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of the swiss universities



Annual Report 2004

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Foreword

In its third year of existence, the OAQ continued to expand its operational activities and intensify collaboration with its national and international partners. In 2004 the OAQ carried out a total of 26 quality evaluations involving more than 50 independent international experts, whom the OAQ was able to recruit thanks to its extensive collaboration with other European quality evaluation agencies.

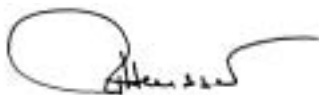
The generally positive results of evaluations focusing on the internal quality assurance systems operated by the Swiss universities are of particular relevance. These systems must be efficient as a prerequisite for the universities' teaching and research performance to reach the high standards required. The results of the quality evaluations were discussed in detail with the respective universities; they form the basis for the quality assurance guidelines for Swiss universities which will be drafted in the future.

In 2004 the first accreditation certificates with quality labels were issued. Accreditation decisions provide a basis for comparing courses of study offered in Europe and give students and the labour market important guidance. Practically all European countries now have academic accreditation systems, and it is to be hoped that these quality evaluations will become an established part of the Swiss university landscape very soon in the interests of maintaining Switzerland's academic standing.

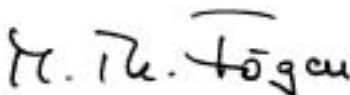
The quality evaluations carried out so far met with a positive response from the experts involved and from the universities. This is of major importance for the continued acceptance of the OAQ. The organization will continue to intensify its partnership and collaboration with the universities in the coming years.

The OAQ and its procedures enjoy a good reputation outside Switzerland, too. Its international achievements received particular recognition in December 2004, when it took over the Presidency of the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA). This role enables the OAQ to follow European developments in the implementation of the Bologna Declaration at first hand and, to a certain extent, to shape them.

The OAQ is confident that its work is advancing the integration of Switzerland into the European higher education area and strengthening the position of Switzerland as a base for tertiary education. We would like to extend our sincerest thanks to our partners and to everyone who has supported the OAQ in the past year.



Rolf Heusser, MD, MPH
Director of the Center of Accreditation and Quality Assurance
of the Swiss Universities (OAQ)



Prof. Marie Theres Fögen
President of the Scientific Advisory Board

1 The OAQ's activities in 2004

1.1 OAQ Office

The OAQ Office was able to exploit its operative potential to the full for the first time in the year under review. A total of 26 quality evaluations were carried out, including ten audits, four summary quality assessments, seven accreditation procedures and five preliminary evaluations of private institutions which had submitted an application for accreditation. The audits examined the quality assurance systems of all ten public cantonal universities. The results were discussed with the quality assurance managers of all these universities in the newly established Swiss University Quality Network. The meetings between the OAQ and the universities' quality assurance managers were consistently constructive; there was an exchange on the subject of best practices and initial steps were taken towards establishing guidelines for quality assurance systems at Swiss universities.

In addition to the above-mentioned quality evaluations, which were carried out on behalf of the Swiss University Conference (CUS) and the State Secretariat for Education and Research (SER), the OAQ began accrediting all 44 continuing medical education programs in human medicine offered in Switzerland at the request of the Swiss Federal Office of Public Health (SFOPH) and the Swiss Medical Association (FMH). These evaluations will be extended to cover dental medicine as well. The OAQ also expressed its willingness to carry out accreditation of universities of applied sciences and other institutions in the tertiary education system in Switzerland.

The OAQ's national profile was raised by a large number of bilateral meetings, by involvement in national commissions, and by two conferences organized by the OAQ. An accreditation conference was held in late April in Bern in collaboration with the Swiss Academy of Humanities and Social Sciences. The international workshop of the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA) took place in Zurich in December 2004. The OAQ carried out a great deal of preliminary work specifically for the ECA network in 2004. This included the production of a position paper on the role of accreditation in the future European higher education area and the development of a code of good practice establishing binding standards for accreditation agencies in Europe. Both papers were approved by all the ECA's member organizations at the workshop in Zurich and sent to the Bologna Follow-up Group and the education ministers of the countries which are members of the ECA. At national level, these position papers will contribute to discussions surrounding a future accreditation policy for higher education.

The OAQ is also an active member of other European quality assurance associations. In 2004 the Joint Quality Initiative (JQI) completed the Dublin descriptors by formulating generic qualification profiles for doctoral qualifications and "short cycles". Since the generic quality descriptors are also an integral part of a European Qualification Framework, this work is also relevant for universities in Switzerland.

1.2 Director and academic staff

Now that the initial phase of establishing the OAQ has been completed and the consolidation phase has begun, the Director took on a greater number of strategic and public-relations tasks and assisted the academic staff (5.4 positions) with their work. The staff were involved in planning, implementing and evaluating all the quality assessments carried out by the organization. The tasks to which the academic staff are allocated were adjusted slightly in the light of experience to date and developments in Europe during 2004. The areas handled by these individuals cover both international questions (e.g. GATS treaties, implementation of the Bologna Declaration, international recognition of diplomas) and national aspects (e.g. the university landscape in 2008, quality assurance systems at Swiss universities, quality evaluations in the medical and psychological professions, a National Qualification Framework).

The Director and the academic staff at the OAQ participated in around 180 discussions, meetings and presentations held in Switzerland. These discussions were used to exchange information and experience with the institutions, organizations and individuals active in Swiss education (CUS, CRUS, SER, federal offices, EDK, ETH Board, student organizations, representatives of associations, universities of applied sciences, colleges of further education and universities, industry, the medical professions, quality assurance agencies in other countries, etc.).

The OAQ was involved in numerous commissions during 2004 and represented at some 30 meetings. In Switzerland the OAQ is a member of the Swiss Commission of Universities of Applied Sciences, the Swiss University Quality Network, the Bologna project management group set up by the CRUS, the quality assurance working group of the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (seco) and the State Secretariat for Education and Research (SER), and quality assurance commissions dealing with medicine. On an international level, the OAQ holds the Presidency of the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA) and is involved in several of its working groups; it has also initiated a number of trilateral and bilateral accreditation cooperations. The Director of the OAQ also sits on the Scientific Advisory Board of a German accreditation agency (AHPGS) and on the Project Q advisory board of the German Rectors' Conference. And finally, the OAQ participates in a joint expert group of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Federation for Medical Education (WFME) .

The Director of the OAQ and the academic staff took part in various international meetings and conferences focusing on quality assurance and accreditation in the year under review. The work done by the OAQ featured in presentations given at five international meetings (in Germany, England, Norway and Spain) and eleven national meetings.

Annick Weizmann, a member of the academic staff, left the OAQ after three years to take on new responsibilities elsewhere. The OAQ would like to take this opportunity to thank Ms. Weizmann again for her great contribution to setting up the organization. We would also like to welcome a new member to the team: Ms. Ameli Kruse is a specialist in anaesthesiology and studied in Freiburg im Breisgau and Berlin. Working on a temporary contract, she is responsible for the project to develop accreditation tools for continuing university education for the medical professions under the Law on Medical Professions.

1.3 Secretariat at the OAQ Office

Two employees in the secretariat support the Director and the academic staff. They deal with correspondence, handle organizational tasks for the Director, and are responsible for managing the agenda and bookkeeping. The secretariat plays an important role in the organization and administration of quality evaluations (travel arrangements for external experts, contracts, billing, etc.). During the year under review, the secretariat organized two international accreditation workshops with the assistance of the academic staff.

