2001

On the date of the initial accreditation by the Accreditation Council in 2001 the Accreditation, Certification and Quality Assurance Institute ACQUIN was launched with 57 members from four German federal states. By the end of 2015, its membership was held by 169 universities as well as professional societies and associations from all over Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Liechtenstein and Lebanon.

In June 2011 ACQUIN was reaccredited by the Accreditation Council for the second time, in the same year its membership in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education EQAR was successfully extended. In December 2015 ACQUIN requested the third reaccreditation by the Accreditation Council and at the same time the renewal of the full membership of ENQA and the continuation of its registration with EQAR.

In the year under review, just over 500 accreditation and evaluation decisions were made (including decisions on the fulfillment of the conditions and system accreditations as well as certifications). In the course of 14 years of practical work the operational and organisational structure of ACQUIN have proven their effectiveness and assured a continuous focus on quality.

With eighteen completed and nine ongoing system accreditation procedures, ACQUIN plays a leading role in the further development of the accreditation system in Germany and sees itself as a reliable partner of universities in the advancement of their quality management systems.

2015
TABLE OF CONTENTS

COMMITTEES.......................................................................................................................... 5

ACCREDITATION PROCEDURE................................................................................................. 17

COOPERATIONS.......................................................................................................................... 23

ANNEXES................................................................................................................................... 34
IN THIS REPORT ALL JOB TITLES REFER EQUALLY TO BOTH GENDERS.
NO LINGUISTIC DIFFERENTIATION WAS MADE IN ORDER TO FACILITATE THE READABILITY.
COMMITTEES

In 2015 ACQUIN made just over 500 evaluation and accreditation decisions (including decisions on the fulfillment of the conditions). The evaluation and accreditation procedures were carried out jointly by the accreditation commission, the expert committees, the appointed expert groups as well as the ACQUIN head office in a carefully structured process and under the terms of clearly defined division of responsibilities.

According to the process requirements, the committee structure is made up as follows:

- The effective cooperation of the institutions and committees of ACQUIN is insured by the board and the general assembly. Both strategic steering committees of ACQUIN are focused on the application and implementation of the objectives and operational principles of ACQUIN when using the criteria and procedures for accreditation and certification.

- The accreditation commission renders a comprehensive contribution to the careful and reliable task fulfillment of ACQUIN. The accreditation commission of ACQUIN is composed of representatives of universities, colleges of art and music, universities of applied sciences, professional practice and students. According to the statutes, the chairmanship of the accreditation commission is held by a chairperson. The accreditation commission members are appointed for a period of two years.

- The expert committees partially expanded its personnel; long-standing expert committee members were reelected or replaced by new expert representatives. Here again, there are representatives of universities, professional practice and students. The expert committee members are appointed for a period of four years.

- The appeals commission was appointed in 2013. It investigates appeals which are not remedied directly by the accreditation commission and then expresses its opinion.

- In 2015 approximately 800 experts - university professors, students and representatives of professional practice - on behalf of ACQUIN evaluated study programmes and internal quality assurance systems at universities taking into account the criteria of the Accreditation Council and the "Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area" (ESG) as well as the country-specific legal requirements.

- In order to meet the requirements of the evaluation and accreditation procedures and to provide the adequate publicity, the head office of ACQUIN is always adequately staffed. From 2010 onwards, the managing director is assisted by a deputy.
THE BOARD

In addition to the general assembly of ACQUIN, the board is another strategic steering committee of the association. The board bears the economic responsibility for ACQUIN and thus has a particular interest in the efficiency and effectiveness of the ACQUIN operation.

Meetings of the Board:
4 March 2015, Bayreuth
20 April 2015, Wiesbaden
18 December 2015, Frankfurt am Main

In 2015 the board met three times to decide on the membership applications, to make the personnel-related decisions and to discuss matters that are of fundamental relevance for ACQUIN. The board is doing the important task of keeping track of the developments and results of the work of the association in order to make crucial decisions on the further development of the performance capability of ACQUIN. In 2015 the board dealt with the reaccreditation procedure of ACQUIN in particular and the introduction of the Code of Ethics.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2015
IN WIESBADEN

On 20 April 2015 the general assembly of ACQUIN was held at the RheinMain University of Applied Sciences in Wiesbaden.

Following the opening statement by the board chairman of ACQUIN, Professor Dr.-Ing. Gerd Zimmermann, the assembly was initiated by the welcoming speech of the president of RheinMain University of Applied Sciences, Professor Dr. Detlev Reymann. One of the guest speakers of the assembly, Professor Dr. Reinhold Grimm, is the chairman of the Accreditation Council. With regard to the proposed changes in the rules of the Accreditation Council, Mr. Grimm spoke in favour of mentality change in the accreditation process meaning that rather than checking compliance with the criteria, one should focus on the further development of quality. The accreditation should be a consultation process for the universities, and their individual responsibility should be promoted. Mr. Grimm dedicated his subsequent speech to the topic of the Statutes of Fees and stressed that the Accreditation Council was ordered by the Conference of the Ministers of Finance to increase the fees for the agencies, since the institutional grants were not sufficient to finance the Accreditation Council. The resulting discussion revolved mainly around the further development of the system accreditation procedures, the consideration of specialised criteria for programme accreditation procedures and the importance of competence-oriented qualification objectives.

This was followed by the reelection of the accreditation commission (for composition see appendices), debate on the annual report 2014 and the presentation of annual internal audit report. The report drafted for the 2014 financial statement was adopted unanimously. The general assembly also voted unanimously for the discharge of the board and for the adoption of the business plan for 2015.
APPEALS COMMISSION OF ACQUIN

The appeal procedure of ACQUIN provides that the university appeals regarding accreditation decisions are initially submitted to the accreditation commission and then, if the appeal is not rectified, they are forwarded to the appeals commission for revision and statement. Recommendations of the appeals commission are considered by the accreditation commission.

No meetings of the appeals commission were held in 2015.

MEMBERSHIP

In 2015 ACQUIN managed to attract new members. As a result of 2015 withdrawal of member universities and the strategic concentration within the AKAD university group, initially the number of members slightly decreased: by 31.12.2015 ACQUIN included 169 members - in the vast majority universities (in balanced proportions universities and universities of applied sciences as well as colleges of art of music) and scientific societies and science-related professional associations. The geographical reach extends across all German federal states, Austria, Switzerland, Liechtenstein and Lebanon.

