

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

Register Committee
13-14 March 2025

Ref. RC46/C135

Ver. 1.0

Date 2025-03-28

Page 1 / 2

Decision of:	2025-03-14
Result:	Take note
Report received on:	2025-01-20
Agency registered since:	2011-09-01
Last external review report:	2021-04-21
Registration until:	2026-04-30
Absented themselves from decision-making:	n/a
Attachments:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Substantive Change Report, 2025-01-20 2. Minuted clarification document of call with AAQ, 2025-02-05 3. Organisational Development of the Office of the Swiss Accreditation Council (SAC), 2024-09-20 4. Organisation of AAQ, 2024-11-29

1. The Register Committee considered the Substantive Change Report of 2025-01-20.
2. The Register Committee noted that the office of the Swiss Accreditation Council (SAC) has been formally integrated in the organisational chart of the Swiss Agency of Accreditation and Quality Assurance (AAQ). The roles and responsibilities of, both, AAQ and SAC are clearly outlined in a document (Annex 4).
3. SAC remains having supervisory role over AAQ – both as a strategic and regulatory body of the AAQ. The Register Committee understood that SAC outlines the expected services, such as preparing the council's meetings, in a performance agreement, while the Director of AAQ handles the implementation. For this, SAC compensates AAQ with a lump sum.
4. The Register Committee understood that several measures were established to prevent conflict of interest between the intertwined tasks of the two bodies, including (a) clear separation of the accreditation and quality assurance unit and the support office of SAC in AAQ, and (b)

defined minimum fee charged by quality assurance agencies evaluating Swiss public higher education institutions.

5. In the agency's view, the newly introduced changes are not expected to affect AAQ's budget or human resources, as SAC and AAQ remain to have separate legal status and budgets (see Annex 2).
6. Based on the detailed information provided in the Substantive Change Report, its Annexes and the minuted document from the clarification call, the Register Committee had no major concerns that the ESG are complied with in the organisational changes within AAQ. **The Committee, however, expects that the impact of the measures for ensuring that AAQ remains compliant with the ESG 3.3 will be analysed as part of the agency's next renewal of registration.**

Register Committee

13-14 March 2025

Ref. RC46/C135

Ver. 1.0

Date 2025-03-14

Page 2 / 2

EQAR Substantive Change Report

Reference #	28748692
Status	Complete
Login Username	christoph.grolimund@aaq.com
Login Email	christoph.grolimund@aaq.com
Agency #1	Swiss Agency for Accreditation and Quality Assurance
Agency acronym	AAQ
Expiry date #1	30/04/2026
Contact #1	Christoph Grolimund
Phone #1	+41313801160
Email #1	christoph.grolimund@aaq.com
Other organisations?	No
A. Has the organisational identity of the registered agency changed?	No
B. Has the organisational structure changed?	Yes
Description	<p>As part of the evaluation of the Higher Education Act (HEdA), the report "Evaluation of the structures, processes and effects of the bodies pursuant to the Higher Education Funding and Coordination Act (HEdA)" of 10 May 2002 states that "The fact that the SAR office is managed by the AAQ is suboptimal from the point of view of the evaluation: the resulting conflict of interest for the AAQ can unnecessarily impede its activities. The resulting distortion of competition to the disadvantage of foreign accreditation agencies recognised in Switzerland is also to be criticised from the point of view of the evaluation".</p> <p>The President of the Swiss Accreditation Council</p>

(SAC) took up the comment from the evaluation of the HEdA and commissioned RES PUBLICA to conduct a study on the organisational development of the SAC office. The report "Office of the Swiss Accreditation Council: Analysis of the current situation and recommendations for the future" of 3 November 2023 examined two models of organisational development: the SEPARATION MODEL, in which the office is completely separated from the AAQ and reports directly to the President, and the INTEGRATION MODEL, in which the office is fully integrated into the AAQ and reports to the Director.

At its meeting of 8 December 2002, the Swiss Accreditation Council decided to fully integrate its office into the AAQ.

Following this decision, a joint project organisation developed 8 measures (report attache, see 02.02_Office_SAC_2b_Report_English_2024-09-20_SAR) to implement the integration, which were approved by the SAC in September 2024. The most important measure is a new organisation chart for the management and operation of the AAQ. This includes a new profile for the Deputy Director,...

... who will have direct responsibility for all external quality assurance procedures. The general principles of the new chart and the appointment of a new Deputy Director have been decided and will apply from 1.2.2025. The details of the new chart will be further developed with the participation of the team of AAQ under the guidance of a consultant. AAQ's report on the current status of the reorganisation was adopted by the accreditation council in December 2024 (report attached, see Item_2.04_Office_SAC_2_Organisation_AAQ_English_2024-12-13).

C. Changes in EQA activities	4. Not applicable, no new activities/no changes
D. Activity outside the scope of the ESG	No
File #1	02.02_Office_SAC_2b_Report_English_2024-09-20_SAR.pdf (483 KB)
File #2	Item_2.04_Office_SAC_2_Organisation_AAQ_English_2024-12-13.pdf (450 KB)
Submit form?	I am ready to submit the change report form
Last Update	2025-01-20 10:47:44
Start Time	2025-01-20 10:37:31
Finish Time	2025-01-20 10:47:44
Device	Desktop
Referrer	https://fs22.formsite.com/res/formLoginNew

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

Minutes of Telephone Conversation

Register Committee

Ref. C135
Date 2025-02-13
Page 1 / 1

Date of the conversation:	05-02-2025
Representative of AAQ:	Markus Hodel, Christoph Grolimund
Representative of EQAR:	Aleksandra Zhivkovikj

1. AAQ has made a Substantive Change Report on 2025-01-20. In order to prepare the deliberations of the Register Committee on the report, EQAR contacted AAQ via telephone to clarify the matter(s) below.
2. AAQ agreed to clarify the matter(s) by means of a telephone conversation.
3. The office of Swiss Accreditation Council (SAC) is formally integrated in the organisational chart of the agency. The role of SAC's director is expanded to include the responsibility for the SAC's office. To keep the office of the SAC separate from the quality assurance procedures, the new organisational structure of AAQ now envisions separate units performing these tasks.
4. SAC remains responsible for accepting review reports coming from review agencies, including the AAQ, and preparing the meetings of the SAC. For these services, SAC compensates AAQ with a lump sum.
5. SAC remains having supervisory role – both as a strategic and regulatory body of AAQ. For example, SAC adopts the AAQ's budget and strategy and nominates the director of AAQ.
6. The director of AAQ remains being part of the SAC, without any voting rights.
7. The changes are not expected to affect AAQ's budget or human resources, as the two entities remain having separate legal status and budgets.

Organisational Development of the Office of the Swiss Accreditation Council SAC

Introductory remarks

1. Initial situation: current organisation of the office
2. Development of the office: tasks and requirements
3. Proposals for measures to integrate the office of the SAC into AAQ

Appendices

The Accreditation Council has decided in favour of integrating the office into the Swiss Accreditation Agency. A project organisation set up by the Accreditation Council formulates recommendations for the implementation of the decision based on the current organisation and its shortcomings. The tasks of the office are derived from the tasks of the Accreditation Council. A function diagram clarifies the responsibilities and illustrates the interaction between the Accreditation Council, the office and AAQ.