In addition, the staff in the secretariat maintain a database which contained some 2,000 addresses at the end of 2004. All the internal processes at the OAQ benefit from the expertise and dedication of these members of staff.

1.4 Scientific Advisory Board

The Scientific Advisory Board and the OAQ Office held four working meetings during the year under review at which the final reports on the new quality audits at the ten cantonal universities and related questions (publication policy, production of guidelines for quality assurance systems at universities, etc.) were discussed. Considerable time was also spent on applications for accreditation from private universities. This category of quality evaluation, in particular, raises a number of questions which need to be addressed in the future (e.g. criteria for the status of a university, status of an accredited private institution, publication of negative evaluation results). In addition to these activity-related questions, the Scientific Advisory Board also commented on questions relating to strategy and internal quality management at the OAQ. The President of the Scientific Advisory Board, Marie Theres Fögen, and the Director of the OAQ, Rolf Heusser, held a special meeting with representatives of the CRUS to discuss the current status of quality assurance in Europe and the audits carried out at the Swiss universities to evaluate their internal quality assurance systems. The OAQ Office also consulted the Scientific Advisory Board between meetings on specific matters such as the composition of expert panels for certain procedures.

1.5 Pool of experts

The OAQ carries out all its evaluation procedures in conjunction with independent experts and evaluators. They play a vital role in underpinning the informative value of the quality evaluations and thus the credibility of the OAQ. The experts are selected with tremendous care by the OAQ using a list of formal criteria. Central importance is attached to the experts' independence, expertise in the field being evaluated and prior experience of quality assurance. According to the guidelines, the majority of the members of a team of experts involved in a quality evaluation must come from abroad. This rule has proved to be exceptionally useful. The experts are recruited through the European quality assurance networks of which the OAQ is a member.

Around 60 experts were involved in the 26 quality evaluations carried out in 2004, and another 40 took part in accreditations related to medicine. The list of all the experts working on behalf of the OAQ is appended to this Annual Report.

2 Quality assurance

The declaration drawn up in Berlin by the European ministers of education on 19 September 2003 emphasizes the status of quality in higher education as the driving force behind the creation of the European higher education area. The ministers underlined the fact that, according to the principle of institutional autonomy, the primary responsibility for quality assurance in university education must lie with the universities themselves, but that the universities are also accountable to the state and to society. Accordingly, it is the task of the universities to adopt suitable measures to ensure that their teaching and research performance is of a high quality, and it is the task of the state to examine whether this is in fact the case. In Switzerland this external quality assurance is ensured in two ways. Firstly, the OAQ has been given a mandate to monitor the internal quality assurance measures adopted by the Swiss universities every four years. As stated in the Federal Law on Financial Aid to Universities, it is compulsory for all cantonal universities to undergo a quality evaluation and it is a condition of these institutions receiving financial support from the federal government. Secondly, an accreditation system is available for evaluating the quality of individual products marketed by the universities (e.g. programs or subject areas); this system is described in more detail in chapter 3.

2.1 Evaluation of the universities' quality assurance systems (quality audits)

To date there has been no independent inventory or evaluation of the quality assurance measures adopted by the universities in Switzerland. In 2003 the OAQ produced a concept for quality evaluations based on an audit procedure at the behest of the State Secretariat for Education and Research (SER). Once this concept had been approved by the SER, quality audits were started on 1 July 2003 and continued until May 2004. The audit process comprised a self-evaluation by the university using guidelines issued by the OAQ and an external evaluation carried out during an on-site visit by a team of independent international experts. A total of 23 people with experience in international quality assurance and management helped to audit ten universities. The on-site visits took place in January and February 2004 in an open and constructive atmosphere. The universities had to demonstrate that they had installed effective and efficient systems for assuring the quality of teaching and research and that these measures also bring about an improvement in quality.

The results of the audits showed that there was some potential for improvement, but it was clear that a large number of important modules required for a good quality assurance system are already in place. The evident great commitment to quality assurance and quality development and the satisfaction expressed by many students about the quality of teaching were both very encouraging factors. The experts recommended that the universities should make quality assurance a more integral part of their overall strategies, that study programs and curricula should be evaluated systematically, and that the results of evaluations and other quality assurance activities should be used to improve the quality of teaching and research in the long term. The results of the ten quality audits were summarized by the OAQ into a single report and can be obtained from the OAQ website.

In 2005 the OAQ will use the results of these quality audits and the latest international developments to draw up guidelines for quality assurance at the Swiss universities in close collaboration with the universities, their committees and the CUS. The preliminary groundwork was started in 2004 (see also chapter 2.3). In producing guidelines for quality assurance at universities the OAQ will be fulfilling an important legal mandate: Article 7 of the Federal Law on Financial Aid to Universities requires the OAQ, at the behest of the CUS, to define the quality assurance requirements and to check regularly whether the universities comply with them.

2.2 Evaluations carried out as part of the qualification procedure for subsidies under the Federal Law on Financial Aid to Universities (UFG)

The federal government wishes the OAQ to carry out detailed evaluations of institutions applying for financial aid from the federal government for the first time and of those which have been granted provisional recognition as academic institutions. The same quality standards and tools will be used as for full accreditation procedures. The OAQ carried out two evaluations of this kind with positive outcomes in early 2004:

- Graduate Institute of Development Studies, Geneva
- Swiss Distance Learning Foundation, Brig

Two more evaluations were started during 2004 at the following institutions: the Centre for Continuing Training of Teachers in Lucerne and the University of Lucerne. In all cases on-site visits were carried out in December 2004 on the basis of the institutions' self-evaluation reports. The final results are expected in March 2005.

2.3 The Swiss University Quality Network

This national network was set up in the summer of 2003 on the initiative of the OAQ and brings together two representatives from each of Switzerland's universities (the quality officer and a representative of the Rector's Office in each case). The Rectors' Conference of the Swiss Universities (CRUS) is also represented in this network which is managed by the OAQ. The network met twice during 2004, and subgroups held interim meetings. Meetings of the Swiss University Quality Network always begin with an exchange of opinions on the current situation of quality assurance. The main focus of the meetings in 2004 was the presentation and discussion of the results from the quality audits held at the public cantonal universities (see chapter 2.1). The questions raised by the teams of experts were discussed, such as the publication and implementation of the results of evaluations carried out internally by the universities, and best practices in quality assurance and quality evaluation. Specifically, the quality assurance measures implemented by the Faculty of Medicine at Geneva University and by the Faculty of Law at Lucerne University were discussed. Another topic was the intended publication of the results of quality audits by the OAQ. And finally, the meetings provided an opportunity to gain an overview of current quality assurance developments in Europe.

2.4 Guidelines for quality assurance at the Swiss universities

The OAQ received a mandate from the CUS, based on the current legislation, to develop minimum standards for quality assurance at the Swiss universities. The OAQ is basing this work on the results of the quality audits carried out at the ten cantonal universities and on international regulations and experience. The task of drafting the guidelines was started in 2004 as part of the activities of the Swiss University Quality Network (see chapter 2.1). The quality assurance delegation of the CRUS is also being consulted on this matter. The guidelines foresee a list of about ten quality standards which describe the requirements that a good quality assurance system in the university context must fulfil. The standards will be operationalized in explanatory texts. Fundamental preliminary work will be done by a subgroup of the Swiss University Quality Network. The results will be compared with the work done by other European partners in a European quality audit working group. The guidelines for quality assurance at Swiss universities are expected to be ready for submission to the CUS for approval in the summer of 2005.