In 2015 the Board accepted the following universities as new members of ACQUIN:

Geisenheim University
University of Art, Design and Popular Music, Freiburg
Academy of Fine Arts, Munich

ACCREDITATION COMMISSION

The accreditation commission is the central decision-making body in the evaluation and accreditation procedures. It has a number of key tasks related to the overall coordination of the procedure: it determines the procedural principles and guidelines, discusses and decides on the evaluation results and makes accreditation decisions based on them. It also appoints the members of the expert committees. Its decisions for accreditation of a single study programme (programme accreditation) or internal quality assurance systems of higher education institutions in the area of teaching and learning (system accreditation) are based on the expert report, the opinion of the university on the expert report and the opinion of the competent expert committee. The procedures of certification and institutional accreditation are similar.
MEETINGS OF THE ACCREDITATION COMMISSION 2015

In 2015 the accreditation commission met four times (in March, June, September and December) in order to come to an agreement apropos of the evaluation criteria and procedural principles, to make accreditation and certification decisions on the basis of the expert reports, the opinions of the universities and the opinions of the expert committees and to deal with the appointment of new or reelected longtime expert committee members.

At the June meeting, Dr. Olaf Bartz, the managing director of the accreditation commission, took part in the supervision of a procedure which was adopted at this meeting.

The new guidelines “Certification” and “Institutional Accreditation” drawn up by the office were adopted, documents for accreditation of part-time and / or further education courses were updated, and the criteria of the expert appointment were decided.

The initiation of proceedings for reaccreditation of ACQUIN and the grounds for the application to the Accreditation Council were taken note of by the accreditation commission. The accreditation commission discussed the Code of Ethics compiled by the head office in relation to the application for renewal of full membership of ENQA and the continuation of the registration with EQAR and submitted the amended version to the board as a draft resolution.

Furthermore, during the meetings the accreditation commission dealt with the new developments in the German accreditation system and the European Higher Education Area, in the year under review among other things with the report of the Federal Government on the implementation of the Bologna Process, the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes, with the updated resolutions of the KMK in teacher training as well as with the comments of the German student union with respect to the needs of students with disabilities. In addition, the results of 81st, 82nd, 83rd and 84th meeting of the Accreditation Council (inter alia, the experimentation clause in the context of system accreditation, the Statutes of Fees and the agency-related aspect of the regular monitoring and the obligation to disclose the opinion of the expert report even in negative accreditation decisions of all procedures starting 01.01.2016) were considered and discussed as well as the circular letters of the Accreditation Council, in particular, the recognition of non-university gained knowledge and skills and the impact of the system accreditation for preparation programmes and external examinations at universities of Baden-Württemberg.

In individual cases, the accreditation commission had to deal with appeals from the universities. In these cases the arguments of the universities were carefully examined again. A total of six appeals of the accreditation decision were submitted, three of them were upheld and one was partially upheld, it concerned respectively the withdrawal or amendment of conditions. In another case, the appeal against the ap-
proval of two conditions was not upheld; however, the wording of the conditions was readjusted. In one procedure a university applied for an accreditation of dual version of its full-time accredited courses as part of a significant change with evaluation of records; the accreditation commission considered necessary to start a separate accreditation procedure with an on-site visit. The university then entered into a contract with ACQUIN for the implementation of the procedure so the appeals commission was not addressed in relation to this case. In 2015 the accreditation commission was coordinated in the head office by Kateryna Kryvko and Nina Soroka.

EXPERT COMMITTEES

Since its foundation in 2001, ACQUIN has set up nine expert committees composed of representatives of universities, colleges of art and music, universities of applied sciences, professional practice and students. The expert committees play a significant role in the evaluation and accreditation procedures, they nominate the experts and ensure the uniformity and appropriateness of the implementation of the procedures on the basis of the evaluation report drawn up by the expert groups and the opinion of the universities. The performance of the expert committees is therefore essential for the internal quality assurance and quality control. The members of the expert committees fulfill their duties under the coordination of an expert committee spokesperson.

The individual expert committees cooperate with each other in the accreditation in order to meet requirements of the profile of individual study programmes in a bundled process and the profile of interdisciplinary study programmes.

A shared exchange of opinions and experiences of expert committees and accreditation commission takes place regularly every two years. No such meeting was held in 2015.

In some committees personnel changes were made. On the one hand, there was a recruitment of additional personnel in order to take proper account of the various academic disciplines; on the other hand, there was a replacement of retired members to ensure the professional continuity within the expert committees.

REELECTION AND PERSONNEL CHANGES IN THE EXPERT COMMITTEES

Expert Committee for Architecture and Planning:

- Professor Dipl.-Ing. Peter Berten (Architect, Technical University of Berlin), reappointed since March 2015
- Professor Dipl.-Ing. Gert Bischoff (Landscape Architects (BDLA), University of Applied Science Erfurt), reappointed since March 2015
- Dipl.-Ing. Rainer Hilf (Interior Architect (BDIA), Nuremberg), reappointed since March 2015
We mourn Professor Dipl.-Ing. Frid Bühler, who worked at ACQUIN since the founding of the expert committee with great dedication to the quality of architectural education and passed away in 2015 after a serious illness.

Expert Committee for Humanities, Linguistics and Cultural Studies:

- Professor Dr. Matthias Bauer (English Philology / Literature Studies, Eberhard Karls University of Tübingen), reappointed since March 2015
- Professor Dr. Verena Blechinger-Talcott (Japanese Studies, Free University of Berlin), reappointed since March 2015
- Professor Dr. Stephan Conermann (Islamic Studies, The University of Bonn), reappointed since March 2015
- Professor Dr. Helmut Johannes Vollmer (English Linguistics / Language Teaching and Learning, University of Osnabrück), reappointed since March 2015
- Professor Dr. Gabriele Diewald (German Studies, University of Hannover), reappointed since March 2015

After several years of involvement in the Expert Committee the following member has resigned:

- Heike Wehage (Student of Secondary-School Teacher Training with the subjects of History and Mathematics and specialised Mobility and Transport at Braunschweig University of Technology)

Expert Committee for Computer Science:

- Professor Dipl.-Inform. Astrid Beck (Software Engineering and Media Informatics, Esslingen University of Applied Sciences), reappointed since September 2015
- Professor Dr. Wolfgang Hesse (Computer Science, Philipp University of Marburg), reappointed since September 2015
- Walter Leonhardt (Software-Engineering, DATEV eG), reappointed since September 2015

Expert Committee for Engineering Sciences:

- Professor Dr.-Ing. Peter Husar (Biosignal Processing, Ilmenau University of Technology), reappointed since March 2015
• Professor Dr. Horst Hellbrück (FB Electrical Technology and Computer Science, University of Applied Sciences, Lübeck), appointed since March 2015
• Wenzel Wittich (Student of Mechanical Engineering, RWTH Aachen University), appointed since September 2015

After several years / one year of involvement in the expert committee the following members have resigned:
• Professor Dr.-Ing. Holger Dahms (Electrical Technology, University of Applied Sciences, Lübeck)
• Martin Franke (Student of Industrial Engineering with Business Studies at the Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus-Senftenberg)

Expert Committee for Art, Music, and Design:
• Professor Rudolf Meister (President of the State Academy of Music and the Performing Arts in Mannheim), reappointed since March 2015
• Hannes Oppermann (Student of Dramaturgy (Master) at the University of Music and Theatre Leipzig), reappointed since March 2015
• Professor Dr. Wolfgang Dinglinger (Music Theory, Berlin University of the Arts), reappointed since March 2015

