



ACE Denmark
Akkrediteringsinstitutionen

GUIDELINES

ON APPLICATION FOR ACCREDITATION AND APPROVAL OF EXISTING UNIVERSITY STUDY PROGRAMMES



THE ROTATION PLAN FOR ACCREDITATION OF EXISTING
UNIVERSITY STUDY PROGRAMMES IS AVAILABLE AT WWW.ACEDENMARK.DK

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Preface

The *Guidelines on accreditation and approval of existing university study programmes* implement the Accreditation Order in assessment and documentation points. Consequently, the guidelines form the basis of the university's application for accreditation of existing university study programmes.

The guidelines ensure that required and adequate documentation for the quality and relevance of the study programmes is made available for the accreditation panels' assessments and the Accreditation Council's decisions.

Through their work, the Accreditation Council and ACE Denmark wish to help ensure that the universities will be able to meet the challenges faced by Danish higher education in the years to come. The intention is for the accreditation process to work as a useful quality assurance tool for the universities in their general quality assurance of university study programmes. With this in mind, focus on the relationship between the universities' quality assurance systems and the European standards and guidelines will be sharpened.

1 February 2011

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Introduction

Background

With Act no. 294 of 27 March 2007 on the Accreditation Agency for Higher Education (the Accreditation Act) and the establishment of the Accreditation Council and ACE Denmark, Denmark now has a national accreditation system which aims to secure the quality and relevance of higher education in the country. Increased focus on quality assurance and international standards as well as a desire to make Danish higher education globally competitive has led to the establishment of an independent institution.

The Accreditation Council and ACE Denmark's accreditations of university study programmes are performed in accordance with Ministerial Order no. 1402 of 14 December 2009 on Criteria for the Relevance and Quality of University Study Programmes and on Procedures for Approval of University Study Programmes ("the Accreditation Order"). All new and existing university study programmes in Denmark must be accredited in accordance with the criteria set out in Appendix 1 to the Accreditation Order. These guidelines implement the criteria of the Accreditation Order in assessment and documentation points.

The guidelines comprise two parts. *Part 1* is the Accreditation Council and ACE Denmark's implementation of the Accreditation Order. *Part 2* contains study programme information, basic information, legality issues and special circumstances. The documentation to be prepared by the institution must cover both these parts.

Stages of the accreditation process

The accreditation panels, which consist of academic experts, employer representatives and students, perform an academic assessment of each study programme according to the criteria and assessment and documentation points. This assessment is based on the university's documentation report, a visit to the study programme and any hearing responses. ACE Denmark works as a secretariat for the accreditation panels and prepares an accreditation report based on the accreditation panel's assessments. The accreditation report contains the overall recommendation for the Accreditation Council's decision. Based on the accreditation report, the Accreditation Council makes a decision on accreditation.

The accreditation process consists of a number of stages. These are described in the statutory framework.

- The university applies to the Accreditation Council for accreditation and approval of an existing study programme.
- The university uploads the documentation for the study programme to www.acedenmark.dk.
- ACE Denmark and the accreditation panel read the documentation.
- ACE Denmark reads the documentation to ensure that it complies with, among other things, the university programme regulations.
- The accreditation panel visits the university.
- The accreditation panel assesses the quality and relevance of the study programme, and ACE Denmark prepares a provisional accreditation report containing a recommendation accreditation of the study programme based on the accreditation panel's assessments.
- The provisional accreditation report is submitted for a hearing at the university. The university gets to consider the *content* of the full provisional accreditation report, as the university may point out *any misunderstandings, inaccuracies or incompleteness* in the consideration of the university's documentation.
- The university submits a hearing response to ACE Denmark.
- The accreditation panel performs an academic assessment of the hearing response.
- ACE Denmark prepares the final accreditation report to the Accreditation Council.
- The Accreditation Council makes a decision on accreditation of the study programme. A study programme may either receive positive accreditation, conditional positive accreditation or a refusal of accreditation.
- The Accreditation Council recommends the title of the study programme, subsidy status, specific admission requirements for bachelor programmes, the prescribed study period of the study programme and

any maximum limits on student intake for the study programme to the Danish Agency for Universities and Internationalisation. If the Accreditation Council does not agree with the university on the five elements recommended to the Danish Agency for Universities and Internationalisation, these are submitted to a hearing at the university, after which they are recommended to the Danish Agency for Universities and Internationalisation.

- The Danish Agency for Universities and Internationalisation makes a decision on the title, subsidy status, specific admission requirements for bachelor programmes, the prescribed study period of the study programme and any maximum limits on student intake for the study programme.
- The Accreditation Council makes a decision on approval of the study programme.
- ACE Denmark sends a letter of decision to the university.

