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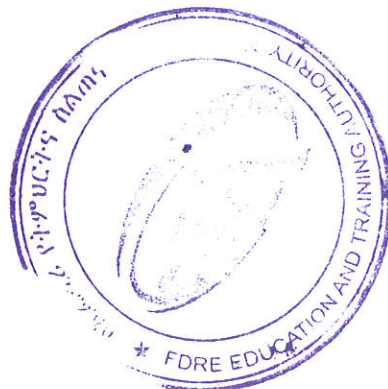
FDRE Education and Training
Authority

Document Number: ACC003/2023

Review Number: First edition

Effective Date: Sept. 2023

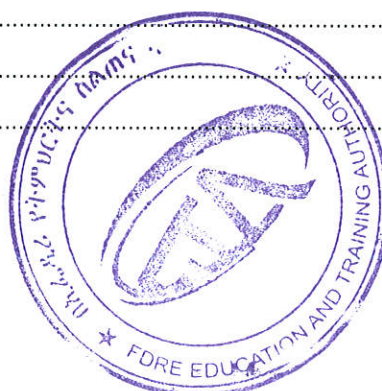
Higher Education Institutional Accreditation Standard Handbook



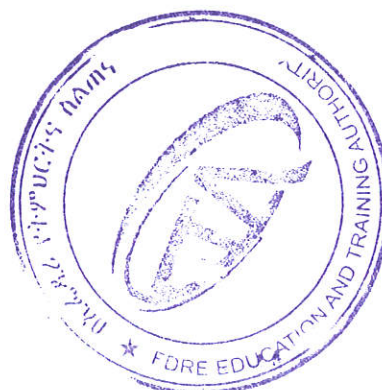
September 2023
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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Preamble

This manual serves as a guide for the accreditation process of academic institutions. Accreditation plays a vital role in ensuring the quality and effectiveness of educational programs, providing assurance to students, faculty, and stakeholders that the institutions meet recognized standards.

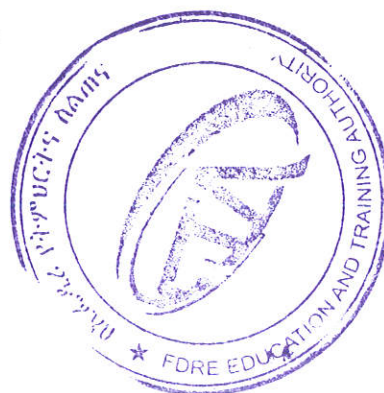
The purpose of this manual is to establish clear guidelines and procedures for institutional accreditation, thereby promoting consistency and fairness across different educational institutions and programs. It is designed to be a valuable resource for higher learning institutions, program administrators, staff members, and accreditation bodies involved in the evaluation and verification of the quality of academic programs.

Within this manual, detailed information is included on accreditation criteria, evaluation methodologies, and the documentation required for the accreditation process. These guidelines have been carefully developed to provide a structured framework that evaluates program outcomes, curriculum design, staff qualifications, educational resources, student support services, and other essential aspects contributing to the overall quality of institutions.

The accreditation process outlined in this manual is guided by principles of transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement. It recognizes the diverse nature of academic programs and encourages institutions to tailor their approaches to meet the unique needs and objectives of their respective disciplines. By adhering to these guidelines, institutions and their programs demonstrate their commitment to delivering high-quality educational experiences and their dedication to the pursuit of academic excellence.

Accreditation is a collaborative effort, involving the full participation of academic staff, administrators, students, and external stakeholders. It fosters a culture of self-evaluation and encourages ongoing institutional improvement, serving as a catalyst for innovation and professional development.

While the specific requirements for accreditation may vary depending on the nature of the program, this manual aims to provide a foundation upon which HEIs and their programs can build their accreditation processes. It serves as a framework to guide institutions through the stages of self-study, external evaluation, and decision-making, with the goal of achieving and maintaining institution excellence.



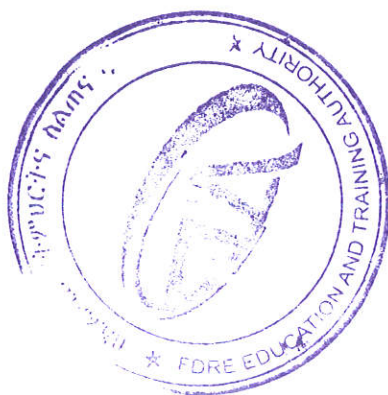
We hope that this Institutional Accreditation Handbook serves as a valuable tool in the institutional accreditation journey. By implementing the guidelines outlined within, HEIs can enhance their institution, elevate their reputation, and contribute to the educational landscape in a meaningful and impactful way.

