ACCREDITATION QUALITY STANDARDS



EAHEA®

European Association for Higher Education Advancement

Document Control

Document	Accreditation Quality Standards
Version	4.0
First issued	March 2003
Last updated	November 2026
Document owner	Secretariat of EAHEA
Approving body	Management Board of EAHEA
Review	At least every five years, and whenever a rule that this document relies on changes
Replaces	The previous edition of this document
Related documents	General Provisions; Accreditation Regulations; Accreditation Standards
Language	English. The English text is the official version.

Revision History

Version	Date	Description
1.0	March 2003	First edition.
2.0	September 2020	Revised edition.
3.0	April 2024	Revised edition.
4.0	November 2026	Full revision: aligned with the General Provisions, the Commissions Charter and the current services and fees structure of EAHEA.

Accreditation Quality Standards

The EAHEA Accreditation Quality Standards are the evaluation form of EAHEA accreditation. They measure the quality of an institution at the international level, independently of local legislative formats, regulations and cultural differences. An institution that wants to be accredited demonstrates compliance with them in its Self-Study Report, and the Secretariat grades each item on the basis of the evidence.

How the Quality Standards Are Used

Areas and items: The Quality Standards have three areas and 26 items: Administrative Responsibility (9 items), Institutional Integrity (5 items) and Academic Quality (12 items). They apply the nine Standards for Accreditation, and the table in the Accreditation Standards shows which Standard is mainly evaluated in which item.

Grades: Each item is graded from 0 to 4. A grade of 4 (Outstanding) means that the evidence is complete and no improvement is needed; 3 (Standard) that the item is met and may improve; 2 (Acceptable) that it is met with weaknesses that need improvement; 1 (Insufficient) that it does not meet the minimum; 0 (Null) that the requirement is not met at all or that no evidence was given.

Average: The grades of all the items that apply to the service count equally. Their average decides the result, as the Accreditation Regulations provide: 3.0 to 4.0 accreditation is granted, 2.0 to 2.9 Conditional Accreditation, 0.0 to 1.9 denial.

Essential items: Four items are essential: 1.2 Legal Authorization, 1.5 Financial Stability, 2.1 Information and Veracity and 3.10 Assessment and Evaluation. A grade below 2 on an essential item prevents the result "Accreditation granted" whatever the average.

Proportionality: The items are applied in proportion to the size, mission and delivery mode of the institution. For Program Accreditation and Course Accreditation, only the parts of the items that bear on the program or the course are graded.

Evidence: The institution attaches the evidence that each item names to its Self-Study Report, in English or with an English translation. Where an institution is young or small and a document does not yet exist, it says so and gives what it has.

1. Administrative Responsibility

Administrative Responsibility covers the legal status, facilities, financial stability and staff of the institution and its commitment to ethical values and continuous improvement. The institution shows its administrative capacity, stability and responsibility.

1.1. Identification: The institution states its legal name, date of foundation and mission, the types of education that it offers (for example traditional, adult, distance, part-time or professional training), and its current numbers of enrolled learners and graduates. Evidence: a short institutional profile with these facts.

1.2. Legal Authorization: The institution is legally authorized to conduct its educational activities under the laws and procedures of its country or region, and it proves its legal status. Where it is relevant, the institution briefly

explains the legal requirements and the authorities involved in its country. Evidence: the certificate of incorporation or registration, the articles, letters of authorization from the competent authorities, or other documents of legal status.

1.3. Accreditation, Recognition and References: The institution describes any third-party references to its quality, such as memberships of professional bodies, accreditations, approvals by third parties and quality assurance certifications. Evidence: a copy of each letter or certificate, or an active verifiable link to the issuing organization.

1.4. Facilities: The place, the transport and the facilities suit the users and the activities of the institution. They are open at clear and appropriate times that take account of special needs, learners can easily reach the staff, and a manager is responsible for the daily operation. For online delivery this item covers the technical infrastructure. Evidence: a brief description of the location, facilities, working hours, study timetables and yearly schedules, and the name of the manager.

1.5. Financial Stability: The institution is financially responsible and can meet its obligations to learners. It has a corporate and financial plan for its development, and should have adequate insurance and contingency plans. Where the educational activity is part of a larger body, the plan may be that of the whole body. Evidence: financial statements and a financial and business plan (EAHEA recommends the past three years and the planning of the next three; a younger institution gives what exists).

1.6. Qualified Staff: All staff are suitable for their positions and have appropriate qualifications and experience, and learners are supported by qualified staff whenever the institution is open. Evidence: an organizational chart with the names, positions and duties of the staff, and the qualifications and professional experience of the staff at managerial level.

1.7. Educational Values and Ethics: The institution is committed to educational values in its corporate, strategic and marketing objectives, to the professional development of its staff and teachers, and to good business and employment practice. It has a clear, fair and effective procedure for complaints and refunds, controls the use and storage of data, learner records and copyrights, and does not discriminate directly or indirectly on grounds of sex, race, color, nationality, ethnic origin, religion, belief, political opinion, disability or age. Evidence: the complaints and refund procedure, the data protection policy and the non-discrimination statement.

1.8. Permanent Quality Control: The institution tells its learners and graduates that they may contact EAHEA with their satisfaction, complaints or suggestions about their learning experience. EAHEA uses these comments for the continuing improvement of the institution and to monitor that its policies are respected. Evidence: the place where the institution gives learners the contact details of EAHEA.

1.9. Continuous Improvement: The institution uses its self-study to identify what must improve and plans the change. There is no single preferred method: the institution shows how it checks and controls its own quality to keep public confidence. Evidence: the improvement plan that follows from the Self-Study Report.

