Category D: Graduate Policies Catalog

Program Accreditation Policy

Policy Title	Program Accreditation
Responsible AIU Office (Higher Management/Directorate)	University Vice President
Policy Owner (Executive Department/Office)	Program Director
Pertinent Dates	Created in March 2022, Approved in ……, Applied effective in ……..

I.   SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy applies to all programs in the university. All students, academic staff, and program directors as well as partners in the programs (if any) should be informed with this policy. The purpose of this policy is to outlines the processes for approval and accreditation of a program.

II.   DEFINITIONS

Award: refers to a certificate, or transcript of a diploma, masters degree or PhD.

Certification: refers to the combination of documents that a student receives when completing a course of group of courses as a statement of accomplishment.

Committee for Academic Programs bylaws and Courses: A committee in the Education Affairs Council concerned with reviewing and developing new and existing programs and courses.

Confer / Conferral: the granting of an Award in recognition of academic achievement

Course: A course is the specific content which is taught throughout a semester and is allocated a certain number of credit hours according to the educational program. A special code is assigned for each course.

Graduate: a student who has successfully completed all the requirements for an Award

Program: A set of courses that qualify for obtaining a degree if the student passes the courses successfully.

Program Coordinator: A faculty member entrusted with creating a new study program or reviewing an existing one.

Statement of achievement: a list of courses completed successfully by the student including the student's grade in each course.

Testamur: it is a university certificate, a legal document that is made available when the degree is conferred. This official document which contains the university seal as well as the signatures of the University Vice-President and President.

Transcript: It is a record showing a student's academic path at AIU and the courses he/she has studied in each semester, along with their codes, credit hours and grades. It also includes other transferred courses finished by the student in another university and the semester GPA.

III.   POLICY STATEMENT

Accreditation is a mark of academic excellence and a measure of and institutional quality. This policy document sets out the fundamental rules and procedures for approval and accreditation of a new program at AIU. This document will be revised and supplemented, as required, to meet new needs and conditions of newly opened and running programs. Revised pages will be sent to all holders who are responsible for keeping the manual current. An important part of this updating process depends on the constructive comments, information, and suggestions received from the postgrad students as well as the staff members and other administrative users.

IV.   RESPONSIBILITIES

This policy must be implemented by the University Vice President and program directors to be applied on all university programs.

V.   POLICY STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES

AIU announces the procedures for all program directors and staff members. All new programs are designed and developed consistent with:

1- The relevant educational sector committee framework and associated guidelines in the Supreme Council of Universities (SCU).
2- The Policies for establishing a new program and new courses at AIU
3- The relevant standards of National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education (NAQAAE).
4- The relevant standards for external recognition, registration or accreditation body for this program

Approval of New Program:
All new programs at AIU should be first approved by the Council of Academic Affairs and the University council. This is followed by approval from the University Board of Trustee. The new program is submitted to the relevant educational sector committee at SCU. The final approval of the new program is granted by the relevant educational sector committee at SCU after reviewing and amendment (if any) and site visit to inspect the physical resources available for the program at AIU.

National Accreditation of a Program:
The following procedures and rules must be to obtain an accreditation certificate from NAQAAE:
• The program director submits a request to the university vice president that the program is ready for the national accreditation
• The university vice president redirects this request to the quality assurance center in the university to give an official report of the status of readiness of the program for accreditation and any necessary amendments or resources to enhance the readiness of the program for accreditation.

