

EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION ADVANCEMENT

Document 2:

STANDARDS FOR ACCREDITATION

These Standards for Accreditation apply to educational and training institutions and organizations. EAHEA interprets and applies them through the policies and procedures that it publishes, and they are to be read together with Document 1 when the accreditability of an institution, a program or a course is evaluated. The Standards serve several functions:

- They represent good practice against which education and training institutions and programs can be evaluated and improved.
- They guide the evaluators in their reviews, interviews and visits.
- They are the basis on which EAHEA reviews the reports and documentation that an institution provides.
- They let governmental agencies, employers, participants and the public know the criteria by which an accredited institution, program or course has been evaluated.

HOW THE STANDARDS ARE APPLIED

The Standards are applied in proportion to the size, mission and delivery mode of the institution, and an institution may meet them in different ways. Full Accreditation and Online Accreditation apply all nine Standards to the institution. Program Accreditation and Course Accreditation apply Standards 4 to 9 to the program or course, and apply from Standards 1, 2 and 3 only the parts that bear on it: its mission and objectives (1.1 and 1.2), its personnel, records and data protection (2.3, 2.4 and 2.7), and its tuition and refund policies (3.2). Standard 5.5 applies to every service in which education is delivered online.

EAHEA grades the Standards on the scale of 0 to 4 and decides the result from the final average, as set out in Document 1, Sections 4.1 and 4.4. The EAHEA Accreditation Quality Standards, which are used as the evaluation form, group the same requirements into three areas: Administrative Responsibility, Institutional Integrity and Academic Quality. The table shows where each Standard is mainly evaluated.

Standard	Items of the Accreditation Quality Standards in which it is mainly evaluated
1. Mission, Goals and Planning	Administrative Responsibility: Identification; Educational Values and Ethics; Permanent Quality Control; Continuous Improvement
2. Governance and Management	Administrative Responsibility: Legal Authorization; Accreditation, Recognition and References; Qualified Staff
3. Financial Capacity and Responsibility	Administrative Responsibility: Financial Stability. Institutional Integrity: Legal Contract
4. Curriculum Design and Development	Academic Quality: Courses or Programs Description; Course Objectives or Expected Learning Outcomes; Course Contents and Materials; Course Update; Certificate or Diploma
5. Instructional Delivery and Resources	Administrative Responsibility: Facilities. Academic Quality: Course Delivery and Availability; Teaching Methodology; Tutorial or Guidance
6. Qualifications and Supervision of Instructional Personnel	Administrative Responsibility: Qualified Staff. Academic Quality: Teachers' Proficiency

Standard	Items of the Accreditation Quality Standards in which it is mainly evaluated
7. Admissions and Student Services	Institutional Integrity: Information and Veracity; Admission Procedures; Legal Contract; Assistance
8. Student Assessment and Achievement	Academic Quality: Hours of Study; Assessment and Evaluation; Transcript or Equivalent
9. Institutional Effectiveness	Administrative Responsibility: Permanent Quality Control; Continuous Improvement. Institutional Integrity: Assistance; Post-Graduate Service

STANDARD 1: MISSION, GOALS AND PLANNING

The institution has a mission that is consistent with the mission, scope and standards of EAHEA.

1.1. Mission: The institution states its mission clearly and makes it public. The mission is consistent with the Principles of Ethics (Document 2.1) and is the basis on which education and training are delivered and assessed. The education provided matches the mission and is supported by a needs assessment or by market experience.

1.2. Goals: Broad institutional goals are clearly stated, support the mission and are understood at all levels of the organization.

1.3. Planning: The institution has sound written plans, for one year and for the longer term, that cover its educational and business objectives. The plans support the mission and the goals, are updated at least annually, and contain specific, measurable objectives with operational strategies, time frames, required resources and a method of evaluation.

STANDARD 2: GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The institution is capably and responsibly managed.

2.1. Governance: A governing board or a senior management team is responsible for an effective framework of written strategies and policies. This structure ensures the integrity and effectiveness of the institution and its compliance with legal, regulatory and accreditation requirements.

2.2. Operational Management: Operational management implements the strategies and policies of senior management systematically, within an organizational framework that is clearly defined and understood. Written policies and procedures guide the day-to-day operations.

