

STIFTUNG
Akkreditierungsrat 

Annual Report 2021

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Activity Report 2021

Reporting period: January through December

2021 Contents

Foreword	4
Overview	5
1. Current Developments	6
1.1 New Chairperson	6
1.2 ENQA Evaluation	6
1.3 First Alternative Procedure Accredited	6
1.4 Number of applications	6
1.5 Applications for accreditation in ELIAS	7
1.6 Pandemic-related adjustments	7
2. Activities of the Accreditation Council in 2021: Tasks and Results	8
2.1 (Re)accreditation of degree programs and quality assurance systems, as well as applications for alternative procedures	8
2.2 Requests for deadline extensions and bundled approvals	9
2.3 Approval of agencies	9
2.4 Decisions of the Accreditation Council	9
2.5 Review of Accreditation Procedures	10
2.6 Events	11
2.7 Working Groups	11
3. International Cooperation	12
4. Information and Communication	13
4.1 Publication of Accreditation Data	13
4.2 Communication with the agencies	14
4.3 Statistical data	14
5. Resources	15
5.1 Finance	15
5.2 Staffing, facilities, and equipment of the office	15
Appendices	17

Foreword

For the Accreditation Council, 2021 was marked by a high volume of applications in the accreditation system under the new legislation and the COVID-19 pandemic. Thanks to the constructive and pragmatic cooperation of all full-time and volunteer staff at the Accreditation Council and its office, the applications were largely processed despite the ad hoc adjustments necessitated by the pandemic. Nevertheless, it became apparent that the Accreditation Council's role as "final decision-maker" and "guardian of consistency" entails more effort than had been assumed in 2017/18 during the initial planning phase. Furthermore, more applications for program accreditation are being submitted than we had originally anticipated. Many universities are currently having to wait longer than is reasonable for their applications to be processed. I apologize for this—we hope to, and are working on, remedying the situation starting in 2023.

The Electronic Information and Application System (ELIAS), introduced in 2019, remains indispensable; in addition to its database function, it enables paperless application submission and processing. The ELIAS training sessions offered by the Secretariat were very well received. The willingness of all participants to embrace the electronic process and master its use played a decisive role in enabling the Accreditation Council to essentially fulfill its tasks even under full workload.

The new event series "The Accreditation Council in **Dialogue**" took place for the first time in September. The response was strong, with nearly 300 participants. Within this event series, the Accreditation Council engages in mutual exchange with the universities. The aim is to address a wide range of topics, all of which are relevant to accreditation.

This year's Quality Award went to Neubrandenburg University of Applied Sciences for its application for reaccreditation of the program cluster

"Social Work" (B.A.), "Early Education – Education and Upbringing in Early Childhood" (B.A.), "Counseling – Psychosocial Counseling in the Fields of Social Work/Social Pedagogy, Education, and Upbringing" (M.A.), and "Social Work Studies" (M.A.). The degree programs are characterized by high success rates, a strong commitment to continuous improvement, as well as a high degree of interdisciplinarity, the implementation of new areas of focus, the "Online Counseling" in the curriculum, and the diversity and competency-based orientation of the examination procedures.

In light of the high number of applications, the administrative office has further expanded its staff. In addition to preparing case materials and decision documents, it has also handled the pandemic-related adjustments.

I would like to thank all the individuals and institutions serving on a volunteer basis for the Accreditation Council for their dedication, which far exceeds what could reasonably be expected. This is evident not only in the quarterly Council meetings and the careful preparation of meeting materials, but also in the work for the various committees, in the intensive communication between the Secretariat and Accreditation Council members, and, of course, in the representation of the Accreditation Council at external events.

Bonn, June 2022



Prof. Dr.-Ing. Hans-Joachim Bargstädt

Overview

1. Quarter 2021

107. Meeting (special meeting) of the Accreditation Council on January 26, 2021, online

AC resolutions:

- 55 applications for program accreditation (covering 145 degree programs due to mergers), five deferred

Handover of the chairmanship of the Accreditation Council from Professor Dr. Reinhold R. Grimm to Professor Dr.-Ing. Hans-Joachim Bargstädt

108. Meeting of the Accreditation Council on March 16–17 March 2021, online

AR resolutions:

- 92 applications for program accreditation (covering 198 degree programs due to mergers), one deferred
- Two applications for system accreditation
- Pandemic-related extension of the suspension of § 28 MRVO
- Adoption of the 2020 Quality Report and an FAQ on learning outcomes in accreditation

2. First Quarter of 2021

109. Meeting of the Accreditation Council on June 22–June 23, 2021, online

AR Resolutions:

- 148 applications for program accreditation (covering 383 degree programs due to mergers), one degree program deferred in one application
- Six applications for institutional accreditation
- Resolution AR 109/2019 to postpone the “timely” submission deadline by three months to September 30, 2023 (previously: September 30, 2022)

- Approval of the Belgian agency Mu-siQuE for its activities in Germany

Award for Quality Development

- Awarding of the “Quality Development Award” to the Neubrandenburg University of Applied Sciences

3. Quarter 2021

110. Meeting of the Accreditation Council on September 21, 2021, online

AR resolutions:

- 146 applications for program accreditation (covering 286 degree programs due to mergers)
- Five applications for institutional accreditation
- Mandatory reporting of significant changes due to the pandemic (Section 28 MRVO) effective October 1, 2022
- Approval of the Swiss agency AAQ for its activities in Germany

4. Q1 2021

111. Meeting of the Accreditation Council on November 29–30, 2021, online

AR resolutions:

- First-time accreditation of an alternative procedure (Harz University of Applied Sciences)
- 118 applications for program accreditation (covering 211 degree programs due to mergers)
- Six applications for institutional accreditation
- Approval of the ASIIN agency for its activities in Germany

In connection with the meeting: ESG evaluation by the *European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education* (ENQA).

