



Agentur für
Qualitätssicherung
und Akkreditierung
Austria

Decree on the Accreditation of Universities of Applied Sciences 2019 (FH-AkkVO)

as at 1 February 2019

Pursuant to section 23 para. 5 of the Act on Quality Assurance in Higher Education (*Hochschul-Qualitätssicherungsgesetz*, HS-QSG), Federal Law Gazette I no. 74/2011 as amended, the Board of the Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria issues the following Decree:

1. Chapter 1: Subject, scope, and definitions

§ 1. Subject and Scope

This Decree shall govern the procedure and the criteria for the initial accreditation of a university of applied sciences and its degree programmes, the procedure and criteria for the extension of institutional accreditation, and the procedure and criteria for the programme accreditation as well as the procedure and the criteria for modifications to institutional and programme accreditations.

§ 2. Definitions

The following definitions shall apply to the terms used in this Decree:

- (1) Accreditation is the formal state approval of an educational institution (institutional accreditation) or of degree programmes (programme accreditation) based on pre-defined criteria.
- (2) The institutional initial accreditation is an ex-ante accreditation of a university of applied sciences including the accreditation of individual degree programmes. Accreditation is granted upon verification that the criteria pursuant to section 15 are met. The initial accreditation procedure addresses aspects both at institutional level and regarding the individual degree programmes submitted for accreditation.
- (3) An extension of the institutional accreditation (re-accreditation) covers institutional aspects as well as the extension of the accreditation of the degree programmes accredited up to this date. Accreditation is granted upon verification that the criteria pursuant to section 16 are met.
- (4) The programme accreditation is an ex-ante accreditation of a bachelor, diploma or a master programme. Accreditation is granted upon verification that the criteria pursuant to section 17 are met. Further special provisions for joint degree programmes or jointly offered degree programmes as well as for degree programmes offered at another site than that of the institutional accreditation have been laid down in section 18.
- (5) Modifications to institutional or programme accreditations are changes of the characteristics of private universities or degree programmes, respectively, that have already been accredited and require approval by administrative decision pursuant to section 14. The procedure addresses all criteria pursuant to sections 15 to 18 which are affected by the respective changes.



2. Chapter 2: Rules for carrying out the procedure

§ 3. Application

(1) A written application for institutional initial accreditation, re-accreditation, and programme accreditation as well as for modifications to an institutional accreditation or programme accreditation shall be addressed to the Board of the Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria (hereinafter referred to as: Board) and submitted electronically as well as in paper to the secretariat of the Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria (hereinafter referred to as: secretariat).

(2) Pursuant to section 23 paragraph 7 and section 26 paragraph 1 No 1 HS-QSG, the application for re-accreditation shall be addressed to the Board and submitted to the secretariat no later than nine months before the end of the approval period; otherwise, the accreditation will expire.

(3) The application shall indicate the applying legal entity based in Austria and the name of the university of applied sciences and shall be signed by its legal representative. In case the applicant institution is a legal entity governed by private law, a current excerpt from the commercial register or register of associations shall be enclosed.

(4) A complete and formally correct application for institutional initial accreditation, re-accreditation, and programme accreditation may then be submitted. It must contain all information and documents required to verify that the accreditation criteria pursuant to sections 15 to 18 are met.

(5) The application for modifications of an institutional accreditation or programme accreditation submitted shall be complete and formally correct. It shall contain all information and documents required for the approval of the changes and shall document which criteria pursuant to sections 15 to 18 are affected by the modifications. Furthermore, it shall indicate to what degree the respective criteria are fulfilled.

(6) The secretariat shall scrutinize the application regarding its completeness and formal correctness. In the case that any remediable shortcomings are identified, the secretariat will grant an appropriate period of time for their remedy. If the shortcomings cannot be remedied in the period of time provided, the Board shall reject the application.

(7) After the completeness and formal correctness of the application have been verified, further copies shall be submitted in the number to be announced by the secretariat.

§ 4. Procedure

(1) As a rule, the review procedure is based on sections 5 to 13; in exceptional cases the Board shall decide on an alternative procedure.

(2) Regarding institutional initial accreditations, the Board, while ensuring maximum efficiency may divide the subject matters of application and carry out separate reviews if the number of degree programmes or the range of disciplinary fields submitted for accreditation requires this.

(3) If accreditation of several degree programmes or the modification of institutional accreditations and programme accreditations is submitted at the same time, the Board may handle them in a joint procedure if this is reasonable, in particular considering the disciplinary relatedness of the degree programmes.