2.5 The National Qualification Framework

As part of the Bologna reform, the systematization of quality assurance throughout Europe, a number of European countries have established a framework for qualifications in higher education (known as National Qualification Frameworks). The conference of European ministers of education held in September 2003 in Berlin called on all the countries which signed the Bologna Declaration to take this step. The National Qualification Frameworks are being developed on the basis of European specifications (work on a European Qualification Framework done by the Bologna Follow-up Group).

In October 2004 an attempt to develop a common basis for the definition, objective and scope of a National Qualification Framework was undertaken at a meeting of the SER, the CRUS and the OAQ. All parties welcomed the creation of a framework for educational qualifications awarded in Switzerland. This task ultimately needs to be tackled at all levels of education. Now is thought to be a favourable and appropriate time for starting this work at university level. The main objective is greater transparency and the facilitation of international recognition of qualifications and diplomas awarded by the Swiss universities.

The National Qualification Framework for Switzerland can draw on existing elements (diploma supplement, ECTS, learning outcomes, generic qualification descriptors). In particular, the task will be to link these separate elements. Ideally the framework should cover all types of tertiary education institutions operating in Switzerland, and against this background wide-ranging support for the project must be achieved. The first formal exploratory discussions on a National Qualification Framework for higher education in Switzerland are scheduled to start in 2005. The initial task will be to persuade all the players involved in education policy of the value of such a framework. A workshop or a meeting could provide a suitable platform for illustrating the progress that has been made in this field both nationally and internationally.

2.6 Integrating quality assurance into the education framework article

The OAQ made use of its right to declare its position on the parliamentary initiative to incorporate an article on the education framework into the federal constitution. The OAQ basically welcomes the federal government's intention to make support for the universities contingent on quality assurance measures. This is in keeping with the situation in most European countries, where quality assurance also acts as a regulating instrument. However, the OAQ believes that the concept of quality assurance needs to be defined more precisely in both the law and the ordinance. The OAQ assumes that the term "quality assurance" as used in the proposed education framework article is understood primarily as being independent, external quality assurance. The relationship between internal and external quality assurance and the role of the various institutions (universities, state, quality assurance agency) in quality assurance also need to be clarified in the law. The OAQ feels that it is necessary for external quality evaluations to be carried out to ensure that the universities are employing effective and efficient quality assurance systems. There also needs to be independent information on the quality of the products offered by the universities (e.g. in the form of selective evaluations of programs or assessments of subject areas).

2.7 Involvement in international quality assurance networks

2.7.1 European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA)

The ENQA was founded in 1998 and transformed into an association in 2004; membership is now open to quality assurance agencies in all countries which have signed the Bologna Declaration and not only EU member states, as was previously the case. This means that the OAQ can now join the association as a full member. At the meeting of ministers in Berlin in 2003, the ENQA was mandated to propose a set of quality standards, test procedures and quality assurance guidelines that would be binding for all quality assurance agencies in Europe. The ENQA produced a report on this material at the end of 2004 in anticipation of the next ministerial meeting, scheduled to be held in Bergen, Norway, in 2005. The report contains global recommendations for quality assurance at universities, for external academic quality assurance, and for the tasks assigned to the individual quality assurance agencies. It has been proposed that a European register of validated quality assurance and accreditation agencies should be compiled, and for this reason the quality assurance agencies have been recommended to undergo a periodic review. The OAQ participated in the work done by the ENQA in its role as President of the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA).

2.7.2 International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE)

The OAQ has been a member of this international network of quality assurance agencies for the past two years. The OAQ based its work on a code of good practice for the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA) on preparatory work done by the INQAAHE. The ECA's code of good practice will be presented at the INQAAHE meeting in New Zealand in April 2005.

2.7.3 Joint Quality Initiative (JQI)

The JQI was established in 2001 on the initiative of eleven national quality assurance agencies. The objective of this network was initially to develop generic qualification descriptors for bachelor, master and doctoral qualifications which would be valid throughout Europe. This step makes it easier to compare university qualifications in Europe and provides significant guidance for curriculum planners. The core competencies for bachelor and master degrees were defined in 2001, and the corresponding descriptors for doctoral qualifications and "short cycles" were completed in 2004. The OAQ has represented Switzerland in the Joint Quality Initiative network since it was set up. The Dublin descriptors have now become a central element in a European Qualification Framework, and the OAQ is accordingly recommending that universities in Switzerland should look at these descriptors in more detail. It is up to the individual countries or disciplines to operationalize or specify these European requirements.

2.7.4 The quality assurance and accreditation initiatives of UNESCO and the OECD

The OAQ has received regular invitations to attend meetings of the Global Forum on Accreditation and Quality Assurance organized by UNESCO since the start of 2003. Major topics featuring in this forum for exchange are the global deployment of accreditation and quality assurance systems, access to the university system, and international recognition of qualifications. Some major groundwork was completed at a meeting in Paris in advance of a joint education initiative launched by UNESCO and the OECD. The stated goal of these two organizations is to agree joint, internationally applicable guidelines for quality assurance in education by the summer of 2005. The main emphasis is on protecting students against misleading information about the quality of programs being offered. Guidelines for governments, universities, student associations, quality assurance and accreditation agencies and bodies responsible for recognizing qualifications were developed at meetings in Paris and Tokyo which were attended by the OAQ. These guidelines are not binding in any legal sense, but the countries that are members of UNESCO and the OECD will find it difficult to ignore them. The next step will be for UNESCO and the OECD to create an international information system containing data on universities which are nationally recognized and whose quality is assured.

3 Accreditation

In the light of the increasing autonomy granted to universities and attempts to create a European higher education area, accreditation agencies have been set up in practically all European countries in the past ten years. In Switzerland a national accreditation system for universities was introduced in 2002. Some countries pursue accreditation for individual programs (e.g. Germany, the Netherlands, Spain), while others focus on institutional accreditation (e.g. Ireland, Austria). The accreditation of universities is mandatory in almost all European countries. In Switzerland the first step has been to set up a voluntary accreditation system for universities.

Accreditation is a formal, transparent quality assurance procedure which uses defined, internationally compatible standards to determine whether universities and the programs they offer comply with minimum quality requirements. Accreditation decisions facilitate the international comparison of study achievements at university level, and they therefore create an important precondition for the student mobility required by the Bologna Declaration. Accreditation decisions provide students, employers and politicians with a guarantee of the quality of universities and in this way enhance the credibility of the university system in a given country. But the universities also benefit greatly from accreditation because this mark of quality increases their competitiveness.

The European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA) was set up in 2003 to ensure that accreditation decisions issued in one country would also be recognized in other European countries. The OAQ has presided over this network since December 2004. The members have agreed a code of good practice which standardizes accreditation procedures in Europe. In view of international developments, the ECA is confident that the importance of accreditation is set to grow in all European countries in the very near future. Accreditation is already the most important external quality assurance measure in Europe.

3.1 University accreditation procedures in 2004

Seven accreditation procedures were carried out in Switzerland during the year under review, three of them at private universities, with the other four focusing on institutions and programs at public universities. Once the positive accreditation decisions had been confirmed by the CUS, the first accreditation certificates (valid for seven years) were awarded to the following institutions and programs in 2004:

- Hydrogeology Centre at Neuchâtel University, including its Master of Hydrogeology program
- International Institute of Management in Telecommunications (iimt) at Fribourg University and its Executive Diploma and Executive MBA programs.

