

Ruth Becker, Bettina Jansen-Schulz, Beate Kortendiek, Gudrun Schäfer

Gender Related Aspects of Introducing and Accrediting Bachelor and Master Programmes¹

1. The Bologna Process – A Challenge for Gender and Academic Policy

The internationalization of the higher education system and the transformation of national higher education facilities into a united European higher education realm (otherwise known as the Bologna Process) pose a particular challenge to equity politics. The central element of this development is the conversion to a Bachelor/Masters (BA/MA) diploma system. According to experience, times of upheaval are also times in which the previously neglected and ignored can be brought into play and new ideas given a chance. On the other hand though, that which was achieved with great struggle can also get lost in the radical changes. For example, historically, the number of women participating in education programmes has decreased progressively over the degree levels i.e., previously the proportion of women completing degrees has decreased from the Magister level to the doctorate level and even further to the Habil level. The question now is if this trend will be 'shifted downward' by introducing the BA/MA system, so that the tendency for women to be excluded will no longer occur at the doctorate level, but rather already at the transition between Bachelor and Master programmes. Should this occur, the marginal reconciliation of men and women participating in the higher levels of academic qualification and employment, which was achieved with great efforts, would be lost. However, there is also the question of how successfully the content of the academic teaching will be reformed and improved with the modifications. The changes mandate that Women's and Gender Studies be better embedded in academic teaching and research as a central innovation of academic methods and knowledge. In the meantime, it seems to be recognized in a number of key institutes which support research, that compared internationally, Germany still has a lot of catching up to do with regards to integrating gender aspects in academia and research. Since course planning is a highly disputable area connected to power, prestige and last but not least resources, the extent to which it is possible to alleviate this deficit in gender and academic policy by adopting tiered programmes is still open. It is thus essential to the further development of the higher education system that the Bologna Process be guided and accompanied by gender experts.

This was obviously something that the European education ministers recognized: In their "Berlin Communiqué" from 2003 they wrote that "the necessity to improve the competitiveness (...) [has] to be brought into agreement with the goal of increasing

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the significance of the social dimensions of the European higher education realm.” This concerns “strengthening the social coherence as well as **decreasing social and gender specific inequality** on national and European levels.”

The coordination office of the Women’s Research Network NRW took this declaration of intent as an opportunity to investigate the extent to which the demand for decreasing gender specific inequality (i.e., according to a Bologna Process’ gender-balanced design) has been implemented in the changing degree programmes at German universities. The goals of the study also included developing criteria for a gender-balanced course of studies and indicating possible content which, from the perspective of Women’s and Gender Studies, should be integrated into the spectrum of programmes available at German universities. Strategies previously developed for ensuring the integration of gender aspects in the development of BA/MA programmes were also to be pointed out. This research was supported by the Ministry for Innovation, Science, Research and Technology.

2. The Importance of Equality Aspects in the Accreditation Process

In introducing tiered programmes, Germany has taken particular measures to ensure the quality of study opportunities. The core of this quality assurance is a two-step accreditation procedure. In the first step, the new degree programmes are certified by independent accreditation agencies authorized by an accreditation council before being introduced. In a second step, five years later, these programmes are once again screened in a re-accreditation process.

The “Foundation for the Accreditation of Study Programmes in Germany” is responsible for the decentrally organized accreditation system’s functionality. The foundation was founded in spring 2005 and emerged from the states’ Ministry for Cultural Affairs Conference in 1999.² An initial idea of the importance of gender aspects and the significance of gender mainstreaming can be gained by looking at the make-up of the highest ranking committees in this accreditations process. As can be seen in Table 1, it presents a picture, which mirrors with unsurpassed clarity the decreasing portion of women in higher levels of the academic landscape: The foundation’s board consists of four men, in the accreditation council there are seventeen men and two women, of which one woman is a student representative. So far there is no representative for equality politics who is an expert in gender. Moreover, men also dominate the foundation’s council (with a ratio of ten to three). In the head office women form the majority – but only in terms of numbers since the director is a man; the numerical superiority of women results from that fact that there is a female secretary. Thus, on the accreditation processes’ management level, the European wide principle of gender mainstreaming which also aims to have the equal participation of women on all (decision making) level is still not established.

² Bodies of the foundation include: the foundation council with members from politics and academia as well as the accreditation council to which representatives from politics, academia and professional life as well as students and two international representatives belong.

