



FIBAA

20

20

ANNUAL
REPORT

Table of Content

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Editorial | 3 |
| Structural and personnel changes within the FIBAA | 5 |
| New Managing Director: Mag.a Diane Freiberger, MBA | 5 |
| Merging of the three existing FIBAA commissions to the FIBAA Accreditation and Certification Commission (F-ACC) | 6 |
| FIBAA Activities in 2020 | 7 |
| Digital transformation in the accreditation process | 7 |
| „Excellent in Digital Education“ - Introduction of a new quality seal by FIBAA ... | 8 |
| The Situation | 8 |
| Goal of the quality seal | 9 |
| Methods of development | 9 |
| First results and concept for the content structure | 9 |
| Workshops, conference contributions and co-operations of FIBAA | 10 |
| Expert training: Webinar on system accreditation | 10 |
| Tajikistan: FIBAA at the international conference on „International Accreditation - Factor of Education Quality Improvement“ | 11 |
| Indonesia: FIBAA online workshop with about 400 participants | 11 |
| Digital Workshop: What distinguishes quality in Distance Learning? ... | 12 |
| Russia: Renewal of Memorandum of Understanding between The National Centre for Public Accreditation (NCPA), Russia and FIBAA | 12 |
| Outlook 2021 | 13 |
| FIBAA Accreditation and Certification Commissions meetings | 13 |

Editorial

With this annual report of 2020, I take the liberty of reviewing the first six months of my management. Since May 2020, I have had the privilege of taking over the management of FIBAA as successor to Prof. Dr. Fink. When I decided to do this, I of course did not know anything about the upcoming special challenges of 2020.

Not only did the management change in the middle of the year, but all of us were facing a completely new situation – a worldwide pandemic, a lockdown and an unpredictable, incalculable working world. However, business had to be continued and, in my case, taken over. It was self-evident for everyone WHAT to do, but solutions had to be found very quickly HOW to continue to tackle the tasks in order to ensure the best possible services with and for our clients.

Together with the FIBAA team, we actively faced the new situation and were able to record visible results and further development of FIBAA in 2020. Processes were adapted, new competencies and infrastructure were built and communication systems were changed.



In the following report, the most important structural changes and national, as well as international projects, with our partners will be presented. An important structural adjustment in FIBAA was the merger of the respective accreditation and certification commissions. The three existing FIBAA commissions, the FIBAA Accreditation Commission for Programs, the FIBAA Accreditation Commission for Institutional Procedures and the FIBAA Certification Commission for Continuing Education have been merged into the FIBAA Accreditation and Certification Commission (F-ACC) and entered into force on January 1st, 2021. This restructuring now provides the full commission with an effective and efficient organizational base so that future valuable work can be done within FIBAA and together with our stakeholders.

As already mentioned, the processes of the accreditation and certification procedures had to be adapted to the new situation, in order not to risk bringing the business to a

standstill. So we quickly developed the digital competencies and also the infrastructure to be able to carry out digital on-site visits, which we already started by mid-May 2020. We are going to evaluate how we can continue to use the experiences gained from these visits in the future. Initial experiences in this regard have already been presented in a publication.

As a future decisive event for the further development of FIBAA, the start of the development process for a new seal should certainly be mentioned. For this purpose, starting from the first ideas in July until the end of the year, a draft of the evaluation catalog was created and approved by the commissions. This was a significant milestone for the further phase of piloting and subsequent evaluation in 2021, so that the new product can be launched on the market. In accordance to FIBAA's understanding of quality, the new „Excellent in Digital Education“ seal is intended to give HEIs the opportunity for further organizational development. The seal can serve as an extension to institutional procedures (institutional audit, system accreditation, institutional accreditations). A department or faculty can also apply for an institutional certification for excellency in digital teaching or apply with a single course of study or continuing education course.

„Our understanding of the world influences the conditions of the existing world“ is how Carl Popper once put it in a nutshell. Systemic thinking, globalization, diversity and sustainability are the buzzwords that also challenge our education systems and universities. With this in mind, FIBAA has been dealing with the topic of digital transformation in teaching and learning, also from the perspective of quality assurance. A first workshop on this topic took place in November 2020 and offered 40 participants the opportunity to discuss this topic. Also the national and international cooperation, which is important and valuable for FIBAA, could be renewed and additionally built up. In particular, the renewal of the Memorandum of Understanding between The National Centre for Public Accreditation (NCPA), Russia and FIBAA. In the course of conferences and workshops with international partners, FIBAA's important international focus was once again emphasized.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff in the office as well as the external project managers, the commission members and stakeholders for the warm and supportive start in FIBAA and look forward to further exciting and constructive cooperation with everyone.

