

Substantive Change Report
by Central Evaluation and Accreditation Agency (ZEvA)

Register Committee

Ref. RC24/C32

Ver. 1.0

Date 3/7/2019

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Decision of: 19/06/2019

Report received on: 13/02/2019

Agency registered since: 08/04/2009

Last external review report: 01/06/2016

Registration until: 30/06/2021

Absented themselves from decision-making: n/a

Attachments:

1. [Substantive Change Report](#)
2. [Clarification request of 29/04/2019](#)
3. [Clarification response of 24/05/2019](#)

1. The Register Committee considered the Substantive Change Report of 13/02/2019.
2. The Committee thanked ZEvA for reporting these changes of its own accord in line with the EQAR Procedures for Applications.
3. The Register Committee sought and received additional clarification from ZEvA (request of 29/4/2019 and response of 24/5/2019 attached). The Committee thanked ZEvA for the clear and comprehensive response.
4. The Register Committee took note of the changes brought about by the [Interstate Treaty](#) between the German federal states, which entered into force in 2018, and the related [Specimen Decree](#). The main change lies in the fact that – for accreditation in Germany – ZEvA no longer takes accreditation decisions itself, but prepares an assessment report on the basis of which the German Accreditation Council (GAC) takes a decision; the way in which ZEvA carries out these assessments remains largely similar to the pre-2018 system.
5. The Register Committee underlined that agencies themselves remain responsible for the alignment of their activities with the ESG, even if they work based on third-party processes and criteria. As an EQAR-registered agency it is ZEvA's responsibility to assure itself that the frameworks under which it decides to operate are compatible with the ESG.
6. The Register Committee took note of the decision to merge the Standing Accreditation Commission (SAK), the Committee for Systems Accreditation (KSA) and the Commission for International Affairs (KIA) into the newly-established ZEvA-Commission (ZEKo). Based on the

information from ZEvA's website, the Committee noted that the different stakeholder perspectives continue to be represented on the ZEKo.

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7. The Register Committee took note of the fact that ZEvA applies the criteria as set out in the Specimen Decree, which replace the accreditation criteria previously set by GAC.
8. The Committee thanked ZEvA for enclosing the mapping table elaborated by the GAC, which illustrates how the criteria correspond to Part 1 of the ESG.
9. The Register Committee noted that ZEvA did not change its practice as regards site visits.
10. The Register Committee noted that no final details on follow-up processes could be provided to date, but understood that the GAC is likely to have a role in the follow-up processes. The Committee underlined that ZEvA retains responsibility for follow-up to take place, even if GAC makes accreditation decisions. This does not exclude that GAC actually implements the follow-up processes, as long as ZEvA has assured itself that this indeed happens.
11. The Register Committee expects that the interaction between GAC and ZEvA, and their respective roles in the follow-up process, will be analysed in the next external review of ZEvA.
12. The Register Committee noted that ZEvA did not change the composition, selection and appointment of review panels, as its established practice is in line with the nomination procedure adopted by the German Rectors' Conference (HRK).
13. The Register Committee noted that ZEvA did not change the way in which it assures consistency of reports and continues to rely on the existing committees/working structures in that regard.
14. The Committee nevertheless underlined that the next external review of ZEvA should analyse whether the new arrangements had any impact on the consistency of applying the accreditation criteria.
15. The Register Committee noted that ZEvA continues to publish the full expert reports on its own website, in addition to the report being published by GAC together with its eventual decision. ZEvA thus discharges its responsibility to ensure that all its reports are published and the Committee welcomed that commitment to transparency.
16. The Register Committee noted that ZEvA's appeals procedures were not changed. The Committee understood that institutions thus retain the possibility to both complain about procedural errors, etc., or to appeal the report, i.e. specific statements or conclusions in the report.

Betreff: Substantive Change Report: ZEvA – Central Evaluation and Accreditation Agency
Von: "schaefer at zeva.org" <form_engine@fs22.formsite.com>
Datum: 13.02.19, 16:49
An: substantive-changes@eqar.eu

Reference #	15241779
Status	Complete
Agency #1	ZEvA – Central Evaluation and Accreditation Agency
Expiry date #1	30/06/2021
Contact #1	Henning Schäfer
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Other organisations?	No
A. Has the organisational identity of the registered agency changed?	No
B. Has the organisational structure changed?	Yes
Description	ZEvA has merged three of its decision-making bodies into one. The Standing Accreditation Commission (SAK), The Committee for Systems Accreditation (KSA) and the Commission for International Affairs (KIA) have been discontinued. Their responsibilities have been transferred to the newly-formed ZEvA-Commission (ZEKo). All formal decisions concerning accreditation, certification or audits are taken by the ZEKo.
C.i. Are there new types of activities?	Yes
C.ii. Are there changes in existing activities?	No
C.iii. Have some or all existing	Yes

activities been discontinued?