The Accreditation Council's accreditation decisions

The Accreditation Council may pass down the following decisions on accreditation of the individual study programme:

- *Positive accreditation.* The study programme is generally assessed to fulfil the accreditation criteria.
- *Conditional positive accreditation.* The Accreditation Council may decide to grant a conditional positive accreditation if the study programme does not fully fulfil all the criteria, and if the Accreditation Council also assesses that the study programme will be able to correct the problem within a short period of time. The Council fixes a deadline for correction of the problems.
- *Refusal of accreditation.* The study programme is generally assessed not to fulfil the accreditation criteria.

Pursuant to section 7, subsection (2), of the Accreditation Act, the Accreditation Council is responsible for determining the period for which positive accreditation applies. The Accreditation Council has decided that accreditation is valid for six years for all types of study programmes. In special cases, the Accreditation Council may stipulate a shorter period, if it assesses that it is uncertain whether the study programme will continue to fulfil the criteria for quality and relevance for the full period of 6 years.

The five criteria of the Accreditation Order

Appendix 1 to the Accreditation Order contains a total of five criteria, divided into three columns:

Column I: Demand for the study programme in the labour market
Criterion 1: Demand for the study programme

Column II: Research-based teaching
Criterion 2: The study programme must be based on research and connected with an active research environment of high quality

Column III: Academic profile and level of the study programme as well as internal quality assurance
Criterion 3: Academic profile of the study programme and learning outcome targets
Criterion 4: Structure and organisation of the study programme
Criterion 5: Continuous internal quality assurance of the study programme

Implementation of the criteria in assessment and documentation points

The Accreditation Council and ACE Denmark have implemented the criteria in assessment and documentation points. The detailed descriptions of the criteria contained in the Order are numbered in the guidelines. In the guidelines, assessment points, documentation points and any clarifications of the documentation points are placed together. The assessment point is worded as a question. Then, the documentation points are presented. They are worded as requirements for the institution's account and documentation. An account is a presentation which may include descriptions, explanations or assessments of a particular issue. Documentation means a structured collection of qualitative or quantitative data demonstrating a specific issue.

The assessment point is a numbered headline written in bold. The documentation point(s) is/are given below. Detailed descriptions are provided below the documentation point(s).

Example

2.5 The research environment behind the study programme must be of a high quality, which must be documented through relevant research indicators [description in the Accreditation Order]

Assessment and documentation points

2.5.1 Is the research environment connected with the study programme of a high quality? [assessment point]

- The institution must prepare a statement of the number of research publications for the research environment(s) connected with the study programme. This statement must cover three years. From 2009, the statements must comply with the principles of the bibliometric research indicators of the Danish Agency for Science, Technology and Innovation and cover "Articles in journals, level 1", "Articles in journals, level 2" and other relevant research publications. [documentation point]

Framework guidelines

The *Framework guidelines on accreditation and approval of new and existing university study programmes* describe the general circumstances relating to applications for accreditation and approval of university study programmes. The Framework guidelines supplement the Guidelines on approval and accreditation of new and existing university study programmes. They describe circumstances relating to the application process which are not directly related to the criteria of the Accreditation Order.

Requirements for the documentation report and appendices

The university must prepare applications for the study programmes to be accredited. The following requirements must be met by the application, including the documentation report and appendices:

- The documentation report must, as a minimum, take account of the assessment and documentation points contained in the guidelines. The university may include other information, if deemed relevant.
- It is vital that comments are provided on the documentation and other appendices and that they are used to actively support the argumentation in the application. As a general rule, appendices which have been enclosed with the documentation report, but to which no exact references have been made, will not be considered.
- Generally, quantitative documentation must cover the past three years. This applies to parts 1 and 2 of the guidelines.
- The application must have been approved by the university's rector.
- The Accreditation Council will reject applications which are so materially and decisively lacking that it is not possible to assess the study programme in question based on the application. See also *Framework guidelines on accreditation and approval of new and existing university study programmes* at www.acedenmark.dk.

It is important that the documentation report refers precisely to the places in the appendices of central importance to the responses to the individual documentation points, e.g. by indication of the name of the document, page number and perhaps paragraph (e.g. "Curriculum, p. 3, paragraph 5" or "Curriculum clause 8").

If the university assesses that a bachelor programme and a master's programme are a natural continuation of each other, the university may prepare a joint documentation report covering both programmes. In order for the university to be entitled to prepare a joint report, the programmes must be anchored in the same academic environment, the master's programme must build on the academic profile of the bachelor programme, and the bachelor programme must give direct admission to the master's programme. ACE Denmark has described in more

detail the requirements for documentation of the individual programme if a joint report is prepared. See www.acedenmark.dk.

If the documentation report concerns both a bachelor and a master's programme, it is important that the university clearly identifies matters which relate:

- to both the bachelor and the master's programmes
- only to the bachelor programme
- only to the master's programme.