In addition to these accreditation procedures, five preliminary evaluations were carried out at private universities which had applied for accreditation. The accreditation procedures at private universities highlighted a number of problems which need to be clarified in the new University Law scheduled for 2008. The status of accredited private universities in Switzerland needs to be clarified; a legal basis needs to be created for the publication of negative accreditation results (at the moment only positive results can be published); and responsibility for accrediting other institutions of higher education in Switzerland needs to be defined. As far as the content of the accreditation process is concerned, criteria for the status of a university need to be established, and the extent to which a university differs from other tertiary education institutions needs to be clarified. In this context the OAQ will be launching a survey of institutions and organizations involved in tertiary education in Switzerland in early 2005 to throw some light on these matters.

The accreditation tools are employed both in the course of regular accreditation procedures and in those carried out on behalf of the former Federal Office for Education and Science (OFES) (now the State Secretariat for Education and Research, SER). Experience had been gained from a total of 15 procedures by the end of 2004. Surveys among the external experts involved in these procedures and of the university units which were accredited indicated that the accreditation process and the associated quality standards had met with a high level of acceptance. The accreditation tools used by the OAQ and the guidelines have been praised by international partner organizations for their clarity. Some European countries have now started using the Swiss accreditation instruments, or part of them, for their own purposes (e.g. France and Denmark).

3.2 Accreditation in the medical professions

In the autumn of 2004, the OAQ was given a mandate by the Swiss Federal Office of Public Health (SFOPH), the Swiss Medical Association (FMH) and a multi-institutional committee on continuing education to carry out accreditation procedures for all 44 continuing education programs in human medicine. The OAQ received the same mandate from the Swiss Dentists' Society (SSO) for the corresponding continuing education programs in dentistry. These accreditation procedures are scheduled for completion by June 2005 and include a critical assessment by two independent experts of the self-evaluation reports produced for all the specialization programs. The benchmarks for passing the accreditation examination are the international quality standards of the World Federation for Medical Education as adapted for Switzerland and the stipulations in the federal legislation concerning the freedom of movement of medical personnel in the Swiss Confederation. A random sample of individual continuing education facilities was visited. The accreditation decisions will be taken by the Federal Department of Home Affairs (DHA) on the basis of proposals put forward by the OAQ.

The preliminary work on the implementation of the new Law on Medical Professions has already started (in 2004). This law defines the accreditation of continuing education in human and dental medicine and in other medical professions as mandatory. The OAQ concluded agreements with the SFOPH in 2004 on the associated preliminary work.

3.3 Accreditation in the psychological professions

A preliminary draft of a new "Psy Law" has been put forward which, similarly to the situation in the medical professions, foresees mandatory accreditation of continuing education programs in the psychological professions. The OAQ was mandated to collaborate with the SFOPH on preparing an accreditation procedure for the field of psychological psychotherapy. The first task facing the OAQ is to develop generic quality standards and quality standards for specific professions. The intention is to base this work on the internationally accepted standards in this field and to adapt the quality standards subsequently to meet the needs of the professional organizations and the draft law. In 2004 the OAQ and the SFOPH concluded agreements on the execution of this work.

3.4 Planned accreditation of universities of applied sciences

The OAQ seized the opportunity offered by the revision of the Law for the Universities of Applied Sciences to plead for an equal treatment with the universities in matters relating to accreditation. Drawing on the practice in other European countries, the OAQ has formulated the following requirements for the accreditation of universities of applied sciences in Switzerland:

- Accreditation processes and standards must follow best practices in Europe.
- An effort should be made to gain international recognition for accreditation decisions.
- The same quality criteria should basically apply to universities of applied sciences and to universities, although the specific objectives and orientation must be taken into account.
- The accreditation of universities of applied sciences in Switzerland should be aligned with national requirements (culture, language, etc.).
- Following the principle of equal treatment for all universities of applied sciences, accreditation decisions should be based on uniform criteria.
- A system must be established which will enable operative activity to start in the near future and synergies to be used.

For the reasons mentioned above, the OAQ is against the creation of a new accreditation organization specifically for the universities of applied sciences in Switzerland. This move would be unique in Europe and would run the risk of failing to find national acceptance and of leading to unequal quality standards being applied to universities and universities of applied sciences in Switzerland. The suggestion of commissioning international agencies to carry out accreditation is equally problematic. In this instance no account would be taken of the specific needs of Switzerland, and there would be no assurance that all Swiss universities of applied sciences would be treated equally (various international agencies use different accreditation processes and apply different decision-making criteria). In any case, very few national accreditation agencies are currently operating outside their national boundaries. The principle commonly applied is rather that the national accreditation agencies are responsible for the countries in which they are based and collaborate through European networks to achieve international recognition of accreditation decisions.

The OAQ is well informed about current developments in quality assurance at Swiss universities of applied sciences through its membership in the Federal Commission for Universities of Applied Sciences. At the end of 2004, the OAQ was mandated by the Federal Office for Professional Education and Technology (OPET) to check existing expert reports produced under the ongoing program to evaluate the design of the new bachelor programs at the universities of applied sciences for consistency and to draw up an overview of the main outcomes and trends. Appropriate agreements were concluded by the OAQ and the OPET, and a first cycle was completed in 2004.

3.5 Accreditation of colleges of further education

In 2004 the OAQ also received a large number of enquiries concerning the accreditation of other institutions providing tertiary education in Switzerland. Serious providers of further education (such as hotel and catering colleges) are seeking accreditation for colleges of this type as a matter of some urgency in the face of growing international competition. At the moment, however, there is neither a mechanism nor a legal basis for carrying out accreditation work of this kind. The OAQ is willing to work in this field as soon as an official mandate has been issued and the questions of who is responsible for taking the accreditation decision and what status a decision of this kind will have for the accredited institution have been resolved.

3.6 National contacts

Collaboration and networking with national and international partners is one of the OAQ's priorities. In 2004 the OAQ took part in over a hundred meetings in Switzerland at which it provided information about its work and about national developments in accreditation and quality assurance. During the year under review, the OAQ met with representatives from Swiss academic institutions (universities, universities of applied sciences and colleges of further education), the federal authorities (SER, OPET, SFOPH), national institutions (e.g. CUS, EDK, CRUS) and other interested organizations and bodies (professional associations, academies, *économiesuisse*, *Avenir Suisse*, etc.). The OAQ gave eleven presentations in Switzerland on the current status of accreditation activities (to the Association of Swiss University Lecturers, representatives of non-professorial academic staff, the CRUS, the Swiss Academy of Humanities and Social Sciences, the Federal Commission for Universities of Applied Sciences, individual universities, etc.).

Accreditation and quality assurance are also an important topic dealt with by the national committees of which the OAQ is a member:

- Swiss University Quality Network
- CRUS Bologna project group
- Federal Commission for Universities of Applied Sciences
- Sector committee on quality management in the healthcare system organized by Metas (Federal Office of Metrology and Accreditation in Switzerland).

The OAQ is keen to continue and intensify this good, constructive collaboration with its partners in the coming years.