(4) The Board may, on application of the applying institution, take into consideration the outcomes of other quality assurance procedures in order to facilitate the process. In the case of

jointly offered degree programmes the results of earlier quality assurance procedures will be recognised.

§ 5. Experts

(1) The Board shall appoint experts to assess the application. If the Board does not consider an external review necessary for assessing the application, the appointment of experts can be waived.

(2) When composing the expert panel, the Board shall ensure that all aspects relevant for the procedure will be reviewed, taking into account the specific features of the Austrian universities of applied sciences and the Austrian higher education system. The Board shall take into account special requirements on a case-by-case basis, it shall aim for diversity in the composition of the expert panel, and ensure that their current activities cover the following fields of competence:

1. proven scientific qualifications in the disciplines core to the university of applied sciences' course offerings;
2. research activities in the relevant disciplines and familiarity with the academic research at universities of applied sciences;
3. verifiable international experience obtained through professional activity abroad;
4. verifiable knowledge of a professional field relevant for the university of applied sciences' course offerings obtained through relevant work experience;
5. experience in quality management and quality assurance in higher education;
6. experience in higher education management and organisational structures;
7. experience in teaching as well as in the development, implementation, and evaluation of curricula;
8. student experience in a discipline of the university of applied sciences' course offerings.

With regard to programme accreditations and changes thereto, no 1, 2, 4, 7, and 8 apply to the discipline of the respective degree programme; no 6 does not apply.

(3) With regard to re-accreditation, the Board may appoint experts in addition to the expert panel for subject-specific external review reports as regards specific subjects if it considers this necessary in order to sufficiently take account of the range of subjects of a university of applied sciences in the evaluation of the criteria.

(4) In the case of applications for accreditation of degree programmes from the fields of training of senior medical-technical services, midwives as well as general health and nursing care, AQ Austria consults the experts provided in accordance with the relevant professional regulations.

(5) The experts must be unbiased. They shall declare in writing that there are no grounds for bias and that they will keep confidential all facts they become aware of in relation with their work as experts. Reasons for bias include, for example:

1. employment or any other contractual relationship with the applicant institution within the last five years;
2. applications to the applicant institution within the last five years;
3. involvement/co-operation with the applicant institution or their bodies within the last five years;
4. personal research co-operation or co-operation with persons linked to the applicant institution within the last five years;

5. examinations taken or degrees obtained at the applicant institution within the last five years; or
6. private proximity to persons linked to the applicant institution.

(6) The secretariat shall inform the applicant institution about the experts and shall grant the applicant institution an appropriate period of time to raise objections, for example concerning the unbiasedness of the experts. Reasons for objections shall be given in writing. The objections shall be submitted to the Board. The applicant institution does not have the right to propose experts.

(7) The secretariat shall support the activities of the expert panel throughout the accreditation procedure. Except for the site visit, communication between the applicant institution and the expert group shall take place exclusively via the secretariat.

(8) The secretariat shall prepare the experts for their activities, in particular for their role as experts, and shall support them in carrying out their activities, in particular with regard to the relevant legal regulations and the characteristics of the applicant institution or the application object, respectively.

§ 6. Site visit

(1) The review includes a one- to three-day site visit of the experts to the applicant institution. If the Board does not consider a site visit necessary for assessing the application, the site visit can be waived.

(2) With regard to re-accreditation, the Board may decide on a site visit to further sites if the applicant institution offers degree programmes at more than one site.

(3) If accreditation is requested for a degree programme to be offered at another site than the site which was institutionally accredited, or if the changes to the programme accreditation applied for refer to a site at which the degree programme has so far not been offered, the site visit shall take place at the site at which the degree programme will be offered.

(4) The following principles for the organisation and conduct of a site visit of the applicant institution shall apply:

1. The agenda shall be tailored to the specific requirements of the procedure and be co-ordinated with the applicant institution.
2. The experts, staff of the secretariat as well as representatives of the applicant institution shall participate in the site visit. The applicant institution shall be free to select its representatives. The representatives of the student body shall be selected, where applicable, by the student representation.
3. All relevant groups of the applicant institution shall be heard, and the individual groups shall be able to present their positions autonomously and uninfluenced.
4. The staff of the secretariat shall support the experts in their activities and make sure that the site visit is proceeding properly.

§ 7. Review report

(1) On the basis of the insights gained from the application documents and the site visit, the experts shall draw up a joint review report, consisting of statements and assessments with regard to the criteria pursuant to sections 15 to 18 and, if applicable, of references to good practice or recommendations for further development, respectively.