Thank you for your commitment to institutional accreditation and for joining us in this important endeavor to ensure the continuous improvement of academic institutions. Let us embark on this journey together, driving excellence and fostering success for the benefit of students and society as a whole.



Abbreviations

AB	Accreditation body
ASDDG	Accreditation and Standardization Deputy Director General
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CQI	Continuous Quality Improvement
DCT	Data Collection Tool
EQF	Ethiopian Qualification Framework
ETA	Education and Training Authority
ETP	Education and Training Policy
GE	General Education
HE	Higher education
HEI	Higher Education Institute
HERQA	Higher Education Relevance and Quality Agency
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IQA	Internal Quality Assurance
MoE	Ministry of education
MoSHE	Ministry of Science and Higher Education
NAB	National accreditation body
SER	Self-evaluation Report
SSS	Student Satisfaction Survey
ToA	Team of Assessor
ToR	Terms of Reference
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training



Glossary of terms

Academic Staff refers to personnel engaged by higher education providers who are involved in teaching, research and community service, training, and supervision.

Adequate refers to satisfactory or acceptable in quality or quantity.

Alumni refers to graduates of a Higher Education Provider.

Assessment refers to a systematic mechanism to measure a student's attainment of learning outcomes.

Academic leadership refers to the positions and persons within the governance and management structures being responsible for decisions on academic matters. This includes teaching, researching, and giving service for community and the structure might contain President, V/ presidents, dean, deputy dean, vice deans, provost, heads of departments, course leaders, directors of research institutes and centers, as well as chairs of standing committees.

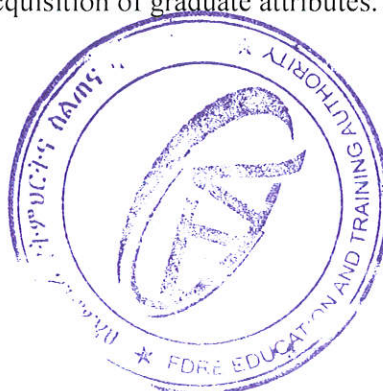
Accreditation refers to the quality assurance process under which services and operations of educational and training institutions are evaluated and verified by an external body to determine if applicable and recognized standards are met.

Accrediting body refers to legal entities that develop a set of standards and accredit programs and/or institutions meeting predefined quality standards.

Admission policy refers to the set of rules, regulations and criteria that institutions of higher education use to select and admit students into their programs. This policy outlines the requirements and qualifications that applicants must meet to be considered for admission.

Blueprint refers to a clear, written recipe for an exam that ensures all content (KSA) is covered fairly and the test is a balanced sample of all the learning objectives that students are expected to master it.

Curriculum refers to a document of academic programs that encompasses all aspects of teaching-learning and assessment delivered by programs towards the attainment of learning outcomes and the acquisition of graduate attributes.



Co-curricular Activities refers to an activity conducted outside the classroom that may or may not form part of the credits

Community Engagement refers to the active involvement and participation of HEIs and programs with the communities they serve. It is the role of HEIs incorporating community needs, concerns, and aspirations into the teaching and research of the institution to deepen relationship and trust between HEIs and community.

Conducive refers to a favorable surrounding or condition or environment with a positive effect on the students – can determine how and what the person is learning.

Competency refers to a student's knowledge, skills and abilities which enable the student to successfully and meaningfully complete a given task or role.

Ethiopian qualification framework refers to an instrument that classifies qualifications based on a set of criteria that are approved nationally and benchmarked against international best practices.

Formative assessment refers to referring to an assessment used to improve student learning and performance by giving feedback continuously.

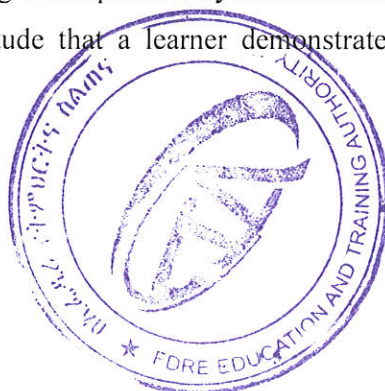
Governance refers to the act and/or the structure governing of the program. Governance is primarily concerned with policy making, the processes of establishing general institutional and program policies, and also with control of the implementation of the policies.

Good practice refers to a set of internationally accepted norms which is expected to be fulfilled to maintain high quality.

Higher Education Institution (HEI) refers to University, college, or other organization that delivers higher education.

Item analysis refers to a statistical technique that helps instructors identify the effectiveness of their test items. In the development of quality assessment item analysis plays an important role in contributing to the fairness of the test along with identifying content areas that may be problematic for students.

