

ACQUIN

Accreditation,
Certification and
Quality Assurance
Institute

Annual Report 2020

2001

At the time 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 2020, its membership was held by 156 higher education institutions as well as professional societies and associations from all over Germany, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Lebanon, Egypt, and Mongolia.

As a result of the Federal Constitutional Court ruling of 17 February 2016, the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Rectors' Conference have further developed the accreditation system which ensures the constitutional conformity of the system of quality assurance in higher education. The Interstate Treaty on the organization of a joint accreditation system to ensure the quality of teaching and learning at German higher education institutions (Interstate study accreditation treaty) was ratified by the end of 2017 and came into force on 1 January 2018. The implementation of accreditation procedures which is carried out after the conclusion of a contract from 1 January 2018 onwards is based on the Specimen decree adopted by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany on 7 December 2017 or in accordance with the regulations on accreditation of the individual federal states. The reorganisation of the accreditation system required new procedure steps in the process flows at ACQUIN as well as rearrangement of its committees.

Same as in 2006 and 2011, in 2016 the Accreditation Council approved reaccreditation of ACQUIN for a period of five years. The European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) also confirmed compliance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) and extended the listing of ACQUIN with EQAR until 30 June 2021. In the year covered by the report, ACQUIN prepared the Peer Review for the renewal of its membership with the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) as well as the continuation of its registration with EQAR which is now a prerequisite for re-approval of accreditation agencies in Germany.

In the year under review, 188 decisions were made in programme accreditation procedures (in Germany and abroad, including fulfilment of conditions and resumptions of procedures) under the previous legislation and 268 evaluation results were ascertained under the new legislation; in addition, seven certification and evaluation results were ascertained and one institutional accreditation was completed. Upon conclusion of five procedures, the 35th system accreditation procedure under the previous legislation was completed, and in two procedures under the new legislation, the evaluation results were ascertained.

2020

| |
|--------------------------|
| TABLE OF CONTENTS |
|--------------------------|

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Head Office and Committees | 5 |
| Accreditation and Evaluation Procedures | 15 |
| Partnership and Dialogue | 22 |

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Committees and Head Office

The evaluation, certification, and accreditation procedures were carried out jointly by the accreditation commission, the expert committees as well as the ACQUIN head office in a carefully structured process and in the context of clearly defined division of responsibilities.

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

- The effective cooperation of the bodies and committees of ACQUIN is insured by its **board** and **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. Board elections are held every three years. The board was newly elected in 2019.
- The **accreditation commission** renders a comprehensive contribution to the thorough and reliable task fulfilment by ACQUIN. It is composed of representatives of universities, colleges of art and music, universities of applied sciences, professional practice, and students. According to its statute, the chairmanship of the accreditation commission is held by a chairperson. The accreditation commission members are appointed for a period of two years. The accreditation commission was newly elected in 2019.
- The **expert committees** have been dissolved following thorough deliberation due to the amended framework conditions. The appointment of the expert groups now fall within the scope of responsibility of the accreditation commission.
- The **appeals commission** has been appointed to ensure an orderly and independent appeal procedure to address objections of contractual partners of ACQUIN with respect to accreditation decisions. The appeals commission is made up of five members, with one member per each group of universities, colleges of art and music, universities of applied sciences, professional practice and students. The term of office shall be three years. The appeals commission was newly elected in 2020.
- In 2020, on behalf of ACQUIN over 700 **experts** — university faculty members, students, and representatives of professional practice — evaluated study programmes, advanced training programmes, and internal quality assurance systems at higher education institutions taking into account the criteria of the regulations on accreditation in specific German federal states and the "Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area" (ESG) as well as the relevant country-specific legal requirements.
- In order to meet the requirements of the evaluation and accreditation procedures and to provide the appropriate degree of publicity, the **head office** of ACQUIN is always sufficiently staffed. From December 2017 onwards, the operations have been carried out under a dual leadership in the spirit of a collegial management.

THE BOARD

In addition to the general assembly of ACQUIN, the board is a major strategic steering committee of the agency. The board bears the economic responsibility and thus has a particular interest in the efficiency and effectiveness of the ACQUIN operations. The board plays a crucial part in keeping track of the developments and results of the work of the agency necessary for making essential decisions on the further development of the performance capability of ACQUIN.

In 2020, the Board held meetings four times to decide on membership applications, make personnel decisions, and discuss matters of fundamental relevance to ACQUIN. Among other things, interviews were held to select a successor to Dr Stefan Handke who left ACQUIN at the beginning

Meetings of the Board

7 February 2020, Bayreuth
(recruitment interviews)
20 February 2020, Bayreuth
(recruitment interviews)
21 July 2020 (an online meeting)
10 September 2020 (an online meeting)

of 2020. The second managing director position was re-filled as of 1 April 2021.

Furthermore, the reorganisation of the accreditation system and the associated effects on the structures and processes of ACQUIN remained on the agenda in 2020; in this regard, significant attention was given to the change in the committee structure concerning the dissolution of the expert committees and the preparation for the ENQA Review for the re-approval of ACQUIN as an accreditation agency.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The general assembly was originally scheduled to take place in Erfur on 4 May 2020, but had to be cancelled due to pandemic-related travel and contact restrictions. Instead, a virtual general assembly of ACQUIN took place on 23 July 2020.

The session was opened by the chairman of the board of ACQUIN, Prof. Dr. Sebastian Kempgen. Remarks on the format of the meeting were followed by a presentation by Colin Tück, Director of the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR), on the database of accreditation and quality assurance reports in Europe (Database of External Quality Assurance Results — DEQAR).

First, Mr Tück elucidated the background of the DEQAR project, then he presented the architecture. The common database is aimed at creating more transparency and comparability in Europe and making the reports and decisions accessible to the public. The Bologna goal of automatic recognition of degrees throughout the European Higher Education Area has been pursued since 2012. Accreditation was seen as a foundation for this recognition, but finding relevant accreditation reports was not an easy task, especially when looking for accreditation decisions from other European countries. In 2015 and 2016, the database was conceptualised at EQAR, and the decision to implement it was made. In

2018, the database went online. The information comes from the nearly 50 agencies registered with EQAR. The database is structured in such a way that on top of allowing to locate the relevant accreditation reports, it also provides further information on the respective higher education system. This information is intended to improve the comprehensibility of the accreditation reports.

