香港學術及職業資歷評審局
Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of
Academic & Vocational Qualifications

Revised Accreditation Standards under the Four-stage Quality Assurance Process

April 2018

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List of Abbreviations

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AA	Accreditation Authority
ATS	Award Titles Scheme
Cap. 320	Post Secondary Colleges Ordinance
Cap. 592	Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications Ordinance (AAVQO)
CAT	Credit Accumulation and Transfer
GLDs	Generic Level Descriptors
HD	Higher Diploma
HKCAAVQ	Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications
IE	Initial Evaluation
IR	Institutional Review
LPA	Learning Programme Accreditation
NLP	Non-local Learning Programmes
PAA	Programme Area Accreditation
PILOs	Programme Intended Learning Outcomes
PIR	Periodic Institutional Review
the Process	Four-stage Quality Assurance Process
QA	Quality Assurance
QF	Hong Kong Qualifications Framework
re-LPA	Learning Programme Re-Accreditation
SCS	Specification of Competency Standards
SGC	Specification of Generic (Foundation) Competencies

Glossary

For a glossary of the terms used in this document, please visit
http://www.hkcaavq.edu.hk/files/review-of-standards/documents_or_information/glossary_e.pdf.

Revised Accreditation Standards

(Evidence Guides Not Included)

1. Initial Evaluation

Purpose Statement	Domain of Competence
To ascertain whether an operator is competent to operate learning programme(s) that meet QF standards up to a certain QF level.	IE-1 Organisational Governance and Management IE-2 Financial Viability and Resources Management IE-3 Organisational Staffing IE-4 Organisational Quality Assurance
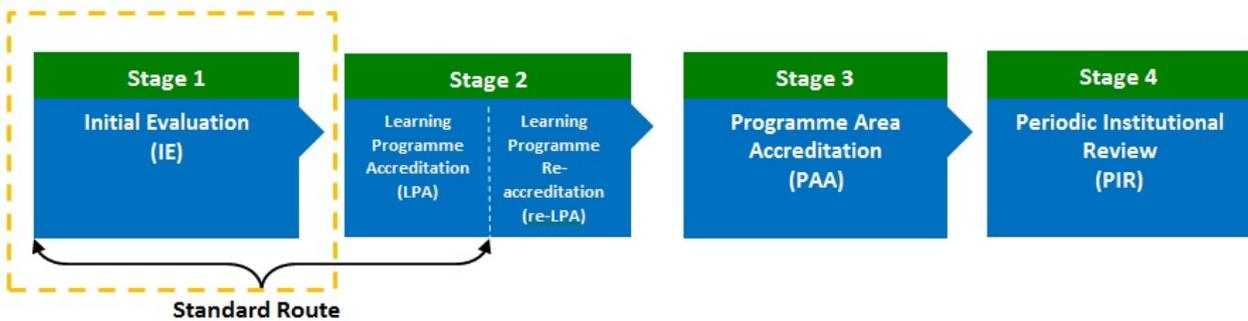
The Four-stage Quality Assurance Process

Domain: IE-1 Organisational Governance and Management

Accreditation Standard

The governing body of the operator has clearly defined and appropriate educational/training objectives, and has implemented a management structure to realise those objectives, for the delivery of learning programme(s) that fall within the scope of the QF level(s) sought.

Minimum requirements:

IE-1.1   The operator is an organisation, or part of one, that can legally operate learning programme(s) in Hong Kong.

IE-1.2   The people with key responsibilities for its education and training operations are fit-and-proper persons.

IE-1.3   The operator has governing and management team members, structures, polices and processes to effectively manage its operation and they are responsible for the quality of its educational/training.

IE-1.4   The operator has a governance and management team with appropriate skills and expertise to lead an education/organisation and to manage its learning programme(s).

IE-1.5   The operator has reliable administration and management systems and procedures in place to ensure security, accuracy and currency of its records.

IE-1.6   Learners enrolled in a learning programme are provided with accurate and up-to-date information about the programme and the qualifications that the programme may lead to.

IE-1.7   The governing body must ensure that the name of the operator adequately represents the nature of its operation (reflecting the learning programme(s) and the corresponding award(s)).

Explanatory Notes for IE-1

Why this accreditation standard is important
This standard is to ensure that the operator has established governance and management arrangements incorporating input from key stakeholders, which can ensure that key decision-making processes are effective in continuously assessing and enhancing the quality and effectiveness of its own operation, and protecting the interests of learners.

A collaborative provision refers to the provision of learning programme(s) leading or contributing to the award of credit or a qualification that are delivered, assessed or supported through an arrangement involving more than one parties. In the context of non-local programmes, the term 'operator' refers to the collaborative provision as defined by a formal partnership agreement between the local and non-local operator.

Matters for consideration
▪ The operator assumes full accountability and responsibility for its education and training operations, regardless of whether any third-parties, including its parent or associated organisation(s), are involved.
▪ The operator has a clear structure, in terms of functions and responsibility, for decision-making and management of its education and training operations.
▪ The operator has developed a strategic plan which has identified educational/training objectives, and is supported by implementation plan(s) with measureable performance indicators.
▪ The operator has procedures to handle grievances and/or complaints from staff and learners in a fair and transparent manner.
▪ The operator has policies and procedures in place which ensures protection of learners, covering issues including but not limited to conflicts of interest, discrimination, harassment, and responsibility to learners.
▪ The operator has policies that set out arrangements for learners enrolled in a learning programme to complete their qualifications in the event of termination or closure of the organisation/programme(s).

Special considerations for Collaborative Programmes

- Each awarding body within a partnership must either have a self-accrediting status or have already obtained a recognised accreditation status for the collaborative programme(s).
- Each partner in the collaboration must enter into a collaborative provision as a matter of organisational policy. A properly authorised body within the governance and management structure of the organisation with the authority to commit the necessary resources must have taken the decision to enter into a contract.
- The non-local operator should be fully authorised to operate in the country in which it is based, and the terms of its accreditation should permit (or not prohibit) its participation in collaborative provision with a partner outside its own country as well as to award qualifications.
- There should be a written and legally binding agreement setting out the rights and obligations of the partners. The agreement must cover the responsibilities of each operator and the specific matters relating to each learning programme offered through the collaboration.
- There should be a clear, written statement of responsibilities for making policy and operational decisions concerning the learning programmes covered by the collaboration. The awarding body should assume overall responsibility for the academic standards and quality of the collaborative programme.
- The partnership must have effective arrangements for information to be shared between the partners.

Domain: IE-2 Financial Viability and Resources Management

Accreditation Standard

The operator must have adequate financial and physical resources to achieve its educational/training objectives, with well-defined systems and processes to manage its finances to support the quality and effectiveness of its operation.

Minimum requirements:

IE-2.1   The operator plans and manages its finances to sustain the operation of its learning programme(s).

IE-2.2   The operator has a financial planning and budgeting process which is based on realistic assumptions with regard to the projected demands, costs of operation, and foreseeable changes in the environment.

IE-2.3   The operator has mechanisms in place to appropriately allocate financial and physical resources for its education and/or training operations.

IE-2.4   The operator has the facilities and equipment necessary for the delivery of its learning programme(s).

IE-2.5   The operator regularly reviews the adequacy, in terms of quality, quantity and utility, of its educational and training resources, and takes necessary follow-up actions.

Explanatory Notes for IE-2

Why this accreditation standard is important
This standard is to ensure that the operator has the necessary financial and educational/training resources to support sustainable development of its education and training services. Management of financial and educational/training resources has to take into consideration programme planning, learners' needs and staffing requirements, and the quality of the provision.

