

Dr. Frauke Reitemeier

Notes of the Pre-Reaccreditation Meeting

12 Feb 2020 2.10pm – 4.50pm

Present:

for the Faculty: Florian Jütte, consultant for the Faculty's systemic reaccreditation processes

for the Teachers' Training department: Jörg Behrendt

for the Managing Board: Prof. Dr. B. Tischleder, Dr. F. Reitemeier

members of staff and students: see list of participants

Prof. Tischleder welcomes all present.

Introduction of the Reaccreditation Process and the Timeline

For the Faculty of the Humanities: F. Jütte

Mr. Jütte explains the advantages of the systemic accreditation compared to the formerly used programme accreditation: In the future, the degree programmes will be reviewed in the university by the experts for the degree programs (i.e. by everyone involved in the degree programmes), not by external consultants. The university itself is not yet system-accredited.

The Faculty formed various clusters of subjects based on the content of the degree programmes. The reaccreditation timelines of the clusters are different. A criteria catalogue with a total of 30 quality goals and 24 profile goals was defined, to be used throughout the University.

In the English Department, the first round of evaluative talks will take place in the summer semester of 2020; the next rounds will follow in the summer semesters of 2022 and 2024. In that semester the first reaccreditation cycle ends, and the results will go into the central evaluation committee for final review. An information management system will be used for this, which, however, is still in the beta test phase. The evaluation committee consists of representatives of all status groups. It checks whether the accreditation has been carried out correctly, whether all criteria are met and whether appropriate measures have been planned for criteria where that was not the case. This is the basis for a recommendation to the University's presidential board which ultimately decides on the reaccreditation.

Within the cycle of reaccreditation talks, three external reviewers (professionals outside academia, teachers, students) must be invited although there is no timeframe for their participation. The Department has the right to propose professionals and instructors, while the student representatives are chosen by the Faculty from a pool of students.

The term used for the evaluative talks is "Qualitätsrunde", "quality round". This means that the criteria are to be discussed – potentially controversially – in an open and non-hierarchical meeting. The results are recorded - in the past often by photo documentation - and forwarded to the Department's Managing Board so that appropriate measures can be initiated if necessary. However, changes to study regulations will still have to be approved by the central Faculty committees.

It is possible that a degree programme is not accredited, although it is thought that the refusal of reaccrediting a programme that was already accredited in the past is unlikely. In

case serious problems are discovered, the departmental Managing Board - or possibly the central evaluation commission - must press for appropriate measures.

For the first round of evaluative talks in History, five stations were set up according to relevant subcriteria of the 'doability' or feasibility of the study programme. The Managing Board of the History Department wanted to collect feedback from as many students as possible. The stations were covered in several rounds, which, according to Mr. Jütte, restricted creativity, but produced good results.

As an alternative to inviting all members of the department, students and staff members can appoint delegates. For this, "topic days" are required where not only the processes are explained but where delegates meet and discuss with those they represent. Evaluative talks with delegates are more efficient, but more restricted in scope.

The Faculty has created a list of questions for a student questionnaire that can be used as-is, but can also be supplemented with other questions the Department considers important. The survey should take around 20 minutes, which means around 30 questions. The survey is set up and evaluated by the Faculty's representative. The results are passed to the Department for use in the evaluative talks. The process of setting up the questionnaire and running and evaluating it takes about 10 weeks. The use of the student survey is however not mandatory, nor does it have to be used for the first round of discussions. Due to staffing levels, the Faculty cannot provide a translation of the question set.

The Departments will also receive a data set which contains relevant information on the development of student cohorts.

The evaluative talks are moderated, and to ensure an efficient and fruitful discussion, questions are collected beforehand that help structure the discussions. Mr. Jütte points out that the Faculty cannot provide moderators for several meetings in one week; if this is what the Department wants, staff members would have to act as moderators. According to the Faculty, clusters of subjects should be discussed in one round [as a side note, our cluster contains the teaching and non-teaching BAs in English; the Master of Education in English; the Master of Arts in English Philology; the BA and MA programmes in North American Studies].

If no student survey is carried out, the discussion rounds are based on self-reports - according to Mr. Jütte, this means reports of the participants in the discussion round - and which are reviewed and discussed.