Following Mr. Tück's presentation, the managing director of ACQUIN, Marion Moser, presented the thematic analysis titled "Experiences with regard to discretionary powers in the Specimen decree — accreditation recommendations of expert groups and subsequent decisions of the Accreditation Council." In its decisions, the Accreditation Council can deviate from the recommendations of the expert groups, but in this case a justification is required. Additional monitory findings which are included by the Accreditation Council as conditions in the decision, also need to be justified. In its decisions that deviate from the recommendations of the experts, the Accreditation Council has imposed additional formal as well as substantive conditions.

According to Ms Moser, the results presented on the previous decision-making

practice of the Accreditation Council are, however, only an initial analysis that is not yet statistically reliable. This analysis will be carried on by ACQUIN in the future, also in a differentiated form based on subject disciplines. The presentation is available on the ACQUIN homepage alongside the corresponding publication.

This was followed by the establishment of a quorum, the discussion on the annual report 2019, and the auditor's report. The financial report prepared for 2019 was adopted. The general assembly also voted to discharge the board and to adopt the budget for 2020.

Due to the changes in the scope of responsibility of ACQUIN, adjustments to the statutes were requisite. The most significant change in the statutes concerned the dissolution of the expert committees. The decisive factor for it was the feedback from the Accreditation Council regarding the participation of the committees of agencies in the evaluation procedures. The amendment to the statutes was accepted and the current statutes were adopted.

Subsequently, the members elected the appeals commission in rotation (see *annexes for its composition*).

MEMBERSHIP BASE

In 2020, ACQUIN was once again able to gain new members. As a result of withdrawals of member higher education institutions effective in 2020, the total number of members slightly decreased: as of 31 December 2020 ACQUIN consisted of 156 members — in the vast majority higher education institutions (in balanced

proportions universities, universities of applied sciences, and colleges of art and music), scientific societies, and science-related professional associations. The highest number of members amounted to 172 and was attained in 2014.

In the year under review, the geographical reach of the membership extends across all

German federal states, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Lebanon, Egypt, and Mongolia.

In 2020, the board approved the following higher education institutions as new members of ACQUIN:

Cairo Graduate College, Egypt
Mongolia International University, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS COMMISSION

The complaints and appeals commission has been appointed to ensure an orderly and independent appeal procedure. The appeals commission is made up of five members, with one member per each group of universities, colleges of art and music, universities of applied sciences, professional practice, and students. The term of office shall be three years.

In 2020, the appeals commission was newly elected by the general assembly. At its meeting on 27 November 2020, the commission adopted rules of procedure.

The complaints procedure covers the rules of the procedure, issues of fact and law and — in procedures outside the scope of

the Specimen decree — accreditation or certification decisions. The procedure provides that complaints or objections from higher education institutions are initially submitted to the accreditation commission and then, if the appeal is not rectified, they are forwarded to the appeals commission for a revision and statement issuance. Recommendations of the appeals commission are to be considered by the accreditation commission. In the case of appeals against the nomination of experts, a decision is made directly by the accreditation commission.

In 2020, no complaints were submitted to the appeals commission.

ACCREDITATION COMMISSION

The accreditation commission is the central decision-making body in the evaluation, certification, 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 reaches decisions on the evaluation results, and makes accreditation decisions based on them (in proceedings outside the scope of the

Specimen decree). In addition, it appointed members of the expert committees — up until their dissolution in 2020. Since their abolition, the accreditation commission has been responsible for appointing expert groups.

In accreditation procedures that take place outside the scope of the Accreditation Council, the accreditation commission decisions for accreditation of an individual 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 and the statement of the concerned higher education institution on the expert report. The procedures of certification and

institutional accreditation are carried out along the same lines.

In procedures under the new legislation, the accreditation commission determines the recommendations of the expert committees and also takes into account the statements of the higher education institutions.

MEETINGS OF THE ACCREDITATION COMMISSION 2020

In 2020, the accreditation commission held meetings four times — in March, July, September, and December — in order to come to an agreement regarding the evaluation criteria and procedural principles, to make accreditation decisions, and to deal with the appointment of expert groups. Each of these meetings was held virtually due to travel and contact restrictions over the course of the reporting period.

In the year under review, the members of the accreditation commission addressed the decisions and requirements of the Accreditation Council on the new accreditation system and process adjustments.

Meetings of the Accreditation Commission (Online conferences):

AK 76 on 24 March 2020

AK 77 on 10 July 2020

AK 78 on 29 September 2020

AK 79 on 3 December 2020

As a result of the negative stance of the Accreditation Council with regard to a referral of the evaluation results and resolution recommendations of the expert committees to internal agency committees, the transfer of the expert committees into an expert network was proposed. The implementation of the planned expert network as a subcommittee of the accreditation commission was postponed to

2021 due to the pandemic-related restrictions. With regard to accreditation procedures within Germany, the accreditation commission itself underwent a transformation from a decision-making body to an interdisciplinary quality assurance body, whereby the structural possibility of an expert statement for complex procedures was retained, especially for procedures with a disagreement between the expert group and the higher education institution.

For procedures that are carried out outside the competence of the German Accreditation Council, the accreditation commission continues to function as the decision-making body.

Rules of procedure were drawn up for online voting procedures. A procedure for the appointment of expert groups was decided upon as well as the procedure for taking note of and discussing the accreditation reports. In addition, deviations between the expert decision recommendation and the decision of the Accreditation Council were analysed for individual procedures with the aim of drawing conclusions for the interpretation of the regulations on accreditation.

Procedures in which the Accreditation Council had assessed expert reports as "not ready for a decision" and returned them to the higher education institutions with a

request for clarification were also discussed in detail.

