



The Danish  
Accreditation Institution

## **Guide to programme accreditation**

*Local provision abroad of Danish programmes of vocationally oriented  
higher education*

February 2015

## Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
1.1 Background.....	3
2. The accreditation process.....	5
2.1 Screening by the Danish Ministry of Higher Education and Science.....	5
2.2 The applicant selects an operator and signs a contract.....	5
2.3 Application and accreditation assessment.....	5
2.4 Approval by the Danish Ministry of Higher Education and Science.....	6
3. Special conditions for accreditation of local provision of programmes abroad.....	7
4. Guidance.....	8
4.1 Completed application form.....	8
4.2 Relevant appendices for documentation of the report.....	8
4.3 One application form for each place of local provision.....	8
4.4 Closing date for applications.....	8
4.5 Submitting the application.....	9
4.6 Presentation of the local provision of a programme.....	9
5. Criteria.....	10

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

These guidelines establish the basis that applicants are to follow when applying for accreditation of local provision abroad of Danish programmes of vocationally oriented higher education. An application form is included in chapter five of the guidelines. The Danish Accreditation Institution (AI) can perform accreditation assessments of such applications, but the applicant may also choose another operator/quality agency. The operator must be a full member of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) and comply with the European standards and guidelines for quality assurance of further and higher education (ESG). Furthermore, the operator must follow the guidelines that are described in this document.

These guidelines cover all new local provisions of Danish programmes offered abroad included in Act no. 601 of 12 June 2013 on the Accreditation of Institutions of Higher Education (the Accreditation Act). The guidelines include local provision of ordinary programmes (full-time), i.e. academy profession programmes and professional bachelor programmes, as well as part-time continuing education programmes, i.e. academy profession programmes and diploma programmes.

These guidelines concern Danish higher education programmes that are provided by a Danish home institution in another host country. The applicant for approval of the transnational programme is a Danish higher education institution (the granting body), and therefore this Danish institution is responsible for the application. Accordingly, the Danish institution is responsible for collecting the required information from the host institution abroad (the operating body).

The applicant can only apply for accreditation of local provision of programmes that have already been approved in Denmark. The applicants must use an established Danish programme as the blueprint for the programme abroad.

### **Legal basis**

1. Act no. 601 of 12 June 2013 on the Accreditation of Institutions of Higher Education (the Accreditation Act)
2. Ministerial Order no. 467 of 8 May 2013 on Academy Profession Programmes and Professional Bachelor Programmes
3. Ministerial Order no. 578 of 1 June 2014 on Further Education System (part-time education)
4. Ministerial Order no. 936 of 25 August 2014 on university colleges of higher education
5. Ministerial Order no. 935 of 25 August 2014 on academies of professional higher education
6. Ministerial Order no. 745 24 June 2013 on Accreditation of Institutions of Higher Education and approval of new Higher Education Programmes

*Specifically with regard to local provision of Danish programmes abroad:*

7. Ministerial Order no. 684 of 30 June 2009 on local provision of Danish vocational further and higher education programmes abroad
8. Annex no. 4 in the Ministerial Order no. 691 of 30 June 2009 on accreditation and approval of academy profession programmes and professional bachelor programmes etc.

Legislation (in Danish) is available at [www.retsinformation.dk](http://www.retsinformation.dk) and [www.borger.dk](http://www.borger.dk) (with the exception of the Accreditation Act).

## **2. The accreditation process**

### **2.1 Screening by the Danish Ministry of Higher Education and Science**

The process begins with the applicant preparing a screening application for the Danish Ministry of Higher Education and Science. The Ministry subsequently decides whether the applicant may apply for accreditation of local provision of (a) Danish programme(s) abroad.

Only accredited local provision of programmes may be established abroad. Please refer to the Danish Ministry of Higher Education and Science for further information.

### **2.2 The applicant selects an operator and signs a contract**

The applicant decides whether the Danish Accreditation Institution or another operator is to assess the local provision of the programme abroad for accreditation. The operator must comply with the requirements described on page 3.

A contract with the operator is subsequently drawn up, and the applicant must pay for the assessment.

