

Substantive Change Report
by Hungarian Accreditation Committee (HAC)

Register Committee

Ref. C51

Ver. 1.0

Date 2020-07-10

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Decision of: 10/07/2020
Report received on: 09/04/2020
Agency registered since: 01/09/2018
Last external review report: September 2018
Registration until: 30/09/2023
Absented themselves from decision-making: Not applicable

Attachments: [1. Substantive Change Report, 09/04/2020](#)
[2. Additional information, 22/04/2020](#)

1. The Register Committee considered the Substantive Change Report of 09/04/2020.
2. The Register Committee took note that HAC discontinued its long-term practice of evaluating the formal requirements of doctoral schools in a six month cycle, and introduced a new approach to evaluating doctoral schools, once every five years.
3. The Committee noted, that compared to the previous evaluation, the new approach has more detailed criteria on education and research.
4. The Committee underlined that the full consideration of ESG Part 1 in the evaluation of doctoral schools should be mapped and addressed in the next external review of HAC (ESG 2.1).
5. The Register Committee noted that the guidelines and criteria for the evaluation were developed with the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders, including the HAC Board, the National Doctoral Committee, the National Union of Doctoral Students (DOSZ), the National Union of Students (HÖÖK), the Educational Authority under the Ministry of Human Capacities, and universities (ESG 2.2).
6. The Committee noted that HAC has introduced a one-day site visit, carried out by a group of 3 to 5 experts, including a student. The selection of experts is carried out considering the academic profile of the school and the experience of the experts. HAC's programme officer coordinates the review process and takes part in the site visits as well (ESG 2.3, 2.4).
7. Doctoral schools may be accredited with conditions. A monitoring process may be introduced, at the end of which the accreditation may be withdrawn if the accreditation conditions are not met (ESG 2.3). The

results of the evaluation are discussed by the corresponding doctoral committees and subsequently by the Expert Committee for Doctoral Schools of HAC. The accreditation decision is taken by the Board of HAC (ESG 2.5).

Register Committee

8. The Register Committee could verify that the reports from the doctoral school evaluation are published on the agency's website in Hungarian (ESG 2.6).
9. The Committee took note that the new evaluation are covered by HAC's regular complaints and appeals procedures (ESG 2.7).
10. The Committee noted that the agency has begun revising its internal quality assurance system and has established specialized working groups for institutional accreditation, doctoral school accreditation and ex ante programme accreditation (ESG 3.6).
11. The Register Committee concluded that the process for evaluation of doctoral schools appeared to be aligned with the ESG and therefore took note of the Substantive Change Report. The Committee further underlined that a full assessment of the new procedure is to be carried out as a part of HAC's next external review.

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EQAR Substantive Change Report	
Agency #1	Hungarian Accreditation Committee
Expiry date #1	30/09/2023
Contact #1	Christina Rozsnyai
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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?	No
C.ii. Are there changes in existing activities?	Yes
C.iii. Have some or all existing activities been discontinued?	Yes
Description new/changed	As indicated in the 2018 SER, the HAC has introduced a new approach to evaluating doctoral schools. The criteria were developed with the involvement of a wide range of institutional, student and expert stakeholders (2.2.). They follow the ESG Pt 1 but are more detailed, also including questions on research. The site visit teams (2.4.) involve 3-5 experts, incl. students. Site visits (2.3) are usually one day. Reports are published (2.6.) and monitoring may be required (2.3.). The HAC's regular complaints and appeals procedures apply (2.7.). Thematic analysis is not affected.
List discontinued	Evaluation of formal criteria at doctoral schools every six months is discontinued.
File #1	Doktori_akkreditcis_tmutat_l_nrtkelsi_szempon_trendszer_20190628_5.pdf (840k)

HAC Substantive Changes report for EQAR on the new evaluation procedure of Doctoral Schools

- i. Has the purposes of the doctoral evaluation programmes changed? If yes, in what way? how was the activity and criteria developed or updated? In what way were the stakeholders involved in this process (what was the consultation process)? (ESG 2.2)

As recommended by the ENQA review panel, and underlined by the Register Committee, the HAC has discontinued its long-term practice of evaluating the formal requirements of doctoral schools every six months. This has now been discontinued, at the same time the whole evaluation process was renewed. The new approach calls for the evaluation of doctoral schools in five-year cycles and the criteria follow Part 1 of the ESG (Hungarian criteria were submitted to EQAR). The criteria were developed with a wide range of stakeholders with a first draft by a staff working group and consultations with the HAC Board and subsequently the National Doctoral Committee; the National Union of Doctoral Students (DOSZ); the National Union of Students (HÖÖK); the Educational Authority under the Ministry of Human Capacities. The HAC also organized a conference to which all universities were invited. Implementation began with a pilot run involving six universities. The participating doctoral schools and visiting team members were asked to suggest improvements which led to an update of the guidelines and criteria.

- ii. What is the criteria used in these evaluations? What are the measures implemented to ensure consistency in preparing the review and in the decision making? (ESG 2.5)

The HAC's criteria are based on Part 1 of the [ESG](#) (see iii. below).

Consistency is assured via several steps. Site-visit panels are composed of experts with experience in the academic profile of the school, in leadership, quality assurance, the doctoral student perspective, as well as external stakeholders from research institutes and industry. Moreover, there is a member on the panel with previous experience in HAC reviews whenever possible. A HAC programme officer coordinates the process and participates in the site visit.

The guidelines include a self-evaluation guideline with the criteria¹ and a procedural guideline², which supports the consistent interpretation by both the doctoral school and the evaluators and decision-makers.

The panel may suggest three levels of accreditation:

- Accredited for five years
- Accredited for five years with a monitor procedure with a set deadline with the possibility to withdraw accreditation

1

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2

http://old.mab.hu/web/images/doc/beadvanyok/Doktori_akkredit%C3%A1ci%C3%B3s_%C3%BAAtmutat%C3%B3_II_Elj%C3%A1r%C3%A1srend_20190719.pdf

- Not accredited.

The expert evaluations are discussed in doctoral schools expert committees and subsequently in the Expert Committee for Doctoral Schools, which ensures the consistent interpretation of the criteria. The accreditation decision is passed by the HAC Board.

- iii. How is ESG 1.1 – 1.10 reflected in the new criteria (ESG 2.1)

The criteria follow the ten sections of ESG part 1, but in more detail. An addition question pertains to research. The criteria assess how the doctoral school applies the European Standards on all levels of its organization, and how it plans, executes, checks and follows up on its quality assurance activities.

- iv. How is the selection and appointment of experts ensured? Is there any change in the training of reviewers to the other procedures conducted by HAC? (ESG 2.4)

The selection of the panel is described in the procedural guidelines. The panels include 3-5 experts recommended by the doctoral schools expert committee and who are approved by the HAC Board. They include an expert who heads another doctoral school or experienced at teaching at a doctoral school and/or quality assurance experts and a doctoral student. The doctoral school is asked to assure that there is no conflict of interest concerning any of the selected panel members.

- v. In what cases is monitoring required in the evaluation of doctoral programmes? (ESG 2.3 re follow-up)

Monitoring is done when a doctoral school is accredited with set recommendations. This is the case if ESG are not fulfilled but are judged to be able to be improved within two years.

- vi. How is the agency's internal quality assurance (ESG 3.6) ensuring the quality and integrity in the evaluation process of doctoral studies?

The HAC is currently revising its internal quality assurance system, meanwhile the same system is in place as described in its 2018 Self-Evaluation Report. A change in place for over a year that affects internal quality is that specialized working groups have been established within the Secretariat for institutional accreditation, doctoral school accreditation and ex ante programme accreditation.