

1. Introduction

1.1 Bhutan Accreditation Council

The Bhutan Accreditation Council (BAC) was established in 2011 as envisaged by the Tertiary Education Policy (TEP) of the Kingdom of Bhutan 2010. The BAC is the national authority on accreditation, quality assurance, and interpreting and recognizing qualifications. The Quality Assurance & Accreditation Division (QAAD) under the Department of Adult and Higher Education, Ministry of Education, serves as the Secretariat to the Council. Section 11.1 of the TEP provides for BAC to progress into an autonomous body in the future.

1.2 Accreditation

Accreditation is one of the most important tools used globally for quality assurance of higher education systems. There are two types of accreditation: institutional accreditation and programme accreditation. The Council shall undertake institutional accreditation, and depending on the need, it shall initiate programme accreditation in the future as deemed appropriate. The accreditation procedures outlined in this manual are primarily related to institutional accreditation. The procedures will guide the accreditors, tertiary education institutions (TEIs) and QAAD in carrying out the accreditation exercise. The accreditation process is based on a thorough and independent evaluation carried out by a team of accreditors. A TEI shall be evaluated against eight standards outlined in this manual.

Accreditation is mandatory for all TEIs in Bhutan. It is aimed to enhance the quality of tertiary education in the country, promote accountability, and encourage a sustained culture of excellence in higher education. It is a continuous process that supports TEIs to examine their institutional vision and standards, performances, and identify strategies to improve educational effectiveness. Accreditation is thus a mechanism to create awareness and gain public trust and confidence in the quality and standards of higher education.

A branch campus that is part of a larger TEI but is based in a location independent of the main campus, offers programmes leading to a university award, has its own faculty and administrative structure, human resource (HR) and budgetary autonomy shall be accredited independently.

The funding of a TEI shall be determined by the accreditation status. In case a TEI consistently fails to show progress as evident in the accreditors' report, the Council may recommend to the Tertiary Education Board (TEB) appropriate action regarding funding the TEI.

1.3 Provisional Accreditation

The Council awards a provisional accreditation to a new TEI when the proposal sufficiently demonstrates that the proposed TEI has the potential to develop and achieve the standards outlined in this manual. **The validity of the provisional accreditation is for a minimum of five years from**

the year of its establishment. However, the provisional accreditation does not guarantee any subsequent automatic accreditation status.

Procedure for Provisional Accreditation

QAAD will be involved from the beginning of establishment of TEI along with HEPD as a member in the Technical Team and Technical Committee. An official from QAAD shall be a member of both the Technical Team and Technical Committee. The concerned official shall sensitize new TEI on the accreditation standards and processes. QAAD shall submit recommendation for Provisional Accreditation to the Council based on the report of the Technical Committee for establishment of new colleges. The Provisional Accreditation certificate (*Annexure I*) shall be awarded upon validating the report of Technical Committee prior to commencement of the TEI.

Since Provisional Accreditation is awarded based on validating fulfillment of the requirements, any major changes (e.g. programme, conceptual master plan, etc.) shall be resubmitted to the Council for endorsement. The Council reserves the right to withdraw/withhold the Provisional Accreditation status.

1.4 Core Values

The Council believes that the quality of tertiary education in the country is dependent on the education systems' ability to support as well as set high standards and expectation for TEIs. The process of accrediting TEIs is underpinned by a set of core values that the Council is committed to.

Quality

The Council is committed to ensuring quality of tertiary education through sustained efforts to achieve excellence, efficiency, competence and high standards. It believes that TEIs are dynamic, forward thinking, positive, proactive, and responsive to the realities of an ever changing world.

Integrity

The Council believes that the TEIs uphold and practice the Bhutanese values of *tha dham-tshig ley ju-drey* (*tha dam tshig las rgyu 'bras*). TEIs shall demonstrate the high ideals of loyalty, duty, respect, fairness, honesty, and transparency.

Professionalism

The Council believes that TEIs uphold and practice high level of professionalism and continuously seek to improve the quality of their services.

Inclusiveness

The Council believes in ensuring inclusiveness and diversity by involving stakeholders in developing policies, procedures and processes that cater to diverse needs.

Collaboration

The Council believes that TEIs continuously work collaboratively with relevant stakeholders and reputed TEIs both within and outside Bhutan to strengthen the quality of tertiary education.

1.5 Purpose of Accreditation

The main purposes of accreditation are as follows:

1. ensure that acceptable standards are met by all TEIs.
2. create awareness and gain public trust and confidence in the quality and standards of tertiary education.
3. encourage and support TEIs to improve institutional standards or maintain them.
4. provide assurance of quality to the government and other stakeholders.

1.6 Benefits of Accreditation

1.6.1 For the Tertiary Education Institutions

Standards

Accreditation process ensures that acceptable standards are met by all TEIs.

Professionalism

Accreditation promotes professionalism in the TEIs by encouraging a culture of quality consciousness and continuously seeking ways to improve services.

Recognition

Accreditation by a credible independent body supports efforts to address quality and facilitates international recognition of TEIs and their awards.

Funding

Accreditation status facilitates funding support from the Government based on the Funding and Financial Mechanism of TEIs.

1.6.2 For the Government

The accreditation reports on TEIs provide information to the government for informed decisions on funding and overall health of the tertiary education system in the country.

1.6.3 For Students and other stakeholders

Accreditation helps students to make informed decisions about choice of TEIs/programmes within the country, enable TEIs to provide students quality learning, enhance student/staff mobility, and facilitate credit transfer.

1.7 Conflict of Interest

The accreditors and TEIs shall declare conflict of interest. They shall declare conflict of interest before carrying out accreditation as per *Annexure II*.

1.8 Confidentiality

Any information on accreditation that is considered confidential in nature shall be protected.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 The Bhutan Accreditation Council, as national agency for accreditation, shall:

- 2.1.1 provide overall direction related to quality assurance and accreditation.
- 2.1.2 institute mechanisms to ensure credible accreditation of TEIs in the country with the aim to provide quality tertiary level education.
- 2.1.3 direct the Secretariat to carry out review exercise to affirm that the TEIs have followed up on the recommendation of the accreditors.
- 2.1.4 award provisional accreditation.
- 2.1.5 endorse the appointment of accreditors based on the recommendations of the Secretariat.
- 2.1.6 review/endorse the accreditation result based on the accreditors' reports.
- 2.1.7 grant, withhold or withdraw accreditation status based on accreditation reports and procedures.
- 2.1.8 interpret the provisions outlined in the manual.
- 2.1.9 direct the Secretariat to assess any substantive changes initiated by TEIs.
- 2.1.10 act as arbitrator for addressing appeals related to accreditation as per *Annexure III*.
- 2.1.11 approve review of the accreditation related documents.

2.2 The Quality Assurance and Accreditation Division, as Secretariat to the Council, shall:

- 2.2.1 coordinate and facilitate accreditation of the TEIs as per the manual.
- 2.2.2 build a pool of trained accreditors.
- 2.2.3 recommend appointment of accreditors to the Council.
- 2.2.4 facilitate to address appeals from TEIs on accreditation outcome.
- 2.2.5 publish relevant accreditation reports.
- 2.2.6 carry out review exercise to affirm that the TEIs have followed up on the recommendations from accreditation exercise.
- 2.2.7 communicate the decision of the Council to relevant stakeholders.
- 2.2.8 carry out study on any substantive changes initiated by a TEI.
- 2.2.9 establish linkages with external quality assurance agencies.
- 2.2.10 seek approval to conduct review of the accreditation related documents.

2.3 The Tertiary Education Institutions shall:

- 2.3.1 be committed to provide quality tertiary education.
- 2.3.2 comply with all existing Acts, policies, guidelines, and all other relevant directives.
- 2.3.3 maintain required standards as outlined in this manual.
- 2.3.4 diversify programmes that cater to national HR requirements and are responsive to global employment demands.

- 2.3.5 prepare Institutional Self Assessment Report (ISAR) for submission to the Secretariat as per *Annexure IV*.
- 2.3.6 submit documents required by accreditors or Secretariat.
- 2.3.7 declare conflict of interest.
- 2.3.8 collaborate and render support to the accreditors during accreditation site visits.
- 2.3.9 apply for accreditation and re-accreditation six months prior to expiry of validity.
- 2.3.10 ensure timely payment of accreditation fees.
- 2.3.11 inform the Secretariat of any substantive changes in the TEI along with supporting documents.
- 2.3.12 institute an internal quality assurance (IQA) mechanism.
- 2.3.13 maintain Annual Quality Assurance Reports (AQAR).

2.4 The Accreditor shall:

- 2.4.1 declare conflict of interest.
- 2.4.2 evaluate the ISAR submitted by TEIs through detailed examination, prepare tentative accreditors report, grade and list the required evidences before the site visit.
- 2.4.3 develop plan of action for the accreditation site visit (5 days) and share with the Secretariat.
- 2.4.4 validate the evidences during the site visit.
- 2.4.5 ensure comprehensive and diligent evaluation of the institution against standards outlined in this manual.
- 2.4.6 ensure integrity of practice and shall submit undisputed recommendation on accreditation to the Council without making biased judgment.
- 2.4.7 finalize accreditors' report, present at the exit meeting and submit to the Secretariat in both hard and soft copy.
- 2.4.8 present accreditation report to the Council.
- 2.4.9 complete assigned tasks as per the agreement (*Annexure V*) including appeal, if any.
- 2.4.10 conduct other appropriate actions as deemed necessary to ensure professionalism.

2.5 Appeal Committee

The appeal committee shall:

- 2.5.1 function as the final arbitrator for all appeals related to accreditation as per the ToR (*Annexure VI*).
- 2.5.2 verify appeals to ascertain its genuineness and prepare report as per *Annexure VII* within one month from the date of receiving appeal letter.
- 2.5.3 ensure fair and transparent decision.
- 2.5.4 study the appeal and communicate the decision within 45 working days as per *Annexure VIII* after the committee accepts the appeal.