Introductory remarks

Evaluation HFKG

As part of the evaluation of the HEdA, the authors of the report "Evaluation of the structures, processes and effects of the bodies pursuant to the Higher Education Funding and- Coordination Act (HEdA)" of 10 May 2022 stated: "The fact that the SAR office is managed by AAQ is suboptimal from the point of view of the evaluation: the conflict of interest that arises for AAQ as a result can unnecessarily hinder its activities. The resulting distortion of competition to the disadvantage of foreign accreditation agencies recognised in Switzerland is also to be criticised from the perspective of the evaluation." (S. 41)

Study by RES PUBLICA

The presidency of SAC took up the advice from the evaluation of the HEdA and commissioned RES PUBLICA to conduct a study on the organisational development of the office of SAC. The report "Office of the Swiss Accreditation Council: Analysis of the current situation and recommendations for the future" dated 3 November 2023 examined two models of organisational development:

- the separation model, in which the office is completely separated from AAQ and reports directly to the President;
- the integration model, in which the office is fully integrated into AAQ and reports to the director.

In its final assessment, RES PUBLICA stated that there were arguments in favour of both models that are perfectly valid. However, the separation model was best suited to solving the "governance problem". In the assessment of RES PUBLICA, the integration model absolutely requires accompanying measures: equal access for all agencies to the meetings of the Accreditation Council, equal treatment of all agencies with regard to fees (adjustment of the Fees Ordinance) and regular dialogue with all agencies.

Decision of the Accreditation Council

At its meeting on 8 December 2023, the Swiss Accreditation Council decided to fully integrate its office into AAQ.

With its decision in favour of the integration model, SAR wanted to secure AAQ's expertise and avoid additional interfaces. It also considered RES PUBLICA's cost estimates for an external solution to be too optimistic and judged the cost of a WTO tender to be too high.

Project organisation

SAC instructed its President and the Director of AAQ to work out the details of the integration. The following considerations and proposals for the integration of the office into AAQ were drawn up within the framework of a project organisation for the attention of the Accreditation Council. The project group consisted of Christoph Grolimund (Director of AAQ), Petra Lauk (AAQ), Georg Reschauer (Managing Director of the Accreditation Agency for Health and Social Services AHPGS) and Isabella Brunelli (SERI). The steering group included: Markus Hodel (President of SAC), Martina Weiss (Secretary General of swissuniversities) and Silvia Studinger (Deputy Director of SERI).

1. Initial situation: the current organisation of the office

Definition of competences according to HFKG

The framework for the organisation of the office is set out in the competence regulations in accordance with the Higher Education Funding and- Coordination Act (HEdA) (Annex 1): The Accreditation Council is the decision-making body for procedures in accordance with the HEdA and the supervisory body for AAQ. AAQ, in turn, is responsible for carrying out procedures in accordance with the HEdA. Finally, the HEdA places AAQ under the authority of the Accreditation Council.

This constellation - decision-making and supervisory level (council) and procedural level (agency) - is widespread in accreditation. It poses no particular challenges for governance and the organisation of the office: in this constellation, the agency is the office, as providing the documents for the decision is one of the core tasks of an agency.

However, the Swiss Accreditation Council has a further competence: it can recognise other domestic and foreign agencies. With this competence, the Accreditation Council also becomes the regulator of the Swiss accreditation landscape. AAQ is therefore potentially in a different situation to other agencies that are recognised by SAR.

For the organisation of the office, it is therefore also important to ensure equal treatment of the agencies.

Organisation of the office

The Organisational Regulations of the Swiss Accreditation Council (OReg-SAR) of 27 May 2015 (Annex 2) govern the organisation of the office.

Article 2 Paragraph 3 of the Organisational Regulations of the Accreditation Council (OReg-SAR) of 27 May 2015 (AAQ already tasked AAQ with managing the office when the Accreditation Council was established. At that time, the OReg-SAR delegated the task with one sentence: The Accreditation Agency manages the secretariat of the Accreditation Council and provides it with administrative support. (Art. 2 para. 3 OReg-SAR as of 27 May 2015; Annex 2).

At its meeting on 21 September 2021, the Accreditation Council deleted the second sentence of Article 2 paragraph 3 of the OReg-SAR and specified the tasks of the office and how it functions in a new Article 2a Office of the Accreditation Council and administrative support for the Accreditation Council:

- Preparation of the meetings of the Accreditation Council and the Presidency;
- Minutes of the meetings of the Accreditation Council and the Presidency;

- Preparation of the decisions of the Accreditation Council and the Presidency;
- Website of the Accreditation Council;
- general administrative support.

It also stipulated that AAQ must provide the Accreditation Council with a managing director who for all technical purposes (in terms of expertise) reports to the President. (OReg-SAR status as of 1 January 2022, Annex 2)

Challenges in the organisation of the office

The current organisation of the office creates two problem areas that need to be addressed in the further development.

1 Organisational integration of the office

In the current organisation of the office, the managing director reports to both the president (in terms of expertise) and the director (in terms of employment law). Shared management is not a problem in principle, but the fact that the managing director reports to two levels is potentially problematic in that it mixes the decision-making and supervisory levels with the procedural level: On the one hand, tensions can arise between task fulfilment (Council) and resource deployment (AAQ). On the other hand, conflicts of interest are conceivable if the Council and AAQ reach different conclusions in their assessment of a higher education institution.

2 Equal treatment of agencies

AAQ is subordinate to the Accreditation Council in its role as a supervisory body. At the same time, the Accreditation Council has recognised five other agencies and thus also assumes the role of regulator. As an agency subordinate to the Accreditation Council, AAQ has direct access to the Accreditation Council than the other agencies. The OReg-SAR (Art. 7) stipulates the participation of the Director of AAQ in the meetings of the Accreditation Council. In combination with the Fees Ordinance, which requires AAQ to charge public universities only for the direct costs of accreditation procedures, this results in unequal treatment of the agencies.

2. Further development of the office: tasks and requirements

The mission of the office is to support the Accreditation Council in fulfilling its role as a decision-making body for accreditation in accordance with the HEdA. The tasks and activities of the office are thus derived from the tasks of the Accreditation Council.

Tasks of the Accreditation Council

The tasks and responsibilities of the Accreditation Council are regulated conclusively in Article 21 HEdA. They can be summarised in three areas of responsibility:

I ACCREDITATION

This area includes all tasks in connection with accreditation decisions (Art. 21 para. 3 HEdA): Admission to procedures, accreditation decisions and decisions concerning the fulfilment of conditions.

II STATUARY TASKS

This area includes the other tasks of the Accreditation Council in accordance with Articles 21 and 22 HEdA: budget and accounts (para. 6), activity report (para. 6), supervision of AAQ (Art. 22 para.

