

***Drs. AR 78/2009***

**Resolution on the Application of the Evaluation Agency Baden-Württemberg (evalag) for Accreditation of 21st October 2008**

(Resolution of the Accreditation Council of 01.10.2009)

**I.**

The Foundation for the Accreditation of Study Programmes in Germany (Foundation) accredits the Evaluation Agency Baden-Württemberg (evalag), as per § 2 para. 1 no. 1 of the German Statute on the Establishment of a Foundation "Foundation for the Accreditation of Study Programmes in Germany", subject to the following regulations and thus grants it the right in this respect to accredit study programmes and internal quality assurance systems of Higher Education Institution by awarding the seal of the Foundation.

**II.**

The decision as per item I. above comes into effect on 02-10-2009, however without retrospective effect because the agreement with the Foundation had not been concluded as per § 3 of the German Statute for the Establishment of a Foundation "Foundation for the Accreditation of Study Programmes in Germany" up to 30-11-2009.

**III.**

The accreditation and the right as per item I. above are granted for a duration of five years; the right to revocation as per item V. below is reserved. As per § 2 para. 1 sentence 2 of the resolution "Decisions of the Accreditation Council: Types and Effects" of 15-12-2005 in the version of 29-02-2008, the accreditation lapses on 31-12-2014. If ENQA should decide by 31.12.2009, that according to general European standards an accreditation for a term longer than five years is permitted, then the accreditation term gets extended up to the maximum period permitted according to general European standards, but at the most by another three years.

#### **IV.**

The Accreditation Council has determined that evalag does not fulfil one quality requirement; however this quality requirement is not significant as per § 1 para. 3 of the resolution "Decisions of the Accreditation Council: Types and Effects" of 15-12-2005 in the version of 29-02-2008. The accreditation is therefore granted under the following condition:

#### **Condition**

By 30.06.2010 evalag should present an addition to its internal quality management system, by formalising and transparently documenting the agency-internal quality measures, process flows and responsibilities.

#### **V.**

If evalag does not prove having fulfilled these conditions within the time limit or if the condition proves not to have been fulfilled after expiry of the time limit, the Foundation can revoke the accreditation as per § 7 para. 2 of the resolution "Decisions of the Accreditation Council: Types and Effects" of 15-12-2005 in the version of 29-02-2008.

#### **VI. Reasoning**

##### **General:**

On the basis of the expert report and the hearing of the Agency, the Accreditation Council arrived at the opinion that the Evaluation Agency Baden-Württemberg (evalag) essentially meets the "Criteria for the Accreditation of Accreditation Agencies" of 15.12.2005 in the version of 08.10.2007.

The Accreditation Council has gained a very positive impression of evalag and its conceptional preparatory work done for taking up the accreditation activity. Nevertheless, some defects have to be pointed out with regard to meeting the "Criteria for the Accreditation of Accreditation Agencies". Since rectifying these defects is however possible in a period of at the most 9 months, an accreditation of evalag with conditions is indicated.

The evalag has used the possibility of a response to react very specifically and comprehensively to the criticism in the expert report and to implement the suggestions contained in the expert report to the greatest extent. The partly revised and partly newly

created documents of the agency present a changed starting point, so that the decision of the Accreditation Council differs from the recommendations of the experts. The differences can be explained in detail as follows:

*Regarding criterion 1.3: Consideration of the criterion "gender mainstreaming"*

evalag has already included the partial criterion "gender mainstreaming" in its revised "Criteria for the (re-) accreditation of study programmes" (response of evalag, Annex 7f). The aspect of gender mainstreaming is taken into account also in the "Guidelines for Higher Education Institutions for the Preparation of Self-documentation" (response of evalag, Annex 7d) as well as in the "Concept for Preparation of the Experts" (response of evalag, Annex 6). The recommendation of the expert group is thus comprehensively implemented.

*Regarding criteria 1.3 and 1.4: Pre-assessment by experts for Higher Education Institutions*

evalag has omitted the originally planned procedural step of informing a Higher Education Institution about the pre-assessment by experts before the on-site visit itself both in the programme as well as system accreditation (response of evalag, Annexes 7 and 8). With that the recommendation of the expert group is comprehensively implemented.

*Regarding criterion 2.2: Consistency of the procedure descriptions*

evalag has revised its procedure descriptions about selection and appointment of experts, specified the presentation of the organisational structure in detail and thus taken the criticism of the experts into account. It is very clear from the documents that the agency has only one accreditation commission at present. It is also clear from the documents that the experts are basically selected by the accreditation commission of evalag, while the formal appointment is made by the chairman of the foundation council. The recommendations of the expert group are thus comprehensively implemented.

*Regarding criterion 2.4: Declarations of No-conflict-of-interest*

evalag has implemented the recommendation of the expert group that it specify the possible reasons for conflict-of-interest in the declaration of the experts named by the agency in such a manner, that they also apply to representatives from professional practice and students (response of evalag, Annexes 9b and 9c). The recommendation of the expert group has thus been taken into account comprehensively.

#### *Regarding criterion 4: Equipment*

The experts have recommended to the Accreditation Council to state the condition, that proof of the occupation of one more post is furnished. In the meantime evalag has complied with such a request. Within the hearing of the representative of evalag at the 60th meeting of the Accreditation Council the Accreditation Council has been advised that another employee will start work in the accreditation department of the agency in November 2009. The recommendation of the expert group has thus been taken into account comprehensively.

Besides, the Accreditation Council takes a positive note of the disclosed aim of evalag to implement the recommendation of the expert group with regard to the development of a quality manual soon.

The Accreditation Council assumes that the foundation constitution of evalag will come into effect before the beginning of the accreditation activity and without material deviations from the draft version (02.03.2009), which was available to the experts and based on which the expert report was prepared.

During the on-site visit evalag has pointed out the necessity of a start-up financing for the development and expansion of the accreditation department. The Accreditation Council assumes that the repayment of the funds connected to the start-up financing will – as assured by the Agency – begin with the conclusion of the first accreditation procedure and be completed at the latest after two years.

#### **Regarding the condition:**

According to criterion 5 of the “Criteria for the Accreditation of Accreditation Agencies” of 15-12-2005 in the version of 08-10-2007, the Agency must show a formalised internal quality management system, which, among other things, covers systematic internal feedback processes and the analysis of one’s own processes.

According to the expert report, the informal processes play at present a more emphatic role than against the formal processes in the practice of quality assurance in evalag. A quality assurance system independent of persons involved makes it necessary, however, that the concrete measures, processes and procedures of internal quality management be formalised and documented transparently. Particularly the systematic components of the quality assurance system required by criterion 5 require a minimum of formalisation and documentation of the individual agency-internal process flows and responsibilities, also

with a view to an increase in the personnel of the agency which can not be precluded in future.

**VII. Compliance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) and the membership criteria of the European Association for Quality Assurance (ENQA)**

The Accreditation Council states that evalag complies with the “Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area” (ESG) and meets the member criteria of the "European Association for Quality Assurance" (ENQA).