- When the readiness of the program for national accreditation is approved by the quality assurance center, the vice president submits the request for accreditation of the program to the university council for approval.
- The program director applies electronically to NAQAAE expressing the university desire and willingness to accredit the program. Documents must be enclosed with this application indicating:
  - The program has offered an academic degree at least once.
  - The AIU university council approves of this application.
  - All other documents in the guidelines for program accreditation manual issued by NAQAAE
- If it is evident for the NAQAAE that the application submitted by AIU meets the conditions for accreditation, AIU will be notified in writing (electronically) within the period of time specified by the board of directors of NAQAAEE within 30 days after the application is submitted or completed, whichever is later, so that AIU can go on with other procedures within the period specified by the NAQAAE.
- After being notified, AIU pays the accreditation fees determined by the NAQAAE's board of directors, and within 30 days after payment of fees NAQAAE will provide AIU with the required forms and data to proceed with the evaluation and accreditation process and the guide which will help the AIU fill in these forms and prepare the required data.
- In coordination with NAQAAE, AIU must provide and upload on NAQAAE website the data and studies which indicate that it has met the standards set for accreditation, especially the following:
  - AIU vision and mission and strategic plan
  - The program self-evaluation study conducted by AIU.
  - All other documents that may be required by the NAQAAE as per the updated guidelines for program accreditation.
- NAQAAE appoints the external reviewers who will undertake the evaluation process and informs the university by their names. In case of any disapproval from the AIU to any of the reviewers due to conflict of interest, AIU can apply for change of this reviewer stating issue of the conflict of interest.
- The principal external reviewer (Reviewer team leader) shall communicate with AIU to inform the educational institution of the procedures to be followed to accomplish the evaluation process and the dates of the visits to be made by their designated personnel to the institution.
- The external reviewer team shall make a preliminary report after reviewing the program data uploaded to NAQAAE website and shall ask for any additional data to be uploaded to the website. After the preparation of the preliminary report virtual as well as site visit will be conducted by the reviewers team to generate the final report on the program. This visit includes but is not limited to:
  - The LMS of the program with all online learning materials and resources
  - The online synchronized lectures and practical sessions
  - Site visit to AIU to review all resources allocated to the program and all supporting facilities in AIU such as classrooms, theaters, labs, playgrounds, library, clinic, youth care center, services and restaurants, dorms, buses, IT center, lecturers and TA offices ..etc.
- After the visit, the reviews team will make their final report that will be revised by NAQAAE and sent to AIU with the final decision by registered mail:
  - If the evaluation indicates that the program has met the established standards, the program is awarded the accreditation certificate, and NAQAAE send a copy of it to AIU.
  - If the program does not meet all the standards, NAQAAE specifies a period of time it sees necessary to for a revisit and clearly identifies the areas which have not met the standards and how to improve in order to reach the required quality level.
  - If the program does not obtain the accreditation certificate due to its inability to meet most of the established standards as indicated by the reports of evaluation committees, the status of the program is rejection of the accreditation and AIU has to reapply after at least 6 months after addressing all the comments mentioned in the NAQAAE report.
- The rejection report of NAQAAE will contain:

