



CEENQA

CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN NETWORK
OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

German experiences in institutional evaluation

Standards and criteria

Jan Philipp Engelmann, Secretary General of CEENQA

5 December 2023

QFORTE Seminar "Institutional external evaluation: realities and perspectives"



Overview of the German accreditation system

General characteristics:

- Decentralised
- HEIs have lots of flexibility
- Focus on the quality at a programme level
- Institutional accreditation is optional



Overview of the German accreditation system

Legal foundations:

- **International:**
 - Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)
 - Communiqués of the EHEA ministerial conferences
 - Lisbon convention
- **National:**
 - Interstate Study Accreditation Treaty as of 2017
 - Specimen Decree/State Decrees on the accreditation of study programmes as of 2017-2020



Players

- German Accreditation Council (state institution)
- Quality assurance agencies (11 private/semi-public organisations)
- Higher education institutions (422 with 2,871,000 students)



Programme vs. institutional accreditation

Basics:

- Both types of accreditation are equally valid
- HEIs freely choose one of the types
- Programme accreditation used to be the norm, but institutional accreditation is becoming more common (currently 130 HEIs)
- Successful institutional accreditation confers self-accreditation status



Standards and criteria for programmes

Differentiation between formal and academic criteria

Agencies assess the formal criteria

- Structure and duration
- Admission requirements
- Adequate academic degree
- Modularisation
- ECTS



Standards and criteria for programmes

Expert panels assess the academic criteria

- Qualification objectives and learning outcomes
- Curriculum
- Academic Mobility
- Teaching Staff
- Resources
- Examinations
- Workload and organisation
- Adequacy and up-to-dateness of the programme
- Quality assurance measures
- Gender equality and compensation of disadvantages
- Special regulations for joint degree programmes and other forms of cooperation



Standards and criteria for institutions

The subject of institutional accreditation is an internal quality assurance system at an HEI.

Institutional accreditation means that this QA system is able to ensure the compliance of all degree programmes with the formal and academic criteria.



Standards and criteria for institutions

- Mission statement for teaching
- **Systematic realisation of formal and academic criteria for degree programmes** [all criteria mentioned earlier]
- Defined responsibilities and processes for design, continuous development and internal accreditation of degree programmes
- Involvement of all internal and external stakeholders
- Independence of assessment, appeals
- Sufficient resources
- Continuous development and revision of QA system
- Assessment of all areas relevant for teaching and learning
- Collection and utilisation of adequate data
- Documentation and transparency



CEENQA

CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN NETWORK
OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

**Thank you for your
attention!**

**Any questions or
comments?**

**Your contact to
CEENQA:**

Jan Philipp Engelmann
Secretary-General
secretariat@ceenqa.org