Learning outcomes refers to measurable achievements that the learner will be able to understand after the learning is complete. They are statements that describe the specific knowledge, skill, and attitude that a learner demonstrates after the completion of program.



Principal stakeholders refer to the students, faculty, Ministry of Education, professional associations, education strategic center, and the public.

Programme refers to an arrangement of courses/ subjects/ modules that is structured for a specified duration and learning volume to achieve the stated learning outcomes, which usually leads to an award of a qualification.

Program Accreditation refers to external evaluation of educational programs that meet predefined standards by recognized accrediting body.

Program goals/outcomes refers to general statements of what the program intends to accomplish; they describe learning outcomes and concepts in general terms. They should also be consistent with the mission of the program and institution.

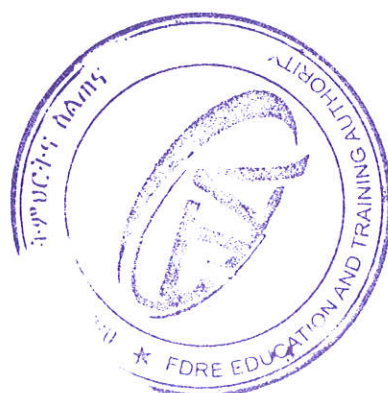
Quality enhancement refers to process where steps are taken to bring about continual improvement in quality.

Summative assessment refers to a formal method to evaluate students learning at the end of an instructional unit and designed to both assess the effectiveness of the program and the learning of the participant which is used to decide if the student has to move to the next stage of learning.

Support staff refers to non- academic personnel engaged by higher education providers.

Self-evaluation Report refers to a Self-evaluation report submitted by a Higher Education Provider to demonstrate whether it has achieved the quality standards for purposes of accreditation exercise or not.

Scholarly activities refers to activities that apply systematic approaches to the development of knowledge through intellectual inquiry and scholarly communication (e.g., learning and teaching, research, publications, and creative and innovative products).

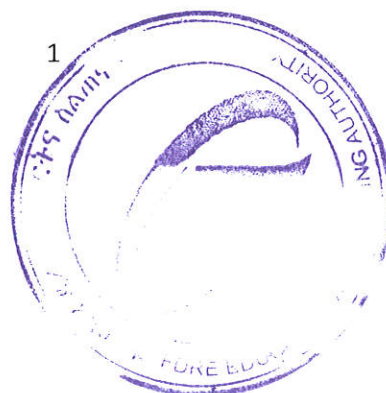


1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Higher education is the source of scientific and technological advancement and economic growth of a country. Mindful of these and other benefits, the Ethiopian government embarked on the development and expansion of higher education since 1991. These and other necessitated the need to regulate and assure the quality of higher education and training. As a result, the Federal Government of Ethiopia established Higher Education Relevance and Quality Agency (HERQA) in 2003 through Higher Education Proclamation no. 351/2003 as an autonomous legal body, accountable to the Ministry of Education, to supervise the relevance and quality of higher education institutions. The Agency employed a number of mechanisms to maintain and improve good quality in institutions of higher educations. It was, however, not able to deliver what was expected of it successfully due to various factors. Because of this, a number of criticisms have been presented from different bodies. One of the criticisms was not able to treat governmental and non-governmental higher education institutions in the same way. Further, it was employing shallow/not adequately stringent accreditation standards that allowed the existence of poor-quality education programs in both public and privately-owned higher education institutions. As a result, in 2022, the Council of Ministers issued a decree to re-establish HERQA as Education and Training Authority (ETA) with a new set of duties and responsibilities (Council of Ministers, No 515/2022). One of the duties of ETA is to launch a more effective accreditation system which covers both public and private higher education and training providers in the country.

Hence, ETA, having examined, bench marked and mapped quality assurance systems and accreditation developed and employed by other equivalent agencies in different parts of the world, developed these accreditation standards in the national and international context to introduce a new accreditation system in Ethiopia. Accreditation requires higher education institutions a rigorous self-evaluation and commitment to continuous quality improvement of their system. To



facilitate the effective implementation of accreditation at both Institutional and program levels, having a comprehensive guideline and procedure manual is crucial. Therefore, ETA has come to the development of this standard and to render necessary support. The main purpose of this document is to clearly set out the process and procedures required in the implementation of institutional and program level accreditation activities.

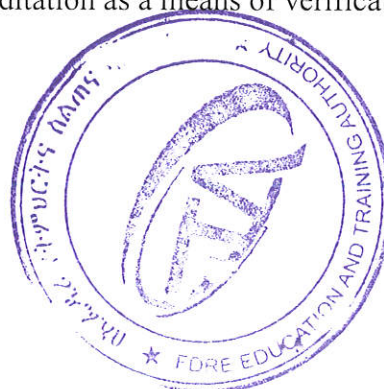
Therefore, ETA believes that the actors in the quality assurance system (both internal and external) can easily use it in their respective quality assurance activities.