Description new/changed	The new activity is in fact a change in the accreditation system in Germany. All formal decisions regarding the legally required programme accreditation of Bachelor's and Master's programmes as well as Systems Accreditation in procedures started from January 1st 2018 onward will be carried out by the German Accreditation Council (GAC). The agency's responsibility is in carrying out a review at the HEI, resulting in an accreditation report that the HEI itself is submitting to the GAC along with its self-report. The rules and criteria for this new accreditation report are laid out in the Interstate Study Accreditation Treaty and the Specimen Decree, which are attached to the change report. In all respects but the fact that ZEvA does not take any formal decisions, the procedure is implemented in the same way as the programme or systems accreditation according to the accreditation system up until December 31st 2017, and thus, its ESG compliance in these respects is also unchanged.
List discontinued	ZEvA is no longer active in programme accreditation in Switzerland.
File #1	161208 Interstate Study Accreditation Treaty.pdf (209k)
File #2	171207 Specimen decree.pdf (495k)
Last Update	2019-02-13 16:49:54

Brussels, 29 April 2019

Substantive Change Report – Clarification Request

Dear Henning,

We wish to thank you for the Substantive Change Report of 13/02/2019. Your report is currently being reviewed by the EQAR Register Committee.

In your report, you refer to the changes in ZEvA's accreditation activities that result from the [Interstate Treaty](#) between the German federal states, which entered into force in 2018, and the related [Specimen Decree](#).

While you attached the legal documents and noted that there were no changes apart from the fact that ZEvA no longer takes accreditation decisions itself, you did not respond specifically to the aspects mentioned in the [reporting form](#).

In order to inform the final consideration by the Committee of your report, we would therefore be obliged if you could please **clarify the following**:

1. Please explain the changes in the accreditation criteria and how ESG 1.1 – 1.10 are reflected in the new criteria (ESG 2.1).
2. Did ZEvA change its approach to ensuring consistency (ESG 2.5) in any way beyond the organisational changes described?
3. Please explain if and how the composition, selection and appointment of review panels (ESG 2.4) changed, in particular with reference to the new nomination procedure for external experts according to Article 3 (3) of the Treaty / §25 (4) of the Specimen Decree.
4. Does the new legal framework lead to any changes as regards the use of site visits (ESG 2.3), the publication of reports (ESG 2.6) or follow-up processes (ESG 2.3)?

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5. Did ZEvA change its appeals process (ESG 2.7) in light of the fact that the agency does not make final accreditation decisions, but reports forwarded to the German Accreditation Council (GAC)?

I wish to draw to your attention that we have addressed identical questions to all EQAR-registered agencies operating within the official accreditation system in Germany, i.e. AAQ, ACQUIN, AHPGS, ASIIN, AQAS, AQ Austria, evalag, FIBAA and ZEvA. It is at your discretion whether to coordinate your response with some or all other agencies.

We kindly ask you for a response **by 29 May 2019**. Please inform us if any difficulties arise in meeting this deadline. Please also note that this request and your response will be published together with the final decision on your Report.

I shall be at your disposal if you have any further questions or inquiries.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Colin Tück'.

Colin Tück
(Director)

Substantive Change Report ZEvA

Answers to the Clarification Request from 29 April 2019

1 Introduction

ZEvA has issued a Substantive Change Report to the EQAR on 13/02/2019, along with an update on its general information. The Change Report reflected on the changes made according to the Interstate Treaty and the Specimen Decree of the German federal states and the resulting changes to the German accreditation system. On 29/04/2019 ZEvA received a clarification request on the Change Report with five questions. In the following, we will provide answers to these questions in the hope of clarifying the changes made. It should be noted, however, that in parts these changes have not been devised by the agency but rather the federal governments of Germany which would be better suited to explain the changes in the criteria and procedures. The internal procedures of ZEvA with regard to these questions have not changed themselves. The only changes made are merely a transfer of responsibility for certain parts of the accreditation procedure to the German Accreditation Council (GAC), as required by the new rules.