Table 1: Composition of the Accreditation System's Management Levels

	Women	Men
Board	0	4
Head Office	3	2
Accreditations Council	2	17
Foundation Council	3	10

The situation is similar in the accreditation agencies: Women dominate the office positions and the commissions consist to a much greater degree of men. In the universities – according to the estimates provided to us by the agency representatives³ – approximately 20% of those participating in the development of the university programmes and the accreditation procedures are women. Nonetheless, our survey of female academics working in the area of Women's and Gender Studies⁴ showed that women tend to complete work in the 'background' and are as such surely involved in important decision making processes. However, as soon as the official, more representative and above all more strongly institutionalized levels are attained they do not appear.

A somewhat more optimistic picture is conveyed by our survey of equal opportunity commissioners⁵ at the universities. Here, 37% of them had participated in various ways in the accreditation procedures, nonetheless, not always in their function as an equal opportunity commissioner. According to the statements made by the women's and equity commissioners, when women are directly involved in the accreditation process, then it is usually within the context of their functions as professors, teachers, deans and workgroup leaders, but not as experts in gender aspects. For this reason, according to the officers, simply increasing the proportion of women involved in the procedures is not necessarily a guarantee that gender aspects will be taken into consideration.

The few women participating in the accreditation process – both on the side of the accrediting institutes as well as on the university side – are not alone sufficient

³ Expert interviews, based on set guidelines, were conducted with representatives from five of the six accreditation agencies as well as the director of the Accreditation Council's office.

⁴ The email survey was sent to 120 female professors who work at universities in Germany and have a focus on Women's and Gender Studies as well as a further 100 women in academia from the Women's Research Network NRW. Answers were received from 23 professors and 16 academic/research assistants.

⁵ Similarly, all of the equity officers contained within the distribution list from the The Federal Conference of Gender Equality Officers in Higher Education in Germany (BuKoF) were surveyed. Replies were received from 26% (of the 298 German universities).

indication of the low priority of gender equity aspects in the development and accreditation of BA/MA programmes. One of the characteristics of gender mainstreaming is that the integration equity goals be taken into consideration in the respective processes by all participants, but especially by the leaders – **regardless of their gender**.

In December 2005, two years after the European Education Ministers committed themselves to it, the Accreditation Council took an initial step towards this by assigning accreditation agencies the task of verifying **“the implementation of the university’s ideas for promoting gender justice in the given degree programmes”** (Accreditation Council, 2005). The second step followed two months later in February 2006 with a declaration in which the council explicitly supported the call for designing the accreditation procedures and accreditation system with an eye towards gender justice. In addition to introducing gender equity as a criterion for the evaluation, the resolution emphasized the necessity of practicing gender mainstreaming in all instances and institutions of the accreditation system in Germany. This results in efforts being made to have an adequate representation of both genders on all levels of the accreditation system.

Both could have been causes for hope, if the council had not forgotten (or consciously struck out?) the considerations related to gender aspects in the new version of the criteria given to the agencies in June 2006. The reasons for their absence is not known to us, however the fact remains that the criterion cited above is not in the new version.

Nonetheless, this does not change much for the accreditation procedure at the universities since the guidelines from December 2005 also had a decisive flaw: “The agency is to verify the university’s concept for promoting gender justice”. But what does the agency do if the university does not have a concept? It could be clearly and succinctly concluded from the answers of the surveyed agencies that the answer is – absolutely nothing. As one agency representative expressed, it only “plays a role for us in the procedure” when the university integrates gender aspects into their criteria. The agencies see themselves as providing an “external view of the quality assurance systems, for which the university itself carries the responsibility.”

The key to integrating gender aspects in the new programmes thus lies in the hands of the universities as well as with the Accreditation Council. Both of which – in implementing the resolutions of the European Education Ministers – are to provide the agencies with clearer criteria, obligating the agencies to require concepts for ensuring gender fair programmes as necessary components of the accreditation documents.