2.3. Personnel Management: Management has written policies and procedures for the recruitment, selection, hiring and retention of personnel. It provides orientation, supervision, evaluation and development, so that qualified and capable personnel are used effectively at appropriate staffing levels.

2.4. Records: The institution keeps organized, accurate and up-to-date records that appropriate parties can access and review. Records are protected from unauthorized access and from loss. Learners and employees have appropriate access to their own files. Records are kept for the period that the law requires and, in any case, long enough for the institution to verify a qualification that it has issued.

2.5. Communications: Management ensures regular and effective communication among the members of the institution on the delivery of quality education and training. Periodic meetings are held and significant issues are documented, in proportion to the size and purpose of the institution.

2.6. Professional Relationships: The institution builds relationships with other organizations in the education, training, employer and industry network, and maintains, uses and documents them to improve the quality of education, training and student services.

2.7. Data Protection: The institution processes the personal data of learners, staff and others lawfully, fairly and securely, in line with the data protection law that applies to it. It keeps that data confidential and has a procedure for requests from data subjects and for data breaches.

STANDARD 3: FINANCIAL CAPACITY AND RESPONSIBILITY

The institution is fiscally sound and follows ethical financial practices.

3.1. Stability: The institution shows a record of responsible financial management, with resources sufficient to provide quality education, training and student services and to complete the instruction of all enrolled participants. Its financial reports give clear evidence of financial stability and sound practice.

3.2. Financial Procedures: The institution reviews its finances at intervals that are adequate for its size and activity. Written policies and procedures provide for financial controls and for the supervision of financial staff. Tuition is charged fairly and consistently, and payments are recorded and tracked. Cancellation and refund policies are written, fair, consistently applied and in line with the law.

3.3. Financial Assistance and Scholarships: An institution that offers student financial assistance or scholarships manages them responsibly, under written policies and procedures and in compliance with the law, and awards them fairly and equitably.

STANDARD 4: CURRICULUM DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

The curricular design, the materials and the measurement of outcomes follow sound educational practice.

4.1. Educational Goals and Objectives: Programs and courses have appropriate educational goals and objectives. The content and the learning experiences are planned in advance and follow a sound, systematic and sequential method. They include the knowledge and skills needed to prepare learners for the expected outcomes of the program or course.

4.2. Program and Instructional Materials: Syllabi, lesson plans, instructional guides, texts and other materials, including software, learning activities and electronic links, show the appropriate scope, sequence and depth for the stated goals and objectives. They are up to date, readily available and support positive learning outcomes.

4.3. Performance Measurement: Performance measures are written and are evaluated and updated periodically. The institution has a sound written assessment system with defined elements, such as a grading scale, weights, tests, reports, projects, attendance and participation, related to the objectives of the program or course.

4.4. Curriculum Review and Revision: The institution has systematic procedures for monitoring and improving its curriculum. They include feedback from faculty, learners, graduates, employers and advisory or certification boards, and an analysis of completion and, where applicable, outcome results.

4.5. Certification and Licensing: Where instruction prepares learners for licensing, certification, registration or examination requirements, the curriculum includes the preparation and materials needed for them. The institution records the pass rates of its graduates and uses them to improve its programs.

STANDARD 5: INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY AND RESOURCES

The institution uses appropriate and effective instructional methods and resources to ensure sound delivery.

5.1. Instructional Methods: Methods encourage active and motivated responses from participants. Written policies and procedures ensure that the curricula are followed and applied consistently by all instructional staff. The methods are consistent with current practice, suited to the educational goals, and take into account the different backgrounds, abilities, learning styles and prior achievement of participants.

5.2. Externships and Internships: Where a program requires an externship, internship or other work-based learning, it follows a planned outline of the knowledge, skills and experience to be gained. Written policies and procedures for its supervision and evaluation are followed, and a sufficient number of sites is available.

5.3. Equipment, Supplies and Learning Resources: Adequate, appropriate and functional equipment, supplies, furnishings and learning resources are readily available to instructors and participants.

5.4. Facilities: The facilities are appropriate for the education, training and student services offered. Instruction takes place in a safe, accessible, sanitary and comfortable environment, free from distraction, which meets the legal requirements that apply to it.

