

STIFTUNG  
Akkreditierungsrat 

**Annual Report 2017**

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Office of the Accreditation Council Foundation  
(until December 31, 2017: Foundation for the Accreditation of Degree Programs in  
Germany) Adenauerallee 73, 53113 Bonn

Tel.: 0228-338 306-0  
Fax: 0228-338 306-79

Email: [akr@akkreditierungsrat.de](mailto:akr@akkreditierungsrat.de)  
Website: <http://www.akkreditierungsrat.de>

Editors: Sandra Schulmeister, M.A., Dr. Olaf Bartz Bonn,  
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# 2017 Activity Report

Reporting period: January through December 2017

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**For the sake of readability, gender-neutral language is not used in some instances. In the spirit of equal treatment, the relevant terms always and fundamentally apply to both women and men**

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## Foreword

The year 2017 was marked entirely by upheaval in the field of accreditation: The [State Treaty on Study Program Accreditation \(StAkkStV\)](#), adopted by the KMK at the end of 2016, had to be ratified by the

16 states in order to enter into force on January 1, 2018. By the end of 2017, it was clear: All state parliaments had approved the State Treaty, thereby fulfilling the [requirements of the Federal Constitutional Court](#) from early 2016 regarding the future structure of external quality assurance in studies and teaching.

In parallel with the ratification of *the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Organization of a Joint Accreditation System for Quality Assurance in Studies and Teaching at German Universities*, the KMK—once again with impressive speed – drafted the [Model Statutory Ordinance \(MRVO\)](#), which regulates the details of the future accreditation system and forms the basis for future accreditation procedures. The Model Statutory Ordinance was adopted by the KMK on December 7, 2017.

A working group appointed by the KMK had developed the new regulatory framework in close consultation with numerous partners in the German higher education system, including the Accreditation Council. The MRVO describes the joint state requirements regarding the structural and qualitative standards for the accreditation of bachelor's and master's degree programs.

In doing so, the KMK also drew on the suggestions regarding the regulations forwarded by the Accreditation Council: In the spring of 2017, the Accreditation Council transmitted the results of the working group on regulatory revision to the states. Since 2015, the working group had been developing proposals for the design of the future regulatory framework with the participation of all stakeholders, that is, representatives

from academia, professional practice, students, and agencies—to develop proposals for the structure of the future regulatory framework.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude and respect to everyone who has worked on this and helped improve the quality of degree programs in Germany. In addition to those directly involved in the process, this includes the numerous reviewers who have consistently put their expertise at the service of accreditation since the inception of external quality assurance, thereby contributing to its success.

With the agreement on the State Treaty at the end of 2016, further transformation processes were initiated or intensified: In order to be able to handle the future task of making decisions regarding degree programs and university-specific quality assurance systems within the new accreditation system, the Accreditation Council began preparatory work in 2017 to establish a computer-based application processing system. I dare to hope that it will be operational as soon as a large number of universities submit accreditation applications under the new legislation.

On behalf of the members of the Accreditation Council, I would also like to thank our national and international partners in the accreditation system, in particular the federal states, which drafted the State Treaty and the Model Statutory Ordinance quickly and constructively and designed the accreditation system in a legally sound manner. I look forward to continued good cooperation.

Bonn, June 2018



Professor Dr. Reinhold R. Grimm

## Overview

### 1. Quarter 2017

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91. Meeting of the Accreditation Council on February 7, 2017, in Berlin

AR Resolution: Proposals for the Future Regulatory Framework

Board Resolution: Compliance with the requirements in the AAQ accreditation process

AR Resolution: Compliance with the requirements in the ACQUIN accreditation process

AR Resolution: Compliance with the requirements in the ASIIN accreditation process

AR Resolution: Fulfilment of requirements in the ZEvA accreditation process

AR Resolution: Application for Reaccreditation of FIBAA

AR Resolution: Application for reaccreditation of AQAS

AR Resolution: Exemption for System Accreditation at Münster University of Applied Sciences

AR Resolution: Experimental Clause – Agreement on the “European Quality Audit” experiment with the University of Bremen

### 2. First Quarter 2017

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92. Meeting of the Accreditation Council on June 7, 2017, in Berlin

Discussion with the Chair of the KMK’s Working Group on the Model Accreditation Ordinance, Mr. Möhler

Discussion: Transition to the new accreditation structures: Transformation process