1.2. Accreditation in Ethiopia

The history of Ethiopian education and training goes back to the beginning of 1930s. Though it has relatively counted long years, as indicated by the World Bank (2003), the relevance and quality of the education and research activities are not up to expected standards and levels. Yet, it is possible to understand that the Ethiopian government has given special attention to the quality and relevance of higher education and training. The Ethiopian Education and Training Policy (1994:8) states that the Ethiopian education and training shall have the objective of promoting ‘relevant and appropriate education and training through formal and non-formal programs’ to citizens. The policy further emphasizes that the ‘curriculum and learning materials need to be prepared based on sound pedagogical and psychological principles and are up to the national standard’ (ETP 1994:13).

As indicated in the ETP (1994) and the recent Education and Training Policy study document (2018), the issue of quality of higher education has internationally become one of the prime agenda considering the prevailing national, international, and global dynamics. The policy documents, prevails that the government of Ethiopia gave due attention for HE quality in 2003. This has been practically shown by ratifying the Higher Education Proclamation and establishing the agency in charge of higher education relevance and quality agency, HERQA.

In so doing, HERQA was established through the Higher Education Proclamation (351/2003, given specifically due attention to accreditation as a means of verification for quality provision at



higher education institutions. Article 78). It has been proclaimed also as an autonomous legal body, accountable to the Ministry of Education, to supervise the relevance and quality of HE offered by any institution. The issue of accreditation is given due attention in various policy documents, among which the revised Proclamation of Higher Education (1152/2018). In this proclamation **Articles 72** (requirements for accreditation), **73** (application for accreditation), **74** (issuance and rejection of accreditation), **75** (validity of accreditation), **76** (application for renewal of accreditation), **77** (decision on application for renewal of accreditation), **78** (renewal of accreditation), **79** (revocation of accreditation) **80** (appeal), **81** (issuance of substitute accreditation certificate), and **82** (returning accreditation certificate) address the issue of accreditation in detail.

However, these exercises/practicalities were not a real accreditation rather they were simply licensing for providers to enter to the business and renewal of license to stay operational. In other words, the focus was given only to private providers. It is therefore, understanding and differentiating what real accreditations and licensing have been cleared out.

Cognizant to this, ETA within its mandate recognized the importance of implementing accreditation and licensing in its respective real sense and objectives. In the case of institution and program levels, ETA currently is expected to develop appropriate documents for the implementation of accreditation and also identify relevant bodies to work with ETA in the accreditation process.

1.3. Ethiopian Higher Education Quality Assurance System

It is imperative to clarify the concept of quality in higher education as it is used to establish a system which assures quality. In literature, there are diversified concepts of quality in higher education. HERQA (2005), accepted and used the concept of ‘fitness for purpose’ to assure relevance and quality of education provision in all higher education institutions in Ethiopia. With this, it is envisaged that provision of quality education is assured provided every program launched at institutions has a set of defined purposes that meet the specific needs of industry in particular. Not only industries but it is also expected to satisfy the nation’s development agenda in general.



In order to assure quality in Ethiopian Higher Education Institutions, it requires to establish an internal quality assurance system and make periodic self-assessment. Then, there should be a platform for HEI's to submit the document within a given time interval to the authority. This enables to conduct external assessments through accreditation and quality audit to validate the self-evaluation and make recommendations for further improvement and grant accreditation status when the requirements are fulfilled as indicated in this guideline.

1.4. Mission, Vision and Objectives

ETA's vision is:

To be globally recognized and competent education and training quality assuring body by 2032.

ETA's Mission Statement

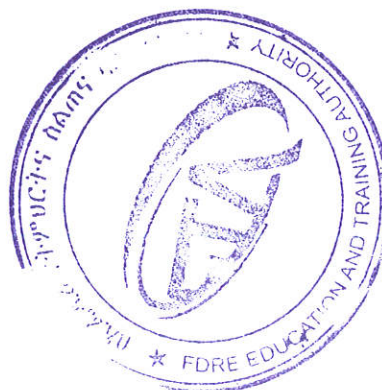
To ensure a high quality and relevant education and training by:

- Developing national quality assurance standards and assure its proper implementation.
- Ensuring that education and training institutions established vibrant internal quality assurance system that can be improved continuously.
- Ensuring that graduates of educations and training institutions acquire the necessary knowledge, skill and attitude that can facilitate the country's development and growth.

