

# REVIEW REPORT

BibelStudienKolleg (BSK), Ostfildern  
Related to a visit for cyclical review;  
24-26 October 2022

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ECTE

European  
Council for  
Theological  
Education

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# A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Report of a cyclical review of the institutional accreditation of BibelStudienKolleg (BSK), Ostfildern, Germany, an alternative provider, and the programme review of two programmes; a QF-EHEA Short Cycle - EQF level 5 programme (120 ECTS) called BSK-L-Programme, practice-oriented; a QF-EHEA First Cycle - EQF level 6 programme (180 ECTS) called BSK-XL-Programme, practice oriented. Both delivered by blended learning.

This report relates to a process, including a desk analysis of the SER and other material provided to the visitation team and an on-site visit 24<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> October 2022, for the purpose of re-accrediting the BibelStudienKolleg on the basis of the ECTE's *Standards and Guidelines* and other relevant ECTE guideline documents. It finds the school generally excellent in achieving its intentions in theological education, suggests to the ECTE Accreditation Commission 10 commendations of excellence, 2 recommendations and no requirements.

# B. INTRODUCTION TO THE REVIEW

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## Description of the review

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BSK was initially accredited by ECTE (then EEAA) in 2005 as to institution and programmes. That accreditation was renewed in 2011 and again in 2017, with no requirements and four recommendations. Progress in these has been signalled in the annual reports of the school since 2017. This therefore is a cyclical review of the accreditation of the institution and its programmes.

The documents guiding this review are the [Standards and Guidelines](#) of the ECTE, parts A 1-6 (institutional standards) and B1-5 (programme standards), the [DE/DO delivery specifications](#), the [Guidelines for Programme Design](#), the [Guidelines for Site Visits](#), the [Guidelines for Institutional Status and Qualification Nomenclature](#), and others as they were relevant.

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## Programmes

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Name in the language of delivery	ESCT-Points	QF-EHEA Cycle	EQF/ISCED Level	ICETE Level	Delivery mode
BSK-L Programm	120 ECTS	Short Cycle	5 (practice)	Diploma	blended
BSK-XL Programm	180 ECTS	First Cycle	6 (practice)	Bachelor	blended

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## The Visiting team

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Dr. Parush Parushev (Team-Leader)  
Dr. Manfred Baumert (Team-Member)  
Dr. Jiien Chen (Student Representative)  
Dr. Graham Cheesman (Review Secretary)

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## Visit arrangements

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The C-SER was constructed in a professional manner in German and translated into English following the template set out in the ECTE [Guidelines for Producing Self-Evaluation Reports](#) and was received in good time by the Accreditation Director. The team was recommended to the Accreditation Commission by the Review Secretaries. The Accreditation commission approved the team and the dates of the review visit and these were communicated to BSK by the Review Secretary who also asked the school if they had any reservations about the team members, but there were none. Dr Parush Parushev was a member of the 2017 team.

Logistical and administrative arrangements prior to the visit were set up as follows:

1. The RS sent the SER, accompanying documents, and all previous correspondence with the school, to all VET members using Google Drive links.
2. VET members communicated the results of their initial reading of the documents to the team leader and RS via email.
3. The Internal Review Co-ordinator (IRC) of the school was identified and received a copy of the online visit protocol and set up a Zoom room for the main meetings.
4. A WhatsApp group was set up internally for the VET members for fast communication and another including the IRC for speedy furtherance of arrangements.
5. In conjunction with the VET leader, the IRC organised and agreed to a programme for the visit.
6. A request for additional documents was sent to the IRC and these were received in a prompt manner.
7. Two initial pre-visit meetings of the VET took place via Zoom to discuss the SER, the documents and the visit.
8. A working report document was set up using Google Docs for members of the team to access and modify which followed the structure of the interim report form pertaining to the current standards and protocol of ECTE. This was filled out and commented on by all members of the VET, the RS and the AD, as the visit progressed in preparation for the interim report-writing on the last day of the visit.

The team was very warmly received by the leadership and the staff. The school provided all online and on campus means needed for an effective evaluation of the academic work and communal life of the institution. From the team's point of view, the documentation submitted, and discussions held were transparent. In addition to the SER and its accompanying documents, a number of other documents were submitted to the VET during the visit as the team sought

further, more detailed, information in various areas. The totality of the documentation provided a good summary of the school's current state and response to previous recommendations. The review took place over two days. The on-campus visit began on Sunday evening 23<sup>rd</sup> October and concluded with meetings Tuesday evening 25<sup>th</sup> October.

The review was conducted in English and German.

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## Visit Schedule

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Meetings with the various stakeholders occurred as follows, at times including all the VET and other times the VET split up and attended different meetings. They included meetings with;

Faculty

Staff

Administrative director

Student representatives

Heads of practical ministry

Head of mentoring

Representatives of the board

Librarian

Dean of faculty

Director

The team also attended a number of lectures.

The team discussed with the director, the board and practical placement representatives the views of external stakeholders such as alumni and employers.

The facilities were inspected and the library was examined.