AR resolution: Election of the Vice-Chair

AR resolution: Fulfilment of requirements in the ASIIN accreditation process – extension

AR resolution: Fulfilment of requirements in the FIBAA accreditation process

### 3. Quarter 2017

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93. Meeting of the Accreditation Council on September 27, 2017, in Berlin

Consultation: Status of deliberations regarding the transition to the new accreditation structures: Transformation process

Board resolution: Initiation of the reaccreditation process by AKAST

AR resolution: Fulfilment of requirements in the AAQ accreditation process – extension

Board of Trustees resolution: Fulfilment of requirements in the AQAS accreditation process

Discussion: Results of the EIQSL project

### 4. Quarter 2017

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94. Meeting of the Accreditation Council on December 14, 2017, in Berlin

Report: Status of the transition to the new system (specifications, etc.)

AR resolution: Application of existing and new law in accreditation

AR resolution: Reaccreditation of the AHPGS

Discussion: Funding for 2019

AR resolution: Handling of monitoring

Board resolution: Adoption of the report on the thematic sample “System Accreditation”

AR Resolution: Change to the “European Quality Audit” under the experimental clause

## 1. Current Developments

### 1.1 The new legal basis: State Treaty and Model Statute

As early as 2016, the draft state treaty had already signaled a change in the framework conditions governing decision-making and rule-setting within the accreditation system: In the future, decisions regarding program and system accreditation will be made by the Accreditation Council (rather than the agencies), with a majority of votes from the academic community required. At the same time, regulatory authority is being transferred from the Accreditation Council to the states.

The states have already exercised this regulatory authority through the draft [State Treaty on the Organization of a Joint Accreditation System for Quality Assurance in Studies and Teaching at German Universities](#). In doing so, they have implemented the requirements of the Federal Constitutional Court regarding the legally secure establishment of quality assurance in studies and teaching. However, before the State Treaty could enter into force on January 1, 2018, it had to be signed by the Minister Presidents and ratified by the state parliaments. This took place as scheduled in the second half of 2017.

Parallel to the ratification process, the “Model Statutory Regulation” working group established by the KMK implemented the requirement to create a uniform set of rules. According to the State Treaty, the details regarding the formal criteria, the subject-matter criteria, and the procedure must be determined by state regulations (see Art. 2–4 StAkkStV), which are based on the KMK’s Model Regulation.

The Model Regulation was adopted by the KMK on December 7, 2018; the implementation process by the states will take place after the State Treaty enters into force in 2018; the state regulations are to apply retroactively as of January 1, 2018.

Under the State Treaty, the Accreditation Council is tasked with submitting proposals to the states regarding the regulations to be enacted by the states (Art. 5, para. 3, no. 6 StAkkStV). Accordingly, it forwarded the results of the Working Group on Rule Revision as a basis for the definition of criteria and procedural rules to be established by the federal states.

Since 2015, the Working Group on Rule Revision, which included representatives from academia, the states, professional practice, students, agencies, and a representative of the Science Council, had met a total of five times. In February and April 2017, the results of the Working Group on Regulatory Revision, which took into account the innovations provided for in the State Treaty, were handed over to the KMK Working Group on Model Statutory Regulations. The suggestions from February covered the following topics:

1. Criteria for the quality of studies
2. Criteria for system accreditation
3. Key points for procedural rules for program and system accreditation
4. Requirements for expert reports in program and system accreditation
5. Structural requirements (formal criteria)
6. Dual degree programs
7. Academicization
8. Subject-specific reference systems and
9. publication practices.

In a second session in early April 2017, suggestions were added on the following topics:

10. Cooperation
11. Experimental clause
12. Accredited degree programs
13. Awarding of seals
14. Reaccreditation
15. Joint programs
16. Accreditation of agencies
17. Transitional provisions.

The working group has drawn upon the extensive experience gained in recent years by universities, the Accreditation Council, and all other stakeholders involved in quality assurance and development.

At its 92nd meeting, the Accreditation Council had the opportunity to exchange views with the chair of the KMK Working Group on the Model Statute, Dr. Dietmar Möhler.

## 1.2 Transformation Process

The legal reorganization of the accreditation system is also linked to structural changes that have a major impact on the way the Accreditation Council operates. As a result of the changed framework conditions, the Accreditation Council will in future make decisions on program and system accreditation in place of the agencies and will be responsible for publishing the decisions.