ETA's Objectives

The objectives are:

- Assessing the relevance and quality of education and training offered by institutions;
- Ensuring that the education and training curriculum supports the country's development needs;
- Providing an efficient and transparent quality audit and accreditation system;



- Disseminating information regarding standards and programs offered by both Ethiopian and foreign education and training institutions;

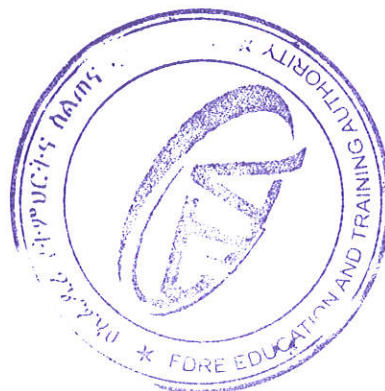
1.5. Principles and Core Values

1.5.1. Principles of Quality Assurance in ETA

- 1) Assuring and achieving quality in higher education is the primary responsibility of higher education institutions and their staff.
- 2) Students must always obtain high quality of education by pursuing necessary learning outcomes.
- 3) One of the qualities of higher education is to what extent it meets and satisfies the needs of society, develops public confidence and sustains public trust.
- 4) Governments have a crucial role in encouraging and supporting quality higher education.
- 5) It is the responsibility of higher education providers and quality assurance and accreditation bodies to sustain a strong commitment to accountability and provide regular evidence of quality.
- 6) ETA works with higher education institutions and their leadership, staff and students and responsible for the implementation of processes, tools, benchmarks and it also measures learning outcomes to create a shared understanding of quality.
- 7) Quality higher education needs to be flexible, creative and innovative and it develops and evolves to meet students' needs to justify the confidence of society and to maintain diversity.

1.5.2. Core Values of ETA

ETA accreditation has committed itself to the following values to support its functions. The three core values embraced by the staff of ETA to accomplish the duties and responsibilities vested on ETA by society and the government are the following:



I. Public Accountability

ETA, cognizant of its societal role, will remain committed to serve the society with a full sense of responsibility.

II. Professionalism

ETA with its staff will provide an expert, professional service informed by knowledge of methods and models of quality assurance for assessing the quality of institution and program of education and training institutions and reach at decision responsibly to accredit them.

III. Transparent and Impartial Service Delivery

The staff of ETA shall pursue and have a mindset based on the ideals of impartiality and equality of treatment and will have transparent and democratic dealings with stakeholders in everything they do.

The following additional values have also been adopted by ETA.

IV. Individual Values

a) Competence:

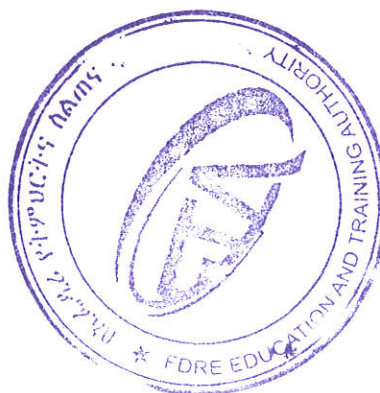
All staff of ETA shall fully discharge their responsibilities with the highest possible diligence, standards and demonstration of professional ability.

b) Professional Integrity:

All staff of ETA will operate with utmost honesty and social responsibility. They shall be professional through technical performance and rigor, ethical through exemplary and fair behavior and shall be responsible in the undertaking of duties and responsibilities.

c) Self-initiation:

Taking initiative to carry out individual and organizational responsibilities is crucial for achieving the goals, objectives and tasks of ETA. Therefore, ETA staff will be willing to move beyond a narrow definition of responsibilities and be flexible and wholehearted in seeking solutions.



V. Organizational Values

a) Trusted partnership

All relationships with stakeholders and individuals shall be with trust and confidence and on the basis of mutual respect and benefit. ETA shall respect confidentiality and carefully minimize possible conflicts of interest.

b) Participatory team work

ETA strives to develop internal synergies and the integration of diversified competencies to promote teamwork and participatory democratic relationships as its powerful instruments to accomplish its roles and responsibilities. ETA will promote consultation and discussions on a regular basis at every level.

c) Client Satisfaction

ETA commits itself to give proactive, relevant and quality services to the highest standards ensuring the satisfaction and fulfillment of the expectations of its stakeholders.

VI. Operational Values

a) Credibility

ETA is bound to the principle of demonstrating trust, public satisfaction and acceptance in all its undertakings.

b) Efficiency and Effectiveness

ETA is committed to maximize its efficiency and effectiveness so that the quality and the outcome of education could be reflected in the social, economic and technological development of the country.

