Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
National Commission for
Academic Accreditation & Assessment

المملكة العربية السعودية
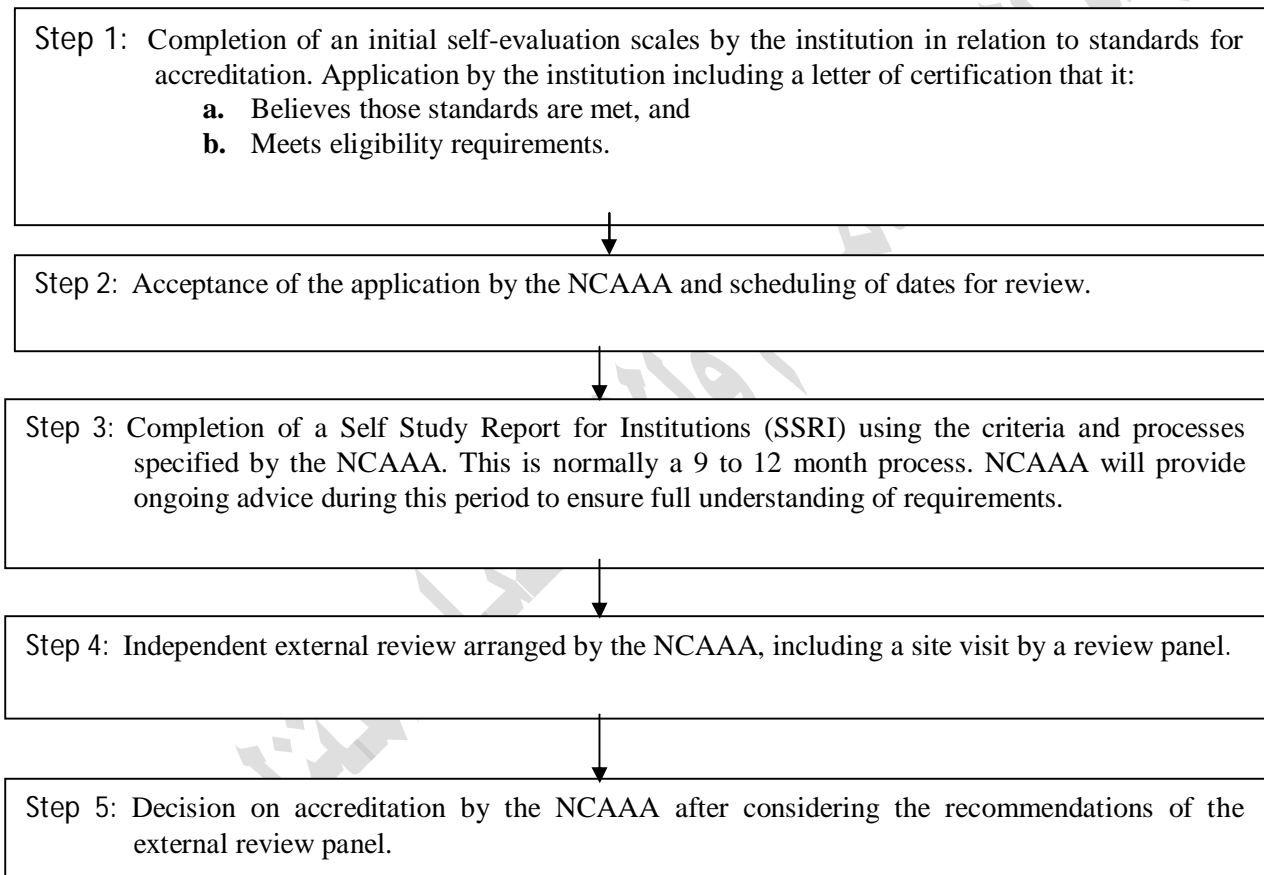الهيئــة الوطنيــة للتقويم
والاعتمـاد الأكـاديمـي

Eligibility Requirements for an Application for Institutional Accreditation

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

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

The major steps involved are:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Application Requirements for Institutional Accreditation Eligibility

1. Final Licence

The institution must be established by the Government of Saudi Arabia as a higher education institution, or if a private institution, have been granted a final license to operate as a higher education institution in Saudi Arabia by the Ministry of Higher Education or other government authority authorized by the Higher Council of Education.

> **Attached a copy of the final licence by approved government institution**

2. Consistent activities

The activities of the institution must be consistent with its official approval or its final license. For example its scope or range of programs, the level at which programs are offered, its title as an institution, and any special conditions specified for its license.

> **Provide a summary report on the activities supporting the final licence**

3. Mission

The institution must have a mission approved by its governing board that is consistent with its official approval or final license and appropriate for an institution of its type and the community or communities in which it operates.

> **Provide details and a copy of approved mission (if outlined in the strategic plan refer to item 4)**

4. Strategic Plan and associated plans

The institution must have a strategic plan for the achievement of its mission and major development objectives that includes objectives for quality improvement.