For the Social Sciences Faculty and ZEWIL: J. Behrendt

Mr. Behrendt briefly explains the overall concept of the evaluation of the Master of Education degree programme. The Teachers' Training division has set up a system accreditation task force which has developed the concept and acts as a steering group. In autumn 2018, a coordination meeting between this team and the Faculty of the Humanities took place. The various Departments are responsible for the subject-specific and didactic aspects in the teaching-oriented BA programme; in the Master of Education, the Departments have decided to divide responsibility differently. The Teachers' Training division believes that discussing the subject-specific and didactic parts for the Master of Education programme should take place alongside reviewing the BA subjects, since the KMK requirements do not separate according to BA / MEd.

The responsibility of ZEWIL is with the educational components in the BA and MEd programmes, but also the overall layout and structure of the degree programme. By the end of 2022, all teaching-related criteria must have been reviewed at least once, since the results

will then be passed to the central evaluation board. For the review process, the Social Sciences Faculty also formed clusters of subjects (in this case: philologies, MINT, social sciences, educational sciences).

ZEWIL defines in advance exactly what information must be submitted. Teaching-specific questions were formulated for each major criterion, which were compiled in an Excel table. At the beginning of February the Faculty's study committee passed a paper that contains further information; this will be made available to the Departments.

Discussion

The student representatives consider the didactic concept, the doability of the programmes and the Department's cooperations to be the criteria which should primarily be discussed. Dr. Reitemeier presents the central results of the online survey (see attachment). The individual study groups have very different priorities on which criteria should be discussed first.

A controversial discussion follows on which subjects the individual discussion rounds should cover, as well as on the duration of the rounds themselves. Three main variants are proposed: - all courses are reviewed in one meeting; - the meeting is separated according to teaching / non-teaching subjects; - a more detailed separation is used (teaching-oriented programmes / MA programmes / non-teaching BA programmes, but discussing NAS and English Philology separately). In any case, the documentation of the discussion expressly outlines reactions and comments that are specific for individual degree programmes.

As a way of organizing the discussion rounds, Mr. Jütte suggests a station system: each of the stations focuses on one particular (sub)topic, to be reviewed and discussed by a small- to mid-sized group, with two such stations set up parallel to one another. After a certain period of time, the participants change their stations. This presupposes, however, that students and staff send delegates; a plenary discussion is not feasible given the overall student numbers in English/NAS.

The student representatives note that it will most likely be difficult to get enough delegates. Incentive systems - in the form of granting credits - will be available from the coming semester. It is hardly possible to come to a decision on the questions for the student survey at this time. A separate meeting will be necessary. This means that the evaluation talks will not have a sound basis for discussing aspects like the didactic concept or the feasibility of the programmes.

It turns out that the core criteria to be discussed in the summer semester of 2020 and the division of the discussion groups are interlinked. One possibility that emerges is to tackle the less critical criteria first, so as to provide enough time for a student survey. The criteria that are not considered as very essential are the transparency of decision-making processes, quality management and aspects of diversity, gender neutrality and equality.

For this reason, it is proposed to hold a first round of talks in the summer semester 2020 on aspects of equipment, transparency, documentation and quality assurance as well as diversity / gender equality / equality (viz. core criteria 4 to 7) and to use the time to compile a student questionnaire. The survey will run in the winter semester so that it is possible to focus on one of the more important areas (didactic concept, doability) in the coming summer semester 2021, based on a sound foundation of student feedback on these points.

The day for the evaluative discussions is May 28, 2020, from 9:00 a.m. All instructors are expected to provide the documents for the system accreditation in their courses in StudIP, so that students can prepare for the meeting, and the date should be expressly noted in the course plans.

The criteria will be divided up so that 6 or 7 stations can be set up, which should be discussed for about an hour in a rolling system.

Mr. Jütte suggests choosing as large a room as possible for the welcome meeting, and requesting separate rooms for the individual stations placed close to one another. He also notes that drinks during the breaks are always welcome, even if there is no financial support for this. He also offers an introductory event for instructing the moderators that explains what kind of moderation is intended and how to set about it. In addition, he offers to set up a homepage, which however is not necessary as a reaccreditation page already exists on the departmental website.

Early on in the summer semester, a meeting of the Managing Board will be called; should this not prove feasible, a planning session for the discussion rounds will be held.