VII. Strategic Value

Commitment to excellence: Commitment to excellence in the performance of ETA is a key to deliver a quality service to the stakeholders and the society at large



2. ACCREDITATION PROCEDURE, APPROACH AND PRACTICE

Accreditation is the quality assurance process under which services and operations of educational and training institutions are evaluated and verified by ETA to determine if applicable and recognized standards are met. Higher Education institutions and/or programs undergo accreditation process to conform that they meet a strict and recognized set of operational standards.

Moreover, accreditation is aimed to enhance the quality of higher education in the country, promote accountability, and encourage a sustained culture of excellence in higher education. It is a continuous process that supports HEI to examine their institutional mission and standards, performances, and identify strategies to improve educational effectiveness.

ETA is mandated to accredit the Ethiopian higher education and TVET institutions based on rigorous and comprehensive standards.

The accreditation procedures outlined in this handbook are applied for both higher education institutional and program accreditation. The procedures will guide the Accreditation Department at ETA, Higher Education Institutions and team of assessors in carrying out the accreditation processes and activities.

The two approaches of accreditation are Institutional and Program accreditation. Higher education institutions can request institutional and program accreditation. The request shall be campus based for both institutional and program accreditation.

The accreditation process is based on a thorough and independent evaluation carried out by a team of assessors. Accreditation process starts with application and ends with accreditation decision.

2.1. Overview of ETA Structure

The structure of FDRE Education and Training Authority consists of nine core departments. These are Internal Quality Assurance office, Accreditation Department, Standardization and Qualification Department, Higher Education (HE) Licensing Department, Technical & Vocational



Education and Training (TVET) and General Education (GE) Licensing Department, Quality Audit Department, Education Credentials Authentication and Equivalence Department, General Education Inspection and Control Department, HE and TVET Inspection and Control Department.

In ETA structure, a strong integrated activities and aligned work flow is expected between these quality assurance entities. Accreditation process considers licensing as a prerequisite before accreditation request. Thus, if institutions and programs do not obtain license, they won't be eligible for accreditation. And likewise, a program accreditation is required to come after institutional accreditation. The Accreditation Office which is one of the entities in the quality assurance system of ETA is a newly introduced approach in the system.

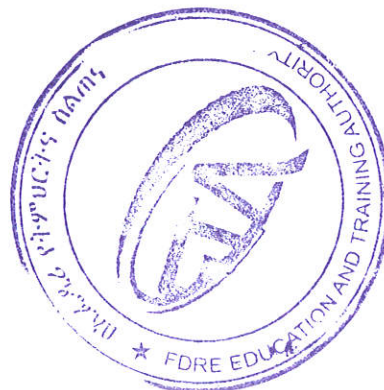
2.1.1. ETA Accreditation Structure

Accreditation is a newly introduced approach in the Ethiopian higher education quality assurance system. ETA is a governmental organization established by proclamation 1263/2021 and Council of Ministers decree No 515/2022 as a national accreditation body. The authority is mandated to oversee and regulate the quality assurance issues of the education and training of the country.

ETA being the major accountable body for accrediting education and training institutions can delegate some of its roles and responsibilities to other actors in the implementation of accreditation. In this process, HEI's, professional associations and other relevant bodies can participate as deemed necessary. The structure of accreditation consists of six responsible bodies. These are Director General, Accreditation council, Accreditation and Standardization Deputy Director General, Accreditation CEO, accreditation desk heads and accreditation experts.

1) Director General

- a) Establish the accreditation council, appeal committee and other structure as required.
- b) Ensure that the accreditation results and other pertinent information have been accessed to the institutions and the public.
- c) Entertain and approve appeals associated with accreditation results coming from the higher educational institutions.



- d) Direct financial and material support for accreditation process and related issues.
- e) Provide overall direction related to accreditation.

2) Accreditation Council

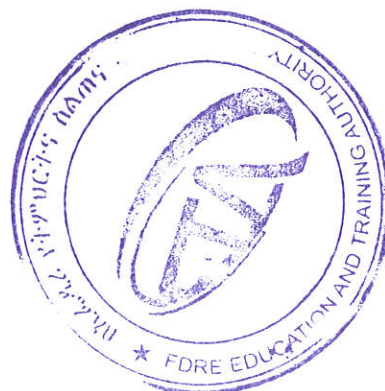
- a) Examine and approve the accreditation decision forwarded by the team of assessors.
- b) Notify the accreditation decision to the director general and the HEIs.

3) Accreditation and Standardization Deputy Director General

- a) Chair the accreditation council.
- b) Coordinate and control the accreditation process.
- c) Support and coordinate the overall quality assurance and the continual quality improvement processes of the HEI's.
- d) Review periodically the accreditation of HEI's and their programs and take remedial action as necessary.
- e) Provide accreditation certificate for the accredited programs and institutions.