The documents prepared by the head office titled "Information on Programme Accreditation", "Guidelines for Preparation of the Self-Report" and "Guidelines for the Self-Report in System Accreditation Procedures" were adopted as information bases for the applicant higher education institutions. In addition, updated handouts and guidelines for accreditation procedures abroad, for the accreditation of PhD programmes as well as for national and international certifications and audit procedures were adopted. Likewise, the complaints, appeals, and objections procedure adapted to the regulations of the Specimen decree was adopted. The reform of psychotherapist training and the newly adopted Nursing Training Act in Germany were substantively discussed.

In addition, preparation for the reaccreditation of ACQUIN played a central role; ACQUIN was previously reaccredited by the Accreditation Council until 30 June 2021. Since the introduction of the new accreditation system, it is no longer the Accreditation Council but ENQA that is responsible for conducting the peer review which confirms compliance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality

Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). Successfully passing the ENQA review is a prerequisite for renewing the listing in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) and thus the basis for permission to carry out accreditation procedures under the new legislation.

In the year under review, the accreditation commission made 188 decisions in programme accreditation procedures (in Austria and abroad, including fulfilment of conditions and readmissions) under the previous legislation and ascertained 268 evaluation results under the new legislation. In addition, seven certification and evaluation results were ascertained and one institutional accreditation was completed. Five system accreditation procedures under the previous legislation were completed, in two procedures under the new legislation the evaluation results were ascertained. ACQUIN is engaged as a partner in a total of nine projects of the EU programme for the promotion of education, training, youth and sport (Erasmus+). (see *below Accreditation and Evaluation Procedures: Accreditation Summary, Accreditation and Evaluation Procedures in International Context*).

EXPERT COMMITTEES

Since its foundation in 2001, ACQUIN has had nine expert committees composed of representatives of universities, colleges of art and music, universities of applied sciences, professional practice and students. The expert committees played a significant part in the evaluation and accreditation procedures, they nominated the experts and ensured the uniformity and

appropriateness of the implementation of the procedures on the basis of the evaluation reports drawn up by the expert groups and the statement of the respective higher education institution.

Most recently, the expert committees also fulfilled this function for the procedures that were carried out under the new legislation and in which the participation of

the expert committees was contractually agreed. From the point of view of ACQUIN, this service of the expert committees would also have been essential for internal quality assurance and quality control in the new accreditation system, this standpoint was repeatedly represented by the head office and the board in discussions with the Accreditation Council. However, the Accreditation Council clarified that the committees of the agency did not have the task of making a statement on the reports of the expert committees. In the sense of the Interstate Treaty and the Specimen decree, the involvement of the committees was not only dispensable, but also no longer welcome.

In this respect, ACQUIN was compelled to change structures and processes more than initially intended. Due to the stipulations of the Accreditation Council, a continuation of the expert committees no longer seemed reasonable. The general meeting therefore

decided on 23 July 2020 to dissolve the expert committees and adopted a corresponding amendment to the Statutes. In order to nevertheless use the extensive experience of the expert committees for the quality assurance of the evaluation procedures, the ACQUIN board and head office developed the idea of setting up an expert network. This way in the event of content-related questions arising during evaluation procedures, the coordinators of the head office can contact individual members of the network on a case-by-case basis, no longer on a regular basis; also conceivable is case-related support with special expert appointments or expert participation in evaluation procedures. Details on the implementation of such a network are to be clarified within the framework of a meeting with the members of all expert committees still existing in 2020; this meeting has been postponed to 2021 (due to the pandemic).

MEETINGS OF THE EXPERT COMMITTEES IN 2020

In the first quarter of the reporting year, the expert committees had meetings in part to conduct business as usual and appoint expert groups, draft statements on

individual procedures and agree on procedural standards for the operation of the expert committee.

However, from mid-March onwards, due to

Meetings of the Expert Committees

Architecture and Planning:
9 March 2020, Bamberg

Computer Science:
9 March 2020, Nuremberg

Engineering Sciences:
-

Humanities, Linguistics and Cultural Studies:
3 March 2020, Bayreuth

Art, Music and Design:
10 March 2020, Berlin

Mathematics and Natural Sciences:

-

Medicine and Health Sciences:

-

System Accreditation:

-

Economics, Law and Social Sciences:

-

general travel restrictions, the meetings could no longer take place as planned, so the resolutions still planned for the first half

of the year took place in part by means of a circulation procedure.

EXPERT GROUPS

In 2020, expert committees and the accreditation commission appointed slightly over 700 experts for a total of 145 (from April 2020 exclusively in virtual form) evaluations in accreditation and certification procedures, including five evaluations at higher education institutions abroad.

For procedures carried out based on the new accreditation system, the experts are appointed in accordance with the documents developed and adopted by the German Rectors' Conference "Binding guide to the appointment of academic teaching staff as Experts in accordance with the Article 3(3) of the Interstate study accreditation treaty" and "Guidelines for nomination of experts and compilation of expert groups for accreditation procedures," dated 24 April 2018.

The composition of each expert groups takes into account academic requirements, students' interests, and requirements of professional practice, so that in addition to academia and professional practice, students are also represented in the expert groups.

For the evaluation of an individual study programme, an expert group size of four members has proven to be effective, two of them are professorial representatives, one representative from professional practice, and one student working jointly. In bundled procedures, the number of experts is increased according to requirements. In many cases, the expert groups include international experts. The groups are

composed of both experts who have already participated in the procedures of ACQUIN and new experts who have no previous experience in accreditation procedures.

The preparation of the experts involves several stages. It includes initial information on the accreditation procedure, its dates and content as well as the role, self-perception and tasks of the expert group in the accreditation procedure. Subsequently, the self-documentation and other relevant documents are made available in order to get the expert group acquainted with the evaluation criteria and rules of the procedure. If necessary, experts can get a consultation from a coordinator from the head office. The expert groups are provided with a handout containing detailed information on their roles and responsibilities over the course of the procedure.

A preliminary meeting of the experts is always held before the on-site visit. It is intended to elucidate the course of proceedings, to exchange views on the self-documentation, and to compile a list of potential questions as well as in general to prepare for the discussions with the higher education institution members. The appointment of a spokesperson from the group of experts is followed by a further insight into the role and self-perception of the experts.

As it became necessary to conduct assessments in online formats from the end

of March 2020, ACQUIN staff within the office tested the usable conference tools, made adjustments to the schedules, and drew up an internal guideline for conducting online assessments.

