

Substantive Change Report
by Swiss Agency of Accreditation and Quality Assurance (AAQ)

Register Committee

Ref. RC/C28

Ver. 1.0

Date 04/02/2019

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Decision of:	04/02/2019
Report received on:	17/09/2018
Agency registered since:	08/05/2012
Last external review report:	July 2016
Registration until:	31/07/2021
Absented themselves from decision-making:	Andrea Blättler, Yiannis Katsanevakis (observer)
Attachments:	1. Substantive Change Report

1. The Register Committee considered the Substantive Change Report of 17/09/2018.
2. The Committee noted that AAQ published documentation for the accreditation process in three subject areas regulated by the Medical Professions Act (MedPA):
 - Human Medicine, Dentistry and Chiropractic
 - Pharmacy
 - Veterinary Medicine
3. The Register Committee noted that the accreditation process is based on AAQ's general programme accreditation process, based on the Higher Education Act and accreditation guidelines.
4. The accreditation process was found to be in substantial compliance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) in the 2016 external review of AAQ and the Committee's subsequent decision to renew AAQ's registration on EQAR.
5. In its 2016 decision, the Committee considered that AAQ only partially complied with ESG 2.3, 2.6 and 2.7.
6. As regards ESG 2.3, the Register Committee found that the roles and duties of AAQ and the Swiss Accreditation Council (SAR) are clearly defined and explained in the new documentation.
7. As regards ESG 2.6, the Register Committee welcomed that the documentation clearly states that reports are published. In line with the

Committee's comments made in the 2016 decision, it should be addressed in the next review of AAQ whether the publication of all reports is fully ensured for these as well as all other accreditation processes.

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8. As regards ESG 2.7, the documentation does not explain any differences as regards complaints or appeals processes for MedPA accreditations as compared to other process. The Register Committee's analysis in the 2016 decision therefore remains pertinent also for these processes.
9. The Register Committee considered that the main difference between MedPA and other accreditation processes lied in the criteria and was thus related to ESG 2.1.
10. The Committee took note of AAQ's clearly explanation that its generic quality standards were supplemented by subject-specific standards arising from the MedPA. In the 2016 review, AAQ's general standards were found to clearly incorporate ESG Part 1 and AAQ was thus considered to be in compliance with ESG 2.1. As the MedPA standards are an addition to – rather than a replacement of – the generic ones, this conclusion remains valid for the three new sets of standards.



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Annex to the Substantive Change Report - AAQ, 17.09.2018

Accreditation of basic medical education (Bachelor and Master degrees in human medicine, pharmacy, dentistry, chiropractic, veterinary medicine) was carried out in Switzerland since the introduction of the Medical Professions Act (MedPA) in 2007.

The new federal Higher Education Act (HEdA), entered into force in 2015, and the consequent HEdA Accreditation Guidelines, in force since July 2015, cover as well the accreditation of study programmes (voluntary procedure), affecting to some extent the accreditation of the university medical education ruled by MedPA (obligatory procedure).

This legal context imposed the revision of the criteria and methodologies for the accreditation of study programmes within the university medical education.

Other than the new legislative context, the revision takes into account the past experience with the previous accreditation cycle, that had been evaluated in terms of strengths and weaknesses:

DE: [Akkreditierung Ausbildungsgänge Medizinalberufe 2010-2014. Synthesebericht OAQ](#)

FR: [Accréditation formation médicale de base 2010-14. Rapport de synthèse OAQ](#)

All relevant stakeholders took part in the revision: the Federal office of public health (FOPH), the federal Commission for the medical professions, the Rector's conference of the Swiss higher education institutions (swissuniversities), the medical Faculties of the Swiss higher education institutions, the Swiss agency of accreditation and quality assurance (AAQ), the Swiss accreditation council (SAC).