3. More or Less Gender? The Importance of Women’s and Gender Studies in the Curricula of Tiered Programmes

On the one hand, the university reforms create opportunities to integrate previously neglected content into degree programmes and thus to take into account developments in academic findings. On the other hand, the shortened course of studies in the Bachelor’s area as well as the stronger specialization in the Master’s

area contains the risk that already achieved standards regarding the integration of theories, methods and knowledge from Women's and Gender Studies could be lost i.e., with the argument that students need to 'concentrate on the core content'. No homogeneous image arises from our survey in this area, rather the following three possibilities were mentioned approximately equally often:

- The restructuring of the programmes made it possible for the first time, to officially embed gender research content in the curricula and/or establish specific 'gender studies' programmes.
- Gender studies were "rejected" as "not belonging to the immediate canon" due to the very rigid organization of studies in the course of restructuring.
- Introducing the BA/MA structure has not changed anything with regards to the anchoring of gender research. In most cases this means that content from Women's and Gender Studies was not embedded in curricular either before or after the introduction of tiered studies⁶.

The results show: The introduction of tiered programmes can lead to the integration of gender aspects in the curricula. In order for this to occur though, engaged individuals and supportive conditions are needed (see point 6). Without such conditions there is the danger that already achieved standards regarding this integration will be once again lost when introducing the BA/MA system.

4. Criteria for a Gender-Balanced University Programme

It became quite clear in our survey that outside of the circle of gender equality commissioners and female gender researchers, there are only very vague ideas about what was meant by the European Education Ministers' call to decrease gender inequality within the context of developing degree programmes. For this reason, we developed in our study an overview of criteria for a "gender-balanced" programme from our survey, from the analysis of measures in universities and above all from the evaluation of extensive literature on gender related university research.

Even if there are different ideas of what characterizes a "gender-balanced" range of courses, and/or which factors have to be taken into consideration when organizing and designing courses of studies from an equality perspective, the following aspects should remain undebated:

A programme which is organized and designed based on gender equity is equally attractive and accessible to both female and male students, and minimizes the social selectivity. It takes into consideration the different living conditions of students as well as the specific interests and ways of learning of female and male students. Advisory, counselling, support and mentor

⁶ In doing so it needs to be taken into consideration that these results refer first and foremost to the survey of researchers in Women's and Gender Studies as well as the equity officers. It thus only involves programmes in which Women's and Gender Studies is represented on the level of women in academia. In general, Women's and Gender Studies have not been integrated in the majority of programmes, either before or after the restructuring.

programmes are oriented on the specific needs of male and female students. Female and male students are equally lead to successfully completing their studies and at the same time egalitarian possibilities for transitioning into MA programmes will be ensured for male and female students. A gender-balanced course of study incorporates the specifics of gender segregated job markets into planning degree programmes and equally supports young female and male scholars. Furthermore, it integrates the theories, methods and knowledge specific to Women's and Gender Studies into the curricula.

This requires that measures be implemented in all phases of studying – from choosing a course of studies, to beginning studies, up to the methods and didactic of the studies and final examinations, right up to the transition into the work field. In the following section, we will present these measures.

Access to University Studies

In the Federal Republic of Germany, the *access to university studies* and the *choice of subject* are both very selective socially as well as highly segregated with regards to gender. The under representation of women in engineering and of men in educational sciences is especially grave. Measures for increasing the attractiveness of programmes for the under represented gender need to take into consideration three problem areas in particular:

- 1) gaining the interest of students of the under represented gender (e.g., by offering information that is targeted to specific groups and by avoiding gender stereotypes in presenting degree programmes and institutions);
- 2) designing admission procedures to be gender-balanced (e.g., by taken into consideration experiences and achievements outside of the university);
- 3) avoiding the exclusionary impact of student fees: Previous experiences indicate that due to more limited material resources, student fees have a greater impact on female students than male students.

The Possibility to Study: Compatibility of Studying, Family and Employment

In BA programmes, inappropriately high demands are frequently imposed on the students so that many programmes can in reality barely be studied. For example, attempts are often made to squeeze the content of an eight to nine semester engineering Magister programme into a six semester Bachelor concept. Work load studies are desperately required and their results have to be evaluated with regards to gender differences in order to take into account the possibly different living and studying conditions of female and male students. According to expert opinions, as a consequence of the exaggerated demands every “freedom of academia” and every possibility for “self-defined learning” is lost. Furthermore, an extremely high work load impedes or hinders obligations outside of the course of studies, for example caring for children or other persons who require looking after. The comment of a representative from one of the accreditation agencies – that due to the tiered

programmes, women had the possibility to insert a family phase following completion of a BA – can hardly be considered an advantage: It has a tendency to put women on a lower qualification level and thus strengthens the exclusion of women from academia and from leading positions in society. Moreover, it threatens to worsen standards which were only achieved with great effort.

