

Substantive Change Report

by Accreditation Agency for Study Programmes of Engineering,
Information Science, Natural Sciences and Mathematics (ASIIN)

Register Committee

Ref. RC28/C55

Ver. 1.0

Date 02/11/2020

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Decision of:	02/11/2020
Report received on:	09/07/2020
Agency registered since:	08/04/2009
Last external review report:	May 2016
Registration until:	31/05/2021
Absented themselves from decision-making:	none
Attachments:	1. Substantive Change Report

1. The Register Committee considered the Substantive Change Report of 09/07/2020.
2. The Register Committee took note of the new offer by ASIIN of two subject-specific quality labels, (1) for medical education in cooperation with the Association of Medical Schools in Europe (AMSE) and (2) the EQAS-Food Label in the field of nutritional sciences, awarded based on an authorisation by the European ISEKI-Food Association (IFA).
3. Both offers are new and no procedures have been completed yet.
4. Based on the last external review of ASIIN and the information provided in the Substantive Change Report, the Register Committee had no concerns that the ESG are complied with in this new activity:
 - i. Both activities were developed in cooperation with subject/sector-specific associations. ASIIN follows its established approach to award the label in addition to its own quality seal, in a combined procedure ("piggybacking approach"). ASIIN has already offered various other labels or seals following a similar approach, e.g. EUR-ACE or Eur-Inf (ESG 2.2).
 - ii. The criteria for the different procedures are published. ESG Part 1 is mainly addressed through ASIIN's own, generic criteria.

ASIIN uses its established decision-making process, in which subject-specific committees screen all reports.

For the EQAS-Food Label, it was clear that the EQAS-Food Label standards are added to ASIIN's generic criteria.

For medical programmes, the Change Report was not entirely clear as to whether ASIIN uses the World Federation of Medical Education

(WFME) standards in addition to or instead of its general criteria; the [ASIIN website](#), however, suggests that they are used in addition (ESG 2.1 & 2.5).

- iii. The review panels are composed according to ASIIN's usual protocol, drawing from the same pool of as in other reviews; for EQAS-Food Label procedures one expert is recruited from the IFA pool of experts (ESG 2.4).
 - iv. Site visits are part of the new activities following the same guidelines as for previous ASIIN processes (ESG 2.3).
 - v. The Report clearly states that all reports are published in these cases; however, no reports are published yet as no procedures have been completed to date (ESG 2.6).
 - vi. Follow-up processes are focused on the fulfilment of conditions; it seems clear that these work the same as in ASIIN's other processes (ESG 2.3).
 - vii. Procedures for the two new labels are subject to the general appeals regulations of ASIIN (ESG 2.7).
 - viii. The new processes are embedded in ASIIN's general internal quality assurance arrangements; since the processes are new, they have not yet been included in any thematic analyses (ESG 3.4 & 3.6).
5. During the upcoming external review of ASIIN for renewal of registration, the Register Committee therefore expects that the following issues are specifically analysed by the review panel:
- i. How ASIIN ensures sufficient coverage of ESG Part 1 in its combined (piggybacking) procedures (ESG 2.1);
 - ii. If and how the new processes will be considered in thematic analyses (ESG 3.4).

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EQAR Substantive Change Report

Agency #1	ASIIN e.V.
Expiry date #1	31/05/2021
Contact #1	Dr. Iring Wasser
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Other organisations?	No
A. Has the organisational identity of the registered agency changed?	No
B. Has the organisational structure changed?	No
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 activities been discontinued?	No

Description new/changed

i. In 2018, the Association of Medical Schools in Europe (AMSE) and ASIIN have entered into a cooperation agreement. For this reason, ASIIN has founded the new Technical Committee 14 – Medicine. ASIIN has been commissioned by AMSE to conduct accreditation procedures in Europe, applying the standards of the World Federation of Medical Education (WFME). The rubrics of fulfilment of these standards foresee so-called “basic standards” as a minimum requirement as well as more challenging “quality development standards” signalling best practice. After completing the procedures, ASIIN hands over the accreditation reports to AMSE that decides on the award of the AMSE Label.

EQAS-Food: In July 2019 the Accreditation Commission of the European ISEKI-Food Association (IFA) decided to authorize ASIIN e.V. to award the EQAS-Food Label. This is essentially done through applying the combined ASIIN General Criteria and Subject-Specific Criteria of the responsible Technical Committee 08 – Agriculture, Nutritional Sciences and Landscape Architecture (as of 2015 and 2011 respectively) on the one hand and the IFA EQAS-Food Procedures, Criteria and Standards (as of 2017) on the other. Additionally, the two partner organisations agreed, that at least one of the peers in each accreditation procedure, where an EQAS-Food label stands to be awarded, shall be selected from the IFA pool of experts.

ii. ASIIN uses a piggy-bagging approach for the simultaneous award of its own quality seal and the award of the European labels and/or national accreditation seals in one combined procedure. This means that HEIs could apply for the award of up to three seals / labels (ASIIN-Seal, European field specific labels, and national labels) in a combined accreditation/certification procedure and with a single set of documentation (self-assessment report and annexes).