1. Current developments at the German Council for Higher Education ()

1.1 New Chair of the German Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education ()

The Accreditation Council has a new chair. Professor Hans-Joachim Bargstädt, Ph.D. (Eng.), was elected by mail ballot at the end of 2020 following the 106th meeting. On January 27, 2021, he succeeded Professor Reinhold R. Grimm, who had chaired the Accreditation Council for nearly 14 years.

1.2 ENQA- Evaluation

The 111th meeting of the Accreditation Council was accompanied by an on-site visit as part of an ESG evaluation conducted by the *European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education* (ENQA), with the aim of regaining full membership in ENQA and being listed in the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR). The ESG evaluation also constitutes the implementation of Article 15 of the State Treaty on Study Accreditation. The subject of the evaluation is the Accreditation Council Foundation as an organization within the context of its integration into an accreditation system in which the federal states define the criteria for accreditation and the agencies conduct the evaluation procedures.

The discussions between the evaluators and the members of the Accreditation Council and the Secretariat, as well as with all stakeholders of the Accreditation Council Foundation, took place online in a constructive atmosphere.

1.3 First Alternative Procedure Accredited

At its 111th meeting, the Accreditation Council accredited an alternative procedure for the first time. It approved the application from Harz University of Applied Sciences with conditions.

This decision definitively establishes the third procedural track, created under the State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation, within the accreditation system. The procedural track provides universities with additional flexibility in the accreditation process, while also offering potential for the further development of external quality assurance for study programs and quality management systems.

At the 110th meeting of the Accreditation Council, a resolution was passed regarding an agreement between the Accreditation Council Foundation and the Stuttgart Media University (HdM), Furtwangen University (HFU), and the Nürtingen-Geislingen University of Applied Sciences (HFU) on the accreditation of an additional alternative procedure. This is the first accreditation process for a system-based alternative procedure. The Accreditation Council conducts the accreditation process itself.

1.4 Number of Applications

Since the 2020/21 winter semester, the new accreditation system has been undergoing a “stress test” due to the high volume of applications in program accreditation and the significantly rising number of applications expected for 2021/2022 in system accreditation as well. In 2021, the number of degree programs for which a program accreditation application was submitted rose to a total of 1,300, surpassing the 1,000 mark for the first time and by a significant margin.

The collaboration between the volunteer members of the Accreditation Council and the full-time staff at the secretariat who support them continued to prove essential in handling these numbers—which had risen sharply once again compared to 2019/2020—in program accreditation alone.

1.5 Accreditation Applications in the ELIAS

The Electronic Information and Application Processing System (ELIAS), which has been in operation since January 2019, continues to serve as a digital application platform, ensuring that the application submission and review process is efficient and reliable.

ELIAS is available to the public at <https://antrag.akkreditierungsrat.de/>.

ELIAS supports the entire application process: from submission by the university or other institutions, through processing by the Accreditation Council's secretariat and preparation of the Accreditation Council's meetings, to the accreditation decision and its announcement.

As of January 2022, 532 applicant organizations (including ten agencies) were registered with an account in ELIAS. Compared to the end of 2020, this represents an increase of eight additional applicant organizations.

To enter accreditations under the old law, the agencies (for program accreditations) and system-accredited institutions of higher education (for internal accreditations) have the option of using corresponding application types so that these are published in the new database. (See also [Chapter 4.1](#))

The activities to complete and correct existing accreditation information, which serve to improve data quality, are carried out in constructive collaboration with higher education institutions and agencies.

In 2019, the groundwork was laid for the "Database 2021" were laid, whereby information on teacher training and combined degree programs will first be corrected and supplemented in the new database, followed later by all degree programs. Due to the high overall effort involved,

Due to the data cleanup required by the individual universities and the current staff shortage at the office, the project deadline was extended to June 2023 and the project was renamed "Database 2023." By mid-October 2021, 186 universities had received an Excel file along with the guidelines for correcting program data. 76 corrected Excel tables were returned by the universities to the office.

1.6 Pandemic-Related Adjustments

In light of the COVID-19 crisis, numerous emergency decisions were made at universities in 2021 that also affected degree programs. The Executive Board of the Accreditation Council Foundation therefore decided on March 27, 2020, to suspend the obligation to report significant changes pursuant to Section 28 of the Model Statute (with corresponding state regulations) for such measures until further notice, subject to specific regulations of individual states.

In consultation with the agency representatives on the Accreditation Council, this also applied to the analogous provision "under the old law" in Section

3.6.3 of the "Rules for the Accreditation of Degree Programs" and system accreditation.