3.7 International and national cooperation on accreditation

International aspects are particularly relevant for the OAQ's work. Active involvement in all major European and international accreditation and quality assurance networks ensures that the OAQ's work complies with best international practice and can always be brought into line with developments within the European higher education area. Moreover, international collaboration provides an opportunity to recruit highly qualified experts and evaluators for accreditation and quality evaluation procedures in Switzerland. Surveys among international experts show that the OAQ's activities meet with international recognition.

3.7.1 Participation in the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA)

The European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA) brings together national accreditation agencies. The twelve founding members signed a cooperation agreement in November 2003 with the aim of achieving international recognition of national accreditation decisions by the end of 2007 at the latest. The OAQ was one of the founding members of the ECA, is active in four of the five working groups organized by the network, and took over the Presidency of the ECA in December 2004. The ECA developed a code of good practice binding on ECA members in order to create a uniform basis for regulating the work done by the accreditation agencies in Europe and to pave the way to achieving the goal of mutual recognition of accreditation decisions. The code stipulates uniform standards for carrying out accreditation procedures and contains guidelines for internal quality management within the individual accreditation organizations. The code of good practice was signed by all the ECA members at a special ceremony during the ECA's annual conference in Zurich in December 2004. Signature of the code represents an important step towards harmonizing the European education area as it forms a basis for the future international recognition of accreditation decisions. A joint position paper on the future role of academic accreditation in Europe was also approved during the ECA conference in Zurich. The ECA is convinced that the significance of academic accreditation as an element of education policy will continue to grow in the future. Mutual recognition of accreditation decisions facilitates international recognition of academic qualifications and diplomas. The ECA position paper also calls for the confusing international education market to be regulated and for the European ministers of education to make national and international recognition of educational facilities and programs at the tertiary level contingent on prior accreditation or equivalent quality evaluations. The above-mentioned position paper on accreditation and the ECA's code of good practice will be sent to the Bologna Follow-up Group in preparation for the next meeting of the European ministers of education in Bergen in 2005. The documentation will also be presented by all ECA members to their respective national education ministers.

In the coming year the ECA will continue its work on harmonization in Europe. There are plans to approve joint criteria for selecting external experts for accreditation procedures and to create a joint platform for publishing accreditation decisions. In addition, the first results of pilot studies on the mutual recognition of accreditation decisions are expected.

3.7.2 The D-A-CH network

Acting in the firm belief that the higher education systems and the accreditation systems in Germany (D), Austria (A) and Switzerland (CH) are very similar, the national accreditation agencies in these countries signed a cooperation agreement in the summer of 2003 which governs the close collaboration between these countries on matters of accreditation. The D-A-CH network held four meetings in the course of 2004, at which it prepared the documents subsequently approved by the ECA (code of good practice, position paper on the role of accreditation in the European higher education area). The three national accreditation bodies also agreed on joint criteria and a standardized approach to selecting external experts. And finally, an inventory of the accreditation standards employed in the countries within the D-A-CH network was drawn up. A number of intercountry cooperation agreements were concluded with a view to further increasing mutual confidence (e.g. reciprocal involvement in accreditation procedures, joint accreditations, etc.).

3.8 Involvement in international conferences on accreditation and quality assurance

In the year under review the OAQ attended 15 international conferences and workshops on accreditation and quality assurance. The topics of these conferences included international recognition of university degrees, the implementation of the Bologna Declaration in Europe, the creation of a European Qualification Framework, future scenarios for the European higher education area 20 years from now, international efforts to pursue accreditation in the medical field, the GATS treaties and their impact, the use of new learning technologies and their repercussions on quality assurance, and the significance of accreditation for the future of higher education in Europe.

The OAQ organized two conferences in Switzerland in 2004, both attended by an international audience:

- An accreditation meeting in Bern in conjunction with the Swiss Academy of Humanities and Social Sciences
- The annual conference of the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA) in Zurich

More than 120 delegates attended the accreditation meeting in Bern, while the ECA annual conference was attended by quality assurance experts from 15 European countries. Both of the events organized by the OAQ were commended by those who attended them.

4 Information and communication

In addition to designing and implementing quality evaluations at universities, the OAQ's mandate also requires it to provide information. The OAQ has an open and transparent information policy. It regularly informs the public and target groups in tertiary education about its activities. It is of central importance to the OAQ that people associated with universities at whatever level should be aware of its functions and of the services it offers. Particular emphasis is placed on an exchange of ideas with students and individuals responsible for university policy. Communication outside the organization needs to be organized professionally and based on a coherent communication strategy. For this reason the OAQ carries out certain tasks in collaboration with an external communication advisor.

4.1 Annual Report 2003

The Annual Report for the year 2003 was published at the end of April in four languages (German, French, English and Italian). The report describes in detail the activities of the OAQ in the field of accreditation and quality assurance and its national and international contacts. The Annual Report 2003 was distributed widely both within Switzerland and abroad (to about 1,000 recipients) and met with a positive response.

4.2 Public relations and media liaison

4.2.1 Presentations in Switzerland

The Director and academic staff of the OAQ took part in around 180 events and meetings in Switzerland during 2004. This presence provided the OAQ with opportunities to inform a wide range of players about the current status of the organization's work. The OAQ's activities, particularly those relating to the national accreditation system, were presented at the following national meetings:

- Meeting of the Association of Swiss University Lecturers at Fribourg University
- Plenary session of Swiss non-professorial academic staff employed at universities
- Plenary session of the Rectors' Conference of the Swiss Universities (CRUS)
- Meeting of the Bologna project management team organized by the CRUS
- Plenary session of the Joint Commission of the Swiss Medical Schools (SMIFK)
- International accreditation meeting organized by the SAGW in Bern
- Meeting of the Federal Conference of Universities of Applied Sciences
- Course held as part of the MME postdiploma program at Bern University

4.2.2 Presentations abroad

The OAQ's activities were presented at the following international events:

- Annual conference of the Accreditation Agency for Study Programmes in Special Education, Care, Health Sciences and Social Work (AHPGS), Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany. Subject: International Developments in the Field of Accreditation
- Annual conference of the European Public Health Association, Brighton, England. Subject: From Peer Review to Accreditation in Public Health
- Annual meeting of the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT) in Stavanger, Norway. Subject: Evaluation Versus Accreditation
- Annual Conference of the Medical Sciences in Barcelona, Spain. Subject: Accreditation in the Field of Medical Sciences
- Annual conference of the European Higher Education Society Linking Research, Policy and Practice (EAIR) in Barcelona, Spain. Subject: A Base for a Slim Quality Audit/Quality Audits in Switzerland

4.3 Annual conference of the Swiss Academy of Humanities and Social Sciences (SAGW) in Bern

On 29 April 2004 the OAQ and the SAGW organized a conference on the subject of "Accreditation and Quality Assurance in the Humanities and Social Sciences" which was attended by some 120 people from all parts of Switzerland, most of them representatives of the universities and the universities of applied sciences. The meeting focused primarily on the significance of accreditation in the humanities and social sciences. An introduction on the international role of academic accreditation was followed by presentations given by experts from other countries on subjects such as quality assurance in the Bologna process, European quality assurance and accreditation initiatives, the Dublin descriptors and their points of contact with the Bologna reform. The topic of accreditation was also considered from various perspectives (from the point of view of students, the labour market/economiesuisse, quality assurance experts and accredited universities). The meeting met with a positive response from participants and helped to raise awareness of accreditation in the social sciences and humanities.