2), recognition of agencies (para. 7) and maintenance of the implementing decrees (para. 5 and para. 8).

III COMMUNICATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS

This area includes informing higher education institutions, agencies and the public about accreditation procedures and decisions as well as exchanges with the joint bodies and recognised agencies on accreditation issues.

Tasks of the President

The duties of the President of the Accreditation Council are defined in Article 10 OReg-SAR (Annex 2):

- Management of the meetings
- Implementation of the decisions
- Supervision of AAQ
- External representation
- Advising the education policy committees.

Tasks of the Executive Committee

The duties of the Executive Committee are set out in Article 9 OReg-SAR (Annex 2):

- Preparation of the meetings of the Accreditation Council
- Queries to agencies concerning the admission of universities
- Negotiation and conclusion of a service agreement with AAQ

Tasks of the office

As the mission of the office is to support the President, the Presidency and the Accreditation Council in the fulfilment of their tasks, it does not lead the management of business, but prepares documents for the attention of the President, the Presidency or the Accreditation Council. The office has the function of a staff unit vis-à-vis the Accreditation Council.

The function diagram in Annex 3 shows the interaction between preparation (office) and responsibility for the draft (President, Presidency) and decision (Accreditation Council).

Appendix 5 provides an overview of the tasks of the office.

3. Recommendations for measures to integrate the office of the SAC into AAQ

Based on the two problem areas of the current organisation of the office (see section 2, above), the following section presents recommendations for measures that can be used to integrate the office into AAQ. The formal steps with which the measures can be implemented and who is responsible for them are also explained.

Organisational integration of the office

Recommendation 1: Subordination of the office

The office will be fully integrated into AAQ's organisation, i.e. it will report only to the Director (Annex 6: Organisational chart).

This avoids the potential mixing of strategic and operational levels in the management of the office.

To position the position of "Secretary" of the Accreditation Council more clearly, it is offered as "Head of office".

Formalisation: Adaptation of Article 2a paragraph 2 OReg-SAR (Secretariat).

Responsible: SAR issues OReg-SAR; University Council approves (Art. 21 para. 5 HEdA).

Recommendation 2: Performance agreement between SAR and AAQ

The Presidency defines the services to be provided by the office on the basis of the function diagram and the list of tasks. This is used to formulate a performance agreement between SAR and AAQ.

On the AAQ side, the Director is responsible for the fulfilment of the performance agreement with SAR. This avoids the potential mixing of strategic and operational levels in the management of the office.

The performance agreement is published on the website of the Accreditation Council.

Formalisation: Performance agreement
Adaptation of Article 2a OReg-SAR (deletion of tasks).

Responsible: SAR issues OReg-SAR; University Council approves (Art. 21 para. 5 HEdA).

Recommendation 3: AAQ organisation chart

The office forms a separate division within AAQ. This gives the office appropriate visibility, providing internal and external stakeholders with a recognisable point of contact for their concerns.

To emphasise the service orientation (staff function) of the office, the job title of its head is "head of the office" (Leiter Geschäftsstelle). The position of head of the office is equal to that of a project manager.

Formalisation: no change to the organisational regulations necessary.

Responsible: is the responsibility of AAQ.

Recommendation 4: Adaptation of the processes and responsibilities in the AAQ procedures

The responsibility for the proposals of accreditation to the Accreditation Council and the release of the accreditation reports (internal quality assurance) in the procedures according to HEdA as well as HEdA and special laws is regulated in such a way that the Director, as the superior of the head of the office and as a permanent guest on the Accreditation Council, has no conflict of interest: i.e. within the area of "Accreditation according to HEdA+" (cf. organisational chart in Annex 5).

Formalisation: Process descriptions and job descriptions.

Responsible: is the responsibility of AAQ.

Recommendation 5: Preparatory work by the agencies

Preparatory work that is not impacting the deliberations of the SAC handed over to the agencies: The agencies are responsible for preparing the cover sheets and the framework of the decisions with all information up to the time of the proposal. The office provides templates for the cover sheets and the framework of the rulings.

This allows the office to focus on content-related tasks (agenda, minutes, Accreditation Council deliberations) and all other less time-dependent work. At the same time, this measure can reduce the peak workload in the run-up to meetings and during follow-up work, and absences can be better absorbed.

Formalisation: Guidelines of the Accreditation Council for the submission of documents by the agencies.

Responsible: is the responsibility of SAR.

Equal treatment of agencies

Recommendation 6: Access of recognised agencies to SAR meetings

The Accreditation Council grants the recognised agencies access to the meetings and the minutes. They are invited to represent their procedures in the Council themselves.

Specifically, SAR invites the recognised agencies to nominate a representative of all the recognised agencies to attend SAR meetings as a permanent guest.

All guests have the same rights, namely the right to participate in the deliberations ("advisory vote"). The previous special status of the AAQ Director will be cancelled.

Formalisation: Adaptation of Article 7 OReg-SAR (participation in meetings)

Responsible: SAR issues OReg; University Council approves (Art. 21 para. 5 HFKG).

Recommendation 7: Institutionalised exchange between AAQ and recognised agencies

AAQ regularly and formally exchanges information with the other agencies prior to the meetings of the Accreditation Council. Within AAQ, each recognised agency has a contact person available for procedural questions.

Formalisation: no adaptation of the organisational regulations necessary.

Responsible: is the responsibility of AAQ.

Recommendation 8: Fee regulation

Based on the recommendation from the RES PUBLICA report, the Accreditation Council requests that the Fees Ordinance be amended so that both AAQ and recognised agencies charge the universities the same flat rate.

The amendment to the Fees Ordinance would increase the lump sum for public universities by CHF 27,000 to CHF 59,000. The financial contribution from the Swiss University Conference would be reduced by the same amount.

Parallel to the amendment of the Fees Ordinance, Article 2 of the Regulations on the recognition of agencies must be amended by SAR.

Formalisation: Adaptation of the SAC Fees Ordinance.

Responsible: SAC issues FeeO-SAC; University Council approves (Art. 21 para. 5 HEdA).

Further adjustments to the OReg-SAR

- The change in job title from "Managing Director" to "Head of Office" requires corresponding amendments to the OReg-SAR.
- The performance agreement instrument makes it possible to delete the detailed provisions on the tasks of the administrative office from the OReg-SAR (Article 2a).
- Article 9 paragraph 3 can be deleted. The Accreditation Council and the Executive Committee always have the option of requesting additional information as part of the decision preparation and- decision-making process.

Annex 1: Definition of competences according to HFKG

The Accreditation Council	decides on accreditation in accordance with the HEdA (Art. 21 para. 3);	
	issues organisational regulations of the Accreditation Council (Art. 21 para. 5);	Authorisation by SHR
	has a budget and accounts for itself and the agency (Art. 21 Para. 6);	
	may -recognise further domestic or foreign agencies (Art. 21 para. 7);	
	issues the Agency's organisational regulations (Art. 21 para. 8);	Authorisation by SHR
	issues Fees Ordinance (Art. 35 para. 2).	Authorisation by SHR
The AAQ	is subject to the Accreditation Council (Art. 22 para. 2);	
	conducts proceedings in accordance with HFKG (Art. 32).	

