



Agency for
Quality Assurance
and Accreditation
Austria

Decree of the Board of AQ Austria on the Accreditation of Private Higher Education 2021

Accreditation Decree on Private Higher
Education 2021 - PrivH-AkkVO 2021

adopted by the Board at its 68th meeting on 7 July 2021,
amended on 24 November 2021 and 10 March 2022,
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Decree of the Board of AQ Austria on the Accreditation of Private Higher Education 2021

(Accreditation Decree on Private Higher Education 2021 - PrivH-AkkVO 2021)

On the basis of § 24 para. 6 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. 20/2021, the following decree is issued:

Chapter 1: Subject and scope, definition of terms

§ 1. Subject and scope

(1) By entry into force of the Private Higher Education Act (Privathochschulgesetz, PrivHG), F. L. G. I no. 77/2020, on 1 January 2021 the term "Private University College"¹ shall – without prejudice to § 14 para. 4 PrivHG – include all educational institutions accredited under this Act. "Private university" refers to private university colleges which, in addition to the accreditation requirements pursuant to § 2 PrivHG, also fulfil the requirements pursuant to § 4 PrivHG. Consequently and without prejudice to § 14 para. 4 PrivHG, "private university college" in this decree comprises all educational institutions accredited pursuant to PrivHG or the Private Universities Act (PUG), and includes private universities. In case of regulations that regard only private universities, the decree will refer explicitly to "private universities".

- (2) This decree for private higher education rules the procedures and criteria for
1. the initial accreditation as a private university college and of its degree programmes;
 2. the extension of the institutional accreditation as a private university college;
 3. the programme accreditation at a private university college;

¹ In Austria the sector of private higher education, Private University Colleges (Privathochschulen) do not and cannot offer doctoral programmes, while Private Universities are entitled and have to offer at least one accredited doctoral programme.

4. the changes to the institutional accreditation and programme accreditation at a private university college;
5. the programme accreditation at private universities under the PUG pursuant to § 14 para. 4 subpara. 3 PrivHG as well as
6. the accreditation as a private university pursuant to § 4 PrivHG.

§ 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 degree programmes and certificate programmes (programme accreditation) based on pre-defined criteria.

(2) The institutional initial accreditation is an ex-ante accreditation of a private university college 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.

(3) An extension of the institutional 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 evidence that the criteria pursuant to § 16 are met.

(4) The programme accreditation is an ex-ante accreditation of a bachelor or master programme, of a doctoral programme at a private university as well as a certificate programme at a private university college or a certificate university programme at a private university, provided that they lead to the award of an academic degree. Depending on the type of the degree programme applied for, accreditation is granted upon evidence that the criteria pursuant to §§ 17, 18 or 19 are met. Further special provisions for joint study programmes and jointly offered study programmes as well as for degree programmes offered at another site than that of the institutional accreditation have been laid down in §§ 20 and 21.

(5) As a rule, the term "degree programme" refers to bachelor, master and doctoral programmes.

(6) The term "certificate programme" is used in § 19 for certificate programmes at private university colleges and certificate university programmes at private universities.

(7) Changes to institutional and programme accreditations are changes at accredited private university colleges and their degree programmes that require an amendment of the official accreditation notification pursuant to § 14.

Chapter 2: Rules for carrying out the procedure

§ 3. Application

(1) An application for institutional initial accreditation, extension of the institutional accreditation and programme accreditation as well as for changes to an institutional accreditation or programme accreditation shall be submitted both electronically and on paper to the Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria (AQ Austria).

(2) Pursuant to § 24 para. 8 and § 26 para. 1 subpara. 1 HS-QSG, the application for extension of the institutional accreditation shall be submitted to AQ Austria 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 and offering scientific and/or scientific-artistic teaching and research in Austria and the name of the legal entity as well as of the private university college and shall be signed by its legal representative. Evidence of the legal representation shall be enclosed. In case the applicant institution is a legal entity governed by private law, this could be a current excerpt from the company register, the register of associations or other suitable evidence.

(4) The submitted application for institutional initial accreditation, extension of the institutional accreditation and programme accreditation shall be complete and formally correct. It must contain all information and documents required to verify the fulfilment of the criteria pursuant to §§ 15 ff. Furthermore, the following prerequisites shall be fulfilled:

1. An application for institutional initial accreditation of a private university college shall comprise at least two bachelor programmes as well as two subsequent master programmes. An application for extension of the institutional accreditation as a private university college shall only be admissible if at least two accredited bachelor programmes as well as two subsequent accredited master programmes are offered.
2. An application for institutional initial accreditation as a private university shall contain an application for accreditation of at least one doctoral programme. The criteria pursuant to § 18 of this decree shall apply to the accreditation of the doctoral programme.
3. An application for extension of the institutional accreditation as a private university is only admissible if at least one accredited doctoral programme is offered. If this is not the case, an application for the accreditation of a doctoral programme shall be submitted in the course of the application for extension of the institutional accreditation. The criteria pursuant to § 18 of this decree shall apply to the accreditation of a doctoral programme.

(5) Applications shall be submitted either in German or in English.

(6) After twelve years of uninterrupted accreditation, a private university college may apply for extension of the institutional accreditation for a period of six to twelve years. The

application shall set forth the requested period of extension. Corresponding evidence shall be submitted for the fulfilment of the criteria pursuant to § 16 for the entire period applied for.

(7) Applications submitted for change to institutional or programme accreditation shall be complete and formally correct. It must contain all information and documents required for the decision regarding the changes, documenting which criteria pursuant to §§ 15 ff are affected by the changes applied for and indicating to what degree the respective criteria continue to be fulfilled.

(8) The Secretariat shall verify the application as to its 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 shall reject the application.

(9) After completeness and formal correctness of the application has been confirmed, further copies shall be submitted in the number to be announced by the Secretariat.

(10) If the qualifications to be acquired by completing a degree programme at a private university college are a condition for taking up and pursuing a regulated profession, the education institution shall, as part of the accreditation procedure, supply proof of recognition of the qualification for the exercise of the profession.

(11) 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 shall decide on the further procedure and on procedural steps that need to be repeated or added pursuant to §§ 4 to 8. The Board of AQ Austria shall inform the private university college on further procedural steps. The private university college shall bear any costs incurred by the amendment of the application and procedural steps that need to be repeated or added.

§ 4. Procedure

(1) As a rule, the review procedure is conducted pursuant to §§ 5 to 13. In the case of paras. 2 to 5 the Board shall decide on an alternative procedure.

(2) In the case of institutional initial accreditation or extension of the institutional accreditation, the Board may divide the subject matters of application and carry out separate reviews.

(3) If several applications for programme accreditation or changes of accreditations are submitted at the same time, the Board may treat them in a joint procedure if this is appropriate, in particular considering the relatedness of the subject area of the degree programmes.

(4) In case of applications for change to institutional or programme accreditations, the Board may decide to waive the need for an external review, request an experts' report or decide on

a review incl. a site visit. The procedure addresses all criteria pursuant to §§ 15 to 21 that are affected by the respective change.

(5) The Board may, on application of the applying institution, take into consideration the outcome 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 case of the programme accreditation of jointly offered study programmes, the results of quality assurance procedures which already have taken place shall be recognised.
2. In case of programme accreditation of joint study programmes with other higher education institutions from the European Higher Education Area, the Board 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 21. 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.