By resolution of the Accreditation Council dated September 21, 2021, September 30, 2022, was set as the end date for this provision. As of October 1, 2022, any significant changes to degree programs resulting from the pandemic must be reported to the Accreditation Council. This reporting requirement applies analogously to the provision "under the old law" in Section 3.6.3 of the "Rules for the Accreditation of Study Programs" and to system accreditation.

Furthermore, on March 10, 2020, the Board of the Accreditation Council Foundation decided to allow extraordinary deadline extensions for pandemic-related delays in the program and system accreditation process. These could be requested for program and system accreditations expiring by September 30, 2021. This does not extend the accreditation period, i.e., the extension granted will be credited toward the subsequent accreditation period.

The pandemic-related extraordinary extension expired on October 1, 2021; an extension of the accreditation period remains possible in the cases listed under § 26 MRVO.

To facilitate the transition, the Accreditation Council decided on June 22, 2021, to postpone the introduction of the three-month submission deadline for program reaccreditation applications—which is required to obtain an automatic extension for the duration of the administrative process—from 2022 to 2023. Applications for program reaccreditation that expire on or after September 30, 2023, must be submitted three months before the expiration of the accreditation period in order to receive the automatic extension for the duration of the administrative process. However, the reaccreditation period still follows immediately after the previous accreditation period, provided that the application was submitted before the expiration of the last accreditation period.

2. Activities of the Accreditation Council in 2021: Tasks and Results

2.1 (Re-)Accreditation of degree programs and quality assurance systems, as well as applications for alternative procedures

In 2021, 503 applications for (re)accreditation of degree programs were submitted. Compared to 2020 (435 applications), this represents a further significant increase following the approximate doubling of applications from 2019 to 2020. In 2021, the Accreditation Council reviewed a total of 559 program accreditation applications at its meetings, 389 of which were first-time applications. Due to bundling, these encompass 1,072 (794) degree programs. Here, too, a further increase is evident compared to 2020.

In a number of applications, the Accreditation Council deviated from the proposal of the agency or the review panel. In these cases, the institutions were given the opportunity to comment before the final decision was made.

In 2021, 15 system accreditations were also submitted to ELIAS and approved, nine of which were initial accreditations under the new legislation.

In the alternative procedures—the third category of procedures alongside program and system accreditation—the Accreditation Council reviewed two applications. At the 110th meeting, the agreement for the joint procedure involving three universities in Baden-Württemberg—the University of Media (HdM), Furtwangen University (HFU), and the Nürtingen-Geislingen University of Applied Sciences (HfWU)—was approved. At the 111th meeting, the procedure for Harz University of Applied Sciences was accredited.

In addition to the technical support provided by ELIAS, a standardized reporting structure (and quality) is a prerequisite for the efficient processing of applications. To ensure that the accreditation reports from (currently) ten accreditation agencies can be efficiently processed by the Accreditation Council, the reports must be structurally comparable and follow a common template across agencies. The comparability and readability of the accreditation reports are ensured by the standardized structure of the report templates. Currently, four **report templates** and, in program accreditation, an additional **Excel table** (with **explanations**) for data collection serve as the basis for the accreditation reports and are also used for the self-reports.

The Accreditation Council and the agencies are in constant dialogue regarding the requirements for accreditation reports, including at the joint meeting at the beginning of 2021.

2.2 Requests for deadline extensions and bundled approvals

In 2021, the Accreditation Council received numerous requests for deadline extensions and bundled approvals; in the latter case, decisions were generally made with the input of Council members with expertise in the relevant fields.

The option for pandemic-related extraordinary deadline extensions, introduced in mid-March 2020, was utilized for just over 1,000 degree programs by the end of 2021 and accounts for the vast majority of extensions. In 2021 as well, applications for extraordinary deadline extensions were received for nearly 250 degree programs. An extraordinary deadline extension to 2022 was approved for a total of over one-third of the degree programs expiring in 2021.

Since 2020, regular applications for deadline extensions and bundled approvals have been fully processed in ELIAS; notifications are also generated and sent within the system. The applications for extraordinary deadline extensions, which were temporarily established until September 30, 2021, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, could be created in the system; however, the notifications were sent outside the system.

2.3 Registration of “ ” Agencies

Under the new legal framework, the Accreditation Council authorizes accreditation agencies operating in Germany to carry out their activities, namely the conduct of accreditation procedures. The basis for the formal authorization procedure is an agency's listing in the EQAR (*European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education*). According to the State Treaty, the prerequisite for the agency's authorization is proof that it is reliably capable of performing the tasks of evaluation and preparing the evaluation report; for agencies listed in the EQAR, this is presumed to be the case unless proven otherwise. In 2018, the Accreditation Council approved all—currently ten—agencies registered in the EQAR as of December 31, 2017, to conduct procedures under the new law. In 2021, the Accreditation Council approved the agencies AAQ, ASIIN, and MusiQuE for their activities in Germany based on their renewed registration in the EQAR.