4) Accreditation CEO

- a) Leads the accreditation process.
- b) Continuously reviews standards, policies, procedures.
- c) Administers the process accreditation.
- d) Consults institutions, associations, accrediting bodies, other federal and regional bodies, regarding accreditation.
- e) Conducts appropriate research and investigates complaints against accredited institutions and programs and any relevant body related to accreditation.
- f) Collaborate with the accreditation council and during the recognition or accreditation process. Also provides administrative support to the institutional or program accreditation council.
- g) Collect the annual quality improvement and follow up report from HE institutions.



2.2. Purpose of Accreditation

Accreditation is a quality assurance process that HEIs or programs undergo to confirm whether they meet a strict and recognized set of services and operational standards.

Accreditation by the ETA serves two specific purposes:

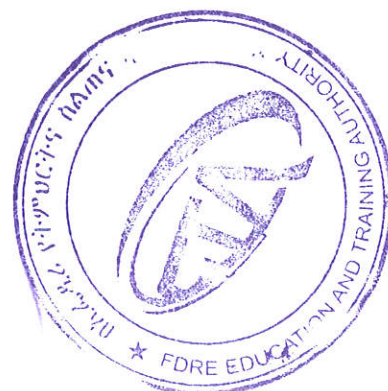
- 1) To determine if an education and training institutions are in compliance with accreditation standards and associated indicators.
- 2) To promote institutional and program improvement.

Therefore, accreditation serves the following purposes:

- Creates a set of quality standards for all education and training institutions and their programs (disciplines);
- Maintains institutions confidence;
- Ensure accountability of education and training institutions and programs which boosts public trust and confidence;
- When an institution or program is properly accredited, it is able to gauge its overall quality without having to conduct a detailed analysis on its own;
- Ensure that set standards are met by all HEI and their programs;
- Ensure accountability and gain public trust and confidence in the quality and standards of higher education;
- Encourage and support HEI and their programs to strive for continuous quality improvement;
- Provide assurance of quality to the government, stakeholders and employers;

2.3. Scope

Accreditation is applied to all higher education institutions and their programs. It shall also apply to all actors, who directly and indirectly participate in the accreditation process.



2.4. Benefits of Accreditation

For Students

- Help students to make informed decisions about choice of HEI/ programs within the country.
- Enable quality learning.
- Enhance student/staff mobility.
- Facilitate credit transfer.

For the Higher Education Institutions

- Gain public confidence and trust.
- Promote professionalism and seeks continuous quality enhancement.
- Earn international recognition of the awards.

For the Government

- Provide information to the government for informed decisions on funding and the overall health of higher education system in the country.

For stakeholders

- Facilitate in deciding on the choice of HEI for their education.
- Help in identifying quality graduates for employment.

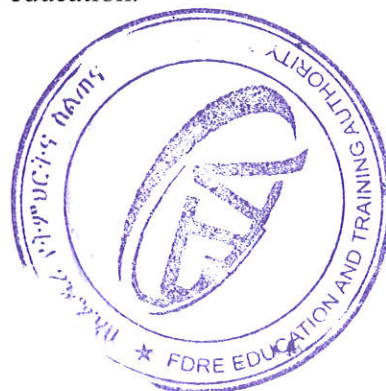
2.5. Confidentiality

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

2.6. Roles and Responsibilities of Higher Education Institutions

The higher education institutions shall:

- a) Be committed to provide quality higher education.

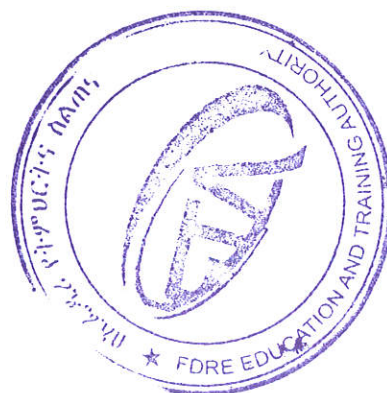


- b) Comply with policies, directives, guidelines, and relevant standards set by ETA concerning accreditation.
- c) Maintain required standards as outlined in this handbook.
- d) Conduct program Self-Evaluation Report (SER), Data Collection Tool (DCT) and Students Satisfaction Survey (SSS) for accreditation requests as per the guidelines and directive.
- e) Submit required documents.
- f) Declare conflict of interest.
- g) Collaborate and support to the assessors during accreditation site visits.
- h) Apply for re-accreditation six months prior to expiry of accreditation.
- i) Ensure timely payment of accreditation fees.
- j) Inform the authority any substantive changes in the HEI along with supporting documents.
- k) Institutionalize internal quality assurance (IQA) mechanism.
- l) Submit Continuous Quality Improvement Reports (ACQIR) annually.
- m) Implement the areas of improvements identified in the accreditation report within the agreed time frame.