§ 5. Experts

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

(2) The selection of experts shall ensure that all aspects relevant for the procedure are reviewed, taking into account the specific features of the Austrian private university colleges and the Austrian higher education system. The Board shall aim for diversity in the composition of the expert teams and take into account special requirements on a case-by-case basis, ensuring that their current activities cover the following fields of competence:

1. proven scientific or scientific-artistic qualifications in the central disciplines of the course offerings at the private university college;
2. research activities in the relevant disciplines and familiarity with research in higher education institutions and universities;
3. recognised international experience obtained through professional activity abroad;
4. recognised knowledge of the professional field relevant for the course offerings of the private university college obtained through subject-relevant work experience;
5. experience in quality management and quality assurance in higher education;
6. experience in higher education management and organisational structuring;
7. experience in teaching as well as in the development, implementation, and evaluation of curricula;
8. experience as a student in one of the subject areas taught at the private university college.

In case of programme accreditation and changes thereto, subparas. 1, 2, 4, 7, and 8 apply to

the discipline of the respective degree programme; subpara. 6 does not apply.

(3) In case of extension of the institutional accreditation, the Board may appoint additional experts for a subject-specific assessment report on individual disciplines for an appropriate consideration of the private university colleges' range of subjects when assessing the fulfilment of the criteria.

(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. Reasons for bias include:

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 or 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 awarded at the applicant institution within the last five years;
6. relations of a private nature to persons linked to the applicant institution.

(5) The Secretariat shall inform the applicant institution of the experts and grant it a reasonable time period of at least one week to raise objections. Reasons for objections shall be given in writing. The objections shall be submitted to AQ Austria. The applicant institution does not have the right to propose experts.

(6) The Secretariat shall support the activities of the experts throughout the entire accreditation procedure. Except for 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 carrying out their activities, in particular with regard to the relevant legal framework and the characteristics of the applicant institution and the object of the application.

§ 6. Site visit

(1) The review includes a one- to three-day site visit of the experts at the applicant institution.

(2) In case of an extension of the institutional accreditation, the Board decides on a visit to other sites if the applicant institution offers one or more degree programmes at more than one site.

(3) If accreditation of a degree programme is applied for at a different site than the institutionally accredited one, or if the changes to a programme accreditation applied for refer to offering a degree programme at an additional site, 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, representatives 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, if any exists, by the student representation.
3. All relevant groups of the applicant institution shall be heard, and the individual persons to be heard shall be able to present their positions autonomously and uninfluenced.
4. The representatives of the Secretariat shall support the experts in their activities and ensure the proper conduct of the site visit.

§ 7. Experts' report

(1) On the basis of the findings gained from the application documents and the site visit, the experts shall draw up a joint experts' report, consisting of observations and assessments to the criteria pursuant to §§ 15 ff and, if applicable, of references to significantly good practice and/or recommendations for further enhancement. If experts consider a criterion to be met only partially, they may propose conditions to the Board. This applies to applications for extension of the institutional accreditation and applications for change. This shall furthermore apply to applications for programme accreditation at private university colleges if the private university college's institutional accreditation has already been renewed twice.

(2) The 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.

(3) If subject-specific experts' reports pursuant to § 5 para. 3 were commissioned, the experts shall take them into consideration when drawing up the experts' report.

§ 8. Comment of the applicant institution

The Secretariat shall send the experts' report to the applicant institution and grant it a reasonable time 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 report, the private university college may point out, in particular, factual errors in the experts' report. Upon receiving the comment, the Secretariat shall forward it to the experts for information. The Board of AQ Austria shall consider the experts' report and any comments of the applicant institution thereon when deciding on the accreditation. If the comment or parts thereof are qualified as changes to the application by the Board of AQ Austria, it shall decide, according to § 3 para. 11, on the further procedure and on procedural steps to be repeated or added.

§ 9. Decision and notification

- (1) The decision of the Board on accreditation and changes thereto shall be based on the application documents, the experts' report, if available, and the comment of the applicant institution on the report, if available. The Board may approve or reject the application.
- (2) If the Board grants accreditation, the accreditation term shall be six years for an institutional initial accreditation and the first extension of the institutional accreditation. For all further extensions of the institutional accreditation, the Board may grant accreditation for a term of six to twelve years. The accreditation period for degree programmes is limited by the term of institutional accreditation.
- (3) In the case of applications for an extension of the institutional accreditation or changes of an institutional or programme accreditation as well as applications for programme accreditation at private university colleges that have already successfully extended their institutional accreditation twice, the Board may grant accreditation under conditions if shortcomings are discovered in the course of the accreditation procedure that can be rectified within a period of no more than two years.
- (4) The decision of the Board is subject to approval by the competent Federal Minister prior to the issuing of the official notification.
- (5) The official notification shall, as a minimum include the following information:
 1. term of accreditation;
 2. name of the legal entity of the private university college and name of the private university college or private university;
 3. title, type, study format, total workload (in ECTS credits), duration (in academic years, semesters, terms or trimesters), language and exact wording of the academic degree to be awarded (including its abbreviation) for the degree programme or degree programmes;
 4. number of study places of the degree programme or the degree programmes;
 5. site or sites at which the degree programme is or the degree programmes are offered;
 6. conditions, if any.

§ 10. Publication of the results of the procedure

After completion of the procedure, AQ Austria shall publish on their website an easily accessible results report on the accreditation procedure for the duration of the accreditation period. It shall contain the Board's decision, including the reasons given, the final 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 and business or trade secrets shall be exempt from publication. The private university college shall publish the results report on the outcome in an easily accessible way on their website for the entire accreditation period.

§ 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 by decree. The obligation to pay arises upon submission of the complete and formally correct application according to § 3 and falls due upon completion of the procedure.

§ 12. Complaints

The applicant institution may appeal to the Appeals Committee of AQ Austria against the procedure as such. The complaints shall be submitted to the Secretariat of AQ Austria.

§ 13. Evidence for the fulfilment of conditions

(1) If the extension of the institutional accreditation or the approval of changes to institutional accreditations or programme accreditations or the programme accreditation of private university colleges that have already extended their institutional accreditation twice is granted under conditions, the private university college shall submit evidence to the Board that the conditions have been fulfilled within the period specified in the 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 shall decide if a review is necessary to determine whether the conditions have been fulfilled. If the Board considers corresponding procedural steps to be necessary, §§ 5 to 12 shall apply.

(4) If the private university college can prove that the conditions have been fulfilled, the Board shall declare this by official notification. If the private university college cannot prove that the conditions have been fulfilled, the Board shall revoke the accreditation by official notification.

§ 14. Changes relevant to the official accreditation notification

(1) Changes of institutional accreditations and programme accreditations require in any case an amendment of the official notification, should the changes relate to the following characteristics:

1. change of the name of the legal entity of the private university college or changes to the legal structure of the legal entity of the private university college;
2. changes to the curriculum, resulting in significant changes to the profile and the intended learning outcomes of the degree programme, modification of the study format, the total workload (in ECTS credits), the duration (in academic years, semesters, terms or trimesters), the language used or the exact wording of the academic degree to be awarded (including its abbreviation) for the degree programme or degree programmes;

3. changes regarding the number of accredited study places of the degree programme or degree programmes;
4. change of the site or sites at which the degree programme is or the degree programmes are offered;
5. amendments to the statute of the private university by addition of guidelines for habilitation procedures following the accreditation of a doctoral programme in the relevant discipline.

In these cases the Board shall decide on the procedure according to § 4 para. 4.