Matters for consideration
- The operator is financially viable.
- There is a financial plan which is reviewed and approved by the governing body of the operator.
- The operator has internal financial control measures in place to ensure the availability of appropriate financial assets or properties of the operator for the operation of its learning programme(s).
- The operator takes appropriate actions to prevent and detect fraud and misappropriation of funds. Such actions should be complementary to the level of external scrutiny, such as external audit that the operator is subject to.
- The operator performs assessment of financial risks regularly and has appropriate risk mitigation in place.
- The operator is able to provide the necessary facilities and equipment which are appropriate to the nature of the planned learning programme(s) and the planned intake of learners.
- The facilities and equipment are maintained to ensure accessibility, safety, security, and a healthy learning environment.
- The operator has sufficient cash flow and/or reserves to support the operation of its learning programme(s), and when necessary, meet financial emergencies and unforeseen occurrences.

Domain: IE-3 Organisational Staffing

Accreditation Standard

The operator must be able to engage staff who are competent to manage its operations, to lead programme planning and development, and to support the delivery of learning programme(s) up to the claimed QF level(s).

Minimum requirements:

IE-3.1   The operator has a clear staffing structure with well-defined functions, responsibilities, and appointment criteria for different positions in the structure.

IE-3.2   The operator has a realistic staffing plan that facilitates effective programme development, management and delivery.

IE-3.3   The operator has set up formal and transparent human resources policies and procedures for recruitment, induction, performance review and staff development, which align with its educational/training objectives.

IE-3.4   The operator maintains an adequate number of full-time staff to ensure the stability of programme management, development and delivery.

Explanatory Notes for IE-3

Why this accreditation standard is important
This standard is to ensure that the operator has set up a staffing structure and system that can ensure the availability of suitable staff for programme management and delivery on an on-going basis, and to ensure that the operator has appropriate staff recruitment and development processes which align staff duties with their specialisations, teaching and industry experience, formal qualifications and professional/scholarly activities.

Matters for consideration
- The operator has determined a maximum learner-staff ratio for each of the learning and teaching activities typically adopted into its learning programme(s) to ensure adequate interaction between learners and staff.
- The operator systematically monitors the teaching and non-teaching workload of staff to ensure teaching effectiveness and healthy professional development.
- Staff tasked with teaching functions generally have a qualification one level higher than the learning programme(s) they teach, or a terminal qualification, in a relevant area of study/training.
- The operator has policies and provides resources to encourage staff development and undertaking of professional/scholarly activities such as research, publication and consultancy in their specialisations, or to enrich industry expertise or knowledge about the QF.
- The operator has set out specific requirements for project or workplace supervisors.
- The operator provides orientation and training to teaching and support staff.
- There are transparent and fair procedures to process complaints or grievances from staff.

Special considerations for Collaborative Programmes
- There should be appropriate and sufficient opportunities for sharing of academic ethos and operations, including induction and on-going support.
- There should be effective policies and processes to ensure that the collaborative programme addresses the local context, including meeting the QF standards, and learner and community needs.

Domain: IE-4 Organisational Quality Assurance

Accreditation Standard

The operator must have an internal quality assurance system that can support effective management and monitoring of the quality of its learning programme(s) in delivering learning outcomes that align with the GLDs of the QF, to meet its educational/training objectives.

Minimum requirements:

IE-4.1   The operator has a robust mechanism for programme approval, development, periodic review and monitoring of its learning programme(s) to ensure that the programme objectives and QF standard(s) are met.

IE-4.2   The operator is ultimately responsible for the quality of its learning programme(s) and award(s), regardless of whether any third-party is involved in the delivery.

IE-4.3   The operator has standards of quality and performance requirements at organisational and programme levels to support evaluation of achievement of educational/training objectives.

IE-4.4   The operator systematically collects evidence of attainment of learning outcomes to support evaluation and enhancement of the effectiveness of its learning programme(s).

IE-4.5   The operator has mechanisms in place to regularly review the effectiveness of its quality assurance system and to initiate the necessary follow-up actions.

Explanatory Notes for IE-4

Why this accreditation standard is important
This standard is to ensure that the operator maintains an internal quality assurance system which can continuously monitor the effectiveness of its learning programme(s) by using multiple sources of evidence to assess the achievement of learning, and takes necessary follow-up actions. It is also important for the operator to conduct regular reviews and demonstrate continuous improvement in its quality assurance system to meet its educational/training objectives.

Matters for consideration
- The operator seeks external input in its quality assurance system. This may include input such as external benchmarking, external examiners and/or advisors.
- The quality assurance system incorporates adequate checks and balances to ensure objectivity between development, delivery and review of learning programme(s).
- The quality assurance system supports systematic collection of feedback from stakeholders such as learners, staff and employers to identify issues requiring follow-up actions.
- The quality assurance system has been effectively implemented for different locations and/or modes of delivery, if any.
- Training is provided to relevant staff to ensure that the quality assurance system is fully understood and implemented effectively at all times.

Special considerations for Collaborative Programmes
- There must be effective integration between the quality assurance systems of the partners, with a clear delineation of the responsibilities of each, particularly with respect to programme development and management, and the authority to make changes to learning programmes.

2. Learning Programme Accreditation/ Re-accreditation

Purpose Statement	Domain of Competence
The purpose is twofold: To ascertain whether a learning programme (proposed or accredited) meets a QF standard to achieve the claimed objectives. To ascertain whether the operator of a learning programme is competent to continuously monitor and improve the effectiveness of its programme operation to achieve the claimed programme objectives.	LPA-1 Programme Objectives and Learning Outcomes LPA-2 Learner Admission and Selection LPA-3 Programme Structure and Content LPA-4 Learning, Teaching and Assessment LPA-5 Programme Leadership and Staffing LPA-6 Learning, Teaching and Enabling Resources/Services LPA-7 Programme Approval, Review and Quality Assurance
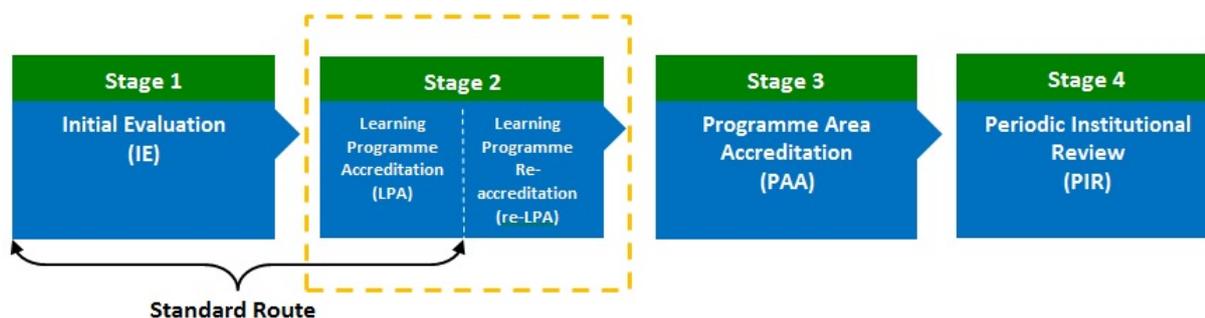
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Domain: LPA-1 Programme Objectives and Learning Outcomes

Accreditation Standard

The learning programme must have objectives that address community, education and/or industry needs, with learning outcomes that meet the relevant QF standards, for all exit qualifications from the programme.

Minimum requirements:

LPA-1.1   The operator has identified the needs for the learning programme, which is articulated in the programme objectives.

LPA-1.2   The programme intended learning outcomes (PILOs) are consistent with the GLDs at the claimed QF level(s) and align with the programme objectives for all exit qualifications from that programme.

LPA-1.3   The PILOs are specific, measurable, achievable and relevant.

