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FEATURES OF PROGRAMME ACCREDITATION PROCEDURE

Accreditation is a process of external quality review used by higher education to scrutinize colleges, universities, and educational programs for quality assurance and quality improvement. Accreditation review is ongoing. The initial earning of accreditation is not entry to indefinite accredited status. The five key features of accreditation are:

• Self study: Institutions and programs prepare a written summary of performance based on accrediting organization's standards.

• Peer review: Accreditation review is conducted primarily by faculty, administrators, and members of the public.

• Site visit: Accrediting organization normally sends a visiting team to review an institution or program. Team members are volunteers.

• Action (judgment) of accrediting organization: Accrediting organization has commission that makes decisions about the accredited status of institutions and programs.

• Monitoring and oversight: Institutions and programs are reviewed over time in cycles from every few years to ten years. Normally, these reviews include a site visit [1].

"Recognition" means that the accrediting organizations undergo a review of their qualifications and activities to determine whether they meet the standards. If accreditors meet the standards, they are recognized. Higher education accreditation's primary purpose is to assure and strengthen

academic quality and ongoing quality improvement in courses, programs, and degree.

Accreditation involves a great deal of work on the part of the institution or program under review as well as the accrediting organization.

• Self studies require extensive documentation and evidence of quality of an institution or program.

• Accreditation teams test the veracity of the self study and look for areas that require improvement that may have been missed.

• Representatives of institutions or programs are carefully interviewed by accrediting commissions to ensure that any concerns that have surfaced will be addressed.

• Peers have a responsibility to the entire higher education community and closer to home; they do not seek to undermine the perceived quality of their own institutions or programs by recommending accreditation for "anyone who wants to get accredited" [1].

Although accreditation is a nongovernmental activity, it is used by the government as one of the tools to help protect the federal investment in institutions and ensures students and parents that basic standards of quality are being met.

Key to meeting accountability expectations of the public and government is accreditation's capacity to provide reliable information about institution and program performance and student learning outcomes. Many of the recent reforms undertaken by accrediting organizations have led to standards and policies calling for developing and using evidence of how well institutions and programs perform and students learn when making judgments about accredited status.

The self-regulatory process of accreditation works. It has helped to create a higher education system that is the most diverse, highest quality, yet, most accessible in the world. Self-regulation assures self-responsibility, builds pride, and has been instrumental in creating the unparalleled intellectual accomplishment of our society.

System accreditation is a multistage procedure made up of different elements to determine the effectiveness of process quality. The procedures of system accreditation include both feature and programme random samples, resulting in a thorough statement about the results of process quality and therefore about the quality of the HEI's study programmes. Procedural basis is the adaption of the most actual version of the Accreditation Council's resolution "General Rules for carrying out System Accreditation Procedures".

1. Preparatory conversation ACQUIN holds conversations with representatives of the HEI about the purpose of the system accreditation procedure, the relevant criteria for evaluation and accreditation and the various procedural steps. 2. Application The HEI submits an application for system accreditation. In case of a relevant state-specific regulation, the application has to be submitted via the responsible ministry. The application includes: • a description of the HEI's quality management system applied to the field of teaching and learning as well as • a systematic overview of the existing and planned study programmes of the HEI, differentiated according to the current state of planning and realisation, assignment to organisational units, as well as to designated degrees. • In case of a system accreditation the documentation additionally has to comprise a report about the results of the half-time random sample.

3. Preliminary evaluation Involving the Standing Expert Committee „System Accreditation" the Accreditation Commission draws a conclusion on the result of the preliminary evaluation. 4. Contract on carrying out a system accreditation procedure After having successfully checked that the prerequisites for the admittance to system accreditation have been met by the HEI, ACQUIN and the HEI make a contract on carrying out the system accreditation procedure. This procedure includes the following elements: • evaluation of the process quality on the basis of the provided documentation as well as two on-site visits • evaluation of selected features of all study programmes offered by the HEI in the frame of the evaluation of the process quality (feature random sample) • evaluation of selected study programmes (programme random sample) The contract will define the time frame and cost of the procedure.

5. Submission of documentation by the HEI The HEI provides ACQUIN with all documents relevant for the accreditation procedure. These include: • a documentation showing internal management and decision-making structures, the HEI's mission and profile, its offer of study programmes, defined quality objectives and the system of internal quality assurance in the field of teaching and learning • a statement from student representatives of the HEI and • the self-documentation for the programme random sample of the selected degree courses. 6. Evaluation of the documentation and the first on-site visit The Standing Expert Committee "System Accreditation" appoints an expert group for evaluating the process quality and nominates a spokesperson for the expert group. The expert group consists of at least five people, whereby usually three persons have professional experience in managing decisionmaking and implementation

processes in HEIs, especially in the field of teaching and learning. These experts should have leadership experience (academic deans, committee members, members of faculty and HEI management), show openness to different organisational structures and have experience with different institutional cultures. Additionally, the expert group should comprise one student representative with experience in HEI self-administration, and one representative of the professional practise.

If decisions on supplementary determinations in terms of professional law must be taken during the procedure, an adequate expert must be involved – as far as this is required due to state regulations. The expert group "Process Quality" evaluates the documentation provided by the HEI. On this basis the expert group conducts conversations with different status groups of the HEI to resolve open questions and to deepen their knowledge about the quality management system. On the basis of the evaluation results the expert group formulates a proposal for the timing and content of the second on-site visit. The HEI is informed about the results and is given the opportunity to submit additional or revised documents in preparation for the second on-site visit. The experts decide on the composition of the feature random sample. The HEI provides ACQUIN with the necessary documents for the feature random sample in time and before the second on-site visit. 7. Feature random sample The feature random sample serves for the evaluation of relevant features concerning the design, implementation and quality assurance of study programmes. Rather than evaluating the subject specific content the experts check the formal compliance and implementation of process regulations and the compliance with the guidelines specified by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (KMK) as well as with state-specific guidelines, and the criteria set up by the Accreditation Council for the accreditation of study programmes.

