

DECREE OF THE BOARD OF AQ AUSTRIA ON THE ACCREDITATION OF UNIVERSITIES OF APPLIED SCIENCES 2024

FACHHOCHSCHUL-
AKKREDITIERUNGSVERORDNUNG 2024 -
FH-AKKVO 2024

adopted by the Board of AQ Austria on 12 December 2024

Decree of the Board of AQ Austria on the Accreditation of Universities of Applied Sciences (Fachhochschul-Akkreditierungsverordnung 2024 - FH-AkkVO 2024)

On the basis of § 23 para. 5 Act on Quality Assurance in Higher Education (Hochschul-Qualitätssicherungsgesetz, HS-QSG), F. L. G. I no. 74/2011, last amended by the Federal Act published in F. L. G. I no. 50/2024, the following decree is issued:

Chapter 1: Scope of regulation

§ 1. Scope of regulation

This decree rules 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 the institutional accreditation, and the procedure and criteria for programme accreditation as well as the procedure and the criteria for changes to institutional and programme accreditations.

Chapter 2: Definition of terms

§ 2. Definition of terms

The following definitions apply to the terms used in this decree:

- (1) Accreditation is the formal federal recognition of an educational institution (institutional accreditation) or of university of applied sciences degree programmes (programme accreditation) based on pre-defined criteria.
- (2) In this decree, the term "Fachhochschule" [German term for "university of applied sciences"] - notwithstanding § 8 para. 7 University of Applied Sciences Act (Fachhochschulgesetz, FHG) F. L. G. no. 340/1993 as amended F. L. G. I no. 50/2024 - includes all educational institutions that are accredited in accordance with the provisions of the HS-QSG, and therefore includes those educational institutions that bear the designation "Hochschule für Angewandte Wissenschaften" in the name of the educational institution.
- (3) The initial institutional accreditation is an ex-ante accreditation of a university of applied sciences and includes both institutional aspects as well as the particular degree programmes applied for. Accreditation is granted upon evidence that the criteria pursuant to §15 are met.
- (4) An extension of the institutional accreditation covers institutional aspects as well as the extension of the accreditation of university of applied sciences degree programmes accredited up to this date. Accreditation is granted upon evidence that the criteria pursuant to §16 are met.

- (5) The programme accreditation is an ex-ante accreditation of a university of applied sciences bachelor's or master's degree programme. Accreditation is granted upon evidence that the criteria pursuant to § 17 are met. Further special provisions for joint study programmes and jointly offered study programmes as well as for university of applied sciences degree programmes offered at another than the institutionally accredited site have been laid down in §§ 18 and 19.
- (6) Changes to institutional and programme accreditations are changes at accredited universities of applied sciences and their degree programmes that require an amendment of the official accreditation notification pursuant to § 14.
- (7) The term criterion encompasses definitions with regard to the assessment areas pursuant to § 23 HS-QSG and the accreditation requirements pursuant to § 8 FHG in the sense of the description of quantitative and qualitative characteristics and requirements that are used to determine and assess the fulfilment of the respective criterion. An assessment area (paragraph) may be assigned several criteria (subparagraphs), which in turn may include further sub-items (literae). The assessment of whether a criterion is met always takes into account the sub-items.
- (8) A criterion pursuant to para. 7 may be assessed as "fulfilled" or "not fulfilled". An assessment as "fulfilled" may be made subject to conditions if deficiencies are identified with regard to the specifications made in the criterion that can be remedied within a period of up to two years. Conditions may only be imposed if rectification is feasible within the specified period and the deficient subject matter of the application can be remedied by imposing conditions. If this is not the case, a criterion is to be assessed as "not fulfilled".

Chapter 3: Rules for submitting an application and carrying out the procedure

§ 3. Application

- (1) An application for initial institutional accreditation, extension of the institutional accreditation, programme accreditation as well as for changes to an institutional accreditation or programme accreditation shall be submitted in writing and electronically to the Secretariat of the Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria (AQ Austria).
- (2) Pursuant to § 25 para. 7 and § 26 para. 1 subpara. 1 HS-QSG, the application for extension of the institutional accreditation shall be submitted 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 educational institution. Proof of legal representation shall be enclosed. Where the applicant institution is a legal entity under private law, proof in the form of a current extract from the commercial register, the register of associations, or other appropriate evidence shall be enclosed.
- (4) An application for initial institutional accreditation, extension of initial institutional accreditation and programme accreditation shall be complete and formally correct. It must contain all information and documents required to verify fulfilment of the criteria pursuant to §§ 15 ff.

In the case of applications for programme accreditation, the application documents shall be accompanied by an executive summary, in which the institutional framework conditions and background relevant to the subject of the application for the new university of applied sciences degree programme are presented with particular reference to the curricular focus.

- (5) The application submitted for change to an institutional accreditation and/or an accredited university of applied sciences degree programme shall be complete and formally correct, with reference to those features to which the changes relevant to the decision pursuant to § 14 para. 1 and/or para. 2 apply. It shall contain all information and documents required for the decision on the change. This information and documentation shall provide evidence

of which criteria pursuant to §§ 15 ff are affected by the requested change and to what extent the relevant criteria continue to be fulfilled.

The application documents shall be accompanied by an executive summary, from which the relevant institutional framework conditions and background of the application for the changes relevant to the decision pursuant to § 14 para. 1 and/or para. 2 can be derived, as well as the date from which the changes are to apply.

- (6) Applications shall be submitted in either German or English. If an application is submitted in English, the choice of language must be justified.
- (7) The Secretariat of the Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria (hereinafter: Secretariat) shall verify the application as to its substantive completeness and formal correctness. Should any remediable shortcomings be identified, the Secretariat will grant a suitable period of at least two weeks for their remedy. If the shortcomings cannot be remedied or are not remedied in the period of time provided, the Board of AQ Austria shall reject the application.

In the case of applications for the accreditation of university of applied sciences degree programmes in the field of education for high level allied health professions, midwifery or general healthcare and nursing, AQ Austria shall call in experts of the Federal Ministry of Health according to the relevant legal provisions governing the respective profession. Only after completeness and formal correctness of the application has been confirmed, it shall be forwarded to the experts to assess compliance with the requirements of the relevant ordinance of the Federal Minister.