# C. INTRODUCTION TO THE INSTITUTION AND PROGRAMMES

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## General Description of Institution and Programmes

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The BibelStudienKolleg e.V. (BSK), is an alternative provider of higher education in theology and Christian service located at Hellmuth-Hirth-Str. 11, 73760 Ostfildern, Germany. BSK is a registered non-profit organisation with her main office in Ostfildern and registration entry in Esslingen. In addition, taking the three-year BSK-XL-Programme qualifies as studying at a public facility or approved private school (recognized by the Stuttgart Registration Presidium as responsible county authority valid as of 01.10.2009). But this does not include any federal acknowledgement of this college facility or the academic subjects. This being the case, BSK is entitled to BAfoeG (German Educational Maintenance Allowance) and therefore is listed in the registry of recognized BAfoeG educational facilities of the Federal State of Baden-Wuerttemberg. In regard to funding eligibility, BSK-XL Programme in full-time mode in its 3rd year is considered an equivalent to an advanced technical college education.

BSK offers four main programmes;

BSK-S Programme (6 months in full-time mode)

BSK-M Programme (1 year in full-time mode)

BSK-L Programme (2 years in full-time mode – accredited by ECTE since 2011) Short cycle, 120 ECTS credits level 5. Practice oriented.

BSK-XL Programme (3 years in full-time mode – accredited by ECTE since 1997) First cycle, 180 ECTS credits, level 6. Practice oriented.

The BSK-L and the BSK-XL are presently being offered for re-accreditation by this ECTE cyclical review.

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## Mission statement

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BSK's mission statement reads as follows;

“BSK stands for competent preparation for life and ministry: biblical, hands-on and tailor-made.

- ‘competent preparation’ shows the claim to offer high-quality education on a professional level;
- the wording ‘Life and Ministry’ reveals the close coherence of self-development, spiritual life and development of one’s personality on one hand and practical and intellectual training for the ministry for Jesus Christ in words and works on the other hand;

- “biblical” shows the theological positioning and, for BSK, is inseparably associated with the adherence to divine inspiration and inerrancy of Holy Scripture as solely authoritative source of revelation;
- “hands-on” reveals the ambition to equip BSK students for practical ministry in church, mission and Christian welfare;
- “tailor-made” is the special label which is to distinguish BSK from other theological training centres. As BSK sees and cherishes each person as God’s individual creation, BSK is striving with maximum effort after supporting each individual in her/his uniqueness and inimitability and leading them to a maturity in Jesus Christ.”

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## History

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The history of the BSK begins after the Second World War. At that time the American Dr. Robert Evans served as a military chaplain in France. He recognised the need for Christian training in Europe at the time and founded the Greater Europe Mission (GEM), which set itself the goal of training evangelists, teachers, preachers and missionaries. On GEM’s initiative, a German-European Bible School was founded in 1955, which was called the “Bibelschule Bergstrasse” from 1958 on and was located in Seeheim. In 1990 the school moved to Königsfeld/Black Forest and was called “Bibelseminar Königsfeld”. Another move to Ostfildern in 2009 and a change of name to “BibelStudienKolleg” followed.

Today, the BSK does not belong to any church or community association, but sees itself as an evangelical, bible-based, supra-congregational training centre mainly for German speaking Europe. BSK is a member of the Association of Evangelical Missions in Germany (AEM), the netzwerk-m and the “Konferenz bibeltreuer Ausbildungsstätten” (KbA).

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## Facilities

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The building is well presented and up to date, the technology is fit for purpose for hybrid delivery, the lecture and seminar rooms are sufficient and the library is well cared for and effective. Overall, the facilities are adequate for the intentions of the school and its programmes.



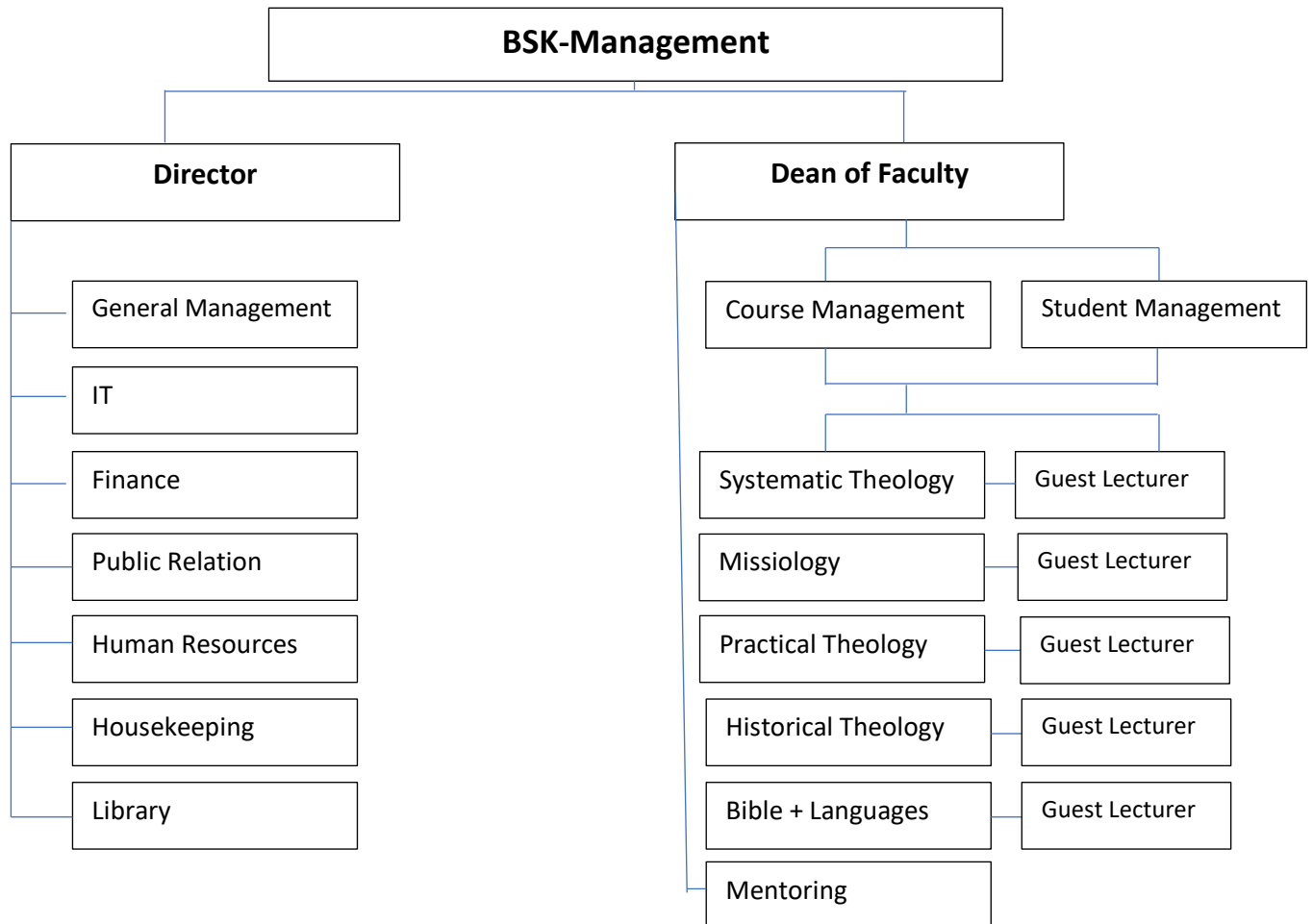
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## Governance