The documentation report with appendices and a covering letter signed by the rector must be uploaded to www.acedenmark.dk, where information on the study programme (part 2 of the guidelines) must also be provided. It is recommended that the university follow the instructions provided on the website. All documents must be uploaded as unlocked PDF files, and scanning of documents should as far as possible be avoided. A documentation report concerning one study programme is expected to be no more than 30 pages long, excluding appendices. Documentation reports concerning both a bachelor and a master's programme are expected to be no more than 50 pages long, excluding appendices. A documentation report concerning several study programmes is expected to be no more than 25 pages long per programme, excluding appendices. The appendices must be limited as far as possible and should generally not be more than 300 pages. Please note that the maximum upload capacity in the application module is 20 MB. In addition, an indicative maximum number of pages is stated below each criterion. The universities will be informed when the documentation report and its appendices must be uploaded. ACE Denmark will also announce when other activities in connection with the accreditation will take place, including a visit from the accreditation panel, the period of hearing at the universities etc.

The general rule is that the documentation report must be in Danish, and appendices may be in Danish or English. The application procedure will take place in Danish.

If the university has any queries regarding these guidelines, it is encouraged to contact ACE Denmark. The university should contact either its contact person or

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Part 1: Criteria of the Accreditation Order

Column I: Demand for the study programme in the labour market

Criterion 1: Demand for the study programme

Description of the criterion in the Accreditation Order

- 1.1 *The institution must document that it is in constant dialogue with employers, employer panels and graduates with a view to ensuring the continued relevance and quality of the study programme.*
- 1.2 *Based on employment and unemployment rates, the institution must document that graduates find relevant employment.*

1.1 The institution must document that it is in constant dialogue with employers, employer panels and graduates with a view to ensuring the continued relevance and quality of the study programme.

Assessment and documentation points

1.1.1 Is the institution in constant dialogue with one or more employer panels and employers, and is the dialogue used to ensure and develop the relevance and quality of the study programme?

- The institution must account for its constant dialogue with one or more employer panels and employers with a view to ensuring the continued relevance and quality of the study programme. In addition, the university must describe whether the dialogue has been established, whether it is based at central, faculty, departmental or another level, how it is undertaken, and how the institution uses the dialogue to ensure and develop the relevance and quality of the study programme. Examples of the institution's use of the dialogue in relation to the study programme must be provided.
- Pursuant to the Accreditation Order, the request for accreditation must be accompanied by documentation for involvement of the universities' employer panels, cf. the University Act.
- For bachelor programmes:
If more than 75% of the graduates of the study programme continue in further education, the institution may also include directors of studies or other representatives of relevant master's programmes in its account of the constant dialogue in addition to the dialogue with employer panels and employers.

1.1.2 Is the institution in constant dialogue with graduates, and is the dialogue used to ensure and develop the relevance and quality of the study programme?

- The institution must account for its constant dialogue with graduates with a view to ensuring the continued relevance and quality of the study programme. In addition, the university must describe whether the dialogue has been established, whether it is based at central, faculty, department or another level, how it is undertaken (e.g. at meetings, through qualitative/quantitative studies or otherwise), and how the institution uses the dialogue to ensure and develop the relevance and quality of the study programme. Examples of the institution's use of the dialogue in relation to the study programme must be provided.
- For bachelor programmes:
If less than 75% of the graduates of the study programme continues in further education, it is expected that the constant dialogue with the graduates also includes graduates from bachelor programmes.

1.2 Based on employment and unemployment rates, the institution must document that graduates find relevant employment.

Assessment and documentation points

1.2.1 Do the graduates of the study programme find relevant employment or continue in further education to the same extent as other graduates from the same field of study?

- For bachelor programmes:

The institution must document the total number of graduates who continue in further education, find employment or go abroad. If less than 90% of the graduates continue in further education, find occupation or go abroad, the institution must account for this.

- For bachelor and master's programmes:

The institution must document the unemployment rate of new graduates (4-19 months after graduation) from the study programme and compare this to the unemployment rate for new graduates from the same field of study (humanities, technical science and natural science, social science, health science or theology), cf. the Ministry of Science's categorisation of fields of study for use in employment statistics). If figures from the Ministry of Science are not used, the university must account for how the figures have been calculated/prepared.

1.2.2 Does the institution respond to the problem if the unemployment rate is more than twice as high as the national average for the field of study?

- For master's programmes:

In general, the institution must always explain a high unemployment rate among the graduates of the study programme. If the unemployment rate is more than twice as high as the national average for the field of study (e.g. humanities overall), the institution must respond to the problem and account for any circumstances that may explain this and for any strategies implemented to address the problem.

1.2.3 Do the graduates of the study programme find relevant employment?

- For bachelor and master's programmes:

The institution must state whether the graduates of the study programme find relevant employment, stating typical job functions, e.g. based on surveys of graduates or employers.