5.5. Online and Distance Delivery: An institution that delivers education online or at a distance uses a reliable learning platform and gives learners technical support. It verifies the identity of learners, protects the integrity of online assessment, keeps learner data secure and backed up, makes its platform and materials accessible, and ensures regular interaction between instructors and learners. It gives EAHEA the access to its platform and course content that a live review needs.

STANDARD 6: QUALIFICATIONS AND SUPERVISION OF INSTRUCTIONAL PERSONNEL

The institution ensures that qualified instructors, under capable professional direction, deliver education and training effectively.

6.1. Qualifications of Instructional Personnel: Instructional personnel have an appropriate combination of educational credentials, specialized training or certification, work experience, and demonstrated teaching and classroom management skills, and meet the accreditation, legal and industry requirements that apply to them.

6.2. Supervision of Instruction: People with relevant education and experience in instruction supervise instructional personnel, and evaluate and direct them with good practice. Observation of teaching, together with learner, peer and supervisory feedback, is documented and used to improve instruction.

6.3. Instructor Orientation and Training: The institution has a written policy for the orientation and training of instructional personnel, and a written policy for their continuing professional development, which it implements, monitors and documents.

STANDARD 7: ADMISSIONS AND STUDENT SERVICES

The institution recruits and enrolls only qualified participants who can reasonably be expected to benefit from the education and training, and provides student services that suit their needs.

7.1. Recruitment and Public Information: Informational and promotional materials, advertising and representations make only justifiable and provable claims about courses, programs, costs, location, instructional personnel, student services, outcomes and other benefits. All communication with prospective learners is ethical and honest. The institution does not state or imply that employment, occupational advancement, licensing or certification is guaranteed.

7.2. Enrollment: The written enrollment policy is clear and complies with the law and with accreditation requirements. Reliable means ensure that, before acceptance, applicants are able and qualified to benefit from the education. The written enrollment agreement discloses the rights, obligations and responsibilities of all parties, including all costs, the payment schedule and the cancellation and refund policy, in clear language, and is given to the learner before any payment or obligation. Price and duration are consistent with the workload, level and learning outcomes of the program.

7.3. Transfer of Credit: The institution has written policies and procedures for the fair and equitable treatment of learners who transfer credit to or from it, and gives clear, complete, factual and timely information about them. A statement that another institution accepts a program for credit is supported by documented evidence.

7.4. Student Services: Student services that suit the mission and the learning objectives of the institution are provided, such as academic advising, tutoring, placement assistance, extracurricular activities and housing, as applicable.

STANDARD 8: STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT

The institution uses appropriate and educationally sound methods to assess the performance, attendance and achievement of learners.

8.1. Student Progress: The institution monitors, assesses and records the progress of participants through a sound assessment system that is related to the performance objectives of the programs or courses. Credits (such as ECTS), clock hours or other units of learning are used to record successful completion. Progress is documented consistently, communicated regularly to participants, and measured against published requirements for satisfactory progress.

8.2. Attendance: The institution has written policies and procedures for monitoring and documenting attendance, which ensure that participation and preparation are consistent with the expected outcomes of the course or program.

8.3. Academic Integrity: The institution has and enforces written rules on academic integrity. It protects assessment against fraud, impersonation and plagiarism, and it issues certificates and transcripts only for genuine study and assessment.

STANDARD 9: INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

The institution uses appropriate methods of evaluation to assess its effectiveness and to ensure that learner outcomes are consistent with its mission and its own benchmarks.

9.1. Participant Satisfaction: Open lines of communication with participants exist, and the institution responds to their concerns. Written procedures assess, document and validate satisfaction with the quality of education and student services, through interim evaluations and a final evaluation at the end of the term of enrollment.

9.2. Employer and Sponsor Satisfaction: Written procedures assess, document and validate the satisfaction of employers and sponsors with the education and training provided.

9.3. Completion and Outcomes: The institution sets benchmarks for the completion of its programs and courses, measures completion against them and acts on the results. Where it publishes placement or other outcome figures, it explains how they are measured, publishes only figures it can prove, and does not state or imply that employment is guaranteed.

9.4. Complaints and Appeals: The institution has a written procedure through which learners and staff can complain or appeal, handles complaints promptly and fairly, and keeps records of them. It tells learners that they may also send their comments, satisfaction or complaints about their learning experience to EAHEA.