With kind regards

Mag.a Diane Freiberger, MBA

Structural and personnel changes within the FIBAA

In the following sections, we would like to briefly describe the main structural and personnel changes at FIBAA in 2020.

New Managing Director: Mag.a Diane Freiberger, MBA

FIBAA could attract an experienced and strong leadership personality for its management: since May 1st, 2020, Mag.a Diane Freiberger, MBA is the new Managing Director of FIBAA.

She has been working in the higher education sector for almost 20 years and has spent 10 years working in quality assurance. As Vice Rector at the University of Applied Sciences Kufstein Tirol, she was particularly responsible for the area of quality in studies and teaching and was also Head of Programme and Quality Management at the Business School.

Her academic education biography began with a master's degree at the Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich. She then taught for nine years at the Catholic Foundation Academy for Social Pedagogy, Munich. After completing an additional qualification as a PR specialist at the Bavarian Academy for Advertising and Communication in 2000, Mag.a Diane Freiberger worked in the field of marketing and public relations in the private sector for seven years. Finally, she decided to return to the higher education area, where she has been active in University Management since 2007. In 2011, Mag.a Diane Freiberger completed the Master of Business Administration (MBA) at the Carl von Ossietzky University of Oldenburg.

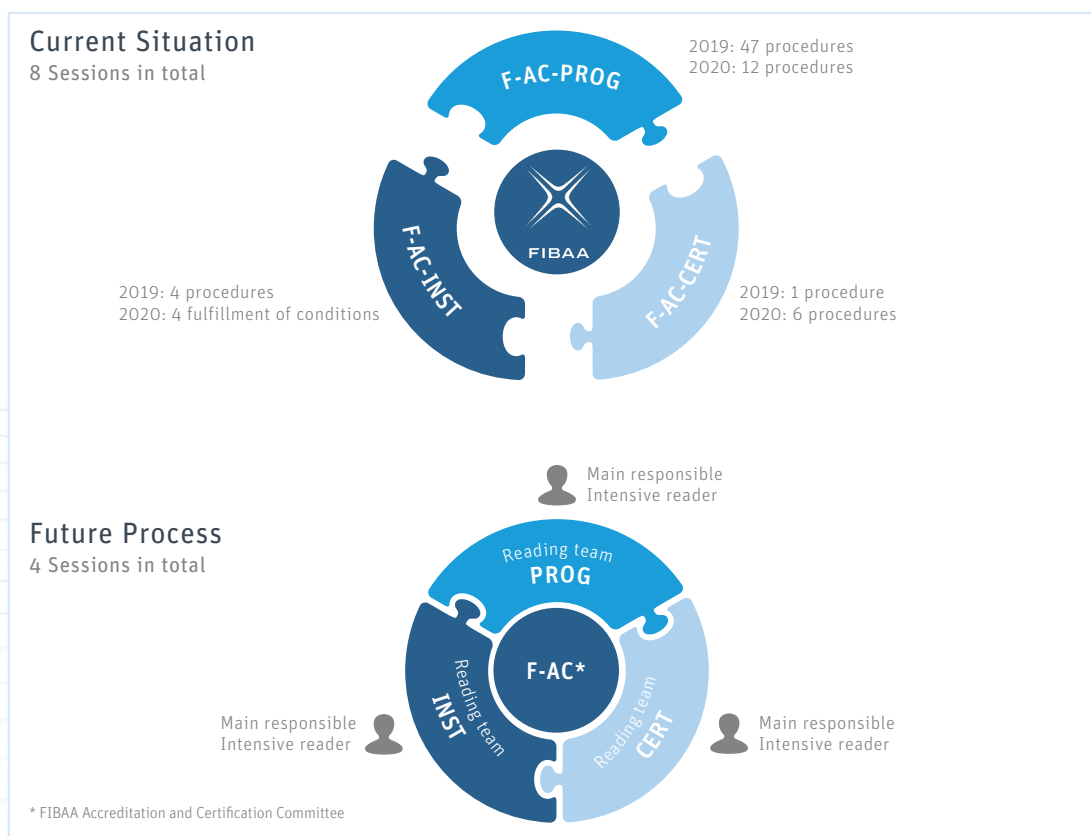
Mag.a Diane Freiberger, MBA has valuable experience in the field of accreditation from various perspectives. In the course of her professional career she worked at the Austrian quality assurance agency AQA Austria and was responsible for project management for national and international institutional evaluations, audits and programme accreditations. As a quality manager, she built up the internal process and quality management at the University of applied sciences Kufstein Tirol and subsequently, as Vice Rector, successfully led the University through external audits and accreditation of study programmes. As a scientific assessor in institutional accreditation procedures, she is also familiar with the perspective of peer review experts.

