



AGREEMENT TOWARDS MUTUAL RECOGNITION OF ACCREDITATION RESULTS AND DECISIONS

Preamble

The ECA partners have over the past three years consistently built up a level of trust between the accreditation agencies. At first the trust has been based on a thorough knowledge of the structure and organisation of the different accreditation systems. After that the accreditation frameworks have been compared, the decision-making structures analysed and recommendations have been made on the composition of the panels.

The trust has been brought to expression in a code of good practice, which has been signed by all ECA members. This code will be the basis for the external evaluation of ECA members.

Mutual recognition of accreditation results cannot be based solely on the analysis of how accreditation systems and organisations work in theory. Therefore all kinds of co-operation mechanisms have been developed in order to experience the practical performance of the systems. This has resulted in bilateral accreditation procedures, comparisons between ECA members and numerous observation reports on the performance of the accreditation organisations.

Agreement

Based on the Agreement of Cooperation of the members of the European Consortium for Accreditation in higher education (ECA);

taking into account the ECA Code of Good Practice and the Principles for the Selection of Experts; acknowledging the accreditation profiles and co-operation activities of the members of ECA;

with the aim to achieve the confirmation of the ECA members that they recognise the results of each others accreditation procedures within their competences;

with the purpose to facilitate mutual recognition of accreditation decisions.

ECA members agree to regard each others accreditation tools and instruments as compatible and free of substantial differences;

ECA members agree to continue their co-operation projects, i.e. joint accreditation procedures, observation reports on accreditation procedures, and comparisons of procedures and standards of ECA members;

ECA members are convinced that these co-operation projects will enhance mutual trust and thereby help to achieve the principle goal of ECA, namely mutual recognition of accreditation results and decisions by the end of 2007.

On behalf of ECA, Rolf Heusser, Chairman
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