Deanship of Academic Development

Program Assessment Center

Management System and Organizational Structure for Assessment and Accreditation of Academic Programs at KFUPM

March 2013
1. Introduction

Accreditation is a system for recognizing educational institutions and professional programs affiliated with those institutions for a level of performance, integrity, and quality which entitles them to the confidence of the educational community and the public they serve. Since accreditation status is reviewed on a periodic basis, recognized institutions and professional programs are encouraged to maintain continuous self-study and improvement mechanisms. The accrediting process requires institutions and programs to examine their goals, activities, and achievements; to consider the expert criticism and suggestions of a visiting team; and to determine corrective actions based on recommendations or suggestions from the accrediting agency.

In efforts to improve the quality and level of performance of the academic programs, KFUPM initiated the process of Accreditation of their Academic Programs at the main campus as well as the community colleges which includes Dammam Community College (DCC) and Hafr Al Batin Community college (HBCC). Accreditation to the Engineering and Computing Programs is provided by the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) with a revision cycle of 6 years, for the Business and Industrial Management programs, it is done by Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) with a review cycle of 10 years and for all the Programs at National level, the accreditation is done through National Commission for Academic Accreditation and Assessment (NCAAA) with a review cycle of 5 years.

Prior to accreditation, it is KFUPM policy to conduct periodic self-assessment for its academic programs and it should be at least one year before accreditation visit. The aim of the self-assessment is to improve the academic programs and ensure high academic standards. Self-assessment is an important tool for academic quality assurance and provides feedback to initiate action plans for improvement. Figure 1 outlines the cycle for self-assessment and accreditation process.

![Figure 1: Self assessment and accreditation cycle](image)

This document aims to give a detailed procedure for any college or department going through national or international accreditation including the two community colleges.
A procedure on a follow up of the implementation plan based on the self assessment or accreditation team findings is also included.

2. Objectives and Purpose

2.1 Objectives of Accreditation at KFUPM

- To improve the quality of the academic programs and as an auditing mechanism that is independent of the educational system.
- To assure that a program has clearly defined, educational objectives and learning outcomes and is meeting them.
- To ensures that a program or a college is meeting national/international standards.
- To provide a feedback on quality assurance of academic programs.

2.2 Purpose

Accreditation is a process of meeting the program standards developed by the related accrediting agency. Accreditation indicates that the accredited programs or organization has achieved an appropriate level of organizational proficiency and that it has reliable mechanisms in operation to continually improve the quality of the offered programs.

Prior to accreditation, self-Assessment is carried out to assure quality in academic programs and to alleviate the academic programs to reach the intended goals and learning outcomes. This is a continuous process intended to improve academic programs and student learning.

2.3 Benefits

- confidence that the University is offering programs that are meeting national / international standards and has built-in mechanisms to ensure it is continually improving;
- improves assessment culture in the University, improves academic programs, and contributes to good management relations;
- opportunity to receive feedback at the time of the accreditation site review/survey from objective, informed, and skilled peers;
- improved efficiency and accountability;

3. Organizational Structure and Committees Charges

This section highlights a typical organizational structure for any program or college undergoes through national or international accreditation. Figure 2 demonstrates the structure and the charges of each committee are included after.
3.1 University Committee for Accreditation & Assessment (UCAA)

The University Committee for Accreditation & Assessment (UCAA) will be in charge of assuring and planning all quality matters related to academic programs. The committee shall advise the Rector on the policy and institutional matters pertaining to the accreditation and assessment of the academic programs. It should also approve the implementation plan for the department or college based on assessment team findings or recommendations. More specifically, the charges of the committee will be as follows:

Committee Charges

1. Approves and supervise the implementation of a comprehensive accreditation & assessment plan for academic programs at the University.
2. Initiates, revises and approves policies and procedures to enhance and assure quality of academic programs.
3. Approves corrective actions and developmental plans, based on self assessment and accreditation findings, for individual academic programs and monitor its implementation.
4. Advises the Rector on all matters related to accreditation of academic programs and submits reports to the Rector after accreditation or self-assessment visits documenting strengths, weaknesses of the concerned department or college based on the assessment team findings or recommendations.

Members

Vice Rector for Academic Affairs – Chairman
Dean of Academic Development
All college deans and Deans of Community Colleges
Two experienced Faculty members.

By Invitation

Vice Rector for Applied Research
General Supervisor, Services
Dean of Faculty and Personnel Affairs
Dean of Student Affairs
Dean of Admission and Registration
Dean of graduate studies

3.2 College Accreditation & Assessment Committee (CAAC)

The College Accreditation & Assessment Committee (CAAC) shall advise the University Committee for Accreditation & Assessment on all matters pertaining to academic accreditation and assessment with the objective of continuously improving the quality of the college programs in accordance with local needs and international quality standards. The Committee shall provide support to the College dean in all matters related to preparation maintaining accreditation from the accrediting agency.

