

# WP3/D3.3 EU Recognized Accreditation & Certification

Accreditation & Certification Procedure with ASIIN

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## The Accreditation and Certification Process

The Digital4Business Consortium decided to implement the accreditation and certification procedure with the German accreditation agency ASIIN. The decision was taken based on ASIIN's international reputation and its experience with complex consortia and special quality assurance procedures. ASIIN is an official EQAR-registered agency and is thus allowed to apply the European Approach, a special quality assurance method that was specifically developed for joint programs. Most importantly, ASIIN was chosen because it is one of the few agencies that offers and implements so-called combined procedures. This entails that an accreditation on program level and a certification of shorter programs (e.g. micro-credentials) can be combined in one procedure and thus guarantees a higher time and cost efficiency.

In order to prepare well for the quality assurance process described above, the Digital4Business Consortium started to involve ASIIN at an early stage. In September 2023, an ASIIN representative was invited to one of the official in-person Consortium meetings which took place in Potsdam, Germany. The agency representative introduced the Consortium to the European Approach and gave a first insight into the procedural steps and relevant documents needed for the process. In November 2023, the Consortium carried out a workshop with ASIIN to get ready for international accreditation. During this workshop, ASIIN introduced in detail the accreditation and certification criteria based on the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG), the different (internal) processes of the quality assurance procedure, and focused in particular on the development of the application documents (self-evaluation report and relevant evidences).

From January to April 2024, the Consortium – in particular the WP3 leaders – developed an extensive set of application documents. Next to a self-evaluation report, this set included in particular official documents related to the study program, such as the Cooperation Agreement, the Study and Examination Regulations, the Module Handbook containing complete module descriptions for each individual module, the Student Handbook, the Internal Quality Handbook, a sample Diploma Supplement and a sample Diploma Certificate, a sample Evaluation Questionnaire, and CVs of all staff members involved in the program/individual modules.

A first draft of the application documents set was submitted at ASIIN on 14 April 2024 for a preliminary review. The preliminary review done by the ASIIN representative showed that the set of application documents was complete and did not require further improvements or additional documents. However, the Consortium still used the time until the final deadline for submission of the final set of application documents for internal reviews and quality checks. The final set of application documents was eventually submitted at ASIIN on 30 April 2024.

The next step within the quality assurance process will be the on-site visits, during which an ASIIN expert team and an ASIIN representative will visit the premises of two Consortium partners and carry out discussions with different stakeholders (university management, program

coordinators, teaching staff involved in the program, students from similar programs). The on-site visit will take place on 4 June 2024 in Potsdam at German UDS (for the accreditation of the whole degree program) and on 5 June 2024 in Dublin at NCI (for the certification of micro-credentials.).

A final accreditation decision by ASIIN is expected by the end of September 2024.

## Overview of the application documents

The following application documents were submitted at ASIIN on 30 April 2024:

- Self-Evaluation Report
- Cooperation Agreement
- Examination and Study Regulations
- Module Handbook
- Student Handbook
- Internal Quality Handbook
- Staff Handbook
- Sample Diploma Supplement
- Sample Diploma Certificate
- Sample Student Survey Questionnaire

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