LPA-1.4   The programme objectives and PILOs are clearly presented for consistent interpretation, implementation and communication to learners and staff.

Explanatory Notes for LPA-1

Why this accreditation standard is important
This standard is to ensure that the positioning of a learning programme has taken into consideration the needs of the sector, and competences required of its graduates as reflected in the PILOs, which are commensurate with the programme objectives and the relevant QF level requirements as stipulated in the GLDs. Each exit point defined for the learning programme represents a standalone study path in its own right.

Matters for consideration
▪   The PILOs, programme objectives and the educational/training objectives of the operator are aligned.
▪   The programme objectives and PILOs are supported by a well-developed programme rationale.
▪   The programme aims to enhance employability and/or competitiveness of learners.
▪   The PILOs have been systematically mapped to the GLDs, and internally moderated for consistency.
▪   The development of programme objectives and PILOs has incorporated input from relevant staff, stakeholders and external experts.

Special considerations relating to government policies
▪   For Associate Degree and Higher Diploma programmes, the programme objectives, learning outcomes and exit qualifications comply with the latest version of the Common Descriptors for Associate Degree and Higher Diploma Programmes under the New Academic Structure.
▪   The use of titles for qualifications obtainable from the learning programme complies with the Award Titles Scheme (ATS).

Domain: LPA-2 Learner Admission and Selection

Accreditation Standard

The minimum admission requirements of the learning programme must be clearly outlined for staff and prospective learners. These requirements and the learner selection processes must be effective for recruitment of learners with the necessary skills and knowledge to undertake the programme.

Minimum requirements:

LPA-2.1 The operator ensures the alignment between the minimum admission requirements and the positioning of the learning programme.

LPA-2.2 The minimum admission requirements are clearly documented for consistent implementation and effective communication with learners and staff.

LPA-2.3 The operator has formal and valid admission procedures for assessing whether an applicant meets the minimum admission requirements prior to enrolment.

LPA-2.4 The operator has admission policies which govern the consideration of exemption, non-standard entry, advanced standing, credit accumulation and transfer, which are consistently implemented and effectively communicated to staff and prospective learners.

Explanatory Notes for LPA-2

Why this accreditation standard is important
This standard is to ensure that the operator understands the characteristics and diversity of the target learners in order to develop an adequate learning process and to identify the necessary resources for their attainment of the PILOS and achievement of the programme objectives.

Matters for consideration
- There are mechanisms to provide accurate admission information to prospective learners.
- There are reliable procedures to verify the integrity and creditability of the credentials provided by applicants to inform admission decision-making.
- Admission data and decisions are fully and accurately retained and are accessible for review.
- Informed by data/information, the operator should regularly check the appropriateness of admission standards and integrity of the admission process in order to make sure that the learners selected are able to complete the programme in normal circumstances.
- Training and support is provided to the personnel responsible for carrying out admission functions.
- There are mechanisms in place to ensure that the admission standards are adhered to and admission procedures are fully implemented at all times, for different locations/modes of delivery.

Special considerations relating to government policies
- The minimum admission requirements are consistent with the requirements stipulated in the latest version of the Common Descriptors for Associate Degree and Higher Diploma Programmes under the New Academic Structure.

Domain: LPA-3 Programme Structure and Content

Accreditation Standard

The structure and content of the learning programme must be up-to-date, coherent, balanced and integrated to facilitate progression in order to enable learners to achieve the stated learning outcomes and to meet the programme objectives.

Minimum requirements:

LPA-3.1 The PILOs and programme structure and content are properly aligned, for ensuring adequate development of the necessary knowledge, skills, competencies and attitudes.

LPA-3.2 The breadth and depth of the learning programme provides sufficient volume of learning and coverage to allow an average learner to achieve the intended learning outcomes, that align with the programme objectives.

LPA-3.3 The programme structure clearly sets out a logical and coherent sequence of learning and the interdependencies of the content.

LPA-3.4 For programmes with multiple exit awards, each exit award represents a coherent programme in its own right.

Explanatory Notes for LPA-3

Why this accreditation standard is important
This standard is to ensure that the selection and structure of programme content are driven by PILOs, and are appropriate to facilitate the learners' attainment of the PILOs at the claimed QF level and to meet the programme objectives. The structure of the learning programme should be based on sound educational/training principles for constructing a coherent learning experience that develops knowledge, skills, competencies and attitudes.

Matters for consideration
- There is a definitive programme document describing the approved programme structure and content, as well as the rules for progression.
- The design of the learning programme appropriately adopts a logical sequence for effective programme management, delivery and assessment.
- The progression of the learning programme has been clearly built into the logic of programme design.
- There is horizontal and/or vertical integration of programme content, for learning programmes that span multiple years or stages.
- The programme structure provides opportunities for demonstration of integrated learning.

Special considerations relating to government policies
- For Associate Degree and Higher Diploma programmes, the generic and specialised content of the proposed learning programme meet the requirement stipulated in the latest version of the Common Descriptors for Associate Degree and Higher Diploma Programmes under the New Academic Structure.
- For a learning programme to be labelled as SCS-based or SGC-based, the conditions stipulated in the Qualifications Guidelines for SCS-based/SGC-based Courses under QF are met.
- The assignment of QF credits follows the Implementation Table of Use of Credit promulgated by EDB, and complies with the Concepts and Principles of QF Credits under QF.

Domain: LPA-4 Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Accreditation Standard

The learning, teaching and assessment activities designed for the learning programme must be effective in delivering the programme content and assessing the attainment of the intended learning outcomes.

Minimum requirements:

LPA-4.1 The chosen model(s) and mode(s) of delivery of the learning programme are appropriate in consideration of the programme objectives and content, and are effective in engaging learners in the learning process.

LPA-4.2 The selection of learning, teaching and assessment activities of the learning programme has considered the characteristics and diversity of learners as allowed by the defined admission standards.

LPA-4.3 The selected learning, teaching and assessment activities are aligned with the programme content and PILOs.

LPA-4.4 Assessments are valid, reliable, fair and effective for assessing learners' attainment of the intended learning outcomes.

LPA-4.5 Assessment tasks are based on criterion-referencing to reflect differentiated attainment.

LPA-4.6 The operator provides timely feedback to learners in all forms of learning, teaching and assessment activities, and identifies learners-at-risk.

Explanatory Notes for LPA-4

Why this accreditation standard is important
This standard is to ensure that learning, teaching and assessment activities together provide the learning experience required to facilitate and assess learners' attainment of the PILOs upon completion of the programme. The selection of learning, teaching and assessment activities should aim at maximising the effectiveness of learning, by adopting proved methodologies of learning, teaching and assessment.

Matters for consideration
▪ Appropriate learning and teaching activities are adopted in the learning programme, which may include e.g. lecture, tutorial, experiment, problem-solving, simulation, online learning, on-the-job-training, work-based learning and workplace attachment.
▪ Appropriate assessment activities are included in the learning programme, which may include e.g. assignment, examination, project, practical test and interview.
▪ The operator has a process for estimating the notional learning hours for different learning and teaching activities for assignment of credits, if applicable.
▪ There is a system for internal and/or external moderation of assessments to ensure consistency of standard and marking.
▪ The operator has planned for industry and workplace attachment, including the insurance, supervision and assessment arrangements, where applicable.
▪ The operator has policies to ensure the integrity and validity of assessments. This may cover photographing/recording of practical assessments, detection of plagiarism, authentication of the identity of learners, external vetting, moderation and benchmarking.

Domain: LPA-5 Programme Leadership and Staffing

Accreditation Standard

The operator must have adequate programme leader(s), teaching/training and support staff with the qualities, competence, qualifications and experience necessary for effective programme management, i.e. planning, development, delivery and monitoring of the programme. There must be an adequate staff development scheme and activities to ensure that staff are kept updated for the quality delivery of the programme.