In addition, the reorganization of the accreditation system also requires a revision of the foundation's internal legal norms (bylaws and

rules of procedure) and an adaptation of the IT infrastructure.

To ensure the new system's functionality, planning began as early as 2016, and preparations were intensified in the spring of 2017 following the KMK's agreement on the State Treaty.

By far the largest task within the upcoming transformation process (extending beyond 2017) is the development and implementation of an IT-based application processing system, including the relevant grant guidelines. Starting in the middle of the year, the Foundation for the Accreditation of Study Programs in Germany received support from the consulting firm INFORA in preparing and conducting the accreditation process.

The Accreditation Council is preparing to process an initial average of approximately 1,000 program accreditation cases and between five and 15 system accreditation cases annually. This volume of applications (estimated based on the current application situation) is intended to enable the timely processing of accreditation applications, even given the limited human resources of the Accreditation Council and its secretariat.

A future database maintained by the Accreditation Council itself is intended to make both positive and negative accreditation decisions available to the public. Such a database will feature interfaces to the Higher Education Compass as well as to other European databases (Qrossroads, DEQAR).

In the first half of 2017, as part of the market exploration phase, several discussions were held with various providers of such systems (and databases); in September, representatives from agencies and higher education institutions were invited to a workshop to identify the different perspectives and requirements of the respective stakeholder groups.

In addition to setting up the application processing system and the database, the Accreditation Council addressed the following tasks in 2017 (which will also largely occupy it in 2018):

- Preparation of budget documents for the budget deliberations
- Development of a new fee schedule
- Adaptation of the foundation's internal quality assurance system
- Upgrading and expanding the office's IT infrastructure
- Revision of the foundation's internal legal norms (articles of incorporation and bylaws)
- Revision of the complaints procedure in accordance with ESG
- Relaunch of the Foundation's website, including corporate design and seal

Throughout 2017, the Accreditation Council regularly engaged in intensive discussions regarding the aforementioned aspects of the transformation process and will continue to do so in 2018.

## 2. Activities of the Accreditation Council in 2017: Tasks and Results

### 2.1 Accreditation of agencies

The procedures for accrediting bachelor's and master's degree programs (in program accreditation) as well as internal university quality assurance systems (in system accreditation) are carried out by accredited agencies. The agencies receive their authorization (accreditation or reaccreditation) from the Accreditation Council, which sets the quality requirements for agencies and reviews their compliance at regular intervals.

In 2017, conducting these accreditation procedures—which, at an agency's request, also included an evaluation based on the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (ESG)—was among the Accreditation Council's statutory duties for the last time.

At its 91st meeting in February 2017, the Accreditation Council accredited the following agencies for an additional five years:

- ▶ AQAS Decision: The Agency for Quality Assurance through Accreditation of Study Programs (AQAS e.V.) was reaccredited with two conditions until March 31, 2022.
- ▶ Decision on FIBAA: The Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation (FIBAA) was reaccredited with three conditions until March 31, 2022.

For the purpose of quality improvement, an agency's accreditation may be subject to recommendations and conditions. As a follow-up measure to accreditation, verifying compliance with these conditions is thus one of the fundamental tasks of the Accreditation Council. To fulfill the conditions,

an agency generally has nine months to meet the conditions. During the reporting period, the Accreditation Council made the following decisions regarding compliance with conditions:

- ▶ **Decision 1 AAQ:** In February, the Accreditation Council initially determined that the AAQ agency had fulfilled one of the two conditions; the deadline for fulfilling the second condition was extended to August 31, 2017. In September 2017, the Accreditation Council determined that the second condition had been fulfilled (see [Decision 2 AAQ](#)).
- ▶ **Decision ACQUIN:** In February, the Accreditation Council determined that the three conditions associated with the accreditation had been met.
- ▶ **ASIIN Decision 1:** In February, the Accreditation Council initially determined that the agency had fulfilled two of the three conditions; the deadline for fulfilling the third condition was extended to May 10, 2017. In June 2017, the Accreditation Council determined that the third condition had been fulfilled (see [ASIIN Decision 2](#)).
- ▶ **ZEVA Decision:** In February, the Accreditation Council determined that the two conditions associated with the accreditation had been met.
- ▶ **FIBAA Decision:** In June, the Accreditation Council determined that the two conditions associated with the accreditation had been met.
- ▶ **AQAS Decision:** In September, the Accreditation Council confirmed compliance with the two conditions associated with the accreditation.