2.4 Decisions of the Accreditation Council

During the reporting period, the Accreditation Council made the following fundamental decisions:

► COVID-19 Pandemic

At its 110th meeting on September 21, 2021, the Accreditation Council decided to suspend the reporting obligation pursuant to Section 28 of the Model Regulation (MRVO) for COVID-19-related

to limit significant changes to degree programs and quality management systems to the period ending October 1, 2022.

The reasoning (and hope) behind this is that normalcy could return in the summer semester of 2022, allowing universities to then make experience-based decisions regarding which emergency regulations—particularly in the area of digitalization—they wish to retain or discontinue. Decision Drs. AR 97/2021 further stipulates that the substantive evaluation of the significant changes will be conducted during the next regular reaccreditation of the degree program, but no later than the end of 2024.

The end date for the suspension of the reporting obligation applies analogously to the provision under the old law in Section 3.6.3 of the “Rules for the Accreditation of Degree Programs and for System Accreditation.”

(► [Resolution of September 21, 2021](#))

Furthermore, at its 109th meeting on June 22, 2021, against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Accreditation Council modified its resolution of November 22, 2019, “Automatic Extension of Accreditation Deadlines for the Duration of the Administrative Procedure” (Drs. AR 109/2019). The bringing forward of the deadline for “timely” applications has been extended by one year. In the new resolution , the previous deadlines “September 30, 2022” have been replaced by “September 30, 2023.” (► [Resolution of June 22, 2021](#))

► Guidelines for Quality Reports of System-Accredited Universities

Higher education institutions with (partial) system accreditation are required under § 29 MRVO to publish accreditation decisions and reports on their internal procedures. In its resolution “Reporting Requirements for System-Accredited Higher Education Institutions” dated September 24, 2018, the

Accreditation Council clarified this: The evaluation results of the internal procedures must be documented in so-called quality reports.

At its 105th meeting on September 29, 2020, the Accreditation Council adopted guidelines for the preparation of these quality reports. According to these guidelines, quality reports must document the evaluation of degree programs, including input from external stakeholders and taking into account any dissenting opinions. Furthermore, they must include an overview of any measures taken, a brief description of the process for awarding the seal, as well as brief profiles and summary evaluations of the degree programs. There is no obligation to use the templates. Universities were granted a transition period for implementation, which was extended by six months due to the pandemic. As of March 31, 2021, internally accredited degree programs may only be entered into the Accreditation Council's database in conjunction with a quality report.

(► [Resolution of September 29, 2020](#))

2.5 Review of the accreditation process

Since 2018, the review of accreditation procedures (“monitoring”) has no longer been part of the Accreditation Council's responsibilities. However, until decisions on accreditation procedures under the new law are available, the Accreditation Council may continue to initiate ad hoc review procedures for procedures under the old law if there are indications of improper conduct of a procedure or an erroneous accreditation decision.

During the reporting period, there was one ongoing procedure and no new procedures.

2.6 Events

ELIAS Training Courses

In April 2021, three ELIAS training sessions for rapporteurs (via Zoom video conference) were held. Further sessions are planned.

Quality Development Award

In 2021, the “Award for Quality Development” was presented.

At its 109th meeting on June 22, 2021, the Accreditation Council approved Neubrandenburg University of Applied Sciences’ application for reaccreditation of the program cluster “Social Work” (B.A.), “Early Education – Education and Upbringing in Early Childhood” (B.A.), “Counseling – Psychosocial Counseling in the Fields of Social Work / Social Pedagogy, Education, and Upbringing” (M.A.), and “Social Work Studies” (M.A.).

The program is distinguished by success rates of 93 to 97 percent, a strong commitment to the continuous development of the programs, as well as its strong interdisciplinary focus, the implementation of new specializations, “online counseling” in the curriculum, and the diversity and competency-based orientation of the examination procedures.

The decision on the award was made by a six-member jury, whose members were selected from representatives of the universities, international members, student representatives, and members of the Accreditation Council’s Professional Practice Group. (► [Quality Award 2021](#))

Quality Dialogue 2021

On June 21, 2021, the 2021 Quality Dialogue took place on the topic of “Dual Degree Programs from the Perspective of Accreditation.” The response to the virtual event was extremely positive, with nearly 300 participants.

The Accreditation Council in Dialogue

In September, the Accreditation Council launched a new series of events: With the format “The Accreditation Council in Dialogue,” it aims to engage in mutual exchange with higher education institutions. The series will address diverse topics, all of which are relevant to accreditation. The first session on September 8, 2021, was dedicated to the topic of “Dual Degree Programs.”

2.7 Working Groups

► **Teacher Education Working Group**

The Working Group on Teacher Education held its inaugural meeting virtually on May 21, 2021.

At the second meeting on June 28, 2021 (virtual), a draft guideline was prepared, which was further discussed at the third meeting on September 7, 2021, and the fourth meeting on October 29, 2021 (both also virtual). (Members of the Teacher Education Working Group, [see Appendix 1](#))

► **Steering Committee**

The Monitoring Committee met virtually on May 12, 2021, for its 6th meeting to discuss the topics delegated to it: “Cross-module exams,” “Faculty and full-time teaching,” and “Evaluation of the MRVO.” (Members of the Monitoring Committee, [see Appendix 1](#))

3. International cooperation in quality assurance and quality development is a key prerequisite for the realization of the European Higher Education Area. Therefore, the promotion of international cooperation remains one of the central tasks entrusted to the Accreditation Council by the federal states, even under the new legal framework. At its core, international cooperation must aim to promote mutual understanding of quality assurance systems, develop comparable criteria, methods, and standards for quality assurance, and improve the transparency of study programs in order to thus facilitate the mutual recognition of qualifications and, consequently, student mobility.