To ensure the independence and impartiality of the expert groups, the persons involved in the respective accreditation procedures are asked to sign a declaration of impartiality. From 2018 onwards, this document also contains information on data protection in

accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation.

On 14 and 15 December 2020, the head office conducted two online expert training courses via live stream as part of the concept for training experts in national and international evaluation, accreditation, and certification procedures, one concerned programme accreditation procedures and the other was about system accreditation procedures.

HEAD OFFICE

The coordinators of the head office are responsible for implementation and organisation of the procedures; they also provide a support system for committees, public relations and internal quality assurance. In addition, their scope of responsibilities includes participation in national and international conferences and meetings of scientific associations, maintenance of contacts with higher education institutions in Germany and abroad, and initiation of new co-operation projects.

The distribution-of-business plan agreed on in 2018 was not retained in this form — a division into four teams with personnel allocation: Internal Processes and Quality Assurance, Programme Accreditation and Certification, System Accreditation and University Advisory Service as well as International Matters — partially due to personnel changes within the office. A divisional management is assigned to each of the substantive business areas of programme accreditation, system accreditation and international affairs, certification as well as internal organisation. Decisions are made in a centralised manner by the management. Project assistance, accounting, and the

secretariat operate outside the divisional structure.

In 2019, electronic time recording and project control were introduced in the office for the first time; this was adapted and expanded in the reporting year and initial evaluations were carried out.

In May 2020, an in-house online training course on conducting online conferences was held for all ACQUIN employees. In the course of the year, internal workshops on the criteria of the regulations on accreditation and the decision practice of the Accreditation Council were also held when required.

As part of a project to improve the organisational structure and processes at ACQUIN, two Master's students from the Harz University of Applied Sciences analysed the processes within the office. After a kick-off workshop with the management and individual interviews with all employees in December 2019, the problem area analysis took place in the reporting year, the results of which were presented in a final workshop on 24 September 2020. The focus was on improving internal communication on the basis of monthly team meetings and a biweekly action board, coupled with the

implementation of a positive feedback culture and binding communication rules.

During the year under review, the management and the coordinators were supported by two secretarial and accounting staff, a project assistant, a project manager for EU projects ,and student assistants. The staff of the head office comprised 17 employees (as of 31 December 2020), three of whom are employed part-time.

After the departure of the managing director Dr Stefan Handke at the beginning of 2020, the position was filled by Mr Frank-André

Schlipp in April 2020. The establishment of a collegial management with two persons at the head of the office was thus maintained.

Tobias Auberger and Helke Biehl as well as Annette Lowack and Benjamin Taylor left ACQUIN in the course of 2020. Andreas Jugenheimer was hired as a new coordinator.

WORKS COUNCIL

In 2020, due to the pandemic, the works council reached an agreement with the management to extend home office arrangements.

ACQUINUS GMBH

In 2020, ACQUINUS GmbH continued pursuing the goal of opening up new business fields in the area of consulting and services for higher education institutions and university-related institutions through careful selection of reference projects.

ACQUINUS GmbH evaluates, advises, and coaches institutions in the higher education sector comprehensively on all topics of

science and science management of study, teaching, research, administration, and Third Mission. After the departure of Tobias Auberger, Dr. Alexander Rudolph took over the management of ACQUINUS.

In the reporting year, the website was fundamentally revised and adapted to match the corporate design of ACQUIN.

ACCREDITATION AND EVALUATION PROCEDURES

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. With 78 (re)accredited courses under the previous legislation and 268 recommendations for the accreditation of courses under the new legislation, ACQUIN remains one of the four agencies with the most accreditation decisions per year in Germany in 2020.

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 higher education institution. 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 thirty-five percent

In addition to the accreditation of study programmes and quality management systems in the field of teaching and learning, ACQUIN ensures achievement of a similar programme quality in academic advanced training that does not lead to a degree by carrying out **certification procedures**. In the year under review, ACQUIN completed four certification procedures, two in Germany and two in Kazakhstan.

Another procedure type carried out abroad is **institutional accreditation and evaluation procedures**. The focus of such procedure is the organisation and functioning of an entire higher education institution and it involves evaluation of the areas of teaching and learning, research and internal self-government. In 2020, an institutional accreditation process was completed in the Caribbean in this regard.

- **Grounds for making a decision** remained extremely varied in 2020, for the second time no conditions were imposed on a narrow majority of the decisions in the programme accreditation procedures.
- In compliance with the internationalisation principles of ACQUIN, the agency collaborated with foreign partner institutions in procedures at **higher education institutions abroad** in 2020 as well.
- The coordinators of ACQUIN were responsible for the **support of higher education institutions**, they were in charge of providing comprehensive information to the programme and system managers on preparation, implementation and follow-up procedures as well as on the committee work associated therewith prior to signing agreements.

ACCREDITATION SUMMARY OF 2020

In the year under review, ACQUIN brought about 188 programme accreditation decisions (in Germany and abroad, under the previous legislation), including compliance with conditions and resumptions, and determined 268 results of the evaluation under the new legislation.

In Germany, 15 study programmes were accredited for the first time and 63 reaccreditations were granted, 27 of these accreditations were subject to conditions. It should be noted that the proportion of conditions imposed in the first time accreditation procedures was lower in the reporting year for the second time in a row in comparison with the reaccreditations, at the same time, the proportion of conditions imposed fell significantly for reaccreditations as well.

Fulfilment of the requirements was confirmed for 83 study programmes.