Minimum requirements:

LPA-5.1 The operator has appointed staff (e.g. programme leader(s)) with adequate experience in programme management and development, responsible for leading and overseeing the effectiveness of programme operation.

LPA-5.2 The operator has sufficient, adequate and competent teaching, training and support staff for conducting the learning, teaching and assessment activities designed for the learning programme, to support the projected number of learners.

LPA-5.3 The operator has a staff development plan aligning with the on-going development of the learning programme.

LPA-5.4 There are processes in place for the programme team to work collaboratively and effectively to achieve the programme objectives.

Explanatory Notes for LPA-5

Why this accreditation standard is important
This standard is to ensure that, regardless of the mode of engagement (full-time/part-time, paid/unpaid, internal/external), those engaged in the operation of the learning programme should be qualified and understand the philosophy and design of the learning programme in order to perform effectively on an on-going basis. A stable programme leadership is essential for continuity and oversight of the effectiveness of programme operation to achieve the programme objectives. To ensure that the workload is reasonable, the calculation of workload includes all teaching and non-teaching duties assigned by the operator.

Matters for consideration
- The operator has defined programme-specific staff appointment criteria relevant for the learning programme.
- The profile of appointed staff is commensurate with the requirements of the learning programme.
- Staff development activities clearly correspond to professional development, building up of industry experience, as well as enhancement of knowledge or skills about learning, teaching and assessment, which are relevant to the learning programme.
- Staff are active in research, publication, consultancy and/or other professional/scholarly activities.
- There is effective communications within the programme team to ensure consistent delivery of the learning programme and alignment of expectations.
- The operator maintains a reasonable workload for staff members engaged in the learning programme.

Domain: LPA-6 Learning, Teaching and Enabling Resources/Services

Accreditation Standard

The operator must be able to provide learning, teaching and enabling resources/services that are appropriate and sufficient for the learning, teaching and assessment activities of the learning programme, regardless of location and mode of delivery.

Minimum requirements:

LPA-6.1 The operator has the necessary financial resources to support the operation of the learning programme, in consideration of other educational/training services being provided by the operator.

LPA-6.2 Learners have adequate access to the necessary learning, teaching and enabling resources/services, also taking into consideration any other educational/training services being provided by the operator.

LPA-6.3 The provision of learning, teaching and enabling resources/services aligns with the learning, teaching and assessment activities.

LPA-6.4 The learning, teaching and enabling resources are up-to-date and their utilisation is monitored to ensure that they are adequate for the operation of the learning programme on an on-going basis.

LPA-6.5 The operator provides learners with clear, accurate information and dependable access to support services that facilitate their successful completion of the programme.

Explanatory Notes for LPA-6

Why this accreditation standard is important
This standard is to ensure that the operator has appropriate and sufficient learning, teaching and enabling resources/services for the operation of the learning programme, and is backed by necessary financial resources. Learning, teaching and enabling resources may include lecture theatres, tutorial rooms, libraries, laboratories, studio, supplementary aids, software and online databases. Examples of learner support services include counselling, career/life planning and learning diagnosis.

Matters for consideration
- The learners will have access to suitable and safe facilities and adequate equipment necessary for their learning activities. Arrangements have been made to ensure these resources are accessible at the time of delivering the relevant parts of the learning programme.
- The operator has supplementary aids and services available to learners with special needs.
- The library and online materials are up-to-date and relevant to the content of the learning programme.
- Feedback on the quality of learning, teaching and enabling resources/services is regularly collected from learners and staff for analysis and enhancement purposes.
- The learners have access to adequate computing and network facilities for learning, conducting research, and communicating with peers and staff.
- Learners and staff are provided with adequate training and information to ensure that they are aware of and know how to use the learning, teaching and enabling resources.
- Steps have been taken to ensure that the learners and staff have the right of use to the materials such as software, photographs and videos required for teaching/learning purpose.
- The support provided to learners is adequate to the delivery mode adopted.
- There is policy to ensure availability of staff for consultation and advice to learners.
- The operator provides appropriate learner support services, which may include learning diagnostics, personal counselling and career/life planning for example.
- The operator has a resource development plan that supports the on-going development of the learning programme.

Domain: LPA-7 Programme Approval, Review and Quality Assurance

Accreditation Standard

The operator must monitor and review the development and performance of the learning programme on an on-going basis to ensure that the programme remains current and valid and that the learning outcomes, learning and teaching activities and learner assessments are effective to meet the programme objectives.

Minimum requirements:

LPA-7.1 The development or review of the learning programme has strictly followed the approved policies and procedures of the operator.

LPA-7.2 The overall design of the learning programme has been validated to ensure alignment with the claimed QF level(s), PILOs and the learning needs of the target learners, and is supported by adequate staff and other resources.

LPA-7.3 The operator has incorporated external and internal input for programme development, management and monitoring to ensure continuous improvement of the quality of the learning programme throughout the whole learning process.

LPA-7.4 The operator evaluates the efficiency and effectiveness of its quality assurance policies and procedures for programme approval, development and review, and takes necessary follow-up actions for improvement.

LPA-7.5 Feedback and evidence for programme development, management and review are regularly collected, analysed and interpreted to assess the effectiveness of programme implementation and to identify continuous improvement actions, with proper records and documentation.

Explanatory Notes for LPA-7

Why this accreditation standard is important
This standard is to ensure that the operator maintains and implements a robust internal quality assurance system which continuously monitors the effectiveness of its learning programmes by using multiple sources of evidence to assess the achievement of learning outcomes, and takes necessary follow-up actions. It is also important for the operator to regularly review the robustness of its internal quality assurance system for improvement.

Matters for consideration
- Regular quality assurance activities, both internal and external, of the learning programme have been properly planned with allocated resources.
- Retention, progression and completion rates are regularly monitored and follow-up actions are identified and implemented if necessary.
- Admission and assessment data are analysed for possible correlation and patterns for review of admission standards.
- Surveys are conducted of staff, learners and employers to collect feedback on programme delivery and outcomes.
- Learners, staff, employers, alumni, practitioners and other relevant stakeholders are regularly involved in the evaluation and alignment of programme objectives and learning outcomes.
- Issues identified by internal and external quality assurance activities are acted upon appropriately.

3. Programme Area Accreditation

Purpose Statement	Domain of Competence
To ascertain whether an operator is competent to quality assure its learning programme(s) within a programme area up to a certain QF level, as demonstrated from the track record of its operation of accredited learning programmes in a particular discipline or industry area, and its capacity to enhance its organisational effectiveness to achieve the educational/training objectives.	**Institutional Domain:** PAA-1 Organisational Governance and Management PAA-2 Strategic Planning and Development PAA-3 Financial Management and Viability PAA-4 Organisational Quality Assurance and Enhancement **Programme Area Domain:** PAA-5 Programme Area Development and Management PAA-6 Learning, Teaching and Assessment PAA-7 Staffing and Staff Development PAA-8 Programme Area Resources and Services
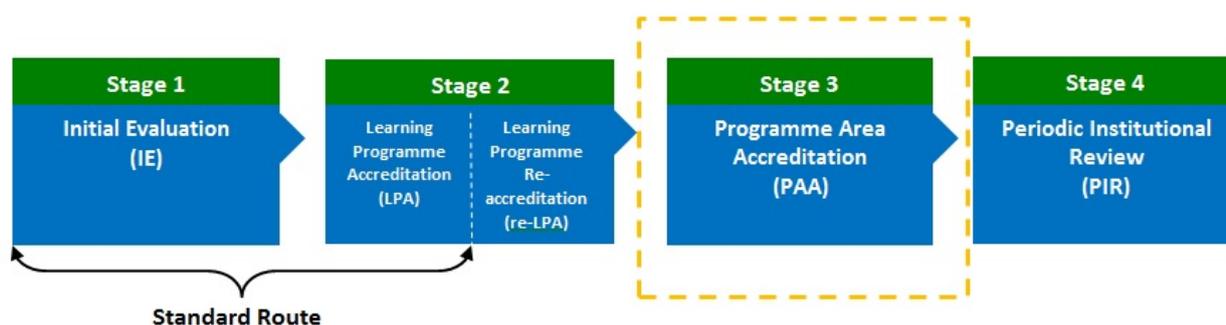
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Domain PAA-1: Organisational Governance and Management

Accreditation Standard

The operator must have a governing body that defines the operator's vision and mission and establishes educational/training objectives aligned with the vision and mission. The governing body has set a clear and explicit direction for development based on the operator's values and characteristics, and has implemented a management system which is fit-for-purpose and effective in meeting the educational/training objectives.

