Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
National Commission for
Academic Accreditation & Assessment

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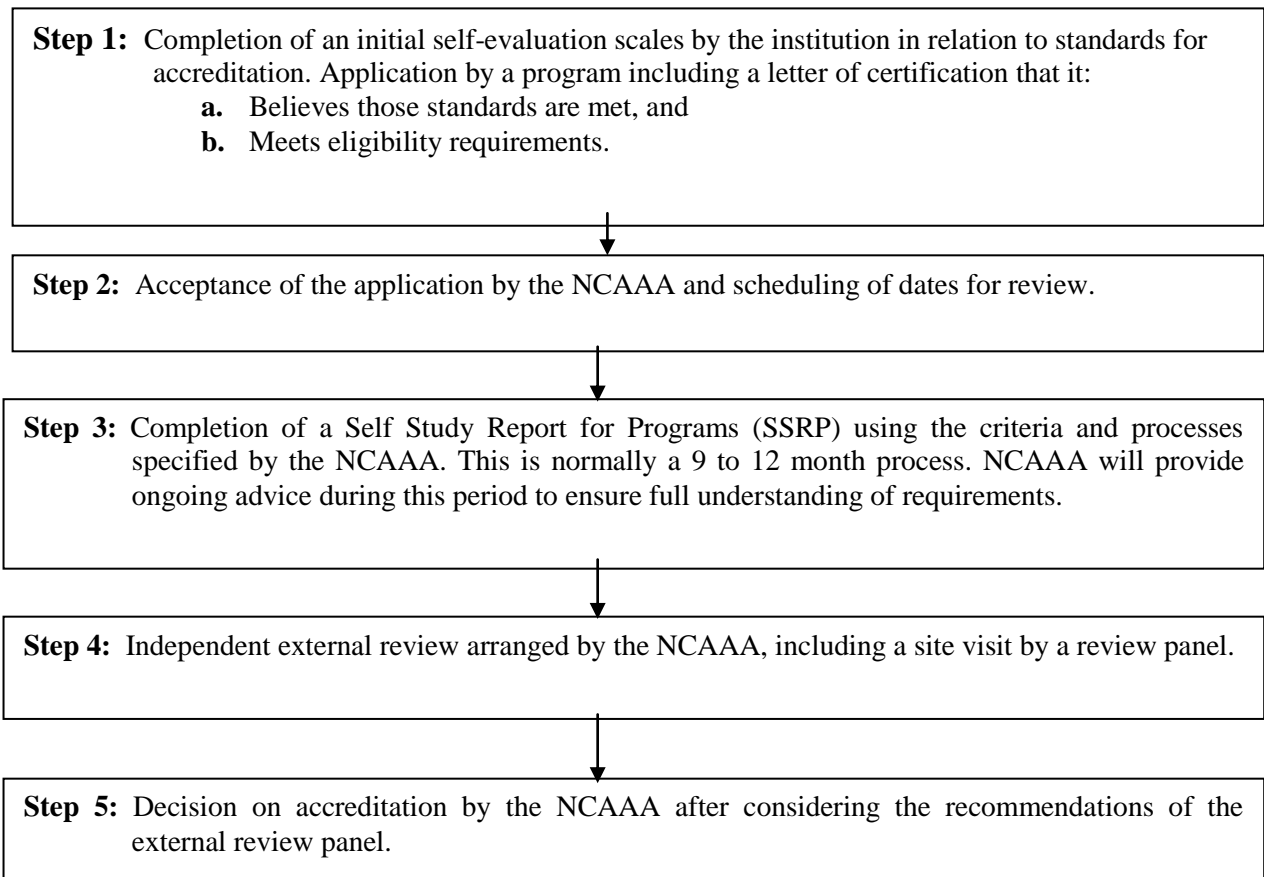الهيئـــــة الوطنيـــــة للتقويـــم
والاعـتـمــاد الأكـاديـمـــي

Eligibility Requirements for an Application for Program Accreditation

The process for accreditation of an institution involves a rigorous self evaluation in relation to the eleven standards specified by the NCAAA followed by an independent external review. In that external review a panel of experts will verify the conclusions of the institution's self evaluation and consider the quality of performance in relation to the NCAAA standards.

Before program accreditation process begins the NCAAA must be satisfied that certain requirements are met. These requirements relate to core elements in the standards for quality assurance and accreditation, and to compliance with the terms and conditions of its official approval or (for a private institution) its license to operate.

The major steps involved are:

Step 1: Completion of an initial self-evaluation scales by the institution in relation to standards for accreditation. Application by a program including a letter of certification that it:
   a. Believes those standards are met, and
   b. Meets eligibility requirements.

Step 2: Acceptance of the application by the NCAAA and scheduling of dates for review.

Step 3: Completion of a Self Study Report for Programs (SSRP) using the criteria and processes specified by the NCAAA. This is normally a 9 to 12 month process. NCAAA will provide ongoing advice during this period to ensure full understanding of requirements.

Step 4: Independent external review arranged by the NCAAA, including a site visit by a review panel.

Step 5: Decision on accreditation by the NCAAA after considering the recommendations of the external review panel.