- (8) Substantive completeness and formal correctness of the application shall be confirmed in writing by the Secretariat and shall include a reference to the obligation to pay the fixed and published procedure charges pursuant to § 11.
- (9) If the qualifications to be acquired by completing a university of applied sciences degree programme are a condition for taking up and pursuing a regulated profession, the university of applied sciences shall, as part of the accreditation procedure, supply proof of recognition of the qualification for the exercise of the profession.
- (10) The application for initial institutional accreditation or an extension of the institutional accreditation of a university of applied sciences shall comprise at least two university of applied sciences bachelor programmes and two subsequent university of applied sciences master programmes.
- (11) If a degree programme according to § 2 para. 2a FHG with a number of study places that are financed by private legal entities outside the higher education area is established, the application for programme accreditation or for changes to an accredited university of applied sciences degree programme shall set out the amount of study places that are financed by said private legal entities and give information on the corresponding admission procedure, incl. any limitations to a previously defined student target group. The written funding commitment and the usually associated cooperation commitment of the private legal entity shall be enclosed with the application for programme accreditation or the application for changes to an accredited university of applied sciences degree programme.
- (12) Applications may be modified until the Board of AQ Austria decides on the matter. Amendments to the application shall be submitted in accordance with § 3 para. 1. The Board of AQ Austria shall decide on the further procedure and procedural steps that need to be repeated or added pursuant to §§ 4 to 8. AQ Austria shall inform the applicant institution of any further procedural steps. The applicant institution shall bear any costs (procedure charges as well as the fixed expense allowances for experts) incurred by the amendment of the application and by procedural steps that need to be repeated or added.

§ 4. Procedure

- (1) The Board of AQ Austria decides on the procedure, taking into account the specific requirements of the application. The Board of AQ Austria may waive the need for an external review, request an experts' report or decide on a review incl. a site visit. Furthermore, the Board of AQ Austria can focus the review procedure on a selection of criteria according to §§ 15 ff, if this can be derived from the specific requirements of the application.
- (2) In the case of an institutional accreditation or an extension of the institutional accreditation, the Board of AQ Austria may separate the subjects of the application and carry out separate reviews. The applicant institution shall bear the costs incurred (procedure charges and fixed expense allowances for experts).
- (3) If accreditation of several degree programmes and/or changes of institutional accreditations or programme accreditations are applied for at the same time, the Board of AQ Austria may treat the applications in a joint procedure if this is appropriate, in particular considering the relatedness of the subject area of university of applied sciences degree programmes. The Board of AQ Austria may reduce any procedure charges incurred in accordance with § 5 para. 2 in conjunction with para. 3 of the Procedure Charges Determination in force at the time the applications are submitted.
- (4) The Board of AQ Austria decides on the procedure for applications for changes to institutional accreditation or for changes to an accredited university of applied sciences degree programme pursuant to § 4 para. 1.
- (5) At the request of the applicant institution, the Board of AQ Austria may take into account the results of other quality assurance procedures in order to facilitate the process. The corresponding evidence and results of past quality assurance procedures shall be attached to the application.
 1. In the case of programme accreditation of jointly offered study programmes, the results of quality assurance procedures which have already taken place shall be recognised.
 2. In case of the programme accreditation of joint study programmes with other higher education institutions from the European Higher Education Area, the Board of AQ Austria may, upon application of the applicant institution, apply the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes instead of §§ 5 to 8 and 17 to 19. If the programme accreditation is carried out according to the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes by a quality assurance agency registered in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR), the evidence and results of the completed quality assurance procedure shall be attached to the application for programme accreditation.
 3. In the case of programme accreditation of joint study programmes with a public university pursuant to § 6 para. 1 Universities Act 2002 (UG 2002), the Board of AQ Austria may upon application of the applying institution, specify a deviating procedure which takes into consideration, in particular, the co-operation agreement, quality assurance and development of the curricula.

§ 5. Experts

- (1) If the Board of AQ Austria decides on a procedure involving experts, it shall appoint them. When appointing experts, the Board of AQ Austria strives for diversity and considers relevant areas of competence in the selection process, in accordance with the requirements of the application and the procedure:
 1. scientific or artistic qualification in the central disciplines of the university of applied sciences' course offerings;
 2. relevant research and/or teaching experience and knowledge of academic research and/or teaching activities;
 3. professional activity in an occupational field relevant to the course offerings of the university of applied sciences;
 4. experience in quality management and quality assurance in higher education;
 5. experience in university management and organisational structures;

6. experience in the development, implementation and evaluation of curricula;
 7. current experience as a student in one of the subject areas taught at the university of applied sciences.
- (2)** In the case of an extension of institutional accreditation, the Board of AQ Austria may appoint additional experts to draw up subject-specific reports if it deems this necessary to appropriately consider the range of subjects at the university of applied sciences when assessing the fulfilment of the criteria.
- (3)** In the case of programme accreditations of university of applied sciences degree programmes in the field of education for high level allied health professions, midwifery or general healthcare and nursing, the Board of AQ Austria shall involve the experts of the Federal Ministry of Health in accordance with the relevant professional regulations. The applicant institution shall bear the incurred costs (expense allowances for experts).
- (4)** 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. Bias may arise, in particular, from the reasons listed below, which must be substantiated in writing and communicated electronically to AQ Austria:
1. contractual employment with the university of applied sciences within the last five years;
 2. participation in application procedures as an applicant at the university of applied sciences within the last five years;
 3. personal research collaboration or co-operation with individuals from the university of applied sciences within the last five years;
 4. examinations taken or degrees awarded at the university of applied sciences within the last five years;
 5. familial or close personal connections to individuals at the university of applied sciences.

In the case of the requirement to consult experts from the competent Federal Minister of Health pursuant to para. 3, a deviation from the requirement pursuant to § 4 para. 1 to 5 may be made with regard to the above-mentioned time periods. In any case, the time period shall not be less than three years.

- (5)** The Secretariat shall inform the applicant institution about the experts and grant it a reasonable time period of at least one week to raise objections. Objections can be derived in particular from the grounds of bias mentioned in para. 4. Objections shall be justified and submitted in writing and sent electronically to AQ Austria. The applicant institution does not have the right to propose experts.
- (6)** The Secretariat supports the activities of the experts throughout the entire accreditation procedure. Apart from the site visit, communication between the applicant institution and the experts shall take place exclusively via the Secretariat.
- (7)** The Secretariat shall prepare the experts for their role and activities. The Secretariat shall support the experts in their activities, in particular with regard to the specific requirements of the subject of the application.

§ 6. Site visit

AQ Austria determines the agenda for the site visit at the applicant institution. The following principles apply:

1. The agenda shall be tailored to the specific requirements of the procedure and be coordinated with the applicant institution. AQ Austria names the relevant groups of the applicant institution that are to be heard.
2. The representatives of the relevant groups shall be nominated by the applicant institution. After consultation with the experts, the agenda for the site visit is set by AQ Austria in cooperation with the applicant institution.
3. The selection of students, if applicable, is carried out by the student representation of the applicant institution.

4. All relevant groups of the applicant institution shall be heard, and the individuals to be heard shall present their positions freely and without external influence.
5. In addition to the experts, representatives of the Secretariat take part in the site visit to support the experts in their work and to ensure the proper conduct of the site visit.