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

1. changes to the name of the degree programme, provided that they are not the result of changes to the curriculum which significantly change the profile and the intended learning outcomes;
2. change of the name of the private university college or private university.

In these cases, the official notification is amended ex officio.

Chapter 3: Assessment criteria

§ 15. Criteria for the initial institutional accreditation

If, in the course of the institutional initial accreditation, an application for accreditation as a private university is submitted, this application shall contain an application for accreditation of at least one doctoral programme. The criteria pursuant to § 18 of this decree shall apply to the accreditation of the doctoral programme or the doctoral programmes.

If, in the course of the institutional initial accreditation, an application for accreditation of one or more certificate programme(s) at private university colleges or of one or more certificate university programme(s) at private universities is submitted, the criteria pursuant to § 19 of this decree shall apply.

(1) Profile and objectives

The private university college defines an institutional profile and derives objectives for their activities, ensuring that the academic standards are complied with. The latter encompass:

1. the freedom of science and its teaching and/or the freedom of artistic activity and the dissemination of the arts and their teaching;
2. the connection of research and teaching; and/or the freedom of artistic activity and the dissemination of the arts and their teaching;
3. the diversity of scientific and artistic theories, methods and doctrines.

(2) Development planning

1. The private university college has a development plan which is in line with its profile and objectives and which specifies longer-term strategies for their achievement. The

development plan outlines the measures and resources needed for the duration of the accreditation period to achieve these objectives. The development plan shall be attached to the application for institutional initial accreditation and comprise the following:

- a. designation of focal points and measures in teaching and research;
- b. information on structural and content-related development planning;
- c. information on staff planning;
- d. description of gender equality measures;
- e. an outline of measures for the promotion of junior academics and young artists at private universities as well as
- f. measures for establishing and implementing a quality management system.

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

(3) Organisation of the private university college

1. The private university college's organisational structure ensures higher education autonomy and thus the freedom of science and its teaching and/or the freedom of artistic activity and the dissemination of the arts and their teaching. For this purpose, the private university college has a balanced system of academic self-administration, governance and strategic management, while at the same time taking into account the interests of the legal entity. The corresponding organisational structure, the bodies, their competences and interactions are defined in the statute, a draft version of which shall be attached to the application.
2. Pursuant to § 5 para. 2 PrivHG, the draft statute describes the bodies, their functions and main responsibilities as well as the appointment processes. The following shall be provided for, in particular:
 - a. The participation rights of academic self-administration are secured in regard to all academic issues. This includes, as a minimum, the contents of research and teaching as well as the participation in the appointment of the members of the private university college's bodies and in the selection and appointment procedures.
 - b. The composition of the body of academic self-administration ensures a balanced representation of all status groups required to fulfil the private university college's academic core tasks.
 - c. The governing bodies are appointed through election that involves the academic self-administration.
 - d. The legal entity's interests are safeguarded but are limited by the fundamental freedom of science and its teaching and/or the freedom of artistic activity and the dissemination of the arts and their teaching.
3. Pursuant to § 5 para. 2 PrivHG, the draft statute governs the selection procedures at the private university college, making sure that they are transparent and quality-driven.
4. Pursuant to § 5 para. 2 PrivHG, the draft statute shall govern the appointment procedures for professorships in accordance with international standards which comprise:
 - a. a transparent, quality-driven and competitive design;

- b. the participation of the body of academic self-administration;
- c. an appointment committee with professorial members from relevant subject areas; in the event that the private university college does not have a sufficient number of subject-related professorships in order to fill the seats, external members shall be appointed;
- d. a guaranteed qualification of the members to be appointed equivalent to a habilitation in an appropriate subject area. A more detailed justification shall be provided in the application as to corresponding explanations with regard to qualifications equivalent to a habilitation. In any case, a relevant professorship or the nomination for a shortlist as part of an appointment procedure at a recognised Austrian or foreign higher education institution shall be regarded as proof of a qualification equivalent to a habilitation degree.

For private universities that offer habilitation, the following criterion shall apply, in addition:

- 5. Pursuant to § 5 para. 2 PrivHG, the draft statute governs the award of habilitation degrees. The basic requirements for a habilitation procedure are governed by habilitation regulations. The procedure for the award of a habilitation degree ensures academic qualifications as a condition for the conferral of the authorisation to teach. In the discipline of the habilitation the private university has an established research environment into which a relevant doctoral programme has been embedded.
- 6. A draft statute has been drawn up in which the following matters pursuant to § 5 para. 2 PrivHG have been set out:
 - a. guiding principles and tasks of the private university college;
 - b. bodies of the private university college;
 - c. gender equality, in particular an equal opportunities plan;
 - d. assurance of student co-determination in academic matters;
 - e. provisions with regard to the studies, in particular admission and examination regulations;
 - f. guidelines for academic honours pursuant to § 8 para. 2 PrivHG, if applicable;
 - g. guidelines on appointment procedures at private university colleges or appointment and habilitation procedures at private universities, respectively.

(4) Quality management system

- 1. The private university provides for a quality management system that is embedded into the higher education institution's strategic management. Based on the objectives of the private university college, this quality management system ensures that the quality of learning and teaching as well as of research and development and/or of the advancement and appreciation of the arts as well as of the supporting tasks are assessed on a regular basis.
- 2. The private university college provides for a quality management system that ensures the fulfilment of the criteria for the accreditation of degree programmes. For this purpose, regular processes have been defined to evaluate and to further enhance degree programmes. These processes involve all relevant internal and external stakeholder groups.
- 3. The private university college provides for procedures to periodically and systematically collect information on the quality of research and development and/or the

advancement and appreciation of the arts and its supporting tasks, that are used in the quality management procedures.

4. The private university college provides adequate structures and procedures to ensure that the rules of good scientific practice and academic integrity are adhered to.
5. The private university college assesses the effectiveness of its quality management system on a regular basis and enhances it as required, drawing on the knowledge of relevant internal and external stakeholders.

(5) Degree programme and degree programme management

Taking into account a heterogeneous student body, the following criteria shall apply. In the case of 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, study formats offered alongside professional activity, dual degree programmes, distance-learning degree programmes, joint study programmes or jointly offered study programmes.

1. The degree programme is oriented towards the profile and the strategic objectives of the private university college.
2. The profile and intended learning outcomes of the degree programme
 - a. have been clearly defined;
 - b. comprise discipline-specific-scientific and/or scientific-artistic as well as personal and social skills;
 - c. comply with the requirements of the aspired professional fields of activities and
 - d. comply with the respective qualification level of the National Qualifications Framework.
3. The name of the degree programme and the academic degree correspond to the degree programme's profile and intended learning outcomes.
4. The degree programme
 - a. complies with the scientific and/or scientific-artistic and didactic requirements of the respective subject or subjects;
 - b. comprises defined core subject areas which represent the most important subjects of the degree programme and thus the main competences to be acquired;
 - c. ensures by its content and structure the achievement of the intended learning outcomes;
 - d. comprises modules and/or courses with learning and teaching as well as examination methods that allow for the achievement of the intended learning outcomes and build on the overall concept of the degree programme;
 - e. takes into account the integration of research and teaching and/or research and the appreciation of the arts and
 - f. encourages the active involvement of students in the learning process.
5. The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) is applied correctly to the degree programme. The workload related to the individual modules and/or courses, expressed in ECTS credits, makes it possible that the intended learning outcomes are achieved within the stipulated duration of studies. In the case of degree programmes for working professionals, the professional activity is taken into account.