These traditional ideas stand in contrast to a concept calling for:

- flexible day-care offers for small children near to the university,
- times, in which lectures and events take place, that also appeal to male students, and
- special rules for parents with regards to the length of studies and examinations.

Possible approaches to examination regulations for parents already exist, e.g., extended deadlines for repeating examinations.

Ensuring Successful Studies through Teaching Methods, Advising, Counselling and Mentoring

Within the theory and methodology of teaching Women's and Gender Studies a number of teaching methods have been developed for combating gender bias in the didactic concepts of gender segregated programmes. Although these have been derived especially in relation to degree programmes with a below average proportion of women, they are also applicable to others. The first step is to perceive students as individuals with different interests, (previous) experiences, living situations, learning strategies, strengths and weaknesses: Gender-balanced teaching takes into consideration these differences both in the content as well as in methods and didactics. There have also been very positive experiences with single-gender courses.

If the goal of reducing the duration of studies is achieved with the introduction of tiered programmes, the *advising and counselling* of students will become even more important in the future. In order to ensure gender-balanced supervision all those participating in it must undergo intensive further education and training. This applies to academic advisors on all levels (i.e., university, disciplinary/faculty and programme) as well as for all of the teachers who participate in the supervision of students. Establishing and evaluating a convincing *assessment and monitoring system* for observing and analyzing the success of studies as well as the drop-out rate of male and female students is also critical to academic counselling. This includes formalized *feedback systems* as well as gender differentiated analyses of labour markets relevant to the respective programmes in order to be able to specifically inform female and male students about their chances in different areas.

At a number of universities, *mentoring* has become one of the most important measures for supporting young academics – also and especially for women. Mentoring has always been one of the most important factors for a successful career, nevertheless on informal levels it has for the most part remained closed to

'outsiders' (e.g., women, those who belong to lower social classes, migrants). By developing a special mentoring programme oriented on women (or in general on the under represented gender) it may be possible to compensate for this disadvantage. In doing so the mentor as a role model takes on an important function, which is why single-gendered teams can be advantageous.

Professional Qualification, Securing Chances on the Job Market

From the perspective of equity politics, three issues are of particular interest in connection with the topic of professional qualifications and the chances for graduates in the labour market:

- the question of which jobs a BA qualifies someone for and/or for which jobs the diploma will be recognized for in the labour market;
- the question of to what degree the job market of the affected careers is horizontally and/or vertically segregated regarding gender and how this can be taken into consideration in academic advising as well as in designing curricula;
- the question of to what extent interdisciplinary diplomas are acknowledged on the labour market.

From the perspective of equity politics it is thus necessary to systematically observe the labour market – also with regards to gender differences – and to integrate the knowledge gained from this into both academic advising and curricula development. With few exceptions, up until now, this topic does not seem to have been consciously embedded in those participating in the development and accreditations process. For the sake of equal opportunities for male and female graduates on the job market, a remedy needs to be found here. Given segregated job markets, professional qualifications cannot be defined gender neutrally; instead the segregation mechanism has to be included in the professional experiences. This applies in particular to university programmes which are traditionally connotated as male.

Transitioning from a Bachelor to a Master's

Based on the opinions of experts in the accreditation agencies, the *transition from the BA to MA programmes* is an extremely critical break during which decisions about what discipline to pursue and where applicable whether or not to change universities can be planned. This time is used in the same way by both women and men. The new system provides an opportunity to facilitate a much more precise and differentiated orientation for students. Nonetheless, with regards to gender equity, the rate of transitions to the master's, doctorate and habilitation programmes are especially pertinent. Will the introduction of the tiered programmes lead to the continual decrease in the proportion of women, which we have had to register previously across all disciplines on the way from the magister level over to the doctorate and habilitation in order to be a professor, now arise at the transition to

the master's? No definite conclusions can be made from currently available data. According to the German Rector's Conference (HRK) in the 2005/2006 winter semester there were just under 203,000 students enrolled in bachelor programmes, of those 109,000 were female. The proportion of women in the bachelor area was thus 46.4%, only 2% less than the proportion of all female students (48.1%) (HRK 2006:19). Of the 46,000 students in master programmes, there were only 18,500 female students or 40% (ibidem) – an at least alarming result.