### **2.3 Application and accreditation assessment**

The first step of the accreditation process is for the applicant to complete the application form and submit it to the operator after prior agreement. The operator then moves forward with the accreditation assessment process, following the steps outlined below:

1. The operator checks the materials received for formal errors.
2. The operator recruits members to the accreditation panel to assess the local provision of the programme.
3. The applicant answers supplementary questions from the operator.
4. The operator formulates a draft report in accordance with the accreditation panel's assessments.
5. The operator submits the draft report to the applicant for comments.
6. The operator submits the final report with its recommendation to the Accreditation Council.
7. The Accreditation Council makes its decision. In its decision, the Council will take into account whether the operator has submitted a satisfactory accreditation assessment. The Council may also ask the operator questions about the individual criteria and compliance with these, the composition of the accreditation panel, hearing of the report with the applicant, etc. When the report is being processed by the Accreditation Council, the operator is expected to appear in person before the Council and answer any questions.

The final report is then submitted to the Accreditation Council.

#### **2.4 Approval by the Danish Ministry of Higher Education and Science**

In the final phase of the process, the decision made by the Accreditation Council is submitted to the Danish Ministry of Higher Education and Science, which then decides whether the local provision of the programme can be approved. The Ministry may, however, only approve the programme if it has been accredited.

### **3. Special conditions for accreditation of local provision of programmes abroad**

The accreditation assessment and the subsequent accreditation decision are based on the special conditions mentioned below.

First of all, accreditation of local provision of programmes does not constitute approval in relation to local regulations in the host country. Local legislation and approvals (and any accreditation) from local authorities abroad are not legally valid, but may be submitted as part of the documentation. If the local provision of the programme gets approved, the applicant is granted permission by the Danish Ministry of Higher Education and Science to establish Danish education programmes abroad, offer Danish award programmes and to use the Danish brand to market the relevant education programme.

Secondly, the accreditation must assess whether local provision of a programme meets the goals for learning outcomes of the Danish programme (as offered in Denmark). Accordingly, the local provision of the programme(s) must be in accordance with Danish legislation. Furthermore, the local provision of the programme must deliver a quality level ensuring that students can achieve the goals for learning outcomes established for the Danish programme. To achieve the goals for learning outcomes and in order to operate abroad, it may be necessary to make a number of adjustments to the original Danish programme when applying for accreditation of a programme offered abroad. Therefore the applicant may adapt an academy profession programme (full-time and part-time) and a diploma programme by up to 15 ECTS points and a professional bachelor programme by up to 30 ECTS points. As part of the accreditation, the applicant is also expected to describe local conditions that are particularly important to take into account with regard to realisation of the local provision of the programme. There may also be issues about the students' entry qualifications that require special attention in order to ensure the students have the appropriate academic level. As a rule, the student entry qualifications have to be at the same academic level as that required for Danish students attending the programme in Denmark.

Thirdly, the applicant must be able to ensure the quality of the local provision of the programme across great geographical distances. Therefore, criterion 1 (see below) addresses organisation and communication between the Danish home institution and the host institution abroad.

## 4. Guidance

Chapters 4 and 5 describe the accreditation criteria and associated requirements for documentation and reporting. The table in chapter 5 states which conditions the applicant must account for. The table also serves as an application form.

In connection with the application, the applicant is asked to submit: 1) a completed application form and 2) relevant appendices for documentation of the report.

As a general rule, the application form and appendices must be completed in English.

### 4.1 Completed application form

The white fields of the application form in chapter 5 must be completed. The application form indicates which conditions the applicant is expected to describe. Relevant appendices must be enclosed for documentation and the text in the table should be in the form of a summary and hence relatively short.

### 4.2 Relevant appendices for documentation of the report

The applicant must list the appendices enclosed in the application form. The appendices must be numbered so that precise references can be made to the underlying documentation in the report. To avoid misunderstandings or uncertainties about documentation, the applicant is asked to clearly indicate the relevant appendices and page number for each conclusion in the text included in the table. Appendices do not need to be enclosed for all criteria. When specific appendices are expected to be enclosed, this will be stated.