6. The Diploma Supplement is specific to the respective degree programme and suitable to support international mobility of students as well as graduates and facilitates academic and professional recognition of the acquired qualifications.
7. The requirements for admission to the degree programme
 - a. have been clearly defined and
 - b. contribute to the achievement of the qualification objectives.
8. The admission procedure to the degree programme
 - a. has been clearly defined;
 - b. is transparent for all involved and
 - c. ensures a fair selection of the applicants.
9. The procedures for the recognition of formally, non-formally and informally acquired competences in terms of crediting towards examinations or parts of the degree programme
 - a. have been clearly defined
 - b. and are transparent for all involved.

(6) Counselling and support for students

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

(7) Research and development and/or advancement and appreciation of the arts

1. The private university college's research and development activities are based on its profile and objectives. For this purpose, it has developed a concept which comprises at least strategic goals as well as measures for their implementation.
2. The private university college takes provision that prospected research in disciplines meet the standards in academia and the respective disciplines' requirements.
3. The private university college provides for institutionally anchored co-operations in research and development and/or the advancement and appreciation of the arts with partners from the higher education area and, where appropriate, from outside higher education in Austria and abroad adequate to the respective subject cultures.
4. The private university college promotes research or development activities by providing for appropriate organisational or structural conditions.
5. The private university college provides for measures for the transfer of knowledge and technologies to the economy and society.

By way of derogation from § 15 para. 7 subpara. 2, the following criterion shall apply to private universities:

The private university makes sure that the planned research activities in the disciplines to be established comply with the academic and the respective disciplines' standards and guarantee international visibility.

(8) Staff

1. For carrying out its tasks in teaching and research in accordance with the development plan, the private university college has at all sites of implementation provided for
 - a. sufficient scientific and/or scientific-artistic teaching and research staff
 - b. staff members which are subject-specifically as well as didactically qualified according to the requirements of the respective post.

The private university college makes sure that at least 50 per cent of the volume of teaching is covered by permanent scientific and/or scientific-artistic teaching and research staff. Permanent teaching and research staff means employees working at least 50 per cent of their working hours (usually at least 20 hours per week) in permanent employment at the private university college.

2. The private university college makes sure that the subject-specific core competences representing the most important subjects of the degree programmes and thus the main competences to be acquired are covered by
 - a. permanent professors corresponding to at least one full-time equivalent as well as
 - b. other permanent scientific and/or scientific-artistic teaching and research staff corresponding to at least one full-time equivalent.
3. The private university college's permanent scientific and/or scientific-artistic staff is involved in the activities in research and development and/or the advancement and appreciation of the arts in their specified subject.
4. The private university college ensures an appropriate balance concerning the teaching, research and administrative activities of the permanent scientific or scientific-artistic staff allowing for adequate participation in teaching but also leaving sufficient time for research and development and/or the advancement and appreciation of the arts.
5. The private university college provides for adequate further training and staff development measures.
6. The private university college provides for adequate measures for the integration of adjunct teaching staff into the organisation of teaching and into programme organisation.
7. The private university college provides for sufficient non-academic staff.

By way of derogation from § 15 para. 8 subpara. 2, the following criterion shall apply to private universities:

8. The private university makes sure that the subject-specific core competences representing the most important subjects of the degree programmes and thus the main competences to be acquired are covered by
 - a. permanently employed professors corresponding to at least two full-time equivalents and
 - b. other permanent scientific and/or scientific-artistic teaching or research staff corresponding to at least one full-time equivalent.

The private university college or private university shall attach CVs for existing permanently

employed teaching and research staff employed to the application for institutional initial accreditation. Furthermore, proof of this staff's extent of employment and their teaching load shall be provided.

For permanent teaching and research staff still to be recruited, the application for institutional initial accreditation shall be supplemented by job descriptions, stating, at least the respective post, the envisaged extent of employment, the teaching load as well as a date for the appointment.

(9) Funding

1. The financial plan for the accreditation period comprises a realistic and plausible balance of all expected revenues and expenses in connection with the establishment as a private university college, its responsibilities in teaching as well as research and/or the advancement and appreciation of the arts in accordance with the statements in the development plan:
 - a. It shall be based on a minimum number of students to ensure the viability of the respective degree programmes for the accreditation period.
 - b. Furthermore, it shall include all costs relating to the required infrastructure as well as the planned staff costs (academic or scientific-artistic staff, non-academic staff) for the entire private university college.
 - c. Provisions shall be made, especially reserves shall be built up for ensuring the funding of the expiring degree programmes.
 - d. The underlying assumptions to the financial plan shall be described.
2. Financing commitments of all funding bodies listed in the financial plan shall be attached to the application for institutional initial accreditation, making sure that evidence is available for six years following accreditation.

(10) Infrastructure

The private university college's 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 private university college draws on external resources, their right of disposal has been secured and the key points thereof shall be described in the application for institutional initial accreditation.

(11) Co-operation

In addition to institutionally anchored co-operations in research and development and/or the advancement and appreciation of the arts, the private university college provides for partnerships matching their profile from the higher education area and, where appropriate, from outside higher education in Austria and abroad. These co-operations promote the mobility of students and staff.

(12) Information

The private university college has a website and provides easily accessible and up-to-date information on its performance, including, as a minimum, the statute, the curricula with the study and examination regulations, model written training agreements and an outline of the quality management system.

§ 16. Criteria for the extension of the institutional accreditation

If, in the course of the extension of the institutional accreditation of a private university college, an application for accreditation as a private university is submitted, this application shall contain an application for accreditation of at least one doctoral programme. The criteria pursuant to § 18 of this decree shall apply to the accreditation of the doctoral programme.

(1) Profile and objectives

The private university college has defined an institutional profile and derives objectives for their activities, ensuring that the academic standards are complied with. The latter encompass:

1. the freedom of science and its teaching and/or the freedom of artistic activity and the dissemination of the arts and their teaching;
2. the connection of research and teaching;
3. the diversity of scientific and artistic theories, methods and doctrines.

(2) Development planning

The application for extension of the institutional accreditation describes which adjustments have been made in the development planning during the preceding accreditation period and which focal points have been defined for the first six years following the extension of the institutional accreditation.

- a. The private university college describes how, on the basis of an established procedure, a regular process of monitoring the achievement of objectives has taken place and
- b. how, with which measures and required resources, the objectives defined for the accreditation period to come can be achieved in the following areas:
 - i. teaching and research and/or the advancement and appreciation of the arts;
 - ii. structural and content related development planning ;
 - iii. information on staff planning;
 - iv. gender equality measures;
 - v. measures for the promotion of junior academic and academic-artistic staff at private universities as well as
 - vi. further enhancement of the quality management system.

An updated development plan shall be attached to the application for the extension of the institutional accreditation. After twelve years of uninterrupted accreditation, a private university college may apply for extension of the institutional accreditation for a period of six to twelve years. The application must set forth the requested period and describe the development plan for the period applied for.