Expert Committee for Mathematics and Natural Sciences:
• Professor Dr. Jutta Ludwig-Müller (Botany, Dresden University of Technology), reappointed since March 2015
• Professor Dr. Nikolaus Korber (Chemical Sciences, University of Regensburg), reappointed since December 2015
• Dipl.-Ing. agr. Geert Oppermann (GASCADE Gastransport GmbH), reappointed since December 2015

Expert Committee for Medicine and Health Sciences:
• Professor Dr. med. Helga Fritsch (Department of Anatomy, Histology and Embryology, Innsbruck Medical University), reappointed since March 2015
• Dr. med. Thomas Shiozawa (Clinical Anatomy, Eberhard Karls University, Tübingen), reappointed since September 2015

After several years of involvement in the expert committee the following member has resigned:
- Professor Dr. med. dent. Dr. med. J. Thomas Lambrecht (Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, University of Basel)

**Expert Committee for System Accreditation:**

- Alexander Buchheister (Student of Economic Geography, RWTH Aachen University), appointed since December 2014
- Professor Dr.-Ing. Heinrich H. Kil (Transport System Design, University of Applied Sciences Erfurt), reappointed since March 2015
- Professor Dr. Sigrid Metz-Göckel (Centre for Didactics in Higher Education at Dortmund University of Technology), reappointed since March 2015
- Theo Scholtes (Head of Bitburger Braugruppe GmbH), reappointed since March 2015
- Professor Dr. Beate Finis Siegler (Social Policies, Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences), reappointed since March 2015
- Professor Dr. Sascha Spoun (President of the Leuphana University of Lüneburg), reappointed since March 2015
- Professor Dr. Guido Vergauwen (Theology, University of Fribourg), appointed since March 2015
- Professor Dr. rer. nat. Manfred Schubert-Zsilavecz (Center for Drug Research, Development and Safety (ZAFES), Johann Wolfgang Goethe University Frankfurt a. M.), appointed since December 2015

After several years of involvement in the expert committee the following members have resigned:

- Professor Dr. Helmut Konrad (History, University of Graz)
- Professor Dr. Rolf Zaugg (Economic Sciences, University of Applied Sciences Northwest Switzerland)

**Expert Committee for Economics, Law and Social Sciences:**

- Cordula Spitzer (Student of Law, University of Regensburg), reappointed since March 2015
- Professor Dr. Thomas Rautenstrauch (Accounting and Finance, Zurich University of Applied Sciences in Business Administration), reappointed since March 2015
- Professor Dr. Karl-Jürgen Bieback (Social Law / Labour Law / Public Law, University of Hamburg), reappointed since December 2015
- Professor Dr. Rolf Bühner (Business Administration, University of Passau), reappointed since December 2015
- Professor Dr. Jörg-Dieter Oberrath (Private and Public Economic Law, Bielefeld University of Applied Sciences), reappointed since December 2015
- Professor Dr. Ferdinand Müller-Rommel (Institute for Political Science, Leuphana University of Lüneburg), appointed since December 2015
- Professor Dr. Michael-Jörg Oesterle (Business Administration Institute, University of Stuttgart), appointed since December 2015

After several years of involvement in the expert committee the following members have resigned:
- Professor em. Dr. Hermann Meyer zu Selhausen (Business Administration, formerly Ludwig Maximilians University of Munich)
- Professor Dr. Dieter Kugelmann (Public Law, German Police University in Münster)

**MEETINGS OF THE EXPERT COMMITTEES IN 2015**

In 2015 the expert committees held meetings regularly. Each expert committee met twice in order to issue the guidelines for the upcoming procedures, to appoint experts, to submit comments on the individual procedures and to coordinate the procedure standards for the work of the expert committees. In each session, the agenda included discussions referred to new developments in the German accreditation system and in the European Higher Education Area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meetings of the Expert Committees</th>
<th>Mathematics and Sciences:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economics, Law and Social Sciences:</td>
<td>25 February 2015, Bayreuth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 March 2015, Munich</td>
<td>15 September 2015, Bayreuth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 November 2015, Munich</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering Sciences:</td>
<td>Architecture and Planning:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 March 2015, Bayreuth</td>
<td>16 March 2015, Zurich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 September 2015, Bayreuth</td>
<td>15 September 2015, Berlin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities, Linguistics and Cultural Studies:</td>
<td>Art, Music and Design:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19/20 March 2015, Dresden</td>
<td>26/27 February 2015, Berlin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15/16 September 2015, Tübingen</td>
<td>21/22 October 2015, Schwäbisch Gmünd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Science:</td>
<td>Medicine and Health Sciences:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 March 2015, Nuremberg</td>
<td>13 March 2015, Frankfurt am Main</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 September 2015, Nuremberg</td>
<td>04 September 2015, Frankfurt am Main</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>System Accreditation:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16 March 2015, Frankfurt am Main</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27 August 2015, Lüneburg</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EXPERT GROUPS

In 2015 the expert committees appointed a total of approximately 800 experts for 129 on-site visits within the framework of the accreditation procedures. The expert committees proceeded according to the handout "Procedures and criteria of the expert appointment" which in 2013 was adapted to the new rules of Accreditation Council for the accreditation of study programmes and for system accreditation and in 2015 updated again.

For the appointment of the expert group members, the scientific requirements, the student needs and the practical professional requirements are taken into account so that the expert groups alongside scientists also include students and representatives of professional practice. For the evaluation of an individual study programme the expert group includes at least five members: three professorial representatives, a representative of the professional practice and a student representative. In bundled procedures the number of reviewers is increased accordingly. In many cases, the expert groups included international experts. The groups were composed of experts who had already participated in the ACQUIN procedures previously as well as new experts.

The preparation of the experts involves several stages. The request of the experts is carried out on behalf of the responsible expert committee and includes initial information on the accreditation procedure, its timing and content as well as the role, the self-perception and the tasks of an expert in the accreditation procedure. Then the self-documentation and other relevant documents (ACQUIN guides, criteria of the Accreditation Council, resolutions by the Council of Ministers of Culture etc.) are sent in order to get the expert group acquainted with the evaluation criteria and procedures. In addition, password protected documents are provided for download on the ACQUIN internal Internet portal. When necessary, experts can consult with the person in charge of the expert committee or the coordinator from the head office. The experts are provided with a handout with detailed information on their roles and responsibilities within the procedure. Furthermore, a production of an online training video is planned.

A preliminary meeting of the experts is always held before the on-site visit. Depending on the process it takes two to four hours and is intended to clarify the course of proceedings, to exchange views on the self-documentation and to collect questions as well as overall to prepare for the discussions with the university members. The appointment of a spokesperson from the group of experts is also followed by a further understanding of the role and self-perception of the experts.