§ 7. Experts' report

- (1) On the basis of the findings from the application documents and, if applicable, pursuant to § 4 from discussions with representatives of the applicant institution, the experts shall draw up a joint experts' report, consisting of observations and assessments to the criteria pursuant to §§ 15 ff and, if applicable, references to significantly good practice and/or recommendations for further enhancement.
- (2) A criterion can be determined as "fulfilled" or "not fulfilled" pursuant to § 2 para. 8. Experts may propose to the Board of AQ Austria that conditions be imposed if shortcomings in the specifications defining the criterion are identified and can be remedied within a period of up to two years. This only applies in cases where a criterion is determined to be "fulfilled"; if this is not determined, the criterion is to be assessed as "not fulfilled". This regulation applies to the following applications:
 1. extension of institutional accreditation;
 2. changes to institutional accreditations and accredited university of applied sciences degree programmes;
 3. programme accreditation of universities of applied sciences that have already successfully completed an audit according to § 22 HS-QSG.
- (3) The experts' report shall be drawn up respecting the diversity of the experts' opinions, while at the same time aiming at a consensus in order to provide common findings and assessments with regard to the criteria and a concluding assessment. If diverging experts' opinions on an issue cannot be resolved, they shall be made transparent in the experts' report.

§ 8. Comment of the applicant institution

The Secretariat shall forward the experts' report to the applicant institution and grant it a reasonable period of at least two weeks for a written comment on the report. The comment shall be submitted to AQ Austria. Within the scope of the comment on the experts' report, the university of applied sciences may point out, in particular, factual errors. Upon receiving the comment, the Secretariat shall forward them to the experts for information. The Board of AQ Austria has to consider the experts' report and, if applicable, the comment of the applicant institution in the accreditation decision. If the Board of AQ Austria qualifies the comment or parts of the comment as an amendment to the application, the Board of AQ Austria shall decide on the further procedure and on procedural steps to be repeated or added as well as additional costs (procedure charges and expense allowances for experts) pursuant to § 3 para. 12.

§ 9. Decision and official notification

- (1) The Board of AQ Austria decides based on the application documents, the experts' report, if available, as well as any subject-specific experts' report obtained pursuant to § 5 para. 2, and the comment of the applicant institution, if available. The Board may of AQ Austria approve or reject the application.
- (2) If the Board of AQ Austria approves an application for accreditation, the accreditation period for initial institutional accreditation and an extension of institutional accreditation shall be six years. After an uninterrupted accreditation period of twelve years, the accreditation of university of applied sciences degree programmes shall be awarded for an unlimited period.

- (3) In the case of applications from universities of applied sciences that have already successfully completed an audit according to §22 HS-QSG for an extension of institutional accreditation, for programme accreditations, for changes of institutional accreditation or for changes to accredited degree programmes, the Board of AQ Austria may grant an accreditation subject to conditions if shortcomings are identified in the course of the accreditation procedure that can be remedied within a period not exceeding two years.
- (4) The decision of the Board of AQ Austria is subject to approval by the competent Federal Minister prior to the issuing of the official notification. Applications for the accreditation of university of applied sciences degree programmes in the field of education for high level allied health professions, midwifery or general healthcare and nursing, an agreement shall furthermore be reached with the competent Federal Minister of Health.
- (5) The official notification shall, in any event, include the following information:
1. accreditation period;
 2. name of the legal entity of the university of applied sciences and name of the university of applied sciences;
 3. title, type, study format, total workload (in European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) credits), duration (in academic years, semesters), language used and exact wording of the academic degree to be awarded (including its abbreviation) for the university of applied sciences degree programme;
 4. number of study places of the university of applied sciences degree programme;
 5. site at which the university of applied sciences degree programme is offered;
 6. conditions, if any.

Pursuant to § 25 para. 6 subpara. 8 HS-QSG, the accreditation period begins at the time of delivery of the official notification. If an appeal is lodged against the official notification of the Board of AQ Austria, the accreditation period is suspended pursuant to § 25 para. 8 HS-QSG.

§ 10. Publication of the results of the procedure

No later than two months after the completion of the accreditation procedure, upon delivery of the official notification, AQ Austria and the university of applied sciences shall publish an easily accessible results report on the accreditation procedure on their respective websites for the duration of the accreditation period. The results report shall contain the decision of the Board of AQ Austria including the reasons given, the experts' report (incl. the experts' names as well as their institutional affiliations) and the applicant institution's comment (the latter only following their approval). Personal data, funding sources as well as business and trade secrets shall be exempt from publication.

§ 11. Costs

The applicant institution shall reimburse AQ Austria for the costs for the experts and pay a lump sum to be specified and published by the Board of AQ Austria. The lump sums as well as any procedural costs (costs of the experts – expense allowance, plus any applicable taxes, travel and accommodation costs) shall be prescribed by means of an official notification. The obligation to pay arises upon submission of the substantively complete and formally correct application according to § 3 para. 8 and falls due upon completion of the procedure. In the case of applications for initial institutional accreditation and for extension of institutional accreditation, 50 percent of the lump sum in accordance with the Procedure Charges Determination by the Board of AQ Austria regarding the procedural lump sums, shall be due upon submission of the substantively complete and formally correct application according to § 3 para. 8 and after the decision by the Board of AQ Austria on a deviating procedure pursuant to § 4 para. 1 and 2.

§ 12. Complaints

The applicant institution may appeal to the Appeals Committee of AQ Austria against the procedure as such, insofar as these do not concern the assessment of evidence to be raised in the context of an appeal. The appeal shall be submitted to AQ Austria in writing and in electronic form.

§ 13. Evidence for the fulfilment of conditions

- (1) If the extension of the institutional accreditation or the approval of changes to institutional accreditations or university of applied sciences degree programmes or the programme accreditation at universities of applied sciences that have already successfully completed an audit according to § 22 HS-QSG is granted subject to conditions, the applicant institution shall submit evidence to AQ Austria that the conditions have been fulfilled in writing and in electronic form within the period specified in the official notification (up to two years).
- (2) The evidence that the conditions have been fulfilled shall contain all information and documents necessary to confirm the fulfilment of the conditions.
- (3) The Board of AQ Austria shall decide if an assessment is necessary to determine whether the conditions have been fulfilled. If the Board of AQ Austria considers corresponding procedural steps to be necessary, §§ 5 to 12 shall apply. The applicant institution shall be informed about the determined procedure and shall bear the lump sum as well as any additional costs (expense allowances for experts, plus any applicable taxes, travel and accommodation costs).
- (4) If the applicant institution can prove that the conditions have been fulfilled, the Board of AQ Austria shall declare this by official notification. If the university of applied sciences cannot prove or cannot prove in time that the conditions have been fulfilled, the Board of AQ Austria shall revoke the accreditation by official notification.

The period for the fulfilment of the conditions shall commence at the time of delivery of the official notification pursuant to § 25 para. 6 subpara. 8 HS-QSG. If an appeal is lodged against the decision pursuant to para. 1 in accordance with § 25 para. 8 HS-QSG, the period for submitting evidence that the conditions have been fulfilled is suspended.

