

Content

I. Latest Decisions II. New Guidelines of the ÖAR

III. Round-Table with Students IV. Mutual Recognition Agreements

I. Latest Decisions

In the plenary meeting on 11 January 2008 the ÖAR decided on the following applications for accreditation:

- **Konservatorium Wien Privatuniversität**

The application for accreditation of the academic programme "Master of Arts Education" was approved.

- **Transart Institute Privatuniversität**

The Accreditation Council decided negatively on the application of accreditation as private university.

The decisions are not yet legally binding because they still need the approval of the Federal Ministry of Science and Research.

II. New Guidelines of the ÖAR

The Accreditation Council decided on the following revised guidelines:

- Basic Criteria
- Habilitation

Furthermore the ÖAR formulated institutional requirements for the accreditation of doctorate programmes are:

- Doctorate programmes

The full-text versions are available as PDF on the ÖAR website:

<http://www.akkreditierungsrat.at/cont/en/downloads.aspx#Richtlinien>

III. Round-Table with Students

The second round-table discussion with student representatives of private universities took place in the Council meeting in January. The organisation of student organisations and the involvement of students in the internal quality management have been issued. Moreover the pilot project of the ÖAR to establish a "pool of student experts" for accreditation procedures has been discussed. The ÖAR will involve students as experts for collegiate issues in the procedures in the future.

IV. Mutual Recognition Agreements

The ÖAR is founding member of the 2003 initiated project *European Consortium for Accreditation ECA* (www.eaconsortium.net) which has the goal to achieve mutual recognition of accreditation decisions. Therefore 15 accreditation organisations of 10 European countries have worked together intensively to, for instance, develop common instruments for accreditation, conduct comparisons of systems and mutual observations as well as create a binding *Code of Good Practice*.

The ÖAR belongs to the first agencies that achieved the project goal and signed bilateral recognition agreements with four European accreditation organisations, which can be seen as *key player* in terms of European accreditation. These four agencies are:

- NVAO - Nederlands-Vlaamse Accreditatieorganisatie (Niederlande)
- NOKUT - Nasjonalt organ for kvalitet i utdanningen (Norwegen)
- PKA Państwowa Komisja Akredytacyjna (Polen)
- OAQ Organ für Akkreditierung und Qualitätssicherung der Schweizerischen Hochschulen (Schweiz)

As the international *ECA Dissemination Conference* has shown in the beginning of December, this project in the field of quality assurance has achieved a fundamental step for the creation of a European higher education area. With the signing of these agreements the Austrian accreditation system and the work of the ÖAR has met a high degree on international appreciation and recognition.

The signed agreements are online available:

<http://www.eaconsortium.net/conference/documents2.php>