> **Provide a summary report and copy of the Institutions approved strategic plan, operational and quality assurance plans**

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5. Administrative Policies and Procedures

The institution must have developed and made readily accessible to teaching and all other staff a complete set of administrative policies and regulations including terms of reference for major committees and responsibilities of teaching and administrative positions. These should be consistent with the requirements of Standard 2—Governance and Administration and other relevant standards dealing with teaching and administrative and support services. Committees or councils for which terms of reference and membership structure must be available include:

a. University Council or Board of Trustees.
b. Any standing sub committees of the University Council or Board of Trustees.
c. Senior academic committees (including the academic council if applicable) responsible for oversight of and approval of programs or major program changes, research development, and graduate studies programs (if applicable).
d. Any standing sub committees of the senior academic committee.
e. Institutional quality committee. (**Note** that although it should be normal practice to have a single quality committee for all institutional activities, if separate committees have been established to oversee quality for academic functions and administrative functions the membership structure and terms of reference of both must be available, together with the committee responsible for coordinating the two sets of activities.)
f. Institutional requirements for college academic committees or councils and standing sub-committees
g. Institutional requirements for department academic committees or councils and standing sub-committees.

Provide a list and a copy of the Institution policies, regulations and terms of reference

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6. Student Handbooks and guides

The institution must have published guides (or catalogues or handbooks) that are readily accessible to existing and potential future students, and teaching and other staff, that include accurate and current information about details of programs and courses, degrees offered and graduation requirements, admission requirements and procedures, costs and refund policies (if applicable), rules and regulations directly affecting students.

Provide a copy of student handbooks, guides, and prospectus

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7. Program Specifications (refer attachment 1)

The institution must have program specifications for all of its degree level programs using the template required by the NCAAA. These program specifications must have been approved by the institution's senior academic committee.

Complete all program specifications as attached to the eligibility list

8. Course Specifications (refer attachment 2)

The institution must have course specifications using the template required by the NCAAA for all courses in all its programs and firm commitments to complete specifications for all remaining courses by the proposed time for the external review.

Complete three course specifications for each level (x12) as attached to the eligibility list

9. Program Approval Policy and procedures

The institution must have established and described in policies and regulations processes for program approval and approval of program changes under the authority of a central curriculum committee or equivalent. The processes must provide an appropriate balance between institutional responsibility and oversight, and flexibility for course and program modifications as required at department or college level.

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

10. Guide books for monitoring quality and improving programs.

The institution must have effective systems for monitoring the quality and supporting improvements in its programs that meet the requirements for Standard 4; Learning and Teaching, and all of its sub-sections.

Provide a guide book for the internal quality system

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11. Record Management

The institution must have established arrangements for maintaining records and providing summary statistical data to departments, colleges and central committees (Quality committee and Curriculum Committee or equivalent) including at least the following information:

a. Grade distributions for all courses.
b. Mean grade distributions for all courses for each department (or program), college, and the institution as a whole. (desirably provided for courses at each year level)
c. Completion rates for all courses.
d. Mean completion rates for all courses for each department (or program), college, and the institution as a whole. (desirably provided for courses at each year level)
e. Year to year progression rates and total program completion rates for all programs.

Provide a summary report and evidence about the analysis and reporting of statistical data

12 Student Evaluation

The institution must have established arrangements for student evaluation of courses and programs and mechanisms for the use of those survey results in program and course evaluations at department, college and institutional levels. These arrangements should include a number of common questions across the institution for internal benchmarking purposes, and centralized processing of survey results with regular reports provided to relevant levels within the institution.

Provide a summary report and evidence of student surveys

13. Quality Assurance System

The institution must have an effective system for quality assurance covering all areas of institutional activity and operating under the supervision of a senior manager within the institution's central administration. Note that this must include some appropriate processes for monitoring the quality of organizations established by the institution or of services contracted out to other organizations, such as, community colleges, preparatory year programs, regional campuses, or contracted services, such as, catering or IT services.

Provide a summary report and manuals on how institutional quality assurance is managed and maintained

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14. **Key Performance Indicators and Benchmarks**

The institution must be able to provide reliable data on the Key Performance Indicators specified by the NCAAA and any additional indicators identified by the institution for its own performance evaluation. Note that for the initial accreditation reviews to be conducted in (e.g. 2010) it is recognized that systems for collecting required data for all the NCAAA's KPIs may not yet be in place. However, data must be available for use in the institutions self study for a majority of items, and plans must have been prepared for the remaining items to be available.

> **Provide a summary report and evidence of key performance indicators and benchmarks**

15. **Comparative benchmarks**

The institution must have identified other institutions to provide comparative benchmarks for quality evaluation and, where necessary, have established agreements for exchange of information on indicators to be used for this purpose. (Note that special agreements are not required for use of published data on performance benchmarks, but are necessary if unpublished data is to be used. An institution may benchmark its performance on different functions against different institutions.)