### 4.3 One application form for each place of local provision

If the Danish institution wishes to offer the same transnational programme at different locations, the institution must prepare *one application for each place of local provision*. The application must include sufficient information about each place of local provision of the programme (an accreditation assessment relates to the specific, academic environment where the teaching activities are to take place). An application has to be submitted from each location that has to obtain accreditation. When applying for accreditation of the same programme at different locations, much of the information provided in the individual applications may be identical, whereas in other respects the applications may differ.

### 4.4 Closing date for applications

Dates and more specific requirements regarding the application are specified by the operator after dialogue with the applicant.



#### 4.5 **Submitting the application**

The application and cover letter, which must be signed by the head of the education institution, must be uploaded through the application module at: <http://ansoegningsmodul.akkr.dk>. We recommend that you follow the instructions on the website.

Files must be uploaded as open PDF files and appendices may not be scanned versions. All together, the uploaded files may not exceed 20 MB. Applications may not exceed 30 pages in length. The number and size of appendices should be limited as much as possible and should generally not exceed 200 pages.

#### 4.6 **Presentation of the local provision of a programme**

In the electronic application module at <http://ansoegningsmodul.akkr.dk> you will be asked to provide some information on the programme and the local provision of the programme. This is necessary background information for accreditation. The application module contains more detailed information or clarification of the information you must provide. We will ask you for the following basic information:

- Name and type of programme
- The address or addresses abroad at which the programme will be offered
- The main area or central subject fields of the local provision of the programme
- The language in which the local provision of the programme will be offered
- Expected intake first year
- Programme regulations for the programme already approved in Denmark and draft programme regulations for the new local provision of the programme
- Name of contact person

## 5. Criteria

### **Criterion 1. Organisation and communication**

A clear organisational setup and effective communication channels have been established to assure the quality of programmes provided abroad.

The applicant must account for and document that

- there is clear and appropriate division of labour and responsibility between the educational institution in Denmark and the institution offering the study programme abroad,
- there are clear and appropriate communication channels between the Danish educational institution and the institution offering the study programme abroad, and
- there is an organisational setup that ensures continuous compliance with criteria 2-7.

### **Together the report and documentation must enable the accreditation panel to assess:**

- Whether the Danish educational institution lives up to its responsibility of regularly ensuring the quality of the local provision of the programme abroad.

### **The applicant must:**

- A. Further describe how the current cooperation between the Danish institution and the host institution abroad is organised and how it might be realised in the future. This includes clarifying who is responsible for the programme in Denmark and abroad. Relevant organisational charts must be enclosed. The report must also include a description of how the Danish educational institution plans to ensure the cooperation is working appropriately.
- B. Enclose written agreements between the Danish institution and the host institution abroad describing how the Danish institution in cooperation with the host institution abroad intends to regularly ensure and contribute proactively to compliance with the criteria 2-7 in the start-up phase and in the subsequent operating phase:
- 2) There are a sufficient number of relevant internships.
  - 3) The local provision of the programme adheres to the programme's goals for learning outcomes.
  - 4) The programme is based on knowledge of vocational or professional activities, development work and applied research.
  - 5) The provision of the programme is supported by a sufficiently strong academic environment.
  - 6) The physical facilities and material resources at the place of local provision are sufficient for the programme to be provided in accordance with the goals for learning outcomes.
  - 7) Systematic and continuous efforts to assure and develop the quality of the activities and results of the local provision of the programme.

C. Enclose all other relevant cooperation agreements between the Danish institution and the host institution at the place of local provision abroad (the applicant is not required to enclose agreements of a purely business or financial nature).

**Advisory remarks:**

- The statements above must particularly focus on the division of labour between the Danish institution and the host institution at the place of local provision abroad in relation to quality assurance. This also means that the applicant must further describe how knowledge about quality assurance regularly reaches the Danish institution and how the Danish institution regularly follows-up on reports from the host institution.
- There may be overlaps between the description of criteria 2-7 and the general description of the division of labour between the Danish institution and the host institution in relation to these criteria. The applicant may therefore choose to provide a thorough description of criteria 2-7 and only provide a brief description of criterion 1. However, all documentation requested under criterion 1, e.g. contracts and agreements, must always be provided.