To ensure the independence and impartiality of the experts, the experts involved in the respective accreditation procedures are asked to sign a declaration of impartiality in accordance with criterion 2.3.3 of the "Rules for the Accreditation of Agencies" issued on 08.12.2009 and amended on 10.12.2010 (Accreditation Council).
THE OFFICE

The coordinators of the head office are responsible for the implementation and organisation of the process, support of the committees, public relations and internal quality assurance. Their scope of responsibility includes participation in national and international conferences and meetings of scientific associations and maintenance of contacts with universities in Germany and abroad as well as the initiation of new cooperation projects.

The office structure introduced in 2010 was modified again in several organisational units. The topics can be divided into the following categories "Programme Accreditation", "System Accreditation", "International Work" and "Committee Work". In addition, the internal committee for quality assurance was reorganised into "Team QM". It is responsible for cross-sectional tasks and is directly connected to the management board.

OFFICE PARTIES

The summer party of ACQUIN on 17 July 2015 on the premises of the office was attended by numerous former employees and student assistants. On 16 December 2014 for Christmas party the management invited all staff and student assistants to winter village Bayreuth followed by a dinner.

ACQUINUS GmbH

In 2015 the ACQUINUS GmbH pursued the goal of exploring new business fields in the area of consulting services for universities and university-related institutions through careful selection of reference projects. The ACQUINUS GmbH offers services to universities in the areas of "Preparation for the Institutional Accreditation", "Certification of Module Studies" and "Implementation of a Quality Management System" which were further developed in 2015.

In the year under review, the consulting services were provided to HWTK University of Applied Sciences in Berlin in the course of preparation for the institutional accreditation by the Science Council.

In 2015 ACQUINUS cooperated with GIZ GmbH and carried out a project under the initiative "Technical cooperation in the Central Asian region - Vocational Education in Central Asia" in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. So the "Regional Reference Curriculum 'Food Technology - Master of Science'" was evaluated.

The consulting services to the University of Koblenz-Landau were provided in preparation for the university system accreditation. The evaluation carried out at the Freiburg Academy for University Continuing Education was aimed to develop action recommendations for the future structure and orientation of the institution.
ACCREDITATION PROCEDURE

Since the foundation of ACQUIN, *programme accreditation* has been one of the main tasks of the Agency. A high-quality implementation is ensured in each procedure. The competent expert committees check appropriate combinations of subjects for each bundled programme accreditation procedure and pay attention to the number of courses in terms of feasibility. In 2015 ACQUIN (re-) accredited 275 courses and thus belongs to the four agencies in Germany with most accreditation decisions per year.

The German accreditation system has been further developed with the process of *system accreditation*: from programme accreditation to evaluation of the internal quality assurance system of a university. ACQUIN announced its first nationwide completion of a system accreditation procedure at a German university in 2011 and now its market share of the ongoing and completed procedures amounts to about fifty percent.

In addition to the accreditation of study programmes and quality management systems in the field of teaching and learning, ACQUIN ensures that a similar programme quality is achieved in advanced scientific training that does not lead to a degree by carrying out the *certification procedures*. Hitherto, two procedures have been completed.

Another procedure type carried out abroad is *institutional accreditation*. The focus of such procedure is the organisation and functioning of an entire university that involve evaluation of the areas of teaching and studying, research and university-internal self-government. In 2015 institutional accreditation procedures were completed at two universities in two countries.

- The *grounds for a decision* turned out to be extremely varied in 2015. The majority of decisions in the programme accreditation resulted in the accreditation with conditions, this way most universities could be signaled that they are on the right track.

- In compliance with the internationalisation principles of ACQUIN, the Agency collaborated with foreign partner institutions in procedures at *universities abroad* in 2015.

- The employees of ACQUIN were responsible for the *support of the universities*, they were in charge of providing the comprehensive information to the programme and system managers on preparation, implementation and follow-up procedures and the committee work associated therewith before signing the contract.
In the year under review, ACQUIN brought about 494 programme accreditation decisions. 150 study programmes were accredited for the first time, 125 programmes were reaccredited. 143 of these accreditations included conditions. The fulfillment of conditions was confirmed in 219 study programmes.

The system accreditation procedures were completed at six universities; the fulfillment of conditions in system accreditation procedures was confirmed four times. In 2014 five universities were approved for system accreditation procedures, thus ACQUIN had a total of nine ongoing system accreditation procedures in Germany at the end of the reporting period.

Programme accreditation procedures were carried out and completed abroad in several universities in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Egypt, Ethiopia and Oman. Institutional accreditations were conducted and decided at all universities in Lebanon and Bulgaria.

In addition to the accreditation of study programmes and quality management systems in the field of teaching and learning, ACQUIN also carries out the certification procedure in which the quality of advanced scientific training is checked. In 2015 ACQUIN completed the first two certification procedures and thereby certified three further education programmes.

In case of an accreditation with conditions as well as a rejection of accreditation there is a possibility of suspending the accreditation process based on the opinion of the university for a period of time that does not exceed 18 months.

During the year 2015 a degree programme accreditation was denied and the respective university requested a suspension of the procedure in order to be able to make improvements and to prepare for a resumption of the procedure. In 2015 a university applied for a suspension of the proceedings after a degree programme accreditation was denied at the end of 2014. In three cases, the universities applied for a suspension after a programme accreditation with conditions. Applications for suspension were sustained in all cases.

The decisions on the resumption of a procedure as well as the decisions on the determination of the fulfillment of conditions fall within the competence area of the accreditation commission. The decision of the accreditation commission is made based on the opinions of the expert committees.

The committees of ACQUIN deal comprehensively with the process of the fulfillment of conditions and the resumption of suspensions. Due to this elaborate monitoring of the follow-up phase after the accredita-
tion decision, ACQUIN guarantees a significant contribution to the quality improvement of teaching and learning. In the period under review, an accreditation with conditions was granted in four cases after the resumption.

**DISTRIBUTION OF SUBJECTS**

As in the previous year, most programme accreditation procedures were carried out in the field of Economics, Law and Social Sciences; there was again an increase by four percentage points. The number of procedures increased significantly in the field of Computer Science (from four to ten percent) and Engineering Sciences (from eleven to sixteen percent), after a previous decrease recorded by these two expert committees.

The proportion of procedures in the fields of Architecture and Planning, Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Medicine and Health Sciences remained largely constant, with the least amount of cases processed by the expert committees for Architecture and Planning and for Medicine and Health Sciences.

The proportion of procedures in the fields of Humanities, Language and Cultural Studies decreased slightly. A more significant decrease can be observed in the area of Art, Music and Design; the proportion is now back to its 2013 levels, after it almost doubled in 2014.