(3) Organisation of the private university college

1. The private university college has established an organisational structure which ensures the higher education institution's autonomy and thus the freedom of science and its teaching and/or the freedom of artistic activity and the dissemination of the arts and their teaching.
2. The private university college's organisational structure ensures a balanced system

of academic self-administration, governance and strategic management, while at the same time taking into account the interests of the legal entity. The private university college's bodies, their functions, core responsibilities as well as appointment processes are defined in the statute pursuant to § 5 para. 2 PrivHG:

- a. The participation rights of academic self-administration are secured in regard to all academic issues. This includes, as a minimum, the content-related planning of research and teaching as well as the participation in the appointment of the members of the private university college's bodies and in the selection and appointment procedures.
 - b. The composition of the bodies of academic self-administration ensures a balanced representation of all status groups required to fulfil the private university college's academic core tasks.
 - c. The governing bodies shall be appointed through election that involves the academic self-administration.
 - d. The legal entity's interests shall be safeguarded but are limited by the fundamental freedom of science and its teaching and/or the freedom of artistic activity and the dissemination of the arts and their teaching.
3. The private university college carries out transparent and quality-driven selection procedures which are defined in the statute pursuant to § 5 para. 2 PrivHG.
 4. The private university college has established procedures for the appointment of professors which are defined in the statute pursuant to § 5 para. 2 PrivHG and shall be carried out in accordance with international standards. These standards comprise
 - a. a transparent, quality-driven and competitive design;
 - b. the participation of the body of academic self-administration;
 - c. an adequately staffed appointment committees with professorial members from appropriate subject areas; in the event that the private university college does not have a sufficient number of subject-related professorships to staff the committee, external members shall be appointed;
 - d. a guaranteed qualification of the members to be appointed equivalent to a habilitation in an appropriate subject area. A more detailed justification shall be provided in the application as to corresponding explanations with regard to qualifications equivalent to a habilitation. In any case, a relevant professorship or the nomination for a shortlist as part of an appointment procedure at a recognised Austrian or foreign higher education institution shall be regarded as proof of a qualification equivalent to a habilitation.

For private universities that offer habilitation the following criterion shall apply, in addition:

5. Pursuant to § 5 para. 2 PrivHG, the statute governs the award of habilitation degrees. The basic requirements for a habilitation procedure are governed by habilitation regulations. The procedure for the award of a habilitation degree provides for appropriate academic qualifications as a condition for the conferral of the authorisation to teach. In the discipline of the habilitation the private university has an established research environment into which a relevant doctoral programme has been embedded.
6. A statute has been established in which the following matters pursuant to § 5 para. 2 PrivHG have been set out:

- a. guiding principles and tasks of the private university college;
- b. bodies of the private university college;
- c. gender equality, in particular an equal opportunities plan;
- d. assurance of student co-determination in academic matters;
- e. provisions with regard to the studies, in particular admission and examination regulations;
- f. guidelines for academic honours pursuant to § 8 para. 2 PrivHG, if applicable;
- g. guidelines on appointment procedures at private university colleges or procedures for the appointment of professors and the awarding of habilitation degrees at private universities.

(4) Quality management system

- 1. The private university college uses a quality management system which is embedded into the higher education institution's strategic management. Based on the objectives of the private university college, this quality management system ensures that the quality of learning and teaching as well as of research and development and/or the advancement and appreciation of the arts as well as of the supporting tasks are assessed on a regular basis.
- 2. With its quality management system, the private university college ensures that the criteria for the accreditation of degree programmes are fulfilled. For this purpose, the quality management system comprises clearly defined processes and instruments to assess and further enhance learning and teaching on a regular basis. These processes involve all relevant internal and external stakeholders.
- 3. Within the scope of its quality management processes, the private university college periodically and systematically collects and processes information on the quality of research and development and/or the advancement and appreciation of the arts and its supporting tasks.
- 4. With appropriate structures and procedures, the private university college ensures that the rules of good scientific practice and academic integrity are adhered to.
- 5. The private university college 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 stakeholders.

(5) Counselling and support for students

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

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

- 1. The private university college's research and development activities comply with its profile and objectives. For this purpose, it has developed a concept which comprises its strategic goals as well as measures for their implementation.
- 2. The private university college renders research in its disciplines that is in accordance with the academic standards and the respective disciplines' standards.
- 3. The private university college conducts institutionally anchored co-operations in

research and development and/or the advancement and appreciation of the arts with partner institutions from the higher education area and, where appropriate, from outside higher education in Austria and abroad adequate to the respective subject cultures.

4. The private university college promotes the research and development activities among its scientific and scientific-artistic teaching and research staff by providing an appropriate organisational and structural framework.
5. The private university college has a quantitatively and qualitatively adequate research infrastructure.
6. The private university college ensures a transfer of knowledge and technologies, respectively, to economy and society.

For private universities, the following criterion shall be fulfilled, in addition:

7. The private university renders research in its disciplines that is in accordance with the academic and the respective disciplines' standards and guarantees international visibility.

(7) Staff

1. For carrying out its tasks in teaching and research in accordance with the development plan, the private university college provides at all sites at which studies are offered for
 - a. sufficient scientific or scientific-artistic teaching and research staff;
 - b. staff members which are subject-specifically as well as didactically qualified according to the requirements of the respective post.

The private university college makes sure that at least 50 per cent of the volume of teaching is covered by permanent scientific or scientific-artistic teaching and research staff, respectively. Permanent teaching and research staff means employees working at least 50 per cent of their working hours (usually at least 20 hours per week) in permanent employment at the private university college.

2. The private university college makes sure that the subject-specific core competences representing the most important subjects of the degree programmes and thus the main competences to be acquired are covered by
 - a. permanent professors corresponding to at least one full-time equivalent as well as
 - b. other permanent scientific and/or scientific-artistic teaching and research staff corresponding to at least one full-time equivalent.
3. The private university college's permanent scientific or scientific-artistic teaching and research staff, respectively, is involved in the activities in research and development or the advancement and appreciation of the arts, respectively, in their specific subject.
4. The private university college provides for an appropriate balance of the teaching, research and administrative activities of the permanent scientific or scientific-artistic staff, respectively, to ensure adequate participation in teaching but also leaving sufficient time for research and development and/or the advancement and appreciation of the arts.

5. The private university college has established adequate further training and staff development measures.
6. The private university college has established adequate measures for the integration of adjunct teachers into the organisation of teaching and into programme organisation.
7. The private university college has sufficient non-academic staff.

By way of derogation from § 16 para. 7 subpara. 2, the following criterion shall apply to private universities:

8. The private university makes sure that the subject-specific core competences representing the most important subjects of the degree programmes and thus the main competences to be acquired are covered by
 - a. permanent professors corresponding to at least two full-time equivalents and
 - b. other permanent scientific or scientific-artistic teaching or research staff corresponding at least to one full-time equivalent.

The private university college or private university shall attach CVs for existing employed permanent teaching and research staff to the application for extension of the institutional accreditation. Furthermore, proof of this staff's extent of employment and their teaching load shall be provided.

(8) Funding

1. The financial plan for six years following the extension of the institutional accreditation comprises a realistic and plausible balance of all expected revenues and expenses in connection with the operation of the private university college, its responsibilities in teaching and research and/or the advancement and appreciation of the arts in accordance with the statements in the development plan:
 - a. It shall be based on a minimum number of students to ensure the viability of the respective degree programmes for the accreditation period.
 - b. Furthermore, it shall include all costs relating to the required infrastructure as well as the planned staff costs (academic or artistic and non-academic staff).
 - c. Provisions shall be made, especially reserves shall be built up for ensuring the funding of the expiring degree programmes.
 - d. The underlying assumptions to the financial plan shall be described.
2. Financing commitments of all funding bodies listed in the financial plan shall be attached to the application for extension of the institutional accreditation, making sure that evidence is available for six years following the extension of the institutional accreditation.