At its 93rd meeting, the Accreditation Council initiated the reaccreditation process for AKAST.

The Accreditation Council rejected a request by the AHPGS for reaccreditation under the old law. The background for the request was the agency's concern

that the State Treaty would not be ratified in time. However, as it became apparent at the end of 2017 that the State Treaty could enter into force as planned, the AHPGS was referred to the new procedure of registration with the European register EQAR.

## 2.2 Review of Accreditation Procedures

In addition to the accreditation of accreditation agencies, one of the Accreditation Council's core statutory tasks in 2017 is to review the program and system accreditation procedures carried out by the agencies.

This is done, on the one hand, on an ad hoc basis when there are indications of a procedure being carried out improperly or of an erroneous accreditation decision. On the other hand, the Accreditation Council has developed a range of review formats with different objectives, which it used for the last time (for the time being) in 2017.

These review formats include random document-based reviews, procedural monitoring, thematic spot checks, and feedback meetings.

### ▶ Random Review

Random review procedures are used in both program and system accreditation to ensure that the criteria, procedural rules, and decision-making rules established by the Accreditation Council are applied appropriately and with sufficient consistency across agencies. In this way, the Accreditation Council's review helps to establish procedural standards and improve the quality of procedures over time, but

also, where necessary, to prevent harm to those affected.

► Theme-based spot checks

The selection of topics for this type of spot check takes into account current issues that are of particular relevance to the higher education and quality assurance system. In topic-based spot checks, the focus is on how the agencies deal with specific problems and challenges and which accreditation rules are perceived as helpful or rather hindering in this context.

► Procedural support

Program and system accreditation processes are monitored by members of the Accreditation Council or staff of the Secretariat. This has a twofold objective: On the one hand, it provides the Accreditation Council with direct insight into the agencies' day-to-day operations; on the other hand, the agencies receive feedback on the observations and findings from the external perspective of the process monitor.

► Feedback Meetings

Feedback meetings place greater emphasis on the perspective of the institutions of higher education. The discussions between the Accreditation Council, agencies, and institutions of higher education facilitate a targeted exchange regarding completed program and system accreditation procedures and serve to gather feedback on accreditation practices and, above all, on the observable effects of accreditation on the quality of education.

The thematic spot checks, process monitoring and Feedback Discussions

are characterized by a stronger focus on dialogue.

The following reviews were conducted during the reporting period:

- Proceedings initiated in 2017: A cross-agency, cross-sectional sample survey regarding the requirements instrument was initiated; the investigation had not yet been completed by the end of the reporting period. Two ad hoc review proceedings were opened; in one additional case, the preliminary review determined that the proceeding should not be opened.
- Proceedings initiated and concluded in 2017: Two random inspections and two feedback meetings were conducted, each in the context of system accreditation. In addition, five system accreditation proceedings were examined as part of the thematic sample "System Accreditation" (see below).
- Proceedings concluded in 2017: Two proceedings in system accreditation that began in 2015 were concluded.

The thematic random sample conducted in 2017 addressed selected issues in system accreditation. As part of the sample, five completed system accreditation procedures were reviewed. The review focused on the application of self-accreditation rights and higher education institutions' understanding of the involvement of external experts.

To ensure a dialogue-oriented review process, the Accreditation Council organized an expert discussion in Berlin on November 13, 2017 ([see Chapter 2.5](#)).

The originally planned investigation (cross-sectional sample) into the design of bundled accreditation procedures was not carried out.

The Accreditation Council was informed about the results of the process monitoring, feedback meetings, and review procedures in the form of reports or Executive Board resolutions.

### 2.3 Resolutions of the Accreditation Council

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

#### ► Proposals for the future regulatory framework

The Accreditation Council approved the proposals for the new regulatory framework; these were forwarded to the KMK Working Group on the Model Statute in spring 2017. ([see Chapter 1.1](#))

#### ► Election of the Vice-Chair

At its 92nd meeting, the Accreditation Council elected Dr. Ude, State Secretary in the Ministry of Economics, Science, and Digitalization of the State of Saxony-Anhalt, as Vice Chair.

#### ► Application of Previous and New Law

Contracts concluded after the State Treaty entered into force shall be implemented under the new law. For accreditation procedures ongoing as of January 1, 2018, the previous law shall apply. The Accreditation Council decided this on December 14, 2017, in a more detailed interpretation of the relevant provision in the StAkkStV.