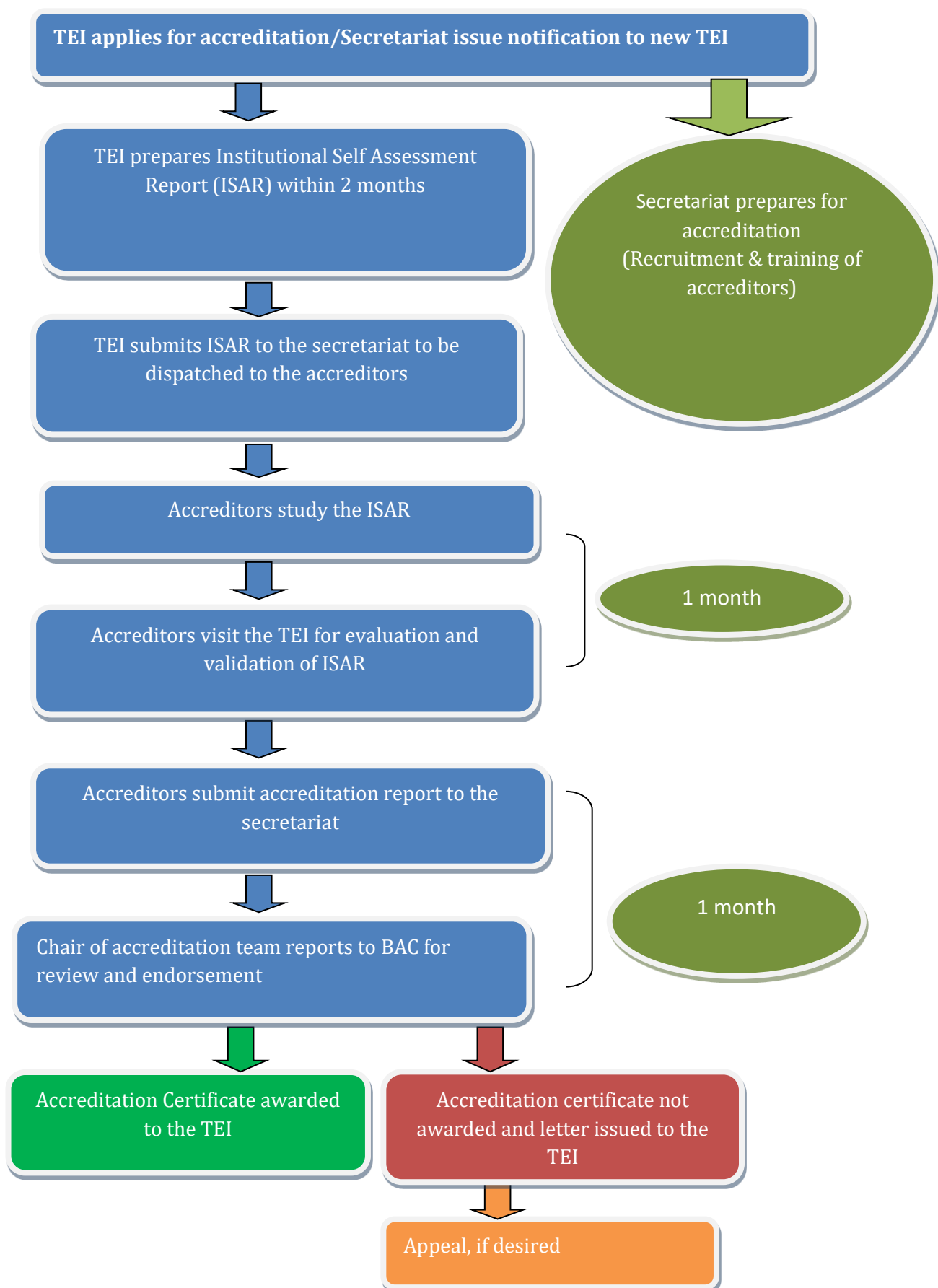
3. Accreditation Process

Facilitated by the Secretariat of the Council, accreditation is a systematic process of supporting and enabling TEIs to provide quality tertiary education to university students. The key stages of the accreditation process include a TEI applying for accreditation, preparing an ISAR over a two month period, and submitting the ISAR to the Secretariat. The Secretariat will then dispatch the ISAR to the team of accreditors who will study the document and subsequently visit the TEI for evaluation and validation of the ISAR. Upon successfully completing the accreditation exercise at the TEI, the accreditation team will submit an accreditors' report to the Secretariat who will then ask the Chair of the team to present the report to the Council for review and endorsement. The Secretariat will then arrange for the award of the accreditation certificate to the TEI by the Council.

3.1 Application

A TEI is required to submit an application for accreditation six months prior to the expiry of the validity of the previous accreditation certificate. In case of a newly established TEI, the Secretariat shall issue a notification reminding the TEI to apply for accreditation. The TEI shall apply for accreditation to the Secretariat using the prescribed application form (***Annexure IX***) along with the accreditation fee as per ***Annexure X***.

The accreditation process entails the following steps:



3.2 Institutional Self-Assessment Report

The TEI prepares and submits an ISAR to the Secretariat within two months from the application date. A late penalty shall be levied as approved by the Ministry of Finance as per *Annexure X*. The ISAR shall be submitted in the format as given in *Annexure IV*.

3.3 Accreditation site visit

The Council grants approval to the accreditors to assess the TEIs based on their Terms of Reference [*Annexure XI*]. Upon appointment by the Council, the accreditors study the ISAR and subsequently visit the TEI for evaluation and validation of the ISAR. The accreditors shall confirm or contest the ISAR through detailed examination, evaluation and site visit. The detailed assessment and site visit shall be made within one month after receipt of ISAR.

3.4 Accreditors' report and grading

The accreditors shall compile the accreditors' report and grading as per *Annexure XII* and *Annexure XIII* respectively based on the evaluation and site visit. The report shall be finalised during the exit meeting and signed by the accreditation team and head of the institution. The accreditors' report along with grading shall then be submitted to the Secretariat.

3.5 Endorsement by the Council

Within one month of the receipt of the accreditors' report the Secretariat shall organise a meeting of the Council for review and endorsement of the report. The Chair of the accreditation team will present the report to the Council on behalf of the team for endorsement. Upon endorsement the Council may then award or not award the accreditation certificate (*Annexure XIV*) to the TEI.

3.6 Appeal

The right to appeal is granted to TEIs as an opportunity to question either the process or outcome of the assessment or decision of the Council on the accreditation report. However, a TEI shall have no right to change or replace the eight standards set out in the manual. A TEI may appeal under following circumstances:

- a. not satisfied with the accreditation outcome.
- b. observed major deviation in the accreditation process from those outlined in this manual.
- c. not satisfied with the Council's decision to invalidate a previously awarded accreditation certificate.

A TEI intending to appeal may apply using the prescribed form (*Annexure XV*) within ten working days from the receipt of the accreditation certificate/letter of regret along with adequate

justification. The application must be submitted along with receipt of non-refundable appeal fee (*Annexure X*).

The first appeal shall be made to Chairperson of the Council with additional justifications and evidences. The Chair may direct the Secretariat to study the appeal or take appropriate course of action. The appeal shall be addressed within one month from receipt of the appeal.

If the TEI is not satisfied with the decision of the Council, it may appeal to Appeal Committee within ten working days from the day of decision along with receipt of non-refundable appeal fee. Upon receipt of the appeal letter, the Committee shall convene within one month of the receipt of the letter by its Secretariat to consider the appeal. The Committee shall address the appeal through detailed examination of the evidences, site visits and other appropriate measures as deemed necessary within 45 working days. The final decision of the Committee shall be communicated as per *Annexure VIII*. The judgment of the Committee shall be final and binding.

3.7 Reassessment

Reassessment shall be made in the following situations:

- a. Where a TEI fails to get minimum required grade, it shall apply for reassessment within six to twelve months. If it fails to obtain accreditation certificate after the reassessment the Council may take appropriate action.
- b. Where a TEI intends to improve its grade, it may apply for reassessment after completing at least a year.

All expenses related to reassessment, including honorarium, accommodation, daily allowance, and travel, shall be borne by the TEI.

3.8 Reaccreditation

Reaccreditation shall mean a different cycle of accreditation that happens after the expiry of validity of the previous accreditation. The TEI shall apply for reaccreditation six months prior to the expiry of the validity of the previous one. The fee and the procedure for reaccreditation shall be same as those of the previous accreditation.

4. Standards for Accreditation

Accreditation is a systematic and thorough process of assessing the performance of a TEI and enabling it to provide quality tertiary education. To do so, it looks at critical areas of institutional development and performance that can be assessed objectively. The accreditation process as outlined in this manual will assess a TEI based on a set of eight Standards which are formulated through wide stakeholder consultations, research and international best practice. Each Standard has Key Aspects and Indicators that are significant, relevant, measurable and achievable. The eight Standards are:

1. Governance, Leadership and Management
2. Curriculum Design, Content and Review
3. Teaching Learning and Assessment
4. Human Resources and Services
5. Research, Publications and Linkages
6. Infrastructure and Learning Resources
7. Student Services
8. Internal Quality Assurance and Enhancement System

Each Standard is identified by a number and name (e.g. *Standard 1: Governance, Leadership and Management*). The Key Aspect of each Standard is numbered (e.g. *1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, and 1.5*) for five Key Aspects under Standard 1. Each Key Aspect has a set of Indicators (e.g. *Key Aspect 1.1: Vision, Mission and Objectives*) has three Indicators numbered as 1.1.1, 1.1.2, and 1.1.3. Each Indicator has a set of questions that are to be used by the TEIs for preparing the ISAR (e.g. *Question 1.1.1.1 will address Indicator 1.1.1 of Key Aspect 1.1 of Standard 1*).

Standard 1: Governance, Leadership and Management

Standard 1 considers the vision, mission, and objectives of the TEI. It also encompasses organizational structure, management practices, accountability and transparency. The standard will include TEIs' leadership culture and academic autonomy. The standard will enable the accreditors to understand the process of strategic planning and implementation in a TEI.

Key Aspects	Indicators
1.1 Vision, Mission and Objectives	1.1.1 Vision, mission and objectives are clearly stated 1.1.2 Vision, mission and objectives are aligned with the university/institution goals and national aspirations. 1.1.3 Plans and activities are geared towards achieving the vision, mission and objectives of the institution.
1.2 Organizational Structure and Management	1.2.1 Clear organizational structure and mandates in place. 1.2.2 Governance, administrative structure and institutional practices that promote efficient, effective and ethical leadership in place. 1.2.3 Participatory and collaborative engagement of staff and students in relevant decision making processes in place.

1.3 Accountability and Transparency	1.3.1 Has clear line of reporting and accountability system. 1.3.2 Promotes transparency, efficiency and accountability. 1.3.3 Transparent and effective financial management system in place. 1.3.4 Proper documentation of financial statements including auditing system in place.
1.4 Leadership and Academic Autonomy	1.4.1 Has competent and qualified leadership to lead the organization. 1.4.2 Has high degree of autonomy in both management and academic matters. 1.4.3 Promotes and facilitates leadership grooming and succession planning.
1.5 Strategic Development, Planning and Implementation	1.5.1 Strategic planning to achieve organizational goals and objectives in place. 1.5.2 Realistic and measurable objectives and action plans in place. 1.5.3 Activities are coherently planned, implemented and monitored. 1.5.4 Resource mobilization strategies in place.

Standard 2: Curriculum Design, Content and Review

Standard 2 considers the key features of a TEI's academic programmes such as curriculum design, content, review processes and their alignment with the vision of the TEI. It will look at the TEI's efforts to diversify its programme, catering to national development goals and emerging global trends. It will also address inclusiveness and flexibility in the curriculum to suit different learning needs, career opportunities, and to facilitate credit transfer for student mobility.

Key Aspects	Indicators
2.1 Curriculum Design and Development	2.1.1 Nationally rooted and globally relevant curriculum in place. 2.1.2 Developed in consultation with relevant expertise and stakeholders, research, and local and international best practices. 2.1.3 Research oriented curriculum developed.
2.2 Curriculum Evaluation and Review	2.2.1 Committee or other mechanism for curriculum evaluation and review in place. 2.2.2 Curriculum revised based on study of development needs and emerging trends. 2.2.3 Curriculum feedback mechanism in place.
2.3 Academic Flexibility and Programme Diversification	2.3.1 Learners offered diverse choice of programme. 2.3.2 Elective options are available for students. 2.3.3 Provision for credit transfer system in place.

Standard 3: Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Standard 3 considers the teaching, learning and assessment approaches and practices in the TEI including policies and systems that ensure quality. This includes the overriding philosophy, methods and strategies of teaching, learning, and assessment. It will look at pedagogical practices that engage students in higher order thinking and investigation, real world experience, field attachment and internships, and application of Information & Communication Technology (ICT) resources.

Key Aspects	Indicators
3.1 Teaching Learning Process	3.1.1 Academic planning in place. 3.1.2 Variety of teaching methodologies in use. 3.1.3 ICT enabled teaching-learning used. 3.1.4 Mechanism in place to evaluate teaching. 3.1.5 Provision for inclusive teaching and learning process in place.
3.2 Assessment Process	3.2.1 Sound assessment policies and system in place. 3.2.2 Mechanism to improve fairness, transparency, and efficiency of assessment system in place. 3.2.3 Process of designing assignments, tracking progress and providing feedback in place. 3.2.4 Innovative approaches and methods of assessing student learning outcomes in place.
3.3 Student Engagement	3.3.1 Teaching approaches and methods are focused on interactive and engaged learning. 3.3.2 Peer-self assessment is practiced. 3.3.3 Methods that enable continuous assessment of student learning are practiced. 3.3.4 Lifelong learning is promoted and practiced. 3.3.5 Innovative approaches and methods for student engagement in place.
3.4 Teaching Learning Materials	3.4.1 Reading materials are made available. 3.4.2 ICT learning materials are made available. 3.4.3 Equipment and facilities for quality teaching and learning are used.

Standard 4: Human Resources and Services

Standard 4 considers human resource management, including policies and procedures for recruitment, management and continuous professional development of teaching faculty and administrative staff of the TEI. The standard also includes appropriate service conditions while in service as well as post-retirement as outlined in the HR service manual.

Key Aspects	Indicators
4.1 Human Resource Management System	4.1.1 Comprehensive HR Policy in place. 4.1.2 A well-developed HR management system in place.

		4.1.3 Policies and systems for succession planning instituted.
4.2 Quality Human Resource		4.2.1 Adequate academic staff with relevant qualification and experience employed. 4.2.2 Faculty-Student ratio maintained as per the university norm. 4.2.3 International academics engaged. 4.2.4 Has quality support staff with relevant experience and competency.
4.3 Human Resource Development		4.3.1 A comprehensive HRD master plan in line with the strategic plan of the TEI in place. 4.3.2 Continuous professional development for faculty in place. 4.3.3 Professional development for non-teaching staff in place. 4.3.4 Annual operating budget for HRD instituted.
4.3 Service Conditions		4.4.1 Effective monitoring, evaluation and reward systems in place. 4.4.2 Innovation and entrepreneurship in the process of teaching-learning practices rewarded. 4.4.3 Internal service rules including staff welfare and post-retirement benefits in place. 4.4.4 Mechanism to retain quality faculty in place.

