R2.3.6 REPORT ON ACCREDITATION AND FORMALIZATION

PROJECT INFO

Project title	Digitalisation of water industry by innovative graduate water education
Project acronym	DIGIWATER
Project reference number	621764-EPP-1-2020-1-NO-EPPKA2-KA
Action type	Knowledge Alliances in Higher Education
Web address	http://waterharmony.net/projects/digiwater/
Coordination institution	Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU)
Project duration	01 January 2021 – 30 April 2024

DOCUMENT CONTROL SHEET

Work package	WP2 Digital Water Curriculum
Ref. no and title of task	T2.3.6 Accreditation and formalisation
Title of deliverable	R2.3.6 Report on accreditation and formalisation
Lead institution	THOWL
Author(s)	Katarina Pilar von Pilchau
Document status	Final
Document type	Report
Document version and date	V01, 20 April 2024
Dissemination level	Restricted to other programme participants (including Commission services and project reviewers)

VERSIONING AND CONTRIBUTION HISTORY

Version	Date	Revision description	Partner responsible
v.01	20 April 2024	Document written	THOWL

Table of Contents

List of figures

1 Introduction

The aim of Task T2.3.6 was to determine formal requirements for the accreditation of new/updated degree programmes at the partner universities for the jointly developed curricula in Digiwater. The results will then be summarised in a report. For that a brief overview of the accreditation process was requested from the partner universities. They were asked to minimise the process as much as necessary. The following questions were used for orientation:

- What procedural steps are necessary to achieve accreditation?
- Which institutions and organisations need to be involved?
- Are they regional or national organisations?
- How much time must be planned on average until the accreditation has been successfully carried out?
- Are there any procedural costs for accreditation, if so, how high are they?

2 Formal requirements for accreditation and formalization at partner universities

1.1 Norway – NMBU

1   What procedural steps are necessary to achieve accreditation?

- the program should be presented to see if it is within the university strategy and who should participate

- a detailed description of the program is written.

- the program description is evaluated internally and externally.

- the program is approved at faculty level

- the program is approved at university level

2   Which institutions and organisations need to be involved?

Faculty and University (see question 5)

3   Are they regional or national organisations?

Regional.

4   How much time must be planned on average until the accreditation has been successfully carried out?

As a university we can do the accreditation ourselves. It takes one and a half year to establish a new study program. At national level: Our accreditation is assessed approximately every 6 years.

5   Are there any procedural costs for accreditation, if so, how high are they?

No

1.2 Belgium – KUL

1   What procedural steps are necessary to achieve accreditation?

- Accreditation in Flanders is given on the level of a study programme (e.g. new bachelor's or master's programme).

- New bachelor's or master's programmes cannot be organised without authorisation, but have to be applied for through extensive multiple government procedures.

- Prior to the external procedure, an internal KU Leuven procedure has to be followed. This internal KU Leuven procedure helps delivering the building blocks for the external procedure.

- For new study programmes, the following steps have to be taken in order to be recognised by the Flemish Government (i.e. the external procedure):

    1. Macro-efficiency check organised by the CHO, who in turn requests advice from the VLUHR. The macro-efficiency of a study programme relates to the importance of the programme for society and the possible demand for the programme.

    2. Quality check by NVAO with a programme-specific review by an advisory committee. The quality check is carried out on the basis of an initial accreditation procedure (TNO) tailored to the specific conduct. Tailed specifically to KU Leuven, KU Leuven makes use of a blueprint ('blueprint+') to adequately cover all aspects of the TNO framework. Following steps are part of the TNO:

        a. Preliminary consultations (optional)

        b. Information dossier

        c. Application

        d. Verification of admissibility of the application

        e. Composition of the assessment panel

        f. Site visit

        g. Decision by NVAO (6 months after receipt of application, 8 months in the event of a relevance check)

        h. Decision by the Flemish Government (within 30 days after dispatch of the final initial accreditation decision)

    3. Recognition by the Flemish Government.

- The Higher Education Commission decides on the organisation of initial bachelor's or master's programmes taught in a language other than Dutch, and advises the Flemish Government on application files regarding an exemption on the equivalence condition.