*Write here and/or refer to the exact appendix containing the relevant information.*

## **Criterion 2. Internships**

There are a sufficient number of relevant internships.

- For full-time academy profession programmes and professional bachelor programmes, the applicant must account for and document that the institution is able to provide the required number of internships; this includes accounting for the demand for internships.

*This criterion needs only be answered in relation to full-time academy profession programmes and professional bachelor programmes.*

**Together the report and documentation must enable the accreditation panel to assess:**

- Whether the applicant can provide the requested relevant internships.

### **The applicant must:**

- A. Account for the relevant industries or types of undertaking or organisation where students are expected to obtain internship as well as the job functions the students are expected to fill at the place of internship.
- B. Account for the number of internships required in relation to expected student admission.
- C. Account for and document the necessary internships, e.g. through agreements already made and/or cooperation with the place of internship.
- D. Present a plan which renders it probable that the necessary internships will be provided in the future.

### **Advisory remarks:**

- Documentation that the institution is able to provide the necessary internships may e.g. comprise partnership agreements or other cooperation agreements about internships or networks which the applicant has established with companies or organisations.
- The applicant must present a plan which renders it probable to provide internships in the future (item D above). The plan may include description of previous efforts made by the applicant in relation to providing internships and the results of these efforts. The description must include how experience with providing internships in other geographical areas or experience from other education programmes will be used in relation to the new programme.

*Write here and/or refer to the exact appendix containing the relevant information.*

### **Criterion 3. Organisation of the programme**

The local provision of the programme adheres to the programme's goals for learning outcomes.

The applicant must account for and document that

- the organisation of the programme enables students to achieve the goals for learning outcomes established for the programme,
- the programme is organised in such a way that it is possible to complete one or more components of the programme abroad within the prescribed time of study.

### **Together the report and documentation must enable the accreditation panel to assess:**

- Whether the local provision of the programme is organised in such a way that students can achieve the goals for learning outcomes of the education programme.
- Whether the local provision of the programme is appropriately adjusted to local conditions.
- For ordinary academy profession programmes and professional bachelor programmes: whether student stays abroad are possible without prolonging the overall time of study.
- Whether admission requirements and procedures ensure that students who begin the programme have qualifications at the same level as students admitted to similar education programmes in Denmark.

### **The applicant must:**

- A. Enclose the programme regulations for the programme in Denmark and the draft programme regulations for the new local provision of the programme (as described in chapter 4). Describe any changes and adjustments in relation to the Danish education programme that forms the basis for the local provision of the programme. The description must include as a minimum:
  1. The reason for the need for local adaptation of the programme due to culture, legislation, etc. in order to achieve the goals for learning outcomes of the education programme.
  2. The adaptations of learning goals for programme components, including distribution of ECTS points between the components.
  3. The changes of the programme structure.
  4. Student rights and grievance options.
  5. Teaching language and pedagogical basis.
  6. Admission requirements for the education programme.
- B. Elaborate on, and give grounds for, the academic progression and preparation as shown in the draft programme regulations for the new local provision (item A). This includes accounting for whether the mutual weighting and prioritisation of the elements is appropriate in relation to the goals for learning outcomes. In addition, the pedagogical basis for teaching and learning must be stated, including teaching methods and work practices.
- C. For full-time academy profession programmes and professional bachelor programmes: describe and state which semesters or parts of the education programme enable study abroad without prolonging the overall time of study.
- D. Describe how the institution will support the students' possibilities for studying abroad (including Denmark, if possible).

E. Elaborate and explain admission requirements and procedures (item A.6).

**Advisory remarks:**

- The programme regulations must be based on goals and frameworks laid down for the education programme in current regulations in Denmark. However, as described in chapter 3, the applicant may adapt the local provision abroad of the programme to local conditions.
- Learning goals for the individual components (elements or modules) of the education programme must be formulated, but these do not need to be divided into knowledge, skills and competencies.
- “Studying abroad” refers to countries other than the host country in which the programme is offered. The institution may offer multiple ways of supporting students’ possibilities for studying abroad.