Professional master's programmes are not required to document 1.2.1, 1.2.2 and 1.2.3.

The response to this criterion may not exceed five pages, excluding appendices.

Criteria column II: Research-based teaching

Criterion 2: The study programme must be based on research and connected with an active research environment of high quality

Description of the criterion in the Accreditation Order

- 2.1 *The study programme must provide the students with knowledge, skills and competences based on research within the relevant discipline(s) and, where relevant, based on the interaction between research and practice.*
- 2.2 *The study programme must be organised by active researchers.*
- 2.3 *The students must to a large extent be taught by active researchers.*
- 2.4 *The study programme must have a close connection to an active research environment.*
- 2.5 *The research environment behind the study programme must be of a high quality, which must be documented through relevant research indicators.*

The documentation points in 2.1, 2.2, 2.4 and 2.5 may be taken together.

2.1. The study programme must provide the students with knowledge, skills and competences based on research within the relevant discipline(s) and, where relevant, based on the interaction between research and practice.

Assessment and documentation points

2.1.1 Is there an interrelation between the research areas associated with the study programme and the subject elements of the study programme?

- The institution must prepare an overview of the interrelation between the subject elements/modules of the study programme and the research area(s) associated with the study programme. The overview must illustrate which scientific/academic staff members/research groups undertake research within fields of relevance to the individual subject elements/modules of the study programme.

2.1.2 Does research interact with practice?

If the institution assesses that research areas behind the study programme are particularly profession-oriented or practice-oriented:

- The institution must account for how these research areas cooperate with the practice field.

2.3 The study programme must be organised by active researchers

Assessment and documentation points

2.3.1 Is the study programme to a large extent organised by scientific/academic staff?

- The institution must describe who organises the study programme. Organisers are the people who have the formal and actual responsibility for the on-going organisation of the entire study programme. In addition to the board of studies and the director of studies, this could be an education committee, a coordinator group, course coordinators, course supervisors etc.
- The institution must document that the scientific/academic staff organising the study programme are active researchers within a research area of relevance to the study programme. This must be documented using CVs showing, as a minimum, publications for the past three years, perhaps using a hyperlink.

2.3 The students must to a large extent be taught by active researchers

Assessment and documentation points

2.3.1 Are the students to a large extent taught by scientific/academic staff?

- The institution must account for the number of full-time equivalents for scientific/academic staff and part-time scientific/academic staff teaching on the study programme. In these guidelines, the term "teaching" also includes guidance, preparation, teaching administration and examination. Scientific/academic staff and part-time scientific/academic staff are defined in the statistical material of Universities Denmark (*Danske Universiteters Statistiske Beredskab*). Full-time equivalents for scientific/academic staff and part-time scientific/academic staff teaching on the study programme must be calculated based on the principles set out in the statistical material of Universities Denmark (http://dkuni.dk/politik_debat/statistik/), table C, columns 1.1. and 2.1. Full-time equivalents must be calculated for the most recently completed academic year or for the most recent calendar year.
- Based on the above figures, the institution must indicate the ratio of scientific/academic staff to part-time scientific/academic staff for the study programme. If the ratio of scientific/academic staff to part-time scientific/academic staff is 25% lower than the ratio for the field of study nationwide, the institution must explain this. Based on the statistical material of Universities Denmark, ACE Denmark publishes an overview of ratios of scientific/academic staff to part-time scientific/academic staff for the fields of study nationwide.

2.3.2 Do the students have the possibility of maintaining close contact with scientific/academic staff?

- The institution must account for the number of students that trigger resources on the study programme as at 1 October of the year in which the ratio of scientific/academic staff to part-time scientific/academic staff is also calculated.
- The institution must indicate ratios of students to scientific/academic staff in terms of number and full-time equivalents:
 - The number of students relative to the number of scientific/academic staff on the study programme is calculated as the number of students that trigger resources on the study programme as at 1 October of the relevant year relative to the number of scientific/academic staff teaching on the study programme in the relevant year.
 - The full-time equivalent ratio includes student full-time equivalents based on the reported figures ("STÅ" report) and full-time equivalents for scientific/academic staff, as stated above under 2.3.1.

For professional master's programmes, the number of students relative to scientific/academic staff on the programme may be documented using the university's own records.

2.4 The study programme must have a close connection to an active research environment

Assessment and documentation points

2.4.1 Is the study programme provided with a close connection to an active research environment?

If (significant parts of) the study programme (are) not taken at the same campus as the research environment(s):

- The institution must account for how it is ensured that the students' teaching and guidance have a close connection to an active research environment. If (significant parts of) the study programme (are) offered as distance education, the institution must describe how the contact between the students and the research environments is supported electronically or otherwise, including how the students and the research environments are expected to use the contact options.