Details of requirements for a self study and the external review process are included in Part (3) of *Handbook for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions.*

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Accreditation is public recognition that necessary standards are met in the management and delivery of a program, and the quality of learning outcomes are achieved by students. The standards must exceed or be equivalent to what is done in high quality international institutions.

The process for accreditation of a program involves a rigorous self evaluation in relation to the eleven standards specified by the NCAAA, followed by an independent external review. In the external review a panel of experts will verify the conclusions of the program self evaluation and consider the quality of performance in relation to the NCAAA standards.

Relationship to Institutional Accreditation:

Criteria for program accreditation relate primarily to the program concerned. However the quality of a program and the evidence that is required for accreditation depend to a considerable extent on processes within the institution as a whole. These may be beyond the control of those managing the program but they still affect its quality and must be considered in program evaluation. Consequently, the NCAAA requires an institutional accreditation review as a whole before going on to accredit individual programs.

It is important to recognize that if a program is to be accredited ALL the standards required must be met, regardless of who is responsible for delivering particular services.

If the institution has earned accreditation recognition by the NCAAA the institutional requirements will be assumed to have been met.

> **There are extra-ordinary circumstances when special arrangements related to program eligibility for accreditation are made by the NCAAA if the institution has not yet been accredited. These institutional requirements are provided below (see Minimum Institutional Requirements for Eligibility for Program Accreditation and page 12).**

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Application Requirements for Program Accreditation Eligibility

1   **Authorisation of Program**
The program must be one which the institution is authorized to offer by the relevant government authority. (i.e. at a level and within a field of study that is included in its final license or Ministry or other government approval.

Attach a copy of the approval from the MoHE or decision by the University Council

2   **Application for accreditation**
The application must have been approved by the Rector of the university or the Dean of the college within which the program is offered.

Attach a letter of approval signed by Rector, Vice Rector or Chair of Board of Trustee

3.   **Program Specifications (refer attachment 1)**

A program specification must have been prepared, using the NCAAA template. The program specification must have been approved by the institution's senior academic committee.

Complete a program specification as attached

4.   **Course Specifications (refer attachment 2)**
Course specifications must have been prepared, using the NCAAA template, and approved for all courses included in the program.

Complete three course specifications for each level as attached

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Clearly stated descriptions must be available of course content, program requirements, and other regulations affecting students in the program, including institution or college–wide requirements as well as those specific to the program concerned.

Provide copies of the descriptions of course and program requirements or regulations

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6. **Annual course or program reports**

Completed annual program and course reports, using NCAAA templates, and must have been prepared for at least one year for the application to be approved and for a second year by the time of the site visit.

Provide copies of the last two reports

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7. **Student evaluation surveys**

Student evaluation surveys must have been conducted with a minimum of a (50%) response rate for all courses, and for the program. Summary reports on survey responses must be available for at least two years by the time the SSRP is completed.

Provide a summary report containing statistical data from the last two years. Attach three questionnaires

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8 **Student graduation results**

At least one group of students must have completed the program, and feedback from that group of students must be available.

Provide a summary report on the analysis of the evaluations from graduates

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9   Program Advisory committees

For any program designed to prepare students for professional practice, a program, department or college advisory committee must have been established with a majority of members in the profession(s) concerned who are external to the institution. Terms of reference of that committee must include reviewing program evaluation data and providing advice on program content and delivery arrangements.

Provide a sample of minutes, records and reports for the last two years

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10   Institutional KPI's and Benchmarks

One or more institutions or agencies must have been selected for benchmarking the quality of the program, and a list of KPIs that are considered in using these benchmarks must be available. If these indicators and benchmarks include unpublished data, agreements must have been completed for the relevant data to be provided.

Provide a summary report on the results of the institutional KPI's and benchmarks

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11. National Qualification Framework (NQF)

A brief summary report must be provided demonstrating consistency of the program with the requirements of the *National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education* (NQF). These requirements include the title of the award to be granted on completion of the program, the number of credit hours (which must be in addition to any studies in a foundation or preparatory program), learning outcomes in the domains of learning, and evidence of the level of achievement of learning outcomes in those domains.

Provide a brief summary report demonstrating verification of NQF requirements

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12 Self Evaluation Scales (SES) – refer attachment 3

The *Self Evaluation Scales for Higher Education Programs* must have been completed with a rating of at least (3 stars) on all standards and sub-standards applicable to the program. (Note: It is not necessary for every single item within the scales to be given three stars or more. However that rating for each group of items must be at that level and the Commission may specify certain individual items on which a minimum three star rating is required).

Complete a first draft of the Self Evaluation scales for Programs (SESP)   **Refer attachment 3**

13 Self Study Report for Programs – refer attachment 4
An initial draft of the *Self Study Report for Programs* (SSRP) must be submitted.

Complete an initial draft of the Self Study Report for Programs (SSRP)   **Refer attachment 4**

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MINIMUM INSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ELIGIBILITY FOR PROGRAM ACCREDITATION:

In the event that the institution is **NOT** accredited by NCAAA, there are extra-ordinary circumstances when special arrangements related to program eligibility for accreditation are made by the NCAAA. These institutional requirements are provided below. There may be additional flexible requirements that are determined according to individual situations.