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The governance body of BSK is composed of a General Meeting at least once a year and a Board of Directors composed of 3 individuals elected by the general meeting, at least two individuals thereof must not be on BSK staff. For considerations of quality and efficiency, the Dean of Faculty is a permanent observing member on the Board, without a right to vote though. As a rule, the Board meets in four sessions each year.

The organisational chart of the institution related to management aspects is as follows:



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## Educational and non-educational Staff

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The school works with five full time faculty, one part time faculty and up to 40 adjuncts (Gastdozenten). Their qualifications are adequate for the teaching at the levels required by the programmes. A full document describing the teaching staff, their qualifications and subject areas was provided with the SER.



The instruction proportion of full-time lecturers teaching is now 55% in the BSK-XL and 62% in the BSK-L programme. Part time lecturers make up approximately 10% in each of these programmes and the rest is covered by adjuncts.

Administrative staff are adequate, efficient and well led.

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## Budget

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BSK has been in existence for 66 consecutive years and is in a stable financial position, with no loan liabilities, with planned and balanced budgets year on year, and with externally audited accounts presented each year to the General Meeting.

The sources of income for BSK are;

- 1.) Tuition fees from enrolled students from the four programs BSK-S to BSK-XL;
- 2.) Tuition fees from guest auditors;
- 3.) Receipts from lectures and ministries of BSK staff in churches and organisations;
- 4.) donations and collections.

Donations provide for approximately 55% of costs.

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## Programmes and Delivery Modes

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Although BSK runs four programmes, only two of these are presented for re-accreditation, the BSK-L (short cycle) 120 ECTS credits and the BSK-XL (first cycle) 180 ECTS credits as described above.

These two programmes transitioned to a balanced semester system in 2017 and a revision of the curriculum occurred in 2019, including an expansion of course options.

The Covid-19 pandemic required BSK to suspend classroom teaching for a while and they re-tooled their technology to work with students off campus. Following a return to classroom teaching, some elements of a hybrid approach were preserved with an interactive participation student system. This new delivery approach has enabled student numbers to remain relatively stable through the last five years.

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## Student numbers

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	Total	Program- Participants		Mode of study		Gender	
				Full time	Part time	Male	Female
2017	144	BSK-XL	60	42	102	78	66
		BSK-L	23				
		BSK-M	34				
		BSK-S	27				
2018	154	BSK-XL	66	50	104	88	66
		BSK-L	24				
		BSK-M	38				
		BSK-S	26				
2019	133	BSK-XL	58	50	83	82	51
		BSK-L	25				
		BSK-M	30				
		BSK-S	20				
2020	135	BSK-XL	60	51	84	82	53
		BSK-L	29				
		BSK=M	30				
		BSK-S	16				
2021 (October)	130	BSK-XL	56	46	84	78	52
		BSK-L	23				
		BSK-M	29-S				
		BSK-S	22				

BSK-XL is a first cycle programme, level 6 (practice oriented) and BSK-L is a short cycle programme, level 5 (practice oriented).

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## How the school prepared for the review

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This is a cyclical review and the school looked forward to engagement with ECTE in this way with a view to understanding further improvements in its institution and programmes as a result of the recommendations of ECTE.

The Dean of Faculty was accountable for the contents of C-SER. During the compilation of the report, he was supported by his academic assistant in the preparation of the report. Further BSK lecturers and staff assumed responsibility for the contents of sections of the report which are part of their area of responsibility. The main language of operation at BSK is German, thus the report was drafted in the German language and consequently translated into English.

Over 50 additional documents were presented to ECTE to develop the picture of BSK, most of which were in German.