Standard 5: Research, Publications and Linkages

Standard 5 considers the policies, practices and outcomes with regard to the TEI's research engagement, consultancy services, and extension activities. It focuses on the facilities provided and efforts made by the TEI to promote research culture. It also enables TEI to encourage faculty and students to undertake research projects that are relevant and useful to society.

Key Aspects	Indicators
5.1 Research Culture	5.1.1 Clear research policy in place. 5.1.2 Research fund secured. 5.1.3 Research capacity developed. 5.1.4 Research events organised. 5.1.5 Research activities have impacted policy.
5.2 Research and Publications	5.2.1 Faculty and students' research work published in peer reviewed journals. 5.2.2 Books and book chapters published. 5.2.3 Research outputs presented at conferences and published as conference proceedings. 5.2.4 Database for research papers maintained.
5.3 Consultancy and Extension Services	5.3.1 Consultancy policy document in place. 5.3.2 Database for consultancy services available. 5.3.3 Revenue from consultancy service generated. 5.3.4 Professional services to community and agencies at national and international levels provided.
5.4 Collaborations and Linkages	5.4.1 System of student/faculty exchange programs in place. 5.4.2 Active collaborations with professional organizations

	established.
	5.4.3 Institutional/individual memberships to professional associations and bodies attained.

Standard 6: Infrastructure & Learning Resources

Standard 6 considers the adequacy, quality and optimal use of academic and residential infrastructure, recreational facilities, learning resources and other service facilities. As part of learning resources, the standard will address the quality and use of library facilities, laboratories, and ICT services for teaching and learning. It also addresses hygiene, safety, overall maintenance of infrastructure and future expansion plans.

Key Aspects	Indicators
6.1 Academic Infrastructure	6.1.1 Development of facilities carried out based on TEI strategic plan. 6.1.2 Adequate and quality academic facilities ensured.
6.2 Residential Infrastructure	6.2.1 Hygienic and adequate accommodation facilities for students provided. 6.2.2 Basic amenities provided. 6.2.3 Accommodation facilities for relevant staff available.
6.3 Recreational and Other Facilities	6.3.1 Recreational facilities provided. 6.3.2 Other facilities are made available. 6.3.3 Inclusive facilities provided.
6.4 Library Services	6.4.1 Efficient library services in place. 6.4.2 Adequate space for reading available. 6.4.3 Provision of special services in place. 6.4.4 Optimum access and use of library ensured. 6.4.5 Feedback mechanism in place. 6.4.6 Tie-up with other libraries established.
6.5 ICT Services	6.5.1 ICT facilities for effective teaching learning, research and services are in place. 6.5.2 Professional support services for teaching & learning provided. 6.5.3 Strategies to upgrade ICT facilities in place.
6.6 Safety and Maintenance of Physical Infrastructure	6.6.1 Disaster resilient facilities in place. 6.6.2 Safety, disaster management and contingency plan and Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) in place. 6.6.3 Sustainable and green campus promoted. 6.6.4 Effective mechanisms for maintenance of infrastructures in place. 6.6.5 Provision for developing physical facilities in place.

Standard 7: Student Services

Standard 7 considers the policy, procedures and criteria for student admission. Hence, it focuses on a TEI's admission processes and decisions in terms of transparency, fairness and inclusiveness. It also seeks information on records maintained by the TEI on the performance and progression of students during their course of study as well as those after graduation. Further, it looks at efforts put in by the TEI to enhance student performance and progression. It examines the administrative and financial support systems provided by the TEI to facilitate student engagement in activities that enhance their employability skills and competencies. The Standard also sees how the TEI engages its alumni in the institute's social, cultural and developmental activities. A very important consideration is the quality of services for students with special needs.

Key Aspects	Indicators
7.1 Admission Process and Student Record	7.1.1 Admission criteria and procedures aligned with tertiary education policies. 7.1.2 Comprehensive and dynamic admission policy, procedure and processes in place. 7.1.3 Data-base of student profile maintained. 7.1.4 Admission policy for international students in place.
7.2 Student Progression	7.2.1 Student progression monitored and enhanced. 7.2.2 Mechanism to address student attrition in place. 7.2.3 Completion rate enhanced. 7.2.4 High achieving students recognized and rewarded.
7.3 Student Engagement Activities	7.3.1 Participation of students in curricular and co-curricular activities visible. 7.3.2 Funds for student engagement activities available. 7.3.3 Opportunities for developing entrepreneurial skills provided.
7.4 Student Support Systems	7.4.1 Healthy dining facilities ensured. 7.4.2 Functional student bodies in place. 7.4.3 Student handbook available. 7.4.4 Personal/career guidance/counseling and life skills programme provided. 7.4.5 Annual student satisfaction/happiness survey conducted. 7.4.6 Student grievance redressal system in place. 7.4.7 Financial support and welfare schemes in place. 7.4.8 Other student support services provided.
7.5 Special Needs and Inclusive Services	7.5.1 Policies and programmes to support students with special needs in place. 7.5.2 Policies for promoting gender equity in place. 7.5.3 Academic guidance and mentoring services available. 7.5.4 Provision for differentiated teaching and assessment mechanism in place.
7.6 Graduate Employability	7.6.1 Strategies to enhance graduates employability in place. 7.6.2 Graduate performance at work are evident.

7.7 Alumni Engagement	7.7.1 Alumni profile maintained. 7.7.2 Alumni engagement facilitated. 7.7.3 Networking among alumni encouraged. 7.7.4 Outstanding alumni recognised.
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Standard 8: Internal Quality Assurance and Enhancement System

Standard 8 considers internal quality assurance systems that support continuous institutional quality improvement in all other seven standards described above. It assures that there are mechanisms and strategies in place that ensure continuous improvement of all the other standards. Possible methods and tools for improving internal quality and institutional effectiveness include regular feedback from students, key stakeholders, and employers and the community, objective tracer/graduate destination studies, employer and institutional self-reflection. This standard also seeks information on innovative practices, institutional identity such as institutional brand, institutional distinctiveness, and institutional values.

Key Aspects	Indicator
8.1 Quality Assurance System	8.1.1 Internal quality assurance mechanisms in place.
8.2 Continuous Enhancement	8.2.1 Culture of self-reflection/self-appraisal promoted.
8.3 Innovative Practices	8.3.1 Innovative practices by students, academic and support staff promoted. 8.3.2 Innovative practices demonstrated and sustained. 8.3.3 Innovative practices recognised.
8.4 Institutional Branding	8.4.1 Distinct institutional brand developed and promoted. 8.4.2 The values, principles and practices of Gross National Happiness are evident in the TEI's institutional culture.

5. Grading System

5.1 Introduction

Institutional grading is the main outcome of the assessment and accreditation process. The *Certificate of Accreditation* carries a grade assigned to a TEI which is the status of accreditation. The grading system is based strictly on the principles of objectivity and accuracy in the accreditation process. Grading is expected to contribute to the continuous development of a TEI and the motivation and strategies it requires for sustained efforts to improve quality. The grading system has been designed based on a sound understanding of local contexts and international best practices.

The process of assessing and grading a TEI takes into account the weighted mean value of all grade scores obtained for each of the eight Standards and the Key Aspects considered in the accreditation exercise. The Key Aspects of each Standard have different weightings according to their relative importance.

5.2 Categories of TEIs and weightings

The TEIs are broadly categorized as follows:

1. University
2. Affiliated institute/college
3. Constituent institute/college
4. Autonomous institute

However, for the purpose of accreditation, the weighting for eight Standards for all the TEIs are the same. Therefore, the same grading sheet (*Annexure XIII*) shall be used for all the TEIs. The maximum scores for each Key Aspect are as follows:

Standard	Key Aspects	Weighting
1. Governance, Leadership and Management (100)	1.1 Vision, Mission and Objectives	10
	1.2 Organizational structure and management	20
	1.3 Accountability and transparency	20
	1.4 Leadership and academic autonomy	20
	1.5 Strategic development, planning and implementation	30
2. Curriculum Content, Design and Review (100)	2.1 Curriculum design and development	40

	2.2 Curriculum evaluation and review	40
	2.3 Academic flexibility and programme diversification	20
3. Teaching Learning and Assessment (150)	3.1 Teaching learning process	40
	3.2 Assessment process	40
	3.3 Student engagement	40
	3.4 Teaching learning materials	30
4. Human Resources and Services (125)	4.1 Human resource management system	35
	4.5 Quality human resource	35
	4.3 Human resource development	35
	4.4 Service conditions	20
5. Research, Publications and Linkages (150)	5.5 Research culture	45
	5.2 Research and publication	45
	5.3 Consultancy and extension services	25
	5.4 Collaborations & linkages	35
6. Infrastructure & Learning Resources (125)	6.1 Academic infrastructure	20
	6.2 Residential infrastructure	20
	6.3 Recreational and other facilities	15
	6.4 Library services	30
	6.5 Safety and maintenance of physical infrastructure	15
	6.6 ICT services	25
7. Student services (150)	7.1 Admission process and student record	20
	7.2 Student progression	25
	7.3 Student engagement activities	25
	7.4 Student support systems	35
	7.5 Special needs and Inclusive services	15
	7.6 Graduate employability	15
	7.7 Alumni engagement	15
8. Internal Assurance and Enhancement System (100)	8.1 Quality assurance system	30
	8.2 Continuous enhancement	25
	8.3 Innovative practices	30
	8.4 Institutional branding	15

5.3 Process of grading

Upon receipt of ISAR from a TEI, the BAC Secretariat shall send the document to the team of accreditors appointed for accreditation of that TEI. The report shall be studied by the accreditors individually and scores shall be awarded for each Key Aspect before the actual site visit. The team shall decide the final score at the time of their stay in the TEI for the accreditation. The scores shall be based on documentary evidences, discussions, consultations, observations and collective judgement of the accreditation team.

For ease of grading, five points shall be used to work out the weighted score. The five points are: 5(Excellent), 4(Very Good), 3(Good), 2(Satisfactory), and 1(Unsatisfactory). An appropriate point shall be awarded for each Key Aspect based on the TEI's ISAR and evidences from the site visit.

For example, under Standard 1 (Governance, Leadership and Management), there are five Key Aspects with maximum score for each as given below. Points shall be awarded based on an accreditor's judgment of each Key Aspect (e.g. Key Aspect 1.1 is awarded 3 points because this Key Aspect was found to be Good. Similarly Key Aspect 1.3 was awarded 1 as it was found to be Unsatisfactory). The final point for each Key Aspect is awarded based on discussions and collective judgement of the accreditation team, not merely averaging the points. To get the weighted score for each Key Aspect, the maximum score is multiplied by the point awarded.

Standard 1: Governance, Leadership and Management			
Key Aspect	Maximum Score	Points (1-5) (e.g.)	Weighted Score
1.1 Vision, Mission and Objectives	10	3	30
1.2 Organizational structure and management	20	2	40
1.3 Accountability and transparency	20	1	20
1.4 Leadership and academic autonomy	20	1	20
1.5 Strategic development, planning and implementation	30	3	90
Total for the standard	100		200

The total weighted score for this Standard is 200. To find the weighted average score, the total weighted score shall be divided by the maximum possible point i.e. 5, which gives the total score of 40 ($200 \div 5 = 40$) for that Standard.

The weighted average score for the rest of the Standards shall be obtained in the same way and added to get the final total score. The final grade shall be awarded based on the range of scores obtained as shown in the table below:

Range of Total Weighted Average Score	Grade	Performance Descriptor
851- 1000	A+	Excellent
751 – 850	A	Very Good
501 – 750	B	Good
376 – 500	C	Satisfactory
375 and below	D	Unsatisfactory/ Not accredited

Annexure XIII shall be used for grading. The accreditation certificate will be printed on *Dheys* paper as per *Annexure XIV*.

6. Post Accreditation

The Post Accreditation phase is as important as the accreditation exercise itself. This phase entails several activities and efforts aimed to either sustain the strengths and work towards further development or make efforts for continuous improvement as reflected in the accreditation report and status. Specifically, this phase consist of the following activities and events.

6.1 Certification

An Accreditation Certificate shall be awarded to the TEI if it obtains a minimum weighted score of 376. A TEI securing a weighted score of less than 376 shall be issued a letter of regret with reasons for declining award of Accreditation Certificate.