§ 14. Changes relevant to the official accreditation notification

- (1) Changes to institutional accreditations or accredited university of applied sciences degree programmes require in any case an amendment of the official accreditation notification, should the changes relate to the following characteristics:
 1. change of the name of the legal entity of the university of applied sciences and change of the legal structure of the legal entity of the university of applied sciences;
 2. change to the curriculum of the university of applied sciences degree programme resulting in significant changes of the profile and the associated intended learning outcomes at degree programme level;
 3. change regarding the number of study places of the university of applied sciences degree programme;
 4. change of the site of the university of applied sciences degree programme.

The following shall apply to § 14 para. 1: In these cases, the Board of AQ Austria shall decide on the procedure according to § 4 para. 1.

The following shall apply to § 14 para. 1 subpara. 1: In these cases, the procedure pursuant to § 14 para. 2 shall apply.

The following shall apply to § 14 para. 1 subpara. 2: Significant changes to the curriculum may involve changes to the name of the degree programme, the total workload (in ECTS credits), the duration (in semesters), the language used and/or the wording of the academic degree to be awarded (including the abbreviated form) and the organisational

form of the university of applied sciences degree programme or may be caused by the change and/or inclusion of special profile-defining features.

The following shall apply to § 14 para. 1 subpara. 3: For universities of applied sciences that are accredited for an unlimited period of time pursuant to § 23 para. 9 HS-QSG and whose quality management system is certified according to § 22 HS-QSG, a change pursuant to subpara. 3 does not require a change to the official accreditation notification. Therefore, no application according to § 3 para. 6 has to be submitted to AQ Austria.

(2) The Board of AQ Austria must be informed of the following:

1. change to the name of the university of applied sciences degree programme, unless this is due to a change pursuant to para. 1 subpara. 2;
2. change to the name of the university of applied sciences.

The following shall apply to § 14 para. 2: In these cases, the Board of AQ Austria acknowledges the notification of the change, and the decision is amended ex officio.

Chapter 4: Criteria and requirements for evidence and substantiation for the conduct of procedures

§ 15. Criteria for initial institutional accreditation

The following criteria shall apply to the initial institutional accreditation of universities of applied sciences:

(1) Profile and objectives

1. The university of applied sciences defines an institutional profile and derives objectives for its activities in the fields of learning and teaching as well as applied research and development. The university of applied sciences shall ensure compliance with the key principles:
 - a. ensuring a practice-oriented education at higher education level;
 - b. imparting the ability to solve problems in the respective profession according to the state of the art and the current and future practical requirements;
 - c. promoting the permeability of the education system and the professional flexibility of graduates.
2. Furthermore, the university of applied sciences ensures that the academic standards for the organisation of university of applied sciences degree programmes are fulfilled. This comprises, in particular:
 - a. the freedom of science and its teaching;
 - b. the connection of applied research and development and teaching;
 - c. the diversity of scientific theories and scientific and/or scientific-artistic methods.

(2) Development planning

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. For the first six years after accreditation as a university of applied sciences, the development plan sets out how the objectives set for this period can be achieved with the planned measures and the resources deployed for this purpose. The development plan is attached to the application for institutional accreditation and includes:
 - a. designation of focal points and planned activities in teaching and applied research and development;
 - b. information on structural and content-related development planning;
 - c. information on personnel planning;
 - d. description of measures for gender equality;
 - e. measures establishing a quality management system.
2. The university of applied sciences shall define a regular process for 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 ensures higher education autonomy as well as the freedom of science and its teaching, while taking into account the interests of the legal entity. To this end, it has a balanced system of bodies as specified in the FHG. The corresponding organisational structure and the interaction of the bodies is defined in the statute, a draft version of which shall be attached to the application for institutional accreditation.
2. The draft statute describes the following issues defined in § 10 para. 3 subpara. 10 FHG in a comprehensible and adequate manner:
 - a. provisions with regard to the curriculum and examination rules;
 - b. regulations to ensure the integrity of academic and artistic study, teaching and research activities;
 - c. provisions with regard to the establishment and discontinuation of university of applied sciences degree programmes and continuing higher education programmes;
 - d. rules for the election of the university of applied sciences board and the establishment of any working groups, if any, and their statutes;
 - e. regulations with regard to presence quorums of the board;
 - f. an equal opportunity plan with measures that promote gender equality;
 - g. if applicable, guidelines for the award of academic honours upon agreement with the provider;
 - h. if applicable, guidelines for the appropriate use of titles customary in academia.

(4) Quality management system

1. The university of applied sciences must provide for a quality management system that is embedded in the higher education institution's strategic management. The quality management system comprises processes and measures for:
 - a. regular and systematic collection of information and data in the areas of study, applied research and development and supporting tasks;

- b. ensuring fulfilment of the criteria for the accreditation of university of applied sciences degree programmes through defined, regular evaluations with the involvement of relevant stakeholders;
 - c. development of new and continuous further development of university of applied sciences degree programmes with the involvement of relevant interest groups.
2. The university of applied sciences must provide appropriate and suitable structures and procedures to ensure that the rules of good scientific practice and scientific and/or artistic integrity are adhered to.

(5) Degree programme and degree programme management

Taking into account a heterogeneous student body, the following criteria shall apply. In the case of university of applied sciences degree programmes with special profile elements, the descriptions shall address these characteristics defining the profile. Special profile elements are, for example, access to a regulated profession, mandatory vocational practice in the case of university of applied sciences master's programmes, study formats alongside professional activity, dual university of applied sciences degree programmes, university of applied sciences degree programmes with distance learning components and fully online degree programmes, joint study programmes or jointly offered university of applied sciences study programmes that are conducted at more than one location.

1. The university of applied sciences degree programme is oriented towards the profile and strategic objectives of the university of applied sciences, taking into account the aspects of demand and acceptance.
2. The curriculum of the university of applied sciences degree programme
 - a. corresponds to the scientific and/or artistic, professional and didactic requirements of the respective subject area and/or the respective subject areas, is related to the focal areas of applied research and development at the university of applied sciences and takes into account the requirements of the defined professional fields;
 - b. comprises defined core subject areas which reflect the main subjects of the university of applied sciences degree programme and thus the central competences to be acquired in the degree programme;
 - c. ensures the achievement of the intended learning outcomes according to the respective qualification level of the National Qualifications Framework through content and structure;
 - d. comprises modules and/or courses with suitable learning/teaching methods that promote the active participation of students in the learning process and provide for suitable assessment methods to achieve the intended learning outcomes;
 - e. comprises modules and/or courses whose workload, expressed in ECTS credits, enables the degree programme to be completed within the specified duration of study;
 - f. in the case of university of applied sciences bachelor's degree programmes, this includes a professional internship, which constitutes a relevant part of the degree programme.
3. The name of the university of applied sciences degree programme and the academic degree correspond to the thematic focus of the university of applied sciences degree programme. The academic degree shall be chosen from the admissible academic degrees defined by AQ Austria in accordance with § 6 para. 2 FHG.
4. To support international mobility and to facilitate academic and professional recognition of the qualifications acquired, a programme-specific Diploma Supplement shall be provided for students and graduates. An exemplary Diploma Supplement for the university of applied sciences degree programme shall be enclosed with the application for institutional accreditation.
5. The admission requirements for the degree programme and the admission procedure for the university of applied sciences degree programme are clearly defined and communicated transparently. The organisation of the admission procedure ensures an objective selection of applicants and is designed to promote the permeability of the education system.