Appendix 2: OReg-SAR

15 March 2015	16 September 2016	1 January 2022	Draft 1 January 2025
<p>Art. 2 Organisation of the Accreditation Council</p> <p>³ Under Article 22 para. 2 HEdA, the Accreditation Council supervises the Swiss Agency of Accreditation and Quality Assurance (Accreditation Agency). The Accreditation Agency runs the Secretariat of the Accreditation Council and provides it with administrative support.</p>	<p>Art. 2 Organisation of the Accreditation Council</p> <p>¹ The Accreditation Council is a joint federal and cantonal body responsible for accreditation and quality assurance within the Swiss higher education sector. It is also the accreditation body responsible for accreditation procedures set forth in HEdA.</p> <p>² Under Article 21 para. 4 HEdA, the Accreditation Council is independent.</p> <p>³ Under Article 22 para. 2 HEdA, the Accreditation Council supervises the Swiss Agency of Accreditation and Quality Assurance (Accreditation Agency). The Accreditation Agency runs the Secretariat of the Accreditation Council and provides it with administrative support.</p>		<p>Art. 2 Organisation of the Accreditation Council</p> <p>¹ The Accreditation Council is the joint federal and cantonal body for accreditation and quality assurance in the Swiss higher education landscape and the accreditation body for accreditation procedures under the HEdA.</p> <p>² The Accreditation Council is independent of instructions in accordance with Article 21 paragraph 4 HEdA.</p> <p>³ Pursuant to Article 22 paragraph 2 HEdA, the Swiss Accreditation Agency (Accreditation Agency) is subordinate to the Accreditation Council. The Accreditation Agency manages the secretariat of the Accreditation Council and provides it with administrative support.</p>
		<p>Art. 2a Secretariat of the Accreditation Council and administrative support for the Accreditation Council</p> <p>¹ ¹The Swiss Accreditation Agency runs the Secretariat of the Accreditation Council. The tasks of the Secretariat include:</p> <p>a. preparing the meetings of the Accreditation Council, the Presidium of the Accreditation Council and possible committees of the Accreditation Council, as well as – in particular at the request of the Council – reviewing the accreditation applications and the proposals for decisions on admission in accordance</p>	<p>Art. 2a Office of the Accreditation Council and administrative support for the Accreditation Council</p> <p>¹ The Swiss Accreditation Agency runs the Secretariat office of the Accreditation Council to support the Accreditation Council in the exercise of its competences and the fulfilment of its tasks in accordance with the HEdA. The tasks of the office include</p> <p>a. a. preparing the meetings of the Accreditation Council, the Presidium of the Accreditation Council and possible committees of the Accreditation Council, as well as – in particular at the request of</p>

		<p>with Article 10 paragraph 1 HEEdA Accreditation Ordinance;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. drawing up the minutes of the meetings of the Accreditation Council, the Presidium of the Accreditation Council and possible committees of the Accreditation Council; c. preparing the decisions of the Accreditation Council and the Presidium of the Accreditation Council, editing and communicating the decisions as well as monitoring the implementation of the decisions; d. establishing, developing and monitoring the website and the intranet of the Accreditation Council; e. providing general administrative support to the Accreditation Council and the Presidium of the Accreditation Council, in particular with regard to finances, accounting, appeals and projects. <p>² The Accreditation Council shall conclude a performance agreement with the Swiss Accreditation Agency regarding the guarantee of the Secretariat. The performance agreement must in any case state that the Swiss Accreditation Agency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. provides the Accreditation Council with at least one Secretary who is professionally subordinate to the President of the Accreditation Council; b. may, with the consent of the President of the Accreditation Council and with prior approval or at the suggestion of the Secretary, issue mandates to third parties. 	<p>the Council reviewing the accreditation applications and the proposals for decisions on admission in accordance with Article 10 paragraph 1 HEEdA Accreditation Ordinance;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. drawing up the minutes of the meetings of the Accreditation Council, the Presidium of the Accreditation Council and possible committees of the Accreditation Council; e. preparing the decisions of the Accreditation Council and the Presidium of the Accreditation Council, editing and communicating the decisions as well as monitoring the implementation of the decisions; d. establishing, developing and monitoring the website and the intranet of the Accreditation Council; e. providing general administrative support to the Accreditation Council and the Presidium of the Accreditation Council, in particular with regard to finances, accounting, appeals and projects. <p>² The Accreditation Council shall conclude a performance agreement with the Swiss Accreditation Agency regarding the guarantee of the Secretariat. The performance agreement must in any case state that the Swiss Accreditation Agency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. provides the Accreditation Council with at least one Secretary who is professionally subordinate to the President of the Accreditation Council; b. may, with the consent of the President of the Accreditation Council and with prior approval or at the suggestion of the Secretary, issue mandates to third parties.
<p>Art. 7 Attendance of meetings Apart from members, the following individuals attend the meetings of the Accreditation Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. A clerk from the Secretariat of the Accreditation Council who has been asked to take the minutes; 			<p>Art. 7 Attendance of meetings Apart from members, the following individuals attend the meetings of the Accreditation Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. A clerk from the Secretariat The head of the office of the Accreditation Council who has been asked to take the minutes t

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. The Director of the Accreditation Agency who shall act in an advisory capacity; c. Other guests as needed. 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. the Director of the Accreditation Agency who shall act in an advisory capacity; c. the representative of a recognised agency, who is elected as a representative by all the recognised agencies; d. other guests as required.
<p>Art. 9 Composition and tasks of the Presidium</p> <p>¹ The Presidium of the Accreditation Council shall be comprised of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The President, and b. Two Vice Presidents. <p>² The Presidium prepares plenary meetings and supervises the Accreditation Agency.</p>		<p>Art. 9 Composition and tasks of the Executive Committee</p> <p>¹ The Presidium of the Accreditation Council is composed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the President, and b. two Vice Presidents. <p>² The Presidium prepares the plenary meetings and supervises the Swiss Accreditation Agency.</p> <p>³ The Presidium may question the accreditation agency or the applicant institution if there are doubts about the fulfilment of a requirement for admission to the procedure in accordance with Article 10 paragraph 1 of the HEdA Accreditation Ordinance.</p> <p>⁴ The Presidium shall negotiate and conclude the service agreement with the Swiss Accreditation Agency on behalf of the Accreditation Council on the guarantee of the Accreditation Council's Secretariat in accordance with Article 2^a paragraph 2 of these Regulations.</p>	<p>Art. 9 Composition and tasks of the Presidium</p> <p>¹ The Presidium of the Accreditation Council shall be comprised of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the President, and b. two Vice Presidents. <p>² The Presidency prepares the plenary meetings and supervises the Accreditation Agency.</p> <p>³ The Presidium may question the accreditation agency or the applicant institution if there are doubts about the fulfilment of a requirement for admission to the procedure in accordance with Article 10 paragraph 1 of the HEdA Accreditation Ordinance.</p> <p>⁴ The Presidium shall negotiate and conclude the service agreement with the Swiss Accreditation Agency on behalf of the Accreditation Council on the guarantee of the Accreditation Council's Secretariat in accordance with Article 2^a paragraph 2 of these Regulations.</p>
<p>Art. 10 President</p> <p>¹ The President shall be elected by the Swiss Higher Education Council for a four-year term of office, which may be renewed once.</p> <p>² The President leads the Accreditation Council. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Chairing the meetings of the Accreditation Council; b. Making sure that the Accreditation Council carries out its tasks in a timely and suitable manner and that it coordinates, takes action and completes activities; 		<p>Art. 10 President</p> <p>¹ The President of the Accreditation Council shall be elected by the Swiss Higher Education Council for a four-year term of office, which may be renewed once.</p> <p>² The President shall lead the Accreditation Council. His or her tasks shall include in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. chairing the meetings of the Accreditation Council; b. ensuring that the Accreditation Council carries out and completes its tasks in a 	<p>Art. 10 President</p> <p>¹ The President of the Accreditation Council is elected by the University Council. The term of office is four years; re-election is possible once.</p> <p>² The President heads the Accreditation Council. His or her tasks include in particular</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. chairing the meetings of the Accreditation Council; b. ensuring that the Accreditation Council carries out and completes its tasks in a timely, expedient and coordinated manner;