The certificate shall include the following information:

- a) Name of the TEI
- b) The statement “Accredited by the Bhutan Accreditation Council”
- c) The accreditation grade
- d) Validity (date of award and expiry), and
- e) Signature of the Chairperson of the Council.

The validity of accreditation depends on the grade obtained as given below:

Grade obtained	A+	A	B	C	D
Validity	5 years	4 years	3 years	2 years	Not accredited

The decision of the Council regarding the accreditation outcome shall be communicated to the TEI through the Secretariat. A certification ceremony shall be organized by the Secretariat for award of Accreditation Certificate to the TEIs.

In case of loss of Accreditation Certificate, the concerned TEI shall request the Secretariat along with valid reason. While the Secretariat shall facilitate reprinting of certificate, the printing cost shall be borne by the concerned TEI.

6.2 Withdrawal or Suspension

The accreditation status (certificate) awarded to a TEI may be suspended/withdrawn if evidences are clearly established for the following:

- TEI has made false or intentionally misleading statements while applying for accreditation or any other submission to the Council.

- TEI fails to apply for reaccreditation within the deadline given to it in its previous accreditation.
- Council establishes the truth of serious complaint(s) received in writing.

1.3 Publicity

The Council shall publish the list of TEIs along with their profile, accreditation status, grade, and validity on the BAC website. The information to be published shall be reviewed periodically and updated accordingly.

The TEI's website shall publish the ISAR and the Accreditors' Report. It may also include statements like 'accredited by the Bhutan Accreditation Council', 'accredited by the BAC' or 'BAC accredited'. The website shall be linked to the BAC website.

Accreditation shall be carried out only for the TEIs whose application for accreditation has been reviewed and endorsed by BAC. The accreditation status acquired by a TEI shall not be owned or publicized by any partner or branch campus of that TEI. A TEI may publish its Accreditation Report in parts or in its entirety on its website or other publication sites. However, the TEI shall avoid any inaccurate or misleading statements concerning the accreditation. In the event of a TEI's accreditation status/certificate being withdrawn, the TEI must remove all statements or claims of accreditation from all of its promotional materials or sites within the timeframe given by the Council. A TEI whose application for accreditation has not been endorsed by BAC shall not make any public references to its application. Any breach of these conditions may have implications for subsequent decisions by the Council on future applications for accreditation.

An accredited TEI shall display the Accreditation Certificate in a prominent place for easy viewing. Information on the accreditation status of each accredited TEI shall be available at the Secretariat.

1.4 Quality Enhancement

A TEI shall consistently endeavour to not only maintain the standards achieved at present but also to continuously improve the quality of its core business of teaching, research and service, infrastructure facilities and resources. The efforts and initiatives to seek continuous improvement through the pursuit of excellence, creativity and innovation may be spurred by the recommendations arising from the Accreditors' Report. They may also be driven by a continuous process of institutional self-reflection, visioning, planning and putting strategies in place to achieve the institutional goals.

The TEIs shall maintain and prepare annual progress report of the institute and report to the Secretariat. The Secretariat shall then validate the report through monitoring visit and update the

Council accordingly. The report shall be uploaded in both the BAC and TEIs' website for public information.

Provisional Accreditation Certificate



BHUTAN ACCREDITATION COUNCIL

No. BAC/2019/

Date:



Certificate of Intuitional Provisional Accreditation

This is to certify that

..... (*Name of Institution*)

is accredited provisionally by the

Bhutan Accreditation Council

This provisional accreditation is valid till

.....(*Date*)

**Chairperson
Bhutan Accreditation Council**

No Conflict of Interest Statement

By the Institution

[.....Name of the Institution]

[.....Visit Date]

This is to certify that the proposed accreditors have no affiliation with our institution, directly or indirectly in the immediate past three years.

Further, the Institution will not appoint any of the members of the proposed team of accreditors for any assignment in the institution for the next three years after the assessment of the Institution by the accreditors

I,(name), bearing CID/EID No....., (Position Title).....(Agency) as the representative of (Name of TEI).....declare the following as per the provisions no. 1.7 of the manual:

That I do not have or anticipate any Conflict of Interest. I shall notify the BAC Secretariat immediately in the event such interests arise in the course of accreditation or before discharging my duty; OR

I do have a Conflict of Interest in view of the following reason(s):

- Family member:.....
- Close relative:
- Close friend:.....
- In-laws:.....
- Enemy:.....
- Others (specify):.....

I hereby certify that the above information is true to the best of my knowledge. In the event, the above declaration is found to be incorrect, I am aware that:

- I will be liable for administrative/legal action under relevant laws, rules and regulations, and
- the accreditation of the Institution will be suspended/canceled immediately and must be reassessed.
- the Institution shall bear all the costs associated to the reassessment of accreditation.

(Affix legal stamp)

Signature & date:

Place:

No Conflict of Interest Statement

By the Accreditor

[.....Name of the Institution]

[.....Visit date]

I,(name), bearing CID/EID No.....,
(Position Title).....(Agency) as the
accreditor for the accreditation of (Name of TEI)....., confirm that:

- I am not affiliated with the institution in the immediate past three years, directly or indirectly.
- I have no affiliation with any institution competing with the proposed institution.

I declare that I do not have or anticipate any Conflict of Interest. I shall notify the BAC Secretariat immediately in the event such interests arise in the course of accreditation or before discharging my duty; OR

I do have a Conflict of Interest in view of the following reason(s):

- Family member:.....
- Close relative:
- Close friend:.....
- In-laws:.....
- Enemy:.....
- Others (specify):.....

I hereby certify that the above information is true to the best of my knowledge. In the event the above is found to be incorrect, I am aware that:

- I will be liable for administrative/legal action under relevant laws, rules, and regulations, and
- I will be deregistered from the pool of accreditors maintained by BAC.

(Affix legal stamp)

Signature & date:

Place:

BAC Report on Appeals

1. Name and Address of the Appellant Institution:

Name:	
Location:	
Date:	
Representative of applicant:	

2. Description of the grievance:

3. Evidences submitted:

4. Judgement/decision by BAC:

5. Members of the Council:

Name	Dated signature
Chairperson:	
Member:	
Member:	
Member:	
Member:	
Member:	
Member:	

Institutional Self-Assessment Report

The Institutional Self-Assessment Report (ISAR) shall consist of the following three parts:

- A. Executive Summary
- B. Profile of the institution
- C. Standards-wise details

The details of each part are outlined below.

A. Executive Summary (short write-up for each criterion with a maximum of five to six pages).

Standard 1: Governance, Leadership and Management

Standard 1 considers the vision, mission, and objectives of the TEI. It also encompasses organizational structure, management practices, accountability and transparency. The standard will include TEIs' leadership culture and academic autonomy. The standard will enable the accreditors to understand the process of strategic planning and implementation in a TEI.

Standard 2: Curriculum Design, Content and Review

Standard 2 considers the key features of a TEI's academic programmes such as curriculum design, content, review processes and their alignment with the vision of the TEI. It will look at the TEI's efforts to diversify its programme, catering to national development goals and emerging global trends. It will also address inclusiveness and flexibility in the curriculum to suit different learning needs, career opportunities, and to facilitate credit transfer for student mobility.

Standard 3: Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Standard 3 considers the teaching, learning and assessment approaches and practices in the TEI including policies and systems that ensure quality. This includes the overriding philosophy, methods and strategies of teaching, learning, and assessment. It will look at pedagogical practices that engage students in higher order thinking and investigation, real world experience, field attachment and internships, and application of ICT resources.

Standard 4: Human Resources and Services

Standard 4 considers human resource management, including policies and procedures for recruitment, management and continuous professional development of teaching faculty and administrative staff of the TEI. The standard also includes appropriate service conditions while in service as well as post-retirement as outlined in the HR service manual.

Standard 5: Research, Publications and Linkages

Standard 5 considers the policies, practices and outcomes with regard to the TEI's research engagement, consultancy services, and extension activities. It focuses on the facilities provided and efforts made by the TEI to promote research culture. It also enables TEI to encourage faculty and students to undertake research projects that are relevant and useful to society.

Standard 6: Infrastructure & Learning Resources

Standard 6 considers the adequacy, quality and optimal use of academic and residential infrastructure, recreational facilities, learning resources and other service facilities. As part of learning resources, the standard will address the quality and use of library facilities, laboratories, and ICT services for teaching and learning. It also addresses hygiene, safety, overall maintenance of infrastructure and future expansion plans.

Standard 7: Student Services

Standard 7 considers the policy, procedures and criteria for student admission. Hence, it focuses on a TEI's admission processes and decisions in terms of transparency, fairness and inclusiveness. It also seeks information on records maintained by the TEI on the performance and progression of students during their course of study as well as those after graduation. Further, it looks at efforts put in by the TEI to enhance student performance and progression. It examines the administrative and financial support systems provided by the TEI to facilitate student engagement in activities that enhance their employability skills and competencies. The Standard also sees how the TEI engages its alumni in the institute's social, cultural and developmental activities. A very important consideration is the quality of services for students with special needs.

Standard 8: Internal Quality Assurance and Enhancement System

Standard 8 considers internal quality assurance systems that support continuous institutional quality improvement in all other seven standards described above. It assures that there are mechanisms and strategies in place that ensure continuous improvement of all the other standards. Possible methods and tools for improving internal quality and institutional effectiveness include regular feedback from students, key stakeholders, and employers and the community, objective tracer/graduate destination studies, employer and institutional self-reflection. This standard also seeks information on innovative practices, institutional identity such as institutional brand, institutional distinctiveness, and institutional values.

B. Profile of the institution

Name							
Location							
Type of Institution (Constituent/ affiliated/ others)							
Affiliated to							
Date of last accreditation (if applicable)							
Date of establishment of Internal Quality Assurance Unit (IQAU)							
Source of funding							
Cost of education (Tuition fees and living cost)							
Total area (in acres)							
Year of establishment							
Head of institution:							
Website:							
Telephone number:							
Fax number:							
Email:							
Name of the Focal Person for QA:							
No. of Departments							
No. of Programmes	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>UG:</td> <td>PG:</td> <td>M. Phil:</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ph. D:</td> <td>Any other:</td> <td>Total:</td> </tr> </table>	UG:	PG:	M. Phil:	Ph. D:	Any other:	Total:
UG:	PG:	M. Phil:					
Ph. D:	Any other:	Total:					
No. of programmes with electives (specify electives)							
New programmes introduced during the last five years							
No. of faculty	Male: __ Female: __ Total: __						
Regular	Male: __ Female: __ Total: __						
Contract	Male: __ Female: __ Total: __						
Visiting/adjunct faculties	Male: __ Female: __ Total: __						
Total no. of faculty with PhD:							
Total no. of faculty with Masters:							
Total no. of faculty Bachelors:							
No. of Non-teaching staff:	Male: __ Female: __ Total: __						
Technical:	Male: __ Female: __ Total: __						
Administrative:	Male: __ Female: __ Total: __						

Support:	Male: __ Female: __ Total: ____
No. of Students:	Male: __ Female: __ Total: ____
Diploma:	Male: __ Female: __ Total: ____
Bachelor:	Male: __ Female: __ Total: ____
Masters	Male: __ Female: __ Total: ____
Any other	Male: __ Female: __ Total: ____
No. of programme offered through mixed mode (Specify)	
No. of working days during the last academic year	
No. of teaching days during the last academic year	
Level of autonomy the institution has from the affiliating University:	
Date of submission:	

C. Standard-wise details

In order to address all the indicators under each Standards and Key Aspects, the TEIs have to answer the following questions. The evidences, wherever required, must be compiled for the team of accreditors.

Standard 1: Governance, Leadership and Management

1.1 Vision, Mission and Objectives

1.1.1.1 State the vision, mission and objectives of the institution.

1.1.2.1 State how the vision, mission and objectives are aligned with the university goals and national aspirations including Gross National Happiness.

1.1.3.1 Explain how the plans and activities of the TEIs are geared towards achieving the stated mission and objectives.

1.2 Organizational Structure and Management

1.2.1.1 Explain the organizational structure of the institution in place including the terms of references of the key position holders.

1.2.2.1 Explain how the TEI promote efficient, effective and ethical leadership within the organization (e.g. *Standard Operating Procedures, Turn Around Time, etc.*).