- o The degree of deficit in meeting standards (moderate / severe).
- o The standards which the institution has not applied.
- o What the institution has to do so that it can obtain the accreditation certificate.
- The accreditation certificate awarded to the program by NAQAAE is valid for five years. It is renewed by the same procedures as mentioned before within the first month of the last year of the validity period of the accreditation certificate. The last report of accreditation committees on the institution must be enclosed with this application.
- The program to which an accreditation certificate is awarded continues, throughout the period of the validity of the certificate, to be subject to periodical monitoring and revision through the annual self-reports submitted by the program director to the quality assurance center of the university.
- The quality assurance center of the university should make visits and annual report for each program as a follow up process for the status of accreditation to make sure that the accredited program continue to meet the previously fulfilled evaluation and accreditation standards.
- If a complaint was filed to NAQAAE that the program does not meet any of the standards of accreditation that it has previously fulfilled such as the ratio of staff members to students or the availability of resources and facilities, a site visit can be requested by NAQAAE for monitoring and revision to reconsider the validity of the accreditation certificate when the educational institution violates the established standards.
- If the monitoring, revision or inspection of the program which is awarded an accreditation certificate indicates that the institution has not met one of the conditions set for accreditation or has committed any violations or made any changes in its activity, its work system or the educational programs it offers, thus making it not meet the education quality and accreditation standards, then the board of directors of NAQAAE, through an informed decision, can suspend the accreditation certificate for a period of time it specifies or revoke the certificate depending on the grossness of the violation. NAQAAE's board of directors shall revoke the accreditation certificate if the data or documents submitted by the program to obtain the accreditation certificate prove to be untrue or if the institution obtains accreditation certificate through fraud.
- NAQAAE must notify AIU, by registered mail with acknowledgement of receipt, of the decision on the suspension or revocation of the accreditation certificate within fifteen days after this decision has been made. This notification must include the causes of the decision, and NAQAAE must announce this decision the same way it has announced the decision of issuing the accreditation certificate for the institution.
- NAQAAE shall revoke the decision of suspending the accreditation certificate if it has been proved that AIU has eliminated the causes of this decision. The accreditation certificate awarded to the program whose accreditation certificate has been revoked is issued after following the procedures and rules mentioned before in reapplication.
- AIU can make complaint to the board of directors of NAQAAE about the decision of refusing to award it the accreditation certificate or renew it or about the decision of suspending or revoking the certificate issued for the institution, provided that AIU pays the petition charges determined by NAQAAE's board of directors. This petition must be made within thirty days after the institution is notified of the decision. These The petitions are investigated by a committee formed by NAQAAE by members who have not previously participated in evaluating AIU. These members are selected by the NAQAAE's board of directors. In addition, the committee includes a member from the State Council who must be at least a judge of a court.
- The Petition Committee with all its members shall meet and make its recommendation regarding the petition by the majority of votes at most within ninety days after papers have been referred to it. The Committee submit its report on the petition to the board of directors NAQAAE. The board's decision regarding the petition is final and includes causes. AIU shall be notified, by registered mail with acknowledgement of receipt, of the decision within thirty days after it has been taken. If the petition made by AIU is accepted, the petition charges shall be returned to AIU.

- The faculty members and the members of the boards of trustees of AIU or their up to their third degree relatives cannot be appointed by NAQAAE for evaluation of any program in AIU due to conflict of interest.
- The team in charge of evaluation work is committed to disclose all the facts and circumstances which may affect his/her impartiality and autonomy, or which may create justifiable doubts about his/her impartiality.
- The circulation of any data or information about AIU and its programs that is necessary for the evaluation process is limited exclusively to those in charge of the evaluation and accreditation process. This data and information shall be kept in a way that secures its privacy and prevents it from reaching those who are not concerned, according to the system set by the NAQAAE's board of directors. Accordingly, the evaluation work or any member in NAQAAE are not allowed to disclose the confidential data and information to anyone without the explicit written permission of AIU's legal representative.

International Accreditation of a Program:
The following procedures and rules must be to obtain an international accreditation:
- The program must be nationally accredited by NAQAAE
- The program director shall determine the international accreditation body and form a team from the faculty members and staff working in the program to assess the readiness for accreditation as per the accreditation standard.
- The program director submits a request to the university vice president that the program is ready for the international accreditation and specifies the accreditation body
- The university vice president redirects this request to the quality assurance center in the university to give an official report of the status of readiness of the program for accreditation and any necessary amendments or resources to enhance the readiness of the program for accreditation and the fees needed for accreditation and the timeline of the accreditation process as per the communication of the program director and the director of the quality assurance center and the accreditation body.
- When the readiness of the program for international accreditation is approved by the quality assurance center, the vice president after reviewing the condition with the council for academic affairs may submit the request for accreditation of the program to the university council for approval.
- When the approval of the university council for proceeding with the international accreditation is granted, the program director and the international accreditation team in the program along with the assistance from the quality assurance center shall proceed with the international accreditation body as per their suggested timeline plan and procedures (approx. 1-2 years) till the accreditation is reach

VI.   **FORMS/INSTRUCTIONS (if applicable)**

All forms in this part are in accordance with that of the approval and accreditation bodies

VII.   **APPENDICES (if applicable)**

[This section includes any additional relevant information or documents in attached appendices.]

VIII.   **CONTACT INFORMATION**

University Vice President
Program Director
Quality Assurance center Director

Triggered by:	Name	Date	Sig.
Created by:	Name	Date	Sig.
Revised by:	Name	Date	Sig.
Approved by:	Name	Date	Sig.