2.5 The research environment behind the study programme must be of a high quality, which must be documented through relevant research indicators

Assessment and documentation points

2.5.1 Is the research environment connected with the study programme of a high quality?

- The institution must prepare a statement of the number of research publications for the research environment(s) connected with the study programme. The statement must cover the past three years. From 2009, the statements must comply with the principles of the bibliometric research indicators of the Danish Agency for Science, Technology and Innovation and cover "Articles in journals, level 1", "Articles in journals, level 2" and other relevant research publications.

The response to this criterion may not exceed 10 pages, excluding appendices.

Criteria column III: Academic profile and level of the study programme as well as internal quality assurance

Criterion 3: Academic profile of the study programme and learning outcome targets

Description of the criterion in the Accreditation Order

- 3.1 *There must be an interrelation between the learning outcome targets of the study programme, the name of the programme and the title that graduates of the programme are entitled to use.*
- 3.2 *The learning outcome targets of the study programme must live up to the relevant type description (bachelor (bachelor), master's (candidatus) (kandidat) or master's (master)) in the Qualifications Framework for Danish Higher Education (Kvalifikationsrammen for videregående uddannelser), cf. Appendix 2.*

3.1 There must be an interrelation between the learning outcome targets of the study programme, the name of the programme and the title that graduates of the programme are entitled to use

Assessment and documentation points

3.1.1 Does the competency profile correspond with the title and name of the study programme?

- The institution must indicate the ministerial order, including its number, publication date and the relevant section(s), on the basis of which the study programme is approved. Based on the curriculum, the institution must show the interrelation between the competency profile of the study programme and its title, name, objectives and content, cf. the indicated ministerial order. The institution must account for the weighting of subject fields of the study programme for study programmes with an interdisciplinary profile.

3.2 The learning outcome targets of the study programme must live up to the relevant type description (bachelor (bachelor), master's (kandidat) or master's (master)) in the Qualifications Framework for Danish Higher Education, cf. Appendix 2.

Assessment and documentation points

3.2.1 Does the competency profile of the study programme live up to the relevant type description in the Qualifications Framework?

- Based on the curriculum, the institution must account for the interrelation between the competency profile of the study programme and the requirements for either the bachelor, master's or professional master's level in the provisions of the Qualifications Framework, cf. Appendix 2 to the Accreditation Order.

The response to this criterion may not exceed two pages, excluding appendices.

4 Structure and organisation of the study programme

Description of the criterion in the Accreditation Order

- 4.1 *The study programme must be organised such that it supports the learning outcome targets of the programme, the specific admission requirements and the programme's examination forms.*
- 4.2 *Instruction must be provided in a pedagogical and qualified manner by the lecturers.*
- 4.3 *The physical setting for the study programme must match the programme and the number of students.*
- 4.4 *The study programme must be organised such that the students are given the possibility of becoming part of an international study environment.*

4.1 The study programme must be organised such that it supports the learning outcome targets of the programme, the specific admission requirements and the programme's examination forms

Assessment and documentation points

4.1.1 Is there an interrelation between the admission requirements and the academic level of the study programme?

- For bachelor programmes:
The institution must indicate the programme-specific and area-specific admission requirements. The institution must account for how the academic level of the study programme ensures the interrelation with the programme-specific and area-specific admission requirements.
- For master's programmes:
The institution must indicate the qualifying study programme(s), including specific admission requirements. The institution must account for how the academic level of the study programme ensures that the academic level of the master's programme builds on the academic level and content of the typical qualifying study programme(s).
- For professional master's programmes:
The institution must indicate the qualifying study programme(s), including specific admission requirements as well as relevant work experience. The institution must account for how the academic level of the study programme builds on the academic level and content of the typical qualifying study programme(s) and the student's work experience.

4.1.2 Does the organisation of the study programme support its competency profile?

- Based on the current curriculum, the institution must document the structure of the study programme, including modules/subject elements, their timing and ECTS points. If a new curriculum has been adopted but has not entered into force, the institution may also make a supplementary reference to this curriculum in the documentation. Graphical presentations may be used.
- The institution must describe how the structure of the study programme supports the competency profile of the study programme, including
 - the academic progression from the first to the last semester. The account may comprise examples from the course descriptions;
 - the interrelation between the academic targets of the subject elements and the competency profile of the study programme. The account may be based on examples.
- For bachelor programmes: The institution must document the dropout rate for the first year of the study programme. If the first-year dropout rate is more than 33% higher than the national average for the field of study in one of the past three years, the institution must account for any reasons for the dropout and efforts undertaken to bring down the dropout rate. The first-year dropout rate must be calculated in accordance with the statistical material for Universities Denmark (table F.3.1).

- For master's programmes: The institution must document the dropout rate for the study programme. If the dropout rate is more than 33% higher than the national average for the field of study in one of the past three years, the institution must account for any reasons for the dropout and efforts undertaken to bring down the dropout rate. The dropout rate must be calculated in accordance with the statistical material for Universities Denmark (table G.1.4).
- For professional master's programmes: Dropout rates are not required to be documented.