Why more men than women transfer into the MA phase is probably one of the most important touchstones of gender equity – not only for tiered programmes, but also with regards to increasing the proportion of females in academia. The reason for this is that in the future university careers will be accessible via a master's degree. In addition to promptly compiling and analyzing gender differentiated data, it is also necessary to implement measures suitable for obtaining female students who will continue their studies in master programmes. Besides the already mentioned mentoring programmes, targeted support programmes, similar to those for supporting doctorates and habilitations, as well as specific advising programmes need to be considered. In a number of disciplines setting quotas for student research assistants would probably be beneficial seeing such positions are often the start of an academic career. Since access to a university career will in future occur via a master's degree, the first hurdle is shifted even earlier chronologically. This poses the question of whether introducing tiered programmes will increase the size of the "qualification gap" between male and female graduates.

5. Integrating Women's and Gender Studies

Depending on the subject area, the integration of gender aspects in teaching and the course of studies differ according to content, intensity, and range. Whereas gender questions (should) belong to the canon within social and cultural studies because the category of gender is indispensable to analyzing social and cultural relationships, the gender issues within natural sciences and engineering are different since they are not so easily derived from the theoretical content. Nevertheless, Women's and Gender Studies have shown that considering gender aspects is also indispensable to the further development of these disciplines.

5.1 Interdisciplinary Issues

An analysis of the discipline specific content, methods and issues of Women's and Gender Studies in different subject areas⁷ shows that in all disciplines – in addition to specific questions – three concerns central to gender studies can be named. As integral components of the curriculum in every discipline these can contribute to a gender-balanced course of studies and a gender-sensitive professional qualification. These three issues are: 1) professional aspects of the subject area, 2) the criticism of

⁷ Here we are referring to the 54 discipline specific curricula recommendations for integrating Women's and Gender Studies in the programme content, which we gained within the contact of this study (see below).

discipline specific knowledge, and 3) aspects of the production and use of the discipline's research results. We strongly recommend that these aspects regarding gender research, which are expanded below, be considered "minimal standards" in the curricula when accrediting the BA/MA programmes.

Professional Aspects of the Discipline (History, Career, Job Market)

Compiling and analyzing the history of the desired career (i.e., tracing key lines of development and disciplinary traditions with regards to gender) contains historical questions such as the admission of women to specific career areas and the admission of women into universities. Furthermore, it means examining the process of academizing careers which were previously considered "female professions" as well as the "gender bias" of careers and its development.

In doing so, professions are analyzed on their individual, institutional and social levels in order to demonstrate the gendering of work and gender differentiated attributes. Sensitizing students with regards to their own gender role as well as existing stereotypes should strengthen their self-reflection about their own later professional activities and with that make visible the significance of gender in professional life. In particular, profession related communication and interaction processes as well as gender related perceptions are issues which should be explored. Professional activities and opinions should also be critically reflected with regards to gender and culture.

By addressing the history and development of the profession as well as analyzing gender relationships within the career areas, gender aspects within the faculty culture can be taken up and problematicized not only in strongly horizontally segregated degree programmes such as educational sciences or engineering, but also in vertically segregated disciplines.

Critique of Disciplinary Knowledge (Gender Bias, Biographies and Language)

Secondly, we are concerned with making gender as well as men and women visible in academia. Students should be enabled to understand the significance of the category of gender for the theoretical, research, and practical aspects of their disciplines and to reflect on gender relationships within the respective disciplines.

From the perspective of knowledge criticism, students should be encouraged to detect gender biases in their own disciplines, in that they learn to question with regards to gender who researched and published what, when, why and how. The focus is on the androcentric, on gender dichotomies or the gender sensitivity of knowledge. It is about enabling students to critically reflect on research processes and projects with an eye towards gender. Taking into consideration the work and biographies of female researchers within the respective disciplines and in particular, discovering female pioneers in academia is of utmost importance. Furthermore, including biographical dimensions and reflections into teaching and studying additionally facilitates a self-reflexive examination of one's own way as an academic.

A further important aspect is gender-balanced language, through which sensitivity and reflection about language are promoted within teaching and studying. Attention should also be paid to the practical examples used in teaching to ensure that they do not contribute to maintaining stereotypes, but instead take up modernized and resistant or unusual gender images. This approach to integrating gender-balanced language and images should also be included in teaching materials.

Aspects of Producing and Utilizing the Results of the Disciplinary Research

The third key discipline-independent approach to gender research is based on the gender sensitive perspective of processes for developing and implementing the results and products of research. Knowledge production and the effects of it on the implementation as well as the gendered learning processes should be examined. Especially in engineering, in which the idea that “the construction of a machine does not have anything to do with gender” frequently dominates, analyzing such issues can contribute to illustrating the significance of the category of gender that penetrates all social and academic areas.