# D. FINDINGS OF THE REVIEW

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## Description of the extent of the review

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This report relates to a cyclical review of the institutional accreditation of BibelStudienKolleg (BSK), Ostfildern, Germany, an alternative provider, and the programme accreditation of two programmes:

- a QF-EHEA Short Cycle - EQF level 5 programme (120 ECTS) called BSK-L-Programm, practice-oriented;
- a QF-EHEA First Cycle - EQF level 6 programme (180 ECTS) called BSK-XL-Programm, practice oriented (180 ECTS).

Both programmes are delivered by blended learning and are submitted to this review for re-accreditation.

The BSK-L programme forms the first two years (or two thirds) of the BSK-XL credits. In this report, the two programmes are generally commented on together under the structure provided by the ECTE standards. However, particular attention was paid to progression within each programme and progression policies for students from the completed BSK-L to BSK-XL.

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## Standards relating to the institution

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### STANDARD A1: - Identity and Purpose

INSTITUTIONS HAVE CLEARLY FORMULATED STATEMENTS OF IDENTITY AND PURPOSE

Standards examined	A.1.1 identity, A.1.2 Legal and Fiscal status, A.1.3 Vision and Mission, A.1.4 Public information. DE/OE.3 and DE/OE.4
Previous requirements or recommendations: None	
Evidence of Compliance	<p>SER D.A.1, examination of ancillary documents, in particular,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self- and external reflection</li> <li>• Lecturers' manual</li> <li>• Articles of association</li> <li>• Strategic plan</li> <li>• Statement of faith</li> </ul> <p>Meetings with leaders, faculty, stakeholders and students of the school.</p>
Analysis	<p>BSK has a clearly expressed institutional evangelical identity. It embraces the core values of ECTE, which are firmly incorporated in the BSK statement of faith and it is accepted by all faculty members and students. It is evident that they are endorsed, applied, and reflected in learning activities, programmes and institutional aspects.</p> <p>BSK also endorses the statement of faith of the Deutsche Evangelische Allianz. The school is a trusted partner by the German evangelical stakeholders both as faith communities and as mission agencies. Biblical grounding is evident in all programmes and modules.</p> <p>BSK has an appropriate legal status as the alternative provider of higher education (as a registered association) in Germany on levels 5 and 6. It uses appropriate terminology and is a registered non-profit organisation with her main office in Ostfildern and registration entry in Esslingen.</p> <p>BSK holds to a definite vision and has a clear mission statement which is being reviewed by the management in regular intervals, understood by internal and external stakeholders and adapted to its strategic planning and matched by the budgetary provisions.</p>

	The public information on identity, activities and the various tracks of the academic programmes is done via so-called “study guides” and “guidelines” at BSK. All relevant information is accessible on the internal network (“SharePoint”). Information concerning the modules and courses is presented in module descriptions and course syllabi. This information can be accessed in the internal BSK network.
Commendations, recommendations, requirements	None
Panel conclusion	Full Compliance

## A.2 - Governance and Quality Assurance

### INSTITUTIONS HAVE APPROPRIATE AND EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE AND QUALITY ASSURANCE STRUCTURES

Standards examined	A.2.1 Governance, A.2.2 Leadership and Management, A.2.3 Decision-making structures, A.2.4 strategic planning, A.2.5 Internal Quality Assurance procedures, A.2.6 Cyclical External Quality Assurance. DE/OE.7 and DE/OE.8
Previous requirements or recommendations: None	
Evidence of Compliance	SER D.A.2, examination of ancillary documents, in particular, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BSK Competence Governance</li> <li>• Articles of association</li> <li>• Strategic plan</li> </ul> Meetings with leaders, faculty, stakeholders and students of the school.
Analysis	The leadership of the BSK experienced relatively immediate personnel changes in the Board and the General Assembly and managed these crises well. Suggestion – strive for more female representation at the General Assembly. BSK has continually been working at her strategic plan to attain expected study outcomes. It is presented in a very careful and thorough way to the Board and the General meeting. It is scheduled to be discussed and updated every two years.
Commendations, recommendations, requirements	<b>Commendation:</b> The VET commends BSK for its elaborate strategic plan with clearly defined long term and short-term goals
Panel conclusion	Full Compliance

### A.3 - Human Resources

#### HUMAN RESOURCES IN INSTITUTIONS ARE FIT FOR PURPOSE AND MANAGED FOR FLOURISHING

Standards examined	A.3.1 Human Resources; A.3.2 Non-Educational Staff; A.3.3 Educational Staff; A.3.4 HR Policies and procedures. DE/OE.15, DE/OE.16, DE/OE.17, DE/OE.18 and DE/OE.19.
<p>Previous requirements or recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The ratio of lectures delivered by full-time lecturers (48 %) should be raised</li> <li>- Improve the professional skills of the library personnel, in particular include in the long-term planning a part-time appointment of a professionally qualified librarian</li> </ul>	
Evidence of Compliance	<p>SER D.A.3, examination of ancillary documents, in particular,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lecturers' manual</li> <li>• Teaching loads lecturers</li> <li>• List of lecturers</li> <li>• Job description lecturers</li> <li>• Job description administrative staff</li> <li>• Guideline Personnel Development Reviews</li> </ul> <p>Meetings with leaders, faculty, stakeholders and students of the school.</p>
Analysis	<p>Positive observations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The BSK management implemented the ECTE proposal during the last reaccreditation and employed five additional lecturers.</li> <li>• A professional librarian has been appointed part time in response to the 2017 visit recommendation.</li> <li>• In the SER, the school management repeatedly emphasises its short communication paths and documents a well-thought-out crisis management for its staff (non-educational and lecturer).</li> </ul> <p>The load taken by individuals and staff and lecturers is now acceptable and the proportion of teaching by full time staff has increased satisfactorily.</p> <p>Suggestions toward best-practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• finding creative ways of bringing visiting faculty to integrate into the academic culture through retreats, selective themes, and focused lectures.</li> <li>• continue to work on increasing the number of female educational staff.</li> </ul>
Commendations, recommendations, requirements	None
Panel conclusion	Full Compliance