6. Procedures for the recognition of examinations, other academic achievements and formally, non-formally and informally acquired competences—particularly those obtained in the context of the practice-oriented training of the university of applied sciences degree programme and eligible for credit transfer—are clearly defined and transparent for all stakeholders, potentially allowing for a reduction in study duration.

(6) Counselling and support for students

1. The university of applied sciences provides for suitable offerings for counselling on the subjects and organisation of studies as well as psychosocial counselling and support for its students.
2. The university of applied sciences provides for a suitable procedure of handling complaints made by students.

(7) Applied research and development

1. For the first six years following initial institutional accreditation, the university of applied sciences must have a plan for implementing application-oriented research and development activities, which is consistent with the priorities set out in the development plan. The plan is attached to the application for institutional accreditation and includes:
 - a. statements on ensuring suitable organisational and structural framework conditions for the promotion of application-related research and development activities;
 - b. statements on ensuring scientific standards in the academic disciplines where applied research and development activities are planned;
 - c. statements on the planning and establishment of institutionally anchored co-operations on applied research and development with partners from the higher education area and, where appropriate, from outside higher education in Austria and abroad;
 - d. statements on measures for knowledge and/or technology transfer to the economy and society.
2. The permanent teaching and research staff assigned to the university of applied sciences degree programmes are involved in the application-oriented research and development activities relevant to the university of applied sciences.

(8) Staff

1. In order to fulfil its tasks in accordance with the development plan, the university of applied sciences provides
 - a. sufficient permanent and adjunct teaching and research staff who are didactically and scientifically and/or artistically or professionally qualified according to the requirements of the respective post, and
 - b. sufficient non-scientific staff.
2. The university of applied sciences ensures appropriate student support through the composition of its permanent and adjunct teaching and research staff.
3. The university of applied sciences has adequate processes and measures to
 - a. integrate the adjunct teaching staff in the teaching and study organisation of university of applied sciences degree programmes and
 - b. manage an appropriate balance between teaching, research, and administrative activities of the permanent teaching and research staff.
4. The core subject areas of the university of applied sciences degree programmes are covered by permanent scientifically and/or artistically or professionally qualified teaching and research staff. The core subject areas represent the main subjects of the degree programmes and thus the central competences to be acquired.

5. The development team for each university of applied sciences degree programme submitted in the application for institutional accreditation, comprise at least four persons. Of them
 - a. two must be academically and/or artistically qualified by a habilitation degree or an equivalent qualification, and
 - b. two must be professionally qualified and involved in the development of the respective university of applied sciences degree programme and
 - c. at least two academically and/or artistically and two professionally qualified persons of the development team shall act as adjunct or permanent teaching staff in the degree programme.
6. The management of the respective university of applied sciences degree programme is the responsibility of scientifically qualified teaching and research staff who perform this activity as their main occupation.
7. The university of applied sciences provides for transparent and quality-driven recruitment procedures for hiring permanent and adjunct teaching and research staff and provides for adequate further training and staff development measures.

The following shall apply to § 15 para. 8 subpara. 4: The university of applied sciences submits CVs for the already employed permanent teaching and research staff with the application for institutional accreditation. For this staff, the respective teaching load must be documented.

For permanent teaching and research staff who have yet to be recruited, the application for institutional accreditation shall be accompanied by a recruitment plan indicating the date of the planned appointment.

The following shall apply to § 15 para. 8 subpara. 5 lit. a: Corresponding information regarding a qualification equivalent to a habilitation in scientific and/or artistic fields must be provided in detail in the application for institutional accreditation. As evidence of a qualification equivalent to a habilitation, a relevant professorship at a recognized domestic or foreign university, or inclusion in the proposal for a relevant professorship at a recognized domestic or foreign university, is considered sufficient.

The following shall apply to § 15 para. 8 subpara. 5 lit. c: The university of applied sciences submits CVs of the scientifically and/or artistically, as well as professionally, qualified members of the respective development teams, who teach permanently or adjunct in the university of applied sciences degree programme, with the application for institutional accreditation.

The following shall apply to § 15 para. 8 subpara. 6: The university of applied sciences submits CVs for the planned heads of studies with the application for institutional accreditation, stating the respective teaching load. For heads of studies who are still to be recruited, the application for institutional accreditation shall be accompanied by a recruitment plan indicating the date of the planned appointment.

(9) Funding

A financial plan for the first six years following accreditation shall be enclosed with the application for institutional accreditation. The financial plan refers to the explanations in the development plan and includes a realistic and plausible comparison of all expected income and expenses in connection with the establishment of a university of applied sciences. The financial plan must address the following aspects in a comprehensible and plausible manner:

1. presentation of a minimum number of students that ensures that the respective university of applied sciences degree programmes are sustainable for the duration of the accreditation;
2. presentation of all costs in relation to the necessary infrastructure and planned staff requirements (scientific and/or artistic as well as professional and non-scientific staff);
3. presentation of precautionary measures, in particular through the creation of reserves, which ensure the continuation of studies in the event that university of applied sciences degree programmes are discontinued.

The application for institutional accreditation shall be accompanied by the corresponding funding commitments from the funding bodies named in the financial plan. The financial calculations must be attached to the application for institutional accreditation in Excel format.

(10) Infrastructure

The university of applied sciences' facilities and equipment are quantitatively and qualitatively adequate to ensure the performance of its tasks in accordance with the development plan. In the case that the university of applied sciences draws on external resources, their right of disposal has been secured and the key points thereof shall be described in the application for initial institutional accreditation.

(11) Co-operation

In addition to the plans for institutionally anchored co-operations for applied research and development pursuant to § 15 para. 7 subpara. 1 lit. c, the university of applied sciences enters into co-operations with partners from the higher education area and, where appropriate, from outside higher education in Austria and abroad, which align with its profile and aim to promote the mobility of students and staff.

(12) Information

The university of applied sciences has a website that offers easily accessible and up-to-date information about its services, including, as a minimum, the statutes, the curricula with the study and examination regulations, model written study contracts agreements and an outline of the quality management system.

