

8 November 2016**HRK proposals for reorganisation of accreditation**

The German Rectors' Conference (HRK) has now presented detailed proposals for the future structure of the accreditation system and the accreditation process. The General Assembly adopted the recommendations today in Mainz, after key parameters had initially been formulated in May.

In the view of the HRK, accreditation should be redesigned as an academically oriented process for quality assurance and accountability along the lines of an audit, and should be guided by the provisions of the "European Standards and Guidelines (ESG)". Agencies should be able to offer consultative and organisational services in this process; their involvement in accreditation processes, however, should not be mandatory. The final arbiter for all procedures should be the Accreditation Council.

"The German Federal Constitutional Court has clearly signalled that the reorganisation of the accreditation system must be carried out in accordance with the academic ethos. That means that academics must constitute the majority in all bodies. The involvement of students and professional practice will naturally continue," said HRK President Prof Dr Horst Hippler, referring to the ruling by the Federal Constitutional Court in February. "Universities themselves must be able to assume greater responsibility for the quality of the courses they offer and to participate in carrying out the accreditation process to a greater extent than before."

"The universities can judge whether it is productive for them to use the services of agencies for their quality improvement. We therefore call for them to be given the option to make this decision and, where appropriate, to carry out innovative procedures autonomously," says HRK Vice-President for Teaching, Learning, Teacher Education and Lifelong Learning, Prof Dr Holger Burckhart. "This will bring us closer to achieving the new balance in the system that we had previously called for in early summer."

"Now that we have presented constructive proposals, we expect that the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany will create a solid legal framework for the implementation of the innovations as quickly as possible and will very shortly adopt the treaty between the federal states already flagged for October," says Hippler.

View text of the resolution