**Distribution of subjects: accredited programmes in 2015**

- Architecture and Planning
- Humanities, Linguistics and Cultural Studies
- Computer Science
- Engineering Sciences
- Art, Music and Design
- Mathematics and Sciences
- Medicine and Health Sciences
- Economics, Law and Social Sciences

The percentage breakdown by subject groups shows that the claim of ACQUIN that it accredits study programmes of all subject groups is fair.
CURRENT STATE OF PROCEDURES FOR THE SYSTEM ACCREDITATION

In 2015 ACQUIN completed six system accreditation procedures and approved the initiation of five system accreditation procedures. In four cases the fulfillment of conditions was confirmed.

Thus, since 2011 ACQUIN has certified the internal quality assurance system in teaching and learning in 18 universities and confirmed the fulfillment of the conditions in ten cases, one procedure is suspended.

APPROVAL

In 2015, the following universities were approved for the system accreditation procedures by ACQUIN: Schmalkalden University of Applied Sciences, East Bavarian Technical University of Amberg-Weiden, Viadrina European University and Ludwigsburg University of Education.

The approval requirements for procedures of partial system accreditation at Hamburg University for Teacher Training at the Universities of Free Hanseatic City of Hamburg were also evaluated as fulfilled.

The proceedings were initiated.

FIRST AND SECOND ON-SITE VISIT

In 2015 first on-site visits in regards to the system accreditation were carried out at the University of Duisburg-Essen and the University of Kaiserslautern. The first and second on-site visits were carried out at the University of Frankfurt am Main. The second on-site visits were carried out at the Technical University Dresden and the Technical University of Kaiserslautern.

DECISION MAKING PROCESS

In 2015 decisions on the system accreditation were made for the Technical University of Applied Sciences Wildau, Friedrich Schiller University of Jena, University of Regensburg, Dresden University of Technology, Fresenius University of Applied Sciences and Technical University of Kaiserslautern.

FULFILLMENT OF THE CONDITIONS

In the course of 2015 the fulfillment of the conditions was confirmed by the accreditation commission for the Leuphana University of Lüneburg, Fresenius University, University of Hof and University of Tübingen respectively.

INTERIM EVALUATION

An Audit Meeting was held for University of Mainz and Maastricht University in June 2015. The report from the interim evaluation was considered by the accreditation commission and the results were determined.

The interim evaluation of the Technical University of Ilmenau was started based on files, and the result determination will follow in 2016.
In 2015 ACQUIN also carried out a number of accreditation procedures outside of Germany. These programmes are not offered in cooperation with German universities so ACQUIN does not grant the seal of the German Accreditation Council, but it awards the seal of quality of ACQUIN; if required, an inspection result is determined and an accreditation recommendation is provided to a country-specific accreditation authority.

To meet the demands of growing interest of foreign universities in evaluation procedures by ACQUIN, ACQUIN promotes international composition of its committees wherever possible. So the committee work is enriched not only by experts with international experience, but also by professors from abroad (Switzerland, Austria, Lebanon) in several expert committees as well as in the accreditation commission.

KAZAKHSTAN

In the year under review, ACQUIN carried out multiple on-site visits in Kazakhstan again. In February, March and November 2015, four peer reviews were carried out at the German-Kazakh University in Almaty, State University in Semey, State University in Kokshetau and Caspian University in Almaty. A total of 46 study programmes in Kazakhstan (eight at the State University in Kostanay, sixteen at the State University in Taldykorgan, seven at the Kazakh National Agrarian University in Almaty, ten at the State University in Semey and five at the German-Kazakh University in Almaty) was awarded the seal of quality of ACQUIN in 2015. 45 study programmes were accredited without conditions.

In 2013 the accreditation commission decided to extend the deadline for fulfillment of conditions in the accreditation procedures at universities in the Republic of Kazakhstan from nine to twelve months, as the programme design of the local universities in many parts must be approved by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan and due to the coordination and decision-making processes between universities and the Ministry the fulfillment of programme-specific requirements in accreditation procedures within the period of nine months was often impossible. The fulfillment of conditions in 11 programmes was confirmed in 2015.

New contracts for the implementation of programme accreditation procedures were concluded with the German-Kazakh University in Almaty, Kazakh National University in Almaty and State University in Taldykorgan. ACQUIN will carry out the first reaccreditation in Taldykorgan. Numerous other contracts were prepared.

RUSSIA

In May and October 2015 the on-site visits were carried out at the Southern Federal University Rostov-on-Don and at the State Polytechnic University in St. Petersburg. The procedure in St. Petersburg was conducted jointly with the Russian Accreditation Agen-
cy NCPA, here various expert groups led parallel peer reviews of three study programmes for five consecutive days. Two courses at the Southern Federal University Rostov-on-Don were awarded the seal of quality of ACQUIN in 2015. This university also concluded new contracts with ACQUIN for the first reaccreditation in Russia.

KYRGYZSTAN

In October 2015 ACQUIN carried out a peer review of the Kyrgyz State Technical University in Bishkek. The peer-reviewed programme was accredited in December 2015.

BULGARIA

In the period under review, ACQUIN carried out four on-site visits at the European Polytechnical University in Pernik. Seven study programmes were accredited; the university was also awarded the seal of quality of ACQUIN for institutional accreditation.

SLOVENIA

In 2015 a study programme at the Faculty of Commercial and Business Sciences in Celje was accredited. The on-site visit was carried out in December 2014.

OMAN

In March 2015 a Peer Review was carried out at the German University of Technology in Muscat, Oman. In September 2015 three study programmes were accredited for the first time, three others were reaccredited.

EGYPT

ACQUIN carried out an on-site visit at the German University in Cairo in May / June 2015. The reaccreditation decision for the two peer-reviewed study programmes was made in September 2015.

ETHIOPIA

In May 2015 an on-site visit at the University of Addis Ababa was carried out. The peer-reviewed study programme was awarded the seal of quality of ACQUIN in September 2015.

LEBANON

As part of a procedure for institutional accreditation a peer review was carried out at the University of Balamand in Al Kurah in April 2015. The decision on institutional accreditation was made in September 2015.
COOPERATIONS

In order to achieve its objectives, a continuous cooperation in national and international, particularly European, context is of great importance for ACQUIN. Goal-oriented cooperation is crucial for the discussion, development and reception of further advancement in the field of quality assurance procedures and it supports the recognition of the work of ACQUIN.

- **Cooperation with universities**
  ACQUIN cooperates with the mergers of universities and their initiatives at a European, federal and state level to analyse the requirements for quality assurance and develop appropriate measures for comprehensive development, assurance, monitoring and improvement of quality in teaching and learning.

- **Cooperation within the German accreditation system**
  ACQUIN cooperates with the partners in the German accreditation system in the national context, the round table of the Accreditation Council with the accreditation agencies and bilaterally with accreditation agencies accredited by the Accreditation Council in order to contribute to the maintenance and development of the accreditation system.

- **Cooperation with students**
  ACQUIN cooperates with students and student organisations in order to analyse the concerns of students regarding quality assurance measures and to seek the appropriate solutions.