4.1.3 Do the examination forms of the study programme test central elements of its competency profile?

- For each study programme, the institution must document the variation of examination forms and describe how the chosen examination forms test the competencies which are key to the competency profile of the study programme.

4.1.4 Are the academic minimum requirements for study programmes aimed at teaching in upper secondary schools?

- The institution must describe how study programmes aimed at teaching in upper secondary schools live up to the academic minimum requirements; cf. the Ministry of Science, Innovation and Higher Education's guidelines on university study programmes aimed at teaching in upper secondary schools (academic minimum requirements).

4.2 Instruction must be provided in a pedagogical and qualified manner by the lecturers

Assessment and documentation points

4.2.1 Is it ensured that instruction is provided in a qualified and pedagogical manner?

- The institution must account for how the university ensures that instruction is provided in a qualified and pedagogical manner. The institution must document that it performs surveys asking the students to assess the pedagogical quality of the instruction and that it follows up on these surveys.

4.3 The physical setting for the study programme must match the programme and the number of students

Assessment and documentation points

4.3.1 Does the institution ensure the physical setting for the study programme?

- The institution must describe how it ensures that sufficient classrooms, IT facilities and libraries are available relative to the number of students on the study programme. The account must include the results of the UMV (study environment evaluation), where this is relevant for the study programme. For study programmes where special technical equipment (such as laboratories) is required, the institution must document that the equipment is up-to-date, available, usable and adequate relative to the number of students who use the equipment.

4.4 The study programme must be organised such that the students are given the possibility of becoming part of an international study environment

Assessment and documentation points

4.4.1 Is it ensured that the students are given the possibility of studying abroad?

- The institution must describe how the structure of the study programme supports the students' possibilities of studying abroad.

The response to this criterion may not exceed seven pages, excluding appendices.

5 Continuous internal quality assurance of the study programme

Description of the criterion in the Accreditation Order

- 5.1 The study programme must satisfactorily form part of the institution's quality assurance system, cf. the European standards and guidelines for universities' internal quality assurance of study programmes.*

5.1 The study programme must satisfactorily form part of the institution's quality assurance system, cf. the European standards and guidelines for universities' internal quality assurance of study programmes.

Assessment and documentation points

5.1.1 Does the institution's quality assurance system live up to the European standards for universities' internal quality assurance?

The European standards and guidelines for universities' internal quality assurance (Part 1 of Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (www.enqa.eu under Publications, cf. Appendix 1 to these guidelines)) set out the following requirements for the quality assurance system (the university programme regulations by which the requirement is being met and the references to the documentation concerning the other accreditation criteria where the fulfilment of the requirement is described are shown in parentheses):

1. Policy and procedures for quality assurance.
 2. Approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards (cf. the University Act).
 3. Assessment of students (cf. the Examination Order, the Grading Scale Order and the Order on External Examiners).
 4. Quality assurance of teaching staff (cf. the Order on Admission and Enrolment, the Accreditation Order and criterion 4).
 5. Learning resources and student support (cf. the Order on Admission and Enrolment, the Accreditation Order, criterion 4, the University Act etc.).
 6. Information systems.
 7. Public information (cf. the Act on Transparency and Openness in Education).
- The institution must, cf. item 1 above, document the policies on which the institution's quality assurance system is based, its purpose, organisational framework, distribution of responsibilities and key elements. Also, the institution must document that the quality assurance system includes procedures ensuring that the institution meets the requirements in items 2, 3, 4, 5 and 7 above.
 - The institution must, cf. item 6 above, document the part of the quality assurance system that ensures information relevant to the effective management of study programmes is collected, analysed and used.

5.1.2 Is the programme management able to continuously and systematically solve any problems identified on the programme?

- The institution must account for the integration of the quality assurance of the study programme into the quality system of the institution. The institution must document the procedures used for the continuous quality assurance of the planning and course of the study programme. The institution must provide examples of or describe how it continuously and systematically solves any problems identified on the study programme based on collection, analysis and use of relevant information, cf. ENQA Standards and Guidelines, part 1, clause 1.6.

The response to this criterion may not exceed five pages, excluding appendices.