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. Ensuring compliance with decisions of the Accreditation Council; d. Seeing to it that supervision of the Accreditation Agency is organised and handled in a suitable manner; e. Representing the Accreditation Council in dealings with the outside world and signing on its behalf; f. Advising education policy bodies in accreditation matters; g. Informing the general public as needed concerning discussions and decisions of the Accreditation Council. 		<p>timely, expedient and coordinated manner;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. ensuring the implementation of the decisions of the Accreditation Council; d. ensuring that the supervision of the Swiss Accreditation Agency is organized and exercised in an expedient manner; e. representing the Accreditation Council externally and signing on its behalf, subject to the Signature Regulations of the Accreditation Council; f. advising education policy bodies on questions of accreditation; g. informing the public as needed about the business and decisions of the Accreditation Council to chair the meetings of the Accreditation Council; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. ensuring the implementation of the decisions of the Accreditation Council; d. ensuring that the supervision of the Swiss Accreditation Agency is organized and exercised in an expedient manner; e. representing the Accreditation Council externally and signing on its behalf, subject to the Signature Regulations of the Accreditation Council; f. advising education policy bodies on questions of accreditation; g. informing the public as needed about the business and decisions of the Accreditation Council to chair the meetings of the Accreditation Council.
--	--	--	---

Appendix 3: Fees Ordinance SAC and Regulations on recognition of agencies

Fees Ordinance SAC

1. September 2020	1. Januar 2025
<p>Art. 3 Cost-covering fees</p> <p>¹ Based on Article 35 paragraph 1 HEdA, cost-covering fees shall be charged for accreditation procedures in accordance with HEdA. Here, a distinction shall be drawn between:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> direct costs, in particular the fees paid to assessors, their expenses and the expenses of Accreditation Agency employees in connection with on-site visits; indirect costs, in particular the expenditure of the SAC and the Accreditation Agency in connection with accreditation procedures. <p>² In the case of institutional accreditation, the direct and indirect costs shall be charged as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Accreditation Agency shall invoice higher education institutions and other institutions within the higher education sector whose sponsors are required under FCA-CHE to contribute funding to the SAC and to the Accreditation Agency for the direct costs. The other recognised agencies shall invoice higher education institutions and other institutions within the higher education sector for the direct costs; they may invoice them for indirect costs up to the amount specified in Article 4 paragraph 2. <p>³ In the case of programme accreditation, the higher education institutions and other institutions within the higher education sector shall be invoiced for the direct and indirect costs irrespective of the sponsor.</p>	<p>Art. 3 Cost-covering fees</p> <p>¹ Based on Article 35 paragraph 1 HEdA, cost-covering fees shall be charged for accreditation procedures in accordance with HEdA. Here, a distinction shall be drawn between:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> direct costs, in particular the fees paid to assessors, their expenses and the expenses of Accreditation Agency employees in connection with on-site visits; indirect costs, in particular the expenditure of the SAC and the Accreditation Agency in connection with accreditation procedures. <p>² In the case of institutional accreditation, the direct and indirect costs shall be charged as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Accreditation Agency shall invoice higher education institutions and other institutions within the higher education sector whose sponsors are required under FCA-CHE to contribute funding to the SAC and to the Accreditation Agency for the direct costs. The other recognised agencies shall invoice higher education institutions and other institutions within the higher education sector for the direct costs; they may invoice them for indirect costs up to the amount specified in Article 4 paragraph 2. <p>³ In the case of programme accreditation, the higher education institutions and other institutions within the higher education sector shall be invoiced for the direct and indirect costs irrespective of the sponsor.</p>

Anerkennungsreglement

21. Juni 2024	1. Januar 2025
<p>Art. 2 Requirements</p> <p>(...)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> for institutional accreditation, the agency shall charge the higher education institutions both under public and private law at least the direct costs in accordance with Article 4 of the SAC Fees Ordinance (FeeO-SAC); for the programme accreditation, the agency shall charge public and private higher education institutions at least the direct and indirect costs in accordance with Article 5 of the SAC Fees Ordinance; <p>(...)</p>	<p>Art. 2 Requirements</p> <p>(...)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> for institutional accreditation, the agency shall charge the higher education institutions both under public and private law at least the direct costs in accordance with Article 4 of the SAC Fees Ordinance (FeeO-SAC)); for the programme accreditation, the agency shall charge public and private higher education institutions at least the direct and indirect costs in accordance with Article 5 of the SAC Fees Ordinance; <p>(...)</p>

Appendix 4: Function diagram

Function diagram AAQ & SAR V = prepares E = responsible for design X = approved / accredited / recognised	Project manager	Section Head	Director AAQ	Office	President	Presidency	Accreditation Council
MANAGEMENT OF PERSONNEL			X				
ACCREDITATION PROCEDURES							
- Coordination of procedures	X						
- Proposal of accreditation	V	X					
I ACCREDITATION							
MEETING PREPARATION AND- FOLLOW-UP SAR-P							
- Agenda SAR-P			-	V	X		
- Document for meetings SAR-P			-	V	X		
- Minutes SAR-P			-	V		E	X
- Things-to-do SAR and SAR-P				X			
- Agenda SAR			-	V	E	X	
- Documents for meetings SAR			-	E		X	
- Minutes SAR			-	V	E	E	X
ACCREDITATION DECISIONS							
- Decree			-	V		E	X
- Opening decrees			-	X			
- Publication of decrees			-	X			
- Invoicing ¹			-	X			
ACCOUNTING & FINANCES			-	X			
II "Statutory" tasks							
BUDGET AND ACCOUNTS SAR			-	V	E	E	X
ACTIVITY REPORT			-	V	E	E	X
SUPERVISION OF AAQ (INCL. BUDGET AND ACCOUNTS)			-	-	E	E	X
RECOGNITION OF AGENCIES							
- Decrees			-	V		E	X
- Opening decrees			-	X			
- Publication of decrees			-	X			
- Invoicing ²			-	X			
MAINTENANCE OF LEGAL BASIS				V		E	X
III Communication with stakeholder groups							
SUPPORT OF THE SAR WEBSITE				X			
GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE			-	X			
EXTERNAL REPRESENTATION OF THE ACCREDITATION COUNCIL			-	-	X		

¹ Fees for decisions in proceedings by other recognised agencies in accordance with the Fee Ordinance

² Fee for the recognition of other recognised agencies in accordance with the Fee Ordinance

Appendix 5: Overview of the tasks of the office

The office ...

