

Decision No. EI-2024-8 on the accreditation of the M.Sc. Biochemistry, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, 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. DEL_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 M.Sc. Biochemistry meets the four accreditation criteria, voted by the Board of the High Council on 29th September 2022, as follows:

ACCREDITATION CRITERION 1 – TEACHING POLICY AND CHARACTERISATION

The study programme is totally consistent with the institution's educational training strategy at the Ahmadu Bello University level as well as at the National Universities Commission (NUC) level and recognised by the World Bank as an Africa Centre of Excellence. It has a central and coherent position in the Biochemistry department of the University and among the other proposed programmes. The study programme addresses all required thematic and courses, including an interdisciplinary approach for the different scientific needs and for entrepreneurship. Moreover, the programme is effectively backed by research units and partially funded by research funds and bodies.

Although there are some signed agreements with foreign universities, there is no international mobility. This is explained by the national situation (scarcity of funds, security). In addition, the socio-economic world is not sufficiently involved in training. This is justified by the research-oriented strategy of the programme, but ultimately the links are still too weak for an M.Sc. programme. The programme appears to be scientifically relevant, functional, and highly structured. Additional openings towards the international and socio-economic world would enable it to reach the best international standards.

ACCREDITATION CRITERION 2 – THE PEDAGOGICAL ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

The structure of the study programme and the teaching methods used are adapted to the target competences. They involve socio-economic actors, especially for the Management and Entrepreneurship course, but stronger links and involvement of these partners could be implemented in the programme. Students have access to a range of courses (elective and core) and facilities, and are required to undertake 12 to 18 months of research to complete their curricula. The several elective courses proposed by the programme allow the students to specialize and offer career flexibility.

Although different types of teaching environments exist, the programme would benefit from diversifying its teaching practices (project-based teaching, inverted classes, for instance). Because of the Nigerian economic and safety context, outgoing and incoming mobility are limited. Nevertheless, language support for non-English-speaking foreign students is provided.

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

The programme is minimally monitored in terms of its attractiveness, performance and relevance. Yet, basic data on student success and integration are provided. The monitoring of outcomes is not fully formalised, but the Centre is able to identify students' further studies and integration into the labour market. However, it appears that the data is not used sufficiently to monitor and propose changes to the programme.

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

The programme is managed and implemented by a formally identified teaching team and relies on a quality-and ethics-based approach. The programme also has sufficient administrative, pedagogical and human resources to fulfil its mission and undergoes an external evaluation by the National Universities Commission every five years. Students are involved in the management of the programme through the Students Representative Council which allows them being part of the University processes. Students recruitment procedures are clearly defined and brought to the attention of the stakeholders. However, the M.Sc. in Biochemistry could benefit from more precise internal evaluation processes and by involving the teaching staff in the analysis of the students' evaluation of the courses.

Article 2

The M.Sc. Biochemistry, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, 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;
- diversify teaching practices by implementing project-based teaching, inverted classes (flipped classrooms);
- involve the socio-economic partners by enhancing their participation in courses and by including them in workshops and seminars.

Article 4

This decision will be published on the Hcéres website.

Paris, 15th March 2024.

The acting President
signed
Stéphane Le Boulter