Merging of the three existing FIBAA commissions to the FIBAA Accreditation and Certification Commission (F-ACC)

At the end of 2020, the FIBAA Foundation Council passed a groundbreaking resolution: The three existing FIBAA commissions, FIBAA Accreditation Commission for Programs, FIBAA Accreditation Commission for Institutional Procedures and FIBAA Certification Commission for Continuing Education are to be merged into the FIBAA Accreditation and Certification Commission (F-ACC), going into effect on January 1st, 2021.

The background of the merger is the regulation of the accreditation system in Germany in 2018, in which decisions on the seal of the German Accreditation Council (GAC) are no longer made by the agency's own commissions but by the GAC itself. However, FIBAA still awards its own FIBAA seal for international, institutional and program accreditations, certification of continuing education. The FIBAA Accreditation and Certification Commission remains responsible for these notifications. The standards go beyond the national minimum criteria, especially with regard to internationality and employability. In addition the premium seal is awarded, if an institution is successful beyond measure.

The Foundation Council expects the restructuring to bundle all competencies that were previously represented in the individual FIBAA Commissions. Thus, the synergy effects can be achieved with more effectiveness, discussion and solutions of accreditation and certification topics.



FIBAA Activities in 2020

Despite the pandemic FIBAA was able to manage and carry out its usual activities and tasks, albeit somewhat reduced. The premise was to use the technological possibilities and to ensure the best possible workflow for the clients and to continue with further development of FIBAA.

Digital transformation in the accreditation process

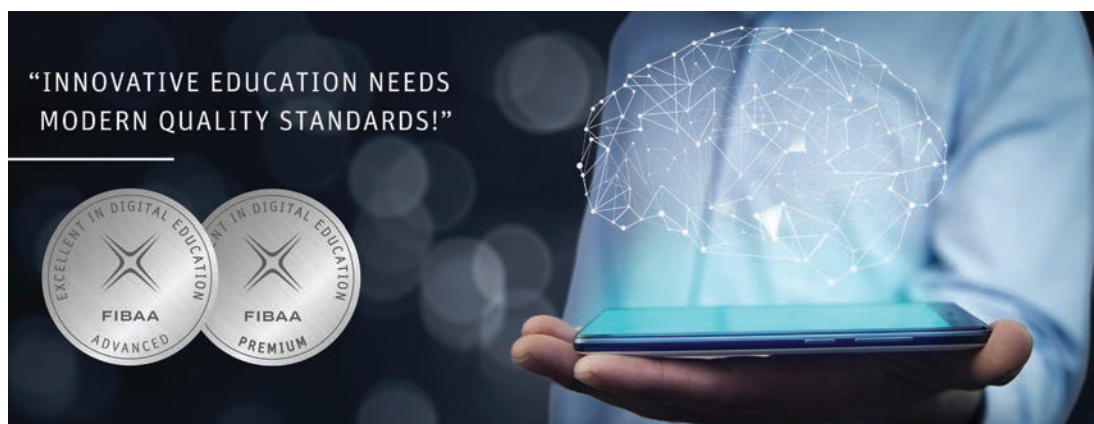
The last few months have taken us into the world of digital communication. All around the globe offices with their employees and managers were suddenly 100% connected via the internet. Companies were to connect via various communication platforms within the organization and with their clients. Day-to-day business, corporate decisions and work for the company all took place „remotely“. Of course, the accreditation agencies were also confronted with this situation and it became clear quickly, that the respective processes of the ongoing accreditation (respective certification) procedures could not suddenly come to a standstill. With regards to the accreditation system, at least in the German higher education area, the German Accreditation Council reacted quickly and determined, that HEIs would not have to fear possible accreditation gaps, but could rely on an extension of the accreditation periods (German Accreditation Council 2020).

Nevertheless FIBAA rose to the challenge and switched the on-site visits to a digital variant as early as middle of May 2020.