1.2.3.1 How does the TEI facilitate the involvement of staff and student in relevant decision making processes?

1.3 Accountability and Transparency

- 1.3.1.1 Explain how the TEI ensures a clear line of reporting and accountability in line with ToR.
- 1.3.2.1 What control mechanisms are put in place by the TEI for ensuring transparency, efficiency and accountability?
- 1.3.3.1 Explain the financial management system.
- 1.3.4.1 Describe the financial auditing mechanism, including external and internal. Provide audit reports including outstanding memos, if any and details of compliance).

1.4 Leadership and Academic Autonomy

- 1.4.1.1 Provide profiles of the head of the institution and other key leadership position holders (head of TEI, Deans, Heads of Department, Programme Leaders, Relevant others)
- 1.4.2.1 State the extent of autonomy that TEI has in both management and academic matters.
- 1.4.3.1 Explain how the TEI grooms leadership and facilitates succession planning.

1.5 Strategic Development, Planning and Implementation

- 1.5.1.1 Explain the process of developing the TEI's strategic plan.
- 1.5.2.1 Explain how the TEI ensures that the plans and objectives are significant, realistic and measurable.
- 1.5.3.1 Explain how the TEI ensures that the plans and objectives are achieved.
- 1.5.4.1 Explain the various resource mobilization strategies put in place, apart from the state funding. Provide details of the revenue generated in the past 3 years.

Standard 2: Curriculum Design, Content and Review

2.1 Curriculum Design and Development

- 2.1.1.1 How does the TEI ensure that the curriculum is relevant to the national development priorities, employment opportunities and global competencies?
- 2.1.1.2 How does the TEI integrate aspects of GNH into the curriculum?
- 2.1.2.1 How does the TEI network with government, industry, private sector and reputed external institutions in curriculum development?
- 2.1.3.1 Explain how the TEI ensure that the curriculum promotes research culture.

2.2 Curriculum Evaluation and Review

2.2.1.1 Explain the curriculum evaluation and review process instituted by the TEI.

2.2.2.1 How does the TEI ensure that the curriculum responds to development needs and emerging trends in the review process?

2.2.3.1 Explain the mechanisms used to gather feedback on the curriculum from diverse sources.

2.3 Academic Flexibility and Programme Diversification

2.3.1.1 What steps have been initiated by the TEI to facilitate learners to choose the courses of their choice?

2.3.2.1 What are the various elective options offered to students? How does this address the different learning needs of the students?

2.3.3.1 How does the TEI facilitate credit transfer system with institutes abroad?

Standard 3: Teaching, Learning and Assessment

3.1 Teaching Learning Process

3.1.1.1 How does the TEI ensure effective implementation of teaching and learning plan?

3.1.2.1 Describe various teaching methodologies used.

3.1.3.1 Provide details of how ICT is used to enable effective teaching-learning process.

3.1.4.1 What are the ways adopted by the TEI to evaluate teaching effectiveness of faculty members?

3.1.5.1 What provision does the TEI have to cater to students with diverse learning needs?

3.2 Assessment Process

3.2.1.1 List the academic and assessment related regulations.

3.2.1.2 Describe the assessment process and techniques used by the TEI?

3.2.2.1 Provide details that ensure assessment practices are fair, transparent and efficient.

3.2.3.1 Provide details of how faculty members design assessment task and track progress.

3.2.3.2 What type of feedback do faculty members provide on student work?

3.2.4.1 What are some of the innovative approaches and methods used by the faculty members to assess student learning outcomes?

3.3 *Student Engagement*

3.3.1.1 Describe the different ways in which faculty members engage the students in authentic learning.

3.3.2.1 Describe the ways in which faculty members use peer and self-assessment techniques in their teaching approaches.

3.3.3.1 What assessment methods are used by faculty members to ensure progressive learning?

3.3.4.1 What policies and practices does the TEI have to promote lifelong learning?

3.3.5.1 Explain some of the innovative approaches and methods faculty members used in teaching and learning?

3.4 *Teaching Learning Materials*

3.4.1.1 What reading materials do the faculty members provide their students for quality learning? (e.g. reference books, e-resources and other reading materials)

3.4.2.1 With appropriate examples, explain how technology (e.g. VLE, mobile app, website, online forums, etc.) is used in the teaching learning process.

3.4.3.1 List few equipment and facilities used for quality teaching and learning used in the TEI.

Standard 4: Human Resources and Services

4.1 *Human Resource Management System*

4.1.1.1 Explain how the TEI ensure effective implementation of HR policy?

4.1.2.1 How does the TEI facilitate fair and transparent recruitment, professional development and promotion of employees?

4.1.3.1 What policies and systems are in place that ensure leadership development and succession planning?

4.2 Quality Human Resource

4.2.1.1 Give details of staff qualification and their academic and professional profile.

4.2.2.1 How does the TEI ensure that the faculty-students ratio is met?

4.2.3.1 What qualifications, teaching and research experience and relevant areas of expertise do international academics possess?

4.2.4.1 List the number of supporting staff with relevant experience and competency.

4.3 Human Resource Development

4.3.1.1 How does the TEI ensure transparent and effective implementation of HR master plan?

4.3.2.1 Provide details on how the capacity of the faculty is enhanced on a continuous basis.

4.3.3.1 Provide details on how the capacity of the non-teaching staff is enhanced on a continuous basis.

4.3.4.1 How does the TEI allocate the budget for HR development of both the faculty and non-teaching staff?

4.4 Service Conditions

4.4.1.1 What mechanisms are employed to effectively monitor, evaluate and reward performance of your employees?

4.4.2.1 Provide details of faculty/ staff rewarded for innovative approaches adopted during the last three years?

4.4.2.2 How does the institution recognize new ideas, innovations and entrepreneurship of the faculty and staff?

4.4.3.1 What are the schemes available for the welfare of the employees?

4.4.3.2 What percentage of staff have availed the benefit of such schemes in the last three years?

4.4.4.1 What are the measures taken by the TEI for attracting and retaining quality faculty?

Standard 5: Research, Publications and Linkages

5.1 Research Culture

5.1.1.1 What are the significant research initiatives undertaken by the TEI in the past three years as a result of research policy implemented?

- 5.1.2.1 How much research grant is received every year from external funding for the past three?
- 5.1.2.2 What percentage of annual institutional budget is kept as research fund and how does the TEI ensure its effective utilization?
- 5.1.3.1 Explain the initiatives taken by the TEI to build the research capacity of faculty members and students (e.g. mentoring, training, research related courses, research project, etc.).
- 5.1.4.1 Provide details of research events (*conferences, seminars, workshops, training programmes, etc.*) organized by the TEI in the past three years.
- 5.1.5.1 Describe key policy changes that have resulted from the TEI's research activities.

5.2 Research and Publications

- 5.2.1.1 Provide details of publications by faculty and students in peer reviewed national and international journals (*e.g. publications listed in international databases*).
- 5.2.2.1 Provide list of publications in the form of monographs, books, books edited and book chapters in the last three years.
- 5.2.3.1 Provide details of papers presented in conferences and/or published in conference proceedings by faculty and students.
- 5.2.4.1 Provide details of how the TEI's research database is used for the planning process within and beyond the TEI?

5.3 Consultancy and Extension Services

- 5.3.1.1 Provide details of the systems and strategies to provide consultancy services.
- 5.3.2.1 List broad areas and major consultancy services provided by the TEI in the past three years.
- 5.3.3.1 Provide the details of revenue generated from consulting services in the last three years.
- 5.3.4.1 Provide details of any professional services provided by individuals or as an institution in the last three years.

5.4 Collaborations and Linkages

- 5.4.1.1 Provide details of national and international exchange programmes for faculty, non-teaching and students implemented over the last three years.
- 5.4.2.1 Provide details of all the formal collaborations, partnership/ linkages that are active (*e.g. MoU, MoA, MoC, other documentary evidences, etc.*).

5.4.2.2 Provide details of exchange programmes or other initiatives resulting from the collaboration.

5.4.3.1 Provide the list of institutional/ individual membership to professional bodies and describe some of the key benefits of such association.

6: Infrastructure & Learning Resources

6.1 Academic Infrastructure

6.1.2.1 How does the TEI ensure that facilities are developed based on the strategic plan and how quality is addressed?

6.1.2.1 Explain how the TEI ensure that all academic facilities meet the basic requirement based on existing regulations.

6.1.2.2 Provide details if the TEI has initiated development of additional facilities beyond the basic requirement or based on innovative ideas.

6.1.2.3 Provide details of classrooms, laboratories, library space, lecture theatre, conference/meeting hall, staff work stations and other learning spaces.

6.2 Residential Infrastructure

6.2.1.1 Give details on hostel accommodation facilities with regard to space adequacy and utilization, recreation, visitor/reception lounge and social interaction space.

6.2.2.1 Give details on the availability amenities such as safe drinking water, fan/AC/heater, furniture, internet connectivity and other amenities in the hostels as appropriate.

6.2.3.1 Give details of residential facility for relevant staff (e.g. student resident coordinator, cooks, plumber, electrician, driver, etc.).

6.3 Recreational and Other Facilities

6.3.1.1 Give details of available recreational facilities such as indoor and outdoor sporting facilities, open green spaces, etc. and how effectively these are used.

6.3.2.1 Give details on other facilities made available (*e.g. cafeteria, guest house, convenience shop, banking, etc.*) and the quality of services.

6.3.2.2 Provide some detail on policies for managing these facilities and revenues earned.

6.3.3.1 How does the TEI ensure that the facilities meet the requirements of the students with disability?

6.4 Library Services

6.4.1.1 What are the mechanisms in place that ensure efficient library services? What are the significant initiatives implemented in the past three years?

6.4.1.2 How does the library ensure purchase and use of current titles, print and e-journals and other reading materials? Specify the budget allocated and spent on procuring new books, journals and e-resources in last three years.

6.4.1.3 How does the library use compatible software and online cataloguing systems?

6.4.2.1 Describe the facilities related to research, reading and group discussion available in library (*e.g. computers within the library with internet connection*)

6.4.3.1 Describe the special services provided by the library (e.g. photocopy, scanning, assistance in data searching, user orientation, support for student with special need and others)

6.4.4.1 Provide details on the following items: library visiting hours, average number of walk-ins per day, average number of books issued/returned, ratio of library books to students enrolled, average number of books added in last 3 years, average number of log in to OPAC and to e-resources, average number of e-resources downloaded/printed, number of information literacy trainings organised, details of books weeded out.

6.4.5.1 What strategies are used by the library to collect feedback from users? How is the feedback analysed and used for further improvement of the library services?

6.4.6.1 Provide details on inter-library loan system and tie-up with electronic library facilities.

6.5 ICT Services

6.5.1.1 How have the TEI's ICT policies helped to improve the efficiency and quality of services related to teaching learning, and research?

6.5.2.1 How does the TEI promote the creative use of technology to enhance efficiency and quality of teaching, learning and research?

6.5.3.1 Explain the plans and strategies to enhance ICT infrastructure and associated facilities?

6.6 Safety and Maintenance of Physical Infrastructure

- 6.6.1.1 Explain how the TEI ensures disaster resilient facilities in the existing buildings and designs of new infrastructure.
- 6.6.2.1 Give details on the contingency plans of TEI and its implementation.
- 6.6.3.1 Provide the details on the policies and efforts made by TEI to promote sustainable campus (*e.g. use of materials, waste management, etc.*).
- 6.6.3.2 Provide details on measures adopted by the TEI to ensure green and open space for aesthetics and ambience.
- 6.6.4.1 Provide details on the policies and mechanism put in place to ensure effective maintenance of infrastructure and facilities.
- 6.6.5.1 How does the TEI plan and ensure that its infrastructure is enhanced in line with academic growth and/or is optimally utilized? Provide some account of practices during the last three years.

Standard 7: Student Services

7.1 Admission Process and Student Record

- 7.1.1.1 Explain how student admission procedures are aligned with national policies?
- 7.1.2.1 Explain how the TEI's admission policies ensure transparent and systematic enrollment process? How often are the policies reviewed?
- 7.1.2.2 Describe the criteria and process of admission (merit, admission test, combination of merit, entrance test and interview; any other) used by various programmes of the institution.
- 7.1.3.1 Describe how student information is maintained and how confidentiality of student records is ensured.
- 7.1.4.1 Explain the TEI's admission policy for international students, including the admission criteria.

7.2 Student Progression

- 7.2.1.1 Provide details of pass percentage semester wise for each programme for last three years.
- 7.2.1.2 What steps does the TEI take to ensure student progression and success?
- 7.2.2.1 Provide details on students' dropout rate and cases of students with re-sit, redo and repeat in their programmes, semester wise for last three years.