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

► Networks, Conferences, and Discussions

The Accreditation Council has been a *member* since 2005 and an *affiliate* since 2018 of the *European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education* (ENQA). It is also a member of the *International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education* (INQAAHE) and the *CHEA International Quality Group* (CIQG).

Together with the DAAD, it is represented in the “Implementation” working group of the Bologna Follow-Up Group (BFUG) and regularly participates in international working groups, meetings, and conferences. In 2021, these included, among others,

- the ENQA General Assembly on April 22, 2021 (online),
- the INQAAHE Annual General Meeting on March 26, 2021 (online).

- the Intermediate Workshop as part of the “Bologna Hub Peer Support” project on November 25, 2021 (online)

The Accreditation Council was unable to participate in the annual meeting of the *Quality Audit Network* in 2021. The network meetings serve as a forum for regular exchange among European quality assurance agencies whose procedures focus on various aspects of internal quality management at higher education institutions.

At the request of the BMBF, the Accreditation Council is participating in the MICROBOL project. The project supports ministries and stakeholders in examining whether and how existing Bologna instruments can be applied to *microcredentials*. The two-year project is co-funded by Erasmus+ KA3.

This international cooperation enables the Accreditation Council to share its expertise while also learning from the experiences of its international partners.

► Membership in ENQA

From 2005 to 2018, the Accreditation Council was a full member of the *European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education* (ENQA); its membership was last renewed in 2013 for a five-year term. In September 2018, the status was changed to “affiliate” because the Foundation was unable to submit the application for renewal of full membership in time due to the restructuring of the new system, which coincided with this period.

The Accreditation Council is seeking to regain full membership in ENQA as well as listing in the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR). The evaluation contract was concluded on December 9, 2020, and the on-site visit took place in parallel with the

111th Meeting of the Accreditation Council from November 30 through December 2, 2021.

► European Database Project DEQAR

In order to present all quality assurance results of the agencies listed in the European Register (EQAR) on a single platform, EQAR has established the European database DEQAR (*Database of External Quality Assurance Results*). The goal is to provide the general public with open access to the quality assurance results of degree programs and institutions that are evaluated according to the ESG within the European Higher Education Area.

Since 2019, the program accreditation results displayed in ELIAS have been manually exported to DEQAR as CSV files; at the end of 2021, an export process via nightly updates to DEQAR was implemented, so that data on program and system accreditation is now transmitted automatically. The results can be found in [DEQAR's public database](#).

► EU Twinning Project “Strengthening capacities for quality assurance and governance of qualifications”

A two-year EU twinning project was launched in July 2019, focusing on the institutional and human resources development of the Georgian National Accreditation Agency (NCEQE). The project partners are Germany (represented by the DAAD, BMBF, and the Accreditation Council) and Estonia (represented by the Estonian Accreditation Agency EKKA).

Following 2019, the Accreditation Council also provided an expert for one of the missions in 2020,

here: manuals and toolkits for accreditation.

The project concluded on June 16, 2021, with a virtual closing conference.

4. Information and Communication

The communication concept developed in 2019 continues to be implemented. Since 2021, it has been supplemented by information and dialogue events; see [Chapter 2.6](#).

4.1 Publication of accreditation and data

Since 2018, the Accreditation Council has ^{been} responsible for the publication of accreditation data in accordance with the Model Statutory Ordinance and the State Treaty¹. The Accreditation Council's own database has been online since January 8, 2019. (see [Chapter 1.5](#))

► **Degree** Programs: Degree programs bearing the Accreditation Council's seal will be published in ELIAS starting in 2019. This includes information on accreditation deadlines, the conditions associated with accreditation, the participating evaluators and their assessments, as well as the Accreditation Council's decision.

► **System-accredited institutions of higher education**: Accredited degree programs offered by system-accredited institutions of higher education can also be found in the new ELIAS database. System-accredited institutions of higher education may enter data into the database themselves; these entries are then activated (following a formal review) by the Accreditation Council's administrative office.

¹ See Art. 3(6) StAkkStV and § 18(4) sentence 2 and § 29 MRVO.

To standardize the entries for system-accredited higher education institutions in the database, there are (new) required fields. For example, system-accredited higher education institutions are not required to prepare their accreditation reports based on the evaluation grids of the Accreditation Council, a measure intended to account for the diversity of quality assurance systems. (See the “[Reporting Requirements for System-Accredited Higher Education Institutions](#),” ► [Resolution of 2018](#).) Section 29 of the MRVO stipulates that reports from system-accredited higher education institutions must be published. In 2019, the Accreditation Council “formulated guidelines for quality reports at system-accredited universities” (► [Resolution of September 17, 2019](#), supplemented by ► [Resolution of September 29, 2020](#), see [Chapter 2.4](#)). The key elements for the reports mentioned therein are evidence, plausibility, and transparency. Since March 31, 2021, internally accredited degree programs can only be entered into the Accreditation Council’s database in conjunction with a quality report.

