

Student Participation in Higher Education Quality Assurance Processes

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Abstract : A very important element of the education system is its evaluation procedure. Each education system should be systematically evaluated and improved. Among the criteria subject to evaluation, attention should be paid to the following: structure of the study programme, implementation of the study programme, admission to studies, verification of learning outcomes achievement by students, giving credit for individual semesters and years, and awarding diplomas, competence, experience, qualifications and the number of staff providing education, staff development, and in-service training, education infrastructure, cooperation with social and economic stakeholders on the development, conditions for and methods of improving the internationalisation of education provided as part of the degree programme, supporting learning, social, academic or professional development of students and their entry on the labour market, public access to information about the study programme and quality assurance policy. Concerning the assessment process and the individual assessment indicators, the participation of students in these processes is essential. The purpose of this paper is to analyse the rules of student participation in accreditation processes on the example of individual countries in Europe. The rules of students' participation in the work of accreditation committees and their influence on the final grade of the committee were analysed. Most of the higher education institutions follow similar rules for accreditation. The general model gives the individual institution freedom to organize its own quality assurance, as long as the system lives up to the criteria for quality and relevance laid down in the particular provisions. This point also applies to students. The regulations of the following countries were examined in the legal-comparative aspect: Poland (Polish Accreditation Committee), Denmark (The Danish Accreditation Institution), France (High Council for the Evaluation of Research and Higher Education), Germany (Agency for Quality Assurance through Accreditation of Study Programmes) and Italy (National Agency for the Evaluation of Universities and Research Institutes).

Keywords : accreditation, student, study programme, quality assurance in higher education

Conference Title : ICLIHE 2021 : International Conference on Legal Issues in Higher Education

Conference Location : Rome, Italy

Conference Dates : July 22-23, 2021