*Write here and/or refer to the exact appendix containing the relevant information.*

#### **Criterion 4. Knowledge base**

The programme is based on knowledge of vocational or professional activities, development work and applied research.

The applicant must account for and document that

- the programme is continuously based on new knowledge of core trends within the employment areas at which the programme aims,
- the programme is continuously based on new knowledge of relevant development work and current results from research fields that are of relevance for the programme's subject areas.

#### **Together the report and documentation must enable the accreditation panel to assess:**

- Whether the local provision of the programme is supported by a sufficient knowledge base.

#### **The applicant must:**

##### **A. Knowledge of core trends within the employment areas (item 1 in the criterion text)**

1. Account for whether the host institution at the place of local provision abroad is already carrying out activities and initiatives which contribute with knowledge about central trends from employment areas which are also relevant for the programme applied for.
2. Set up goals to ensure new knowledge of core trends within the employment areas and present a plan for realisation of these goals. The plan must include information about how knowledge is provided for the teachers, organisers, management and/or students of the local provision of the programme applied for, and how this is established in the knowledge base of the educational programme.

##### **B. Development work and applied research (item 2 in the criterion text)**

1. Account for whether the host institution at the place of local provision abroad is already carrying out activities and initiatives which contribute with knowledge about development work and applied research relevant for the local provision of the programme applied for.
2. Set up goals to ensure new knowledge about relevant development work and applied research and present a plan for realisation of these goals. The plan must include information about how knowledge is provided for the teachers, organisers, management and/or students of the local provision of the programme applied for, and how this is established in the knowledge base of the educational programme.

In addition, any partnership agreements or other cooperation agreements of relevance to the local provision of the programme and which the applicant has established with other relevant education and/or research institutions must be enclosed as an appendix.

**Advisory remarks:**

- “Employment areas” may include sectors with current and potential recipients of graduates from the local provision of the programme.
- “Central trends” refers to significant, current trends from the employment areas which students should know about in order to perform their future job functions as best as possible. This could include knowledge about using new production methods, introducing new technical equipment, and checking whether there are changes in market competitive conditions or in user fields.
- “Development work” refers to testing and development work which provides new and application-oriented knowledge that may contribute to intensifying student competencies and help students solve problems in real work settings. This should also be knowledge which is relevant with regard to the employment areas to which the local provision of the programme aims and/or end users of what is developed.
- A wide range of activities may in principle contribute with the relevant knowledge. This may be through conferences, courses and theme days, knowledge networks, knowledge centre activities, PhD courses, development projects and external presentations for students or knowledge from institutional cooperation and knowledge exchange with other institutions. The knowledge base may also be constituted by teachers studying abroad at other institutions, instructing practitioners in vocational and further training, or experts who are staying temporarily with user companies. The activities may at the same time provide knowledge about the profession and applied research.
- The activities which contribute with knowledge may be carried out by many different actors, including the place of local provision, the Danish institution, and other institutions or undertakings. The activities may also be based on collaboration. It is important that the activities generate knowledge which in one way or the other benefits the local provision of the programme. That is, this knowledge will be provided to the teachers, the organisers, management and/or students at the local provision of the programme.
- The relevant knowledge must regularly be included in the local provision of the programme. This is illustrated by showing how frequently the activities will take place, and by indicating how many hours are allocated per teacher to participate in the activities or in other ways acquire knowledge.

*Write here and/or refer to the exact appendix containing the relevant information.*



**Criterion 5. Academic environment**

The provision of the programme is supported by a sufficiently strong academic environment.

The applicant must account for and document that

- a relevant academic environment is already in place at the place of local provision in the form of related programmes, or
- a plan is already in place which renders it likely that a sufficiently strong academic environment can and will be established.

**Together the report and documentation must enable the accreditation panel to assess:**

- Whether the local provision of the programme will be supported by an adequately strong academic environment.

**The applicant must:**

- A. Describe relevant related education programmes at the place of local provision and the number of student man-years of the education programmes. This includes how many of these related programmes are in the same language as the programme.
- B. Enclose a list of teachers at the place of local provision with relevant qualifications. For each teacher, a mini-CV (or a full CV) should be enclosed, comprising name, level of education, corporate and professional competencies, teaching subjects and experience in teaching in the language of the programme. Teachers are defined as employees with teaching assignments at the place of local provision.
- C. Describe and provide reasons for that goals and plans set up for the development of the academic environment. This includes the distribution between Danish and local education programmes and teachers at the local provision abroad.