(2) The report shall be drawn up respecting the diversity of the experts' opinions, while at the same time aiming at a broad consensus in order to provide common findings and assessments

with regard to the criteria and a summary assessment. If experts' opinions differ on an issue and cannot be eliminated, the differences shall be expressed in the report.

(3) If subject-specific external review reports pursuant to section 5 paragraph 3 were commissioned, the experts shall take them into consideration when drawing up the review report.

§ 8. Comment of the applicant institution

The secretariat shall send the review report to the applicant institutions and grant it a reasonable time frame to comment on the report. Within the framework of the comment, the applicant institution may point out, in particular, factual mistakes. It is also given the opportunity to express any diverging views on the experts' statements and assessments. The written comment shall be addressed to the Board. Upon receiving the comment, the secretariat shall forward it to the expert panel. The experts shall review the comment and, if required, modify the review report. If changes are made, the secretariat shall send the final review report to the applicant institution for information.

§ 9. Decision and notification

(1) The decision of the Board on accreditation and modifications thereto shall be based on the application documents, the review report, and the comment of the applicant institution. The Board may accept or reject the application.

(2) If the Board approves the accreditation application, the accreditation period shall be six years for an institutional initial accreditation and the re-accreditation. After an uninterrupted accreditation period of twelve years the accreditation of degree programmes is granted for an unlimited period.

(3) The Board may make re-accreditations and modifications to an institutional accreditation or programme accreditation conditional. The Board shall decide if an external review is necessary for assessing whether the conditions have been fulfilled. If the Board considers it necessary to conduct a site visit or draw up a review report in order to examine whether the conditions have been fulfilled, sections 5 to 12 shall apply.

(4) If the Board approves the application for re-accreditation or modification of an institutional or programme accreditation with conditions and the university of applied sciences can prove that the conditions have been fulfilled, this shall be declared by the Board by administrative decision. If the Board approves the application for re-accreditation or modification of an institutional or programme accreditation with conditions and the university of applied sciences cannot prove that the conditions have been fulfilled, the Board shall revoke the accreditation by administrative decision.

(5) The decision of the Board shall be subject to approval by the competent Federal Minister prior to the issuing of the official notification. In the case of applications for accreditation of study programmes from the fields of training of senior medical-technical services, midwives and general health and nursing, agreement must also be reached with the competent Federal Minister of Health.

(6) The notification shall contain the following information as a minimum:

1. the term of accreditation;
2. the name of the legal entity of the university of applied sciences as well as the name of the university of applied sciences itself;
3. title, type, study mode, total workload (in ECTS credits), duration (in semesters), language and exact wording of the academic degree(s) to be awarded (including its/their abbreviation);



4. number of study places per academic year
5. site(s) at which the degree programme(s) is/are held;
6. any conditions in the case of applications for re-accreditation and modifications of institutional or programme accreditations.

§ 10. Publishing the findings of the procedure

After the procedure has been completed, AQ Austria shall publish a report on the outcomes of the accreditation procedure on its website for the entire accreditation period which shall be easily accessible and which contains the Board's decision, including reasons, the final review report (incl. the reviewers' names as well as the institutions they are employed at) and the applicant institution's comment (the latter only following their approval). The university of applied sciences shall publish the report on the outcomes on their homepage which shall be easily accessible for the entire accreditation period.

§ 11. Costs

The applicant institution shall reimburse AQ Austria for the fees of the experts and pay a lump sum to be specified and published by the Board by decree. The obligation to pay shall arise upon submission of the complete and formally correct application according to section 3 and shall fall due upon completion of the procedure.

§ 12. Complaints

The applicant institution may appeal to the Appeals Committee of the AQ Austria against the procedure as such.

§ 13. Evidence for the fulfilment of conditions

(1) If the re-accreditation or the approval of changes to institutional accreditations or programme accreditations is made conditional, the university of applied sciences shall submit evidence that the conditions have been fulfilled to the Board within the period specified in the notification.

(2) The evidence that the conditions have been fulfilled shall contain all information and documents necessary to confirm the fulfilment of the conditions.

§ 14. Changes relevant to accreditation

The modification of institutional accreditations and programme accreditations requires approval by administrative decision. This shall apply in any case if the changes made relate to the following characteristics:

1. changes of the name of the legal entity of the university of applied sciences or of the name of the university of applied sciences itself;
2. modifications to the curriculum, if they result in significant changes of the profile, the name, or the study mode of the degree programme, changes of the total workload (in ECTS credits), the duration (in semesters), or of the language and/or the exact wording of the academic degree to be awarded (including its abbreviation);
3. changes in the number of study-places per academic year
4. changes of the site or the sites at which the degree programme is offered

Chapter 3: Assessment criteria

§ 15. Criteria for the institutional initial accreditation

(1) Profile and objectives

The UAS has an institutional profile and derives university-adequate goals for the areas of study and teaching as well as applied research and development from it.