#### ► Further Decisions of the Accreditation Council

*Handling of monitoring:* The Accreditation Council has decided to

evaluation of bundled accreditation procedures planned in the 2017 monitoring portfolio. ([see Chapter 2.2](#)) In this context, a new adjustment was also made to the fees to be paid by the agencies.

*Exemption for Münster University of Applied Sciences:* At its 91st meeting, the Accreditation Council approved an application from Münster University of Applied Sciences for modified system accreditation.

*Change to the “European Quality Audit (EQA)” project under the experimental clause:* The Accreditation Council has approved the University of Siegen’s request to continue the project—which was approved under the experimental clause—on its own following the University of Bremen’s withdrawal.

### 2.4 Internal Quality Assurance

The foundation’s internal quality assurance focuses on the regular and systematic evaluation of feedback received by the secretariat from members of the Accreditation Council, the experts working for the Accreditation Council, and the agencies.

During the reporting period, the following feedback measures were carried out:

- Survey of members regarding the working methods of the Accreditation Council,
- Survey of members regarding the two completed agency reaccreditation processes,
- Feedback interviews with the executive directors of the reaccredited agencies,
- Survey of experts regarding the preparatory seminar held prior to the

agency reaccreditation procedures, and

► Survey of evaluators regarding the agency reaccreditation procedures.

The Foundation for the Accreditation of Degree Programs in Germany (since January 1, 2018: Accreditation Council Foundation) has been in a special situation since 2016, characterized by the legal reorganization of the accreditation system following the Federal Constitutional Court's decision and the related restructuring measures.

By further developing the criteria and procedural rules and drafting corresponding proposals for the working group established by the KMK ([see Chapter 1.1](#)), the Accreditation Council has addressed a core requirement of its [internal quality assurance system](#).

As in the previous year, a meeting of the Quality Assurance Working Group and the publication of a quality report were omitted for capacity reasons.

An external evaluation of the Foundation is conducted at regular intervals of approximately five years, in accordance with § 11 of the Bylaws. In light of the special circumstances described above, the Accreditation Council had already decided at its 90th meeting in December 2016 to conduct the external evaluation scheduled for 2018 under the Articles of Association only after the successful implementation of the new system.

## 2.5 Events

### ► Expert Discussion: Thematic Sample “System Accreditation”

On November 13, 2017, the Accreditation Council organized an expert discussion in Berlin as part of its 2017 thematic sample. Participants included representatives from the agencies, system-accredited universities, students, the KMK and the federal states, as well as the professional sector. The aim of the expert discussion was to exchange views on the challenges and prospects of system accreditation with regard to the application of self-accreditation rights and how universities handle the external evaluation of degree programs. The results of the expert discussion were incorporated into the report [“Evaluation of the Thematic Sample ‘System Accreditation’](#).” The report was published on the Accreditation Council's website.

## 2.6 Working Groups

### ► Working Group on Rule Revision

The Working Group on Rule Revision met a total of two times during the reporting period. In its 5th and 6th meetings, the working group developed recommendations which, after being reviewed by the Accreditation Council, were submitted as suggestions to the KMK Working Group on the Model Statute ([see Chapter 1.1](#)).

### ► Other Working Groups

The Joint Programs, Experimental Clause, and Quality Assurance working groups did not meet during the reporting period.

**3. International cooperation** in quality assurance and quality development is a key prerequisite for the realization of the European Higher Education Area. For this reason, promoting international cooperation is one of the central tasks entrusted to the Accreditation Council by the federal states. Essentially, 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 academic programs, thereby facilitating the mutual recognition of qualifications and, consequently, student mobility.

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

#### ► Networks, Conferences, and Discussions

The Accreditation Council has been an active member for many years in 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* (IN-QAAHE). 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 2017, these included, among others,

- the European Quality Assurance Forum (November 23–25, 2017, Riga),
- the ENQA Members’ Forum (May 3–5, 2017, Oslo),

- the INQAAHE Conference (February 27–March 2, 2017, in Manama, Bahrain)
- the CHEA/CIQG Annual Meeting (February 2–4, 2017, in Washington, D.C., USA)

This year’s annual meeting of the “Quality Audit Network” was hosted by the Accreditation Council; it took place on March 16–17, 2017, in Berlin. 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.