I ACCREDITATION

- 1 Planning and monitoring
 - 1.1 maintains the list of planned, ongoing and completed proceedings;
 - 1.2 monitors the schedule of the Accreditation Council;
 - 1.3 informs the agencies and universities about the schedule;
- 2 Preparation of the content of the meetings (parallel to 3)
 - 2.1 receives the documents from the agencies and checks that they are formally complete;
 - 2.2 obtains reports from the agencies on entry in accordance with Art. 4 Para. 1 Accreditation Ordinance (note: authorisation based on an audit);
 - 2.3 prepares the draft agenda for the meetings of the Presidency;
 - 2.4 prepares the documents for the meetings of the Presidency with the President;
 - 2.5 prepares the draft agenda for the meeting of the Accreditation Council for submission to the meeting of the Presidency (note: the Presidency approves the agenda);
 - 2.6 finalises the cover sheets based on the discussion in the Executive Committee (note: recommendation of the Presidency) and prepares the draft of the decrees;
 - 2.7 arranges translations if necessary (note: translations of self-assessment reports, expert opinions and applications are usually translated using DeepL);
 - 2.8 prepares all other business (e.g. budget, accounts, administration of justice, correspondence);
 - 2.9 makes the documents available to the members of the Accreditation Council in good time for the meeting;
- 3 Organisational preparation of the meetings (parallel to 2)
 - 3.1 reserves the meeting rooms;
 - 3.2 plans and orders the meals;
 - 3.3 reserves hotel rooms if required;
 - 3.4 takes all necessary measures to ensure that the meetings run smoothly;
 - 3.5 is the contact point for SAR members for organisational matters;
- 4 Follow-up of the content of the sessions (parallel to 5)
 - 4.1 prepares the draft minutes of the meetings for submission to the Presidency;
 - 4.2 finalises the decrees and correspondence based on the discussion and decisions of the Accreditation Council for the attention of the President;
 - 4.3 updates the Presidency's and the Accreditation Council's Things-to-do;
 - 4.4 assists external lawyers with appeals against SAR decisions by drafting statements for the attention of the FAC and the Federal Supreme Court;
- 5 Organisational follow-up (parallel to 4);
 - 5.1 sends the decrees (by registered mail) and monitors their opening (deadline for appeal!);
 - 5.2 pays attendance fees and reimburses expenses;

- 5.3 maintains the statistics of the Accreditation Council (note: number of decisions and conditions by type of higher education institution and funding organisation);
- 6 keeps the accounts (paying invoices, claiming financial contributions); settles social security contributions and issues salary statements;

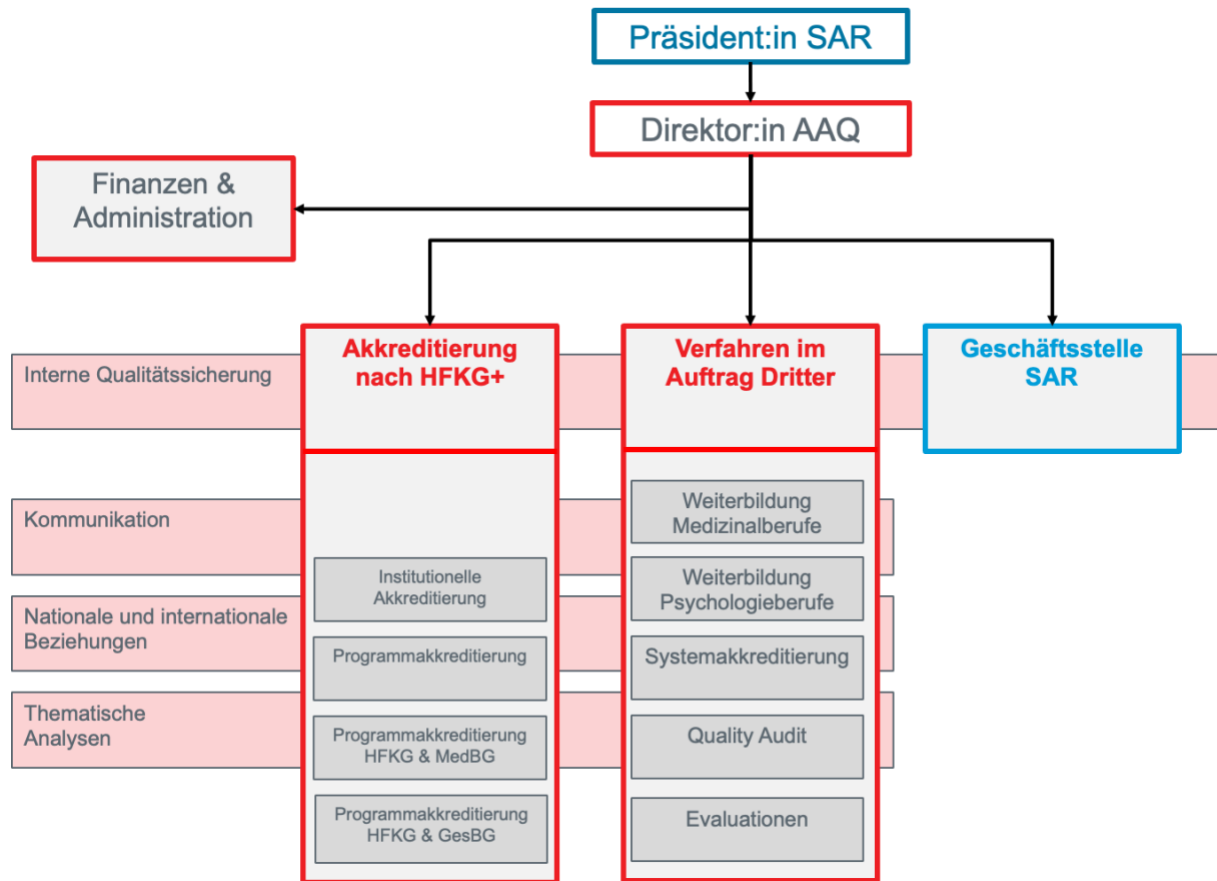
II "STATUARY TASKS"

- 7 prepares the draft budget;
- 8 prepares the annual financial statement;
- 9 prepares the activity report in consultation with the Presidency;
- 10 prepares the amendment of legal basis;

III COMMUNICATION WITH STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

- 11 is the point of contact for agencies, universities, education policy authorities and the general public;
- 12 ensures the internal communication of the Accreditation Council;
- 13 receives written or verbal "enquiries" and answers them independently as far as possible or places them on the agenda for meetings of the Executive Committee;
- 14 carries out clarifications regarding legal enquiries;
- 15 maintains the website of the Accreditation Council;
- 16 maintains the templates for documents.