A challenge was posed by the procedures, especially in connection with the on-site visits to the HEIs. On-site visits are the milestone in the accreditation procedures in which it is necessary to question the explanations of the self-evaluation reports more closely and personally visit the HEIs, to enter into dialogue with the respective actors at the HEIs. Thus, 59% of the on-site visits were conducted digitally. 31% were held as usual at the universities in presence, with the necessary hygienic measures and only 10% were postponed. In summary, it can be said that a digital on-site visit is possible, but not an adequate substitute in terms of quality. Quality is considered here particularly from the perspective of communication and personal exchange.

| | On site in presence | On site digital | Postponed |
|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| PROG national | 8 | 24 | |
| PROG international | 2 | 8 | 5 were moved to 2021 |
| INST national | 4 | 2 | |
| INST international | 2 | 1 | 1 was moved to 2021 |
| CERT national | 3 | 0 | |
| CERT international | 0 | 0 | |
| Summary | 19 | 35 | 6 |

„Excellent in Digital Education“ Introduction of a new quality seal by FIBAA



The Situation

„You have to face a crisis before it hits you“ – According to the principle many universities reacted in the same way and quickly changed their teaching methods during the pandemic.

The order of the day was to switch to digital teaching. Many universities were able to establish a pool of various digital teaching formats, but it was not a routine. A few months later, the results were mixed:

„In general, more than 60% of students rated the transition to distance or online learning as good (17% as very good, 44% as rather good); business students, for example, were even more positive about the transition (75% very good or rather good). In general, the praise of students at public universities and universities of education is more moderate than at universities of applied sciences and private universities. The fact that at least one in three students (33%) rated the changeover process as rather or very bad indicates that the changeover still has room for improvement in the area; law students were particularly skeptical about the changeover process (60% rather or very bad).“

(https://www.bmbwf.gv.at/Themen/HS-Uni/Aktuelles/corona/corona_online-befragung_studierende.html)

„For the digitization of teaching in Germany, TU9 President Wolfram Ressel sees the crisis as „the opportunity par excellence - but we have to take advantage of it“. After all, according to the university barometer, almost 90 percent of universities feel (rather) well prepared for the digital start of the summer semester. However, there is still a lack of investment for sustainable digitization, especially in IT infrastructure, which is why HRK President Alt is once again calling for a Digital Pact for Higher Education.“

(<https://hochschulforumdigitalisierung.de/de/news/hfdbriefing-052020>)

The future task is to use the opportunities presented by the imposed situation to further develop the digital transformation at HEIs. This is where the FIBAA seal for quality assurance

and further development of digital teaching comes in. In consultation with the various stakeholders, it was possible to agree on the designation „Excellent in Digital Education“.

Goal of the quality seal

Quality assurance has many perspectives. Which perspective is taken, is usually decided by the viewer and their individual perspective. Often the vocabulary „quality“ is used in a very inflationary way, without a clear definition of the term in advance. Also the view of a seal to online teaching in connection with the „quality“ of these teachings takes different perspectives. On the one hand, one substantive goal of the seal is, to take into account the aforementioned different perspectives of online teaching, or to develop standards. Another goal is to give HEIs the opportunity for organizational development by dividing the seal into different „quality categories“. In line with the previous FIBAA seals, there will also be different levels of fulfillment for the individual standards.