2 Answers to the Questions

1. [Please explain the changes in the accreditation criteria and how ESG 1.1 – 1.10 are reflected in the new criteria \(ESG 2.1\).](#)

The changes to the accreditation criteria follow a decision of the German Federal Constitutional Court, stating that the federal states had to provide a legal basis to the accreditation system, defining procedural rules and criteria. This legal basis is provided by the Interstate Treaty, and the rules and criteria are defined in the Specimen Decree which all federal states have to adopt into a Decree of their own. The Specimen Decree for the most part adopt the criteria laid out in the Structural Guidelines of the Conference of Ministers of Culture (KMK) and the rules of the GAC, updated in parts on the basis of the 2015 version of the ESG. The most vital change is that the criteria have been divided into formal and academic criteria. The criteria are further explained in the Substantiation of the Specimen Decree attached to the Decree itself.

As for the relation of the ESG to the new criteria, we are attaching a comparison put together by the GAC that shows which parts of the ESG are reflected in which criteria of the specimen decree.

2. [Did ZEvA change its approach to ensuring consistency \(ESG 2.5\) in any way bey-](#)

and the organisational changes described?

ZEvA did not change its approach to ensuring consistency. The consistency of the reports with the published criteria is ensured the same as before by structuring the report according to the criteria and by preparing and supporting our expert groups to properly interpret the criteria. As for the consistency of the final decision with the criteria, ZEvA has no influence on this as it is the responsibility of the GAC.

3. Please explain if and how the composition, selection and appointment of review panels (ESG 2.4) changed, in particular with reference to the new nomination procedure for external experts according to Article 3 (3) of the Treaty / §25 (4) of the Specimen Decree.

No changes were made with regard to the composition, selection and appointment of review panels. The nomination procedure referenced in the Treaty and the Specimen Decree is consistent with ZEvA's prior procedure.

4. Does the new legal framework lead to any changes as regards the use of site visits (ESG 2.3), the publication of reports (ESG 2.6) or follow-up processes (ESG 2.3)?

The new legal framework does not lead to changes for ZEvA regarding the use of site visits or the publication of reports. The only change in the follow-up process is that the agency is no longer responsible for the follow-up since it no longer takes formal decisions. Any follow-up will be carried out by the GAC.

5. Did ZEvA change its appeals process (ESG 2.7) in light of the fact that the agency does not make final accreditation decisions, but reports forwarded to the German Accreditation Council (GAC)?

ZEvA did not change its appeals process. All appeals concerning the formal decision in procedures within the German accreditation system are, however, to be directed towards the GAC as ZEvA does not take any formal decision in these procedures.

Henning Schäfer, Hanover, 24/05/2019



Comparison between ESG 2015 and rules and criteria of German Accreditation System

July 2018

Comparison between part 1 of ESG 2015 and the German accreditation rules and criteria, mainly determined in parts 2 and 3 of the specimen decree pursuant to Article 4, paragraphs 1 – 4 of the interstate study accreditation treaty

ESG 2015	Programme accreditation	System accreditation
1.1 Policy for quality assurance	§ 14 Academic success	§ 17 Concept of the quality management system (goals, processes, instruments)
1.2 Design and approval of programmes	§ 11 Qualification goals and qualification level; § 12 Coherent study programme concept and adequate implementation; § 13 Subject-content organisation of the study programmes	§ 17 Concept of the quality management system (goals, processes, instruments)
1.3 Student-centered learning, teaching and assessment	§ 12 Coherent study programme concept and adequate implementation (paragraph 1); § 15 Gender equality and compensation of disadvantages	§ 17 Concept of the quality management system (goals, processes, instruments)
1.4 Student admission, progression, recognition and certification	§ 5 Admission requirements and transitions between different courses; § 6 Qualifications and qualification designations; § 12 Coherent study programme concept and adequate implementation (paragraph 1); § 14 Academic success	§ 17 Concept of the quality management system (goals, processes, instruments)

1.5 Teaching staff	§ 12 Coherent study programme concept and adequate implementation (paragraph 2)	§ 17 Concept of the quality management system (goals, processes, instruments)
1.6 Learning resources and student support	§ 12 Coherent study programme concept and adequate implementation (paragraph 3)	§ 17 Concept of the quality management system (goals, processes, instruments)
1.7 Information management	§ 14 Academic success	§ 18 Measures to implement the quality management concept, see paragraph 3
1.8 Public information	Publication of examination regulations which contain information on study programmes is obligatory according to the higher education acts of the German states	§ 18 (paragraph 4); Publication of examination regulations which contain information on study programmes is obligatory according to the higher education acts of the German states
1.9 On-going monitoring and periodic review of programme	§ 14 Academic success	§ 18 Measures to implement the quality management concept
1.10 Cyclical external quality assurance	§ 26 Period of validity for the accreditation; extension	§ 26 Period of validity for the accreditation; extension