Appendix 6: AAQ organisational chart (draft)



Organisation of AAQ

1. Principles
2. Organisation chart
3. Description of the tasks of the functions
4. Function diagram AAQ & SAC

1. Principles

AAQ's organisation is "fit for purpose".

Mission statement:

"AAQ carries out institutional accreditation and programme accreditation procedures based on the Higher Education Funding and Coordination Act (HEdA).

AAQ also carries out programme accreditations within the framework of the Medical Professions Act (initial and continuing education), the Psychology Professions Act (continuing education) and the Health Professions Act (training), as well as tailor-made evaluations, system accreditations in Germany and quality audits in Austria.

AAQ's procedures comply with international standards. To ensure this, AAQ continuously reflects on the methods of its procedures, develops them further and maintains an exchange with national interest groups and is networked with accreditation and quality assurance organisations in the European Higher Education Area."

Projects (procedures, working groups, networks, etc.) are therefore at the heart of AAQ's work and in line with its organisation.

AAQ is an expert organisation.

The project managers implement the mandate as the specialists within the context of projects in constant changing constellations. The organisation chart and the job descriptions take this characteristic of the agency into account by assigning the competence to make operational decisions, i.e. decisions concerning the procedures, to the project managers.

The organisation chart shows how the different elements work and what their competencies are. In the operational area, the tasks of the functions located above the projects (formats, deputy director) are limited to coordinating tasks: coordination of resources; further development of procedures).

Responsibility for the management of AAQ and operational responsibility for the procedures are separated.

In addition to the task of carrying out procedures, AAQ is also responsible for the head office of the Accreditation Council. This requires particular care with respect to governance:

- The project managers conduct the procedures independently within the framework of the Accreditation Ordinance.
- The heads of the formats are responsible for the agency's proposals of accreditation and approve the documents for the higher-level committees. They coordinate the work of the project managers on a subsidiary basis.
- The Deputy Director coordinates the formats on a subsidiary basis via the formats meeting. She has direct personnel responsibility for the project managers.
- The director manages the agency via the resources and the methodology of the procedures.

Cross-sectional functions

Tasks that are not directly assigned to a process are defined as cross-sectional functions:

1. Internal quality assurance
2. Communication
3. National and international relations
4. Thematic analysis

Coordinating meetings

Internal communication and the unité de doctrine are ensured through 3 coordinating meetings:

1. Team meeting

The team meeting serves to exchange information between all functions and to ensure "unité de doctrine".

Participants: team AAQ

Management: Director: AAQ

Frequency of meetings: fortnightly

2. Format session

The format meeting is responsible for the exchange and coordination of those responsible for the formats and as a platform for further developing the formats.

Participants: all heads of formats

Director: Deputy Director

Frequency of meetings: 1monthly

3. Extended management

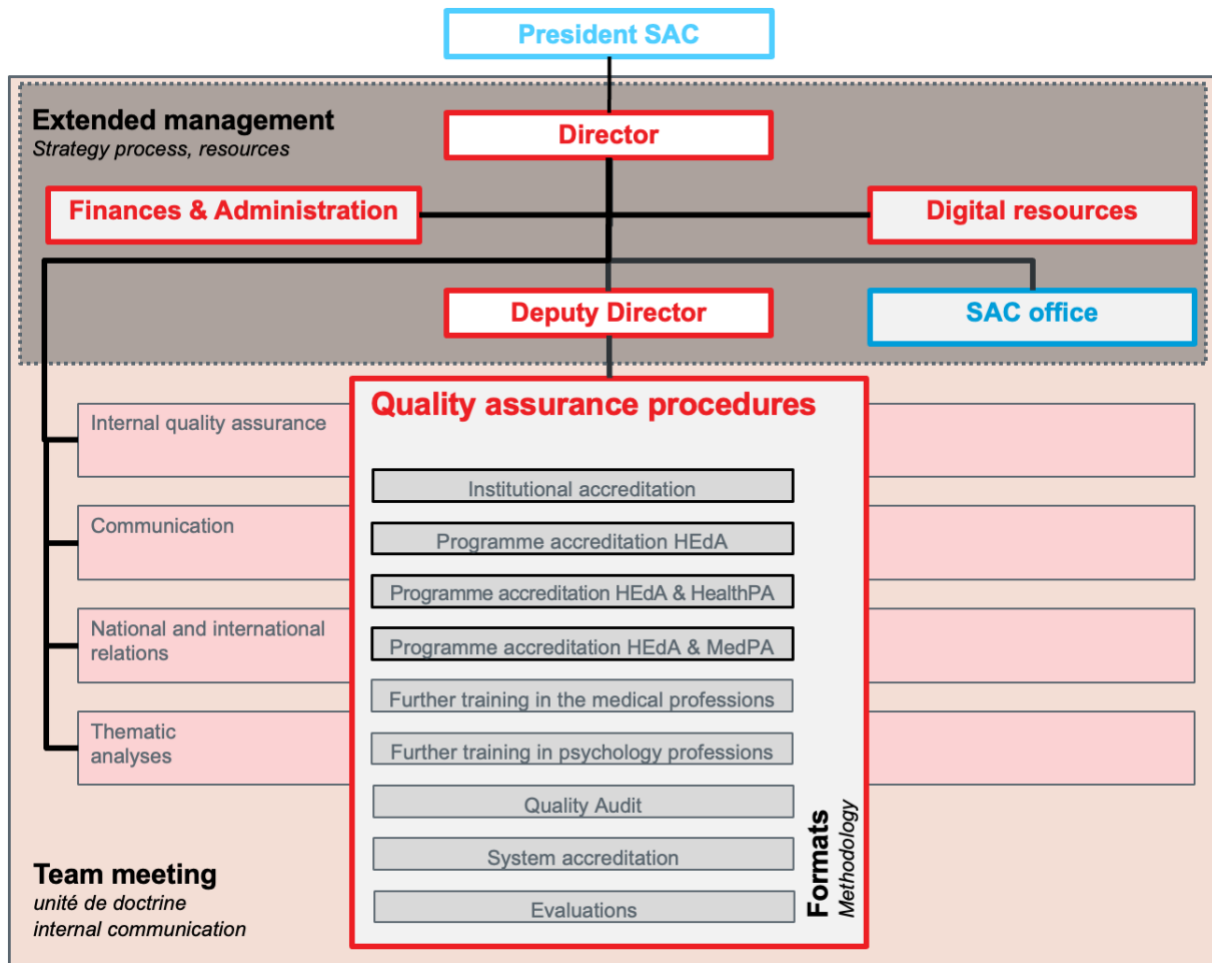
The extended management is responsible for planning and allocating resources (budget, decision to adopt procedures, allocation of procedures, networks and working groups), process responsibility for strategic planning (planning, implementation and controlling).