Methods of development

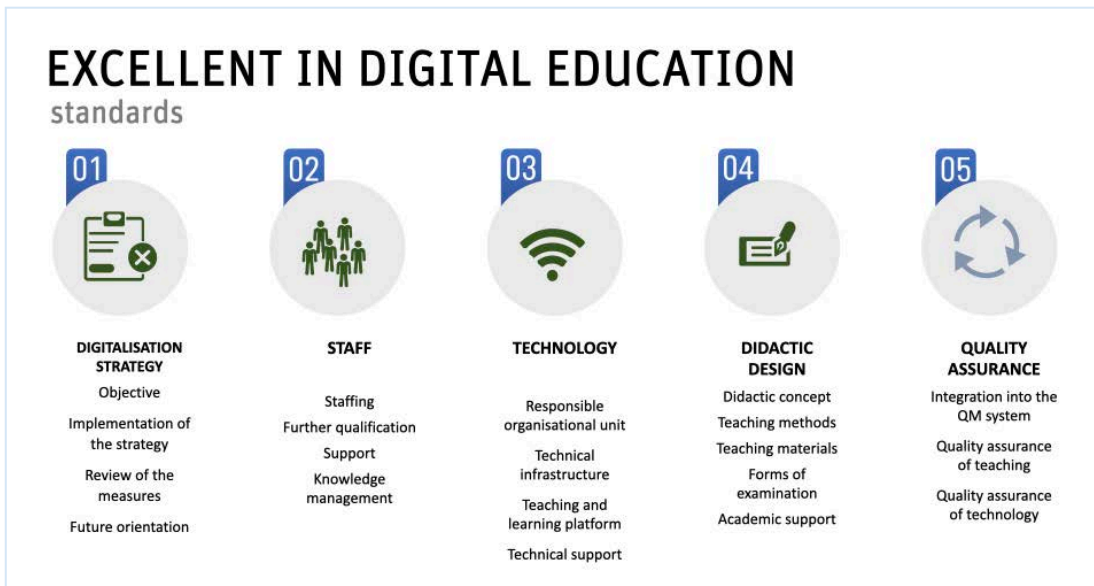
The content of the seal is based, among other things, on the „Occational Paper 26“ of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) on the topic of „Considerations for quality assurance of e-learning provision“ and information from the portal „Hochschulforum Digitalisierung“. Development input was obtained on the one hand from external experts from university management, in particular members of the FIBAA committees, and on the other hand from the expertise of the FIBAA office. In addition, pilot universities in Germany, Austria and Switzerland were acquired, which agreed to carry out the evaluation procedure in a first phase. Subsequently, the pilot phase will be evaluated and both the evaluation catalog and the procedure will be adapted accordingly. The draft of the evaluation catalog has already been evaluated and further developed with the pilot universities in an initial feedback round.

First results and concept for the content structure

The method described above led to the definition of the standards and an evaluation catalog was developed. In a first step, it was important to illustrate the different perspectives that play a role in digital teaching and learning. Here it was important to illustrate the different roles as well as processes within the digital teaching and learning environment. There were five standards identified:

- Strategy for the digitization of the teaching-learning environment
- Personnel
- Technology
- Didactic design
- Quality assurance

Each of these was based on four to five indicators. The evaluation catalog is intended to be viable for institutional procedures as well as for „digital education“ in the context of study programs or certificate courses. The pilot procedures for this have already begun, and further evaluation will follow once these have been completed.



Workshops, conference contributions and co-operations of FIBAA

In order to continuously train former and new evaluators alike, FIBAA holds workshops or webinars twice a year on current as well as new topics of FIBAA’s accreditation procedures.

Expert training: Webinar on system accreditation



In February and March 2020 FIBAA started to train its experts online and has held a webinar on system accreditation procedures according to the requirements of the Accreditation Council.

The online event was aimed at experts who work for FIBAA within the scope of system accreditation procedures.

Ms. Estefanía Guzmán (Division Manager for Institutional Procedures in the German-speaking area) informed the participants about the legal basis of the procedure and addressed in particular the Interstate Agreement on Accreditation, the Specimen Law

Regulation and the country-specific regulations. She also explained the procedure and highlighted individual relevant evaluation criteria. Dr. Tino Shahin (Division Manager for Expert Management) informed the participants about the formal requirements of the expert activity as well as the composition of the expert committees in accordance to the guidelines of the German Rectors' Conference. The webinar chat function enabled participants to ask questions and discuss among themselves.

The webinar was met with a good response and provided an interactive platform for the exchange between FIBAA and experts from science and practice. A planned third Webinar in June 2020 had to be postponed.



Tajikistan: FIBAA at the international conference on „International Accreditation - Factor of Education Quality Improvement“

In September 2020, FIBAA managing director Mag.a Diane Freiberger, MBA and Viktoria Tischanski, FIBAA division manager for international procedures, accepted the invitation from the Tajik State University of Law, Business and Politics, for the online conference “International Accreditation - Factor of Education Quality Improvement“ and held a lecture on „International Accreditation in Central Asia“. FIBAA has been particularly active in the Republic of Kazakhstan for over eight years and is officially recognized there by the Ministry of Education and Science. The conference offered a good opportunity to exchange ideas with representatives of universities, public authorities and accreditation agencies about quality assurance in Central Asia and to discuss the advantages of European accreditation practice in Central Asia.

Indonesia: FIBAA online workshop with about 400 participants

On September 21th, 2020, FIBAA, in cooperation with Malikal Zentrum Institute, held an online workshop on the subject of European accreditation practice, which was led by Dr. Meinarni Susilowati, representative of the National Accreditation Agency of Indonesia (BAN-PT). Around 400 interested participants from 60 Indonesian universities took part. Mag.a Diane Freiberger, MBA and Viktoria Tischanski, FIBAA division manager for international procedures, reported on the European accreditation practice and its advantages. The lively exchange with the participants enabled an interesting insight into the Indonesian university landscape and its quality assurance.