Part 2: Information on the study programme

Basic information

In addition to responding to the documentation points, the institution must provide the basic information in the documentation report, which is necessary background knowledge for the accreditation and approval of the study programme. The basic information must cover the past three years for each study programme. The following must be indicated for each year:

- New students in terms of the number of persons enrolled on the study programme as at 1 October of the relevant year. For bachelor programmes, this figure represents the number of persons enrolled on the study programme, i.e. the sum of students beginning on 1 March and 1 October enrolled through the Coordinated Enrolment System (KOT) and students not enrolled through KOT. For master's and professional master's programmes, the figure represents the number of people enrolled on the study programme during the period from 1 October (of the previous year) to 30 September (of the relevant year).
- The total number of students on the study programme for the bachelor, master's and professional master's programmes, respectively, as at 1 October of the relevant year. This figure represents the number of students enrolled on the study programme.
- The total number of degrees completed for the bachelor, master's and professional master's programmes, respectively, as at 1 October of the relevant year. This figure covers the number of graduates who have completed the study programme during the relevant period from 1 October (of the previous year) to 30 September (of the relevant year).
- The share of elective students as at 1 October of the relevant year. The university may also state the number of elective students.

UI information

In connection with accreditation and approval of existing study programmes, cf. the Accreditation Act, the Accreditation Council recommends:

- a) the subsidy status of the study programmes
- b) title
- c) specific admission requirements for bachelor programmes
- d) prescribed study period
- e) any maximum limit on student intake for the study programmes

for the Danish Agency for Universities and Internationalisation's approval. Based on the Accreditation Council's recommendation, the Danish Agency for Universities and Internationalisation will make a decision on the above points (in the following called UI information).

The Accreditation Council's recommendation concerning UI information, cf. the Accreditation Act

For use for the Accreditation Council's recommendation for the Danish Agency for Universities and Internationalisation, the university must provide the Accreditation Council with information of the currently approved UI information for the study programmes. As part of the Accreditation Council's recommendation for the Danish Agency for Universities and Internationalisation, it is expected that no adjustments are later made to the study programmes relative to that originally approved (e.g. in the form of amendments of ministerial orders).

For this reason, universities must provide the following information to be used as the basis of the Accreditation Council's recommendation:

- a) the currently approved subsidy status
- b) the currently approved title in Danish and English

- c) the currently approved admission requirements (for bachelor programmes: area-specific and programme-specific admission requirements, cf. Appendix 1 to the Order on Admission and Enrolment)
- d) the currently approved prescribed study period
- e) if the Ministry has stipulated a maximum intake of students for the study programme, universities must indicate the maximum limit on student intake corresponding to the limit currently approved.

For all UI information, the university must also provide its own recommendation and state the reason for any differences between what is currently approved and what is recommended.

Title/designation of the study programme

A study programme will only entitle graduates to one title/designation. The title/designation for a study programme is written in Danish first and then in English. Below are some examples of the practice for the titles of university study programmes:

Bachelor programmes

Danish title/designation	Bachelor (BSc) i biologi
English title/designation	Bachelor of Science (BSc) in Biology

Master's programmes

Danish title/designation	Cand.scient. i biologi
English title/designation	Master of Science (MSc) in Biology

and/or

Danish title/designation	Cand.scient. i biologi og [elective]
English title/designation	Master of Science (MSc) in Biology and [elective in English]

Professional master's programmes

Danish title/designation	Master i journalistik
English title/designation	Master of Journalism

If the university recommends a new title which is *not* included in the applicable regulations (e.g. Appendix 1 of the University Programme Order), the following applies:

- 1) the university must obtain the prior consent of the Danish Agency for Universities and Internationalisation for a new title that will require an amendment of the University Programme Order
- 2) the prior consent of the Danish Agency for Universities and Internationalisation must be obtained before the deadline for application and be enclosed with the documentation report.

Based on the consent of the Danish Agency for Universities and Internationalisation for a proposal for a new title, ACE Denmark will assess whether the new title covers the academic content of the study programme, cf. criterion 3.

Subsidy status

It is only possible to apply for a new subsidy status if the nature of the study programme is fundamentally changed (leading to a change of field of study). In terms of accreditation, this could entail that the study programme will be considered a new study programme to be accredited as a new study programme.

The Accreditation Council's responsibility for ensuring that study programmes comply with the university programme regulations

The Accreditation Council is responsible for making a decision on accreditation and final approval of the study programme, also ensuring that the study programme complies with the university programme regulations.

All existing bachelor and master's programmes are covered by the University Programme Order. All existing professional master's programmes are covered by the Part-Time Order. In addition, all professional master's programmes are covered by a programme order, i.e. either the Professional Master's Programme Order or a programme-specific order.