Participants: Director, Deputy Director, Head of Finance & Administration, Head of Digital Resources and Head of the SAC office. The cross-divisional functions are invited as required.

Management: Director

Frequency of meetings: 1monthly

2. Organisation chart



3. Description of tasks, competences and functions

Management of the agency

Director AAQ	
<p><i>manages the Swiss Accreditation Agency in technical, organisational and personnel terms and develops the agency strategically.</i></p>	- plans and allocates resources;
	- submits the financial planning, the budget and the annual financial statements with audit report to the Accreditation Council for comment;
	- delegates the preparation of the basis for the decisions of the Accreditation Council in the context of accreditation procedures under the HEdA to the heads of quality assurance procedures;
	- submits applications for institutional accreditation, programme accreditation under the HEdA and programme accreditation under special legislation;
	- submits the strategic planning of the Accreditation Agency to the Accreditation Council.
	- establishes, amends and terminates the employment relationships of employees and makes all related decisions;
	- develops the agency strategically;
	- represents the agency nationally and internationally;
	- conducts target agreement and staff appraisals with the Deputy Director, the Head of F&A, the Head of Digital Resources and the Head of the SAC office and is responsible for all staff.

Operational functions

Deputy Director	
<p><i>represents the director, coordinates the formats and is responsible for internal quality assurance.</i></p> <p><i>is subordinate to the Director.</i></p>	- supports the Director in the performance of his/her duties and deputises for the Director in his/her absence;
	- supervises the procedures and has personnel responsibility for the project managers;
	- supports the Director in the strategic development of the agency;
	- coordinates the work of the formats;
	- is a member of the Extended Management Board.

Heads of format	
<p><i>create the basis for the project managers' work, ensure its quality and guarantee the unité de doctrine in the formats;</i></p> <p><i>the task is performed by project managers.</i></p>	- manage the formats professionally;
	- provide the guidelines, process descriptions and templates for procedural management;
	- take over the first reading in the iQS;
	- prepare the agency's application (HFKG and third-party orders);
	- prepare application for certification (Quality Audit) and accreditation (PsyG, MedBG)
	- release the documents to the SAC, AAQ Commission, FOPH or university;
	- prepare synthesis reports;
	- develop the process further;
	- are the internal and external contact point for questions about the format;
	- are the contact point for contacts with other agencies;

	- represent AAQ thematically in networks, at conferences and congresses.
--	--

Project managers	
<i>implement AAQ's mandate;</i> <i>are subordinate to the Deputy Director.</i>	- manage procedures (planning, organisation, implementation) based on the legal bases and instruments of AAQ as PL1;
	- prepare the documents for the decision of the Accreditation Council as PL1;
	- as PL2, ensure representation in the conduct of proceedings;
	- take on tasks in the internal quality assurance of the processes;
	- represent the procedures in the SAC as PL1 if necessary;
	- work in committees and networks;
	- contribute to the further development of the processes.

Resource-orientated functions

Head Office	
<i>supports the Accreditation Council in the fulfilment of its tasks in cooperation with the assistant at the head office;</i> <i>reports to the Director.</i>	- prepares and follows up SAC meetings, including coordinating dates, agenda items, providing documents and informing participants;
	- records the results of the meeting;
	- implements the decisions of the Accreditation Council;
	- receives complaints and appeals and coordinates their processing;
	- prepares the annual budget and monitors its implementation;
	- prepares the annual financial statements and the activity report;
	- updates the website of the Accreditation Council;
	- builds and maintains relationships with external stakeholders;
	- is a member of the Extended Management Board.

Head of Finance & Administration	
<i>provides administrative support for the projects;</i> <i>is subordinate to the Director.</i>	- manages the division in technical, organisational and personnel terms;
	- coordinates the administrative support;
	- is responsible for financial accounting and human resources;
	- is a member of the Extended Management Board.

Head Digital Resources	
<i>ensures the technical support of the projects;</i> <i>is subordinate to the Director.</i>	- manages the division in technical and organisational terms;
	- maintains the existing digital resources (ProKon, Jurisprudence and QM-Pilot) securely;
	- develops the resources further;
	- is a member of the Extended Management Board.

Cross-sectional functions

Cross-sectional function: Internal quality assurance	
	- is responsible for AAQ's quality principles
	- further develops AAQ's IQS
	- represents the perspective of IQS in all areas of AAQ and in the management / extended management

Cross-sectional function: National and international relations	
	- maintains a list of conferences, networks and working groups;
	- answers enquiries
	- contributes to the further development of the strategic orientation
	- is the contact person for national and international committees and networks

Cross-sectional function: Communication	
	- Ensures the communication of AAQ
	- further develops the communication tools
	- is responsible for the biennial AAQ conference

Cross-sectional function: Thematic analysis	
	- develops concepts for the evaluation of AAQ reports
	- coordinates the work on the thematic analyses

4. AAQ & SAC function diagram

	Project manager	Head format	Deputy Director AAQ	Director AAQ	Office	President	Presidium	Accreditation Council
V = prepares E = responsible for design X = approved / accredited / recognised								
DOES THE AGENCY				X				
PROCEDURE								
- Management of the proceedings	X							
- Provision of the instruments		X						
- Supervision of the procedures			X					
I PREPARATION AND FOLLOW-UP OF MEETINGS								
MEETING PREPARATION AND- FOLLOW-UP								
- Agenda SAC-P				-	V	X		
- Meeting documents SAC-P				-	V	X		
- Protocol SAC-P				-	V	E	X	
- "To-do-list" SAC and SAC-P					X			
- Agenda SAC				-	V	E	X	
- SAC meeting documents				-	E		X	
- Protocol SAC				-	V		E	X
ACCREDITATION DECISIONS								
- Disposition				-	V		E	X
- Opening decision				-	X			
- Publication Decision				-	X			
- Invoicing ¹				-	X			
RECOGNITION OF AGENCIES								
- Disposition				-	V		E	X
- Opening decision				-	X			
- Publication Decision				-	X			
- Invoicing ²				-	X			
ACCOUNTING & FINANCES				-	V	E/X		
II BUDGET, ACCOUNTS, ACTIVITY REPORT								
BUDGET AND INVOICE SAC				-	V	E	E	X
ACTIVITY REPORT				-	V	E	E	X
SUPERVISION OF AAQ				-		E	E	X
III COMMUNICATION WITH STAKEHOLDER GROUPS								
Support of the SAC website					X			
General correspondence				-	X			
External representation of the Accreditation Council						X		

¹ Fees for decisions in proceedings by other recognised agencies in accordance with the Fee Ordinance

² Fee for the recognition of other recognised agencies according to GebVO