**Advisory remarks:**

- “Academic environment” is defined as the presence of relevant, related education programmes at the place of local provision, but other activities such as relevant, related programmes at other places of study of the institution and formal educational cooperation with other relevant institutions may also be able to support the academic environment.

*Write here and/or refer to the exact appendix containing the relevant information.*

**Criterion 6. Facilities and resources**

The physical facilities and material resources at the place of local provision are sufficient for the programme to be provided in accordance with the goals for learning outcomes.

The applicant must account for and document

- which facilities and resources are necessary to enable students to achieve the goals for learning outcomes (this could e.g. include a library, IT equipment, teaching rooms, equipment, materials and tools),
- that these facilities and resources are present at the place of local provision. If not, an appropriate plan for how these will be provided must be presented.

**Together the report and documentation must enable the accreditation panel to assess:**

- Whether the physical facilities and material resources at the host institution at the place of local provision are sufficient for obtaining the expected benefits of learning.

**The applicant must:**

- A. Describe which facilities and resources are significant for the education programme (e.g. library, IT equipment, lecture halls, class rooms, equipment, materials and tools).
- B. Describe and document the extent to which these facilities and resources are already available at the place of local provision (including relevant information about age, condition and scope of equipment in relation to need).
- C. Present a plan which renders it probable that the necessary facilities and resources will be provided if they are not already there.

**Advisory remarks:**

- Facilities and resources do not need to be new in all cases, but the information about age, condition and sufficiency must be used to assess whether insufficient outdated facilities and resources risk preventing students from achieving their goals for learning outcomes.
- If the physical facilities and material resources are found at different addresses because the teaching takes place at different localities, the institution will be asked to clarify the conditions and sufficiency of each location.
- The plan for how any lack of facilities and resources will be solved must indicate when this will happen.

*Write here and/or refer to the exact appendix containing the relevant information.*

**Criterion 7. Quality assurance**

Systematic and continuous efforts must be made to assure and develop the quality of the activities and results of the local provision of the programme.

The applicant must account for and document that the institution systematically carries out activities aimed at quality assurance and development, that the applicant will involve external and internal stakeholders, and that the quality of the local provision of the programme will be assured as part of this process.

**Together the report and documentation must enable the accreditation panel to assess:**

- Whether there will be systematic and continuous efforts to assure and develop the quality of the activities and results of the local provision of the programme.

**The applicant must:**

- A. Describe and document which activities the host institution abroad is carrying out with regard to quality assurance and development. This includes clarifying who is responsible for the different parts of the implementation of the quality work, how the different parts of the quality work are carried out systematically, what information on programme quality will be collected on a continuous basis, and how often it will be repeated.
- B. Explain how the internal partners are involved in the quality assurance work, including how the host institution ensures internal partners' assessment of whether the students attain the goals for learning outcomes, and how this assessment is followed up. This includes specifically clarifying student involvement: What will students be asked to assess, how frequently will they be asked to assess and how will the results from these assessments be used?
- C. Describe how external partners become involved in the quality assurance work, including how the host institution ensures assessment of goals for benefits of learning from external partners.

**Advisory remarks:**

- "Internal partners" refers to students, teachers and any other relevant employees at the institution involved in the local provision of the programme.
- "External partners" refers to users, internship advisers, external examiners and other relevant cooperation partners.
- Note particularly that focus is on the assessment and the follow-up that takes place locally at the place of local provision. This criterion will be assessed in connection with criterion 1, which clarifies how the Danish institution regularly performs quality assurance of the host institution at the local place of provision.
- As documentation for the underlying systematic quality work already established by the institution, the applicant may enclose relevant excerpts from the quality handbook of the institution or similar procedural descriptions. In addition, it is essential that the applicant describes how quality assurance work is planned to be implemented specifically for this local provision of the programme.

*Write here and/or refer to the exact appendix containing the relevant information.*