Committee Charges

1. Develop and monitor an accreditation & assessment plan for academic programs at the college.
2. Plan and implement training and awareness programs in relation to the standards and requirement of the accrediting agency.
3. Coordinate and facilitate the activities for academic programs self-assessment and National / International Accreditation.
4. Ensure compliance of submitted documents to accrediting body standards and requirements
5. Review and monitor the implementation plan for academic programs within the college based on the self-assessment and accreditation findings.
6. Provide recommendations for program improvements.
7. Review the annual report of each department within the college before sending to SAAC

Members

Dean of the concerned college – Chairman
Department Chairs
College Coordinator
Representative members from the concerned department within the college

**Note:** if more than one college is going through the same accrediting agent at the same time, the dean of the college that has larger number of programs going through the accreditation will be the chair of this committee and the other colleges deans will be members.

CAAC formation depends on the accrediting body and the detailed breakdown of the committees for various accrediting bodies is shown below.

Dean of the college that has larger number of programs going through the accreditation will be the chair of the steering committee and the other colleges deans will be members.

**For ABET Accreditation:**

- **ABET Steering Committee**
  - Deans of the Concerned Colleges
  - College Coordinator
  - Program Coordinators

- **CAAC for CES**
  - Dean of the College---chair
  - Chairmen of Departments
  - College Coordinator
  - Program Coordinators

- **CAAC for CCSE**
  - Dean of the College----chair
  - Chairmen of Departments
  - College Coordinator

- **CAAC for CED**
  - Dean of the College----chair
  - Chairmen of Department(s)
  - College Coordinator
  - Program Coordinator

**For NCAAA Accreditation:**

- **NCAAA Steering Committee**
  - Deans of the Concerned Colleges
  - College Coordinator Programs Coordinator

- **CAAC for CS**
  - Dean of the College----chair
  - Chairmen of Departments
  - College Coordinator
  - Program Coordinator

- **CAAC for CED**
  - Dean of the College----chair
  - Chairmen of Department(s)
  - College Coordinator
  - Program Coordinator

- **CAAC for DCC**
  - Dean of the College----chair
  - College Coordinator
  - Program Coordinator

- **CES** : College of Engineering Sciences.
- **CCSE** : College of Computer Science & Engineering.
- **CED** : College of Environmental Design

- **CS** : College of Sciences
- **CED** : College of Environmental Design
- **DCC** : Dammam Community College
For AACSB Accreditation:

CAAC for CIM
Dean of the College
Chairmen of Departments
College Coordinator

CIM : College of Industrial Management

The college dean is the contact person with the accrediting agency and his responsibilities during the accreditation process is summarized below

College dean responsibilities:

- Initiate accreditation and maintenance processes
- Provides leadership and manage accreditation process for all programs in the college.
- Ensure that all academic programs in the college are meeting and adhering to accrediting body standards and requirements
- Ensure readiness of each academic program in the college for assessment or accreditation visits
- Discuss the assessment or accreditation team findings with concerned department chairman as well as the corrective actions to be taken based on the accreditation and assessment findings.
- Monitor the implementation plans of actions taken to address the recommendations or initiatives to improve the program.

To carry his duties effectively, the dean is supported by a college coordinator. The college coordinator should be highly knowledgeable about the standards and requirements of the accrediting agency. His responsibilities are summarized below

College coordinator

- Provide assistance to the college dean and academic departments within the college with their assessment or accreditation activities
- Develop and promote strategies to support academic programs in their efforts to get the accreditation.
- Collect relevant data and surveys for the accreditation.
- Support the college dean in monitoring progress and maintaining timelines of working Department Accreditation & Assessment Committee (DAAC).
- Work closely with PAC to monitor data collection and analysis for the academic programs.
- Maintain ongoing tracking and appropriate documentation on referrals to assessment/accreditation activities.
- Help the department to prepare implementation plan based on recommendations or assessment findings.
3.3 Quality Assurance Committee (QAC)

The **Quality Assurance Committee (QAC)** shall advise the concerned college dean relating to the feedback on the proposed self-assessment report. The committee shall review the submitted documentation on SAR and advise the Department Accreditation & Assessment Committee (DAAC) for necessary actions or corrections before proceeding for accreditation or self-assessment process.

**Committee Charges**

1. Adhere and follow up on the assessment and accreditation plan
2. Review the Self-Assessment Report and needed documents for Program Accreditation or self-assessment.
3. Provide feedback on the quality of the documents.
4. Ensure compliance of the submitted documents with the accrediting agency standards.
5. Provide recommendations for program improvements
6. Review academic departments implementation plans
7. Monitor the progress towards implementing corrective actions and developmental plans as approved in the implementation plan on annual bases.