§ 16. Criteria for the extension of the institutional accreditation

The following criteria shall apply for the extension of institutional accreditation of universities of applied sciences:

(1) Profile and objectives

1. The university of applied sciences has defined an institutional profile and derives objectives for its activities, while ensuring that the following key principles are adhered to:
 - a. ensuring practice-oriented training at higher education level;
 - b. imparting the ability solve the tasks of the respective profession according to the state of the art and the current and future practical requirements
 - c. promoting the permeability of the educational system and the professional flexibility of the graduates.
2. Furthermore, the university of applied sciences ensures that the academic standards for the organisation of university of applied sciences degree programmes are fulfilled. These include in particular:
 - a. the freedom of science and its teaching;
 - b. the connection of applied research and development and teaching;
 - c. the diversity of scientific theories and scientific and/or scientific-artistic methods.

(2) Development planning

1. In the application for extension of institutional accreditation, the university of applied sciences provides a comprehensible and plausible explanation of focal points of the development plan were implemented during the previous accreditation period and which changes and adjustments were made. In addition, the university of applied sciences describes how, on the basis of an established procedure, a regular process of monitoring the achievement of objectives has taken place.

2. The application for extension of institutional accreditation is accompanied by an updated development plan for the next six-year accreditation period of the university of applied sciences, which is consistent with the profile and objectives and which specifies longer-term goals and strategies for achieving them. The development plan describes how the objectives set for this period can be achieved with the planned measures and the allocated resources and includes:

- a. designation of focal points and measures in teaching and applied research and development;
- b. information on structural and content-related development planning;
- c. information on staff planning;
- d. description of measures for gender equality;
- e. measures for the further development of the quality management system.

(3) Organisation of the university of applied sciences

1. In the application for extension of institutional accreditation, the university of applied sciences provides a comprehensible and plausible explanation of which changes and adjustments were made to the statutes in the previous accreditation period and which processes and measures are used to ensure that the autonomy of the university of applied sciences and thus the freedom of science and its teaching is guaranteed while at the same time taking into account the interests of the legal entity. The statutes are enclosed with the application for extension of institutional accreditation.
2. In the statute the following issues as defined in § 10 para. 3 subpara. 10 FHG are specified in a comprehensible and adequate manner:
 - a. provisions with regard to the curriculum and examination rules;
 - b. regulations to ensure the integrity of academic and artistic study, teaching and research activities;
 - c. provisions on the establishment and discontinuation of university of applied sciences degree programmes and continuing higher education programmes;
 - d. rules for the election of the university of applied sciences board and the establishment of working groups, if any, and their statutes;
 - e. provisions on presence quorums of the board;
 - f. an equal opportunity plan with measures to promote gender equality;
 - g. if applicable, guidelines for the award of academic honours upon agreement with the provider;
 - h. if applicable, guidelines for the appropriate use of titles customary in academia.

(4) Quality management system

1. In the application for extension of institutional accreditation, the university of applied sciences shall describe the processes and measures with which the effectiveness of the quality management system and the defined instruments are regularly assessed and, if necessary, further developed with the involvement of relevant stakeholders. The university of applied sciences describes the key results of these processes in its application.

2. Based on its objectives, the university of applied sciences shall explain how the established quality management system, which is integrated into the strategic university management, will ensure the regular assessment of the quality of teaching and learning as well as applied research and development and the supporting tasks in the upcoming accreditation period. The quality management system comprises processes and measures for
 - a. regular and systematic collection of information and data in the areas of study, teaching and applied research and development and the supporting tasks;
 - b. ensuring compliance with the criteria for the accreditation of study programmes through defined regular evaluations with the involvement of relevant stakeholders;
 - c. developing new degree programmes and continuous further development of existing programmes with the involvement of the relevant internal and external stakeholders.
3. The university of applied sciences ensures compliance with the rules of good scientific practice and scientific and/or artistic integrity through appropriate and suitable structures and procedures.

(5) Counselling and support for students

1. The university of applied sciences provides adequate support offerings on the subjects and relating to the study formats as well as psychosocial counselling and support for its students.
2. The university of applied sciences provides for a suitable procedure of handling complaints made by students.

(6) Applied research and development

1. In the application for extension of institutional accreditation, the university of applied sciences shall explain which strategic objectives and priorities for applied research and development activities were implemented in the previous accreditation period and which were not implemented, providing comprehensible and plausible explanations.
2. The university of applied sciences has defined a plan for the implementation of applied research and development activities for the upcoming accreditation period, which is consistent with the focal points set out in the development plan. The plan is attached to the application for extension of institutional accreditation and includes
 - a. statements on organisational and structural framework conditions for the promotion of application-related research and development activities;
 - b. statements on ensuring scientific standards in the respective academic disciplines in which the planned achievements of the applied research and development activities are outlined;
 - c. statements on the involvement of permanent teaching and research staff at the university of applied sciences in relevant and applied research and development activities;
 - d. statements on institutionally anchored co-operations in applied research and development with partners from the higher education area and, where appropriate, from outside higher education in Austria and abroad;
 - e. statements on measures for knowledge and/or technology transfer to the economy and society.

(7) Staff

1. For carrying out its tasks in accordance with the development plan, the university of applied sciences provides at all sites at which studies are offered for
 - a. sufficient permanent and adjunct teaching and research staff who are didactically, scientifically and/or artistically and professionally qualified in accordance with the requirements of the respective post;
 - b. sufficient non-scientific staff.

2. The university of applied sciences ensures appropriate student support through the composition of its permanent and adjunct teaching and research staff to
3. The university of applied sciences has adequate processes and measures
 - a. integrate the adjunct teaching staff in the teaching and study organisation of university of applied sciences degree programmes and
 - b. manage an appropriate balance of teaching, research and administrative activities of permanent teaching and research staff.
4. The core subject areas of the university of applied sciences degree programmes are covered by permanent scientifically and/or artistically qualified teaching and research staff with practical professional experience. The core subject areas represent the main subjects of the university of applied sciences degree programmes and thus the central competences to be acquired.
5. The development team for each university of applied sciences degree programme comprise at least four persons. Of them
 - a. two must be academically and/or artistically qualified by a habilitation degree or an equivalent qualification, and
 - b. two must be professionally qualified and involved in the development of the respective university of applied sciences degree programme and
 - c. at least two academically and/or artistically and two professionally qualified persons of the development team shall act as adjunct or permanent teaching staff in the degree programme.
6. The management of the respective university of applied sciences degree programme is the responsibility of scientifically and/or artistically qualified teaching and research staff who perform this activity as their main occupation.
7. The university of applied sciences provides for transparent and quality-driven recruitment procedures for hiring permanent and adjunct teaching and research staff, as well as adequate further training and staff development measures.

The following shall apply to § 16 para. 7 subpara. 2: The university of applied sciences submits CVs of the permanent teaching and research staff with the application for extension of institutional accreditation. For this staff, the respective teaching load must be documented.

