

Media Release of 12 May 2015  
ZHAW School of Management and Law

## AACSB Accreditation for ZHAW School of Management and Law

**With effect from May 2015, the ZHAW School of Management and Law is the first business school of a Swiss university of applied sciences to become AACSB-accredited. A mere 5 percent of the world's business schools have been awarded this prestigious standard of achievement, which is based on the highest quality standards and requires the institution and all its members to commit to rigorous quality assurance.**

In early May 2015, the AACSB Board announced its decision to grant an AACSB accreditation to the ZHAW School of Management and Law (SML) in Winterthur. It thus followed the recommendation made by the International Review Team which had visited the SML in late March to review the university's business program. For three days, all relevant documents and internal processes were examined and numerous interviews were conducted with students, faculty members, and other members of staff, as well as with business leaders. This visit was the final stage of a strict, multi-level accreditation process which extended over a period of several years. The SML is the first business program of any Swiss university of applied sciences to have reached this high standard of achievement, and only the second university of applied sciences worldwide. The other Swiss recipients of an AACSB accreditation are the IMD in Lausanne, the University of St. Gallen and the Business Faculty of the University of Zurich.

### Benefits of AACSB Accreditation

This institutional accreditation is a significant milestone, which means more international recognition for qualifications earned at the SML. The Dean André Haelg is convinced that "in an increasingly global business community, our students, our employees, and our partners will all benefit. An AACSB accreditation is evidence of the high standard of our educational programs and the international competitiveness of our graduates. These and other positioning factors will continue to gain importance in the future." Its new status will enable the SML to cast a wider net to attract desirable new partnership universities, which will open up new opportunities for student exchange and collaborative ventures.

### Continuous Quality Improvement

This AACSB accreditation is a reward for the excellent efforts on the part of school's faculty and staff over the past few years. At the same time, the distinction also represents a challenge: Every five years, the SML will undergo a rigorous review process to keep its status. Finally, AACSB accreditation is also an obligation, since accredited business schools need to permanently review their own performance, processes, and systems and continuously develop them further.

### AACSB Accommodates Different Types of Business Programs

AACSB has defined strict criteria which have to be met by all accredited institutions. At the same time, individual characteristics are accommodated as long as they follow a clear mission statement and achieve the goals deriving from it. Both traditional universities and universities of applied sciences are therefore entitled to strive for accreditation. This first-time AACSB Accreditation by a Swiss business school of a university of applied sciences is therefore also an impressive testimonial of the equality of university types ("equal but different") in Switzerland as provided for under the Federal Act on the Funding and Coordination of the Higher Education Sector (HFKG).



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**ZHAW School of Management and Law**

The ZHAW School of Management and Law was established in 1968 as one of the first institutions of higher learning for business administration in Switzerland (HWV). Today it is one of the eight schools of ZHAW Zurich University of Applied Sciences. It delivers study programs, conducts research, and provides services in the following disciplines:

- General Management
- Banking, Finance, Insurance
- Public Management
- International Business
- Business Law

Some 3,700 students are enrolled in eight BSc and six MSc programs, and a further 1,900 participate in one of the continuing education programs offered by the ZHAW School of Management and Law, which include an international Executive MBA, 13 Master of Advanced Studies (MAS) programs and a range of shorter programs and courses.

[www.sml.zhaw.ch](http://www.sml.zhaw.ch)

**AACSB International**

The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB International) was founded in 1916. It is a nonprofit organization which has become the most significant accreditation institution for business schools today. 736 collegiate business schools have so far become accredited in 48 countries all over the world. Its mission is to advance quality management education worldwide. Accredited business schools consistently apply criteria that guarantee a high standard for their educational and research activities. AACSB ensures that accredited institutions offer academic study programs at benchmark levels. The headquarters of AACSB are in Tampa, Florida (USA).

[www.aacsb.edu](http://www.aacsb.edu)