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

#### ► Membership in ENQA

Since 2005, the Accreditation Council has been a member of the *European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education* (ENQA); in 2013, membership was renewed for a period of five years. In the course of 2017, it became apparent that the application for membership renewal scheduled for 2018 could not proceed as planned due to changes in the accreditation system. With the entry into force of the State Treaty, the Accreditation Council will no longer be responsible for conducting accreditation procedures—including the appointment of evaluators and on-site visits—entirely on its own, as has been the case with agency accreditation. From ENQA’s perspective, a transition from full membership to “affiliate” status.

#### ► European Database Project DEQAR

To map all quality assurance results of the agencies listed in the European Register (EQAR) on a single platform

To this end, EQAR has applied for the establishment of a European database called DEQAR (*Database of External Quality Assurance Results*). The project was launched in the fall of 2017; the Accreditation Council is involved as a partner alongside the HRK.

## 4. Information and Communication

### 4.1 Presentation, Information, and Consultation

The Accreditation Council provides regular and comprehensive information about its decisions and all other topics related to the accreditation system.

In addition to using the Information Service for Science (idw) to publish [press releases](#), the [Foundation's website](#) serves as an important tool for publishing accreditation data and for preparing information for the federal states, higher education institutions, students, and agencies.

The website was redesigned at the end of 2017: Information about the accreditation system under the old legal framework can be found largely unchanged on the newly created site [archiv.akkreditierungsrat.de](http://archiv.akkreditierungsrat.de); information regarding the Accreditation Council's new responsibilities can be found at [www.akkreditierungsrat.de](http://www.akkreditierungsrat.de).

The website provides an overview of all published resolutions of the Accreditation Council. The decisions, as well as the relevant documents from the KMK and HRK, are available to website users as PDF files. In addition, the site provides information on the German accreditation system, the members of the Foundation's bodies and committees, and the agencies accredited by the Accreditation Council.

On an ad hoc basis, the agencies and system-accredited universities are informed via electronically distributed [circulars](#) about rule changes, interpretive notes, or the application of rules, criteria, and structural requirements.

In its [newsletter](#), the Secretariat also provides information on the outcomes of the Accreditation Council's meetings, recent developments in the German accreditation system, as well as personnel news, dates, 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 authorized to award the quality seal following successful approval by the Accreditation Council are listed on the Accreditation Council's website. The website also contains the decisions of the Accreditation Council, the conditions and deadlines associated with accreditation, the expert reports, the justifications for applications, and the statements from the agencies.

► **Degree Programs:** Degree programs bearing the Accreditation Council's seal are published in the database of accredited degree programs. This database, which is linked to the Higher Education Rectors' Conference's "Hochschulkompass," is accessible via the Accreditation Council's website and provides information on accreditation deadlines, the conditions associated with accreditation, the participating evaluators, and the assessments they have conducted.

► **System-accredited institutions of higher education**: The accredited degree programs of a system-accredited institution of higher education are listed in the database of accredited degree programs. Since 2016, the results of system accreditation have been adequately reflected, and system-accredited institutions of higher education have the option of making entries in the database themselves ([see also Chapter 4.4](#)).

► **Statistical data**: In addition to program-specific accreditation data, users can also access statistics on the Foundation's website that provide information on the number of currently accredited study programs. The displayed data can be sorted by duration of study, degree title, subject groups, institution type, and federal state.

In 2017, the Secretariat began preparations for the Accreditation Council's new database ([see Chapter 1.2](#)). Accreditation results for procedures under both the new and old legislation will in future be published in a separate database maintained by the Accreditation Council. Work on setting up this database will begin in the course of 2018.

Together with the HRK, the Accreditation Council is participating in the DEQAR (*Database of External Quality Assurance Results*) project, which was launched in September 2017: Initiated by the European register EAQR, the project aims to map all quality assurance results of the agencies listed in the register on a single platform ([see Chapter 3](#)).

### 4.3 Communication with the agencies

Constructive and cooperative collaboration between the Accreditation Council and the agencies is—under both the old and the new

legal framework—a fundamental prerequisite for an effective accreditation system in Germany.

The participation of the agencies in the Accreditation Council's working groups and the advisory membership of a representative of the agencies on the Accreditation Council have proven to be effective tools for reliable mutual information exchange among the stakeholders.