If something is produced within academia, research and practice – in engineering a car is constructed, in pharmaceuticals a medicine is developed, in architecture a house is designed – gender aspects should be considered both in constructing it as well as in utilizing it. Medicines should be tested with regards to the different physiological effects on women and men, houses should contain a kitchen which is large enough to permit housework to be completed together and autos should be constructed so that they are appropriate for a variety of demands.

By analyzing the transformation of research results it is possible to evaluate and design user interfaces in relation to gender aspects. In doing so it is important to critically reflect on gender related connotations in product design and to break through gender stereotyping.

5.2 Forms of Integrating Gender Studies in the Courses Offered: Explicit, Integrative or Interdisciplinary?

In the course of re-structuring the tiered university programmes within the context of accreditation the question arises of where gender aspects can be systematically integrated into teaching and learning. Four approaches can be outlined here that are represented both in our survey and in our recommendations for the curricula:

- 1. Interdisciplinary approach: Single-gender module for various programmes.**

An interdisciplinary approach is particularly appropriate in institutions of higher education where Women's and Gender Studies were previously low-level or non-existent. It involves establishing "Interdisciplinary Gender Studies" within the institution either in the form of an interdisciplinary gender module, or by integrating special classes into a general studies programme ("Studium Generale"). In the case of an interdisciplinary gender module, this could be based around the three interdisciplinary issues

outlined above, plus an examination of the findings of Women's and Gender Studies that are relevant to all subjects.

2. **Integrative approach: Theories, methods and findings of Gender Studies as a cross-disciplinary task and an integral part of teaching and learning.** Many academics prefer an integrative approach, in which gender issues are included in existing degree courses as cross-disciplinary topics. This is a more holistic approach which helps to prevent Gender Studies being sidelined. However, for this approach to work, most (or all) lecturers have to possess the necessary skills. If only a few lecturers have these skills – as is the case almost everywhere at present – explicit approaches such as those outlined below are preferable.
3. **Individual explicit approach: Gender subject modules, gender components.** Where it is impossible to integrate gender issues into existing degree courses, we recommend setting up independent gender modules or components. Gender modules should also be introduced for areas with a high proportion of female students, such as the field of social work – indeed, in these areas, explicit gender modules can form part of the professional qualification. However, gender modules have also been developed for degree courses with a low proportion of female students, such as IT. In general, independent gender modules are recommended as special areas of study within Master's programmes; for Bachelor's programmes, we recommend the integrative approach described above.
4. **Explicit approach: Degrees in gender studies, postgraduate degrees, BA/MA degrees in gender studies, PhDs, degrees in Women's Studies, women's universities, distance-learning degrees.** The explicit approach is particularly recommended for the area of social and cultural studies. Here, MA programmes often aim to prepare students for professional practice based on equal opportunities, or include women's and gender studies as a special area of focus. At present, German institutions of higher education use a wide variety of models for their degrees in “Women's Studies” or “Gender Studies” – ranging from special, mono-educational (single sex) degrees for female students (some of them in natural sciences and engineering) to specific degrees on gender-related topics aimed at both male and female students.

6. The Integration of Gender Aspects is not a Guaranteed Success – Key Tasks and a Binding University Concept are Necessary

A great many equity commissioners and gender researchers question the ability of the divisions to self-directedly act in the sense of gender mainstreaming. According to the equity commissioners' assessment, guidelines or standards are very helpful – both those politically developed for universities as well as those outlined by the university administration for the divisions and faculties.

The University Administration is Called-On Especially

The hopes of the surveyed women in academia are directed primarily at the accreditation agencies and commissions, who are expected to incorporate equity aspects into their inspections. This however contradicts how the agencies and Accreditation Council's see themselves. If this position is maintained, the university administration takes on the key position for ensuring that gender equity aspects are considered and that Women's and Gender Studies are integrated in the new degree programmes.