## A.4 - Community and Context

### INSTITUTIONS DISPLAY HEALTHY COMMUNITY DYNAMICS IN ACTIVE RESPONSE TO CONTEXT

Standards examined	A.4.1 Learning Community; A.4.2 Stakeholder Community; A.4.3 Civil Community; A.4.4 Communication. DE/OE.22, DE/OE.23, DE/OE.24 and DE/OE.25 DE/OE.28.
<p>Previous requirements or recommendations: For building community spirit, more involvement in daily devotions is needed; more effective ways (e. g. shortening the time and moving it to a later time in the day) are recommended.</p>	
Evidence of Compliance	<p>SER D.A.4, examination of ancillary documents, in particular,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Study Guide parts 1 and 2</li> <li>• Syllabus Community</li> </ul> <p>Meetings with leaders, faculty, stakeholders and students of the school. Examination of the school's VLE</p>
Analysis	<p>The visitation team found good media communication in theory and practice and a vibrant community which is emphasised by staff. There is an excellent learning community operating on-campus and on-line.</p> <p>BSK has done well in the area of alumni. It ensured they are involved in various stages of development of the school which provides good feedback for growth and continues a sense of community with them.</p> <p>BSK has worked to create a good experience for on campus, on-line and part-time students; but more could be done in this area to ensure that a similar experience of community is enjoyed by all groups of students. There are creative ways in which this could be done.</p>
Commendations, recommendations, requirements	<p><b>Commendation:</b> The VET commends BSK for creating a good learning community involving on campus teaching and on-line teaching.</p> <p><b>Commendation:</b> The VET commends BSK for developing a robust involvement of alumni from different stages of the institutional development of the BSK, which creates a sense of integrated community of BSK.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Considering the wider use of hybrid forms of instruction, the VET recommends that BSK continue to look for what creative ways may be possible to provide coherence, and the same level experience of community by full-time, part-time, and online students.</p>
Panel conclusion	Substantial Compliance

## A.5 - Educational Resources

### INSTITUTIONS HAVE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES THAT SUPPORT THEIR MISSION AND STRATEGY

Standards examined	A.5.1 Student services; A.5.2 Study facilities; A.5.3 Library/Learning Resource Centres; A.5.4 Information management; A.5.5 Information Technology; A.5.6 Virtual Learning Environment and Educational Resources.  DE/OE.32 and DE/OE.33 DE/OE.34 DE/OE.35 DE/OE.36 DE/OE.37.
<p>Previous requirements or recommendations:</p> <p>For future development BSK should consider adding specialized theological journals and on-line databases; acquire also a standard Evangelical Commentary series.</p>	
Evidence of Compliance	<p>SER D.A.5, examination of ancillary documents, in particular,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Module descriptors Spirituality and Competence, and Practical Theology</li> <li>• Study Guides part 1 and 2</li> <li>• Teaching load of the students</li> <li>• Strategic plan</li> <li>• Library statistics</li> <li>• Publications</li> </ul> <p>Meetings with leaders, faculty, stakeholders and students of the school.</p> <p>Examination of the school's VLE</p>
Analysis	<p>BSK has responded positively to the recommendation of the previous review as to library content. The library is now providing sufficient support and resources for the students' study needs both in the school and from outside.</p> <p>The virtual learning resources are also sufficient for the purpose of the institution.</p> <p>There is a good level of student services and especially there is good communication with the students. It is clear that staff have made, and are making, strong efforts in this area with good success. Students are cared for.</p> <p>Observation: The very good standard Evangelical Commentary series, Historisch Theologische Auslegung (HTA) is available in the library.</p> <p>It was good to see that BSK has a mutually useful sharing relationship with ChristusBund in information technology.</p>
Commendations, recommendations, requirements	<p><b>Commendation:</b> The VET commends BSK for a good level of student services. During the COVID-19 pandemic, personal communication with students was disturbed but the staff of BSK made additional efforts to communicate personal issues of the students and to meet their needs.</p> <p><b>Commendation:</b> The Vet commends BSK that the 2017 recommendation has been met. Library provides sufficient support/</p>



	resources for the students The number of resources has increased significantly. The school has made provision for effective use of the library resources at all times. For example, the students are satisfied with the access to RGG4 through the state church. <b>Commendation:</b> The VET commends BSK for their sharing of information technology and IT specialist with ChristusBund.
Panel conclusion	Full Compliance

## A.6 - Finances and Sustainability

### INSTITUTIONS HAVE SUITABLE FINANCIAL POTENTIAL, PLANNING, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Standards examined	A.6.1 Financial Potential and Planning; A.6.2 Financial Policies and Procedures; A.6.3 Sustainability; A.6.4 Remuneration and Fees; A.6.5 Fundraising.
Previous requirements or recommendations: None	
Evidence of Compliance	SER D.A.6, examination of ancillary documents, in particular, audited accounts
Analysis	Sound financial status Good practice to line up salary scale to the regulations of Christian services (Diakonie) of the state church
Commendations, recommendations, requirements	None
Panel conclusion	Full Compliance