Reference is made to the following relevant university programme regulations, as amended, cf. www.retsinfo.dk:

- Consolidation Act no. 294 of 27 March 2007 on the Accreditation Agency for Higher Education (the Accreditation Act)
- Consolidation Act no. 985 of 21 October 2009 on Universities (the University Act)
- Ministerial Order no. 1402 of 14 December 2009 on Criteria for the Relevance and Quality of University Study Programmes and on Procedures for Approval of University Study Programmes
- Ministerial Order no. 338 of 06 May 2004 on the Bachelor and Master's Programmes at Universities (the University Programme Order)
- Ministerial Order no. 181 of 23 February 2010 on Admission and Enrolment on Bachelor and Master's Programmes at Universities (the Order on Admission and Enrolment)
- Ministerial Order no. 1188 of 7 December 2009 on Part-Time Programmes at Universities (the Part-Time Order)
- Ministerial Order no. 1187 of 7 December 2009 on Professional Master's Degree Programmes at Universities (the Professional Master's Programme Order)
- Ministerial Order no. 857 of 1 June 2010 on University Examinations and Grading (the Examination Order)
- Guide no. 5 of 18 January 2006 of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation providing guidelines on university study programmes aimed at teaching in upper-secondary schools (academic minimum requirements)

Universities must indicate and substantiate:

For all study programmes:

- to which order the study programme is subject, reference to the relevant section and whether the structure of the study programme has been developed in accordance with the order
- which body of external examiners is used for the study programme
- in which language the study programme is provided.

For bachelor programmes, the university must also indicate:

- a minimum of two master's programmes for which the study programme gives admission
- to which master's programme at the university the graduates have a legal claim to be admitted, cf. the Order on Admission and Enrolment.
- the general admission requirements for the study programme.

For master's programmes, the university must also indicate:

- the admission requirements for the study programme, including
 - a minimum of one directly qualifying bachelor programme
 - which bachelors have a legal claim to be enrolled on the study programme, cf. the Order on Admission and Enrolment
 - for study programmes that entitle graduates to use the titles cand.paed., cand.jur., cand.scient.san or cand.polyt.: which professional bachelor programmes qualifies for admission
 - if all or significant parts of the study programme is/are taught in English, the institution must indicate that English at B level, as a minimum, is required for admission.

If the university has stipulated a maximum limit on student intake for master's programmes, the university must account for the academic relevance of the selection criteria, cf. the Order on Admission and Enrolment, and for their compliance with the administrative law requirements on transparency, objectivity and measurability.

For professional master's programmes, the university must also indicate:

- the admission requirements for the study programme, including
 - a minimum of one directly qualifying study programme
 - requirements for the applicants' work experience (a minimum of two years) to be regarded as being relevant.
 - if all or significant parts of the study programme is/are taught in English, the institution must indicate that English at B level, as a minimum, is required for admission.

If the university has stipulated a maximum limit on student intake for professional master's programmes, the university must account for the academic relevance of the selection criteria, cf. the Part-Time Order, and for their compliance with the administrative law requirements on transparency, objectivity and measurability.

Other conditions for all types of programmes

For study programmes aimed at teaching in upper-secondary schools, the university must account for the study programme's compliance with the academic minimum requirements, cf. the guide providing guidelines on university study programmes aimed at teaching in upper-secondary schools, cf. also the information requirement for criterion 4 (clause 4.1.4), to which reference is made.

For parallel or joint programmes, the university must account for the study programme's compliance with the relevant order.

Finally, the university must provide other information assessed to be relevant.

Appendix 1: Summary list of European standards for quality assurance, part 1

This Appendix contains the summary list of standards for the internal quality assurance at higher education institutions in ENQA's publication (page 7). The full wording of the publication with European Standards and Guidelines is available at www.enqa.eu under Publications.

Summary list of European standards for quality assurance

This summary list of European standards for quality assurance in higher education is drawn from Chapter 2 of the report and is placed here for ease of reference. It omits the accompanying guidelines. The standards are in three parts covering internal quality assurance of higher education institutions, external quality assurance of higher education, and quality assurance of external quality assurance agencies.

Part 1: European standards and guidelines for internal quality assurance within higher education institutions

1.1 Policy and procedures for quality assurance:

Institutions should have a policy and associated procedures for the assurance of the quality and standards of their programmes and awards. They should also commit themselves explicitly to the development of a culture which recognises the importance of quality, and quality assurance, in their work. To achieve this, institutions should develop and implement a strategy for the continuous enhancement of quality. The strategy, policy and procedures should have a formal status and be publicly available. They should also include a role for students and other stakeholders.

1.2 Approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards:

Institutions should have formal mechanisms for the approval, periodic review and monitoring of their programmes and awards.

1.3 Assessment of students:

Students should be assessed using published criteria, regulations and procedures which are applied consistently.

1.4 Quality assurance of teaching staff:

Institutions should have ways of satisfying themselves that staff involved with the teaching of students are qualified and competent to do so. They should be available to those undertaking external reviews, and commented upon in reports.

1.5 Learning resources and student support:

Institutions should ensure that the resources available for the support of student learning are adequate and appropriate for each programme offered.

1.6 Information systems:

Institutions should ensure that they collect, analyse and use relevant information for the effective management of their programmes of study and other activities.

1.7 Public information:

Institutions should regularly publish up to date, impartial and objective information, both quantitative and qualitative, about the programmes and awards they are offering.