

Decision No. EI-2024-11 on the accreditation of the Ph.D. Analytical/Environmental Chemistry, Benue State University, Makurdi, Nigeria

The President of the High Council for the Evaluation of Research and Higher Education,

Considering the Research Code, in particular Articles L. 114-3-1 to L. 114-3-6;

Considering the Decree No. 2021-1536 of 29th November 2021 on the organisation and operation of the High Council for the Evaluation of Research and Higher Education;

Considering the Board's deliberation of 29th September 2022 on the accreditation criteria for international study programmes (except doctorates/PhDs);

Considering the Decision No. 2023-9 of 16th March 2023 on the international accreditation procedure of the High Council for the Evaluation of Research and Higher Education;

Considering the agreement No. DEI_2023_CONV17 – NUC, signed on 14th June 2023 for the evaluation/accreditation of study programmes delivered by Africa Centres of Excellence;

Considering the opinion issued by the Accreditation Commission on 29th February 2024;

Decides:

Article 1

Noting that the Ph.D. Analytical/Environmental Chemistry meets the four accreditation criteria, voted by the Board of the High Council on 29th September 2022, as follows:

ACCREDITATION CRITERION 1 – DOCTORAL POLICY

The policy and strategy of the Ph.D. programme in Analytical Chemistry is totally consistent with the CEFTER objectives. The doctoral programme is well-structured, with basic and applicative courses and core courses on entrepreneurship. However, courses on integrity and ethics in research are only elective. The strong link with research laboratories as well as other equipment facilities and the efficient interaction with the supervisors allow the students to undergo their research in good conditions.

The programme is recognised and appreciated by the national academic and industrial partners. Industry partners are involved throughout the process of the programme, which can benefit the further integration of students into the labour market. The internationalisation of the programme is still low (due to funding limitations and national security issues) and no international students were recruited during the evaluation period. Stronger links to innovation would benefit the programme.

ACCREDITATION CRITERION 2 – TRAINING, HOSTING AND SUPERVISION ARRANGEMENTS FOR DOCTORAL STUDENTS

The Ph.D. programme in Analytical Chemistry offers high-quality education and supervision for doctoral students. The students benefit from all the facilities on the new campus of CEFTER (rooms, research equipment, computers, free Wi-Fi) and one to three supervisors for their research work. The rules and criteria for application, course assessment and thesis defence are well-defined and communicated to the students. Thanks to grants from the supervisors, several students can benefit from funding for research. However, the programme could benefit from having more financial support for Ph.D. students as well as an increased mobility for students, which is highly limited by the regional safety situation and economic reasons.

ACCREDITATION CRITERION 3 – ATTRACTIVENESS, PERFORMANCE AND RELEVANCE OF THE DOCTORAL PROGRAMME

In the evaluated period, all the enrolled students are nationals. More precisely, they come from Makurdi, as the majority of students graduated from the Master's programme in Analytical Chemistry of the CEFTER. The Centre's website is informative and helps to raise the profile of both the programme and the Centre. The supervision of the Ph.D. students is of very good quality, with access to all needed facilities. However,

the attractiveness and follow-up of students' careers is not really measured or analysed and should be formally developed.

ACCREDITATION CRITERION 4 – MANAGEMENT AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT OF THE ACADEMIC PROGRAMME

The doctoral programme is supported by the institution's human resources policy and shares the same objectives and values in terms of pedagogy and student supervision. All students follow courses on management and entrepreneurship; elective courses on ethics and integrity in research are provided. They benefit from all the facilities of the CEFER campus (equipment, labs, rooms, scientific resources). The programme assessment is well conducted by the Directorate of academic program and quality assurance. However, the only feedback sent to the programme is when a difficulty is identified. The feedback of the entire assessment would benefit the Programme Director. Financial resources should be increased to provide more grants and funding for both students and staff.

Article 2

The Ph.D. Analytical/Environmental Chemistry, Benue State University, Makurdi, Nigeria, is accredited for a period of 3 years, which may be extended for two years, subject to a follow-up that may include an on-site visit.

Article 3

The decision is accompanied by the following recommendations and comments:

make efforts to systematise and formalise internal quality assurance indicators, which would enable informed management and ensure that the quality of the programme is maintained over the long term;

although other courses include elements of integrity and ethics in research, it would be advantageous to introduce a core course specifically addressing these issues;

implement tools to enhance students' access to research grants by leveraging the strong collaboration with the national industrial network and existing partnership agreements.

Article 4

This decision will be published on the Hcéres website.

Paris, 15th March 2024.

The acting President
signed
Stéphane Le Boulter