

Assessment criteria for internal accreditation of academic degree programmes

Resolution of the Senate, 23 Jan 2019

Guidance on the catalogue below:

The catalogue below describes the assessment criteria for the internal assessment of academic degree programmes and other courses according to the accreditation system.

These criteria set out, on the one hand, quality targets, and, on the other hand, profile targets for certain criteria. The achievement of all quality targets is necessary for internal accreditation.

The failure to achieve profile targets however does not affect internal accreditation—all profile targets are established by the university itself. They are principally aligned with university policy targets (e.g. related to guidelines on teaching and learning) or to recognised best practice in appropriate categories. Achievement of a profile target only needs to be addressed and demonstrated within the assessment process if the faculty selects a specific profile in the relevant area to be documented for the relevant degree programmes.

Assessment of target achievement is principally carried out in decentralised *quality reviews* [Qualitätsrunden] and is validated by means of a central scientific procedure (*internal accreditation*).

| Quality target | Profile target |
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| 1 Didactic approach | |
| 1.1 (General) Programme qualification objectives | |
| <p>Programme qualification objectives are defined. The qualification objectives should be complete, and suited to the course target group, the professional perspectives of graduates and the social context of the subject discipline. They should take into account scientific proficiency, employability and personal development. The qualification objectives are suited to the relevant degree and meet the demands of the pertinent qualification framework. They address the qualifying dimensions of internationalisation, digitalisation/digital competences, diversity alignment and sustainability in a manner suited to the culture of the subject.</p> | <p>The qualification objectives are systematically derived from the (changing) qualification needs of the target group, and further developed and detailed in the examination and study regulations or at least documented in easily accessible media.</p> |
| 1.1.1 Scientific proficiency and subject competence (also research method competence) | |
| <p>The programme approach ensures the acquisition of profound theoretical knowledge in the subject field, competence in resource methods and proficiency in scientific papers at the intended qualification level.</p> | <p>Training is provided in the production of research-oriented or research projects as well as the application of scientific methods in suitable occupational fields during the course in formats that suit the culture of the subject. These are accorded more than average importance in the curriculum.</p> |

| Quality target | Profile target |
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| 1.1.2 Ability to take up qualified employment (also: interdisciplinary competences) | |
| <p>The programme ensures that students develop disciplinary and generic skills in the relevant professional field, enabling them to make a successful transfer to the professional field.</p> <p>Possible fields of activity are proposed to graduates; achieved qualification objectives should enable employability in these fields of activity.</p> | <p>The programme is systematically designed to meet foreseeable demands in the (scientific and non-scientific) job market and reacts appropriately to changes in the market emerging from regular job market studies. It also qualifies students to develop their acquired competences further for new fields of employment.</p> |
| 1.1.3 Personal development and empowerment to play a part in society | |
| <p>The programme empowers students to take into account the social and ethical implications of the subject area and their own activity and to act responsibly in this respect; the course of study also promotes both student introspection and interdisciplinary and critical thinking.</p> | <p>The course of study should explicitly incorporate inter- and transdisciplinary connections and promote recognition and reflection of ethical aspects by means of appropriate ways of transferring knowledge and competences. The programme encourages students to question their own culture of knowledge and to contribute to its further development.</p> |
| 1.1.4 Scientific self-awareness/professionalism | |
| <p>Students are trained to develop a professional image of themselves that is aligned with professional objectives and standards both within and outside the professional world. They root their professional behaviour in theoretical and methodical knowledge, reflect this, and use pertinent opportunities to shape and decide on their approach in an independent and responsibly ethical manner.</p> | |
| 1.1.5 Communication and cooperation, teaching competence | |
| <p>Students develop interdisciplinary competences both for their course of study and for their professional career. They are able to communicate and cooperate both within the scientific world and with various different actors in society. They can exchange relevant and specialist information on alternative, justified solutions with representatives of scientific and non-scientific fields; they recognize and reflect potential conflict areas, and provide appropriate solution processes through constructive, conceptual approaches and can explain these clearly.</p> | |
| 1.1.6 Internationalisation | |
| | <p>The degree programme approach takes account of the international dimension of the subject discipline and contains related components. These may include the adoption of a global perspective in subject content, the development of intercultural competences, international mobility of students and teaching staff, international fields of study, and training in the use of a foreign language in subject communication.</p> |