► **Agencies:** All agencies authorized to conduct accreditation procedures following successful approval by the Accreditation Council are listed on the [Accreditation Council’s website](#).

4.2 Communication with the agencies

Under the new legal framework, constructive and cooperative collaboration between the Accreditation Council and the agencies is more than ever a fundamental prerequisite for an effective accreditation system in Germany.

The participation of the agencies in the working groups of the Accreditation Council and the

advisory membership of agency representatives on the Accreditation Council.

The annual (and regular) exchange with representatives of the agencies took place at the 109th meeting of the Accreditation Council on March 16, 2021. Potential for improvement in program and system accreditation was discussed, particularly with regard to avoiding requirements for Diploma Supplements and the procedural complexity of large bundles.

To date, the Accreditation Council has informed the agencies of new or amended resolutions in the form of letters from the Chair. Agencies learn about changes to the FAQs—some of which directly affect them—via the Twitter news service.

For communication during the rest of the year, it has proven effective for the Chair or individual staff members of the Secretariat to be invited to agency meetings from time to time to discuss specific topics related to the new legal framework. On several occasions, these discussions served to gather feedback from the agencies, including regarding the Accreditation Council’s new database, or to exchange views on the structure of the accreditation reports and how the agencies handle them.

4.3 Statistical Data

In January 2022, 7,159 bachelor’s and 7,262 master’s programs offered by state or state-recognized universities in Germany bore the Accreditation Council’s seal of quality.

These figures are based on the data in the Accreditation Council’s database.

In accordance with the requirements of the new legal framework, the accreditation results

- in program and system accreditation by the Accreditation Council in the database after a decision has been made,
- the degree programs to which a (partially) system-accredited institution has awarded the Accreditation Council's seal are entered into the database by the (partially) system-accredited institutions,
- the degree programs whose accreditation procedures were conducted under the old law are entered into the database by the agencies.

A total of 110 state or state-recognized higher education institutions had successfully completed a (partial) system accreditation process at that time; this corresponds to approximately 20% of all higher education institutions² Some higher education institutions are in the process of obtaining system accreditation; the exact number is unknown to the Accreditation Council, as the reporting requirement was eliminated under the new law. In 2021, 16 higher education institutions submitted an application for system accreditation under the new law to the Accreditation Council (see [Chapter 2.1](#)).

5. Resources

5.1 Finances

The Accreditation Council is jointly funded by the 16 states in accordance with Section 4(1) of the Act on the Accreditation Council Foundation (Accreditation Act). Pursuant to Section 4(4), the Foundation may, to cover

its administrative costs in accordance with the detailed provisions of the fee schedule; it has done so in the [fee schedule](#) issued on July 11, 2018, and amended in 2020. It provides for an annual base fee (base flat rate) for higher education institutions, graded according to institution size, and procedure-related fees (case-based flat rates) for each accreditation decision. The base fee is payable by every higher education institution that offers at least one currently accredited degree program (including bachelor's degree programs at vocational academies). The amount of the basic flat rate and all other fees can be found in the Fee Schedule appendix in the [► Fee Schedule](#).

For the 2021 fiscal year, the Conference of Finance Ministers (FMK) set the annual contributions from the states to the Accreditation Council at 781,400 euros. Fee revenue amounted to 917,250 euros.

The Foundation's annual financial statements for 2021 show revenues of 1,702,249.99 euros (allocations from the federal states, fee revenues, and revenues from third parties) and total expenditures of 1,701,736.92 euros. This leaves a balance of 513.07 euros.

5.2 Staffing, facilities, and equipment of the administrative office

According to the staffing plan, the Foundation's administrative office is staffed by a managing director (1.0 full-time equivalents/FTE), program officers (8.0 FTE), and administrative staff (2.75 FTE), as well as a secretary (1.0 FTE). In addition, from July 2021 to December 2021, the foundation employed a student assistant for 15 hours per month

police academies, universities, administrative colleges, and specialized higher education institutions.

² For 522 institutions documented in ELIAS. These include vocational academies, universities of applied sciences/HAWs, art and music colleges, and

and, from December 2019 to November 2021, a research assistant for 20 hours per month. Subsequently, a contract for 5 hours per week was concluded. Since July 15, 2021, the foundation has also been utilizing the instrument of legally regulated temporary staffing for the first time. As of December 1, 2021, the employee hired under this arrangement was hired as an administrative assistant.

Since mid-2021, external staff members have been engaged on a fee basis for the first time to handle the persistently high volume of applications in program accreditation.

Employees are compensated in accordance with the Collective Bargaining Agreement for the Public Service of the Federal States (TV-L). The staff members selected in the 2021 recruitment process began their duties on March 8, 2021 (through June 30, 2021), April 1, 2021, and October 1, 2021.

With its office at Adenauerallee 73 in Bonn, the Accreditation Council occupies 12 rented office spaces—spanning three floors since January 2019—with a total of 17 workstations and a meeting room, covering a total area of approximately 360 square meters.