**Members**

- Director of Program Assessment Center - Chairman
- Coordinators for Accreditation of
  - College of Engineering Sciences (ABET coordinator)
  - College of Industrial Management (AACSB coordinator)
  - College of Sciences (NCAAA coordinator)
- Two experienced faculty in accreditation and assessment

3.4 Department Accreditation & Assessment Committee (DAAC)

The **Department Accreditation & Assessment Committee (DAAC)** shall advise the Chairman of academic department on all matters pertaining to the accreditation & assessment of the academic programs and related matters with the objective of continuously improving the quality of the department programs, and its teaching and learning methodologies.

**Committee Charges**

1. Ensure adherence to quality standards of accrediting bodies
2. Prepare self-assessment report meeting the accrediting body standards.
3. Ensure availability of needed documents and review course files based on accrediting body requirements.
4. Collect, review and interpret department assessment or accreditation findings.
5. Recommend improvements for department programs and suggest modifications as appropriate.
6. Prepare departmental implementation plan based on recommendations or findings of assessment/accreditation activities.
7. Prepare an annual report highlighting achievements towards actions in the implementation plan and propose corrective actions if needed.

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<tr>
<th>Members</th>
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<tr>
<td>Program Coordinator - Chairman</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faculty members appointed by the Chairman of the Dept.</td>
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</table>

The responsibilities of the department chair and the department program coordinators are summarized below

**Department Chairman Responsibilities**
- Ensure engagement of all faculty members in the assessment/accreditation process.
- Provide support and guidance to DAAC in conducting the assessment or accreditation task.
- Close coordination with DAAC and program coordinator to ensure that the SAR and necessary documents are meeting standards and requirements of accrediting body.
- Engage and prepare faculty of the departments for assessment or accreditation visits.
- Discuss the recommendations or findings with DAAC and lead the development of corrective actions.
- Lead the efforts of the department for implementing actions or recommendations based on the implementation plan.

**Program coordinator:**
- Ensure compliance of the program with the assessment or accreditation plan
- Lead program assessment or accreditation activities at the department
- Lead the DAAC efforts in preparing reports and required documents for accreditation and ensure adherence to the accrediting agent standards
- Ensure completeness and availability of needed documents based on accrediting agent requirements
- Review course files\reports on annual basis according to the accrediting agency requirement and provide continuous feedback or suggestions for improvements to the department chair.
- Communicates assessment results to all members in the program.

**4. Procedure for International/National Accreditation**

The procedure for conducting an international or national accreditation for KFUPM academic programs, including the two community colleges, is described below and Figure 3 provides the flowchart of the accreditation process.
1. The college dean shall identify the academic programs to seek initial accreditation/re-accreditation or self-assessment after getting approval from University Committee for Accreditation and Assessment (UCAA) based on the master plan for Accreditation and Assessment (*note that for CIM, the accreditation is done at college level only*).

2. The college dean shall advise the Department Accreditation & Assessment Committee (DAAC) to prepare the Self-Assessment Report (SAR) according to the accrediting body standards.

3. The Department Accreditation & Assessment Committee (DAAC) shall submit the SAR and supporting documents through the Chairman of the Department to the College Accreditation and Assessment Committee (CAAC) for review.

4. The College Accreditation and Assessment Committee (CAAC) forwards the SAR and supporting documents to the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) to review within one month to ensure that it is prepared according to the accrediting body standards and the report is in line with the required format. The revised SAR should be then sent to the college dean and a copy to PAC.

5. PAC shall send the revised SAR to the Assessment Team (AT) and plan the schedule of the AT visit in consultation with the concerned college.

6. The AT conducts the visit, submits a report and presents its findings according to accrediting agency standards.

7. PAC forwards AT report and findings to College dean which should be then forwarded to UCAA.

8. The College Dean shall also send the AT report with findings to the concerned department and the Department shall prepare and submit an implementation plan according to the form provided in this document in Appendix A (Table A-1), in coordination with PAC, to the University Committee for Accreditation & Assessment (UCAA), through the college dean, based on the AT findings. The plan must include AT findings and the corrective actions to be taken, assignment of responsibility and a time frame for such actions.

9. UCAA approves the implementation plan and forward to College dean for implementation. The College Dean forwards the approved implementation plan to Program Assessment Center for follow up.

10. PAC shall follow-up annually on the implementation plan to ensure departments are adhering to the plan. The academic department shall inform the PAC each time a corrective action is implemented through the form attached.

11. After carrying the self assessment, college dean will initiate the accreditation and officially contact the accrediting agency meeting their deadline for application of accreditation or re-accreditation.