Minimum requirements:

PAA-1.1 The vision and mission are appropriate for the operator's provision of learning programmes, with educational/training objectives demonstrably achieved.

PAA-1.2 The operator plans strategically, realistically and effectively and drives the organisation to achieve its objectives, by defining relevant targets and performance measures.

PAA-1.3 The organisational structure, including roles, responsibilities and decision-making processes, of the operator shows a high degree of integrity, responsibility and accountability for meeting the educational/training objectives.

PAA-1.4 The reporting mechanisms and decision-making procedures are effective for governance, management and quality assurance functions.

PAA-1.5 The governing body regularly engages in self-review and development to enhance its effectiveness and quality of decisions.

Explanatory Notes for PAA-1

Why this accreditation standard is important
This standard is to ensure that the operator has governance which can provide overall direction for the organisation with clearly defined lines of accountability and rules of decision-making and systematic consideration of input from key stakeholders, and to ensure that the management can implement the educational/training objectives and is responsible for the efficiency, effectiveness and quality of operation.

Matters for consideration
- The operator has set up clear procedures to avoid real or perceived conflict of interest, and maintain a clear separation between governance and management functions to ensure checks and balances.
- The operator has set up clear appointment criteria and procedures to ensure that those appointed to perform governance and key management functions collectively possess the necessary knowledge, skills and experience covering the range of duties to be performed.
- There are processes of training, induction and continuing professional development for key personnel who perform governance and management functions, so that the appointed personnel are fully informed of their duties and responsibilities.
- There is an implemented process ensuring effective succession planning for key positions.
- There is a clear scheme of delegation of authority and line of reporting which is efficient and effective.
- There are clear communication protocols within the organisation to ensure clarity about defined targets and compliance with policy.
- The operator enhances integrity and transparency in its operation by implementing appropriate policies and procedures to process complaints and grievances, and responding to them in a timely and effective manner.
- Steps have been taken to fulfil legal and social responsibilities and obligations in the prevailing context.
- There are formal channels at different levels to actively incorporate external input into the governance and management decision-making process.
- There is an information management system that can provide reliable data to inform decision-making.
- Independent external review is initiated to provide reflection on governance and management effectiveness.

Domain PAA-2: Strategic Planning and Development

Accreditation Standard

The operator must have formal processes at organisational level for developing its strategic plan, which are effective in driving achievement of educational/training objectives. The strategic plan should focus on the analyses, decisions and actions needed to sustain and enhance the operation of its learning programmes.

Minimum requirements:

PAA-2.1   The operator has an effective strategic planning process which clearly identifies the actions, priorities and resource allocation for achieving defined objectives while taking into consideration environmental developments, its strengths and weaknesses, and feedback from stakeholders.

PAA-2.2   The operator periodically engages with its stakeholders as well as other relevant parties to assess its strategic positioning and alignment of purposes, objectives and actions, in the process of developing its strategic plan.

PAA-2.3   The periodic planning process responds to the outcomes of implementation and the operational environment in a timely manner.

PAA-2.4   In relation to its educational and training provisions, the operator uses a risk management system with potential risks clearly identified and prioritised, and corresponding mitigation strategies appropriately resourced.

Explanatory Notes for PAA-2

Why this accreditation standard is important
This standard is to ensure that the operator's strategic planning provides a road map for proactive development of its educational and training provision, instead of reacting to unexpected changes, catching up with the developments or handling crisis. A strategic plan provides the directions and means of realising the vision and mission of an operator, and often also includes the associated performance indicators. A good strategic planning process helps foster a culture of commitment and transparency.

Matters for consideration
- The strategic plan is based on realistic projections.
- The strategic plan reflects fully informed and well deliberated decisions by the governing body and management.
- The operator considers relevant current and anticipated changes as part of its strategic planning, review and resource allocation.
- The strategic plan focuses on continuous growth and improvement of learner performance, staff professionalism, and the operator's competency to achieve its mission.
- Learners, staff and other relevant internal stakeholders are provided with opportunities to participate in and provide input to the planning for improvement purposes.
- External input is regularly taken into consideration in the strategic planning and review.
- There is a risk register, or similar document, which is current and identifies the potential risks, assessment of impacts, action plans, and the owners of the identified risks.

Domain PAA-3: Financial Management and Viability

Accreditation Standard

The operator must have an established financial management approach which is effective in ensuring the operator's short-term and long-term viability to sustain its operation in alignment with the current strategic plan, and enables it to meet its educational/training objectives.

Minimum requirements:

PAA-3.1   The operator plans realistically to ensure current and future availability of staff, funds, teaching, learning and enabling resources/services for quality operation of its learning programmes.

PAA-3.2   The financial resources of the operator have been and are projected to continue to be stable and adequate for future financial needs or challenges, with regard to the establishment of the operator and nature of operation.

PAA-3.3   The governing body and management of the operator exercise prudent control over the financial operations and decision-making.

PAA-3.4   The financial planning process of the operator has fully considered the priorities for development and operation of learning programmes.

PAA-3.5   The operator has regularly and systematically reviewed the effectiveness of its financial system, with follow-up actions on any issues identified.

Explanatory Notes for PAA-3

Why this accreditation standard is important
This standard is to ensure that the development of a programme area is supported by sustainable resource planning based on the short-term and long-term financial health and effectiveness of the operator. It is critical that the operator is not only able to provide the financial assets or support, but also has the competence to plan and manage, and its financial means are in alignment with the development of the programme area.

Matters for consideration
- The operator has unqualified independent financial audits in the past three years, if applicable.
- The operator has functioned without an operational deficit in the past three years. Otherwise, a detailed explanation of how the situation was coped with and how to prevent similar occurrence in the future should be provided.
- Budgets are developed with realistic projections of revenue and expenditures.
- Financial risks are assessed in a regular manner in consideration of actual outcomes and new developments.
- The operator practices effective oversight of contractual, collaborative and partner relationships.
- Financial planning and budgeting processes have proved to be effective from the record of operation.

Domain PAA-4: Organisational Quality Assurance and Enhancement

Accreditation Standard

The operator must have established an effective internal quality assurance system with well-defined policies and procedures in place to determine and monitor the quality and standards of its learning programmes, and to ensure alignment with its educational/training objectives and the stated QF level(s).

Minimum requirements:

PAA 4.1   Management of quality is embedded within all key planning, operational and review processes.

PAA 4.2   The operator has implemented a mechanism for effective monitoring and reviewing of organisational performance against defined education and training objectives periodically.

PAA 4.3   The operator has well established practices demonstrating a culture of evidence, self-reflection and improvement, informed by analysis, and interpretation of information.