(In-person) meetings of the Council and its working groups frequently take place in rooms provided by its members and their institutions. In 2020 and 2021, for reasons well known to all, this played a lesser practical role than usual. The Foundation extends its gratitude to all who are generally willing to host one of our events.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Members of the Organs and Bodies

Appendix 2 Meeting Dates

Members of the Organs and Bodies

The bodies and committees are always supported and assisted by staff members from the administrative office, with the number of staff varying as needed.

► Members of the Accreditation Council

Chair (until January 26, 2021) Prof.

Dr. Reinhold R. **Grimm Chair (since**

January 27, 2021)

Prof. Dr.-Ing. Hans-Joachim **Bargstädt**

Vice Chair (since February 20, 2018)

Professor Dr. Holger **Burckhart**, University of Siegen

University faculty

Prof. Dr.-Ing. Hans-Joachim **Bargstädt**, Bauhaus University Weimar Prof.

Dr.-Ing. Stefan **Bartels**, Lübeck University of Applied Sciences

Prof. Dr. Heike **Faßbender**, Technical University of Braunschweig Prof.

Dr. Reinhold **Grimm** (until January 26, 2021)

Prof. Dr. Petra **Gromann**, Fulda University of Applied Sciences

Prof. Dr. Oscar **Loureda Lamas**, University of Heidelberg (since January 27,
2021) Prof. Dr. Hans-Joachim **Roth**, University of Cologne

Prof. Dr. Burkhard **Schmager**, Ernst Abbe University of Applied

Sciences Jena Prof. Dr. Martin **Ullrich**, Nuremberg University of

Music

Representative of the German Rectors' Conference

Prof. Dr. Holger **Burckhart**, University of Siegen

State Representatives

Dr. Christine **Burtscheidt**, Senior Ministerial Director, Hessian Ministry of Science and the Arts

Dr. Michael **Lehmann**, Ministry of Economics, Science, and Digitalization of Saxony-Anhalt

Markus **Wiedemann**, Senior Ministerial Official, Ministry of Science, Research, and the Arts of Baden-Württemberg

Ltd. Dr. Hans-Peter **Zils**, Senior Ministerial Advisor, Ministry of Culture and Science of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia

Representatives from the professional field

Dr. h.c. Josef **Beutelmann**, Chairman of the Supervisory Board of Barmenia Versicherungen Rolf **Fischer**, Senate Director, Senate Administration for the Interior and Sport of the State of Berlin

Dr. Christina **Gommlich**, Senior Manager, Economic, Trade & Social Policy, Corporate Communications & Government Relations, BASF SE

Dr. Andreas **Keller**, Vice Chair of the Union for Education and Science (GEW)

Dr. Hans Jürgen **Urban**, Member of the Executive Board of IG Metall

Students

Daniel **Irmer**, Technical University of Freiberg

Lina **Irscheid**, University of Freiburg (since April 1, 2021) Jasmin **Usainov**, TU Dresden (until March 31, 2021)

International representatives

Prof. Dr. Tilmann **Märk**, University of Innsbruck

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

Representatives of the agencies (in an advisory capacity)

Professor Dr. Reinhard **Zintl**, Otto Friedrich University of Bamberg (emeritus)

► Alternate members of the Accreditation Council

Alternates from the group of university faculty members

Prof. Dr. Christine **Bescherer**, Ludwigsburg University of Education

Prof. Dr. Peter **Buttner**, Munich University of Applied Sciences Prof. Dr.-Ing. Joaquin **Díaz**, Technical University of Central Hesse

Prof. Dr. Birgit **Friedl**, Christian-Albrechts-University of Kiel

Prof. Dr. Carmen **Leicht-Scholten**, RWTH Aachen

Prof. Dr. Oscar **Loureda Lamas**, University of Heidelberg (until January 26, 2021) Prof. Dr. Oliver **Müller**, University of Applied Sciences Kaiserslautern

Prof. Dr. Rolf **Sachsse**, Saar College of Fine Arts Prof. Dr. Charlotte **Schubert**, University of Leipzig (since March 10, 2021)

Deputy for the Group of States

Dr. Imke **Buß**, Ministry of Science, Research, and the Arts of Baden-Württemberg (since March 30, 2021)

Senior Government Advisor Natascha **Lohöfer**, Hessian Ministry of Science and the Arts

State Councilor Katharina **Schrader**, Ministry of Culture and Science of North Rhine-Westphalia (since March 30, 2021)

Deputy for the Professional Practice Group

Stefani **Sonntag**, Union for Education and Science (GEW) Timo **Gayer**, IG Metall

► Permanent Guests on the Accreditation Council

Prof. Dr. Andreas **Musil**, University of Potsdam

Prof. Uwe **Schmidt**, Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz; Prof. Marcelo **da Veiga**, Alanus University

► Members of the Foundation Board

Chair

State Councilor Dr. Eva **Gümbel**, Hamburg Ministry of Science and Research

Vice Chair

Dr. Jens-Peter **Gaul**, Secretary General of the German Rectors' Conference

State Representatives

State Secretary Susanne **Bowen**, Ministry of Education, Science, and Culture of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania

State Secretary Tobias **Dünow**, Ministry of Science, Research, and Culture of the State of Brandenburg