To date, the Accreditation Council has informed the agencies of new or amended resolutions in the form of circulars issued by the chairperson. Under the previous legal framework, this also applies to changes to joint state-level or state-specific guidelines.

Pursuant to Section 3 of the Accreditation Foundation Act, the Accreditation Council also consults with the agencies prior to making fundamental decisions. Under the old legal framework, this applies in particular to matters concerning the structure of the accreditation system and accreditation procedures, as well as the fee schedule.

Due to the transitional situation, no joint meeting with the agencies took place in 2017. Instead, individual staff members from the Secretariat attended two agency meetings to discuss the status of quality assurance in Germany and, in particular, the upcoming changes to the legal framework and their implications for the Accreditation Council and the agencies. The discussions also served to gather the agencies' experience,

including with regard to the Accreditation Council's new (in-house) database, which will be established in 2018.

The monitoring of accreditation procedures by members of the Accreditation Council or

Staff at the secretariat and feedback meetings also provide a good opportunity for the Accreditation Council and the agencies to exchange information and experiences ([see Chapter 2.2](#)).

#### 4.4 Statistical Data

As of the end of December 2017, 5,385 bachelor's and 5,338 master's degree programs offered by state or state-recognized higher education institutions in Germany bore the Accreditation Council's seal of quality.<sup>1</sup> A total of 63 state or state-recognized higher education institutions had successfully completed a system accreditation process by that date; which corresponds to approximately 16% of all higher education institutions.<sup>2</sup> This represents an increase of approximately 24% in the number of system-accredited institutions compared to the previous year. An additional 27 institutions were in the process of system accreditation at the end of the year.

According to the HRK Higher Education Compass, the proportion of accredited degree programs among all offered bachelor's and master's programs stood at just under 60% at the end of 2017 and remained virtually unchanged compared to the previous year. In fact, the rate is higher; there are significant gaps in the entry of accreditation information into the relevant database. The Accreditation Council has recently intensified its efforts to ensure a complete and prompt

Registration by agencies and system-accredited universities. In 2017, the Accreditation Council began developing its own database of accredited degree programs; under the new system, maintaining the database will be one of the Accreditation Council's own responsibilities.

## 5. Resources

### 5.1 Finances

The Accreditation Council is jointly funded by the 16 federal states in accordance with Section 4(1) of the Accreditation Foundation Act (ASG). The federal states provide funding only to the extent that the Accreditation Council's administrative costs are not covered by the collection of fees.

For the 2017 fiscal year, the Conference of Finance Ministers (FMK) has set the annual contributions from the states to the Accreditation Council at 443,000 euros. This amount includes funds for wage increases and the cost contribution of approximately 12,000 euros for the database of accredited degree programs as part of the Higher Education Compass.

The foundation's annual financial statement for 2017 shows revenues of 613,665.11 euros (allocations from the federal states and fee revenues) and total expenditures of 613,626.07 euros. This leaves a balance of 39.04 euros.

received in the course of system accreditation. The number of system-accredited institutions of higher education was determined on a case-by-case basis.

<sup>2</sup> Based on 396 higher education institutions according to the data in the HRK's Higher Education Compass [www.hochschulkompass.de](http://www.hochschulkompass.de)

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<sup>1</sup> The figures cited here are based on the data in the Accreditation Council's database. The database lists all accredited degree programs or study options, provided they have been entered into the database by the accreditation agencies. This also includes degree programs that bear the Accreditation Council's seal

## 5.2 Staffing, facilities, and equipment

According to the staffing plan, the Foundation's administrative office is staffed by a managing director (100%), four program officers (3.0 full-time equivalents), and one administrative assistant and one secretary (each 50%). In addition, the Foundation employs a student assistant for 20 hours per month. With the exception of the assistant, all employees hold a university degree; compensation is provided in accordance with the provisions of the collective bargaining agreement for the public service of the federal states (TV-L).

With its office at Adenauerallee 73 in Bonn, the Accreditation Council has five rented office spaces with a total of eight workstations and a total area of approximately 120 square meters.

In February and March 2017, a law student completed her six-week administrative internship at the Accreditation Council's office.