PAA 4.4   The operator has adopted a systematic and rigorous approach for consistent interpretation and application of the GLDs for the design of learning programmes within the scope of the programme area.

PAA 4.5   The internal quality assurance system includes robust procedures for programme approval, monitoring and review to ensure that learning programmes have appropriate content, rigor and standards of learner performance for the stated QF level(s). These procedures focus on validation of learning outcomes and enhancement of learning.

PAA 4.6   The operator reviews the effectiveness of its internal quality assurances system regularly, with follow-up on any issue identified.

Explanatory Notes for PAA-4

Why this accreditation standard is important
This standard is to ensure that there is periodic assessment of attainment of educational/training objectives using reliable data to inform decision-making and formulation of evidence-based follow-up actions. Long-term success of a programme area hinges on the quality, effectiveness and relevancy of operation, which rests upon the contribution that each of the learning programmes and services makes toward achieving the educational/training objectives in a coordinated manner.

Matters for consideration
▪ The operator has established a track record from the operation of cognate programmes in the proposed programme area that, as a matter of quality assurance, it reviews organisational effectiveness regularly and is able to respond with well deliberated actions and resources. This includes reviewing the effectiveness of governance and management functions, financial and resource planning, programme planning and management, staff planning, and the review process itself.
▪ The actions implemented for enhancement of effectiveness, both programme and organisational, have proved to be effective.
▪ There are checks and balances in the quality assurance system to avoid conflicts of roles.
▪ The operator collects feedback from the key stakeholders to inform the review process.
▪ The quality assurance processes are effective for approval and periodic review of learning programmes, and validation of learning outcomes.
▪ The quality assurance system is supported by reliable collection, analyses and interpretation of data. The data may include comparative data from external sources, as well as environmental data.

Domain PAA-5: Programme Area Development and Management

Accreditation Standard

The operator must substantiate the proposed programme area by its track record of operation of QF-recognised learning programmes in relevant discipline or industry areas, in alignment with organisational objectives and planned resources.

Minimum requirements:

PAA 5.1   The proposed programme area is underpinned by a framework of consistent body of knowledge, principles and practices, which is appropriate for the relevant disciplines, industries, or professions.

PAA 5.2   The operator has established sustainable leadership arrangements for the proposed programme area which ensure that appropriate expertise and experience are in place to provide directions, and to oversee the effective implementation and development of that programme area.

PAA 5.3   The approved development plan of the proposed programme area reflects the strategic positioning of the operator, the synergy within and across the proposed programme area, resource implications, and the necessary means of implementation.

PAA 5.4   The operator has established criteria and procedures for identifying the needs for, or termination of, a learning programme within the proposed programme area, and the requirements for successful implementation.

PAA 5.5   The experience from the operation of existing QF-recognised learning programmes is relevant and can substantiate the proposed programme area.

Explanatory Notes for PAA-5

Why this accreditation standard is important
This standard is to ensure that the track record of operating QF-recognised learning programmes is relevant and transferrable to the proposed programme area. In particular, it is important to recognise that the leadership required to manage and develop a programme area is different from the leadership required to operate learning programmes. The proposed programme area must be self-consistent and contribute to the development of competencies that meet the needs of the society.

Matters for consideration
- The definition of the scope of the proposed programme area should have been drawn up with reference to the Classification of Areas of Study and Training in the Qualifications Register (QR).
- The proposed programme area has strong distinctive features that align with the vision and mission of the operator, and they are derived from the features of the existing QF-recognised learning programmes.
- The proposed programme area has effective leadership to achieve a shared purpose, which is recognised by the staff.
- The existing QF-recognised learning programmes within the proposed programme area consistently meet the planned enrolment targets.
- Programme planning for the existing QF-recognised learning programmes has proved to be effective.

Domain PAA-6: Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Accreditation Standard

The operator must have developed and implemented effective policies for the development of learner-centred strategies for achievement of learning outcomes through alignment of educational/training objectives, learning experiences, assessment, and learning support.

Minimum requirements:

PAA-6.1   The operator collects and analyses admission and other necessary data to track learners' achievement and satisfaction for an understanding of learner characteristics and the preferred mode of learning.

PAA-6.2   The operator provides learning experiences that are congruent with learner characteristics and the programmes it offers.

PAA-6.3   The operator has developed strategies ensuring that its learning programme(s) provide effective learning experience to deliver the intended learning outcomes, as well as driving the alignment of learning, teaching and assessment activities.

PAA-6.4   There is regular review of the effectiveness of the learning, teaching and assessment strategies using findings from actual implementation.

PAA-6.5   All learners have access to accurate and complete information about the fees, admission and completion requirements, and the award(s) to be granted upon successful completion of a learning programme.

Explanatory Notes for PAA-6

Why this accreditation standard is important
This standard is to ensure that the learning, teaching and assessment activities are appropriate for its content and levels of study/training, and contribute to learners' attainment of the intended learning outcomes. Within a programme area, there are teaching and learning activities to encourage integration of interdisciplinary knowledge and skills to the extent congruent to the programme area.

Matters for consideration
- The learning, teaching and assessment strategies have proved to be effective in the operation of the existing QF-recognised learning programmes.
- The learning, teaching and assessment policies driving the development of learning, teaching and assessment strategies are effective in ensuring the alignment between learning, teaching and assessment activities, to achieve the programme objectives of the existing QF-recognised learning programmes.
- The learning, teaching and assessment policies successfully created a high quality learning and teaching environment, physical or virtual, that fosters inquisitive learning and demonstration of competencies, for different learning styles and capabilities.
- There are effective learning, teaching and assessment activities for integration and demonstration of interdisciplinary knowledge and skills within the proposed programme area.

Domain PAA-7: Staffing and Staff Development

Accreditation Standard

The operator must have a suitably qualified and competent workforce which is capable to develop and deliver learning programmes in the proposed programme area, and can ensure sustainable development of the proposed programme area.

Minimum requirements:

PAA-7.1   The operator has in place a staffing plan which is effective in ensuring that there are sufficient management, teaching and administrative staff with appropriate qualifications and experience, and is congruent with the proposed programme area and its future developments.

PAA-7.2   The operator has developed procedures which are effective in ensuring that staff recruitment/engagement, development, workload, remuneration and appraisal are aligned with the learning, teaching and assessment strategies within the proposed programme area.

PAA-7.3   The operator has developed processes to systematically assess and enhance teaching effectiveness within the proposed programme area.

PAA-7.4   The operator has a staff development plan designed to enhance pedagogical knowledge and skills for conducting learning and teaching activities and assessment of learning outcomes.

PAA-7.5   The operator has effective policies that encourage continuous professional development.

Explanatory Notes for PAA-7

Why this accreditation standard is important
This standard is to ensure that, regardless of the mode of engagement (full-time/part-time, paid/unpaid, internal/external), qualified personnel are engaged in conducting the teaching, learning and assessment activities, as well as contributing to the healthy development of the programme area. It is important that staff are conversant with the latest developments within their own areas of expertise/profession, as well as committed to providing high quality educational/ training services.

Matters for consideration
▪ Staff planning has proved to be effective in the operation of the existing QF-recognised learning programmes.
▪ The established staff profile is demonstrably commensurate with the proposed programme area.
▪ There are effective policies and procedures for staff to update themselves in quality assurance, pedagogical advancement and adopting technologies for learning and teaching, and to engage in scholarly and/or professional activities.
▪ Staff understand and are committed to the vision and mission of the organisation, and the positioning of the programme area within the context of achieving the vision and mission.
▪ Teaching effectiveness is reliably assessed to inform staff appraisal and development.