Necessary Elements of a "Concept for Promoting Gender Equity in Tiered University Programmes"

Up till now, there have been no rules or guidelines as to how such a concept should look, what it should contain, how it should be structured and what resources should be connected to it. Instead, there have only been demands and recommendations from the side of equity oriented institutions as well as gender studies and/or equity politics. Despite the large range of approaches, the following central elements of such a concept can be extracted:

1. A description of criteria, which can be used to measure the universities' understanding of "gender equity".
2. An organizational concept which ensures these criteria are taken into consideration in the development of programmes in the various divisions and faculties.
3. A concept for informing, advising and further educating all of those participating on the university side in the development, accreditation and realization of programmes (gender related skills).
4. A concept for ensuring the necessary disciplinary skills (gender studies)
5. A concept for sustained quality assurance (evaluation, monitoring und controlling)
6. Statements about the temporary and permanent resources, which are made available for this.

7. Recommendations and Suggestions

The second part of the study includes:

- recommendations for university administrations, for national and state (*Länder*) politicians as well as accreditation agencies (see text in insert 1),
- recommendations for disciplinary specific content from Women's and Gender Studies for the curricula of 54 of the 80 disciplines distinguished by the BLK,

- a list of more than 200 gender experts who could collaborate on evaluation procedures for these disciplines with regards to the Gender Studies related content, and
- an overview of strategies for integrating gender aspects in higher education facilities in Germany.

Both the gender curricula as well as the list of gender experts can also be found in English in the database maintained at www.gender-curricula.eu. The database is continuously supplemented and extended.

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Recommendations and Suggestions

On the basis of our analysis, we have formulated a number of recommendations for action. These are divided into four groups:

- recommendations for universities,
- recommendations for politicians (national and regional state levels),
- recommendations for the Accreditation Council,
- recommendations for accreditation agencies.

Recommendations for Universities

- University managements should resolve to make the degree courses at their institution gender-balanced
- Specific agreements or regulations should be made with individual faculties and departments
- A system of advice, support and evaluation should be established
- An accreditation agency with expertise in gender should be chosen
- Gender specialists should be involved
- An ongoing training programme in gender skills should be created and regularly evaluated
- The place of gender research should be secured and this field further developed

- A system of evaluation, monitoring and controlling should be set up
- The necessary funding should be secured long term

Recommendations for Politicians (National and State Levels)

- The goal of gender justice should be explicitly acknowledged and implemented at all ministerial levels as a central concern of academic and higher education policy, within the framework of the Bologna Process.
- The importance of gender justice in the introduction of tiered programmes, and particularly in accreditation procedures, should be recognised and communicated in all official statements.
- The importance of Women's and Gender Studies for the advancement of science should be stressed and communicated to the relevant professional associations.
- The Accreditation Council should be influenced in the direction of paying greater heed to gender issues.
- The proposal to include a representative of university equal opportunity officers (from the BuKoF) should be supported.
- Target agreements should be reached on integrating gender issues into the development and accreditation of tiered degrees, and standards for integration established.
- These target agreements should be backed up with performance-related allocation of funding and other incentives and sanctions.
- Universities should be supported in their efforts to ensure necessary resources for the process.
- Universities should be supported with information material.

Recommendations for the Accreditation Council

- The importance of gender-balanced programmes should be recognised and communicated in all official statements.
- The principles of gender mainstreaming should be applied to the Council's committees (ensuring gender balance in the composition of all committees).
- The advice given to agencies respecting gender issues should be made more precise, and a minimum standard set for gender justice in degree programmes.
- When re-accrediting agencies, the Accreditation Council should investigate to what extent the agency has taken gender issues into account and used gender specialists in its accreditation process.

Recommendations for Accreditation Agencies

- The principles of gender mainstreaming should be applied to committees (ensuring gender balance in the composition of all committees).
- The importance of gender justice in degree courses should be explicitly recognised in all official statements and communications with professional bodies and associations.

- A gender specialist should always be included as a referee on principle.
- If no gender specialist is available, internal peer assessment should be used.
- Universities should be asked to submit their concepts for integrating gender issues into tiered programmes.
- Gender issues should be included in the key questions for universities.
- Curricula should be checked for content relating to Women's and Gender Studies.
- For process accreditation, the gender mainstreaming approach in the concept submitted by the university should be checked and carefully evaluated.
- The measures employed by universities for ensuring they have sufficient gender expertise should be checked.
- Universities' quality assurance systems should be checked for gender issues
- For re-accreditation, the gender balance of degree courses should be checked on the basis of past data, broken down by gender.
- Accreditation agencies should themselves carry out qualitative surveys of students to determine how heavy workloads are, the feasibility of combining studying with raising a family, options for part-time study, and teaching methods used. These findings should then be assessed with respect to equal opportunities.