4.4 Annual meeting of the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA)

The annual meeting of the ECA took place on 2 and 3 December in Zurich; it was attended by 40 delegates from 15 European countries. Representatives from a number of European accreditation agencies were joined by other major stakeholder groups from higher education in Europe, such as the European University Association (EUA) and the EU Commission. Guest speakers included quality assurance experts from the Czech Republic and the Netherlands. Major decisions were taken at the ECA annual meeting which are relevant to the forthcoming meeting of European ministers of education in Bergen in 2005. The associated documentation is described in detail in chapter 3.7.1.

4.5 Media liaison

Following the ECA annual meeting in December 2004 in Zurich, a news release was issued to inform the media of the outcome of the conference. This news release and the ECA papers mentioned in it were distributed to Switzerland's major media and to some 40 key individuals active in higher education in Switzerland. Recognition and approval from these individuals has shown that the significance of the ECA and the achievements of the OAQ in this context have been widely understood.

Another media communication has been prepared for release in conjunction with the publication of the report summarizing the quality audits carried out at the public universities in Switzerland.

4.6 Publications

The OAQ produced the following publications during the year under review:

- Dustin Isabelle: Synthèse des réflexions de l'atelier. In: Christian Chauvignier (ed.): *Accréditation des formations supérieures professionnelles et amélioration continue de la qualité*. Editions de l'Ecole Nationale de la Santé Publique, Rennes 2004: Atelier 1: Les modes d'engagement des organismes accrédités dans le développement continu de la qualité, p. 72–80
- Fasel Sylvie, Saner Raymond, Weder Hans: Les Forums de l'OCDE: Réflexions croisées sur l'impact de l'enseignement transfrontalier/Die Foren der OECD: Überlegungen zu den Auswirkungen der länderübergreifenden Bildung. In: Education International, OFES/SBF, 14 December 2004
- Fasel Sylvie: *Accréditation/assurance-qualité, commercialisation et échange de prestations: lignes directrices pour tous?/Akkreditierung/Qualitätssicherung, Handel und Austausch von Bildungsdienstleistungen: Richtlinien für alle?* In: Education International, OFES/SBF, 14 December 2004
- Fasel Sylvie: Trondheim, étape norvégienne de l'internationalisation de l'éducation. In: SAGW-Bulletin, 1/2004, p. 40–41
- Heusser Rolf, Felder Sabine, Steffen Gerber Therese: *Zwischen universitärer Autonomie und staatlicher Kontrolle. Akkreditierung und Qualitätssicherung in der Schweiz*. In: Winfried Benz, Jürgen Kohler, Klaus Landfried (ed.): *Handbuch Qualität in Studium und Lehre*. Raabe Verlag, Berlin 2004
- Heusser Rolf, Zbinden Karl: *Making a case for a slim quality audit*. Background paper for the EAIR forum, Barcelona, 2004

- Heusser Rolf: Accreditation in Higher Education – added value or unnecessary bureaucracy. In: www.swisslearning.com, web magazine, p. 6–9
- Heusser Rolf: Akkreditierung im Hochschulbereich – Mehrwert oder Bürokratie. In: VSH-Bulletin, 2/3 (July), 2004, p. 17–20
- Heusser Rolf: Das Akkreditierungssystem in der Schweiz. In: Thomas Reil, Martin Winter (ed.): Qualitätssicherung an Hochschulen: Theorie und Praxis. Bertelsmann Verlag, Bielefeld (Forum der Hochschulpolitik, published by Hochschulrektorenkonferenz, 1/2004), p. 99–102
- Heusser Rolf, Felder Sabine: Der Stellenwert der Akkreditierung im europäischen Hochschulraum. In: SAGW-Bulletin, 1/2004, p. 25–27
- Heusser Rolf: Einsatz und Nutzen der Akkreditierung im schweizerischen Hochschulbereich. In: Akkreditierung und Qualitätssicherung in den Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaften/ Accréditation et assurance qualité dans les sciences humaines et sociales. Tagung der Schweizerischen Akademie der Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaften (SAGW) und des Organs für Akkreditierung und Qualitätssicherung der Schweizerischen Hochschulen (OAQ) vom 29. April 2004, Bern (Gurten), p. 11–15
- Steffen Gerber Therese: Akkreditierung und Qualitätssicherung im universitären Hochschulbereich der Schweiz. In: Werner Fröhlich, Wolfgang Jütte (ed.): Qualitätsentwicklung in der postgradualen Weiterbildung. Internationale Entwicklungen und Perspektiven. Waxmann, Münster 2004, p. 47–50
- Zbinden Karl: Accreditation of basic medical education in Switzerland. In: TUFH Newsletter, Vol. 23, 1/2004, p. 13

5 Finance

5.1 Balance sheet and profit and loss statement for 2004

Balance sheet as at 31 December 2004

| Assets | CHF |
|--|-------------------|
| Cash | 1,581.50 |
| Federal current accounts, BEKB savings account | 437,485.65 |
| Accounts receivable and withholding tax on accounts receivable | 132,251.29 |
| Deferred assets | 9,771.25 |
| Work started for third-party mandates | 93,640.00 |
| Total assets | 674,729.69 |
| | |
| Liabilities | |
| Accounts payable | 133,738.75 |
| Accounts payable to university cantons | 112,193.55 |
| Prepaid expenses | 269,640.00 |
| Deferred liabilities | 31,695.75 |
| Reserve (for started third-party mandates) | 127,461.64 |
| Total liabilities | 674,729.69 |

Income statement for the period 1 January 2004 to 31 December 2004

| Expenditure | CHF |
|---|---------------------|
| Personnel expenses, including social security and Advisory Board fees | 1,231,073.65 |
| Public relations project, website, trustee services | 113,501.30 |
| Operating costs | |
| Rent/refurbishment | 61,555.80 |
| Furnishing | 3,405.95 |
| Hardware/software, including database | 29,057.93 |
| Operating expenses | 155,974.73 |
| Organization of meetings and workshops | 72,496.32 |
| Accreditation costs (documents, translation, legal support) | 457,030.55 |
| Miscellaneous and contingencies | 28,709.75 |
| Total expenditure | 2,152,805.98 |
| Formation of reserve (for started third-party mandates) | 127,461.64 |
| Total | 2,280,267.62 |

| Income | CHF |
|--|---------------------|
| Contributions from the cantons | |
| BS | 87,586.00 |
| BE | 130,146.00 |
| FR | 81,824.00 |
| GE | 154,675.00 |
| NE | 36,723.00 |
| SG | 42,229.00 |
| TI | 13,191.00 |
| VD | 96,047.00 |
| ZH | 232,081.00 |
| Federal contribution | 874,500.00 |
| Third-party contributions (private and federal accreditation procedures) | 246,920.70 |
| Exceptional contributions (third-party mandates) | 93,640.00 |
| Workshop and course fees | 1,421.65 |
| Liquidation of reserve from 2003 | 184,202.44 |
| Interest income | 5,080.83 |
| Total | 2,280,267.62 |

5.2 Auditors' report

EIDGENÖSSISCHE FINANZKONTROLLE
CONTRÔLE FÉDÉRAL DES FINANCES
CONTROLLO FEDERALE DELLE FINANZE
CONTROLLA FEDERALE DA FINANZAS



MONBIJOUSTRASSE 45, CH-3003 BERN

Reg. Nr. 1.5042.325.00349.02

Bericht der Revisionsstelle

an die Mitglieder der Schweizerischen Universitätskonferenz (SUK)

Als Revisionsstelle hat die Eidg. Finanzkontrolle (EFK) die Buchführung und die Jahresrechnung (Bilanz und Erfolgsrechnung) des Organs für Akkreditierung und Qualitätssicherung der Schweizerischen Hochschulen (OAQ) für das am 31. Dezember 2004 abgeschlossene Geschäftsjahr geprüft.