The main changes concern these items:

- Criteria for accreditation (quality standards based on HEdA and on the achieved learning outcomes according to MedPA);
- Object of the accreditation (full study course composed of Bachelor-Master's acquired competences jointly; focus on the Master's degree);
- Decision making instance (Swiss Accreditation Council, according to HEdA);
- Revised accompanying instruments (new AAQ Guide).

The revision took place in 2015-2017, the current accreditation cycle having begun in 2018.

Links to the corresponding AAQ webpage with the relevant documentation:

DE: <http://aaq.ch/akkreditierung/programmakkreditierung/#HFKG-MedBG>

FR: <http://aaq.ch/fr/accreditation/accreditation-de-programmes/#LEHE-LPMéd>

EN: <http://aaq.ch/en/accreditation/programme-accreditation/#HEdA-MedPA>

Links to the corresponding FOPH webpage:

FR: <https://www.bag.admin.ch/bag/fr/home/themen/berufe-im-gesundheitswesen/akkreditierung-gesundheitsberufe/akkreditierung-ausbildungsgaenge-medizinalberufe.html>

DE: <https://www.bag.admin.ch/bag/de/home/themen/berufe-im-gesundheitswesen/akkreditierung-gesundheitsberufe/akkreditierung-ausbildungsgaenge-medizinalberufe.html>

EN (no translated laws nor instruments):

<https://www.bag.admin.ch/bag/en/home/themen/berufe-im-gesundheitswesen/akkreditierung-gesundheitsberufe.html>

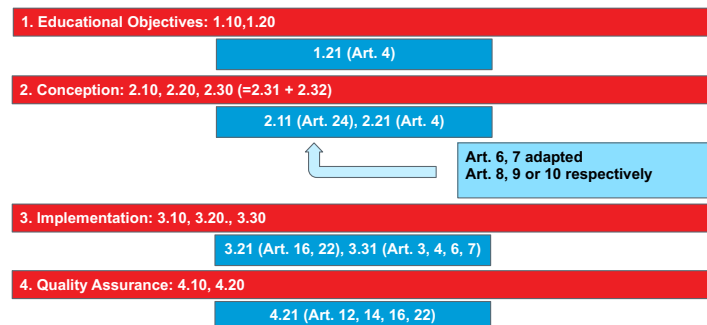
EQAR online form: Please describe the following key aspects of the changed activities:

- i. purposes and development of the activity, involvement of stakeholders (ESG 2.2)
- ii. **criteria used, how they were developed, measures implemented to ensure consistency, how ESG 1.1 – 1.10 are reflected in the criteria (ESG 2.1 & 2.5)**
- iii. review team composition, selection, appointment and training of reviewers (ESG 2.4)
- iv. site visits (ESG 2.3)
- v. publication of reports (ESG 2.6)
- vi. follow-up (ESG 2.3)
- vii. appeals system (ESG 2.7)
- viii. embedding in thematic analyses and internal quality assurance of the agency (ESG 3.4 & 3.6)

All points do follow the same procedure as applied for programme accreditation according to HEdA, already reviewed in the AAQ external review of 2016. Only point ii. deserves special consideration, in so far as the programme accreditation standards according to “HEdA Accreditation Guidelines” were complemented with MedPA accreditation criteria, constituting a new set of quality standards, in comparison with the previous accreditation cycle of university medical education programmes.

ACCREDITATION 2018: THE UNDERLYING CONCEPT

Standards HEdA Objectives MedBG Discipline specific standards





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The new set of standards and their explicative notes are published in Section C of the AAQ Guide (one guide for human medicine, dentistry and chiropractic; one guide for pharmacy; one guide for veterinary medicine):

EN: [Documentation Human Medicine, Dentistry and Chiropractic](#)

EN: [Documentation Pharmacy](#)

EN: [Documentation Veterinary Medicine](#)

Under the quality standard 4.02 a direct link to the ESG Part 1 is established, according to ESG 2.1.

For more information on the accreditation of medical education programmes:

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