7.2.2.2 Explain the support provided to students who are at risk of failing and dropping out of a programme.

7.2.3.1 Provide details of programme-wise completion rate for the last three years.

7.2.4.1 Provide details on how high achieving students are recognized and rewarded by the TEI.

7.3 Student Engagement Activities

7.3.1.1 Provide details on students' major achievements in the last 3 years at regional, national and international levels.

7.3.2.1 Explain how does the TEI ensures adequate fund and support systems for student engagement in these activities?

7.3.3.1 What efforts are made by the TEI to promote entrepreneurial knowledge and skills among the students? What evidences are available on their impact?

7.4 Student Support Systems

7.4.1.1 Provide details on how the TEI provides healthy meals and ensures nutritional standards?

7.4.2.1 Explain the ToR, composition, and selection procedures for student bodies. Give some examples of how these student bodies are engaged in institutional activities.

7.4.3.1 Explain how students access the student handbook as well as how its availability and use are communicated to the students.

7.4.4.1 Give details on the existing mechanisms and types of personal/career guidance/counseling and life skills programmes made available to the students.

7.4.4.2 Provide details of these services (e.g. numbers, issues, programme details, etc.).

7.4.5.1 Explain the findings of the student satisfaction/happiness survey conducted yearly and its impact.

7.4.6.1 Explain the existing grievance redressal mechanisms available for students. Provide details of grievances reported and resolved in the last 3 years, if any.

7.4.7.1 Provide details on financial support mechanisms available to students based need or merit and how these were availed by the students during the last 3 years.

7.4.7.2 Specify type and number of awards given to students who excel in academic and co-curricular activities.

7.4.8.1 Explain any other support provided to students (e.g. assisting students with accommodation search, medical services, etc.).

7.5 Special Needs and Inclusive Services

7.5.1.1 Explain the policies and programmes that cater to students with special needs. Give details on the students with special needs in the last 3 years.

7.5.2.1 Explain the policies and strategies that promote gender equity.

7.5.3.1 Describe the types of academic guidance and mentoring services offered by the TEI. Provide details on students who have availed these services and the percentage of faculty engaged in academic and mentoring services.

7.5.4.1 Describe how differentiated teaching and assessment mechanisms are used to support students with special needs.

7.5.4.2 Provide details on the facilities and trained faculty available on campus that cater to students with special needs?

7.6 Graduate Employability

7.6.1.1 What strategies are in place that enhance the prospects of employability for the graduates (e.g. tracer studies, alumni feedback, on campus recruitment, labour market information, etc.)?

7.6.2.1 Provide details of performance of graduates in BCSE and success rate.

7.6.2.2 Explain what feedback mechanisms are used to assess graduate performance in the work place/higher studies?

7.6.2.3 Provide details on mechanism that are in place for identifying and recognizing outstanding alumni/graduates who have made outstanding contributions to society.

7.7 Alumni Engagement

7.7.1.1 Explain how the alumni profile is maintained.

7.7.2.1 What are the steps taken to engage the Alumni and former faculty in institutional activities and development?

7.7.2.2 How does the institution seek and use data and feedback from its graduates/alumni to improve the performance and quality of institutional provisions?

7.7.3.1 What mechanisms are in place to network among the alumni?

7.7.4.1 Explain what mechanisms are in place for recognizing outstanding alumni. How many alumni were recognized for their outstanding contribution in the last 3 years?

7.7.4.2 Mention 2-3 significant contributions made by alumni.

8: Internal Quality Assurance and Enhancement System

8.1 *Quality Assurance System*

8.1.1.1 Describe any IQA mechanisms (e.g. QA policies, plans and tools) that are in place.

8.1.1.2 Describe any IQA initiatives taken by TEI during last 3 years and explain the processes used to enhance quality on continuous basis.

8.1.1.3 Describe how students, alumni and stakeholders are engaged in enhancing internal quality in the TEI.

8.2 *Continuous Enhancement*

8.2.1.1 Describe any initiatives taken by the institute to promote a culture of self-reflection/appraisal for continuous improvement.

8.2.1.2 What steps have been taken to address or comply with the recommendations of the previous accreditation? Highlight the major achievements based on the recommendations made, if applicable.

8.3 *Innovative Practices*

8.3.1.1 Describe any specific activity that promote and facilitate innovative practices by students, academics and support staff.

8.3.1.2 Describe any successful innovation(s) or initiatives that drive innovation.

8.3.2.1 Describe with evidence any innovative practice that has been demonstrated and sustained.

8.3.3.1 Describe any award received by the TEI both nationally or internationally for innovation or innovative practices.

8.3.3.2 How does the TEI recognize individuals for such achievements?

8.4 Institutional Branding

8.4.1.1 Describe some of the initiatives taken by the TEI to promote a distinct institutional brand.

8.4.2.1 What are the steps taken by the TEI to promote values, principles and practices of gross national happiness infused education?

8.4.2.2 How does the physical environment, infrastructures, and general ambience of the TEI reflect GNH values and practices?

8.4.2.3 How is the TEI known by the society as an institution that is committed to and demonstrates the values of GNH?

Contract Agreement for Accreditors

Part I: General Conditions

1. Agreement

This agreement is executed on day _____ month _____ year _____ between the Bhutan Accreditation Council (BAC) and _____ (name of accreditor) bearing CID/EID No. _____ whose assignment shall be executed as per the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the accreditors.

WHEREAS, the Council desires to engage the accreditors on the following terms and conditions; and

WHEREAS, the accreditors are ready and willing to accept this engagement with the BAC on these terms and conditions.

2. Nature of Service

The BAC shall recruit the accreditors on contract and they shall serve as accreditors for the duration specified.

3. Roles & Responsibilities of accreditors

The accreditors shall:

- 3.1 declare conflict of interest.
- 3.2 evaluate the ISAR submitted by TEIs through detailed examination, prepare tentative accreditors report, grade and list the required evidences before the site visit.
- 3.3 develop plan of action for the accreditation site visit (5 days) and share with the Secretariat.
- 3.4 validate the evidences during the site visit.
- 3.5 ensure comprehensive and diligent evaluation of the institution against standards outlined in this manual.
- 3.6 ensure integrity of practice and shall submit undisputed recommendation on accreditation to the Council without making biased judgment.
- 3.7 finalize accreditors' report, present at the exit meeting and submit to the Secretariat in both hard and soft copy.
- 3.8 present accreditation report to the Council.
- 3.9 complete assigned tasks as per the agreement (*Annexure V*) including appeal, if any.
- 3.10 conduct other appropriate actions as deemed necessary to ensure professionalism.

4. Duration of Agreement

The duration of the agreement is for the accreditation exercise of the _____ (*Name of the Institution*).

The engagement of an accreditor for an accreditation exercise generally comprises of at least two months (Study of ISAR, site visit and endorsement) or until the Accreditors' Report has been endorsed by the Council or appeal if any, whichever is later.

Each accreditation period will commence from the date mentioned in the forwarding letter sharing the ISAR to the accreditors.

5. Remuneration

A professional fee of Nu _____ per accreditor per institute in addition to daily allowance of Nu _____ per day shall be paid to each accreditor who is recruited from outside the civil service. In case the Secretariat cannot make travel arrangements, accreditors shall be eligible for mileage as per the existing rules.

For accreditors who are recruited from the civil service, an honorarium of Nu _____ per hour to a maximum of Nu _____ per day shall be paid in lieu of DSA for duration of site visit. While during the travel, he/she shall be eligible for DSA and mileage as per the prevailing norms.

The accreditors shall arrange their own logistics.

6 Dispute Settlement

Any dispute regarding the interpretation or application of this agreement will be resolved through mutual consultations between the Parties and based on the principles of mutual understanding and respect.

Part II: Oath of Allegiance and Confidentiality

I, having been appointed as an accreditor do solemnly affirm that I shall:

- I. faithfully and conscientiously discharge my duties as per the roles and responsibilities of accreditors reflected in the manual;
- II. conduct appropriately in accordance with the policies, rules and regulations without fear or favor, affection or ill-will; and
- III. ensure confidentiality of information.

(Affix legal stamp)

Name: _____
CID No. _____
Signature _____
Date: _____
Place: _____

(Affix legal stamp)

Witness by: Name: _____
Signature: _____
Date: _____
Place: _____

Terms of Reference of the Appeals Committee

1. OBJECTIVES

The Appeals Committee shall be established by the Sherig Lyonpo to resolve appeal case that the Council was not able to resolve.

2. COMPOSITION

2.1 The Appeals Committee shall consist of three to five members, including the Sherig Lyonpo who shall act as the Chairperson.

2.2 Members of the Committee shall be appointed by the Sherig Lyonpo in consultation with the Council.

2.3 Members shall have broad knowledge on accreditation and quality assurance.

2.4 At least one member shall have legal background and one member shall be from the pool of trained accreditors.

2.5 Each member of the Committee shall be independent.

3. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

3.1 Must have qualification of a relevant Masters or an equivalent degree.

3.2 Should have experience of at least 10 years in any public or private organization and good employment history.

3.3 Should not be serving professor/lecturers in any institution that would have conflict of interest.

3.4 Can be an in-service/private/retired person who can provide justice to the appeal.

3.5 Should be a person of integrity and commitment.

4. TENURE

The Appeals Committee shall be established as and when required. It shall be dissolved immediately after resolving the appeal. The members of the Appeals Committee shall be eligible for reappointment.

5. REMUNERATION

The professional fees of Nu. 5000 shall be paid to the members as per the approval of Ministry of Finance.

6. CORE VALUES

6.1 **Competence:** Demonstrate expertise in carrying out the responsibilities.

6.2 **Integrity and commitment:** Committed to provide fair & accountable services.

6.3 **Professionalism:** Demonstrate professionalism through positive attitude, actions and comments.

7. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

- 7.1 Function as final arbitrator.
- 7.2 Verify the appeals to ascertain genuineness of the appeal within 5 working days after establishment of the Committee
- 7.3 Address the appeal, if found genuine, through detailed examination of the evidences, site visits and other appropriate measures as deemed necessary.
- 7.4 Provide adequate opportunity to the appellant to state and defend their case.
- 7.5 Ensure fair, transparent and judicious decision.
- 7.6 Compile a report as per *Annexure VII* within forty five days from receipt of the appeal.

8 CONVENING OF THE APPEALS COMMITTEE

- 8.1 The Secretariat, shall inform the appellant on the hearing date and time as desired by the Chairperson.
- 8.2 The Committee shall sit for as many sessions as deemed necessary to reach a judgment.

9 APPEAL HEARING

- 9.1 Hearing will normally take place within 21 working days of receipt of the appeal application.
- 9.2 A representative of the institution and a representative (normally the Chairperson) of the BAC shall attend the hearing.
- 9.3 The representatives shall justify the evidence or defend the appeal.

10 AFTER THE HEARING

The Appeals Committee shall:

- 10.1 Take an appropriate decision based on merit of the case.
- 10.2 Inform the institution of its decision within five working days from the day of last hearing.
- 10.3 Compile a written report setting out the decision and its grounds.
- 10.4 Report their decision, through the Secretariat, in the next BAC meeting.

11 QUORUM FOR THE HEARING

The quorum for the hearing shall be full bench of the Appeals Committee.

12 AMENDMENTS

The Terms of Reference shall be reviewed and amended as deemed necessary by the Council from time to time.

Appeals Committee Report

1. Name and Address of the Appellant Institution:

Name:	
Location:	
Date:	
Representative of appellant:	

2. Description of the grievance:

--

3. Evidences submitted:

4. Judgement:

5. Members of Appeals Committee:

Name	Dated signature
Chairperson:	
Member:	
Member:	
Member:	
Member:	

Format for Decision on the Appeal

1. Appellant Details

Name:

Location:

Telephone No.: Fax:

E-mail:

2. Accreditation status

Accreditation Grade, if awarded:

Date of award:

Reason for appeal (Tick)

i. Fail to acquire accreditation ☐

ii. Unsatisfied with the graded awarded ☐

iii. BAC withdraws or suspends accreditation status ☐

iv. Any other.....

3. Members of the Appeals Committee:

i. (Chairperson)

ii.

iii.

iv.

v.

4. Decision of the Appeals Committee

The Appeals Committee was convened by(Name),
Chairperson of Appeals Committee, pursuant to the Terms of Reference (ToR) and
Accreditation Manual in respect of.....(Institution)

The appeal was considered by the Appeals Committee at the hearing held on(Date)
Accordingly, the Committee issued the following judgment based on evidences (*List details of
the
judgment*).....
.....
.....].