(2) Development plan

1. The university of applied sciences has a development plan which is in line with its profile and objectives and which specifies longer-term objectives and strategies for their achievement. As regards the six years following the accreditation as a university of applied sciences the development plan describes how the defined objectives can be achieved with the adopted measures and allocated resources. The development plan also comprises measures relating to gender equality and the advancement of women as well as to the establishment of a quality management system.

2. The university of applied sciences shall define a regular process of monitoring the achievement of objectives and adapting the development plan.

(3) Organisation of the university of applied sciences

1. The university of applied sciences' organisational structure, in accordance with the relevant stipulations of the Fachhochschul-Studiengesetz (FHStG), BGBl 340/1993, ensures the autonomy of the higher education institution as well as the freedom of science and its teaching, while taking into account the interests of the owner/holder.

2. The statute comprises the following regulations as a minimum:

- a. regulations governing the degree programmes and examination regulations ;
- b. election regulations for the Kollegium, the implementation of committees thereof and their statutes
- c. Measures for gender equality;
- d. regulations for the advancement of women
- e.
- f. guidelines for the analogous application of university titles and for the award of academic honours;

(4) Course offerings

1. The university of applied sciences offers a minimum of one bachelor programme with at least one consecutive master programme or with at least one diploma programme.

2. The university of applied sciences has defined processes for the development, establishment, and enhancement of degree programmes, which involve the relevant stakeholder groups and ensure the fulfilment of the criteria for the accreditation of degree programmes.

(5) Degree programme and degree programme management

Taking into account a heterogeneous student body, the following criteria shall apply to each programme submitted for accreditation: In the case of degree programmes with special profile elements, the descriptions shall furthermore address these characteristics defining the profile. Special profile elements are, for example, compulsory vocational practice in case of master programmes, mode of studies which may be completed alongside professional occupa-



tion, dual programmes, distance-learning degree programmes, joint degree programmes or jointly offered degree programmes etc.

1. The degree programme is oriented towards the profile and the objectives of the university of applied sciences and is clearly in line with the development plan.
2. The economy's/society's demand for graduates of the degree programme and the students' demand (acceptance) for the degree programme are transparently presented regarding clearly defined occupational fields and correspond to the planned number of graduates or study places, respectively.
3. The profile and the intended learning outcomes of the degree programme have been clearly defined. They include scientific personal, and social competences, they meet the professional requirements and are in accordance with the respective level of the National Qualification Framework. As regards regulated professions, the university of applied sciences shall describe, if and under which preconditions access to those professions is ensured.
4. The name of the degree programme and the academic degree, as defined by AQ Austria in accordance with section 6 paragraph 2 FHStG correspond to the degree programme's profile.
5. The content and structure of the curriculum ensure that the intended learning outcomes are achieved while linking applied research and development and teaching. Regarding bachelor and diploma programmes the programme also foresees a work placement.
6. The didactic conception of the degree programme's modules shall ensure that the intended learning outcomes are achieved and promotes the students' active contribution in the learning process.
7. The workload related to the individual modules ensures that the intended learning outcomes can be achieved within the stipulated duration of studies, and in case of degree programmes for working students takes into account the professional occupation. The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) is applied correctly.
8. The university of applied sciences has adopted examination rules. The examination methods are suitable to assess whether and to what extent the intended learning outcomes have been achieved.
9. A "diploma supplement" will be issued. It complies with the requirements laid down in Annex to the Verordnung der Bundesministerin für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Kultur über die Ausstellung eines Anhangs zum Diplom („Diploma Supplement“) für Absolventinnen und Absolventen von Fachhochschul-Studiengängen (BGBl. II Nr. 326/2004)
10. The admission requirements have been clearly defined. In terms of the qualification level, they correspond at least to the provisions provided by FHStG.
11. The admission procedure has been clearly defined and ensures a fair and transparent selection of the applicants in accordance with the relevant regulations in the FHStG.
12. The procedures for recognition of academic competences and non-academic competences in terms of crediting towards examinations or parts of a degree programme have been clearly and transparently defined and are in accordance with the relevant regulations in the FHStG. When recognising or crediting academic competences, the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region (Lisbon Recognition Convention, F. L. G. III No. 71/1999) shall be considered.