In case of an accreditation with conditions as well as a denial of accreditation (under the previous legislation), there is a possibility of suspension of the accreditation procedure based on the statement of the higher education institution for a period of time that does not exceed 18 months. This time is set for the higher education institution to introduce improvements and to prepare for the procedure resumption. In the course of 2020, no higher education institutions requested a suspension of the procedure. In the period under review, accreditation was granted for 4 study programmes after the procedure was resumed, all of them without conditions. In a suspended institutional accreditation procedure abroad, accreditation without conditions was also granted in the course of the resumption. These suspensions had already been pronounced in 2019. In these

In 2020 ACQUIN

within Germany

- accredited **15** study programmes for the first time among them **3** with conditions
- reaccredited **63** study programmes among them **24** with conditions
- confirmed fulfilment of conditions for **83** study programmes
- enunciated system accreditation for **3** higher education institutions
- completed **2** system accreditation procedure as part of the experimentation clause
- ascertained evaluation results in **2** system accreditation procedures under new legislation
- ascertained evaluation results in **268** programme accreditation procedures under new legislation
- certified **4** advanced training programmes
- ascertained **1** evaluation result

outside of Germany

- accredited **7** study programmes for the first time
- reaccredited **14** study programmes
- confirmed fulfilment of conditions for **6** study programmes
- certified **2** advanced training programmes
- confirmed fulfilment of conditions for in **3** certified advanced training programmes
- institutionally accredited **1** higher education institution

in the context of Erasmus+

- certified **2** advanced training curricula

cases, the ACQUIN committees dealt extensively with the procedure again and

made a contribution to improving the quality of teaching and studies with this elaborate monitoring of the follow-up phase after the accreditation decision. The decision on the resumption of a procedure as well as the decision on the determination of the fulfilment of conditions fall within the area of competence of the accreditation commission. The decisions of the accreditation commission in the above-mentioned procedures in 2020 were still prepared by opinions of the responsible subject committees.

The system accreditation procedure (under the previous legislation) was brought to a conclusion at three higher education institutions. Two system accreditation procedures which had been carried out within the framework of the experimental clause, were completed. In two system accreditation procedures under the new legislation, ACQUIN determined the assessment result and sent the accreditation report to the higher education institutions which they could use to apply to the Accreditation Council for system accreditation. In 13 procedures, on-site-visits were carried out and random samples were selected.

Abroad, programme accreditation procedures were carried out and completed or compliance with conditions was confirmed at various higher education institutions in Kazakhstan as well as in Liechtenstein, Egypt, and Singapore. Within the framework of institutional accreditation process, a procedure was completed on the Turks and Caicos Islands (*see below Accreditation and Evaluation Procedures in International Context*).

In individual cases, the accreditation commission has to deal with complaints from higher education institutions. In these

cases, the arguments of the higher education institutions are carefully examined. No complaints were filed in the reporting year. In two cases from 2019, which involved deviations from legal or official requirements, the conditions in question could be withdrawn or assessed as fulfilled after clarification of the facts with the Accreditation Council or the responsible state ministry.

Within the framework of the new accreditation system, ACQUIN completed the assessment procedures for 268 study programmes in the reporting year (including 79 first-time accreditation procedures and 189 reaccreditation procedures). In many cases, the procedures also included a deficiency rectification loop, so that in the vast majority of cases an accreditation without conditions could be recommended.

In addition to the accreditation of study programmes and quality management systems in the area of study and teaching, ACQUIN also carries out certification and evaluation procedures in which quality of academic advanced training programmes, individual modules, or other projects are examined. In the reporting year, a diploma programme in Germany was evaluated and two certification procedures in Germany with a total of four modules as well as a procedure in Kazakhstan for two advanced training programmes were brought to a conclusion; in one procedure in Syria, fulfilment of conditions was confirmed. In addition, in the Erasmus+ cooperation project "EldiCare: Adaptation of Qualifications in a Growing European Senior Citizens Economy", a resolution was passed on the certification of advanced training programmes (*see below Accreditation and Evaluation Procedures in International Context*).

DISTRIBUTION OF SUBJECTS

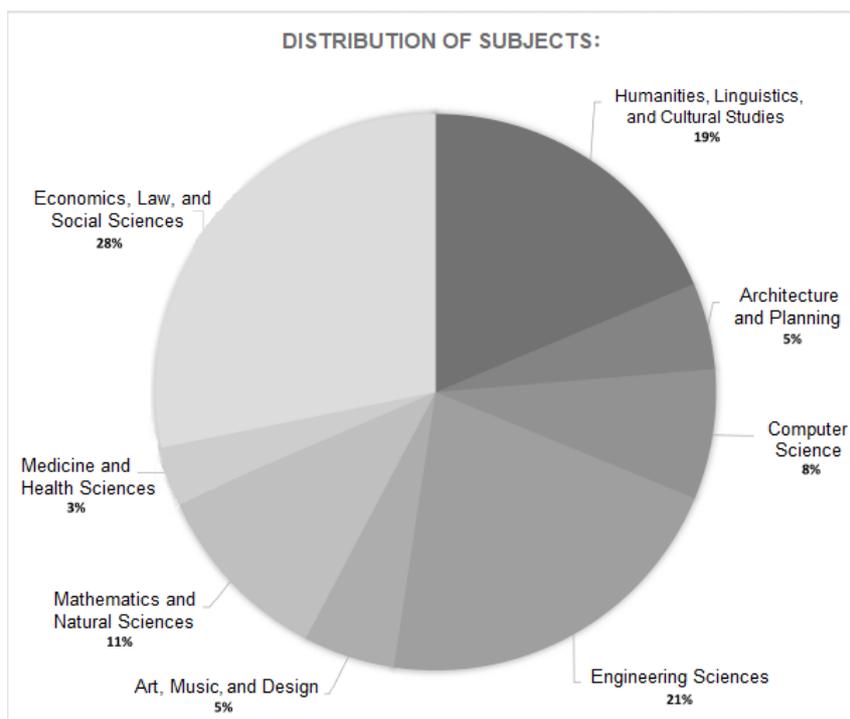
In 2020, there was a shift in the proportion of procedures for the separate subject groups in two areas; for the most part, the proportions of procedures in various subject areas remained constant.

After the spike in the number of procedures in the humanities, linguistics, and cultural studies in 2019, the proportion ratio figures dropped in 2020 and amounted to just under one fifth of all resolutions and resolution recommendations. Thus, the share of these procedures in the reporting year was just below that of the engineering sciences which remained practically unchanged. In contrast, there was a strong increase in the area of economics, law, and social sciences, which accounted for the largest number of procedures.