State Secretary Dr. Oliver **Grundei**, Ministry of Education, Science, and Culture of Schleswig-Holstein State

Councilor Dr. Eva **Gümbel**, Hamburg Ministry of Science and Research

Head of Department, Ministerial Director Dr. Rolf-Dieter **Jungk**, Bavarian State Ministry of Education and Culture, Science and the Arts

State Secretary Annette **Storsberg**, Ministry of Culture and Science of North Rhine-Westphalia

University representatives

Prof. Dr. Peter-André **Alt**, President of the German Rectors' Conference

Dr. Jens-Peter **Gaul**, Secretary General of the German Rectors'

Conference Prof. Dr. Karim **Khakzar**, President of Fulda University of

Applied Sciences

Prof. Dr. Ulrich **Radtke**, President of the University of Duisburg-Essen (until March 14,

2021) Prof. Dr. Dorit **Schumann**, President of Trier University of Applied Sciences

(since March 15, 2021) Prof. Dr. Anja **Steinbeck**, President of the University of

Düsseldorf (since March 15, 2021)

Prof. Dr. Johanna Eleonore **Weber**, Rector of Ernst Moritz Arndt University of Greifswald (until March 14, 2021)

► Members of the Executive Board

Chair (until January 26, 2021) Prof.

Dr. Reinhold R. **Grimm Chair (since**

January 27, 2021)

Prof. Dr.-Ing. Hans-Joachim **Bargstädt**

Members

Prof. Dr.-Ing. Hans-Joachim **Bargstädt** (since January 27, 2021)

Dr. Olaf **Bartz**, Executive Director of the German Accreditation

Council Prof. Dr. Holger **Burckhart**, University of Siegen

Prof. Dr. Reinhold R. **Grimm** (until January 26, 2021)

► Appeals Commission

Members

Prof. Dr. Ute von **Lojewski**, Münster University of Applied Sciences (faculty member)

Marion **Moser**, ACQUIN (agency representative) (March 17, 2021 to November 29, 2021)

Liv Teresa **Muth**, Ghent University (student member)

Dr. Anke **Rigbers**, evalag (agency representative) (until March 16, 2021)

Dr. Alexander **Rudolph**, ACQUIN (agency representative) (since November 30, 2021)

Alternate Members

Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Hans **Gruber**, University of Regensburg (professorial member) (since Nov. 30, 2021)

Marion **Moser**, ACQUIN (agency representative) (until Mar. 16, 2021)

Dr. Iring **Wasser**, ASIIN (agency representative) (since March 17, 2021)

► Teacher Education Working Group

Prof. Dr. Christine **Bescherer**, Ludwigsburg University of Education Prof. Dr.

Holger **Burckhart**, University of Siegen

Prof. Dr. Marcelo **da Veiga**, Alanus University

Phillip **Glanz**, Dresden University of Technology (student member)

Dr. Andreas **Keller**, Vice Chair of the Union for Education and Science (GEW)

Dr. Simone **Kroschel**, AQAS

Prof. Dr. Andreas **Musil**, University of Potsdam

Martina **Österle**, Ministry of Science, Research, and the Arts of Baden-Württemberg Prof. Dr.

Hans-Joachim **Roth**, University of Cologne

Prof. Dr. Uwe **Schmidt**, Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz Prof. Dr.

Martin **Ullrich**, Nuremberg University of Music

► Steering Committee

Dr. Olaf **Bartz**, Accreditation Council

Prof. Dr.-Ing. Hans Joachim **Bargstädt** (since January 27,

2021) Prof. Dr. Holger **Burckhart**, University of Siegen

Timo **Gayer**, IG Metall

Prof. Dr. Reinhold **Grimm** (until January 26,

2021) Prof. Dr. Petra **Gromann**, Fulda University

of Applied Sciences

Prof. Dr. Oliver **Günther**, University of Potsdam (since early 2021)

Daniel **Irmer**, Technical University of Freiberg Prof. Dr. Carola

Jungwirth, University of Passau (until late 2020) Prof. Dr. Tilmann

Märk, University of Innsbruck

Barbara **Michalk**, HRK

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

Hans-Joachim **Roth**, University of Cologne

Henning **Schäfer**, ZEVA Nina

Ulbrich, GEW

Dr. Iring **Wasser**, ASIIN

Meeting Dates

► Meetings of the Accreditation Council

107. Meeting on January 26, 2021, via Zoom video conference
108. Meeting on March 16–17, 2021, via Zoom video conference
109. Meeting on June 22–23, 2021, via Zoom video conference
110. Meeting on September 21, 2021, via Zoom video conference
111. Meeting on November 29–30, 2021, via Zoom video conference

► Meeting of the Foundation Board

25. Meeting on October 20, 2021, via Zoom video conference

► Meeting of the Teacher Training Working Group

1. Meeting on May 21, 2021, via Zoom video conference
2. Meeting on June 28, 2021, via Zoom video conference
3. Meeting on September 7, 2021, via Zoom video conference
4. Meeting on October 29, 2021 via Zoom video conference

► Meeting of the Monitoring Committee

6. Meeting on May 12, 2021, via Zoom video conference