(6) Counselling and support for students

1. The university of applied sciences provides for sufficient offerings for counselling on the subjects and organisation of studies as well as psychosocial counselling and support for their students.
2. The university of applied sciences shall provide for a procedure for handling complaints of students.

(7) Applied research and development

1. The university of applied sciences orients its application-oriented research and development work on its profile. For this purpose, it has developed a concept which comprises at least strategic goals as well as measures for their implementation.
2. The planned activities in applied research and development are accord to the university standards and to the respective disciplinary cultures.
3. The university of applied sciences provides for appropriate, institutionally anchored cooperation in applied research and development with universities and, where appropriate, non-university partners at home and abroad for the respective subject cultures.
4. The university of applied sciences' full-time teaching and research staff is involved in the applied research and development activities in their specific subject.
5. The university of applied sciences shall promote applied research or development activities by providing for appropriate organisational or structural framework conditions.
6. The university of applied sciences shall provide measures for the transfer of knowledge or technologies to the economy and society.

(8) Staff

1. The university of applied sciences shall provide for sufficient teaching and research staff as well as sufficient non-academic staff for carrying out its tasks in accordance with the development plan.
2. The composition of full-time and part-time staff provides for an appropriate support of the students.
3. The core-subjects of the degree programmes are covered by full-time scientifically qualified staff and by professionally qualified teaching and research staff.
4. The teaching and research staff is scientifically, professionally and pedagogically qualified according to the requirements of the respective post.
5. The development teams for the study courses are scientifically and/or professionally qualified with regard to the profile of the respective study courses. The composition and use of the development teams in teaching comply with the requirements laid down in the FHStG.
6. The management of the degree programmes is the responsibility of scientifically qualified teaching and research personnel who are employed full-time at the university.
7. The prioritisation of the full-time teaching and research staff's teaching, research, and administrative activities ensures adequate participation in the teaching activities within the degree programmes and leaves sufficient time for administrative research and development.
8. The university of applied sciences shall provide for transparent and quality-driven recruitment procedures for hiring full-time and part-time teaching and research staff as well as non-

academic staff. The appointment procedures for Fachhochschul- professors are modelled on the respective requirements mentioned in the Universities Act 2002 BGBl. I Nr. 120/2002. In the event that a university of applied sciences does not have a sufficient number of Fachhochschul-professors in order to fill the seats of an appointment committee, external professors shall be appointed as members of therecruitment committee until an adequate professorial body has been built.

9. The university of applied sciences provides for adequate further training and staff development measures.

10. The university of applied sciences provides for adequate measures for the integration of part-time teachers in the organisation of teaching and in programme organisation.

(9) Funding

The university of applied sciences has a viable and sustainable financial plan which ensures the performance of its tasks in accordance with the development plan. Provisions have been made to fund expiring degree programmes.

(10) Infrastructure

The university of applied sciences' facilities and equipment are quantitatively and qualitatively adequate to ensure the performance of the university's tasks in accordance with the development plan. In the case that the university of applied sciences draws on external resources, their authorisation to use them has been contractually secured.

(11) Co-operations

The university of applied sciences provides for collaborations beyond section 15 paragraph 7 no 3 with higher education partners and partners outside the higher education area in Austria and abroad which match their profile and also promote the mobility of students and staff.

(12) Quality management system

1. The university of applied sciences has provided for a quality management system to be incorporated in the higher education institution's strategic management. Based on the university of applied sciences' objectives, it ensures that the quality of learning and teaching as well as of applied research and development and of the administration are assessed on a regular basis. It furthermore guarantees that the assessment criteria are met and promotes the university of applied sciences' development.

2. The university of applied sciences has established procedures to periodically and systematically collect information on the quality of learning and teaching as well as applied research and development and its administration, which are used in the quality management procedures.

3. The university of applied sciences provides for structures and procedures to ensure that the rules of good scientific practice are adhered to.

(13) Information

The university of applied sciences has a website and provides easily accessible and up-to-date information on its activities and offerings, including, as a minimum, the statute, the curricula and study regulations as well as examination regulations, templates of written study agreements and an outline of the quality management system.

§ 16. Criteria for re-accreditation

(1) Profile and objectives

The university of applied sciences has an institutional profile and has derived objectives suited to the university in the fields of teaching and learning as well as applied research.

(2) Development plan

1. The university of applied sciences has a development plan which is in line with its profile and objectives and which specifies longer-term objectives and strategies for their achievement. As regard the first six years following the re-accreditation the development plan describes how the defined objectives can be achieved with the adopted measures and allocated resources. The development plan also comprises measures relating to gender equality and the advancement of women.