The proportion of procedures in the other subjects remained more or less constant: while the number of resolutions and resolution recommendations increased by two and three percentage points respectively in the fields of computer science, mathematics and natural sciences as well as architecture and planning, it fell slightly in the fields of art, music, and design as well as medicine and health sciences.

The lowest number of procedures, at three percent, was no longer in the field of architecture and planning, as in previous years (which reached five percent in the year under review, thus catching up with the field of art, music and design), but in medicine and health sciences.

**Distribution of subjects in 2020:
Resolutions (previous legislation) and recommendations for resolutions (new legislation)**



CURRENT STATE OF SYSTEM ACCREDITATION PROCEDURES

In 2020, ACQUIN completed three system accreditation procedures (under the previous legislation), one of which was a first-time accreditation and two reaccreditations. In two procedures in the context of the experimental clause, the final expert reports were prepared and submitted to the Accreditation Council to establish equivalence with system

accreditation. In two procedures under the new legislation, accreditation reports were prepared and submitted to the higher education institutions so that they can apply to the Accreditation Council.

In further 13 ongoing procedures, documents were reviewed, expert groups appointed, and on-site visits organised. Further procedures were initiated.

FIRST AND SECOND ON-SITE VISIT, SELECTION OF SAMPLES

On-site visits, online evaluations, and selection of samples were carried out in 2020 as part of system accreditation or system reaccreditation at the Dresden University of Technology, University of Erfurt, University of Hamburg, Ruprecht Karl University of Heidelberg, University of Kaiserslautern, Leuphana University of

Lüneburg, Eberhard Karls University of Tübingen, Hof University of Applied Sciences, University of Music FRANZ LISZT Weimar, DHGS German University of Health and Sports, University of Applied Management, European University of Applied Sciences, and Media Design University of Applied Sciences.

DECISION-MAKING (UNDER THE PREVIOUS LEGISLATION)

In 2020, decisions on system reaccreditation were made for Saarland University and Ilmenau University of Technology.

The internal quality assurance system of Saarland University was accredited for the first time.

DETERMINATION OF THE EVALUATION RESULT (UNDER THE NEW LEGISLATION)

The internal quality assurance system of the University of Hohenheim was evaluated by ACQUIN and an accreditation report was prepared which is included into submission of the university for its first application for system accreditation to the Accreditation Council.

In the course of the reaccreditation, ACQUIN assessed the internal quality assurance system of Leuphana University of Lüneburg and prepared an accreditation report which the university submitted to the Accreditation Council.

SYSTEM ACCREDITATION — EXPERIMENTATION CLAUSE

At the HHL Leipzig Graduate School of Management, a system accreditation procedure of the „Quality Audit“ linked with the American AACSB (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business) as

part of the experimentation clause of the Accreditation Council. The process was supported by ACQUIN, and in 2020 it was completed.

The Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz presented a concept for a collegial audit as part of the Accreditation Council's invitation to tender for the experimental clause.

ACQUIN has been supporting the university with this concept since 2017 and prepared the final expert report in the reporting year.

ACCREDITATION AND EVALUATION PROCEDURES IN INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

In 2020, ACQUIN continued to carry out and complete a number of accreditation procedures outside of Germany. These programmes are not offered in cooperation with German higher education institutions, so ACQUIN does not grant the seal of the German Accreditation Council, instead it awards the quality seal 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 higher education institutions in evaluation procedures by ACQUIN, the agency promotes international composition of its committees wherever possible. As a rule of thumb, this approach enriches the committee work by engagement of experts with international experience.

KAZAKHSTAN

New procedures were initiated once ACQUIN had been approved by the Ministry of Education and Science for another five years in November 2018 after initial delay in this process.

At Karaganda State Technical University, accreditation decisions were made for 14 degree programmes in the reporting year. At the German-Kazakh University in Almaty, five degree programmes were assessed in

2020 within the framework of an online conference. The fulfilment of conditions was examined for six study programmes at the National Academy of Arts in Almaty and confirmed in five cases; a grace period was granted for one study programme. At the Centre of Excellence (Nazarbajev Intellectual Schools) in Nur-Sultan (formerly Astana), two advanced training programmes for teachers were re-evaluated and certified.

AUSTRIA

In the year under review, the accreditation decision was made for a diploma degree

programme in the field of dentistry at the Medical University of Vienna.

LIECHTENSTEIN

In 2020, fulfilment of the conditions in a doctoral programme from the field of law at

the private university in the Principality of Liechtenstein in Triesen was ascertained.

EGYPT

At the German University in Cairo, accreditation decisions were made for two

degree programmes in a programme accreditation procedure.

SYRIA

In the reporting year, fulfilment of conditions was confirmed in a certification

process for three study programmes at the Academy of Health Sciences in Idlib.

SINGAPORE

Three on-site inspections were carried out at the Technical University of Munich, Singapore Campus (TUM Asia) in 2020, and

four study programmes were accredited by ACQUIN under the previous legislation.

TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS

Within the framework of a re-admission procedure, the decision for institutional

accreditation of Charisma University was made in the reporting year.

GREECE / GREAT BRITAIN / SPAIN / GERMANY

In the framework of the Erasmus+ cooperation project "EldiCare: Matching skills in a growing European Silver Economy", two further education curricula regarding the training of persons in the field of elderly care were certified at the

following institutions: Institute of Vocational Training (Greece), Staffordshire University (UK), University of Malaga (Spain) and BQS GmbH Döbern (Germany) (*see also Membership and Cooperation in International Networks*).

PARTNERSHIP AND DIALOGUE

In order to achieve its objectives, a continuous dialogue and partnership in national and international 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 higher education institutions***
ACQUIN cooperates with the mergers of higher education institutions and their initiatives at a European, national and local level in order to jointly 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***
In the national context, ACQUIN cooperates with the Accreditation Council and the 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 jointly.
- ***Cooperation within subject areas***
ACQUIN cooperates with the organised forms of disciplines, the departments and faculty conferences as well as 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 jointly.
- ***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 engaged in the development of the European Higher Education Area.
- ***Cooperation in partnership-based projects***
The exposure to national and international projects helps ACQUIN to expand its base of experience. Specific concepts are discussed and common solutions for specific issues 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.

