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Foundation for the Accreditation of Study Programmes in Germany

**Accreditation Council** 

**Programme Accreditation in Germany  
and  
Special Aspects on European Co-operations**



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## Content



The German Accreditation System

International Framework: Accreditation in the EHEA

Experience with Accreditation of joint programmes (international and in Germany)



## **The German Accreditation System: Beginning and Future**

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1999 Start of the German Accreditation System: Accreditation of Bachelor and Master Programmes mandatory

By now: approx.50% of all programmes accredited

As from March 2008:

Introduction of an institutional oriented accreditation approach in addition to programme accreditation (optional for HEI)

Accreditation of all programmes of an institution on bases of

Accreditation of internal quality assurance systems

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## **The German Accreditation System: Three Principles**

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### **Accreditation of programmes and state approval**

Functional separation between state approval and accreditation.

Accreditation is a prerequisite of approval, and therefore partly based on structural standards given by state

### **Decentralised Accreditation System in a federal state**

Accreditation Council as a '*central body*' has been mandated by the 16 states to organise and rule an Accreditation System with the accreditation procedures carried out by various accreditation agencies.

### **Stakeholder involvement**

Representation of students, labour market experts (and state) in the system

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## International Framework: Accreditation in the EHEA - 1

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„Ministers agree to engage at the national level to **remove legal obstacles to the establishment and recognition of (joint) degrees** and to actively support the **development and adequate quality assurance of integrated curricula leading to joint degrees.**“

Berlin Communiqué 2003

„We adopt the standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area as proposed by ENQA. (...) We underline the importance of cooperation between nationally recognised agencies with a **view to enhancing the mutual recognition of accreditation or quality assurance decisions.**“

Bergen Communiqué 2005

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## International Framework: Accreditation in the EHEA - 2

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Framework Conditions:

### Standards concerning the Programmes:

European Qualifications Framework (incl. Level-Descriptors and ECTS)

Comparable Degree-Systems

### Standards concerning Quality Assurance

„European Standards and Guidelines“

European Register of Agencies

### Main Differences:

Accreditation System in place: Yes/No

Legal character of accreditation (accreditation/Approval)

Accreditation object

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## **International Framework: Accreditation in the EHEA - 3**

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### **Consequence:**

Joint-Programmes have to be accredited several times

### **Aim:**

Reduction of workload in the institutions, and compliance with national regulations at the same time

### **Solutions:**

Co-operation of agencies

Mutual recognition of accreditation decisions

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## International Co-operation in practise

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### 3 Versions

Joint procedure, separate decisions

One procedure, „dual use“ of the outcomes

Two procedures with extensive mutual recognition of

▶ High degree of co-ordination in every single case.

## European Consortium for Accreditation 2004-2007

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### Principles for the accreditation of joint programmes, Berlin 2007

2.1. Information sharing and transparency

2.2. The composition of the expert panel

- There should be particular emphasis on the inclusion of experts with relevant international experience and knowledge.

2.3. The assessment process

...

- Any site visit(s) must include representatives of the programme who are able to present the totality of the joint programme across all sites (even if there are not representatives from all sites);

- The panel makes its assessment on the totality of the joint programme, including taking into account the learning outcomes aimed for by the joint programme irrespective of the individual study pathways;


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## European Consortium for Accreditation 2004-2007

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### Principles for the accreditation of joint programmes, Berlin 2007

#### 2.4. The accreditation decision

- The accreditation decision is based on the assessment of the totality of the joint programme (even if the accreditation decision is only binding in the "jurisdiction" of the accreditation organisation that took the decision);
  - The accreditation decision must be communicated to the relevant accreditation organisation(s).
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## Accreditation of Joint Programmes in Germany - 1

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„Conflict of aims“ between Compliance with formal state regulations and promotion of internationalisation


Beschluss des AR vom 09.12.2004:

1. In the case of an accreditation of a joint programme the recognition of diversity of national approaches shall be the guiding principle.

A sufficient quality assurance according to national regulations must be guaranteed.

2. The Accreditation Council recommends the agencies to revert to the outcomes of national quality assurance procedures and to conduct joint review procedures.

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## Accreditation of Joint Programmes in Germany - 2

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Project of the Accreditation Council for 2008:

Joint project with the Nederlands-Vlaamse Akkreditatieorganisatie (NVAO)


### Aim:

Standards for a simplified accreditation procedure in order to avoid double reviews

### Warning:

Security through regulation at the cost of unbureaucratic case to case approach?

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**Vielen Dank für die Aufmerksamkeit!**

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