

Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions according to Article 3 of Higher Education Act, No. 63/2006, No. 1067/2006. (Draft Translation)

Chapter I In General

Article 1

In order to receive full accreditation, a higher education institution (HEI) must comply with the law on Higher Education Institutions according to regulation No. 63/2006 and any provisions therein.

Accreditation of HEIs is afforded according to an international standards and is set in place to guarantee that Icelandic Higher Education Institutions fulfil all the necessary standards of quality assurance and can withstand international comparison.

Accreditation of HEIs is limited to particular fields of study and any subdivisions therein. A HEI can only operate within accredited fields of study.

Accreditation does not obligate the government to provide any funding for any HEI.

Chapter II Awarding accreditation

Article 2

HEI can be operated by the state, as private institutions, as 'Ltd' companies or as any other recognised business corporation.

Accreditation is awarded on full compliance with article 3. No. 63/2006 law on HEIs. The application for accreditation shall include details as to the field of study and any subdivisions therein, that the HEI intends to receive accreditation for.

Applications should include the relevant documentation to comply with article 3 of the law on HEIs and must provide detailed information on the following:

a. Objectives and Roles.

The role of the HEI and any aims and objectives that it intends to fulfil must be clearly set out and in accordance with article 2 of the law on HEIs.

b. Administration and Organisation.

This shall be according to article 15 & 16 in accordance with the law on HEIs.

c. Organisation of teaching and research.

Teaching and research shall be conducted in a manner that closely follows the objectives of the law on HEIs. The HEI shall implement an appropriate protocol for all issues (i.e. academic independence of staff) in accordance with the 3rd paragraph article 2 of law on HEIs.

d. Personnel qualifications requirements.

The HEI shall be in compliance with and shall fulfil article 17 & 18 of the law for HEIs and any obligations therein.

e. Admission requirements and student rights and obligations

Regulations outlining entrance requirements shall be according to article 19 (law on HEIs). Regulations outlining the rights and obligations of students

shall be according to the procedures set out by article 20 of the law on HEIs. State run institutions must comply with the state laws of administration No. 37/1997. Regulations in other institutions (non state) shall be set out and fulfilled with a view to the aforementioned administration laws.

f. Teacher and student facilities and services.

Services and facilities provided for students and teachers must be of such standard that a HEI will be able fulfil its role and objective. Services provided for teachers and students are restricted to same conditions.

g. Internal quality system.

Description of the an internal quality system shall be in accordance with article 11& 12 of the law on HEIs.

h. Description of study according to learning outcomes.

The HEI shall publish an outline the learning outcomes of students at the completion of study, in particular field of study or subdivision therein in accordance to the national qualification framework of Iceland cf. article 5 of the law on HEIs.

i. Finances.

The HEI shall outline the financial conditions of operation whether they are according to part VIII of the law on HEIs, state funded according to other laws or privately funded. HEI finances must be arranged in a manner that guarantees the fulfilment of all financial obligations and commitments toward students, members of staff, affiliates, corporations and the state.

Article 3.

The Minister of Education, Science and Culture shall appoint a committee of three independent specialists that shall provide a review of applications for accreditation of individual fields of study and named subdivisions thereof.

Based on the application and information provided by HEI in accordance with article 2, the specialists committee shall provide the Minister of Education, Science and Culture with a review containing the results of assessment of the criteria in Art. 2(3)

(a) – (i) in addition to assessment of the following points:

- a. Academic knowledge and competence if HEI with the relevant field of study and subdivisions thereof, pertaining to the quality of teaching and research, academic facilities, dissemination of knowledge and connection to community.
- b. The support structure of the HEI for; the academic community, teachers and experts in the relevant field of study and the education and training of students.
- c. Special attention shall be paid to the strengths of the to fields of study and the subdivisions thereof, with reference to course plans, particularly in relevance to links undergraduate and graduate studies and towards other appropriate fields of study.
- d. Academic standard of the field of study and subdivision thereof, in national and international context. Regard shall be taken of i.e. national and international cooperation between HEI and intuitions.

The review of the specialist committee shall be founded on detailed and substantive grounds.

If the results of the specialist committee do not recommend accreditation, it should stipulated the criteria of art. 2 not met by the HEI or point out improvements in order to attain accreditation in a field of study and subdivisions thereof. Upon receipt of such review the Minister of Education, Science and Culture grants HEI specific time for amendments. Those amendments shall be evaluated by the relevant specialist committee and they shall report their results to the Minister of Education, Science and Culture. HEI shall be informed of the results of the application.

Article 4

The accreditation of a HEI in any particular field of study and subdivisions thereof is awarded for an indefinite period of time and the HEI will receive a specific certificate outlining the particular accreditation. On accreditation a decision on the name of the HEI in foreign languages will be made in accordance with article 9 and 3 of the HEIs act..

HEI shall apply for accreditation to the Minister of Education, Science and Culture should it wish to commence teaching or research in a field of study that earlier accreditation does not cover. The same shall apply for any unaccredited subdivisions within an accredited field of study. This shall be done in accordance with article 2 & 3, as appropriate.

Chapter III Revocation of accreditation

Article 5

Should a HEI, at any time decide to discontinue teaching or research in any particular field of study then it shall formally disclose these changes to the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture. Should teaching and research in any accredited field of study be discontinued for a period of two years or more then the accreditation will be revoked by special decree from the Minister of Education, Science and Culture, based on reports from the HEI involved.

Should the accredited HEI fail to comply with the stipulations of the law on HEIs provided for teaching and research, then the Minister of Education, Science and Culture reserves the right to revoke the accreditation for that particular field of study, either in part or in full.

The revocation of accreditation according to article 2 shall be with reference to the results of external quality assurance according to article 13 of the law on HEIs, outlining the quality assurance of teaching and research. Should the results of external quality assurance exercise, or other circumstances, show that a HEI is not fulfilling the accreditation criteria, shall the reasons as well as the areas in need of reparation be identified, so accreditation of a field of study and subdivision therein can be achieved. The Minister of Education, Science and Culture will afford the HEI an extension to make any amendments. Amendments shall be evaluated as appropriate, by the external quality assurance committee, and final decision will be announced to the HEI.

Chapter 1V

Adoption

Article 6

These regulations are stipulated in accordance with article 3, law No. 63/2006, law on HEIs, and take immediate effect.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, 7th. December, 2006.

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