

ACCREDITATION QUALITY STANDARDS



EAHEA[®]
European Agency for Higher Education & Accreditation

EAHEA Accreditation Quality Standards

The European Agency for Higher Education and Accreditation standards become an easy and effective instrument for measuring institutional education quality on the international level because they are not affected by local legislative formats, regulations, or cultural idiosyncrasies.

Any educational institution that intends to earn the accreditation status from the European Agency for Higher Education and Accreditation must demonstrate compliance, through the application for accreditation (Self Assessment Report), with the education quality standards set forth by the European Agency for Higher Education and Accreditation.

The accreditation standards set forth by the EAHEA are:

1. Administrative Responsibility Accreditation

The accreditation of administrative responsibility refers to results associated with the legal status, facilities, financial stability, and staff of the institution as well as its commitment to ethical values and continuous improvement. The applicant higher education institution must demonstrate its administrative capacity, stability, and responsibility.

The following set of standards will guide the institution to achieve the desired administrative responsibility.

1.1. Identification: The educational institution identifies its legal name, foundation date, missions statement, the type of education offered (traditional education, adult education, distance learning, part-time residential learning, professional training, etc.), current number of students enrolled, and current number of graduates.

1.2. Legal Authorization: The educational institution is legally authorized to conduct its educational activities according to the laws and procedures of the corresponding country, state, and/or province. The European Agency for Higher Education and Accreditation requires that the educational institution provides proof of its legal status. Copies of the certificate of incorporation, articles of the institution, letters of authorization from governmental bodies, or any other relevant documents attaining its legal status may be used as proof. If applicable the educational institution should also explain in a brief report what are the specific legal requirements and policy of its country of origin such as the laws, norms, and/or government departments involved.

1.3. Accreditation, Recognition, and References: The educational institution must describe any third-party references that attain to its education quality such as memberships in relevant professional bodies, accreditation, recognition, organizational approvals from third parties, quality assurance certifications. Proof of these references must be provided in the form of a copy of the corresponding letter or certificate or with an active verifiable internet link to the organization.

1.4. Facilities: The physical situation, transportation, and facilities provided at the center are suitable for its users and the activities conducted by the educational institution. Facilities are open to users at clearly specified and appropriate times which take into account any special needs of its users. Users have convenient and accessible communication with the staff. There is a manager who has overall responsibility for running the center daily.

The European Agency for Higher Education and Accreditation requires that the educational institution provides a brief description of its situation, transportation, and facilities, as well as working hours, study timetables, yearly schedules, and the name of the staff manager.

1.5. Financial Stability: The educational institution is financially responsible and can meet its obligations to learners. It should have a corporate and financial plan for its future development. Where the educational activity is embedded in a larger body, this plan may be for the body as a whole. The European Agency for Higher Education and Accreditation suggests that it should also have adequate insurance to cover its liabilities and responsibilities to learners and third parties, and appropriate contingency and recovery plans.

EAHEA recommends that the educational institution provides a financial and business plan detailing business and professional development for the past three years as well as the planning of the following 3 years.

1.6. Qualified Staff: All staff are suitable for the positions they hold, and possess appropriate qualifications and experience. Steps are taken to ensure such qualifications and experience. Learners are supported by suitably qualified staff at all times the educational institution is open. The European Agency for Higher Education and Accreditation requires an organizational chart displaying the names, positions, and duties of the educational institution staff and the educational qualifications and professional experience of all staff working at the educational institution at the managerial level.

1.7. Educational Values and Ethics: The educational institution demonstrates a high commitment to educational values. This should be evident in any corporate, strategic, or marketing objectives the educational institution adopts. Its actions should at all times be compatible with those educational values. The educational institution should also be committed to the continuous professional development of its staff and teachers and adopt widely accepted norms of good business and employment practice. The European Agency for Higher Education and Accreditation suggests that the educational institution has a clear, fair, and effective procedure for dealing with complaints and refunds, and that has control over the use and storage of data, student records, and copyrights. The educational institution does not discriminate, directly or indirectly, sex, race, color, nationality, ethnic origin, or religious or political belief.

1.8. Permanent Quality Control: The educational institution notifies and encourages its students and graduates to contact the EAHEA and communicate their satisfaction, complaints, or suggestions about their learning experience. All comments will be used for the permanent improvement of the accredited institution and to monitor that the EAHEA policies are respected. The European Agency for Higher Education and Accreditation suggests that all students and applicants from the accredited institution should know that they are welcome to contact the EAHEA at any time, to provide a report on their satisfaction or complaints.