| Quality target | Profile target |
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| 1.1.7 Digitalisation/Digital competences | |
| | The degree programme approach ensures in a manner suitable for the subject that relevant digital skills are acquired for study, research, work and participation in society. This includes use of digital data and key IT concepts. |
| 1.1.8 Diversity | |
| | The degree programme approach supports the development of an understanding of diversity and contributes to reflection on stereotypes and prejudices, the identification of discrimination, and the development of constructive working environments. All subject content should take into account diversity-oriented perspectives. |
| 1.1.9 Sustainability | |
| | The degree programme approach encourages the development of the capacity to take into account the various dimensions of sustainability (economic, ecological, social) and to develop and apply sustainable action scenarios. |
| 1.2 Achievement of qualification objectives | |
| The qualification objectives defined at the level of the programme must be achieved by all graduates; individual study behaviour and the selection of modules by particular students should not lead to degrees being issued to persons who have not achieved the qualification objectives. | |
| 1.3 Suitable entrance requirements | |
| Entrance requirements are aligned with defined qualifications objectives. | |
| 1.4 Quality and transparency of examination requirements | |
| Examination requirements and conditions are transparent, comprehensive, adequately detailed and comprehensible. | Examination requirements are implemented in a transparent, student-focused and proactive manner. |
| 1.5 Appropriate examination system | |
| Types of examination vary during the course and take account of the defined qualification objectives. Multi-part modular examination should only be set in exceptional, defined cases and for sound pedagogical reasons. | Examination should be set that enables students to prepare independent scientific work during the course of study. Students should be able to choose between different types of examination in suitable modules. |
| 1.6 Examination feedback system | |
| There is a feedback system for examination outcomes that is fit for purpose. | |

| Quality target | Profile target |
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| 2 Feasibility of the study course | |
| 2.1 Course orientation facilities | |
| <p>Course orientation facilities are available and accessible for prospective students.</p> <p>Various access options to courses are available and are presented in a clear manner.</p> | <p>Student orientation facilities are particularly directed at target groups and enable prospective students to gain in-depth insights into the demands of the course of study.</p> |
| 2.2 Supervision of introduction phases | |
| <p>Support facilities are available during the introductory phase.</p> <p>Amongst other things, these familiarise students with the functioning and use of study infrastructures.</p> | <p>Course introduction facilities provide students with special support when they start the programme. They contribute to reactivating and, when applicable, deepening students' prior knowledge, familiarising them with specific subject approaches, and promoting students identification with the scientific community.</p> |
| 2.3 Study advisory service | |
| <p>There is a sufficient range of expert and general student advice services in both number and quality.</p> <p>The areas of responsibility of the various advice points are clearly demarcated, clear to students, and easily accessible.</p> <p>In addition to typical advice on courses and procedures, the advice service covers student mobility, internships and career opportunities.</p> | <p>There are advice, care and support facilities for various target groups and/or topic areas to promote the orientation and skill acquisition of students on the basis of their individual interests and study schedules.</p> |
| 2.4 Course duration | |
| <p>The course of study is organised in such a way as to ensure that students can graduate within the regulation course period. Consecutive attendance of modules and obligatory attendance is only required in exceptional cases for didactic reasons. Periods for stays at other universities and to do practical work are possible and do not entail any loss of course time.</p> | <p>The programme approach contains support facilities to encourage a timely completion of the course.</p> |
| 2.5 Organisation of examination and examination equality | |
| <p>Examinations are organised in such a way that students are made aware of all essential conditions in a timely fashion, that assessments are undertaken without disturbance, and that examination equality is delivered and evaluated by applying transparent criteria, and the degree can be completed with all the required examinations within the regulation period. Opportunities to repeat examination are available promptly and in a suitable number, and do not lead to delay in completing the degree provided there are not a large number of repetitions.</p> | |

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| 2.6 Student workload | |
| <p>The average student workload is spread equally throughout the course and, in terms of the illustrative course schedules, does not exceed 33 credits per semester. (This does not apply to intensive courses.)</p> <p>The real workload per module corresponds to the duration stipulated in the module descriptions and is regularly checked in a suitable manner.</p> <p>The semester workload takes account of the course examinations due to take place and is spread to avoid any unreasonable peaks of demand.</p> | |
| 2.7 Recognition of credits | |
| <p>The recognition of credits from other universities or institutions must be decided in a transparent process in a suitable period, generally within a month of application, on the basis of the pertinent regulations (amongst others, the Lisbon Recognition Convention).</p> <p>The rejection of a credit transfers must be justified to the student. If the student provided all the documentation requested for evaluation, rejection can only be justified by showing that the attested competences differ significantly from the curricular components substituted. Should the student's application for recognition of credits be rejected, the student may be informed of ways in which recognition may be achieved later on.</p> | |
| 3 Course related cooperation agreements [if any] | |
| 3.1 Cooperation with scientific institutions | |
| <p>Existing cooperation agreements with other universities or scientific institutions are advertised and actively promoted to students depending on their nature and relevance to the degree programme. They are identifiably beneficial for course qualification objectives and students' skill acquisition and are covered by contractual agreements.</p> <p>If the other university or institution provides part of the programme alone or together with university institutions, the contractual regulation ensures that the university can influence the organisation and the content quality of the course in a suitable manner, generally in a comprehensive and a prompt manner; this requirement may be waived if the other university or institution itself basically guarantees ESG compliance.</p> | <p>Cooperation agreements with other universities and scientific institutions are closely aligned with the strategic direction of the providing faculty(ies) and are intensively nurtured. They are designed principally for the achievement of qualification objectives and to enable students to acquire competences. Cooperation agreements with other universities lead to the award of joint/multiple degrees.</p> |