- **Cooperation with disciplines**
  ACQUIN cooperates with the organised forms of disciplines, the department and faculty conferences and scientific societies in order to discuss the subject-specific requirements and conditions in the process of external quality assurance through accreditation and to find the appropriate solutions.

- **Cooperation in international networks**
  ACQUIN is a member of the central international organisations and project initiatives that contribute to the achievement of the association goals. ACQUIN is involved in international and particularly European groupings of institutions of external quality assurance. This way ACQUIN is involved in the development of the European Higher Education Area.

- **Cooperation in partnership-based projects**
  The exposure to international projects helps ACQUIN to expand its base of experience. The own concepts are discussed and common solutions for specific questions are developed. The project work is a learning opportunity for ACQUIN as an organisation and the individual experience and expansion of expertise for its employees.
COMPREHENSIVE INFORMATION FOR EACH UNIVERSITY

The coordinators and the management of ACQUIN (in the office in Bayreuth or in the local universities) conducted a number of discussions in order to inform those responsible at universities on criteria and methods of the evaluation and accreditation procedures.

On April 21, 2015 ACQUIN organised a workshop at the RheinMain University in Wiesbaden for member universities of ACQUIN for a revision of the rules of the Accreditation Council. After an introductory speech by the managing director of ACQUIN, Thomas Reil, the criteria and procedures related to the programme accreditation, system accreditation, interim evaluation and experimentation clause were discussed in several working groups. The event took place following the general assembly of ACQUIN and proved extremely popular.

COOPERATION WITH THE GERMAN RECTORS' CONFERENCE

In 2015 ACQUIN continued its cooperation with the German Rectors' Conference (HRK). Thomas Reil participated at the 66th Annual Meeting of the German Rectors' Conference on 11 May 2015 in Kaiserslautern as well as at the editorial meeting of HRK AG on the German Qualifications Framework on 3 and 4 December 2015 in Eichstätt.

On 11 June 2015 ACQUIN was also present at the HRK Conference "Teacher Education - Responsibility for the Future, Challenges and Perspectives" in Berlin.

COOPERATION WITH THE ACCREDITATION COUNCIL AND THE AGENCIES

ACQUIN regularly meets with its partners in the German accreditation system in order to exchange ideas on the advancement in the field of quality assurance procedures.

COOPERATION WITH THE ACCREDITATION COUNCIL

In 2013 Professor Reinhard Zintl, a member of the appeals commission of ACQUIN, was appointed a representative of HRK and KMK in the Accreditation Council on a proposal from the agencies. The agency representatives and the managing director of ACQUIN participated at the meetings of the Accreditation Council on February 5, June 18, September 30 and 10 December 2015.

On 10 November 2015, the Accreditation Council invited ACQUIN to talk about combination courses in Stuttgart.

On 19 and 20 January 2015 "Forum System Accreditation" was held in Bonn; it was organised by the Accreditation Council and the Rectors' Conference with the aim of promoting dialogue and cooperation between universities, Accreditation Council and agencies and of exchanging ideas on intentions, effects and potentials of system accreditation. ACQUIN and AQAS presented a joint progress report during the internal part of the meeting for system accredited universities, agencies and the Accreditation Council.
AGENCIES MEETING
Professor Reinhard Zintl and Thomas Reil participated at the meeting of the agencies in Bonn, Mannheim, Berlin, Zurich and Cologne on 19 January, 4 May, 9 June, 22 September (only Mr. Reil) and 9 December, 2015. On 29 January 2015 a telephone conference was held in preparation for the next meeting of the Accreditation Council. During other meetings documents and agenda topics of the coming meetings of the Accreditation Council were discussed, this year the agency representatives discussed primarily the planned revision of the rules by the Accreditation Council and the revision of the ESG as a starting point for the revision. A joint proposal paper was developed for the AG rule revision of the Accreditation Council.
At the meeting in December 2015 ideas were shared with Colin Tück, managing director of the European Quality Assurance Register, on the new version of the ESG and the interpretation guidance of EQAR.
In addition to the Agency meeting at a senior management level, in 2015 there was also a meeting of the legal associates working in the agencies, this time they shared experience gained with the thematic sampling of the Accreditation Council (franchise programmes and joint programmes), issues of crediting of competences acquired outside universities as well as award and announcement in the accreditation procedures. The meeting took place on 9 December 2015 in Cologne parallel to the meeting of the agency representatives and shall be held annually.

COOPERATION WITH AKAST
Within the framework of cooperation with the Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Canonical Study Programmes in Germany e.V. (AKAST), ACQUIN undertakes the implementation of accreditation procedures for non-canonical study programmes.
In September 2015 the managing director of AKAST, Barbara Reitmeier, attended the meeting of ACQUIN accreditation commission in Bayreuth as well as the meeting of the experts committee for Humanities, Languages and Cultural Studies in Tübingen. On behalf of ACQUIN Tobias Auberger attended the meeting of AKAST accreditation commission in Frankfurt am Main. The workshop discussions initiated by AKAST and ACQUIN were continued in 2015: on 3 November at the PTH Sankt Georgen in Frankfurt am Main a joint workshop discussion on “competence-oriented checking” was held and Tobias Auberger explained the standards of the accreditation.

PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS
ACQUIN makes sure students are systematically involved in quality assurance.

EXPERT GROUPS
In the expert groups set up by ACQUIN students are always represented, ACQUIN collected very good experience due to this structural decision. The cooperation with the Student Accreditation Pool has proven itself in principle. The Student Accreditation Pool is a self-regulatory body of students who want to get involved in evaluation and accreditation procedures. ACQUIN and the Student Accreditation Pool agreed that the
decision on the expert nominations is solely in the hands of the expert committees.

**EXPERT COMMITTEES**

Students are represented in all committees. In selecting students ACQUIN cooperates with the Student Accreditation Pool. The decision on the appointment is statutorily made by the accreditation commission. In 2015 a student member was appointed to the expert committee for system accreditation, another student was appointed to the expert committee for engineering sciences. In both cases, the proposals of the Student Accreditation Pool were considered.

**ACREDITATION COMMISSION**

Students are full voting members of the accreditation commission of ACQUIN. According to the statutes, the accreditation commission includes a student of a university and a student of a university of applied sciences and their representatives.

**MEETINGS WITH STUDENT ORGANISATIONS**

The managing director of ACQUIN is still the contact person of the Agencies for the Student Accreditation Pool. On 26 June 2015 Dorit Gerkens gave a presentation at the Training Seminar of the Student Accreditation Pool about system accreditation procedures.

**SUBJECT-SPECIFIC AND TOPIC-ORIENTED DISCUSSIONS**

In 2015 coordinators and management of ACQUIN participated in a number of conventions and events of faculty and departmental conferences and scientific associations in order to discuss the objectives, criteria and procedures for accreditation as well as prerequisites and framework conditions for maintenance and improvement of the quality with the representatives of the disciplines.