After twelve years of uninterrupted accreditation, a private university college may apply for extension of the institutional accreditation for a period of six to twelve years. In that case, the private university college must outline in the application for extension of the institutional accreditation the term of the institutional accreditation applied for. Funding must be secured for the term applied for. Corresponding evidence shall be attached to the application for extension of the institutional accreditation.

(9) Infrastructure

The private university college's 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 private university college 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 the institutional accreditation.

(10) Co-operation

In addition to institutionally anchored co-operations in research and development and/or the advancement and appreciation of the arts, the private university college provides for partnerships matching their profile from the higher education area and, where appropriate, from outside higher education in Austria and abroad. These co-operations promote the mobility of students and staff.

(11) Information

The private university college publishes easily accessible and up-to-date information on its services on its website, including, as a minimum, the statute, the curricula with the study and examination regulations, model written training 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 systematic development and establishment of degree programmes and involving the relevant stakeholders.
2. Following its accreditation, the degree programme is incorporated into the private university college's quality management system. Using an established process for quality assurance and enhancement and involving the relevant stakeholders, the private university college ensures ongoing compliance with the accreditation criteria.

These assessment criteria shall not apply to private university colleges if their institutional accreditation has already been renewed twice.

(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 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, study formats alongside professional activity, dual degree programmes, distance-learning degree programmes, joint study programmes or jointly offered study programmes.

1. The degree programme is oriented towards the profile and the strategic objectives of the private university college.
2. The profile and intended learning outcomes of the degree programme
 - a. have been clearly defined;
 - b. comprise discipline-specific-scientific and/or scientific-artistic as well as

- personal and social skills;
 - c. comply with the requirements of the aspired professional fields of activities and
 - d. comply with the respective qualification level of the National Qualifications Framework.
3. The name of the degree programme and the academic degree correspond to the degree programme's profile and intended learning outcomes.
 4. The degree programme
 - a. complies with the scientific and/or scientific-artistic and didactic requirements of the respective subject or subjects;
 - b. comprises defined core subject areas which represent the most important subjects of the degree programme and thus the main competences to be acquired;
 - c. ensures by its content and structure the achievement of the intended learning outcomes;
 - d. comprises modules and/or courses with learning and teaching as well as examination methods suitable for the achievement of the intended learning outcomes and build on the overall concept of the degree programme;
 - e. takes into account the connection of research and teaching and/or research and the appreciation of the arts and
 - f. encourages the active involvement of students in the learning process.
 5. The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) is applied correctly to the degree programme. The workload related to the individual modules and/or courses, expressed in ECTS credits, makes it possible that the intended learning outcomes are achieved within the stipulated duration of studies. In the case of degree programmes for working professionals, the professional activity is taken into account.
 6. The Diploma Supplement is specific to the respective degree programme and suitable to support international mobility of students as well as graduates and facilitates academic and professional recognition of the acquired qualifications.
 7. The requirements for admission to the degree programme
 - a. have been clearly defined and
 - b. contribute to the achievement of the qualification objectives.
 8. The admission procedure to the degree programme
 - a. has been clearly defined;
 - b. is transparent for all involved and
 - c. ensures a fair selection of the applicants.
 9. The procedures for the recognition of formally, non-formally and informally acquired competences in terms of crediting towards examinations or parts of the degree programme
 - a. have been clearly defined
 - b. and are transparent for all involved.
- (3) Research and development and/or the advancement and appreciation of the arts
 1. Subject-specific research or development activities, respectively, in compliance with

the scientific standards of the respective subject or the respective subjects have been planned for the degree programme.

2. The permanent research and teaching staff assigned to the degree programme is involved in these research and development activities.

(4) Staff

1. At all sites at which studies are offered in accordance with the development plan
 - a. sufficient scientific or scientific-artistic teaching and research staff, respectively, has been planned for the degree programme,
 - b. the staff members are subject-specifically as well as didactically qualified according to the requirements of the respective post.

The private university college makes sure that at least 50 per cent of the volume of teaching is covered by permanent scientific or scientific-artistic teaching and research staff, respectively. Permanent teaching and research staff means employees working at least 50 per cent of their working hours (usually at least 20 hours per week) in permanent employment at the private university college.

2. The subject-specific core competences representing the most important subjects of the degree programme and thus the main competences to be acquired are covered by
 - a. permanent professors corresponding to at least one full-time equivalent as well as
 - b. other permanent scientific and/or scientific-artistic teaching and research staff corresponding to at least one full-time equivalent.

By way of derogation from § 17 para. 4 subpara. 2, the following criterion shall apply to private universities:

3. The subject-specific core competences representing the most important subjects of the degree programme and thus the main competences to be acquired are covered by
 - a. permanent professors corresponding to at least two full-time equivalents as well as
 - b. other permanent scientific or scientific-artistic teaching or research staff corresponding to at least one full-time equivalent.

The private university college or private university shall attach CVs for existing permanently employed teaching and research staff employed to the application for programme accreditation. Furthermore, proof of this staff's extent of employment and their teaching load shall be provided.

For permanent teaching and research staff still to be recruited, the application for programme accreditation shall be supplemented by job descriptions, stating, at least the respective post, the envisaged extent of employment, the teaching load as well as a date for the appointment.

4. The composition of the adjunct and permanent teaching and research staff shall ensure a student-teacher ratio appropriate to the profile of the degree programme.
5. Adequate measures are planned for the integration of adjunct teaching staff into the

organisation of teaching and into programme organisation for the degree programme.

6. The private university college shall allow for an appropriate balance of the teaching, research, and administrative activities of the permanent scientific or scientific-artistic staff to ensure adequate participation in teaching but also leaving sufficient time for research and development and/or the advancement and appreciation of the arts.
7. Sufficient non-academic staff has been planned for the degree programme.

(5) Funding

The degree programme's funding

1. is secured for a period of six years and
2. makes it possible that students complete their degree programme even in the event of its discontinuation.

The financial plan for the degree programme comprises a realistic and plausible balance of all expected revenues and expenses in connection with the planned degree programme.

Financing commitments of all funding bodies listed in the financial plan shall be attached to the application.

(6) Infrastructure

Quantitatively and qualitatively adequate facilities and equipment are provided for the degree programme at all sites at which teaching will be offered. In the case that external resources are required for the 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

Co-operation projects with other higher education institutions and, if applicable, partnerships with institutions outside the higher education area in Austria and abroad that match the degree programme's profile are provided for. The mobility of students and staff is being promoted.

§ 18. Criteria for the accreditation of doctoral programmes

The accreditation of doctoral programmes is possible only for private university colleges that fulfil the accreditation requirements pursuant to § 4 PrivHG. Moreover, the accreditation of doctoral programmes is possible for private university colleges where pursuant to § 4 para. 4 PrivHG the requirements for the accreditation as a private university are already met at the time of institutional initial accreditation.

(1) Development and quality assurance of the doctoral programme

1. The degree programme was developed using a predefined procedure for the development and establishment of degree programmes and involving the relevant stakeholder groups.
2. Following its accreditation, the degree programme is incorporated into the private university's quality management system. Using an established process for quality assurance and enhancement and involving the relevant stakeholder groups, the private

university ensures ongoing compliance with the accreditation criteria.