## Standards relating to the programme

### Standard B1: B.1 - Holistic Integration

INSTITUTIONS FORM THEIR STUDENTS WITHIN A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION, CAREFULLY INTEGRATING SPIRITUAL FORMATION, CHARACTER EDUCATION, ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND PRACTICAL TRAINING

Standards examined	B.1.1 Holistic Integration; B.1.2 Spiritual Formation; B.1.3 Character Education; B.1.4 Academic Achievement; B.1.5 Practical training; B.1.6 Mentoring.
<p>Previous requirements or recommendations: 2017:</p> <p>7.2 For building community spirit, more involvement in daily devotions is needed; more effective ways (e. g. shortening the time and moving it to a later time in the day) are recommended.</p>	
Evidence of Compliance	<p>SER D.B.1, examination of ancillary documents, in particular,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Module descriptors Spirituality &amp; Competence, Practical Theology</li> <li>• Study Guides part 1 and 2</li> <li>• Teaching load of the students</li> <li>• Syllabi Spiritual Life, Practice based teaching, Personality, Community</li> <li>• Evaluation forms</li> <li>• Student progress files and performance records</li> <li>• Mentoring guidelines</li> <li>• Internship planning</li> </ul> <p>Meetings with leaders, faculty, stakeholders and students. Examination of the school's virtual learning environment.</p>
Analysis	<p>Recommendation about daily devotions from the previous accreditation visits is fulfilled.</p> <p>The school offers a good balance and integration in its learning activities. The careful balancing of the spring and winter semesters is especially to be commended.</p> <p>Good decision: At the suggestion of ECTE accreditation visit (2017), the distinction between "practical studies" (such as involvement in the spiritual programme) and "practical services" (such as missionary ministries in congregations) of the students was made and has worked well so far.</p> <p>On mentoring provision, BSK does very well. There is a very well-organised set of mentoring activities based on good thinking and best practice. Students appreciate written reflections on different aspects of mentoring. The oral and written system of reflections is very profitable for students and students are aware of this.</p>

Commendations, recommendations, requirements	<p><b>Commendation:</b> The VET commends BSK for good balance of integration of different aspects of learning activities achieved in particular by balancing the winter and summer semester periods.</p> <p><b>Commendation:</b> The Vet commends BSK for a very well-balanced process and thought through practices of mentoring. Students appreciate written and oral reflections on different aspects of mentoring.</p>
Panel conclusion	Full Compliance

## B.2 - Curriculum Development

INSTITUTIONS DESIGN AND IMPLEMENT APPROVED, OUTCOME-BASED PROGRAMMES THAT ARE FIT FOR PURPOSE IN CONTEXT

Standards examined	<p>B.2.1 Design and approval processes; B.2.2 Outcomes and fitness for purpose; B.2.3 Curricula, Module descriptors and learning activities; B.2.4 Graduate profiles; B.2.5 Content, level, feasibility and progression; B.2.6 Credit allocation and duration; B.2.7 Content; B.2.8 Monitoring processes.</p> <p>DE/OE.41 DE/OE.42 and DE/OE.43.</p>
Previous requirements or recommendations: None	
Evidence of Compliance	<p>SER D.B.2, examination of ancillary documents, in particular,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Study Guides part 1 and 2</li> <li>• Various Module descriptors and syllabi</li> <li>• Strategic plan</li> <li>• Lecturers' manual</li> <li>• Guidelines for self-study courses and self-study material</li> </ul> <p>Meetings with leaders, faculty, stakeholders and students.</p> <p>Examination of the school's VLE.</p>
Analysis	<p>The school does well in its concentration on the issue of competencies to evaluate the various stages of learning in the students. The BSK aligns its training and the final examination with the competences of the EQF with its three dimensions although this is not shown in their certificate or supplements of certification. In this way, specialised knowledge (skills) is transformed into ability (abilities) and practised through will (attitudes).</p> <p>However, the VET would like to see more prominence given to the objectives formally listed in the EQF short cycle and EQF first cycle requirements and for these to be embedded in the module descriptors as to both objectives and as to appropriate assessments. These could also be mentioned more prominently in the certification of the courses.</p> <p>All students find the flexibility of the studies very positive.</p>

	In a few module descriptors offered in the SER-Appendix, the distribution of tasks in the module descriptions (XL and L degree programmes) is documented in detail (see A3a, S. 3-4). In this way, the grade assessments are documented in a comprehensible way. The SER demonstrates that the graduate profile matches well the school's concept of competencies.
Commendations, recommendations, requirements	<p><b>Commendation:</b> The VET commends BSK for promoting the concept of competencies and for the thorough evaluation of the stages of learning and of achieved competencies.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> the VET recommends that BSK examines its curriculum and module descriptors to decide whether the EQF short cycle and EQF first cycle objectives are sufficiently prominent (see ECTE guidelines on programme design). The short cycle level 5 and first cycle level 6 programmes each need to have modules with objectives and assessments appropriate to the level and each programme is distinguished from the other. Further, EQF levels should be more prominent on certification.</p>
Panel conclusion	Substantial Compliance

### B.3 - Learning, Teaching and Assessment

#### INSTITUTIONS IMPLEMENT GOOD EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE IN AREAS OF LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