8. Second on-site visit (in-depth analysis) During an on-site visit of several days the expert group "Process Quality" evaluates the compliance and effectiveness of the quality assurance system in the field of teaching and learning according to the documentation. The experts conduct conversations with the persons in charge of quality assurance, the leading management of the HEI, the management of studyrelated organisational units, teaching personnel, students, administrative staff, as well as the equal opportunities commissioner(s). The evaluation serves for an in-depth analysis of the existing quality management system and to formulate recommendations for its continued improvement. The evaluation of the process quality

covers the assessment of the defined features, which have been examined in all study programmes of the HEI. The expert group writes a preliminary evaluation report, which is made available to the expert group of the programme random samples. 9. Programme random sample The programme random sample includes a review of objectives, concept, content, resources, implementation procedures, and programmerelated quality assurance of selected study programmes (see ACQUIN-Guidelines for Programme Accreditation Procedures). Accordingly, the subject specific expert group reviews, in an exemplary manner, the effectiveness of the quality management system through a resultsoriented evaluation of the quality of these study programmes without taking an accreditation decision.

10. Evaluation report on process quality The expert group "Process Quality", taking into account the results of the feature random sample, writes a final evaluation report on the process quality of the HEI. Additionally, this report includes a decision recommendation to ACQUIN's Accreditation Commission to be used as a basis for the decision on system accreditation. ACQUIN forwards the expert's evaluation report without the proposed decision recommendation to the HEI for comment. 11. Comment from the HEI The HEI has the opportunity, within an agreed period (usually four weeks), to comment on the evaluation report and give corrections, if necessary, or to describe already initiated improvement measures. The evaluation report and the HEI's comments thereon are passed on to ACQUIN's Standing Expert Committee "System Accreditation". 12. Statement of the Standing Expert Committee and decision of the Accreditation Commission Based on the evaluation report and the comment of the HEI, the Standing Expert Committee "System Accreditation" checks, if the evaluation of process quality has been handled well concerning content and procedure. As a result, the Standing Expert Committee "System Accreditation" issues a statement. This statement contains a recommendation to the Accreditation Commission. The Accreditation Commission takes the final accreditation decision [2].

ASIIN aims at providing maximum efficiency in its procedures. For every partner involved, efforts should be as little as possible. Our procedural model enables you to apply for different quality seals in one, interlinked procedure. In this manner, additional efforts can be avoided which would otherwise occur in cases when, for instance, a nationally regulated and a subject-related seal are sought.

Types of Programme Accreditation Procedure
ASIIN e. V. currently offers the following types of procedure:

Individual procedure

This procedure is conducted for individual Bachelor's or Master's degree programmes and/or consecutive Bachelor's and Master's programmes.

The accreditation certificate applies to the degree programme. A final individual decision takes place for each degree programme.

Cluster procedure

The procedure is conducted for a cluster of degree programmes of related disciplines. An Audit Team evaluates several degree programmes within the same procedure.

The accreditation certificate applies to one degree programme. A final individual decision takes place for each degree programme.

Whether or which degree programmes are joined in one procedure is applied for by the HEI and evaluated in each individual case by the pertinent Technical Committees of ASIIN e. V.

Two-step procedure

- 1st step: Preliminary review of university- and faculty-wide structural features or models (e.g. teacher training education)

- 2nd step: Cluster procedure for a package of related degree programmes or by packages of subjects based on the report from the 1st step.

The accreditation certificate applies to the degree programme. After the 2nd step, there is a final individual decision for each degree programme.

In the two-step procedure, an Audit Team created especially for this purpose first reviews university-wide structures for the degree programme or degree programme model (1st step). ASIIN e. V. may work together with another accreditation agency and form a joint team to cover disciplines outside of the specialisation area of ASIIN e. V. The results of the 1st step are summarised in an evaluation report, which forms the basis of the expert assessment – as a basic rule in the form of degree programmes or disciplines joined in clusters – conducted in the 2nd step. The procedure of the 2nd step then contains the steps common for a programme accreditation procedure. The decision concerning the accreditation of the individual degree programmes takes place upon completion of the 2nd step [3].

The option of the two-step accreditation procedure is recommended in particular if an accreditation is applied for degree programmes featuring similar structural characteristics and backed by several departments or faculties of the same HEI – e.g. in the case of teacher training education or degree programmes with two majors. Compared to uncoordinated individ-

ual or cluster procedures, the two-step accreditation procedure offers the opportunity to avoid unnecessary expenses in providing and processing information for same/similar issues of the HEI or agency/agencies.

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РАЗДЕЛ 2. АКТУАЛЬНЫЕ ПРОБЛЕМЫ ПЕДАГОГИКИ И ПСИХОЛОГИИ В ИССЛЕДОВАНИЯХ СТУДЕНТОВ

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ПРОБЛЕМА СУВЕРЕННОСТИ ПСИХОЛОГИЧЕСКОГО ПРОСТРАНСТВА В ПОДРОСТКОВОМ ВОЗРАСТЕ

Стремительные социальные изменения, в которых протекает современная эпоха, вынуждают личность к постоянному преобразованию сложившихся жизненных взглядов и отношений. В настоящее время, наряду с личностной зрелостью и психическим здоровьем, одной из главных личностных характеристик является гармоничность психологической организации внутреннего мира личности, согласованность истинных потребностей и реально достигаемых целей, что позволяет человеку в полной мере реализовать свои возможности и быть успешным в различных сферах взаимодействия с современным миром.