(2) Research environment

1. According to its profile and objectives, the private university has developed a research concept
 - a. in which the doctoral programme is embedded and
 - b. which defines research priorities in the discipline of the doctoral programme.
2. The private university can prove that the research priorities and research activities defined for the doctoral programme are in accordance with the academic standards and the respective discipline's standards and guarantee international visibility.
3. Institutionally anchored co-operation projects in research and development and/or the advancement and appreciation of the arts which are relevant for the doctoral programme and appropriate for the respective discipline have been provided for.
4. The private university promotes research and development activities by providing for appropriate organisational and structural framework and ensures that the doctoral programme has been adequately incorporated. The private university ensures for an appropriate balance of the teaching, research, and administrative activities of the permanent scientific or scientific-artistic staff, respectively, providing for sufficient time for research and development and/or the advancement and appreciation of the arts as well as the supervision of doctoral students.
5. The private university's research infrastructure as well as its facilities and equipment are adequate on a quantitative and a qualitative basis for operating the doctoral programme. In the case that the private university draws on external resources, their right of disposal has been secured and the key points thereof shall be described in the application for accreditation of the doctoral programme.

(3) Supervision and counselling services

1. The private university concludes agreements with the doctoral students which govern the respective rights and duties of the private university, the doctoral students and their supervisors. A template of the agreement shall be attached to the application for accreditation.
2. If the private university allows for team supervision of doctoral thesis projects, an adequate supervision concept, including the requirements of all supervisors, shall be outlined.
3. With regard to the supervision of doctoral thesis projects and adequate for the respective discipline, the private university provides for an appropriate number of doctoral students per supervisor. In the case of team supervision, the number of doctoral students shall relate to the main supervisor.
4. The private university enables the doctoral students to engage in an intensive dialogue with scientists and/or artists by co-operating with higher education institutions and, if applicable, partners outside the higher education area in Austria and abroad, and promotes the doctoral students' participation in national and international symposia.
5. The private university provides the doctoral students with appropriate counselling services which are tailored to the specific degree programme.

(4) Degree programme and degree programme management

Taking into account a heterogeneous student body, the following criteria shall apply. In the case of doctoral programmes with special profile elements, the descriptions shall furthermore address these characteristics defining the profile. Special profile elements in doctoral programmes may include, for example, distance-learning degree programmes or joint study programmes.

1. The profile and intended learning outcomes of the degree programme
 - a. have been clearly defined;
 - b. comprise discipline-specific-scientific and/or scientific-artistic as well as personal and social skills;
 - c. comply with the requirements of the aspired professional fields of activities and
 - d. comply with the respective qualification level of the National Qualifications Framework.
2. The name of the degree programme and the academic degree correspond to the degree programme's profile.
3. The minimum duration of studies stipulated in the curriculum is three years. The curriculum ensures by its content and structure the achievement of the intended learning outcomes, while connecting research and development and/or the advancement and appreciation of the arts and teaching.
4. The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) is applied correctly to the degree programme. The workload related to the individual modules and/or courses ensures that the intended learning outcomes, and especially preparing a doctoral thesis, can be achieved within the stipulated duration of studies.
5. Regulations for doctoral programmes have been established. The examination methods are suitable to assess whether and to what extent the intended learning outcomes have been achieved.
6. The Diploma Supplement is specific to the respective degree programme and suitable to support international mobility of students as well as graduates and facilitates academic and professional recognition of the acquired qualifications.
7. The admission requirements to the degree programme have been clearly defined and are in accordance with the requirements of a doctoral programme.
8. The admission procedure to the degree programme
 - a. has been clearly defined;
 - b. is transparent for all involved and
 - c. ensures a fair selection of the applicants.
9. The procedures for the recognition of formally, non-formally and informally acquired competences in terms of crediting towards examinations or parts of the degree programme
 - a. have been clearly defined and
 - b. are transparent for all involved.

(5) Staff

1. In accordance with the development plan, the private university has employed a sufficient number of permanent professors in the discipline relevant for the doctoral

programme who cover the whole range of the discipline's content and methods in order to adequately supervise doctoral thesis projects. Permanent teaching and research staff means employees working at least 50 per cent of their working hours (usually at least 20 hours per week) in permanent employment at the private university.

2. The private university has sufficient scientific or scientific-artistic teaching and research staff, respectively, that is appropriately qualified for the teaching and research activities provided for in the degree programme. The persons provided for the supervision of doctoral thesis projects
 - a. are authorised to teach (*venia docendi*) or have an equivalent qualification in the respective scientific and/or scientific-artistic discipline;
 - b. are actively involved in the activities in research and development and/or the advancement and appreciation of the arts in the specific discipline and
 - c. for the most part, have experience in supervising doctoral thesis projects.

In the case of team supervision, the requirements pursuant to § 18 para. 5 subpara. 2 lit. a to c shall apply for the main supervisor.

3. The private university provides for personnel development measures for supervisors that are aimed at the supervision of doctoral students.

(6) Funding

The degree programme's funding

1. is secured for a period of six years and
2. makes it possible that students complete their degree programme even in the event of its discontinuation.

The financial plan for the doctoral programme comprises a realistic and plausible balance of all expected revenues and expenses in connection with the planned degree programme. Financing commitments of all funding bodies listed in the financial plan shall be attached to the application.

§ 19. Criteria for the accreditation of certificate programmes

(1) Development and quality assurance of the certificate programme

1. The certificate programme was developed using a predefined procedure for the systematic development and establishment of certificate programmes and involving the relevant stakeholders.
2. Following its accreditation, the certificate programme is embedded into the private university college's quality management system. Using an established process for quality assurance and enhancement and involving the relevant stakeholder groups, the private university college ensures ongoing compliance with the accreditation criteria.

(2) Programme and programme management

Taking into account a heterogeneous student body, the following criteria shall apply. In the

case of certificate programmes with special profile elements, the descriptions shall address these characteristics defining the profile. Special profile elements are, for example, study formats offered alongside professional activity, distance-learning certificate programmes, joint study programmes or jointly offered study programmes.

1. The certificate programme is oriented towards the profile and the strategic objectives of the private university college.
2. The profile and intended learning outcomes of the certificate programme
 - a. have been clearly defined;
 - b. combine well-founded discipline-specific-scientific and/or artistic further qualification with the defined target group's proven professional requirements;
 - c. comprise discipline-specific-scientific and/or scientific-artistic as well as personal and social skills and
 - d. are in accordance with level 7 of the National Qualifications Framework.
3. The name of the certificate programme and the master's degree correspond to the certificate programme's profile.
4. The certificate programme
 - a. is oriented towards the defined target group's interests;
 - b. complies to the scientific and/or scientific-artistic and didactic requirements of the respective subject or subjects, respectively;
 - c. ensures by its content and structure the achievement of the intended learning outcomes;
 - d. comprises modules and/or courses with learning and teaching as well as examination methods allowing for the achievement of the intended learning outcomes and build on the overall concept of the certificate programme;
 - e. takes into account the integration of research and teaching and/or research and the appreciation of the arts and
 - f. encourages the active involvement of students in the learning process.
5. The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) is applied correctly to the certificate programme. The workload related to the individual modules and/or courses, expressed in ECTS credits, enables the achievement of the intended learning outcomes within the stipulated duration of the certificate programme. In the case of certificate programmes for working professionals, the professional activity is taken into account.
6. The Diploma Supplement is specific to the respective certificate programme and suitable to support international mobility of students as well as graduates and facilitates academic and professional recognition of the acquired qualifications.
7. The admission requirements
 - a. have been clearly defined;
 - b. contribute to the achievement of the qualification objectives and
 - c. are tailored to the profile of the certificate programme.
8. The admission procedure to the certificate programme
 - a. has been clearly defined;
 - b. is transparent for all involved and

c. ensures a fair selection of the applicants.