2. Institutional Integrity

Institutional Integrity covers information and admission, fees, and the overall administration of the processes and services of the institution. The institution shows the means and procedures that assure its integrity.

2.1. Information and Veracity: Before enrollment, a prospective learner is told all the terms and conditions of the course: what the fees cover, what additional payments may be needed, how long the fees are valid, the payment plans, and when full or partial refunds or transfers to other courses are possible. Advertising and promotion never give a false, misleading or exaggerated impression of the institution, its staff, its provision or its outcomes, and do not suggest that employment is offered or guaranteed. Evidence: samples of every prospectus, brochure, advertisement and recruitment letter, and the written information given to prospective learners.

2.2. Admission Procedures: Prospective learners are handled promptly and courteously by a competent person. The staff and agents who promote the institution know and follow its admissions policy, and the institution is responsible for their actions and statements. Learners are helped to assess their own needs and capabilities before they enroll. Evidence: the admissions policy and the briefing given to staff and agents.

2.3. Legal Contract: There is a learning agreement between the institution and the learner. It states the nature and scope of the course, the services that the institution commits to, any disclaimers, the rights and obligations of the learner and the financial agreement between them. Evidence: a sample enrollment agreement.

2.4. Assistance: The institution gives learners the guidance and the channels of communication that they need to improve their performance and success. Clear procedures exist for questions, problems and suggestions, and difficulties between individuals do not impede learning. Evidence: a description of the student support and of the procedures for questions and problems.

2.5. Post-Graduate Service: The institution keeps learner records for at least five (5) years, or longer where the law requires, and gives graduates duplicates of diplomas, transcripts and certificates on request. Records are complete, accurate and secure, and include the payments and refunds, any special agreements on learning outcomes, and the assignments and examination results. Evidence: the records policy and a description of how each item of this area is met, with sample letters or documents.

3. Academic Quality

Academic Quality covers teaching, learning and service. The institution explains the means and procedures that advance academic quality, shows how they emphasize learner achievement and high expectations of teaching and learning, and that they are developed within the framework of its mission.

3.1. Courses and Programs Description: The institution states the total number and gives a description of all the courses and programs that it offers. Evidence: the catalog of courses and programs.

3.2. Hours of Study: For each course, the institution states the hours of study that a learner completes and how they are earned (attendance, homework, independent study, project, challenge examination, transfer, tutorial, online learning, credit for prior knowledge or other means). Evidence: the hours of study of each course or program.

3.3. Course Objectives or Expected Learning Outcomes: Each course has a brief and clear statement of what the learner can expect to achieve, which is made known to prospective learners before enrollment. Objectives may be stated as skills, vocational or professional competence, preparation for assessed qualifications, job-

related training, knowledge or personal growth. Evidence: the statement of the objectives or learning outcomes of each course.

3.4. Course Contents and Materials: Contents and materials are sufficient to reach the stated objectives, in whatever medium and by whatever method they are provided, suit the level of the learners and are structured for effective learning. EAHEA suggests a clear presentation, units or modules, a sequence in which new material builds on earlier material, a variety of approaches and clear instructions. Evidence: at least one full and detailed sample of course contents, organization and study material.

3.5. Course Delivery and Availability: Study materials reach learners promptly and guidance on study skills is given. Where technology is significant, learners are told the system requirements. Where other materials are needed, the institution says where to obtain them and what they probably cost. Evidence: a description of the delivery, the system requirements and any additional materials.

3.6. Course Update: Contents and materials are reviewed within set periods, so that they stay available, effective and current. Evidence: the review schedule and the date of the last review.

3.7. Teaching Methodology: The institution describes its methodology or teaching style, for example classroom attendance, distance learning, seminars, or online or blended delivery, and may describe other educational initiatives that advance quality. Evidence: a description of the teaching methods of each program or course.

3.8. Tutorial or Guidance: Teachers or tutorial support of sufficient quality are available to all learners. Where they are not, the materials can reach their objectives without such support. Evidence: a description of the tutorial support.

3.9. Teachers' Proficiency: Teachers are qualified in their field, know their subject and keep their knowledge up to date, know how learners learn, help and motivate them, and use learner feedback to improve their teaching. Evidence: the list of teachers and their CVs, as in item 3.10.

3.10. Assessment and Evaluation: Learner progress is assessed regularly, and learners receive prompt and helpful comments on it. Schedules for submitting and returning assignments and examinations are set, and learners who submit unsatisfactory work are supported before any support is withdrawn. Evidence: a description of the evaluation methodology, and a list of teachers with their name, field of expertise, courses, department and level of involvement (full time or part time), with the CV of each teacher or tutor who is directly involved in the learning process. A large institution may give a representative selection, which EAHEA agrees in advance.

3.11. Certificate or Diploma: A certificate or diploma that the institution issues on completion of a course states the name of the awarding body, the nature of the achievement, the name of the learner, the date of completion and the signature or the seal of the awarding body. Evidence: a sample certificate or diploma.

3.12. Transcript or Equivalent: On completion, the institution also issues a transcript or an equivalent document that states at least the total hours of study or credits earned, the grades or the qualification achieved, the name of the awarding body, the name and birth date of the learner, the name and date of completion of the course or subjects, and the signature or the seal of the awarding body. This information may also appear on the certificate. EAHEA suggests that the transcript is clear to other institutions and companies and explains the grading system and the ratio of hours to credits. Evidence: a sample transcript.

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