Standards examined	B.3.1 Educational philosophy and adult pedagogy; B.3.2 Student centred learning and teaching and assessment; B.3.3 Module design and delivery; B.3.4 Variety; B.3.5 Delivery feedback; B.3.6 Assessment.  DE/OE.50 and DE/OE.51 DE/OE.52, DE/OE.53 and DE/OE.54.
Previous requirements or recommendations: None	
Evidence of Compliance	SER D.B.3, examination of ancillary documents, in particular, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Study Guides part 1 and 2</li> <li>• Various Module descriptors and syllabi</li> <li>• Strategic plan</li> <li>• Lecturers' manual</li> <li>• Guidelines for self-study courses and self-study material</li> </ul> Meetings with leaders, faculty, stakeholders and students. Examination of the school's VLE.
Analysis	In BSK, the emphasis is on personalised student-centred learning and assessment and this is evidenced throughout its documents and programmes.  The VET considers it valuable that professional competence plays a central role at the BSK. Both in the practical examinations at the BSK

	<p>and in the congregation, the examination tasks correspond to the ministry challenges in theologically, methodically, and didactically networked thinking.</p> <p>Students were very positive about the teaching towards practice oriented theological reflection.</p> <p>The school has made some decisions in this area such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The subject "English" is removed from the curriculum, because it takes lifelong learning into account and at the same time makes it possible to place emphasis on the biblical languages.</li> <li>• to reduce learning activities per ECTS from 28 to 25 hours.</li> <li>• Change of mentality (students' deficits in self-organization/self-discipline): Mentoring obligatory in study programmes.</li> </ul> <p>Question to Faculty for consideration: (Study Guide 2: 1.5.4 Deadlines). The "study-traffic-light" is basically good, but even 10 open assignments seem too much. Is the individual's personality and resilience taken into account here? It is noted that sometimes assignments require only two to three pages of work which may help the situation, but this raises further questions of the ability to demonstrate competence at higher levels in such a short assignment.</p>
Commendations, recommendations, requirements	<b>Commendation:</b> The VET commends BSK in that it emphasises in its documents and programmes and is positively focused on personalized students-centred learning and assessment.
Panel conclusion	Full Compliance

#### B.4 - Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification

INSTITUTIONS FORMULATE AND IMPLEMENT SUITABLE POLICIES FOR THE STUDENT "LIFE CYCLE" THAT INCLUDES ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, RECOGNITION AND CERTIFICATION.

Standards examined	B.4.1 Admission; B.4.2 Progression; B.4.3 Recognition; B.4.4 Graduation and certification.
Previous requirements or recommendations: None	
Evidence of Compliance	<p>SER D.B.4, examination of ancillary documents, in particular,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Study Guides part 1 and 2</li> <li>• Admission form</li> <li>• Evaluation form</li> <li>• Student progress files</li> <li>• Certificates XL and L</li> <li>• Lecturers' manual</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance records</li> <li>• Diploma supplements</li> </ul> <p>Meetings with leaders, faculty, stakeholders and students</p>
Analysis	<p>BSK is fully compliant in the areas of admission, progression, recognition, graduation and certification.</p> <p>Progression from the level 5 to the level 6 programme is decided on careful individual assessment.</p> <p>Students expressed a desire for more digitalisation in their curriculum management and the VET notes that the management is working on this.</p>
Commendations, recommendations, requirements	None
Panel conclusion	Full Compliance

### B.5 - Qualification Nomenclature and Credits

INSTITUTIONS FOLLOW INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNISED QUALIFICATION NOMENCLATURE AND CREDIT-COUNTING SYSTEMS

Standards examined	B.5.1 Qualification nomenclature; B.5.2 Credits.
Previous requirements or recommendations: None	
Evidence of Compliance	<p>SER D.B.5, examination of ancillary documents, in particular, the BSK website</p> <p>Meetings with leaders, faculty, stakeholders and students</p> <p>Examination of the school's VLE.</p>
Analysis	BSK is fully compliant in the areas of qualification nomenclature and credits.
Commendations, recommendations, requirements	None
Panel conclusion	Full Compliance

# E. CONCLUSIONS

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## SUMMARY OF COMMENDATIONS

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### Commendation 1:

**Standard A.2.4. Strategic Planning:** The VET commends BSK for its elaborate strategic plan with clearly defined long term and short-term goals

### Commendation 2:

**Standard A.4.1. Learning Community:** The VET commends BSK for creating a good learning community involving on campus teaching and on-line teaching.

### Commendation 3:

**Standard A.4.2 Stakeholder Community:** The VET commends BSK for developing a robust involvement of alumni from different stages of the institutional development of the BSK, which creates a sense of integrated community of BSK.

### Commendation 4:

**Standard A.5.1 Student Services:** The VET commends BSK for a good level of student services. During the COVID pandemic, personal communication with students was disturbed but the staff of BSK made additional efforts to communicate personal issues of the students and to meet their needs.

### Commendation 5:

**Standard A.5.3. Library Services:** The Vet commends BSK that the 2017 recommendation has been met. Library provides sufficient support/ resources for the students The number of resources has increased significantly. The school has made provision of effective use of the library resources at all times. For example, the students are satisfied with the access to RGG4 and TRE through the state church.

### Commendation 6:

**Standard A.5.4. Information Management:** The VET commends BSK for their sharing of information technology and IT specialist with ChristusBund.

### Commendation 7:

**Standard B.1.1 Holistic Integration:** The VET commends BSK for good balance of integration of different aspects of learning activities achieved in particular with balancing the winter and summer semester periods.

### Commendation 8:

**Standard B.1.6. Mentoring:** The VET commends BSK for a very well-balanced process and thought through practices of mentoring. Students appreciate written and oral reflections on different aspects of mentoring.