1. Strategic Plan

Provide a copy of the institutions approved strategic plan

2. Quality Centre and strategic plan for Quality Assurance

Establishment of a quality centre and preparation of a strategic plan for quality assurance.

Provide a summary report about quality assurance process and improvement

3. Data on Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)

Existence of an approved set of key performance indicators for use within the institution that include indicators of program quality. Data from these indicators should be available for the institution as a whole and for a majority of programs in the institution (including the program seeking eligibility for accreditation).

Provide a summary report on the KPI data affecting programs across the institution

4. Program Approval process

A clear description of the institution's processes for program approval, monitoring program quality, and approval of program changes.

Provide a copy of a manual or documents containing the regulations, description for program approval, changes and review

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5. **Student Evaluation surveys**

Use of student course and program evaluation surveys in at least (50%) of colleges or departments across the institution and provision of data for the institution as a whole on common items in a form that can be used for within-institution benchmarking.

Provide a summary report and evidence of student surveys

6. **Student advising and counselling**

Provision of student advising and counselling services and processes for the evaluation of the adequacy of those services for the students attending the institution.

Provide a summary report and evidence of student surveys

7. **Extra Curricular activities**

Provision of adequate facilities for extra-curricular activities appropriate for the students attending the institution.

Provide a summary report concerning the extra curricular activities

8. **Learning Resources**

Provisions of learning resources adequate to support the programs offered by the institution and processes in place to identify and respond to program requirements and evaluate the adequacy of this provision.

Provide a summary report concerning Learning resources

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9. **Institutional Storage of statistical data**

A system within the institution for providing summary statistical data to departments, colleges and central committees (Quality committee and Curriculum Committee or equivalent). This data must include at least the following information and be available for purposes of benchmarking of programs throughout the institution:

    a. Grade distributions for all courses.

    b. Mean grade distributions for all courses for each department (or program), college, and the institution as a whole (desirably provided for courses at each year level).

    c. Completion rates for all courses.

    d. Mean completion rates for all courses for each department (or program), college, and the institution as a whole (desirably provided for courses at each year level).

    e. Year to year progression rates for all year levels, and total program completion rates for all programs.

    f. Data on employment outcomes of graduates.

If programs are offered in sections for male and female students the statistical data must be available for both sections as well as in aggregated form or both sections.

Note: Accreditation by the NCAAA is based on all the standards for higher education programs and will apply regardless of whether services are managed by the college or department concerned or by institutional level organizational units. For NCAAA program accreditation, judgments place particular emphasis to standard 4 and all of its sub-standards.

Provide copies of the last two reports on program performance

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Eligibility for Program Accreditation Checklist

Name of Institution_____ **Date** _____

Tick the column beside each criterion to indicate that it is met.

Eligibility Check List	Criteria		
Program Name _____	**Criteria Met**	**Required Evidence**	**Confirmed (NCAAA)**
Program Requirements			
1. Program authorized		Approval of the MoHE/ Decision by the University Council	
2. Application for accreditation approved		Signed by Rector or vice rector/ Chair of Board of trustee	
3. Program specification using the NCAAA template (including program learning outcomes)		Copy	
4. Course specification using the NCAAA template		Sample copies (three courses from each level)	
5. Descriptions of course and program requirements and regulations		Copies	
6. Annual course and program reports using the NCAAA templates		Copies of the last two reports	
7. Summary report of student evaluation survey results		Report about Statistical analysis of the three questioners for the last 2 years	
8. Students graduated, evaluations by the students are available		Graduation book/ Report about analyses of results	
9. Program advisory committees		Sample of the committee minute/ records/ reports for the last two years	
10. Institutional approved KPIs and benchmarks with analysis		Reports on the results of these indicators and benchmarks	
11. Consistency with NQF		Report demonstrating verification of NQF requirements	
12. Self evaluation scales are complete and an initial draft of the SSRP		Completed program self-evaluation scales report and the first draft of the SSRP	

Name & Signature of University Rector   (or Dean for Private Colleges)
_____ Date:_____

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	Minimum Institutional Requirements for Eligibility for Program Accreditation (in the event the institution is not accredited by NCAAA)			
	Institutional Requirements for Program Eligibility	**Criteria**		
		Criteria Met	**Required Evidence**	**Confirmed (NCAAA)**
1.	Strategic plan for the institution plus action plan for the program		Copy	
2.	Quality Center and plan for quality		Documents/ Report about Q A process and improvement	
3.	Data on KPIs affecting all programs across the institution		Report concerning the program KPIs and benchmarking with analysis	
4.	Regulations and descriptions of processes for program approval, changes, and review		Documents/Report concerning the program	
5.	Summary data on student evaluation surveys across the entire institution		Copy	
6.	Student advising and counselling system		Documents/ Report	
7.	Facilities for extra-curricular activities		Report concerning the program	
8.	Provision of learning resources and system for responding to program requirements		Report concerning the program	
9.	Institutional system for provision and storage of statistical data		Copies of the last two reports on the program performance	

Name & Signature of University Rector (or Dean for Private Colleges)

_____ **Date:** _____