1.9. Continuous Improvement: This standard speaks to the awareness of needed improvement which is a direct result of the self-study process. There is no one preferred method of addressing this standard. Rather, the "planning for change and scrutiny for improvement" will often emerge from the internal evaluative mechanisms during the accreditation process in the context of the educational institution itself. The European Agency for Higher Education and Accreditation encourages purposeful change and improvement through the self-study process conducted by the higher education institution. The EAHEA also suggests that the educational institution routinely maintains effective checks and control to foster continuing public confidence and improvement.

2. Institutional Integrity Accreditation

The accreditation of institutional integrity refers to results associated with information and admission, fees, and the overall administration of the institution's processes and services. The applicant higher education institution must demonstrate the means and procedures that assure its institutional integrity.

The following set of standards will guide the institution to achieve the desired institutional integrity.

2.1. Information and Veracity: Before enrollment on a particular course, the prospective student is made properly aware of all terms and conditions relevant to that course, either in the prospectus or similar material, by correspondence, or in discussion with the educational institution. Fees clearly state what services are covered by those fees; what additional payments, if any, may be necessary to achieve the course outcome; what period those fees are valid for; payment plans; the circumstances under which full or partial refunds, or transfers to other courses, are possible; and any other policies that may affect the course fees. No advertising and promotional material gives a false, misleading, or exaggerated impression of the educational institution, its personnel, its provision, or the outcomes of that provision.

The European Agency for Higher Education and Accreditation suggests that all publicity material identifies the educational institution, explains the education or training on offer, and avoids any impression that employment is on offer or somehow guaranteed. The European Agency for Higher Education and Accreditation requires samples of every prospectus, brochure, advertising and promotion material, recruitment-related letters, and written evidence of any information affecting the prospective student attached to the self-study report of any educational institution applying for accreditation.

2.2. Admission Procedures: Potential students are handled promptly and sympathetically by a person competent to do so. Staff or agents engaged in the promotion are fully briefed in and adhere to the admissions policy of the educational institution. The educational institution takes full responsibility for the actions, statements, and conduct of its sales personnel. The students are made aware of their responsibility to assess their own needs and capabilities before embarking upon a course and are offered an opportunity to discuss these matters with the educational institution before enrollment. The European Agency for Higher Education and Accreditation suggests verification of the following issues before enrollment: Whether the applicant's objectives can be realized through that course. Whether the course is suitable for the applicant's level of competence. Any special needs of the applicant.

2.3. Legal Contract: There is a learning agreement, which may be legally enforceable, between the educational institution and the student. The European Agency for Higher Education and Accreditation suggests that such a contract should specify: The nature and scope of the course. The services to which the educational institution is committed. Any disclaimers which protect the educational institution. The rights, obligations, and commitments expected of the learner. The financial agreement between the learner and the institution.

2.4. Assistance: The educational institution provides the student with all the guidance and channels of communication necessary to improve service, student performance, and academic success. The learning experience should never become impersonal and detached. Students have adequate and clear procedures available to handle any questions, problems, or suggestions. Difficulties between particular individuals, should they arise, should not impede the learning process.

2.5. Post-Graduate Service: The educational institution keeps students' records for a minimum of 5 years and will provide graduates with duplicates of diplomas, transcripts, certificates, or other pertinent documents upon request. Student records are sufficient, accurately maintained, and up to date. Records should include at least, amongst other information, details of all payments received and/or refunds made, details of any special agreements on learning outcomes between the educational institution and the student, and information on student progress such as records of all assignments and examinations results. Records should be maintained in a secure place. The European Agency for Higher Education and Accreditation requires a thorough description of how each of the above set of standards is accomplished. Sample letters or documents, and any written evidence related to the above procedures may be attached to the self-study report of any educational institution applying for accreditation.

3. Academic Quality Accreditation

The accreditation of academic quality refers to results associated with teaching, learning, and service. The applicant higher education institution must explain the means and procedures that advance academic quality. It must demonstrate how those procedures emphasize student achievement and high expectations of teaching and learning, research, and service; and that those procedures are developed within the framework of institutional mission.

The following set of standards will guide the institution to achieve the desired academic quality results.

3.1. Courses / Programs Description: Total number and description of all courses/programs offered.

3.2. Hours of Study: How many hours of study on completion of each course and how they are earned (class attendance, homework, independent study, project, challenge exam, transfer, tutorial, online, credit for prior knowledge, or any other means).

