



**ACQUIN**

AKKREDITIERUNGS-,  
CERTIFIZIERUNGS- UND  
QUALITÄTSSICHERUNGS-  
INSTITUT

# COMPLAINTS, OBJECTIONS, AND APPEALS PROCEDURES

DECISION OF THE ACCREDITATION COMMISSION  
DATED 29.09.2020.

[www.acquin.org](http://www.acquin.org)

Your intention. Our focus.

## **ACQUIN COMPLAINTS, OBJECTIONS, AND APPEALS PROCEDURES**

Decision of the accreditation commission dated 29.09.2020.

All employees, experts, committees, and bodies are always open to queries and critical observations on potential shortcomings and flaws in the course of a procedure in order to avoid reasons for subsequent objections and complaints to the extent possible. Furthermore, there is a formal complaints, objections, and appeals procedure.

It covers all components of the evaluation and accreditation procedures. To that end, the procedure is based on process sequence rules and the evaluation criteria, and they are published in the ACQUIN process descriptions. Appropriate precautions are systematically integrated into the process flow and are taken into account when processing complaints, objections, and appeals. Every complaint, every objection, and every appeal are dealt with in stipulated stages of appeal; the complainants are informed of the outcome without undue delay.

### **National evaluation procedures for programme and institutional accreditation procedures**

The following stipulations regulate all objections and complaints for procedures within the scope of the Interstate Study Accreditation Treaty. Appeals to accreditation decisions in these procedures shall be submitted to the Accreditation Council.

#### **§ 1**

##### **Procedural, factual, and legal issues**

The higher education institution has the right to make a statement on procedural, factual, and legal issues. If the issue may not be clarified by the office, the complaint shall be passed on to the accreditation commission for further processing. The accreditation commission may remedy the complaint, provided that it is justified. Otherwise, it rejects it and provides reasons for the decision.

If the higher education institution disagrees with the decision of the accreditation commission on the complaint, it has the right to appeal against that decision within a month. In this case, the objection and the relevant facts are passed on to the ACQUIN complaints and appeals commission.

## § 2

### **Objections and complaints against experts**

The expert committee is set up according to the requirements of the Guidelines on the Appointment of Experts and the Compilation of Expert Groups for Accreditation Procedures of the German Rectors' Conference (HRK). The higher education institution shall be informed on the composition of the expert committee. The higher education institution has the right to object. It may raise objections to the nomination of members of the expert committee in writing within two weeks of receiving a list of experts. Objections may concern a possible bias or insufficient professional competence. The accreditation commission reviews the objections (insufficient professional competence, lack of impartiality) and decides on the replacement of individual members of the expert group. The higher education institution has no veto right against the appointment of expert groups.

## § 3

### **Complaints due to possible formal and legal errors as well as regarding contractual matters**

The higher education institution may lodge complaints about possible formal and legal errors that do not fall under clauses 1 and 2 or contractual matters. The ACQUIN board chairperson decides on it within a month and informs of it as the chairperson of the accreditation commission.

### **National evaluation procedures outside the scope of the Interstate study accreditation treaty and international accreditation and certification procedures**

## § 5

### **Objections and complaints against experts**

The higher education institution has the right to appeal against the appointment of members of expert committees. It may raise objections to the nomination of individual persons of the expert committee in writing within two weeks of receiving a list of experts. Objections may concern a possible bias or insufficient professional competence; they shall be justified. The accreditation commission reviews the objections and makes decisions on the objection or complaint.

## § 6

### **Corrections and objections to the assessment process or the assessment result**

The higher education institution has the right to make a statement on the evaluation process, the factual findings, and the evaluation result. The higher education institution receives the accreditation report and may make a statement in writing; in case of accreditation procedures of study programmes or certification of advanced training it may be done within two weeks, and in case of procedures for institutional accreditation or certification of quality management systems it may be done within four weeks of receipt of the report. The accreditation report and the statement of the higher education institution are reviewed by the accreditation commission.

**§ 7****Appeals against the accreditation or certification decision**

The higher education institution may object to the certification or accreditation decision of the accreditation commission in writing within a month from the date of the letter with the decision. The office submits the objection to the referral and decision to the accreditation commission at its next meeting. The accreditation commission reviews all procedural, factual, and legal issues relevant to the decision as well as reexamines the evaluations on which the accreditation decision is based, paying particular attention to the reasons for the appeal. If the accreditation commission considers the objection to be justified, it shall allow it.

If the accreditation commission does not accept the objection, the appeal from the higher education institution and the adverse vote of the accreditation commission are submitted to the complaints and appeals commission of ACQUIN for a final decision.

**§ 8th****Complaints due to possible formal and legal errors as well as regarding contractual matters**

The higher education institution may lodge a complaint about possible formal and legal errors which fall neither under § 7 nor contractual matters. The ACQUIN board chairperson decides on it within a month and informs of it as the chairperson of the accreditation commission.



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## **DIE AKKREDITIERUNGSAGENTUR**

Das Akkreditierungs-, Zertifizierungs- und Qualitätssicherungs-Instituts (ACQUIN) führt seit seiner Gründung im Jahr 2001 Begutachtungen und Akkreditierungen im Hochschulbereich durch und leistet damit einen Beitrag zur Gestaltung des Europäischen Hochschulraums (EHEA).

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Your intention. Our focus.

**FON** +49 (0)921 - 53 0390 - 50  
**FAX** +49 (0)921 - 53 0390 - 51  
**sekr@acquin.org**

**www.acquin.org**

**VORSTANDSVORSITZENDER**  
Prof. Dr. Sebastian Kempgen

**GESCHÄFTSFÜHRUNG**  
André Schlipp  
Marion Moser