Domain PAA-8: Programme Area Resources and Services

Accreditation Standard

The operator must have implemented a well-managed approach to its provision of learning, teaching and enabling resources which aligns with the current and planned development of the proposed programme area.

Minimum requirements:

PAA-8.1   The policies and procedures are effective for the identification, acquisition and maintenance of the necessary resources, which are linked to financial planning.

PAA-8.2   The operator regularly monitors and assesses the utilisation and adequacy of resources to inform projective planning, including offering of new learning programmes.

PAA-8.3   Learners and staff receive the necessary support to acquire the skills to make effective use of the available resources.

PAA-8.4   The operator has effective resource planning processes that involve key stakeholders.

Explanatory Notes for PAA-8

Why this accreditation standard is important
This standard is to ensure that the planning and allocation of learning, teaching and enabling resources/services are based on sound financial planning aligned with programme area planning, and with a clear understanding of the learners' needs. Comparable resources must be available regardless of the location/mode of delivery to achieve the same learning outcomes. Utilisation of such resources is periodically reviewed to ensure adequacy and currency, and to provide reliable information for projective planning.

Matters for consideration
- Resource planning has proved to be effective in the operation of the existing QF-recognised learning programmes.
- There is access to library, information and technology resources and these resources are sufficient in quantity and quality to support the learning and teaching activities planned for the proposed programme area, regardless of the location/mode of delivery.
- The physical and virtual learning environment is reliable, supporting and safe for its learners, and is conducive for creating an effective learning atmosphere.
- There are systems to support efficient planning, monitoring and evaluation of resources.
- Resource planning has taken into consideration the social, environmental and cultural impacts.

4. Periodic Institutional Review

Purpose Statement	Domain of Competence
To ascertain whether an operator continues to be effective to achieve its vision and mission by systematically enhancing quality of its operation by formulating and implementing actions based on evidence.	PIR-1 Organisational Effectiveness and Planning PIR-2 Organisational Leadership and Staffing PIR-3 Programme Area Development and Management PIR-4 Management of Resources and Services PIR-5 Organisational Quality Assurance and Enhancement
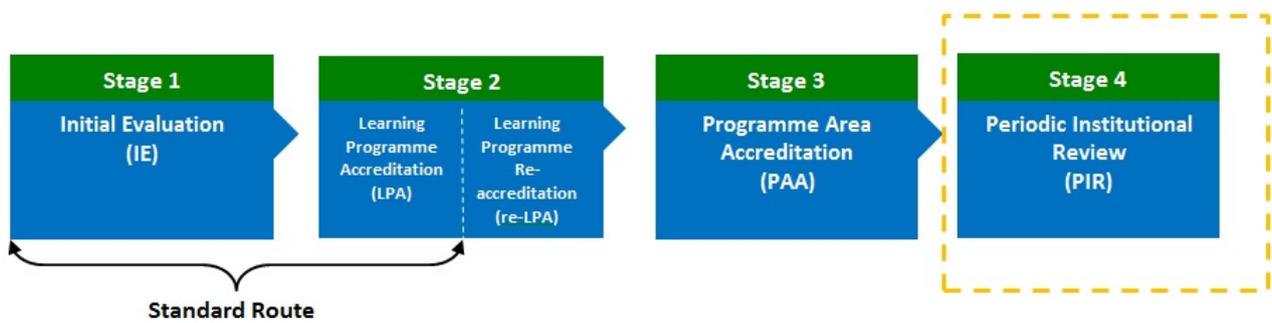
The Four-stage Quality Assurance Process

Domain PIR-1: Organisational Effectiveness and Planning

Accreditation Standard

The operator must demonstrate that it is meeting its educational/training objectives, aligned with its vision and mission, and informed by comprehensive review of organisational effectiveness and implementation of strategically planned initiatives.

Minimum requirements:

PIR-1.1 The operator actively drives the achievement of its vision and mission through periodic programme review and evaluation of programme objectives and achievement of learning outcomes.

PIR-1.2 The operator is able to substantiate its attainment of educational/training objectives within the approved programme area(s), using information such as organisational outcomes and/or performance indicators.

PIR-1.3 The internal quality assurance system of the operator is effective in terms of driving operational and educational/training enhancement within the approved programme area(s).

PIR-1.4 The operator has used evidence-based practices to improve educational/training offerings and services.

PIR-1.5 The operator has a high level of oversight over its educational/training offerings and administrative operations through processes that monitor and improve organisational effectiveness.

Explanatory Notes for PIR-1

Why this accreditation standard is important
This standard is to ensure that the operator continuously enhances its organisational effectiveness through evidence-based decision-making to achieve the organisational vision and mission. As a result, the organisation remains relevant and able to sustain a high quality of services that meets the needs of its clients on an on-going basis. Planning at the organisational level is required to ensure alignment between programme area planning, staff planning, financial and resource planning, in anticipation of the foreseeable changes and challenges.

Matters for consideration
- Enhancement of organisational effectiveness is evident and is linked to strategic planning.
- Policies on academic/training development, quality assurance and resource allocation are proved to be coherent, appropriate and responsive to changes.
- Use of proved qualitative and quantitative analytical tools in strategic planning such as gap analysis, trend analysis and balanced scorecard, is evident.
- Stakeholders are engaged in evaluation of organisational effectiveness and strategic planning.
- Appropriate technologies and reporting tools are adopted to support strategic planning.
- Up-to-date, relevant and accurate information about learning programmes is available for prospective learners to make informed decisions before enrolment. This may include graduate statistics and employability data.

Domain PIR-2: Organisational Leadership and Staffing

Accreditation Standard

The operator must demonstrate that it continues to have a sufficient number of qualified and competent programme leaders, teaching and support staff, as a result of effective staff planning and development, and that these arrangements align with the development of the programme area(s).

Minimum requirements:

PIR-2.1   The programme management team is effective in planning, development and review of the learning programme(s) they are responsible for, by providing directions and making key decisions relating to programme offering/termination, staff management, resource allocation and quality assurance.

PIR-2.2   The effectiveness of staff planning is supported by analysis of the established staff profile and the needs of the internal and external environment.

PIR-2.3   The current policy and practices of the operator in staff appraisal and development at various levels are effective and efficient.

PIR-2.4   The appointment and deployment of teaching and support staff of the operator are effective in ensuring that they have appropriate academic, vocational or professional qualifications. They should also possess relevant and up-to-date experience/knowledge and skills in the development, management, delivery and assessment of outcome-based learning programmes and in the review and quality assurance of such programmes.

PIR-2.5   The operator has effective measures to ensure that staff workload is maintained at a reasonable level to ensure staff development and/or undertaking of professional/scholarly activities.

Explanatory Notes for PIR-2

Why this accreditation standard is important
This standard is to ensure that the operator has a high quality and committed workforce which shares the vision and mission of the organisation, and is able to translate the vision and mission into concrete plans, actions and outcomes at the organisational and programme area levels. This requires identification of the desirable attributes of the workforce and careful planning to acquire and/or develop those attributes. Organisational leadership should be embedded within the governance and management system and not be solely reliant on individual staff.

Matters for consideration
- The staff profile has an appropriate mix of full-time/part-time, teaching/non-teaching, academic/practitioners, and staff at different stages of their career development.
- Staff members are active in research, publication, consultancy, and/or other professional/scholarly activities.
- The operator identifies a relevant set of measures of teaching effectiveness and applies them effectively to inform staff appraisal and development.
- Staff engagement is high in programme planning, development and review processes.
- There are mechanisms, such as co-teaching, to facilitate exchange of experience and skills among staff members.

Domain PIR-3: Programme Area Development and Management

Accreditation Standard

The operator must demonstrate that the processes for programme approval, development, review, as well as the formulation of strategic plans at both the organisational and programme area levels, are linked and continue to remain effective to meet its educational/training objectives within the approved programme area(s).