2   Which institutions and organisations need to be involved?

- Higher Education Commission (CHO)

- Flemish Higher Education Council (VLUHR)

- Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO)

- Flemish Government

3   Are they regional or national organisations?

- CHO: regional (Flanders)

- VLUHR: regional (Flanders)

- NVAO: international (Netherlands + Flanders)

- Flemish Government: regional (Flanders)

4   How much time must be planned on average until the accreditation has been successfully carried out?

- NVAO handles the initial accreditation application within six months. Upon receipt of the draft decision by the NVAO, the institution may appeal.

5   Are there any procedural costs for accreditation, if so, how high are they?
(Please answer in bullet points)

- The rate for initial accreditation customised to own conduct (by NVAO) is EUR 11.877. It covers the costs entailed in the work performed by the panel members (remuneration, travel expenses, hotel accommodation, et cetera), which are paid by NVAO.

1.3 Germany – THOWL

1   What procedural steps are necessary to achieve accreditation?

Programme accreditations are carried out at the OWL University of Applied Sciences. The subject of programme accreditation are Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes at state or state-recognised universities in Germany. In the federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia, the law also stipulates that all degree programmes at a state university must be accredited.

The accreditation procedure is a multi-stage process based on the principle of peer review.

1) the university establishes a new degree programme
2) the higher education institution commissions an authorised accreditation agency to carry out the assessment procedure.
    a) The higher education institution prepares a self-evaluation report according to a specified template.
    b) The degree programme is assessed on the basis of the self-evaluation report by a group of experts consisting of professors, representatives of professional practice and students with a relevant professional background.
    c) An inspection of the respective university takes place in order to hold discussions with representatives of the subject and to be able to assess the facilities.
    d) Based on the self-evaluation report of the higher education institution and the information obtained during the on-site visit, the expert group prepares an expert report, which is part of an accreditation report. The accreditation report consists of two parts: The review report on the formalities and the expert report on the technical and content-related criteria.
3) On the basis of the accreditation report, the university applies to the Accreditation Council for accreditation of the respective study programme. The Accreditation Council decides on the accreditation and re-accreditation of study programmes, the university's own quality assurance systems and alternative procedures for the whole of Germany

2   Which institutions and organisations need to be involved?

Within the university, the Presidential Board, the relevant faculty, the Higher Education Development and Digitalisation Unit and the Quality Management for Teaching and Learning department must be involved in the accreditation process.

An authorised accreditation agency and the Accreditation Council must be involved in the procedure itself.

3   Are they regional or national organisations?

Both the accreditation agencies and the Accreditation Council operate at national level.

4   How much time must be planned on average until the accreditation has been successfully carried out?

The accreditation of a single new degree programme takes 12 - 18 months on average.

5   Are there any procedural costs for accreditation, if so, how high are they?

The costs for the accreditation of a single degree programme are currently around €8,500 to €9,000.

1.4 Turkey – ITU

1   What procedural steps are necessary to achieve accreditation?

Combining its 250 years of legacy and tradition with its expertise and know-how, ITU is updating the engineering education concurrently with the rapid and grand changes, transformations and developments undergoing in engineering and technology education in the last two decades. Blending its institutional expertise with the premises of the 21th century -requiring entrepreneur, innovative, creative, productive approaches and the ultimate goal of serving for a "sustainable society"- ITU has been working systematically to assure that the quality of the engineering education it offers is at the highest level and sustainable.