In addition to the members of the Appeals Committee following officials were present during
the hearing;

1. List of participants from institution

2. Any other officials present
5. The following documents and other evidences were considered by the Appeals Committee.
(List of Documents submitted by institution)

[Name & Signature of the Chairperson]

Appeals Committee

[Date]

ANNEXURE IX

Application form for Accreditation

The submission of this form and the required additional documentation is the first stage in applying for accreditation. This application form along with the appendices V B and V C must be submitted along with the institutional self-assessment report (ISAR) in order to get the accreditation by the Bhutan Accreditation Council. It is, therefore, essential that the information provided is comprehensive, accurate and that all required documents are provided.

Please indicate (✓) the Cycle of accreditation: **(will include provisional accreditation)**

First cycle ☐ Second cycle ☐ Third cycle ☐ Others(specify) ☐

Checklist of documents to be submitted with the application form

Tick the boxes to indicate which documents are included. If you consider that the document is not applicable, please contact the Secretariat for confirmation. The application shall not be accepted in case of incomplete documents.

A.	Institutional Self Assessment Report (ISAR)	<input type="checkbox"/>
B.	Documents authenticating the legal status of the institution, including list of directors, partners and/or legal owners	<input type="checkbox"/>
C.	Lease agreement, if premises are leased	<input type="checkbox"/>
D.	Copies of the last three years' audited annual accounts	<input type="checkbox"/>
E.	Organogram or outline description of the management structure with names of post-holders	<input type="checkbox"/>
F.	Detailed CVs and job descriptions of all senior management and faculty	<input type="checkbox"/>
G.	Institution handbook	<input type="checkbox"/>
H.	Student handbook, if available	<input type="checkbox"/>
I.	Institution prospectus, course brochures, and other marketing materials, if any	<input type="checkbox"/>
J.	No. of students admitted during the last five years by gender	<input type="checkbox"/>
K.	Curriculum outline for each academic programme, including assessment procedures	<input type="checkbox"/>
L.	Faculty student ratio and dropout rate for each programme	<input type="checkbox"/>
M.	Details of self-financed students – programme-wise and gender-wise	<input type="checkbox"/>
N.	Annual Quality Assurance Reports (AQAR) for the entire validity period of accreditation status	<input type="checkbox"/>
O.	Receipts of the accreditation fees	<input type="checkbox"/>

The ISAR has been compiled based on the requirements of the Accreditation Manual. I confirm that the information furnished is accurate, up-to-date and provides a true account of the provider and its provision.

Signature: _____ **Date:** ____/____/20____

Full name: _____

(Director/Proprietor) **(Seal of the Institution)**

For official use only:

The application is received along with all required documents by:

Signature: _____

Name **Date:** _____

Part II: Details of academic programmes and courses

List **all** current programmes offered:

Course/ programme title	Awarding body	Level(s) as per BQF	Current student number

Part III: Details of staff

Name	Teaching/Administrative/Support	Qualifications & institution	Post held	Regular/contract	Date of appointment	Years served in the institution	Subjects taught (if appropriate)

ANNEXURE X

Fee Structure related to accreditation

A fee shall be charged to TEIs for the services provided as structured below. The current approved charges are nominal as the Government is currently funding major accreditation expenditure.

Sl. No.	Particulars	Amount
1.	Accreditation fees	Nu 25,000.00
2.	Appeal fees (to BAC)	Nu 15,000.00
3.	Appeal fees (to Appeals Committee)	Nu 20,000.00
4.	Reassessment fees	Nu 25,000.00
5.	Reaccreditation fees	Nu 25,000.00
6.	Late fees (on ISAR)	Nu 100.00 per day

Note:

1. The late fees shall be applied for duration that ISAR remains due for submission including weekends.
2. The fees shall be reviewed and fixed by the Council from time to time as deemed necessary.

ANNEXURE XI

Terms of Reference for Accreditors

1. BACKGROUND

The Bhutan Accreditation Council was established as per clause 11 of the Tertiary Education Policy of the Kingdom of Bhutan, 2010. The members of the Council were appointed through an Executive Order from the Cabinet. This body has overall authority on accreditation, quality assurance, and interpreting and recognizing qualifications. The Quality Assurance & Accreditation Division, Department of Adult & Higher Education serves as the Secretariat to the Council and shall facilitate accreditation process.

Accreditation shall be done by “**accreditors**” appointed by the Council on the recommendations of the Secretariat. A team consisting of maximum of five accreditors shall be engaged for the accreditation exercise. The accreditors shall constitute of qualified professionals with relevant background. They may be involved for accreditation of more than one institution but they shall not be engaged in more than two TEIs at the same time.

2. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Accreditors shall meet the following criteria to be engaged in accreditation:

- i. Must have Masters or equivalent qualifications in relevant field.
- ii. Should have experience of at least 10 years in any public or private organization with good employment history.
- iii. Should not be serving professor/lecturers in any of the TEIs who would have conflict of interest.
- iv. Can be an in-service person that the Council thinks deemed appropriate.
- v. Should be a person of integrity and commitment.

3. CORE VALUES

3.1 **Competence:** Demonstrate expertise in carrying out the responsibilities.

3.2 **Integrity and commitment:** Committed to provide fair & accountable services.

3.3 **Professionalism:** Demonstrate professionalism through positive attitude, actions and comments.

4. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

The accreditors shall:

- 4.1 ensure integrity of practice and shall submit undisputed recommendation on accreditation to the Council without making biased judgment.
- 4.2 declare conflict of interest.
- 4.3 develop plan of action and submit to the Secretariat.
- 4.4 confirm and contest ISAR submitted by TEIs through detailed examination, prepare a tentative report, grade and list the required evidences before the site visit.
- 4.5 verify and validate the evidences during the site visit to arrive at the final grade.
- 4.6 compile accreditors' report during the site visit based on the evaluation and evidences for submission to the Secretariat in both hard and soft copy.
- 4.7 complete assigned task as per the agreement [*Annexure V*] including answering queries related to accreditation, if any.
- 4.8 ensure comprehensive & diligent evaluation of the institution against standards outlined this Manual.
- 4.9 conduct other appropriate actions as deemed necessary to ensure professionalism.

The evaluation process shall include, amongst others:

Before site visit:

- a) Study ISAR submitted by TEIs based on questions given in *Annexure IV*.
- b) Prepare individual tentative accreditors' report as per *Annexure XII*.
- c) Identify strengths and issues related to the six standards.
- d) Prepare a tentative grade as per *Annexure XIII*.
- e) Prepare a list of evidence required to validate the ISAR

During the site visit:

- a) Appoint the Chairperson and Secretary. The Chair will lead the discussion and Secretary shall lead drafting the report based on the discussions. However, other member may share the responsibility of report writing.
- b) Look for evidences to validate ISAR.
- c) Compare and discuss individual tentative evaluation to arrive at three most important points under each key aspect, overall analysis and recommendations.
- d) Draft provisional report as per *Annexure XII*.
- e) Decide marks to be awarded under each Key Aspect and prepare the Grade sheet based on *Annexure XIII*.

- f) Conduct exit meeting to finalize the report where a presentation shall be made on the overall analysis of the institute.
- g) Sign the final report by head of the institution and accreditors' team.

After the site visit:

- a) Submit a soft copy of all relevant records including the plan of action and the accreditors' report to the QAAD for onward submission to the BAC and for future references.
- b) Answer to queries related to accreditation of the institution, if any.

5. DO'S & DON'TS

Do's

- ✓ Declare conflict of interest
- ✓ Develop a proper plan of action
- ✓ Before the site visit, study the Institutional Self Assessment Report (ISAR) thoroughly
- ✓ Take note of any aspect of the institution that may not have been included in the ISAR
- ✓ Prepare individual tentative accreditor's report
- ✓ Share observations and ideas candidly avoiding domineering attitude
- ✓ Work as a team to arrive at undisputed score and recommendation

- ✓ Shed all inhibitions relating to the institution being assessed
- ✓ Ensure integrity of practice
- ✓ Always be positive, committed, humble and collegial
- ✓ Have at least four team discussion/accreditors's meeting during the site visit
 - First: Appoint Chairperson and Secretary, discuss individual tentative evaluation, identify issues to be probed further and agree on distribution of responsibilities
 - Second: Compare the information collected from the institution and agree on tentative criterion-wise scores
 - Third: Arrive at provisional criterion-wise score and to identify further evidences to be collected, if any
 - Fourth: Based on the evidences collected, fine-tune the provisional score to final score and finalize the provisional report
- ✓ Share the responsibility of drafting the final accreditor's report
- ✓ Share, finalize, and sign the accreditor's report during the exit meeting
- ✓ Ensure confidentiality of information

Don'ts

- ✓ Avoid making criticism on ISAR

- ✓ Do not make conclusions without completing verification of evidences
- ✓ Do not be carried away either in favour of or against the institution by any exceptional strength or weakness in one or two aspects
- ✓ Do not attach any weightage to what you might have learnt unofficially about the institution
- ✓ Do not compare the institution in review to other TEIs
- ✓ Do not be carried by external display
- ✓ Do not give impression of superior knowledge
- ✓ Do not be rude or insulting
- ✓ Do not have personal work or outside visits during the period of assessment
- ✓ Do not accept any gifts, mementos and/or any special hospitality

6. REMUNERATION

A professional fee of Nu 10,000 per accreditor per institution shall be paid in addition to daily allowance of Nu 1000. In case the Secretariat cannot make travel arrangement for the site visit, the accreditors shall be entitled for mileage as per the existing rules.

The accreditors shall arrange their own logistics.

7. ACCESS TO TERTIARY EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

The Secretariat shall inform TEIs based on plan of action. The TEIs shall provide adequate access to information as required by the accreditors.

8. AMENDMENTS

The Council reserves the right to amend this Terms of Reference (ToR). The ToR shall be reviewed and amended as deemed necessary by the Council from time to time as deemed necessary.

ANNEXURE XII

Accreditors' Report Format

Part 1: General information	
1.1 Name and Address of the institution:	
1.2 Year of establishment:	
1.3 Current academic activities at the institution (Number):	
• Faculties /Schools:	
• Departments/Centres:	
• Programmes/Courses offered:	
• Regular faculty members:	
• Contract faculty members:	
• Staff (Technical, administrative & support)	
• Students:	Male:.....Female:

1.4 Three major features in the institutional context (As perceived by the accreditors):	
1.5 Date of visit:	
1.6 Composition of the accreditors:	
Chairperson	Name:
Other member	Name: 1. 2. 3.

BAC Coordinator/QAAD officials	Name:
--------------------------------	-------

Part 2: Criterion wise analysis	Observations (Strengths and/or Weaknesses on Key-Aspects) <i>(Note: Please limit to three major ones for each; use telegraphic language; it is not necessary to have all three each time - write only relevant ones)</i>
2.1 Curricular elements	
2.1.1 Curriculum design and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
2.1.2 Academic flexibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
2.1.3 Feedback on curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
2.1.4 Curriculum update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •

2.1.5 Catering to diverse needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
2.1.6 Teaching-learning process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
2.1.7 Faculty recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
2.1.8 Faculty quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
2.1.9 Evaluation process and reforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
2.2 Research, Innovative practices and Linkages	
2.2.1 Promotion of research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
2.2.2 Research and publication output	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •

2.2.3 Consultancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
2.2.4 Extension activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
2.2.5 Collaborations & linkages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
2.2.6 Innovative practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •

2.3 Governance, Leadership and Management	
2.3.1 Institutional vision & leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
2.3.2 Organisational arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •

2.3.3 Strategy development and deployment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
2.3.4 Human resource management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
2.3.5 Financial management and resource mobilization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •

2.4 Infrastructure and Learning resources	
2.4.1 Physical facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
2.4.2 Maintenance of infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
2.4.3 Library as a learning resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
2.4.4 ICT infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •
2.4.5 Other facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •

2.5 Student services	
2.5.1 Admission process and student profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
2.5.2 Student progression and performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
2.5.3 Student support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
2.5.4 Student activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
2.5.5 Credit transfer system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •
2.5.6 Employability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
2.5.7 Graduate performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
2.5.8 Alumni services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •

2.6 Internal quality assurance and Enhancement system	
2.6.1 Internal quality assurance system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •
2.6.2 Institutional effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •

Part 3: Overall analysis	Observations <i>(Note: Please limit to five major ones for each; use telegraphic language; It is not necessary to have all five bullets under each)</i>
3.1 Institutional strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • •
3.2 Institutional Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • •
3.3 Institutional opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • •
3.4 Institutional challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •

Name and signature Accreditation team:

Name	Designation	Signature with date
	Chairperson	
	Member	
	Member	

Name & Signature of BAC/QAAD official

Name	Designation	Signature with date
-------------	--------------------	--------------------------------

ANNEXURE XIII

Grade Sheet

Name of the Institution: _____

Place: _____

Date of Visit: _____ to _____

Standard	Maximum mark for each standard	Weighted Mark Average $= \frac{\text{total weighted grademark}}{4}$
Governance, Leadership and Management	100	
Curriculum Content, Design and Review	100	
Teaching Learning and Assessment	150	
Human Resources and Services	125	
Research, Publications and Linkages	150	

Infrastructure and Learning resources	125	
Student services	150	
Internal quality assurance and Enhancement system	100	
Total	1000	

Grade: Performance Descriptor:

Name and signature of the Accreditors with date:

<i>Designation</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>	<i>with date</i>
--------------------	-------------	------------------	------------------

Chairperson

Member

Member

BAC

Coordinator

Details:

Standard and Criteria

Standard 1: Governance, Leadership and Management

<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Maximum mark</i>	<i>Point awarded</i>	<i>Weighted grade mark</i>
Vision, Mission and Objectives	10		
Organisational structure and management	20		
Accountability and transparency	20		
Leadership and academic autonomy	20		
Strategic development, planning and implementation	30		
Sub-total	100		

Weighted Average Mark = _____ ÷ 5 = _____

Standard 2: Curriculum content, design and review

Curriculum design and development 40

Curriculum evaluation and review 40

Academic flexibility and programme diversification 20

Sub-total 100

Weighted Average Mark = _____ ÷ 5 = _____

Standard 3: Teaching learning and assessment

Teaching learning process 40

Assessment process 40

Student engagement 40

Teaching learning materials 30

Sub-total 150

Weighted Average Mark = _____ ÷ 5 = _____

Standard 4: Human resource and services

Human resource management system 35

Quality human resource 35

Human resource development 35

Service conditions 20

Sub-total 125

Weighted Average Mark = _____ ÷ 5 = _____

Standard 5: Research, publications and linkages

Research culture 45

Research and publication 45

Consultancy and extension services 25

Collaboration and linkages 35

Sub-total 150

Weighted Average Mark = _____ $\div 5$ = _____

Standard 6: Infrastructure and learning resources

Academic infrastructure	20
----------------------------	----

Residential infrastructure	20
-------------------------------	----

Recreational and other facilities	15
--------------------------------------	----

Library services	30
------------------	----

Safety and maintenance of physical infrastructure	15
---	----

ICT services	25
--------------	----

Sub-total	125
------------------	------------

Weighted Average Mark = _____ $\div 5$ = _____

Standard 7: Student services

Admission process and student profile	20
--	----

Student progression	25
---------------------	----

Student engagement 25
activities

Student support 35
systems

Special needs and 15
inclusive services

Graduate employability 15

Alumni engagement 15

Sub-total 150

Weighted Average Mark = _____ ÷ 5 = _____

Standard 8: Internal quality assurance and Enhancement system

Quality assurance 30
system

Continuous 25
enhancement

Innovative practices 30

Institutional branding 15

Sub-total 100

Weighted Average Mark = _____ $\div 5$ = _____

Name and signature of the Accreditors with date:

<i>Designation</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>	<i>with</i>
		<i>date</i>	

Chairperson

Member

Member

BAC

Coordinator

ANNEXURE XIV

Institutional Accreditation Certificate



BHUTAN ACCREDITATION COUNCIL



No. BAC/2019/

Date:

Certificate of Institutional Accreditation

This is to certify that
..... **(Name of Institution)**

is accredited by the
Bhutan Accreditation Council
with Grade

.....
This certificate is valid till
..... **(Date)**

Chairperson
Bhutan Accreditation Council

ANNEXURE XV

Application for Appeal

1. Appellant Details

Name of Institution:

Address:

Contact No:

Email address: (optional)

2. This appeal is lodged because: (tick relevant ones)

- a. The institution failed to acquire accreditation
- b. The institution is unsatisfied with the grades awarded
- c. The Council withdrew or suspended accreditation status
- d. The decision was not made in accordance with the procedures or criteria set out in this Manual
- e. Any other reasons
(Specify.....)

3. Have you contacted the Secretariat and attempted to resolve the grievance?

Yes ☐

No ☐

If No, please proceed to 5.

4. **What date did you meet with/contact the Secretariat and what was the outcome?**

Date of meeting/contact:

Outcome.....

.....
.....
.....
.....

5. **Reasons for appeal**

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

I certify that all the information is true to the best of my knowledge:

Institution's
President/CEO/Director.....

Signature:.....

Date.....

For Official Use Only

Application received by.....

on.....

Signature.....

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<http://www.aaalac.org/accreditation/benefits.cfm> 7.5.12

Glossary

Academic standards describe *what is taught and learnt, how, and at what stage in a student's career*. The content of the curriculum, the rate at which students are introduced to new concepts and skills, and the methods of teaching, learning and assessment used are the most important aspects of standards. External reference points, such as subject *Benchmark* statements, the *Bhutan Qualifications Framework* level descriptors and reports from the institution's external examiners, are used to ensure that the academic standards set by the University are appropriate.

Accreditation is the process of self-study and external review for quality assurance, accountability and for quality improvement of tertiary education institutions offering post secondary programmes. It is an assurance that a program or institution meets established quality standards.

Accreditation status is the initial accreditation status granted by the Bhutan Accreditation Council on the recommendation of the accreditors based on the accreditors' reports indicating that the institution has demonstrated compliance with the requirements addressed as per the Accreditation Manual.

Accreditors constitute those professionals with similar background who have been assigned the role of accreditors by the BAC.

Accreditors' report is the final report of the accreditors submitted to the Council through the Secretariat on the findings of the site visit. It shall also include the confidential grade awarded by the accreditors.

Action Plan is a series of steps designed to accomplish a goal or an objective, or to make changes and improvements related to strategic planning and outcomes assessment.

Annual Report is a report submitted to the Secretariat yearly to help monitor the status of the TEIs and their efforts towards continuous improvement.

Appeals Committee refers to the committee constituted to handle appeals related to accreditation. It shall consist of three to five members.

Benchmarking is the process of continuously measuring and comparing an institution's resources, processes and outcomes against comparable resources, processes and outcomes in the leading TEIs of higher learning, and against educational best practices to obtain information

that will assist the institution in identifying and implementing improvements.

Bhutan Accreditation Council (BAC) is an autonomous agency mandated with the powers and functions pertaining to the accreditation of tertiary education institutions in Bhutan. The BAC and Council are used as interchangeable.

Bhutan Civil Service Examinations (BCSE) is a competitive examination conducted in accordance with the procedures laid down in the BCSR for initial appointments to professional and management positions in civil service.

Bhutan Qualifications Framework (BQF) is the national document pertaining to qualifications and their classification in Bhutan. It provides education pathways linking the qualifications systematically.

Branch campus is an instructional site located geographically apart and independent of the main TEI. A branch campus is (i) independent of the main campus (ii) offers courses in educational programmes leading to a university award (iii) has its own faculty and administrative structure, and (iv) its own HR and budgetary autonomy.

Council refers to the Bhutan Accreditation Council (BAC).

Course refers to the programme of study offered in the institution.

Cycle of accreditation is the term used to indicate the numerous rounds of accreditation that TEIs undergo. When an institution undergoes accreditation for the first time, it is referred to as cycle 1. Reaccreditation after expiry of the accreditation validity shall be referred to as cycle 2, cycle 3, etc.

Decline of accreditation is when the institution is denied of accreditation status upon recommendation of the Accreditors and subsequent action by the Council indicating that the institution has failed to demonstrate the compliance with the requirements and/or did not get the minimum grade of C.

Educational programme is a coherent set of courses leading to a credential (degree, diploma, or certificate) awarded by the institution.

Exit meeting is a brief meeting between the Accreditors and the institution's leadership, at which time the former orally presents an overview of its draft report with

particular emphasis on its factual findings during the site visit. This meeting may also answer/clarify questions.

Faculty refers to the teaching staff.

Fees refer to the amount the TEIs pay as fixed and revised by the Council from time to time. The fees may be for variety of activities: application, accreditation, re-assessment, re-accreditation, appeals, substantive change, special reviews, advisory visits, etc.

Focal Person is the member of the INSTITUTION who collaborates with the Secretariat during review of the application and with the Accreditors during the site visit. S/he shall report all accreditation allied activities including the Annual Plan of Action to the Secretariat.

Grade refers to the final letter grade arrived based on the total weighted score. It has a performance descriptor.

Good practice is a commonly accepted practice within the higher education community designed to enhance institutional quality.

Integrity refers to the honesty, sincerity and sound moral principle embedded that serve as the foundation of the relationship among the Council, TEIs and the accreditors.

Institutional Accreditation is a type of quality assurance process under which services and operation of tertiary education institutions are evaluated by an external body to determine if applicable standards are met.

Institutional effectiveness is the systematic, explicit, and documented process of measuring performance against mission in all aspects of an institution.

Institutional Self Assessment Report is a primary document that the institution prepares to demonstrate compliance with the standards and questionnaire template provided in the Accreditation Manual.

Main Campus is the institution's campus with the central administrative unit.

Monitoring Reports provide additional documentation of compliance for those standards and requirements made by smaller committees following the Accreditors' Reports and direction of the Council.

Notification of Substantive Change is a letter from the head of the institution to the Council summarizing a proposed change and providing the intended implementation date (and listing the complete physical address for off-campus or branch campus) when an institution plans to initiate a significant change.

Off-campus site is a teaching site located geographically apart from the main campus which is not independent of the main campus.

Programme is the set of course or other work that must be successfully completed before qualifying for a qualification from the institution.

Programme Accreditation is an external content-review process of the programmes offered by TEIs against a specific set of standards.

Qualification is a certificate or deed issued by an educational institution, such as a university, that testifies that the recipient has successfully completed a particular course of study, or confers an academic degree. In some countries it is referred to as diploma.

Quality of provision describes *how well students are catered for*. The concept includes the quality of the *delivery* of the curriculum (as opposed to its content) as well as the quality of learning resources and support services made available to students. Thus, it is possible for an individual, or an institution to teach brilliantly at an inappropriate standard, or to teach poorly at an appropriate standard.

Quality assurance involves making sure that academic standards and quality of provision are satisfactory, so that students, their families, employers and the tax-paying public all get a good deal on their investment in higher education.

Quality enhancement involves working continually to make things better, however good the existing quality of provision.

Recommendation is a formal statement written by the accreditors or other evaluation committee of the Council indicating an institution's lack of compliance with a standard or requirement as envisioned in the Accreditation Manual.

Reaccreditation shall mean different cycle of accreditation of the institution after the expiry of the validity of accreditation status.

Reassessment is the accreditation of the institution when they fail to get the minimum weighted score or for the improvement of the grade awarded.

Score is the mark awarded for each Key Aspect to arrive at the total points for the final grade.

Secretariat is the unit that carries out the daily work to facilitate the functioning of the Council. Quality Assurance and Accreditation Division, Department of Adult and Higher Education, Ministry of Education serves as the Secretariat to the Council.

Site visits are when teams of evaluators (like accreditors, ad hoc committees) are sent to verify the documentations of compliance previously submitted to the Council. Site visits typically involve both the main campus and the off-campus instructional sites.

Staff refers to general human resource including teaching, administrative and support staff.

Student work refers to any academic task assigned to student that is assessed (e.g. projects, written assignments, presentation, dissertation, research papers, lab reports, field work report, etc.).

Substantive Change is a significant modification or expansion of the nature and scope of an accredited institution. This may include institutional activities such as (1) changing the established institutional mission or objectives, (2) changing the institution's legal status, form of control, or ownership, (3) adding courses/programmes that represent a significant departure in content or in method of delivery, (4) adding courses/programmes at a

degree or credential level above the institution's current accreditation, (5) changing from clock hours to credit hours, (6) substantially increasing the number of clock or credit hours for completion of a programme, (7) adding an off-campus location at which the institution offers at least 50 percent of an educational programme, or (8) establishing a branch campus.

Team of accreditors refers to a team consisting of four to five accreditors recruited by the BAC to undertake accreditation of a particular institution.

Tertiary Education Institution is a general term used to mean tertiary education institute such as University, College, Institute, and Faculty.

Weighted average mark is the product of maximum marks and the points allocated which is awarded for each key aspect.