The following shall apply to § 16 para. 7 subpara. 4: The application for extension of institutional accreditation shall be accompanied by an overview of the university of applied sciences degree programmes accredited at the time of submission of the application for extension of institutional accreditation. The overview shall include the respective core subject areas of these degree programmes, stating the respective permanent scientifically and/or artistically and professionally qualified teaching and research staff.

The following shall apply to § 16 para. 7 subpara. 5 lit. a: Corresponding information regarding a qualification equivalent to a habilitation in scientific and/or artistic fields must be provided in detail in the application. As evidence of a qualification equivalent to a habilitation, a relevant professorship at a recognized domestic or foreign university, or inclusion in the proposal for a relevant professorship at a recognized domestic or foreign university, is considered sufficient.

The following shall apply to § 16 para. 7 subpara. 5 lit. c: The university of applied sciences submits CVs of the scientifically and/or artistically, as well as professionally, qualified members of the respective development teams, who teach permanently or adjunct in the university of applied sciences degree programmes, with the application for extension of institutional accreditation.

The following shall apply to § 16 para. 7 subpara. 6: T The university of applied sciences submits CVs of the heads of the degree programmes of the university of applied sciences with the application for extension of institutional accreditation, stating the respective teaching load.

(8) Funding

1. In the application for the extension of institutional accreditation, the university of applied sciences explains any deviations in the financial planning compared to the previous accreditation period and provides a comprehensible and plausible justification for the measures taken to achieve or amend the objectives outlined in the development plan.
2. The application for the extension of institutional accreditation is accompanied by a financial plan for the upcoming six-year accreditation period of the university of applied sciences, which refers to the explanations in the development plan and includes a realistic and plausible comparison of all expected income and expenses in connection with the upcoming accreditation period of the university of applied sciences. The financial plan must address the following aspects in a comprehensible and plausible manner:
 - a. presentation of a minimum number of students that ensures that the respective university of applied sciences degree programmes are sustainable for the duration of the accreditation;
 - b. presentation of all costs in relation to the necessary infrastructure and staff requirements;
 - c. presentation of precautionary measures, in particular through the creation of reserves, which ensure the continuation of studies in the event that university of applied sciences degree programmes are discontinued.

Funding commitments from all funding bodies listed in the financial plan as well as financial calculations in Excel format shall be attached to the application for extension of institutional accreditation.

(9) Infrastructure

The university of applied sciences' facilities and equipment are quantitatively and qualitatively adequate to ensure the performance of its tasks in accordance with the development plan. In the case that the university of applied sciences draws on external resources, their right of disposal has been secured and the key points thereof shall be described in the application for extension of institutional accreditation.

(10) Co-operation

1. In the application for extension of institutional accreditation, the university of applied sciences shall describe which higher education and non-higher education partnerships both domestically and internationally were established, further developed or terminated during the previous accreditation period in addition to the institutionally anchored cooperation in research and development pursuant to § 16 para. 6 subpara. 2 lit. d. Furthermore, the university of applied sciences outlines the measures taken to subject existing partnerships to regular quality assurance. The key results of these measures are presented in the application for extension of institutional accreditation.
2. The application for the extension of institutional accreditation is accompanied by a plan for the upcoming six-year accreditation period of the university of applied sciences, which outlines cooperation initiatives to promote the mobility of students and staff.

(11) Information

The university of applied sciences has a website that offers easily accessible and up-to-date information about its services, including, as a minimum, the statutes, the curricula with the study and examination regulations, model written study contracts agreements and an outline of the quality management system.

§ 17. Criteria for the accreditation of degree programmes

The following criteria shall apply to the accreditation of degree programmes at universities of applied sciences:

(1) Development and quality assurance of the university of applied sciences degree programme

1. The university of applied sciences degree programme, which is linked to the educational institution's profile and strategic objectives, was developed using a predefined procedure for the systematic development and establishment of degree programmes involving the relevant stakeholders.
2. Following accreditation, the university of applied sciences degree programme is incorporated into the university of applied sciences' quality management system. Using an established process for quality assurance and enhancement and including the relevant stakeholders, the university of applied sciences ensures ongoing compliance with the accreditation criteria.
3. The university of applied sciences ensures that the university of applied sciences degree programme is integrated into appropriate and suitable structures and procedures to ensure compliance with the rules of good academic practice and academic and/or artistic integrity.

The following shall apply to § 17 para. 1 subpara. 1 and 2: These criteria only apply to universities of applied sciences that have not yet successfully completed an audit pursuant to § 22 HS-QSG.

(2) Degree programme and degree programme management

Taking into account a heterogeneous student body, the following criteria shall apply. In the case of degree programmes at universities of applied sciences with special profile elements, the descriptions shall address these characteristics defining the profile. Special profile elements are, for example, access to a regulated profession, mandatory vocational practice in the case of university of applied sciences master's programmes, study formats alongside professional activity, dual university of applied sciences degree programmes, university of applied sciences degree programmes with distance learning components and fully online degree programmes, joint study programmes or jointly offered university of applied sciences study programmes that are conducted at more than one location.

1. The university of applied sciences degree programme is oriented towards the profile and strategic objectives of the university of applied sciences, taking into account the aspects of demand and acceptance.
2. The curriculum of the university of applied sciences degree programme
 - a. corresponds to the scientific and/or artistic, professional and didactic requirements of the respective subject area and/or the respective subject areas, is related to the focal areas of applied research and development at the university of applied sciences and takes into account the requirements of the defined professional fields;
 - b. comprises defined core subject areas which reflect the main subjects of the university of applied sciences degree programme and thus the central competences to be acquired in the degree programme;
 - c. ensures the achievement of the intended learning outcomes according to the respective qualification level of the National Qualifications Framework through content and structure;
 - d. comprises modules and/or courses with suitable learning/teaching methods that promote the active participation of students in the learning process and provide for suitable assessment methods to achieve the intended learning outcomes;
 - e. comprises modules and/or courses whose workload, expressed in ECTS credits, enables the degree programme to be completed within the specified duration of study, and
 - f. in the case of university of applied sciences bachelor's degree programmes, this includes a professional internship, which constitutes a relevant part of the degree programme.
3. The name of the university of applied sciences degree programme and the academic degree correspond to the thematic focus of the university of applied sciences degree programme. The academic degree shall be chosen

from the admissible academic degrees defined by AQ Austria in accordance with § 6 para. 2 FHG.

4. The admission requirements for the degree programme and the admission procedure for the university of applied sciences degree programme are clearly defined and communicated transparently. The organisation of the admission procedure ensures an objective selection of applicants and is designed to promote the permeability of the education system.
5. Procedures for the recognition of examinations, other academic achievements and formally, non-formally and informally acquired competences—particularly those obtained in the context of the practice-oriented training of the university of applied sciences degree programme and eligible for credit transfer—are clearly defined and transparent for all stakeholders, potentially allowing for a reduction in study duration.