2. The university of applied sciences uses the defined process of monitoring the achievement of objectives and adapting the development plan.

(3) Organisation of the university of applied sciences

1. Based on a balanced system of academic self-administration, operational and strategic management functions, the university of applied sciences' organisational structure ensures, in accordance with the regulations of the FHStG, the autonomy of the higher education institution as well as the freedom of science and its teaching, while taking into account the interests of the owner/holder.

2. The statute of the university of applied sciences comprises the following regulations as a minimum:

- a. regulations governing the degree programmes and examination regulations ;
- b. election regulations for the Kollegium, the implementation of committees thereof and their statutes
- c. Measures for gender equality;
- d. regulations for the advancement of women
- e. guidelines for the analogous application of university titles and for the award of academic honours;

(4) Course offerings

1. The university of applied sciences offers a minimum of one bachelor programme with at least one consecutive master programme or with at least one diploma programme. In the case of a FH institution which has already been awarded the designation "Fachhochschule" in accordance with the FHStG on application, at least two Bachelor's degree programmes with a Master's degree programme or at least two diploma degree programmes are offered..

2. The university of applied sciences shall ensure that their degree programmes fulfil the criteria for the accreditation of degree programmes. For this purpose the university of applied sciences regularly applies its defined processes for the further development of degree programmes which involve the relevant stakeholder groups. These processes and their outcome are documented for the current accreditation period with regard to the following characteristics:

The profile and the intended learning outcomes of the degree programme have been clearly defined. They include scientific, personal, and social competences, they meet the professional requirements and are in accordance with the respective

level of the National Qualification Framework. The content and structure of the curriculum ensure that the intended learning outcomes are achieved by combining applied research and development with teaching. As regards regulated professions, the university of applied sciences shall furthermore describe how it ensures that the preconditions for access to those professions are met.

- a. The workload related to the individual modules ensures that the intended learning outcomes can be achieved within the stipulated duration of studies, and in case of degree programmes for working students takes into account the professional occupation. The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) is applied correctly.

(5) Counselling and support for students

1. The university of applied sciences provides adequate support structures on the subjects and relating to the organisation of studies as well as psychosocial counselling for students.
2. The university of applied sciences shall provide for a procedure for handling student complaints pursuant to the regulations of the FHStG.

(6) Applied research and development

1. The university of applied sciences' research and development activities are oriented towards its profile and its objectives. For this purpose, it has developed a concept which comprises at least strategic goals as well as measures for their implementation.
2. The university of applied sciences performs activities in applied research and development according to the university-standards and the respective disciplinary cultures.
3. The university of applied sciences provides for institutionally anchored collaborations in applied research and development with partners from the higher education area and, where appropriate, from outside higher education in Austria and abroad which are adequate to the respective disciplinary cultures.
4. The university of applied sciences' full-time scientific staff is involved in the applied research and development activities in their specific discipline.
5. The university of applied sciences promotes applied research or development activities by providing for appropriate organisational or structural framework conditions.
6. The university of applied sciences ensures a transfer of knowledge or technologies to the economy and society.

(7) Staff

1. The university of applied sciences has sufficient teaching and research staff as well as sufficient non-academic staff for carrying out its tasks in accordance with the development plan.
2. The composition of full-time and part-time staff provides for an appropriate support of the students.
3. The core-subjects of the degree programmes are covered by full-time scientifically qualified staff and by professionally qualified teaching and research staff.
4. The teaching and research staff is scientifically, professionally and pedagogically qualified according to the requirements of the respective post.
5. The development teams for the study courses are scientifically and/or professionally qualified with regard to the profile of the respective study courses. The composition and use of the development teams in teaching comply with the requirements laid down in the FHStG.



6. The management of the degree programmes is the responsibility of scientifically qualified teaching and research personnel who are employed full-time at the university.
7. The prioritisation of the full-time teaching and research staff's teaching, research, and administrative activities ensures adequate participation in the teaching activities within the degree programmes and leaves sufficient time for administrative research and development.
8. The university of applied sciences shall provide for transparent and quality-driven recruitment procedures for hiring full-time and part-time teaching and research staff as well as non-academic staff. The appointment procedures for Fachhochschul professors are modelled on the respective requirements mentioned in the Universities Act 2002 BGBl. I Nr. 120/2002. In the event that a university of applied sciences does not have a sufficient number of Fachhochschul professors in order to fill the seats of an appointment committee, external professors shall be appointed as members of the recruitment committee until an adequate professorial body has been built.
9. The university of applied sciences provides for adequate further training and staff development measures.
10. The university of applied sciences takes adequate measures for the integration of part-time teachers in the organisation of teaching and in the programme organisation.

