

Guidelines for Experts (Academic Programmes)

The following points serve as guidelines for experts assessing institutions and for preparing the expert report. Together with the administrative decision (*Bescheid*) on the appointment of the experts these guidelines describe the tasks and duties of the expert. The included points are related to the legal accreditation requirements and the basic criteria of the ÖAR and their fulfilment has to be proved by the ÖAR. The frame of reference has to be orientated towards international standards. The relative importance of each of these points depends on the special requirements of each individual institution and should be decided on by the rapporteur together with the experts.

The expert report has to be written on the basis of the following materials:

- application document submitted by the applicant institution
- findings collected during the site-visit
- further materials on request

1. Academic Programmes and Student Management

- 1.1 Does the academic programme correspond to the institution's mission statement and principles of employability?
- 1.2 Are the programme's quality, range and academic aims appropriate according to the academic degree?
- 1.3 Is the programme based on an overarching didactic concept that has been adequately communicated and adopted amongst the teaching staff?
- 1.4 Does the academic degree correspond to international standards?
- 1.5 Does the structure of the programme give sufficient opportunity for independent study, reflection and analysis? (e.g., what is the proportion of independent study time compared to online/distance teaching and classroom units)
- 1.6 Is the allocation of ECTS appropriate and comprehensible?
- 1.7 Is the workload required for the academic programme manageable for students?
- 1.8 Are the teaching methods and content of teaching units sufficient for the successful achievement of the programme's goals and outcomes (competences and qualifications, knowledge and skills)?
- 1.9 Is the overlap of academic content between the various curricula comprehensible and transparent?
- 1.10 How do the admission criteria and admission procedures measure up to international standards?
- 1.11 Is the ratio of the academic/artistic staff and the students appropriate?

2. Staff

- 2.1 Does the institution have an adequate proportion of permanent staff and appropriate proportions of permanent and external staff?
- 2.2 Do the academic staff demonstrate proven ability at a high academic and didactic level and are their qualifications appropriate to the positions they hold within the institution according to the basic criteria 4?

3. Research and International Co-operation

- 3.1 Is the teaching staff involved in research activities inside or outside the institution, and do these research activities have a knock-on effect on teaching/course contents?
- 3.2 Is the extent and the quality of international cooperation in research and teaching adequate?
- 3.3 Are students involved in research and cooperation projects?

4. Finances and Infrastructure/Space and Equipment

- 4.1 Does the institution have an adequate budget plan?
- 4.2 Does the institution have adequate buildings and specialised infrastructure for the requirements of the programme?

5. Quality Management

- 5.1 Are the institution's programmes assessed regularly within the context of internal evaluation processes?

6 Distance learning, E-Learning or Blended Learning

If the academic programmes are based on distance learning, e-learning or blended learning the following points have to be evaluated additionally. Furthermore the implications of distance learning, e-learning or blended learning have to be taken into account while evaluating points 1-5 as well.

ad Academic Programmes and Student Management

- Is the allocation of face-to-face provision and supervised/not supervised self-study adequate?
- Are there guidelines for selecting and producing digital material? (and are they geared to pedagogical-didactic and technical criteria?)
- Are there guidelines for handling copy right issues?
- Is there legal security provided regarding student assessment? (identification of students; plagiarism)

ad Staff

- Are the qualifications of teaching staff, tutors, administrative and technical personnel regarding the special technical and didactic requirements adequate?
- Is there a development strategy for teaching staff, tutors and administrative personnel regarding the application of IT and communication technology?
- Is there sufficient staff for
 - adequate students' support regarding IT and communication

- development of a didactic concept
- pedagogical-didactic support for teachers
- development of digital course material (contents, technical realisation)
- IT support for teachers and students
- IT service for technical support?

ad Space and Equipment

- Are there study centres for face-to-face provision and student assessment?
- Is there a virtual environment complying with pedagogical needs? (software incl. licences; corresponding hardware)
- Is there an adequate technical infrastructure and equipment of the IT-/distribution department?