Minimum requirements:

PIR-3.1   The design of the learning programmes is effective in terms of level, coherence, balance and progression.

PIR-3.2   The learning, teaching and assessment activities remain effective in relation to the intended learning outcomes within the programme area(s).

PIR-3.3   The learning programmes remain current and valid in the light of developments in the related field of disciplines, industries or professions.

PIR-3.4   The operator has appropriately benchmarked the outcome standards and quality with the claimed QF level(s) with organisations or learning programmes in a similar context.

Explanatory Notes for PIR-3

Why this accreditation standard is important
This standard is to ensure that the operator organises programme area development as a long-term undertaking. Effective alignment of all planning activities is essential for ensuring successful development of programme areas. This kind of alignment happens at the level of strategic planning where decisions on resources and priorities are made. Appropriateness of programme area development would be recognised by the learners, employers, academic/industry partners and the community at large.

Matters for consideration
▪ Depending on the purpose of the approach adopted for benchmarking, an appropriate benchmarking methodology is adopted accordingly. Results of benchmarking are considered at the right level(s) for improvement actions.
▪ External quality assurance, accreditation or professional recognition confirms the quality of learning programmes, including and attainment of learning outcomes.
▪ Admission profile and ratio of applicants to planned places show that the learning programmes in the approved programme area(s) have high demand.
▪ Programme planning within the approved programme area(s) promptly responds to new opportunities and challenges, supported by adequate financial and resource planning.
▪ Strong ties and/or collaborations have been established between the approved programme area(s) and the relevant disciplines, industries or professions.
▪ Learners, alumni and staff achievements from the approved programme area(s) receive recognition from the relevant disciplines, industries or professions.

Domain PIR-4: Management of Resources and Services

Accreditation Standard

The operator must demonstrate that, within the approved programme area(s), the mechanisms for management and deployment of resources and services continue to be effective to meet the educational/training objectives, as a result of implementing organisational resource allocation policies and financial budgets.

Minimum requirements:

PIR-4.1   The operator has effective resource planning covering human, financial, physical and information resources.

PIR-4.2   The financial management is effective to ensure the sustainability of the delivery of their learning programmes in meeting the educational/training objectives. Decisions on such plans are made with the support of relevant and sufficient data and information.

PIR-4.3   The decisions on resource allocation to support learning, teaching and assessment within the programme area(s) have taken into account feedback obtained through various channels, with a view to long-term development of its learning programmes.

PIR-4.4   The feedback from users on the quality and adequacy of learning, teaching and enabling resources is regularly collected and acted upon, and used to inform future planning.

PIR-4.5   Adequate learner support services have been identified and provided by the operator, and have been informed by programme planning and analysis of learner characteristics.

Explanatory Notes for PIR-4

Why this accreditation standard is important

This standard is to ensure that educational/training resources and support services is available and suitable to ensure effective learning, teaching and assessment on an on-going basis. This requires careful planning to ensure that funding is available, development/procurement is timely and training on applying resources in learning/teaching is provided to learners and staff. Within an organisation, resources are typically shared and therefore coordination and scheduling are required to maximise the utilisation and cost effectiveness of resources, and to minimise the impact on the availability and/or quality of resources.

Matters for consideration

- Appropriate resource allocation has been made to ensure adequate learning and teaching resources be provided to the learners for the purpose of effective and independent learning. Such support may include but is not limited to library resources, teaching accommodation, laboratories and other workshop facilities and access to information technology resources.
- Appropriate technologies and reporting tools are adopted to support resource planning.
- Appropriate learner support services are available to meet the needs of the learners.
- Suitable technologies are deployed to provide timely feedback to learners and staff.

Domain PIR-5: Organisational Quality Assurance and Enhancement

Accreditation Standard

The operator must demonstrate its on-going maintenance of an effective quality assurance system for ensuring the quality and standards of its learning programmes at the stated QF level(s) in the approved programme area(s), aligning with its educational/training objectives.

Minimum requirements:

PIR-5.1   The policies on admission, assessment, measurement of quality of learning outcomes, programme approval, staff quality, review and feedback mechanisms, resources and support facilities are effective and relevant to the approved programme area(s).

PIR-5.2   New policies and procedures in regard to the approved programme area(s) are approved through appropriate processes, and implemented through involvement of relevant personnel as appropriate.

PIR-5.3   The quality assurance system is effective in benchmarking and ensuring that the existing and new learning programmes developed within the approved programme area(s) meet the expected QF standards.

PIR-5.4   The feedback from stakeholders has resulted in improvement actions for the approved programme area(s) and organisational effectiveness.

PIR-5.5   The staff members responsible for managing, delivering and assessing the learning programmes takes effective actions to address weaknesses, build on strengths, and generally develop a culture of continuous improvement and quality enhancement.

Explanatory Notes for PIR-5

Why this accreditation standard is important
This standard is to ensure that quality assurance of the operator focuses on evaluating how effective it is in accomplishing its vision and mission and achieving its educational/training objectives, through an on-going, evidence-based and participatory self-reflection process. This is to ensure that the organisation is responding to changes, enhancing its effectiveness and is focused on quality, in pursuit of its organisational aims.

Matters for consideration
▪ Appropriate evidence, both direct and indirect, is systematically collected, analysed and interpreted to inform quality assurance decisions in a timely manner.
▪ Findings from quality assurance activities are fully discussed at the right level(s) and acted upon if necessary.
▪ The governing and management bodies routinely receive reports on effectiveness of improvement actions.
▪ The governing and management bodies have made it a priority to monitor the effectiveness of quality assurance, and the alignment between its vision and mission, educational/training objectives and offerings.
▪ The quality assurance system ensures its integrity and objectivity by engaging external input and incorporating checks and balances between those who take actions and those who review actions.

Appendix I: Ordinances, Policies, Other Relevant Standards and Guidelines

1. **Award Titles Scheme:**
   https://www.hkqf.gov.hk/en/KeyFeatures/ats/index.html

2. **Cap. 320 Post Secondary Colleges Ordinance:**
   https://www.elegislation.gov.hk/hk/cap320!en@2007-07-01T00:00:00?p0=1&p1=1

3. **Cap. 592 Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications Ordinance:**
   https://www.elegislation.gov.hk/hk/cap592!en@2016-05-27T00:00:00?p0=1&p1=1

4. **Classification of Areas of Study and Training in the Qualifications Register (QR), List of Sub-areas and Illustrative Scope Statements**
   https://www.hkcaavq.edu.hk/files/services/accreditation/academic-accreditation/New_Classification_System_e.pdf

5. **Common Descriptors for Associate Degree and Higher Diploma Programmes:**
   https://www.cspe.edu.hk/en/Quality-CommonDesc.html

6. **Credit Accumulation and Transfer:**
   https://www.hkqf.gov.hk/en/KeyFeatures/cat/index.html

7. **Generic Level Descriptors:**
   https://www.hkqf.gov.hk/en/KeyFeatures/levels/index.html

8. **Hong Kong Qualifications Framework:**
   https://www.hkqf.gov.hk/

9. **List of Specification of Competency Standards:**
   https://www.hkqf.gov.hk/en/scs/scs/index.html

10. **List of Specification of Generic (Foundation) Competencies:**
    https://www.hkqf.gov.hk/en/scs/sgc/index.html

11. **QF Credit:**
    https://www.hkqf.gov.hk/en/KeyFeatures/credit/index.html

12. **Qualifications Guidelines for SCS-based/SGC-based Courses:**
    https://www.hkqf.gov.hk/filemanager/en/content_74/QG%20revised_E_2014.08.pdf