> **Provide a summary report on arrangements for comparative benchmarks**

16. **Research**

If the institution is a university, or if it is another type of institution that has a mission or objectives that include research, it must have systems for collecting and reporting data from all departments, colleges and any research centers on the extent and significance of research activity.

> **Provide a summary report on the system for maintenance and provision of data including research (if applicable)**

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17. Community Service activities

The institution must have systems in place for collecting and reporting on the extent and usefulness of formal and informal community service activities, including services provided by community service units or centers, and by other individuals, departments or colleges.

> **Provide a summary report on the system for maintenance and provision of data on community service activities**

18. Alumni or Graduate Data

A new or recently established institution must have been in operation long enough for its first cohort of students to have graduated and information from its graduates about the quality of their programs must be included in evidence provided for accreditation.

> **Provide a copy of the alumni guidebook or graduation data**

19. Self Evaluation Scales (SES) and Self Study for Institutions (SSR1) (refer attachment 3 & 4)

The institution must have reviewed its activities in relation to the eleven standards specified by the NCAAA. This includes an initial draft of the SSRI and it involves a complete Self Evaluation Scales report for higher education institutions by a committee or committees with thorough knowledge of all parts of the organization. The Rector (for a university) or the Chair of the Board of Trustees (for a private college) must have certified that in its view the institution has achieved satisfactory performance on each of the eleven standards. (Satisfactory performance for the purpose of this item means an overall rating of at least three stars for each standard and sub-standard on the star rating system.

NOTE: It is not necessary for every single item within the sub-standards of each standard to be given three stars or more. However, the rating for each standard and sub-standard as a whole must be at that level.

> **Complete a first draft of the Self Study Report Institution (SSRI) and Self Evaluation scales (SES) Refer attachment 3 &4**

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Special Notes:

Accreditation by the NCAAA is based on all the eleven standards described in the *Standards for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions*. In the initial accreditation judgments, particular emphasis will be given to standard 4 and all of the sub-standards of that standard and to other items specified by NCAAA.

If a former college or colleges were amalgamated with an existing institution two or more years before the date of application the quality assurance arrangements and eligibility requirements will be expected to apply to the total institution, including those former colleges.

If a former college or colleges were amalgamated with an existing institution less than two years before the date of application the quality assurance arrangements and eligibility requirements will not be expected to apply to those former colleges, but the institution will be expected to have finalized plans for the full incorporation of those colleges into the institution and the extension of the quality assurance arrangements to them within no more than two further years. In this situation the accreditation judgment will be based on the previously existing institution and the adequacy of the plans for incorporation of the college(s).

An institutional review for accreditation must deal with the total institution. Appropriate processes must be in place for the quality assurance of any associated community colleges or foundation year programs. An institutional review of a private college or university will include all associated colleges, even if they have received a separate license from the Ministry Of Higher Education (MoHE).

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If an institution offers programs by distance education, then arrangements for the provision of those programs must meet the requirements of the Ministry of Higher Education for Distance Education, and the programs offered in that mode must also meet the standards for distance education programs set by the NCAAA. Special arrangements <u>may</u> be made an extension of time for this to be done, provided a detailed action plan has been prepared for those requirements to be fully met within a maximum period of three years.

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Eligibility for Institutional Accreditation Checklist

Name of Institution_____ **Date** _____

All eligibility criteria will need to be met before consideration can be given to accreditation.
Tick the column beside each criterion to indicate if it is met or write in the next column the date by which that criterion will be met. (Must be no later than one month)

	Eligibility Check List	Criteria Met	Required Evidence	Confirmed (NCAAA)
1.	Final license by approved government institution		Copy	
2.	Activities consistent with license or approval		Document/ Report to support consistency	
3.	Mission approved and consistent with license or approval		Documents/Copy of the decision/ copy of the approved strategic plan.	
4.	Strategic and actual plans, including a plan for continuous quality assurance		A copy of the approved strategic plan.	
5.	Availability of policies, regulations and terms of reference		Copy	
6.	Published guides or handbooks for students		Copy	
7.	Program specifications for all programs		Copy of each	
8.	Course specifications		Sample (three courses from each level)	
9.	Regulations and descriptions of processes for program approval, changes, and review		A Copy of approved manual or documents	
10.	Systems for monitoring quality and improving programs		Guidebook for the internal quality system	
11.	Central maintenance analysis and reporting of statistical data		Evidence and reports about the analysis of results	
12.	Student surveys		Summary Reports	
13.	Quality assurance system covering all standards		Reports/ manual	
14.	Data on Key Performance Indicators and benchmarks		Reports	
15.	Arrangements for comparative benchmarks		Reports	
16.	Systems for maintenance and provision of data, including research (if applicable)		Reports	
17.	Systems for maintenance of data on community service activities		Reports	
18.	Students graduated		Alumni Guidebook or Graduation Data	
19.	Compliance with standards for accreditation: Self evaluation scales are complete and an initial draft of the SSRI		Completed self-evaluation scales report and the first draft of the SSRI	

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