(3) Applied research and development

The permanent teaching and research staff assigned to the university of applied sciences degree programme are involved in the application-oriented research and development activities relevant to the university of applied sciences.

(4) Staff

1. At all sites at which studies are offered, sufficient research and teaching staff has been provided, that is didactically as well as scientifically/or artistically or professionally qualified according to the requirements of the respective post.
2. The university of applied sciences ensures appropriate student support through the composition of its permanent and adjunct teaching and research staff.
3. The university of applied sciences has adequate processes and measures to
 - a. integrate the adjunct teaching staff in the teaching and study organisation of university of applied sciences degree programmes, and
 - b. manage an appropriate balance between teaching, research and administrative activities of the permanent teaching and research staff.
4. The core subject areas of the university of applied sciences degree programme are covered by permanent academic and/or artistic or professionally qualified teaching and research staff. The core subject areas represent the main subjects of the degree programmes and thus the central competences to be acquired.
5. The university of applied sciences degree programme was developed with the involvement of the relevant stakeholders. The following must be considered:
 - a. in addition to at least two persons academically and/or artistically qualified by a habilitation degree or an equivalent qualification,
 - b. at least two professionally qualified persons are involved in the development of the university of applied sciences degree programme.
6. The management of the university of applied sciences degree programme is the responsibility of a person with relevant scientific and/or artistic qualifications, who performs this activity as their main occupation.

The following shall apply to § 17 para. 4 subpara. 4: The university of applied sciences submits CVs for the already employed permanent teaching and research staff with the application for programme accreditation. For this staff, the respective teaching load must be documented. For permanent teaching and research staff who have yet to be recruited, the application for programme accreditation shall be accompanied by a recruitment plan indicating the date of the planned appointment for the first academic year.

The following shall apply to § 17 para. 4 subpara. 5 lit. a: Corresponding information regarding a qualification equivalent to a habilitation in scientific and/or artistic fields must be provided in detail in the application. As evidence of a qualification equivalent to a habilitation, a relevant professorship at a recognized domestic or foreign university,

or inclusion in the proposal for a relevant professorship at a recognized domestic or foreign university, is considered sufficient.

The following shall apply to § 17 para. 4 subpara. 5 lit. a and b: The university of applied sciences submits CVs of the scientifically and/or artistically, as well as professionally, qualified members of the respective development teams, who teach permanently or adjunct in the university of applied sciences degree programme.

The following shall apply to § 17 para. 4 subpara. 6: The university of applied sciences submits CVs for the planned head of studies with the application for programme accreditation, stating the respective teaching load. If the head of the degree programme is still to be recruited, the application for programme accreditation shall be accompanied by a recruitment plan indicating the date of the planned appointment.

(5) Funding

A financial plan for the university of applied sciences degree programme, for the first five years following accreditation, comprises, considering costs per study place,

1. a realistic, mathematically verifiable and plausible comparison of all expected income and expenses related to the implementation of the university of applied sciences degree programme, and
2. precautionary measures which ensure the continuation of studies in the event that the university of applied sciences degree programme is discontinued.

The application for programme accreditation shall be accompanied by the corresponding funding commitments from the funding bodies named in the financial plan. The application for institutional accreditation shall be accompanied by the corresponding funding commitments from the funding bodies named in the financial plan. The financial calculations must be attached to the application for programme accreditation in Excel format.

(6) Infrastructure

The required facilities and equipment are available for the university of applied sciences degree programme. In the case that external resources are required for the university of applied sciences degree programme, their right of disposal has been secured and the key points thereof shall be described in the application for programme accreditation.

(7) Co-operation

If co-operation projects with other higher education institutions and, where appropriate, partnerships with institutions outside the higher education area in Austria and abroad are planned to promote the mobility of students and staff of the university of applied sciences programme in accordance with the profile, the key points of the intended co-operation projects must be outlined in the application for programme accreditation.

§ 18. Criteria for the accreditation of joint study programmes and jointly offered study programmes

For the accreditation of joint study programmes and jointly offered study programmes, in addition to the criteria set out in § 17, the following criteria shall apply:

- (1)** The partner institutions are recognised post-secondary educational institutions. Supporting evidence has been attached to the application.
- (2)** The institutions involved have concluded a co-operation agreement which has been attached to the application for accreditation and defines at least the following:
 1. academic performance to be rendered by the students at the respective institutions;
 2. admission and selection procedures;

3. determination of the applicable study and examination regulation(s);
4. automatic and full recognition of examinations and scientific theses produced at the institutions involved;
5. academic degree and specification of how and by whom the academic degree will be awarded;
6. organisational and administrative responsibilities.

§ 19. Criteria for the accreditation of universities of applied sciences degree programmes to be offered at another site as the institutionally accredited site of the university of applied sciences

For the accreditation of a university of applied sciences degree programme offered at another site as the site of institutional accreditation, in addition to the criteria set out in § 17, the following criteria shall apply:

- (1)** The university of applied sciences ensures that the university of applied sciences degree programme is offered in the same quality and under comparable study conditions as the university of applied sciences degree programme offered at the institutionally accredited site, and in particular that:
 1. it will not lead to a lack of resources and, subsequently, a deterioration in quality at existing sites at which the university of applied sciences degree programme is offered;
 2. a sufficient number of qualified teaching and research staff is available to offer the university of applied sciences degree programme at another site;
 3. the specific challenges related to offering the university of applied sciences degree programme at another site are explicitly taken account for in the internal quality management system;
 4. the counselling and support services for students are adequate and comparable to those offered at the institutionally accredited site of the university of applied sciences, and
 5. a procedure to lodge complaints is available to the students.
- (2)** If the university of applied sciences operates the degree programme in co-operation with another institution, a contract has been attached to the application which clearly and transparently defines the co-operation.
- (3)** If the site offering the university of applied sciences degree programme is located abroad, the university of applied sciences shall furthermore ensure that the respective national legislation is observed. In addition, the university of applied sciences shall ensure that
 1. the partner institution is a recognised post-secondary educational institution that is authorised to offer a university of applied sciences degree programme in cooperation with a foreign educational institution;
 2. the cooperation is subjected to regular review regarding the established and targeted objectives;
 3. other educational traditions and cultural differences regarding teaching and learning, including examinations, are respected,
 4. in particular with regard to the students' role in the teaching and learning process as well as in the quality assurance processes.

Chapter 5: Entry into force

§ 20. Entry into force

- (1) This decree enters into force on 15 January 2025.
- (2) The decree does not apply to procedures that are pending as of 1 July 2024.

Disclaimer:

This translation is for informational purposes only and does not constitute the legally binding version of the document. In case of discrepancies, the original German text shall prevail.

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