- The working group Studying and Teaching in Science Management Network met at the invitation of ACQUIN on 3 and 4 July 2015 for a Study Visit "Quality in Teaching and Learning" in Bayreuth. The managing director of ACQUIN, Thomas Reil, held an opening presentation; issues of internal and external quality assurance, networking structures and partnerships in system accreditation were discussed.

- Dr. Stefan Handke participated at the Erasmus+ Annual Conference on 28 and 29 September in Berlin on behalf of ACQUIN and presented the European approach in practice at the workshop "Quality Assurance in Joint Study Programmes".

- The newly founded Berlin Professional School at the HWR Berlin organised a symposium on "Internationalisation in Scientific Advanced Training" on 28 and 29 October, and Dr. Stefan Handke held a keynote presentation for the internationally compiled panel of speakers.

- The Bavarian Deans’ Conference at the Center for University Teaching (Diz) in Ingolstadt on 9 December 2015 was focused on the topic of system accredita-
As part of the BMBF project Network "Quality Audit" Thomas Reil participated at four workshops with stakeholders in Bonn, Greifswald, Potsdam and Osnabrück as an external expert in 2015.

Dorit Gerkens introduced the participants of this event to the topic.

- Thomas Reil attended the meetings of the expert committee "Higher Education and Research" of the Working Group and Culture University (AKH) CSU in Munich on 25 February and 24 June 2015.

## PARTICIPATION IN OTHER UNIVERSITY EVENTS IN GERMANY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date, place</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26/27.01.2015, Wiesbaden</td>
<td>Catholic-Theological Faculty Conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02/03.03.2015, Berlin</td>
<td>15th Annual Meeting of the Working Group Evaluation and Quality Assurance: Berlin-Brandenburg: &quot;QM Systems in Development: Change (or) Management?&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.03.2015, Nuremberg</td>
<td>4th Symposium „Dual Course of Study in Bavaria“</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23/24.04.2015, Berlin</td>
<td>Glienicke Talks - Symposium for Researchers and Decision Makers of the Public Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.06.2015, Bad Wiessee</td>
<td>Bad Wiesseer district</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18/19.06.2015, Munich</td>
<td>EUA-CDE Annual Meeting „The Future of Doctoral Education - Where Do We Go From Here?“</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.07.2015, Hof</td>
<td>Science Day of the metropolitan area Nuremberg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17/18.09.2015, Berlin</td>
<td>5th VDI Quality Dialogue - Engineering Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21/22.09.2015, Kassel</td>
<td>Annual Meeting of the Union Network for Experts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.09.2015, Berlin</td>
<td>DAAD- Expert Seminar &quot;Quality Assurance in International Study Programmes&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.09.2015, Baden-Baden</td>
<td>Association of Private Universities, Annual Conference &quot;15 Years of the Bologna Reforms - Competence Orientation versus Scientific Character of Universities&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-13.10.2015, Wolfenbüttel</td>
<td>Annual Conference for Computer Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19/20.11.2015, Bochum</td>
<td>Network Management Science Annual Meeting &quot;Science Management in Interaction: Creating Interfaces for Politics, Economics and Society&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MEMBERSHIP AND COOPERATION IN INTERNATIONAL NETWORKS

ACQUIN defined priority areas for its activities which are characterised by partnership projects, cooperation in networks and evaluation and accreditation procedures. ACQUIN paid particular attention to the Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe as well as Central Asia and the Arab world in 2015.

- Since 2003 ACQUIN has been a “full member” in the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) and maintained an active exchange of information with interested partner institutions from around the world within this global network.
- Since 2004 ACQUIN has been a member of the European Platform European University Association (EUA) with the status of “affiliate member”. The EUA is now an association of around 850 universities and other members in 47 European countries.
- Since 2003 ACQUIN has been a full member of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), since 2009 ACQUIN has been listed in the European Register of Quality Assurance Agencies (EQAR) created by the E4 group (EUA, ENQA, EURASHE and ESU).
- ACQUIN is focused on the region of Central Asia and Central, East and Southeast Europe and this focus shows that the Agency is an active member in the Central and Eastern European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (CEENQA).

ENQA

Marion Moser and Tobias Auberger participated at the ENQA Members Forum on behalf of ACQUIN in Córdoba on 16 April 2015.

In 2012 ENQA launched various working groups which promote the exchange of ideas of agencies on specific topics. Coordinators of ACQUIN participated in the following working groups: "Impact of Quality Assurance", "Quality Assurance in Lifelong learning", "Staff development in Quality Assurance Agencies" and "Stakeholders' involvement in Quality Assurance". The working group "Staff development in Quality Assurance Agencies" deals with the conception of personal development opportunities for employees of quality assurance agencies and in October 2015 it held a meeting in London in order to determine the content-related design of the final workshops planned for February 2016.

On 5 and 6 November 2015 Marion Moser participated at the European Expert Forum of the ENQA project "Quality Assurance of Cross-border Higher Education" (QACHE) in Paris.

ACQUIN was represented by Stephanie Bernhardi at the tenth European Quality Assurance Forum "Taking stock and looking forward" which was held on 19 – 21 November 2015 in London and was jointly organised by ENQA, ESU, EUA and EURASHE.
For the implementation of the accreditation procedures in the region ACQUIN maintains contacts with numerous universities that request information about the organisation and preparation for the evaluation processes from the head office. In the year under review, ACQUIN also carried out a number of evaluation procedures, especially in Kazakhstan and Russia, as well as in Bulgaria, Slovenia and Kyrgyzstan (see above Accreditation and Evaluation Procedures at the International Level), as well as prepared on-site visits in Lithuania.

Ulf Schöne participated at the general meeting of CEEN-QA in Ljubljana, Slovenia, on 22 and 23 May 2015. Within the EU Twinning project "Empowerment of the Tertiary Level Education of the Republic of Armenia for European Higher Education Area Integration" Dr. Stefan Handke went to Yerevan / Armenia for the period from 23 to 28 February 2015. He coordinated there a three-day workshop "Training on Evaluation of Learning Outcomes Used by Universities". The employees of the national accreditation agency and the Ministry of Science participated at the workshop.

In the sixth International Conference "Education, Research & Development" held in Elenite / Bulgaria on 4-8 September 2015 Dr. Stefan Handke presented a report "International Mission: Challenges of the Certification of HEIs' Internationalisation Strategies".

In May 2015 Dorit Gerkens joined a delegation trip to the Republic of Kosovo. The aim of the trip was to go to the Kosovo Academy for Public Safety (KAPS) and to present the degree programme "Public Administration - Police Management" (MA) offered at the German Police University (DHPol) in Münster as well as to introduce its accreditation and to examine whether similar structures could also be established in Kosovo. The project was supported by the OSCE Mission in Kosovo.