9. The procedures for the recognition of formally, non-formally and informally acquired qualifications in terms of crediting towards examinations or parts of the certificate programme
- have been clearly defined and
 - are transparent for all involved.

(3) Involvement in research and development and/or the advancement and appreciation of the arts

The permanent scientific and scientific-artistic staff assigned to the certificate programme is involved in subject-specific research and development activities of the private university college that are in compliance with the academic standards of the respective subject or the respective subjects.

(4) Staff

- At all sites at which studies are offered in accordance with the development plan
 - sufficient scientific or scientific-artistic teaching and research staff has been provided for,
 - staff members which are subject-specifically as well as didactically qualified according to the requirements of the respective post.
- The subject-specific core competences representing the most important subjects of the certificate programme and thus the main competences to be acquired are covered by
 - professors corresponding to at least one full-time equivalent as well as
 - other scientific or scientific-artistic teaching or research staff, respectively, corresponding to at least one full-time equivalent.

The private university college makes sure that at least 50 per cent of the volume of teaching is covered by permanent scientific or scientific-artistic teaching and research staff, respectively. Permanent staff means employees working at least 50 per cent of their working hours (usually at least 20 hours per week) in permanent employment at the private university college.

The private university college shall attach CVs for existing employed permanent teaching and research staff employed to the application for programme accreditation. Furthermore, proof of this staff's extent of employment and their teaching load shall be provided.

For permanent teaching and research staff still to be recruited, the application for programme accreditation shall be supplemented by job descriptions, stating, in any case, the respective post, the envisaged extent of employment, the teaching load as well as a date for the appointment.

- The composition of the adjunct and permanent teaching and research staff shall ensure a student-teacher ratio appropriate to the profile of the certificate programme.
- Adequate measures are planned for the integration of adjunct teachers into the

organisation of teaching and into programme organisation in the certificate programme.

5. Sufficient non-academic staff has been planned for the certificate programme.

(5) Funding

The certificate programme's funding

1. is secured for a period of six years and
2. makes it possible that students complete their certificate programme in the event of its discontinuation.

The financial plan for the certificate programme comprises a realistic and plausible balance of all expected revenues and expenses in connection with the planned certificate programme. Financing commitments of all funding bodies listed in the financial plan shall be attached to the application.

(6) Infrastructure

1. Quantitatively and qualitatively adequate facilities and equipment are provided for the certificate programme at all sites at which it will be offered.
2. In the case that external resources are required for the certificate programme, their right of disposal has been secured and the key points thereof shall be described in the application.

(7) Co-operation

If the certificate programme is offered in co-operation with legal entities outside the higher education area for the purpose of financial and organisational support, the application shall include a detailed view of the co-operations.

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

In addition to the criteria pursuant to §§ 17, 18 or 19, the following criteria shall apply to the accreditation of joint study programmes and jointly offered study programmes:

- (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.

§ 21. Criteria for the accreditation of degree programmes to be offered at another site as the institutionally accredited site of the private university college

In addition to the criteria pursuant to §§ 17, 18 or 19, the following criteria shall apply to the accreditation of degree programmes offered at another site as the site of institutional accreditation of the private university college:

(1) The private university college ensures that the degree programme is offered in the same quality and under comparable study conditions as the degree programme offered at the institutionally accredited site, making sure, in particular, that:

1. it will not lead to a lack of resources and, subsequently, a deterioration in quality at existing sites;
2. a sufficient number of qualified teaching and research staff is available to offer the degree programme at another site;
3. the specific challenges related to offering the degree programme 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 other sites of the private university college and that a procedure to lodge complaints is available to the students.

(2) If the private university college 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 degree programme is located abroad, the private university college shall also ensure that the respective national legislation is observed, making sure, in particular, that:

1. other educational traditions and cultural differences regarding teaching and learning, including examinations, are respected,
2. in particular with regard to the students' role in the teaching and learning process as well as in the quality assurance processes.

Chapter 4: Entry into force

§ 22. Entry into force

(1) This decree enters into force on 15 July 2021 and applies to applications that were submitted after 1 January 2021.

(2) Thus, according to § 14 para. 3 PrivHG, the accreditation requirements defined in PUG and the Accreditation Regulation for Private Universities 2019 (Privatuniversitäten-Akkreditierungsverordnung 2019, PU-AkkVO 2019) apply for accreditation applications (initial institutional accreditation, extension of the institutional accreditation, programme accreditation,

changes to institutional and programme accreditations) that have been submitted before 31 December 2020. For decisions taken after 1 January 2021, the rules of procedure pursuant to HS-QSG according to the new legal situation shall apply.

(3) These transitional provisions apply by analogy to the University for Continuing Education Krems (Universität für Weiterbildung Krems, UWK).

(4) The transitional provision pursuant to § 14 para. 4 subpara. 2 PrivHG applies to Private universities already accredited at the date of entry into force of PrivHG (1 January 2021) that submit an application for extension of the institutional accreditation between 1 January 2021 and 31 December 2023. Thus, the accreditation requirements defined in PUG and the Accreditation Regulation for Private Universities 2019 (PU-AkkVO 2019) apply. If these private universities submit applications for programme accreditation or changes to institutional accreditation or programme accreditation in the period from 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2023, the accreditation requirements defined in PrivHG in conjunction with the Accreditation Decree on Private Higher Education 2021 (PrivH-AkkVO 2021) apply. In both cases the rules of procedure pursuant to HS-QSG according to the new legal situation apply to all decisions taken after 1 January 2021.

(5) For private universities already accredited at the date of entry into force of PrivHG (1 January 2021) and offering at least one accredited doctoral programme at that time, § 17 para. 4 subpara. 1 and 2 PrivH-AkkVO 2021 apply in regard to applications for accreditation of study programmes. After the first extension of institutional accreditation according to PrivHG in connection with PrivH-AkkVO 2021, § 17 para. 4 subpara. 1 and 3 PrivH-AkkVO apply in regard to applications for accreditation of study programmes.

(6) For private universities already accredited at the date of entry into force of PrivHG (1 January 2021) and granted the right to use the designation "Privatuniversität" according to transitional provision § 14 para. 4 subpara. 4 PrivHG, but not offering at least one accredited doctoral programme at that time, the following provisions apply. In regard to applications for accreditation of study programmes, § 17 para. 4 subpara. 1 and 2 PrivH-AkkVO 2021 continuously apply after the first extension of institutional accreditation according to PrivHG in connection with PrivH-AkkVO 2021 until the second extension of institutional accreditation. If a private university has been granted accreditation of at least one doctoral programme after the first and before the second extension of institutional accreditation according to PrivHG in connection with PrivH-AkkVO 2021, para. 5 applies accordingly in regard to subsequent applications for accreditation of study programmes.

(7) For private universities already accredited at the date of entry into force of PrivHG (1 January 2021), at the first extension of institutional accreditation according to PrivHG in connection with PrivH-AkkVO 2021, § 16 para. 7 subpara. 1 to 7 PrivH-AkkVO 2021 apply in regard to the assessment area staff. In the second extension of institutional accreditation according to PrivHG in connection with PrivH-AkkVO 2021, in addition § 16 para. 7 subpara. 8 PrivH-AkkVO applies, if the private university offers at least one accredited doctoral programme at this time.