## Attachments

Appendix 1	Members of the Organs and Committees
Appendix 2	Meeting Dates

## Members of the bodies and committees

### ► Members of the Accreditation Council

#### *Chairman*

Professor Dr. Reinhold R. **Grimm**

#### *Vice Chair (as of June 7, 2017)*

State Secretary Dr. Jürgen **Ude**, Ministry of Economics, Science, and Digitalization of the State of Saxony-Anhalt

#### *University Representatives*

Professor Dr. Stefan **Bartels**, Lübeck University of Applied

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

Siegen Professor Dr. Reinhold R. **Grimm**

Professor Dr. Ute von **Lojewski**, Münster University of Applied Sciences

#### *State Representative*

State Secretary Salvatore **Barbaro**, Ministry of Science, Continuing Education, and the Arts of the State of Rhineland-Palatinate (as of October 9, 2017)

State Secretary Rolf **Fischer**, Ministry of Social Affairs, Health, Science, and Equality of the State of Schleswig-Holstein (until October 9, 2017)

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

Former State Secretary Prof. Dr. Armin **Willingmann**, Ministry of Economics, Science, and Digitalization of the State of Saxony-Anhalt (until February 16, 2017)

State Secretary Dr. Jürgen **Ude**, Ministry of Economics, Science, and Digitalization of the State of Saxony-Anhalt (as of February 16, 2017)

***Representatives from the professional field***

Dr. h.c. Josef **Beutelmann**, Chairman of the Supervisory Board of Barmenia Versicherungen

Petra **Gerstenkorn**, former member of the Federal Executive Board of the United Services Union (ver.di)

Thomas **Sattelberger**, former member of the Executive Board of Deutsche Telekom AG

Dr. Hans Jürgen **Urban**, IG Metall Executive Board

Jörg **Wollny**, Ministry of the Interior and Local Government of the State of Brandenburg

***Students***

Jan **Bormann**, TU Kaiserslautern (until October 20, 2017)

Franziska **Raudonat**, TU Kaiserslautern

Tillman **Schade**, Kiel University (as of October 20, 2017)

***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 (in an advisory capacity)***

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

**► Members of the Board of Trustees*****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 Councillor Dr. Eva **Gümbel**, Hamburg Ministry of Science and Research

State Secretary Professor Dr. Ulrike **Gutheil**, Ministry of Science, Research, and Culture of the State of Brandenburg

State Secretary Markus **Hoppe**, Thuringian Ministry of Economics, Science, and Digital Society

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

Director General Dr. Peter **Müller**, Bavarian State Ministry of Science, Research, and the Arts

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

**University Representatives**

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

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

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

Applied Sciences Professor Dr. Ulrich **Radtke**, Rector of the University of

Duisburg-Essen

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

**► Members of the Executive Board****Chair**

Professor Dr. Reinhold R. **Grimm**

**Members**

Dr. Olaf **Bartz**, Executive Director of the Foundation for the Accreditation of Degree Programs in Germany

Professor Dr. Reinhold R. **Grimm**

Dr. Jürgen **Ude**, Ministry of Economics, Science, and Digitalization of the State of Saxony-Anhalt (as of June 7, 2017)

**► Appeals Commission**

Professor Dr. Dietmar von **Hoyningen-Hüne**, formerly of Mannheim University of Applied Sciences  
(Chair) Professor Dr. Ute von **Lojewski**, Münster University of Applied Sciences  
Franziska **Raudonat**, Technical University of Kaiserslautern

► **Working Group on Rule Revision**

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

Jan **Bormann**, Student at the Technical University of Kaiserslautern (until  
October 20, 2017) Dr. Verena **Kloeters**, AQAS

Professor Dr. Ute von **Lojewski**, Münster University of Applied Sciences

Ltd. Barbara **Lüddeke**, Bavarian State Ministry of Science, Research, and the Arts Prof. Dr. Martine **Rahier**,  
Rector of the University of Neuchâtel

Franziska **Raudonat**, student at the Technical University of  
Kaiserslautern; Dr. Isabel **Rohner**, BDA

Georg **Reschauer**, AHPGS Renate

**Singvogel**, ver.di

## Meeting dates

### ► Meetings of the Accreditation Council

- 91. Meeting on February 7, 2017, in Berlin
- 92. Meeting on June 7, 2017, in Berlin
- 93. Meeting on September 27, 2017, in Berlin
- 94. Meeting on December 14, 2017, in Bonn

### ► Meetings of the Foundation Board

- 20th meeting on November 8, 2017, in Berlin

### ► Meetings of the Working Group on Rule Revision

- 5. Meeting on January 20, 2017, in Berlin
- 6. Meeting on March 29, 2017, in Berlin