Programme accreditation

The registered institutions for higher education, the institutions for post-initial education, scientific research and academic services, the Faculty for Protestant Theology in Brussels, and the Evangelical Theological Faculty in Heverlee are held to account regarding the quality of their programmes through the agency of external quality assessment bodies. Each programme must periodically attain a programme accreditation.

Do you represent a recognised university or university college? Then you need to follow another procedure.

GENERAL INFO

Programme accreditation is the official conclusion by NVAO that a programme meets the pre-determined minimum requirements regarding quality and level as set out in the assessment framework. NVAO bases its accreditation decision on an assessment of the programme quality by a panel of independent experts.

The assessment procedure is coordinated by an external quality assessment agency which is either registered on the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (www.eqar.eu) or has signed an agreement with NVAO that guarantees that the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG, 2015) are being satisfied. This ensures that the assessment is conducted in accordance with the ESG 2015. In addition, the assessment panel verifies how the programme is involving, on the one hand, internal and external stakeholders, and on the other, external and independent peers and experts.

If applicable, the panel verifies whether the programme meets the regulations with respect to the admission of graduates to corresponding offices or professions.

The assessment is followed by the accreditation procedure, which is always coordinated by NVAO. The assessment report is published and underpins the accreditation decision taken by NVAO (positive – limited validity – negative). Accreditation qualifies a programme for government funding, if applicable, and the conferral of government-recognised diplomas and degrees.

STEPS

1

ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE

Coordinated by an external quality assessment agency

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2

APPLICATION

No later than four months before expiry of the current accreditation or recognition as a new programme

The assessment procedure commences on the day on which NVAO receives an application for accreditation based on a published assessment report. Insti...

The assessment procedure commences on the day on which NVAO receives an application for accreditation based on a published assessment report. Institutions providing a jointly organised programme must submit a joint application. Applications must comprise an application letter signed by the board of the institution, the administrative data of the institution and the programme, the assessment report, and, if applicable, a web link to the website of the quality assurance agency concerned, on which NVAO can consult the assessment framework and the assessment procedure. Applications must be submitted by no later than four months before expiry of the programme's current accreditation or recognition as a new programme and within two months following publication of the external assessment. Applications may be withdrawn at any time.

3

VERIFICATION OF ADMISSIBILITY OF THE APPLICATION

Notification regarding admissibility no later than 15 calendar days after receipt of the application

NVAO will check the admissibility of the application in order to verify that the procedural requirements have been met. If the application is inadm...

NVAO will check the admissibility of the application in order to verify that the procedural requirements have been met. If the application is inadmissible, the institution will be informed accordingly within a timeframe of fifteen calendar days. Subsequently, the institution has 30 calendar days to complete its application, in consultation with the process coordinator. Should it fail to submit a full dossier within the stipulated time, the application will be declared definitively inadmissible.

4

DECISION BY NVAO

Within 3 months after receipt of the application

Within a procedural timeframe of three months following receipt of the application, NVAO will take an accreditation decision. The draft accreditati...

Within a procedural timeframe of three months following receipt of the application, NVAO will take an accreditation decision. The draft accreditation decision and the underlying assessment report by the panel will be forwarded to the board of the institution before expiry of this timeframe. On the basis of the assessment report by the panel, NVAO will take an accreditation decision in accordance with the assessment scale and assessment rules as set out in the assessment framework. In its decision, NVAO may deviate from the recommendations contained in the assessment report, stating its reasons to do so. When drawing up its draft decision, NVAO may ask the institution and/or the panel for additional information, explanations, and clarifications. Before the definitive endorsement of the accreditation decision, NVAO affords the board of the institution the opportunity to formulate comments and/or objections to the draft accreditation decision and/or the underlying assessment report within a term of fifteen calendar days, which term commences on the day after their receipt. The drafts will be amended wherever necessary. Following the decision-making procedure, NVAO will publish the decision and the underlying assessment report on its website and forward both documents to the Education Minister of Flanders.

RATES

Once the application has been found admissible, the institution will receive a request for full payment of the cost price of the programme accreditation. The fee applicable to this procedure is fixed by the Education Minister of Flanders.

- Programme accreditation fee other statutary registered institutions: EUR 12.967
- Programme accreditation fee registered institutions: EUR 25.934
- Fee for NVAO accreditation procedure on the basis of an assessment by another external evaluation organisation: EUR 1.102

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