#### Commendation 9:

**Standard B.2.2. Outcomes and fitness for purpose:** The VET commends BSK for promoting the concept of competencies and for the thorough evaluation of the stages of learning and of achieved competencies.

#### Commendation 10:

**Standard B.3.2. Student centred learning and teaching and assessment:** The VET commends BSK in that it emphasises throughout its documents and programmes and is positively focused on personalized students-centred learning and assessment.

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## SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

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#### Recommendation 1:

**Standard A.4.1. Learning Community:** Considering the wider use of hybrid forms of instruction, the VET recommends that BSK continue to look for what creative ways may be possible to provide coherence, and the same level experience of community by full-time, part-time, and online students.

#### Recommendation 2:

**Standard B.2.3 – Curricula, module descriptors and learning activities:** the VET recommends that BSK examines its curriculum and module descriptors to decide whether the EQF short cycle and EQF first cycle objectives are sufficiently prominent (see ECTE guidelines on programme design). The short cycle level 5 and first cycle level 6 programmes each need to have modules with objectives and assessments appropriate to the level and each programme is distinguished from the other. Further, EQF levels should be more prominent on certification.

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## SUMMARY OF REQUIREMENTS

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There are no requirements.



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## IN CONCLUSION

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The visitation team recommends to the ECTE Accreditation Commission that BibelStudienKolleg (BSK), Ostfildern, be judged to be in compliance with the Standards and Guidelines of the ECTE in both institutional and programme areas without requirements.

The team recommends to the ECTE Accreditation Commission granting re-accreditation with the relevant recommendations listed above, monitored through the annual reporting processes of ECTE.

The visitation team would like to record their gratitude to BSK for a warm welcome and constantly helpful interaction with the team throughout the process. It was truly a meeting of colleagues in the process from which we in the team learnt much and greatly appreciated the staff and leadership of BSK for their excellence and commitment in following their calling.

In producing this report, all those involved as peer experts have been free from undue influence or stakeholders on the findings, analysis, conclusions, commendations, and recommendations.

The visitation team.

### **Signed:**

Dr. Parush Parushev (Team-Leader)

Dr. Manfred Baumert (Team-Member)

Dr. Jiien Chen (Student Representative)

Dr. Graham Cheesman (Review Secretary)

**January 2023**

# APPENDICES

## Appendix 1: Visitation Schedule

ECTE Visit BibelStudienKolleg, Ostfildern in October 24-25, 2022

VET: Dr. Parush Parushev, Dr. Manfred Baumert and Dr. Chen Jieen

### Programme

Sunday, October 23, 2022 (BSK-Responsible ☑ Dietrich Mang) +49 160 94457058		
20.00	Parush Parushev, Manfred Baumert and Chen Jieen arrive directly at hotel	Centro Park Hotel Kreuzbrunnenstr. 103 73760 Ostfildern 0711 3416880
Monday, October 24, 2022 (BSK-responsible ☑ Dietrich Mang)		
7.15-8.00	Breakfast in the hotel at Centro Park Hotel	
8.05	PP (VET 1), MB (VET 2) and CJ (VET 3) arrive at Ostfildern, Scharnhauser Park, Hellmuth-Hirth-Str. 11	
8.15-9.00	Online-Devotion with students	Dominic C. – Link to TEAMS-Meeting see below
9.00-10.00	Orientation session with faculty and staff	All - large classroom ground floor
10.00-10.30	A brief tour of the facilities	Albrecht W. /Dietrich M.
10.30-11.00	Coffee and tea break	
10.50-12.25	VET 1: Meeting with Administration Director / Head of Registration office	Dietrich M.
11.00-12.20	VET 2 and VET 3: Attending lectures	Ludwig Meis (Ethics 5)
12.30-13.30	Lunch with student representatives at BSK	Jonathan Witzemann / Deborah Zwecker
14.30-15.30	VET 1: Meeting with Head of PR office	Dietrich M.
	VET 2 and VET 3: Meeting with Head of practical ministry & Head of student mentoring	Martin Heißwolf Albrecht Wandel
15.30-17.00	Meeting with representatives of the Board incl. Tea and coffee break	Bernhard Knieß Uwe Wazynski
17.00-17.30	Meeting with the Librarian and team visit to the library	Verena B. / Thomas R.
18.00-19.00	Dinner with (Dean of faculty and board representative)	Dietrich M. / Thomas R. Bernhard Kniess
19.00-	VET meeting	

**Tuesday, October 25, 2022 (BSK-responsible ☐ Dietrich Mang)**

8.00-8.45	Breakfast in the hotel	
9.00-9.45	VET 1: starts writing comments for the report	
9.00-10.00	VET 2 and VET 3: Attending lecture	Astrid Eichler (Singles ministry) Albrecht W. (Presentation)
10.00-10.30	Tea and coffee break	
10.30-11.15	VET works on writing comments for the report	
11.15-12.15	Meeting with Director and Dean of faculty	Dietrich M. / Thomas R.
12.30-13.30	Lunch with administration staff at BSK	Hanna V. / Evelyn U. / Birgit E.
14.30-16.30	VET works on writing comments for the report	
16.30-17.30	Meeting with Director and Dean of Faculty for discussing findings, recommendations and the requirements for the final version of report	Dietrich M. / Thomas R.
19.00-20.00	VET finalises writing comments for the report	
20.00	Presentation of findings by VET to Leadership Team	