(8) Funding

The university of applied sciences has a viable and sustainable financial plan which ensures the performance of its tasks in accordance with the development plan. Provisions have been made to fund expiring degree programmes.

(9) Infrastructure

The university of applied sciences' facilities and equipment are quantitatively and qualitatively adequate to ensure the performance of the university's tasks in accordance with the development plan. In the case that the university of applied sciences draws on external resources, their authorisation to use them has been contractually secured.

(10) Co-operations

The university of applied sciences maintains collaborations beyond section 16 paragraph 6 no 3 with higher education institutions and, if appropriate, partners outside higher education in Austria and abroad matching their profile and also promoting the mobility of students and staff.

(11) Quality management system

1. The university of applied sciences uses a quality management system which has been incorporated in the higher education institution's strategic management. Based on the university of applied sciences' objectives, it ensures that the quality of studying and teaching as well as of applied research and development, and of the administration are assessed on a regular basis. It furthermore guarantees that the accreditation criteria are met and promotes the university of applied sciences' development.
2. The university of applied sciences periodically and systematically collects information on the quality of learning and teaching as well as applied research and development as well as supporting tasks performed within quality management procedures.
3. The university of applied sciences assesses the effectiveness of its quality management system on a regular basis and enhances it as required, drawing on the knowledge of internal and external experts.



4. The university of applied sciences has implemented structures and procedures to ensure that the rules of good scientific practice are adhered to.

(12) Information

The university of applied sciences publishes easily accessible and up-to-date information on its activities on its website, including, as a minimum, the statute, the curricula and study regulations as well as examination regulations, templates for study agreements, and an outline of the quality management system.

§ 17. Criteria for the accreditation of degree programmes

(1) Development and quality assurance of the degree programme

1. The degree programme was developed using a predefined procedure for the development and establishment of degree programmes which involves relevant stakeholder groups.
2. Following its accreditation, the university of applied sciences' quality management system covers the degree programme.

(2) Degree programme and degree programme management

Taking into account a heterogeneous student body, the following criteria shall apply to each programme submitted for accreditation: In the case of degree programmes with special profile elements, the descriptions shall furthermore address these characteristics defining the profile. Special profile elements are, for example, compulsory vocational practice in case of master programmes, mode of studies which may be completed alongside professional occupation, dual programmes, distance-learning degree programmes, joint degree programmes or jointly offered degree programmes etc¹. The degree programme is oriented towards the profile and the objectives of the university of applied sciences and is clearly in line with the development plan.

2. The economy's/society's demand for graduates of the degree programme and the students' demand (acceptance) for the degree programme are transparently presented regarding clearly defined occupational fields and correspond to the planned number of graduates or study places, respectively.

3. The profile and the intended learning outcomes of the degree programme have been clearly defined. They include scientific, personal, and social competences, they meet the professional requirements and are in accordance with the respective level of the National Qualification Framework. As regards regulated professions, the university of applied sciences shall describe, if and under which preconditions access to those professions is ensured.

4. The name of the degree programme and the academic degree, as defined by AQ Austria in accordance with section 6 paragraph 2 FHStG correspond to the degree programme's profile.

5. The content and structure of the curriculum ensure that the intended learning outcomes are achieved while linking applied research and development and teaching.

6. The didactic conception of the degree programme's modules shall ensure that the intended learning outcomes are achieved and promotes the students' active contribution in the learning process.

7. The workload related to the individual modules ensures that the intended learning outcomes can be achieved within the stipulated duration of studies, and in case of degree programmes for working students takes into account the professional occupation. The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) is applied correctly.

8. The university of applied sciences has adopted examination rules. The examination methods are suitable to assess whether and to what extent the intended learning outcomes have been achieved.

9. A "diploma supplement" will be issued. It complies with the requirements laid down in Annex to the Verordnung der Bundesministerin für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Kultur über die

Ausstellung eines Anhanges zum Diplom („Diploma Supplement“) für Absolventinnen und Absolventen von Fachhochschul-Studiengängen (BGBl. II Nr. 326/2004).

10. The admission requirements have been clearly defined. In terms of the qualification level, they correspond at least to the provisions provided by FHStG.

10. The admission procedure has been clearly defined and ensures a fair and transparent selection of the applicants according to the regulations laid down in the FHStG.

11. The procedures for recognition of academic competences and, if applicable, non-academic competences in terms of crediting towards examinations or parts of a degree programme have been clearly and transparently defined in accordance with the FHStG. When recognising or crediting academic competences, the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region (Lisbon Recognition Convention, F. L. G. III No. 71/1999) shall be considered.