CONTACTS WITH HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

The staff members of ACQUIN conducted a number of discussions (in the reporting year, mainly in the form of telephone or online conferences) in order to inform those responsible at higher education institutions on criteria and methods of the evaluation and accreditation procedures. Numerous consultations were held, especially on the redesign of the system accreditation procedure. On-site presentations or the personal handover of accreditation certificates could not take place due to contact restrictions during the Coronavirus pandemic.

The ACQUIN workshop for member universities which usually takes place after the general meeting, could not be held this year for the same reason. Instead, information on the Database of External Quality Assurance Results (DEQAR) in Europe as well as experiences with regard to discretionary leeway in the Specimen decree were presented during the virtual general meeting in the form of online presentations (*see Committees and Head Office: General Assembly*).

A web meeting on the topic of "Quality reports for system-accredited higher education institutions or higher education institutions undergoing the system accreditation procedure" took place on 13 July 2020. The workshop was conducted jointly by ACQUIN and evalag agency. After

the Accreditation Council decided that system-accredited higher education institutions also have to publish their accreditation reports, there was great uncertainty on the part of the higher education institutions with regard to the requirements on the layout of these reports. They are concerned about a great deal of additional work in the preparation of the quality reports.

A representative of the Accreditation Council and representatives of the student accreditation pool also took part in the web meeting.

As a result, a position paper entitled "System Coherent Reports or Report Coherent Systems?" was prepared and published. The participants hope that questions raised in it will be dealt with either by a working group set up by the Accreditation Council or within the framework of the evaluation of the new accreditation system in order to find appropriate, effective, and accepted solutions. Moreover, the higher education institutions also would like the Accreditation Council to exchange and coordinate with the system-accredited higher education institutions with regard to the form and layout of the quality reports as a component of the internal quality assurance and development procedures.

COOPERATION WITH THE ACCREDITATION COUNCIL AND THE AGENCIES

ACQUIN regularly meets with its partners within 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 German Rectors' Conference and Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the

Accreditation Council on a proposal from the agencies. Since then, Mr. Zintl has participated in the meetings of the Accreditation Council as a permanent representative of the agencies in an advisory capacity in order to ensure the continuity of the representation of the agencies there, as was the case in 2020.

Within the framework of the first Accreditation Council meeting of the year 2020 in March in Potsdam, an exchange took place between agencies and the Accreditation Council, in the course of which, among other things, layout of the accreditation reports in programme accreditation procedures and the quality reports at system-accredited higher education institutions, the size of bundled accreditation procedures, and the reform of psychotherapist training were discussed.

In the course of the year, online meetings and telephone calls were held with the staff of the Accreditation Council when required.

AGENCIES MEETINGS

Representatives of the Austrian and Swiss agencies that are approved in Germany also took part in the four agency meetings in February (in face-to-face format) and in May, September, and December 2020 (in virtual meeting). In February, the agenda was devoted to coordination and preparation of the joint meeting between agencies and the Accreditation Council in March.

The participants discussed, among other things, the decision practice of the Accreditation Council which partly differed from the earlier decision practice of the agency commissions and was perceived as rather small-scale. The practice of rejecting accreditation reports by the office of the Accreditation Council, without a uniform line being recognisable, was perceived as

highly problematic and damaging to the reputation of the agencies. In this context, the loop for rectifying deficiencies and the distribution of roles between higher education institutions, agencies, and the Accreditation Council were also discussed, and it was decided to collect and analyse reasons for report returns.

In terms of content, there was an exchange on the quality assurance of academic advanced training and digital teaching as well as on the problem of study programmes labelled as dual which had no interlocking content between the learning locations of a company and a higher education institution and which, according to the current interpretation of the Accreditation Council, may no longer be considered dual study programmes.

In addition, during the course of the meetings, the participants exchanged experiences in connection with the Coronavirus pandemic and virtual on-site-visits in evaluation procedures.

Within the framework of the agency meeting in September, the Managing Director of ACQUIN, Marion Moser, was nominated as deputy for Anke Rigbers, Foundation Board of evalag, for the representation of the agencies in the Appeals Commission of the Accreditation Council.

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 2020, cooperation was maintained through mutual visits to the meetings of the accreditation commissions of ACQUIN and AKAST.

PARTICIPATION OF 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 jointly.

STUDENT ACCREDITATION POOL

The pool is a self-governing body of students who want to get involved in evaluation and accreditation procedures. The agencies contribute to the funding of the pool which holds regular training seminars for its members and pool networking meetings. The coordination Committee of the Student Accreditation Pool (KASAP) makes the decisions concerning the operation and current activities of the pool. In the year under review, the pool developed a new seminar concept and began to specifically approach student bodies that were not previously represented in the pool.

KASAP works closely with the student members of the Accreditation Council. Members of KASAP took part in the agency meeting in February 2020 and reported on current developments in the pool, e.g. a new legal form and other financing models currently being sought. In this context, the agencies also addressed the pool's problems with new recruits and its claim to sole validity which is considered problematic in some cases.

EXPERT GROUPS

Students have always been represented in the expert committees appointed by ACQUIN. The agency works in cooperation with the student accreditation pool. However, in some disciplines it is not possible to employ procedures with suitable pool members as these subjects are hardly represented in the pool.

In its cooperation with the student accreditation pool, ACQUIN has adhered to its principle that the final decision on the appointment of experts lies solely in the hands of the agency's own committees.

ACCREDITATION 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 substitute representatives. In the election of the accreditation commission by the general assembly in 2019, three positions were filled with members of the student accreditation pool, the fourth position could not be filled due to a lack of proposals.

EVENT PARTICIPATION

In 2020, due to the worldwide travel and contact restrictions as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic, the coordinators and the management of ACQUIN participated exclusively in virtual form in conferences of scientific professional associations, e.g. in the annual meetings of

ENQA and CEENQA in April and July respectively, as well as in the CHE Forum "Alternative Procedures for System Accreditation" on 5 November and in the European Quality Assurance Forum (EQAF) "Flexible higher education: implications for QA" on 12 and 13 November 2020.