3.3. Course Objectives or Expected Learning Outcomes: A brief and clear statement of what the student can expect to achieve on successful completion of each course. The European Agency for Higher Education and Accreditation suggests that despite course objectives may vary from learner to learner, they should be, in all cases, made clear to potential students before enrollment. Explaining course objectives may be specified in terms of the development of specific skills, vocational or professional competence, the preparation for internally- or externally-assessed qualifications, the provision of job-related training, the imparting of information, or personal growth. In any case, the majority of the programs offered should lead to grant higher education degrees, assuring academic quality, achievement, and student success. The European Agency for Higher Education and Accreditation requires a list of all the courses or programs offered that must include the course name, description, total hours of study per course, any equivalent credits or academic units (if applicable), and any degree or qualification earned upon completion. A sample of the course objectives or expected learning outcomes for one course should also be attached to the self-study report of the educational institution applying for accreditation.

3.4. Course Contents and Materials: Course contents and material are sufficient to achieve the course's stated objectives in whatever media and by whatever method provided. The reading, listening, or viewing level of course materials is appropriate to its intended students. The course contents and material are structured to facilitate effective learning and real acquisition of skills.

The European Agency for Higher Education and Accreditation suggests that good quality study material should include: an appropriate and well-managed presentation; subdivision into appropriate units, lessons or modules; a sequential exposition, with new material building on previous material; the use of a variety of approaches, including summaries, visual material, and illustrative examples as appropriate, to illuminate particular concepts and the inclusion of clear instructions to guide the learner through the material. The European Agency for Higher Education and Accreditation requires a minimum of one full and detailed sample of course contents, organization, and study material attached to the self-study report of any educational institution applying for accreditation.

3.5. Course Delivery and Availability: The provision of study materials to learners is prompt and timely and guidance on study skills is also provided. If a significant element of the provision is technology-based, the educational institution ensures that the learner understands the system requirements. If materials other than those supplied by the educational institution are required, clear information as to where to obtain those materials is given, and their probable cost.

3.6. Course Update: Course contents and materials are reviewed within specified periods to ensure they remain available, effective, and up-to-date.

3.7. Teaching Methodology: The higher learning institution must provide a thorough description of the methodology or teaching style, such as class attendance, distance learning, part-time seminars, TV/Broadcasting, etc. Applicant institutions are encouraged to describe other pedagogical initiatives and activities that advance academic quality.

3.8. Tutorial or Guidance: Teachers or tutorial support of sufficient quality is available to all students. Where this is not the case, the course material is capable of achieving its stated objectives without such support.

3.9. Teachers' Proficiency: Teachers are qualified in their areas of expertise. They have a sound understanding and up-to-date knowledge of their subject; they know how learners learn; they help and motivate their students and communicate enthusiasm for the subject. They also make effective use of feedback from students to enhance their performance as teachers.

3.10. Assessment and Evaluation: Student progress is assessed on a regular, ongoing basis, and learners are provided with prompt and helpful comments on their progress about learning expectations and goals. Appropriate schedules for the submission and return of assignments and examinations are adopted. Care is taken to support and encourage learners who submit unsatisfactory work or examinations; learning support is only withdrawn after all reasonable efforts have been made to overcome their problems.

The European Agency for Higher Education and Accreditation requires a description of the evaluation methodology and a list of teachers displaying the names, area of expertise, courses, major or department they are responsible for, and their level of involvement (part-time or full time). Copies of the Curriculum Vitae or Resume of all teachers or tutors directly involved in the learning process must also be enclosed. Curriculum Vitae should show personal biodata, education, and professional experience.

3.11. Certificate or Diploma: Any certificate or diploma offered by the higher education institution on completion of a course indicates: Name of the awarding body.

Nature of the achievement recognized (degree, professional recognition, etc.). Name of the student. Date of completion of the course. Representative signature and/or seal of the awarding body.

3.12. Transcript or Equivalent: On completion of a course, the higher learning institution must also produce a transcript or document containing, at least, information about: Total number of hours of study earned. Grades or assessed qualification achieved. Name of the awarding body. Name and birth date of the student. Name and date of completion of the course or subjects. Representative signature and/or seal of the awarding body. This information does not need to be on a separate document. It may also show on the certificate or diploma. The European Agency for Higher Education and Accreditation suggests that any transcript should be produced bearing in mind that it must be clearly understood by other educational institutions, companies, and people. It should contain complete information about the grading system used by the higher learning institution; the hours of study/credits ratio (per example:10 hours of study equal 1 credit, academic unit or point); full biodata about the student; detailed information about the course contents or subjects; and the higher learning institution's contact address, phone or e-mail. The European Agency for Higher Education and Accreditation requires a minimum of one sample of the certificate or diploma, and the transcript attached to the self-study report of any educational institution applying for accreditation.



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