(3) Staff

1. The development team for the study programme is scientifically or professionally qualified with regard to the profile of the study programme. The development team meets the requirements of the FHStG with regard to its composition and use in teaching.

2. The university of applied sciences shall provide for sufficient teaching and research staff as well as sufficient non-academic staff for carrying out its tasks in accordance with the development plan.

3. The composition of full-time and part-time staff provides for an appropriate support of the students.

4. The core-subjects of the degree programmes are covered by full-time scientifically qualified staff and by professionally qualified teaching and research staff.

5. The teaching and research staff is scientifically, professionally and pedagogically qualified according to the requirements of the respective post. The appointment procedures for Fachhochschul- professors are modelled on the respective requirements mentioned in the Universities Act 2002 BGBl. I Nr. 120/2002. In the event that a university of applied sciences does not have a sufficient number of Fachhochschul-professors in order to fill the seats of an appointment committee, external professors shall be appointed as members of therecruitment committee until an adequate professorial body has been built

6. The management of the degree programmes is the responsibility of scientifically qualified teaching and research personnel who are employed full-time at the university.

5. The prioritisation of the full-time scientific staff's teaching, research, and administrative activities ensures adequate participation in the teaching activities within the degree programmes and leaves sufficient time for applied research and development.

(4) Funding

The funding of the degree programme is ensured. Provisions have been made to fund the degree programme when expiring.

(5) Infrastructure

The university of applied sciences provides quantitatively and qualitatively adequate facilities and equipment for the degree programme. In the case that the university of applied sciences draws on external resources, their authorisation to use them has been contractually secured.

(6) Research and development/development and appreciation of the arts

1. The full-time teaching and research staff assigned to the degree programme is involved in relevant applied research and development activities.
2. The (planned) research activities of the full-time teaching and research staff assigned to the degree programme are in accordance with the university-standards and the respective disciplinary culture.

(7) Co-operations

The university of applied sciences has envisaged co-operation projects with higher education partners and partners outside the higher education area in Austria and abroad, which match the degree programme's profile and furthermore promote the mobility of students and staff.

Chapter 4: Special provisions

§ 18. Criteria for the accreditation of joint degree programmes and jointly offered degree programmes as well as of degree programmes offered at a site different from the accredited site

(1) Criteria for the accreditation of joint degree programmes and jointly offered degree programmes

The following additional criteria pursuant to section 17 shall apply to the accreditation:

1. The partner institutions are recognised post-secondary educational institutions.
2. The degree programme has been accredited, if so required, in accordance with the national laws and regulations applicable in the partner institution's country, or a parallel or joint programme accreditation procedure is underway.
3. The institutions involved have specified at least the following points in the co-operation agreement:
 - a. coursework and examinations to be completed by the students at the respective institutions,
 - b. admission and selection procedures,
 - c. determination of the applicable study and examination regulation(s),
 - d. automatic and full recognition of examinations and scientific theses produced at the institutions involved,
 - e. academic degree and specification of how and by whom the academic degree will be awarded,
 - f. organisational rules and administrative accountability.

(2) Criteria for the accreditation of degree programmes to be offered at another site as the institutionally accredited site

The following additional criteria pursuant to section 17 shall apply to the accreditation:

1. The university of applied sciences shall ensure that the degree programme is offered in the same quality and under comparable study conditions as the degree programmes offered at the institutionally accredited site, without it leading to a lack of resources and, subsequently, a deterioration in quality at existing sites.



2. The university of applied sciences shall ensure that the specific challenges of a degree programme offered at another site are explicitly taken account for in their internal quality management.
3. The university of applied sciences shall ensure that the counselling and support services for students are adequate and comparable to those offered at other sites. Furthermore, the university of applied sciences shall provide for a procedure for students to lodge a complaint.
4. If the site offering the degree programme is located abroad, the university of applied sciences shall also ensure that the respective national legislation is observed. Moreover, the university of applied sciences shall ensure that other educational traditions and cultural differences regarding teaching and learning, including examinations, are respected, in particular with regard to the students' role in the teaching and learning process as well as in any quality assurance processes.
5. If the university of applied sciences operates the degree programme in co-operation with another institution, a contract has been concluded which clearly and transparently defines the co-operation.

5. Chapter

§ 19. Entry into force

- (1) This Decree shall enter into force on 1 February 2019.
- (2) For procedures pending at the time of entry into force of this Decree, the Decree on the Accreditation of Private Universities of 28 May 2015 shall apply.