KAZAKHSTAN

In 2012 Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan founded the Accreditation Council of the Republic of Kazakhstan and set up the so-called Accreditation Register. The Kazakh Accreditation Council is composed of representatives of the Ministry, Parliament, universities and employers. The Register listed ACQUIN in 2012 and it includes accredited universities, accredited courses and accreditation bodies that are approved in Kazakhstan and thus entitled to carry out accreditation of institutions and study programmes.

Preparatory discussions for programme accreditation procedures in Kazakhstan were held with the private Caspian University, the Kazakh National al-Farabi University, the Kazakh National Academy of Arts in Almaty and the Kazakh National Art Academy in Astana.

In addition to conducting its own accreditation procedures in Kazakhstan, ACQUIN cooperates with the National Agency IQAA (Independent Kazakh Agency for Quality Assurance in Education). ACQUIN and IQAA mutually support each other in the ap-
appointment of a national expert for the evaluation of study programmes. Kazakh experts were appointed by IQAA for the accreditation procedures conducted by ACQUIN at universities in Kazakhstan.

**RUSSIA**

A joint programme accreditation procedure was carried out with the Russian Agency NCPA at the Polytechnic University of St. Petersburg in 2015. This experience was considered an opportunity for a fundamental exchange on the cooperation of German and Russian agencies.

In the course of the Conference "Enhancing the Quality and Relevance of Students' Learning Experience" in Moscow on 13 and 14 November 2015 Dr. Stefan Handke presented the evaluation of previous activities. For future cooperation, the challenges of harmonisation of quality approaches in European Higher Education Area are paramount.

A workshop on "Modularisation, ECTS" was held at the Southern Federal University in Rostov-on-Don in December 2015. A university professor from Germany was recommended by ACQUIN because he is an expert with extended experience in accreditation procedures abroad. He and the representatives of the university talked about the subject module descriptions, competency objectives and quality management in the context of accreditation procedures.

**UKRAINE**

In March 2015 ACQUIN participated in the Forum "Education, Science, Innovation at Universities: Current Challenges" organised by the BM BF Ukrainian-German in Kiev and presented the German Accreditation system. Following this Forum, the Association of Rectors of Ukrainian universities (VRUH) sent a request to the German Rectors' Conference (HRK), among other things, to further intensify the exchange in the area of quality assurance with ACQUIN. HRK, ACQUIN and the University of Konstanz coordinated a BMBF-funded follow-up project. ACQUIN contributed by training multipliers for external quality assurance in the field of study programmes accreditation. The efforts of ACQUIN promote the development and the coordination of long-term exchange of experience. A Ukrainian expert had a three-week internship in Bayreuth and gained experience in the German accreditation system in particular and the principles of the programme accreditation in the European Higher Education Area. After that a two-day workshop on principles of a science-led programme accreditation was prepared and carried out at the Taras Shevchenko University in Kiev in October 2015.
KYRGYZSTAN

ACQUIN assists the country in the establishment of its own accreditation agency. In this context, Usen Omuraliev came to the head office in Bayreuth in May 2015. The former vice-rector of the Kyrgyz National Agrarian University and the representatives of ACQUIN discussed the challenges that are to be considered when building a national accreditation system in Kyrgyzstan. On 24 and 25 September 2015 Marion Moser went to Bishkek at the invitation of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (Regional Programme in Central Asia) and participated in a Seminar on the "Modernisation of the University and Higher Education in Kyrgyzstan. Accreditation legislation "and in her speech she outlined the accreditation system in Germany and the role of agencies in the German accreditation system based on the working practices of ACQUIN.

ARABIAN REGION

With regard to its center of gravity in the Arab world, ACQUIN and the Arab Organisation for Quality Assurance in Education (AROQAE) agreed in 2007 on future cooperation in a "Memorandum of Association". The network must support Arab states and their universities in developing the quality skills and capacities.

As part of the EU Twinning project "Strengthening the National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education Institutional Capacity (NAQAAE) with a View to Improving the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Education System" Clemens Bockmann traveled twice to Egypt as a short term expert in 2015: in March for the evaluation of the quality management system of two universities in and around Cairo and in June for a workshop on the German accreditation system using the example of ACQUIN in the office of NAQAAE.

The institutional accreditation procedure at the University of Balamand in Lebanon was completed in 2015; two programme accreditation procedures were carried out at the German University of Technology Oman and one programme accreditation procedure was carried out at the German University in Cairo, Egypt (see above Accreditation and Evaluation Procedures at the International Level).
OTHER PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS

INCHER-KASSEL: “EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE OF TEACHING AND STUDYING

BY MEANS OF ACCREDITATION AND EVALUATION PROCEDURES”

ACQUIN supports the project of the International Centre for Higher Education Research Kassel (INCHER) "External and internal quality assurance of teaching and learning by means of accreditation and evaluation procedures". The project is sponsored by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and is set to last 42 months. On the one hand, the project should provide a gain in scientific knowledge (particularly university research in the area of social sciences, but also for the adjacent areas such as organisational and governance research, innovation and science research), on the other hand, central insights are obtained into the often controversial development and implementation of internal and external quality assurance procedures which can be utilised for further development in universities and by higher education policy participants.

ACQUIN granted INCHER access to all documents and project supervisors accompanied multiple programme and system accreditation procedures. Experts participated in the programme and system accreditation procedures of ACQUIN were interviewed using a standardised questionnaire in 2015. In total about 6,500 people were contacted: about 4,500 professors and university representatives, 1,300 representatives of professional practice and about 700 student representatives.

A workshop is planned for spring 2016; it will include information about the questions and analysis of the results and statistical tests suggestions for quality assurance procedures and the work of accreditation and evaluation agencies. Furthermore, there are preliminary plans to make a comparison and an analogy of the survey instruments used by the agencies. In this context ACQUIN also expects specific results for its work.

MALTA: “MAKING QUALITY VISIBLE”

From 2013 to 2015 ACQUIN was a partner in the European Social Fund (ESF) that funded the project "Making Quality Visible" in Malta. The aim of the project was to establish a comprehensive quality assurance system in education according to the European standards and guidelines which in addition to universities also include further education and vocational training.

On behalf of ACQUIN Marion Moser was the consultant for the National Commission for Further and Higher Education which is responsible for quality assurance in education in Malta. Standards for a holistic quality assurance system were developed during the joint project meetings with all interested stakeholders. In March 2015 Marion Moser participated at a preparatory meeting for the external evaluation of the institutions participating in the project at the Ministry of Education in Malta. In July 2015 the final conference was held in Malta.
VIETNAM

The Vietnamese higher education system undergoes a comprehensive reorientation with international support. The Vietnamese-German University in Ho Chi Minh City is the first state university with foreign participation. In December two members of the experts committee for engineering of ACQUIN went to Vietnam with members of the DAAD consortium to evaluate the available resources. After that Clemens Bockmann held a two-day workshop "Introduction to Accreditation in Germany - the Approach of ACQUIN".