Regardless of which seal is awarded at the end of a procedure, whether a joint procedure leads to several seals, or whether separate procedures must be organised for individual seals, the general requirements and procedural principles of ASIIN are at the basis for the accreditation/certification procedures.

iii. The involved panels are composed according to identical principals and the pertinent Accreditation/Certification Commissions of ASIIN act as decision-making bodies (with the sole exception of the national programme or system accreditation leading to the seal of the GAC). External quality assurance procedures are carried out by the honorary members of the audit teams - i.e. the auditors – who are appointed on a case-by-case basis according to professional aspects from the ASIIN pool of assessors and with participation of international peers in all procedures outside of Germany. As a rule, proposals of persons from our member organisations and from third organisations in Germany and Europe - e.g. from universities, professional organisations, and umbrella organisations of the social partners - are processed for inclusion in the ASIIN pool of experts and for membership in the technical committees. For filling positions for student representatives, proposals from student associations (i.e. in Germany the Student Accreditation Pool or federal student council conferences) are requested.

When selecting the experts, ASIIN follows the principle of access to an existing pool of experts in the area of programme accreditation, system accreditation or certification, i.e. potential experts are included in a list on the basis of certain criteria, independent of a concrete procedure, so that they can be accessed directly if necessary. This has the advantage that the reviewers can be trained and informed about current developments (e.g. by invitation to information events, newsletters) via central distribution lists even independently of a procedure. The

principles for the nomination of reviewers are published in the respective requirements and procedural principles. In the case of programme accreditation, the responsible technical committee decides on the inclusion in the pool of experts, in the case of system accreditation, the Accreditation Commission for Quality Management Systems and in certification procedures the Certification Commission. The decision is made on the basis of a presentation form to be filled in by the potential assessor.

iv. In general, all QA activities follow the same pattern. After ASIIN and the client have agreed on the objects to be reviewed, accredited, certified or evaluated, and the criteria which should be applied, the client conducts a self-evaluation and writes a self-evaluation report. The report and supporting evidence are reviewed by the assigned ASIIN project manager as well as a group of external experts specifically summoned by ASIIN for this purpose. Following the review of the documentation, the external experts and ASIIN project manager conduct a joint on-site visit including an inspection of infrastructure and discussions with different stakeholder groups, such as the HEI leadership, programme coordinators, teaching staff and students. The expert panel subsequently carries out an on-site visit to the department in question which usually lasts in programme accreditation and certification one and a half day, including a preliminary meeting of the peer group on the first day to prepare the on-site visit. At this preliminary meeting, no representative of the HEI will be present. For a larger number of study programmes to be accredited or courses to be certificated, the duration of the visit and the number of peers forming the peer group will be extended accordingly. The visit of the peer group includes meetings with representatives of the directorate of the institution and of the departments; a visit of the institution, especially of teaching facilities and laboratories; a review of examination papers

and final theses; and separate meetings with academic teachers and students, graduates and prospective employers, each of the latter without representatives of the HEI administration being present.

v. The results of the peer-assessment (desk review plus findings from the on-site-visit) are documented in an audit report that serves as basis for the next steps in the procedure and for the final decision of the accreditation and certification commissions. A first draft of the written audit report is produced by the project manager from the ASIIN headquarters accompanying the audit team on site, amended and signed off by the auditors, then submitted to the university applying for accreditation to check for any omissions or errors. If necessary, the HEI corrects any factual errors and/or makes comments to the rough draft of the auditors. The report, supplemented with the recommendations on the accreditation/certification decision by the peers, is then submitted to the respectively responsible commission ((in the programme accreditation the report is first examined and assessed by the Technical Committee responsible, which give a recommendation for the accreditation decision)).

In the third phase the report submitted by the peer group is then submitted to the responsible ASIIN commission which decides about accreditation/certification. The Commission diversifying the decisions along the different seals that might have been requested and about requirements or recommendations attached to the accreditation per seal and or label. The ASIIN office then informs the HEI applying for accreditation and, if applicable, the respective owner of the seal / label awarded. The complete final report is published on the ASIIN website:

<https://www.asiin.de/de/qualitaetsmanagement/akkreditierung-studiengaenge/entscheidungen.html>

vi: After the visit, the findings of the external experts are summarized in a report. In certification and accreditation procedures, and review procedures for the seal of the GAC, the findings may additionally be reviewed by ASIIN's technical committees and accreditation commissions before being presented to the client. In certification or accreditation procedures, where the external experts or committees discover discrepancies between the agreed criteria and the object being evaluated, ASIIN may award a preliminary certification or accreditation, which ASIIN will only extend if the client remedies the discovered discrepancies within a specified time limit. In cases where the discovered discrepancies are severe, ASIIN may also deny a certification or accreditation.

vii: ASIIN ensures that this criterion is met by establishing an Appeals Committee in 2007 for complaints from universities concerning decisions of the competent accreditation and certification commission of the ASIIN in accreditation procedures. The ASIIN statutes establish the complaints committee as an organ of the association and define the subject of the complaints procedure. In accordance with the association's statutes, the Appeals Committee has adopted rules of procedure that regulate the appeal procedure in detail. According to these rules of procedure, the members of the Complaints Committee are "technically independent and not bound by instructions" This is guaranteed by the composition of the committee.

viii: Since the cooperations are new, they have not yet been included in our thematic analyses.