Digital Workshop: What distinguishes quality in Distance Learning?

On November 5th, 2020, FIBAA held its first fully digital workshop with almost 40 participants. On the subject of „What distinguishes the quality in distance learning?“, besides Dr. Tino Shahin, FIBAA project manager and consultant for the Consult area, two external speakers could be won: Professor Dr. Ulf-Daniel Ehlers, professor at the Duale Hochschule Baden-Württemberg in Karlsruhe for educational management and lifelong learning and representative for lifelong learning at DHBW and Antonia Lütgens, project manager at the European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD), for whom she has been giving online courses since 2016 and certified in the field of management training. She has also been an external project manager at FIBAA since 2020.

In his lecture, Dr. Shahin drew an intermediate summary of the digital upheaval in higher education from the point of view of an accreditation agency, Professor Ehlers explained in his lecture how the quality in distance and online learning can be measured and evaluated, both from a research and a practical perspective.

After the lunch break, the participants had the opportunity to exchange ideas in smaller groups in a virtual network space. Here they were able to discuss key questions about their own experiences and network with one another, which offers added value for participation in every face-to-face event. Then Ms. Lütgens presented the criteria of the Online Course Certification System EOCCS as an example to illustrate what needs to be considered in online educational formats.

Finally, there was a panel discussion with the speakers, FIBAA managing director, Mag.a Diane Freiberger, MBA and the head of the FIBAA program accreditation department, Mrs. Elisabeth Rosenthal. Questions about the topicality and importance of the digital transformation of teaching and learning were discussed from different perspectives.

Russia: Renewal of Memorandum of Understanding between The National Centre for Public Accreditation (NCPA), Russia and FIBAA

NCPA is an autonomous nonprofit organization established in 2009 upon the initiative of the Guild of Experts in Higher Education and other legal entities to organize and carry out accreditation of higher education institutions. NCPA's mission in the Russian system of quality assurance is to form and promote quality culture in higher education through identification, evaluation, and accreditation of the best educational programmes in accordance with the legislation of the Russian Federation and the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).

Having similar missions and institutional objectives in the advancement of quality assurance in higher education, NCPA and FIBAA now wish to continue their collaboration as equal partners for five more years, for the purpose of maintaining cooperative and collaborative mechanisms for the mutual benefits of both parties by measurements like exchange of information and expertise as appropriate and sharing best practice.

Outlook 2021

FIBAA Accreditation and Certification Comissions meetings



February 2021

First constituent meeting of the new FIBAA Accreditation and Certification Committee (F-ACC) and election of the managing board. This meeting will take place online as a protection measurement for the board members and due to the ongoing COVID19 travelling and assembly restrictions.

March 2021 Workshop Universitas Hasanuddin, Indonesia

European Accreditation with FIBAA: Guidelines, Procedural Steps and Benefits Speaker: Ms. Viktoria Tischanski, Division Manager for International Procedures. The workshop serves as an introduction to the European accreditation system. First of all the background of FIBAA, its international accreditation and the methodology and approach will be presented. It will be underlined that FIBAA follows international standards and is particularly committed to the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG). Then the participants will be learning the procedural steps of a FIBAA accreditation. Finally, the advantages that a FIBAA accreditation can bring to the university are presented.

March, What distinguishes quality in Distance Learning?

Speakers: Prof. Dr. Ulf-Daniel Ehlers, Ms Antonia Lütgens, M.A., Ms Viktoria Tischanski, M.Sc.

June 2021 Expert Trainings

Autumn 2021 Evaluation Report of the Pilot procedures to the new seal

Imprint

Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation (FIBAA)



FIBAA

FIBAA Head Office
Berliner Freiheit 20-24
53111 Bonn
Germany

Phone: +49 228 – 280 356 0
Fax: +49 228 – 280 356 20
E-Mail: info@fibaa.org
Internet: www.fibaa.org

Copyright © 2021 by FIBAA
Editors: Mag.a Diane Freiberger, MBA with assistance by Sabine Bals, M.A. &
Christian Bleibaum, M.A.

Design & Layout: Sandra Barwitzki

All rights reserved. No part of this annual report may be reproduced, in any form or by any means, without permission in writing from the editors.