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| 3.2 Cooperation with non-scientific institutions | |
| <p>Existing cooperation agreements with other companies or non-scientific institutions are advertised to students according to their nature and relevance to the degree programme. They contribute to the achievement of course qualification objectives and the student's skill acquisition.</p> <p>The student commitment to or the agreement with the partner body ensure the quality of course-based internship programmes and ensure that they are available to the required extent.</p> | |
| 4 Facilities | |
| 4.1 Teaching staff | |
| 4.1.1 Number, status, and subject-specific qualification | |
| <p>The number, status and scientific qualifications of teaching personnel are, allowing for aspects of interlocking teaching commitments, sufficient for running the degree programme, and guarantee the achievement of the qualification objectives.</p> <p>Teaching capacity is available to the required extent.</p> <p>The proportion of the course to be taught by professors and full-time teachers ensures that a an appropriate scientific level is met for the intended qualification level. The qualification or teaching areas of the professorships involved cover the programme topic areas, especially for stipulated study focus areas, in a suitable manner.</p> <p>(In further study programmes, the proportion of full-time teachers may be reduced if the courses can be largely delivered by those with teaching assignments or by those employed by universities or scientific institutions.)</p> | |
| 4.1.2 HE didactics qualification | |
| <p>The university teaching qualifications of teaching staff is in line with programme requirements and targets.</p> | <p>Teachers have excellent university teaching qualifications, participate in the development of innovating learning and teaching formats and use these on the course.</p> <p>Teachers are encouraged to take part in ongoing university training courses.</p> |
| 4.1.3 Engagement of visiting scholars | |
| | <p>Visiting scholars are engaged in order to differentiated and specialist teaching.</p> |
| 4.1.4 Engagement of practising professionals | |
| | <p>Practitioners are engaged in order to extend course provision with an applied/practice-related perspective.</p> |

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| 4.2 Coordination | |
| <p>A person is assigned to be responsible for coordination, e.g. a programme coordinator.</p> <p>Teachers are required by means of organisational measures to work systematically with other to coordinate and align course modules.</p> <p>There is regular alignment of content and organisation within the jointly-taught modules.</p> | |
| 4.3 Teaching infrastructure | |
| 4.3.1 Rooms, equipment and IT | |
| <p>The quantity and quality of media, IT and other equipment and teaching rooms should correspond to what is needed to deliver the programme. Suitable rooms with special technical equipment are made available for special course formats and content (e.g. group work, role plays, simulation games, virtual components).</p> <p>There is comprehensive Wi-Fi coverage with the required capacity for student use .</p> | |
| 4.3.2 Scientific literature, collections and databases | |
| <p>Appropriate access to relevant current literature, subject related databases, collections and further study materials is guaranteed.</p> | |
| 5 Transparency and documentation | |
| 5.1 Transparency of regulations | |
| <p>The rights and obligations of the university and students are regulated and binding at programme, module, and course level. All course-related regulations are at least accessible for all involved in the main teaching and examination language (German or English).</p> | <p>All relevant regulations and documents are accessible to all involved and are available in English, even for courses where German is the course language.</p> |
| 5.2 Access to current information | |
| <p>Students and teachers are guaranteed to have ongoing access to course matters by means of efficient information channels.</p> | |
| 5.3 Graduation documents | |
| <p>A degree certificate, transcript of records and a diploma supplement in English will be issued shortly after graduation. These contain the individual student grades and a final, overall degree grade that is transparent to non-specialists. The diploma supplement is in line with the sample from the German Kultusministerkonferenz (KMK) und the Hochschulrektorenkonferenz (HRK). Degree certificates and reports are also available in a digital format.</p> | <p>Graduation documents are issued also in a German or in an English translation.</p> |

| Quality target | Profile target |
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| 6 Diversity, gender equality and equal opportunities | |
| 6.1 Equal opportunities guarantee | |
| The university policies on diversity, gender equality and the promotion of equal opportunities in specific circumstances are transparent and implemented at the programme level. | The university has established specific targets and measures to promote diversity-sensitive learning and teaching cultures at the programme level. |
| 6.2 Compensation for disadvantages | |
| There are examination regulations available that cover compensation for affected students that are applied in an appropriate manner. | |
| 7 Quality Assurance | |
| | Specific targets and measures to develop quality by means of the university's quality assurance system have been established at programme level. |
| 8 Special degree programmes <i>[additional criteria]</i> | |
| 8.1 Teacher training courses | |
| The course approach takes into account the "German content requirements for teaching academic disciplines and specialised didactics in teacher education" and "Standards for teacher education: Educational sciences". | The course approach takes into special account measures to build up and extend practical teaching skills and teacher training. |
| 8.2 Multiple subject programmes | |
| There are established approaches at the programme level to ensure that the course can be studied successfully. When extra-subject modules are stipulated in the programme approach, these nevertheless contribute to the achievement of the programme targets. | Regular alignment takes place between the institutions involved with regard to the content and the organisation of multiple subject programmes. |
| 8.3 Further education courses | |
| The course approach takes into account the practical professional experience of students and bring them into play. | |
| 8.4 Intensive courses | |
| The course approach guarantees practical study by suitable measures to deal with the increased student workload. | |
| 8.5 Distance courses | |
| The course approach guarantees feasibility of study via suitable measures to deal with the special conditions of distance learning. Study material is conceived on the basis of pedagogical findings on distance study. | |