12. DAAC prepares SAR for accrediting agency according to accrediting body standards taking into consideration the recommendations from last assessment/accreditation and the actions taken to address that recommendations.

13. SAR shall be sent to CAAC through the Chairman of the department.
14. CAAC sends SAR to the QAC where QAC reviews the SAR within one month and send comments (if any) to college dean who shall forward to concerned department.

15. The college dean shall send the revised SAR to the Accrediting Agency meeting their timeline requirements.

16. The college dean will plan the schedule of the Accreditation Team visit and will make necessary arrangements.

17. The Accreditation Team conducts the visit, submits report and presents its findings in an exit meeting that will be attended by VRAA, College Dean, DAD, PAC, Department Chairmen and DAAC Members.

18. Procedure from Step 8 to step 10 above will be repeated.

After going through the accreditation process, PAC will follow up on the corrective actions based on AT findings and then it will initiate self-assessment according to a timeline that will be sent to all college deans. The self-assessment process should be initiated at one year before the next accreditation or re-accreditation visit.

A detailed procedure is presented in the next section for a follow up on the implementation plan.
Figure 3: Program Accreditation Process

College Dean identifies programs to be accredited or assessed after approval from UCAA.

Department prepares the SAR and submit to QAC through College Dean

Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) reviews the SAR within one month.

SAR Complete?

NO

The AT conducts assessment/accreditation visit and presents its findings

College dean provides an implementation plan to UCAA for approval and the approved implementation plan should be send to PAC

PAC follows up on the implementation plan

College dean initiate accreditation and DAAC Prepares the SAR for Accreditation Body

Note:
Program Assessment Center is in charge of self-assessment process
College Dean is in charge for accreditation process

SAR = Self Assessment Report
UCAA = University Committee for Accreditation and Assessment
CAAC = College Assessment and Accreditation Committee
DAAC = Department Assessment and Accreditation Committee
QAC = Quality Assurance Committee
5. Procedure for Annual Follow-up on the Implementation Plan

Figure 4 provides the flowchart of the follow-up on the implementation plan and the process is described as follows:

1. The concerned college dean receives the approved implementation plan and forwards it to the Program Assessment Center for necessary action.

2. The PAC shall advise the department to submit the corrective action plan on the implementation plan provided by the AT and according to the template provided in Appendix A (Table A-2).

3. The PAC reviews the Corrective action plan provided from the department and forwards to VRAA through DAD.

4. VRAA forwards the submitted corrective actions to University Committee for Accreditation & Assessment for detailed Evaluation.

5. The corrective actions taken are forwarded to the Rector for Approval.

6. The PAC shall follow up with the concerned department annually to provide the corrective actions that were taken in the past academic year. The academic department shall inform the PAC each time a corrective action is implemented.

Appendix A has the templates for implementation plan and a follow up on it.
The College Dean sends approved implementation plan to PAC

PAC requests college dean for corrective action plan.

PAC reviews the corrective action plan

Comments?

YES

PAC forwards the follow-up to VRAA

VRAA forwards implementation plan to UCAA for Evaluation

Approved by UCAA

NO

YES

PAC continues to follow up

Figure 4: Process for Annual Follow-up
Appendix A
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AT Finding</th>
<th>Corrective Action</th>
<th>Implementation Date</th>
<th>Responsible Body</th>
<th>Resources Needed</th>
<th>Status</th>
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<th>Comments</th>
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<tr>
<td>Department Chairman</td>
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<tr>
<td>College Dean</td>
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<td>Director PAC</td>
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<td>Dean DAD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vice Rector Academic Affairs</td>
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</tbody>
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Name of the Department Chairman  
Signature/Date  
Name of College Dean  
Signature/Date  
Name of the Director, PAC  
Signature/Date  
Name of the Dean, DAD  
Signature/Date  
Name of the VRAA  
Signature/Date

Approval by H.E. The Rector  □ Approved  □ Not Approved

Remarks: ____________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
Table A-2: Annual Follow-Up on the Implementation Plan

*more corrective actions can be appended to this template as required.*

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<tr>
<th>AT findings</th>
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<th>Was the Action Implemented? (Y/N)</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
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**Comments**

- **Department Chairman**
  - Name of the Department Chairman
  - Signature/Date

- **College Dean**
  - Name of College Dean
  - Signature/Date

- **Director PAC**
  - Name of the Director, PAC
  - Signature/Date

- **Dean DAD**
  - Name of the Dean, DAD
  - Signature/Date

- **Vice Rector Academic Affairs**
  - Name of the VRAA
  - Signature/Date

**Approval by H.E. The Rector**

- [ ] Approved
- [ ] Not Approved

Remarks: __________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________