Für die Jahresrechnung ist die Geschäftsstelle des OAQ verantwortlich, während unsere Aufgabe darin besteht, die Jahresrechnung zu prüfen und zu beurteilen. Wir bestätigen, dass wir die gesetzlichen Anforderungen hinsichtlich Befähigung und Unabhängigkeit erfüllen.

Unsere Prüfung erfolgte nach den Grundsätzen des schweizerischen Berufsstandes, wonach eine Prüfung so zu planen und durchzuführen ist, dass wesentliche Fehlaussagen in der Jahresrechnung mit angemessener Sicherheit erkannt werden. Wir prüften die Posten und Angaben der Jahresrechnung mittels Analysen und Erhebungen auf der Basis von Stichproben. Ferner beurteilten wir die Anwendung der massgebenden Rechnungslegungsgrundsätze, die wesentlichen Bewertungsentscheide sowie die Darstellung der Jahresrechnung als Ganzes. Wir sind der Auffassung, dass unsere Prüfung eine ausreichende Grundlage für unser Urteil bildet.

Gemäss unserer Beurteilung entsprechen die Buchführung und die Jahresrechnung dem schweizerischen Gesetz, der Vereinbarung vom 14. Dezember 2000 zwischen dem Bund und den Universitätskantonen über die Zusammenarbeit im universitären Hochschulbereich (SR 414.205) sowie der Geschäftsordnung vom 22. Februar 2001 des OAQ.

Wir empfehlen, die vorliegende Jahresrechnung zu genehmigen.

Bern, den 10. März 2005

EIDGENÖSSISCHE FINANZKONTROLLE

Hans-Rudolf Wagner
Fachbereichsleiter

Robert Hombberger
Revisionsleiter

6 Annual Program 2005

The OAQ has set itself the goal of becoming a national and international centre of excellence in matters of quality assurance in higher education. In addition, the OAQ seeks to make a significant contribution to integrating Switzerland into the European higher education area. The following activities are planned for 2005:

6.1 Accreditation

The OAQ had received 11 applications for accreditation of university programs or institutions by the end of December 2004. A further three procedures which were not concluded in 2004 were scheduled for completion in the new year. In addition, preliminary evaluations of three private universities which have applied for accreditation are planned for early 2005. A number of faculties at public universities in Switzerland have expressed interest in being accredited in 2005, and discussions were still in progress at the end of 2004.

In 2005 the OAQ will be accrediting 48 continuing education programs in human and dental medicine on behalf of the SFOPH and the professional organizations. Various preliminary activities will also be carried out at the request of the SFOPH in anticipation of accreditation procedures required by the new Law on Medical Professions and the new Psy Law.

With a view to the new University Law, the future status of accreditation for Swiss universities needs to be clarified and an accreditation policy supported by all players must be developed for Swiss universities. Existing gaps in laws concerning the accreditation of private universities in Switzerland also need to be filled (status of an accredited private organization). And finally, the question of whether and, if so, how accreditation decisions can be linked in future with the international recognition of titles and qualifications also needs to be clarified. In this connection the OAQ's involvement in the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA) is of major importance.

6.2 Quality assurance

The summary results of the quality audits carried out at the Swiss universities will be published in March 2005. The results of these quality audits will form a basis for developing guidelines for quality assurance at the Swiss universities in collaboration with the universities and the CRUS in the first half of the year. The intention is to submit a draft of these guidelines to the CUS for approval in the summer. In 2005 the OAQ will also be working on a list of recommendations for evaluations carried out by the universities on their own responsibility. These tasks confer on the OAQ a regulatory mandate. The work will be carried out in close collaboration with the Swiss University Quality Network. The OAQ will base both documents (guidelines for quality assurance and recommendations for self-evaluations by universities) on the regulations in use in other European countries.

Initial work on a National Qualification Framework for higher education in Switzerland is scheduled to begin in 2005. The OAQ will play an active part in this project in collaboration with the SER, the CRUS and other partners. In particular, it will be able to draw on experience gained in the Swiss Dublin descriptors working group, which was headed by the OAQ.

The proposed text for the new education framework article will make quality assurance a regulatory instrument in higher education in the future; the task is now to define the term more precisely in the relevant laws and ordinances. In particular, internal quality assurance within the universities must be harmonized with external quality assurance carried out by an independent body. The future role of the OAQ in higher education in Switzerland will also have to be clarified within this context.

Four quality evaluations at universities are scheduled for 2005 as part of the qualification procedure for federal subsidies.

6.3 National and international collaboration

The OAQ will continue its international activities in 2005. The OAQ now holds the Presidency of the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA), and priority will accordingly be given to the ECA's objectives. It is hoped that during 2005 agreement will be reached in Europe on criteria and a procedure for the selection of external evaluators. The ECA will also produce a binding definition of the manner in which accreditation decisions should be published and will set up a Europe-wide information platform on the Internet. The first pilot studies for multinational recognition of accreditation decisions will start in 2005. Since accreditation decisions have different consequences in different countries, a number of national bodies (government offices, ENIC/NARIC, etc.) must be involved in this task. The ECA has also set itself the objective of intensifying cooperation and the exchange of information with other European and international partners in the field of quality assurance during the year. It can be assumed that the outcome of the conference of European education ministers which will be held in Bergen in May 2005 will influence the work done by the European accreditation and quality assurance networks.

In 2005 priority will also be given to the OAQ's national networking activities. Meetings of the Swiss University Quality Network to prepare the new guidelines for quality assurance at Swiss universities will be of great importance. One of the OAQ's primary concerns is to establish direct and formalized information channels to students and lecturers at the universities in Switzerland so that they can be informed about international developments and national progress in accreditation and quality assurance.

6.4 Services

In 2005 the OAQ will be carrying out various tasks on behalf of the SFOPH and the medical professional organizations (FMH, SSO). It will also be working for the OPET. The regulations governing the OAQ's activities permit it to offer additional services in its field, including evaluations for third parties or counselling on quality assurance matters.

6.5 Information and communication

In the new year, the OAQ would like to place more emphasis on its mandate to provide information and inform interested groups and the public more about its activities. In March 2005 the results of the quality audits carried out in 2004 will be made available to the general public (publication of a summary report on the results). The OAQ would also like to discuss the results of the ongoing survey of the criteria that a university needs to fulfil with a wide range of interested parties. The OAQ will develop a position paper which will form the basis for discussion of a future accreditation policy for Swiss higher education.

The OAQ website is updated continuously. A regular newsletter is planned for 2005 and will be available in both electronic and paper form.

And finally, other tasks for 2005 will be to intensify the OAQ's contact with the media, to issue regular news releases, and to provide more editorial material for publication.