While providing education to the next-generation engineers capable of meeting today's and future needs and expectations, assuring the quality of the education-learning experiences we offer to our students through internationally recognized and prestigious accreditation has been among the priorities of our university. In this context, ITU is one of the leading institutes in the world with its 25 undergraduate engineering programs internationally accredited by the ABET EAC.
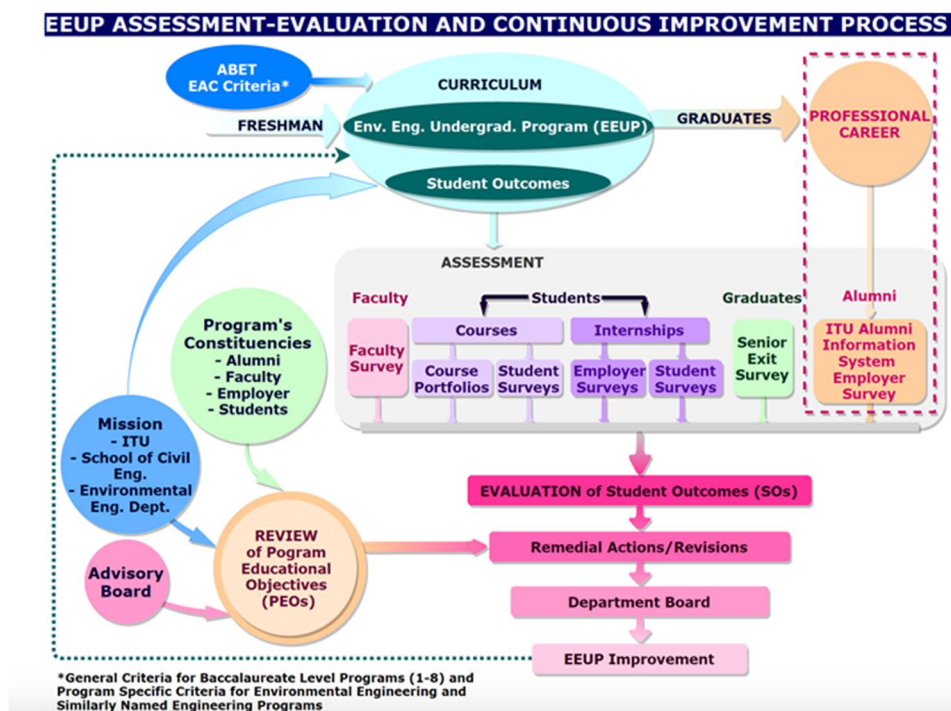

Figure 1: EEUP Assessment

2   Which institutions and organisations need to be involved?

- Faculty departments

- Department responsibles

3 Are they regional or national organisations?

- National

4 How much time must be planned on average until the accreditation has been successfully carried out?

- ABET Accreditation is taking 18 Month.

5 Are there any procedural costs for accreditation, if so, how high are they?

Accreditation costs are given detailed below:

- **Readiness Reviews**

  Fee for each program reviewed $1,100

- **Accreditation Program Reviews**

  Base fee for a program review $8,500

  Fee for each program evaluator $8,500

- **Additional Fees**

  One evaluator reviewing two programs $400

  Extra day, per program evaluator $400

  Visit to off-campus location, per location, per program evaluator $400

- **Interim Reports**

  In some cases, the results of a program review may call for an interim report.

  This does not require an additional review.

  Fee for each program reviewed $4,500

1.5 Cyprus – UCY

The accreditation process for degree programs at the University of Cyprus typically involves several procedural steps:

- Curriculum Development: The first step is to develop the curriculum for the new or updated degree program in collaboration with partner universities in the Digiwater project.
- Internal Review: The university's internal academic committees and departments review the proposed curriculum to ensure it meets the standards and requirements set by the university and relevant accrediting bodies.
- External Review: External experts, often from other universities or relevant industries, are invited to review the curriculum and provide feedback on its quality and alignment with industry standards.
- Submission of Application: The university submits an application for accreditation to the relevant accrediting body or organization.
- Site Visit: In some cases, accrediting bodies may conduct a site visit to the university to evaluate facilities, resources, and faculty qualifications.
- Accreditation Decision: The accrediting body reviews all documentation and feedback gathered during the process and makes a decision on whether to grant accreditation to the degree program.

The institutions and organizations involved in the accreditation process for the University of Cyprus may include:

- The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, and Youth: Responsible for overseeing higher education policies and accrediting bodies in Cyprus.
- Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education (CYQAA): The national agency responsible for accrediting higher education institutions and programs in Cyprus.

They are national organizations

The time required for accreditation can vary depending on factors such as the complexity of the program, the responsiveness of involved parties, and any potential revisions required. On average, the accreditation process may take anywhere from several months to a year or more to complete.

There are likely procedural costs associated with accreditation, including application fees, site visit expenses, and any costs related to curriculum development or external review. The specific costs can vary and would need to be determined by contacting the relevant accrediting bodies or agencies.