In addition, ACQUIN took part in the online workshop "Acquiring International Accreditation from EQAR-Registered Agencies in Europe" on 9 and 10 December

2020, organised by the Indonesian Ministry of Education in cooperation with the DAAD Jakarta Office.

MEMBERSHIP AND COOPERATION IN INTERNATIONAL NETWORKS

ACQUIN defined priority areas for its activities, and they are characterised by partnership projects, cooperation in networks and evaluation and accreditation procedures. In 2020, ACQUIN continued to pay particular attention to the Central, Eastern and South-eastern Europe as well as to Asia and the Arab world.

- 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 an "affiliate member". The EUA is now an association of approximately 800 higher education institutions and other members in 48 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 illustrates that the Agency is an active member in the Central and Eastern European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (CEENQA).

ENQA

The European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) was transformed into a stronger representation of the interests of agencies in the European Higher Education Area on the basis of a draft strategy of the board over the course of the last two years. The role of a "gate keeper" should be left to the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (EQAR) in the future.

Hitherto, within the scope of the evaluation and reaccreditation by the Accreditation Council, the conformity with the membership criteria of ENQA was at the same time the subject of the procedure,

since the entry into force of the Interstate study accreditation treaty in 2018, the Accreditation Council makes the decision on the accreditation of an agency exclusively on the basis of its registration in EQAR. The continuation of registration in EQAR is in turn linked to the renewal of membership in ENQA.

In the reporting year, ACQUIN prepared the peer review for the renewal of the membership in ENQA as well as the continuation of the registration in EQAR and submitted the self-report to ENQA in October 2020.

ERASMUS +

ACQUIN is engaged as a partner in the following currently running projects of the EU's programme to support education, training, youth and sport in Europe (Erasmus+):

EldiCare (<https://eldicare.eu/>): Matching skills in a growing European Silver Economy; in 2020, the certification of two further training curricula "Training for A-typical Caregivers" and "ICT focused training for the elderly care sectoral providers" regarding the further training of persons in the field of elderly care took place at institutions in Greece, Great Britain, Spain, and Germany.

DataPRO (<http://datapro-project.eu/>): Professionalisation of data protection officers in general.

GDPR4H (<https://gdpr4h-project.eu/>): Qualification of data protection officers under the new data protection law for the health industry.

Completion of EldiCare, DataPRO, and GDPR4H projects postponed to 2021 due to Coronavirus pandemic.

DEQAR

Connect

(<https://www.eqar.eu/about/projects/deqar-connect/>): The project was selected under the Erasmus+ call to support the implementation of the European Higher Education Area reforms. The project aims to extend coverage to EHEA countries that are currently underrepresented in DEQAR.

In the year under review, ACQUIN successfully applied as a project partner for the following other projects: **CHAISE**, **KAZDUAL**, **MentorME**, **VETEntre** and **RegAgri4Europe**. The new projects have a duration of two, three, or four years. For more information see website

<https://www.acquin.org/en/international-activities/eu-research-projects/>.

Giorina Maratsi is the project manager at ACQUIN responsible for the implementation of these projects.

SWITZERLAND

ACQUIN is recognised by the Swiss Accreditation Council as an accreditation agency in accordance with the Swiss Ordinance of the Higher Education Council on Accreditation within the Higher Education Sector. In spring 2020, the application of ACQUIN to admit Schaffhausen University of Applied Sciences to the institutional accreditation procedure was approved by the Accreditation Council and the procedure was initiated, with estimated completion scheduled for autumn 2021.

On 4 July 2020, ACQUIN, represented by Valérie Morelle and Dr. Alexander Rudolph, jointly with other approved agencies, organised an information event for higher education institutions on the topic of "Accreditation according to Higher Education Act and Federal Law on Health Professions" to provide information on the changes and effects for programme accreditation due to the Swiss Federal Law on Health Professions which came into force on 1 February 2020.

REGION OF CENTRAL, EASTERN AND SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE AND ASIA

In order to ensure the implementation of the accreditation procedures in the region ACQUIN maintains contacts with numerous higher education institutions that request information about the organisation and preparation for the evaluation processes from the head office.

Overall, the implementation of accreditation procedures in Eastern Europe declined in the course of the previous two years. This can be explained by the increasing number of national agencies — especially in Kazakhstan.

KAZAKHSTAN

In 2012, the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan founded the Accreditation Council of the Republic of Kazakhstan and set up the Accreditation Register. The Kazakh Accreditation Council is composed of representatives of the Ministry, Parliament, higher education institutions, and employers.

The Register includes accredited higher education institutions, accredited programmes and accreditation bodies that are approved in Kazakhstan and thus are entitled to carry out accreditation of institutions and study programmes. ACQUIN was added to the register in 2012. The registration was renewed in 2018.

The relationship with Kazakhstan was also expanded by ACQUIN with the establishment of a branch office. The foundation of the KAZ-ACQUIN LLP in

Almaty was completed in May 2017. The subsidiary of ACQUIN serves as a point of contact for universities in Kazakhstan in the preparation of evaluation procedures. In 2019, KAZ-ACQUIN temporarily ceased operations due to the lack of sufficient contract volume.

In addition to conducting its own accreditation procedures in Kazakhstan, ACQUIN cooperates with the National Agency IQAA (Independent Agency for Quality Assurance in Education) and IAAR (Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating).

Alongside accreditation procedures, in 2020 ACQUIN also carried out a certification procedure for advanced training programmes (*see Accreditation and Evaluation Procedures in International Context*).

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

In October 2019, ACQUIN and the Russian Register agency signed a cooperation agreement in Yerevan.

The Russian Register founded in 1913 is a full member of ENQA. The St. Petersburg-based organization is the largest provider of certification and evaluation procedures in the Russian Federation.

MONGOLIA

In April 2019, ACQUIN entered into a cooperation and partnership agreement with the Mongolian National Council for Education Accreditation (MNCEA) and conducted a workshop for Mongolian

higher education institutions in Ulaanbaatar. In 2020, an accreditation agreement was concluded with the Mongolian National University of Education.

ARABIAN REGION

The cooperation with the German University in Cairo was continued.

In the year under review, two study programmes were accredited and further evaluations were planned.