**Appendix: Experts who work on behalf of the OAQ
All procedures (apart from the medical professions)**

Prof. Philippe Albert, Partenaire
d'Entrepreneurs, La Tour-de-Salvagny, France

Prof. Allan D. Cochrane, Pro-Vice Chancellor
Open University, Milton Keynes, UK

Prof. Marc Amstutz, Rechtswissenschaftliche
Fakultät, Universität Freiburg, Schweiz

Prof. Dagmar Coester-Waltjen, Ludwig-Maxi-
milians-Universität München, Deutschland

Prof. Peter Antes, Seminar für Religions-
wissenschaften, Universität Hannover,
Deutschland

Giovanni Andrea Cornia, Professore straordi-
nario, Dipartimento di Scienze Economiche,
Università degli Studi di Firenze, Italia

Dr. Gudrun Bachmann, Leiterin E-Learning
und Koordinatorin des LearnTechNet, Uni-
versität Basel, Schweiz

Prof. Emanuel De Kadt, Chair of Cultural
Anthropology, University of Utrecht,
Netherlands

Dr. Richard Bessoth, Projektleiter Euro-
päisches Weiterbildungsstudium Bildungs-
management, St. Ingbert, Deutschland

Prof. Pierre de Senarclens, Institut d'Etudes
Politiques et Internationales (IEPI), Université
de Lausanne, Suisse

Dr Daniel Billaux, Itasca Consultants SA,
Ecully, France

Prof. Jacobus J. de Vries, Faculty of
Earth and Life Sciences, Vrije Universiteit,
Amsterdam, Netherlands

Dr. Tove Blytt Holmen, Norwegian Agency
for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT),
Oslo, Norway

Damien Desjonquères, Directeur des
Programmes Care France, Paris, France

Prof. Ingeborg Bø, Executive Director of
the Norwegian Association for Distance
Education (NADE), Oslo, Norway

Prof. Karl Einhäupl, Klinik für Neurologie,
Humboldt-Universität Berlin/Charité,
Vorsitzender Deutscher Wissenschaftsrat,
Berlin, Deutschland

Prof. Christoph Bochinger, Lehrstuhl
für Religionswissenschaften, Universität
Bayreuth, Deutschland

Dr. Sandra E. Elman, Executive Director of
the Northwest Commission on Colleges and
Universities (NWCCU), Washington D.C., USA

Prof. Jacques Bury, Directeur de l'Agence
pour le Développement et l'Évaluation des
Politiques de Santé (ADSAN), Carouge, Suisse

Prof. Mariki Eloff, School of Computing, Uni-
versity of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa

Prof. Giuseppe Cacciatore, Dipartimento
di Filosofia, Università di Napoli Federico II,
Italia

Prof. Hans-Uwe Erichsen, Vorsitzender des
Deutschen Akkreditierungsrates, Münster,
Deutschland

Prof. Franco Cavallo, Facoltà di Medicina e
Chirurgia, Università degli Studi di Torino, Italia

Prof. Reinhard Feldmeier, Theologische
Fakultät, Universität Göttingen, Deutschland

Prof. Lluís Ferrer i Caubet, Rector Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, España

Prof. Luc François, Directeur éducatif de l'Université de Gand, Belgique

Prof. Muzio Gola, Direttore del Dipartimento di Meccanica, Politecnico di Torino, Italia

Prof. Jon Haakstad, Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT), Oslo, Norway

Prof. Kauko Hämäläinen, Palmenia Centre for Continuing Education, University of Helsinki, Finland

Prof. Nick Harris, Vice Director Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), Gloucester, UK

Prof. David Hyndman, Department of Geological Sciences, Michigan State University, East Lansing, USA

Prof. Gotthard Jasper, Rektor der Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg, Deutschland

Prof. Jean-Loup Jolivet, Président du Comité national d'évaluation (CNE), Paris, France

Sami Kanaan, Associé et Consultant senior, Bureau Evaluanda, Genève, Suisse

Prof. Walter Kirchschaeger, Theologische Fakultät, Universität Luzern, Schweiz

Prof. Jürgen Kohler, Rechts- und Staatswissenschaftliche Fakultät, Universität Greifswald, Deutschland

Prof. Helmut Konrad, Historisches Institut, Universität Graz, Österreich

Dorte Kristoffersen, Australian Quality Assurance Agency (AQUA), Melbourne, Australia

Prof. Rainer Künzel, Leiter Zentrale Evaluations- und Akkreditierungsagentur Hannover, Deutschland

Prof. Jacques L'Ecuyer, Directeur de la Commission d'évaluation de l'enseignement collégial, Québec, Canada

Prof. Erich Leitner, Institut für Erziehungswissenschaft und Bildungsforschung, Universität Klagenfurt, Österreich

Prof. Ossi V. Lindqvist, Chair of the Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council (FINHEEC), Helsinki, Finland

Prof. Francesco Lurati, Director of the Executive Master of Science in Communications Management, Università della Svizzera italiana, Svizzera

Prof. Marcus Lutter, Zentrum für Europäisches Wirtschaftsrecht, Universität Bonn, Deutschland

Prof. Evelies Mayer, Institut für Soziologie der Technischen Universität Darmstadt, Deutschland

Prof. José-Ginés Mora, Director Centre for Higher Education Management (CHEM), Technical University of Valencia, Spain

Prof. Denis Müller, Faculté de théologie, Université de Lausanne, Suisse

Prof. Klaus Müller, Katholisch-Theologische Fakultät, Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster, Deutschland

Prof. Herfried Münkler, Institut für Sozialwissenschaften, Humboldt-Universität Berlin, Deutschland

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Prof. Dirk van Damme, Head of Cabinet of the Flemish Minister of Education, Brussels, Belgium

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Ton Vroeijenstijn, DB Ryswijk, Netherlands (worming for DB Ryswijk until December 2003)

Prof. Staffan Wahlén, National Agency for Higher Education, Stockholm, Sweden

Prof. Beatrice Weber-Dürler, Rechtswissenschaftliche Fakultät, Universität Zürich, Schweiz

Prof. Andreas Wiebe, Abteilung für Informationsrecht und Immaterialgüterrecht, Wirtschaftsuniversität Wien, Österreich

Procedures involving the medical professions

Prof. Werner Aberer, Universitäts-Hautklinik, Graz, Österreich

Dr. Hans Alsen, Qualitätsbeauftragter DRK Kliniken, Berlin, Deutschland

Prof. Hartwig Bauer, Generalsekretär der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Chirurgie, Berlin, Deutschland

Prof. Eggert Beleites, Direktor der Universitäts-HNO-Klinik, Jena, Deutschland

Prof. Friedhelm Beyersdorf, Ärztlicher Direktor Abteilung Herz- und Gefäßchirurgie, Herz-Kreislaufzentrum der Universitätsklinik Freiburg i. Br., Deutschland

Prof. em. Ralph Bloch, Ontario, Canada

Prof. Hubert E. Blum, Medizinische Fakultät, Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg, Deutschland

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Prof. Marianne Brodmann, Medizinische Universitätsklinik Graz, Österreich

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Prof. Winfried Graninger, Medizinische Universitätsklinik Graz, Österreich

Prof. Richard Hays, Faculty of Medicine, Health and Molecular Sciences, Townsville, Australia

Prof. Klaus Heller, Klinikum der Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität, Kinderchirurgie, Frankfurt am Main, Deutschland

Dr. Michael Herschel, Direktor Clinical Research Glaxo Wellcome GmbH & Co., München, Deutschland

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Prof. Alexander Kapp, Hautklinik Linden der Medizinischen Hochschule Hannover, Deutschland

Dr. Hans Karle, Faculty of Health Sciences, The Panum Institute, Copenhagen, Denmark

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