2.7. Team of Assessors

The assessor shall:

- Declare conflict of interest.
- Conduct other appropriate actions as considered necessary to ensure professionalism.
- Study the SER, DCT and SSS submitted by HEI, prepare site visit report, grade and list the required evidences provide statements for areas of improvement in the site visit report.
- Develop action plan for the program accreditation site visit (4 days) and share with the relevant Desk head.
- Validate the evidences during the site visit.



- Ensure comprehensive and diligent evaluation of the program against standards outlined in this handbook.
- finalize and present exit report at the exit meeting for the evaluated HEI
- Produce accreditation report and submit to the desk head and CEO in both hard and soft copies within one month of the site visit.
- Complete assigned tasks as per the agreement including appeal, if any.
- Strictly follow the detail guideline for assessors

2.7.1. Assessors Team leader

Besides the roles and responsibilities of the assessors outlined in section 2.7 the team leader shall conduct the followings;

- Lead the team of assessors during the entire accreditation process and activities.
- Chair all meetings during accreditation site visits.
- Present the accreditation report to the Council and other concerned bodies.

2.7.2. Team secretary

In addition to the roles and responsibilities of the assessors outlined in section 2.7 the secretary shall:

- conduct Document review (preliminary)
- compile site visit report
- Write minute of team of assessors.
- Present to and review site visit report with the desk head.

2.8. Accreditation Process

The major steps in accreditation process are as follows.

1) Application for Program Accreditation



Any HEIs and its program that has license to operate in higher education should be able to demonstrate the potential to develop and achieve the standards outlined in this handbook. Upon fulfilling the minimum requirements for accreditation, the HEIs shall begin the application of accreditation process.

- The HEI is expected to conduct, prepare and submit SER, DCT and SSS reports with the necessary and provided application letter.
- The SER, DCT and SSS reports preparation needs to be based on standards set for the purpose of accreditation and appropriate information and evidences that support and best illustrate their specific implementations.
- The documents provided by the HEI for accreditation request should be recent, brief and concise and follow the self-study guide provided by ETA.
- The application form is prepared by the authority and contains general information about the higher education and detail about the program information.
- The SER preparation should be based on the SER guideline.
- The CEO of Accreditation will forward the application to the desk head within five days after receiving the application.

2) Document Review

a) Eligibility status of the program for site visit

- The accreditation desk head and the experts undergo primary screening of the application to verify the submitted documents fulfill the necessary requirements and information which are provided in the documents.
- The accreditation desk heads either accept the application if the necessary information and documents are fulfilled for the application (eligible) or reject the incomplete application and give feedback to the HEI.

b) Appointment of team of assessors

- The desk heads select and assign team of assessors as per assessors' composition, selection and assigning criteria (three from the authority's accreditation experts and one from the HEI and one from industry/professional association).



- Communicating the assigned team of assessors to declare if they have conflict of interest.
- Communicating the HEIs the assigned team of assessors to disclose conflict of interest.
- The desk heads provide the necessary documents (Application letter, DCT, SSS and SER reports) of the HEI for the assigned team of assessors.

c) Document study

- The team of assessor prepares pre-site visit and site visit schedule in line with accreditation site visit template and notify to the desk head and HEI.
- The team of assessor study or review the DCT, SAR and SSS reports thoroughly.
- The team of assessors rate each indicator against the rubrics and notify the preliminary/pre-site visit report to desk head.
- The document study will take 15 days to verify the eligibility status of the program for accreditation.

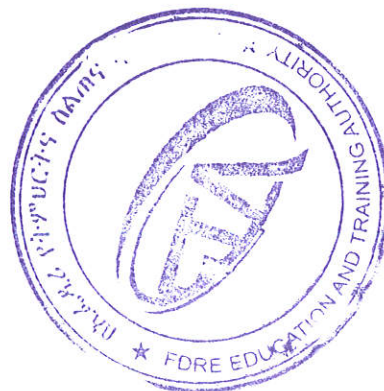
3) Site Visit

- The team of assessors visits the program and verify the claims in the SER, DCT and SSS reports against the standards and indicators.
- Decide marks to be awarded for each indicator in the rubrics and prepare the grade sheet based on observation and evidence verified.
- Conduct exit meeting with HEI presidents and department head to finalize the site visit where a presentation shall be made on the overall analysis of the program.
- The team of assessors shall seek the signature of head of the institution on exit report.

4) Report Writing

- The assessors shall produce report based on the SER, DCT and SSS reports evaluation and site visits findings using the report writing template and guide.
- The team of assessors review the report with the desk head and submit the reviewed report to the accreditation CEO within one month after site visit.

5) Accreditation Decision and Endorsement



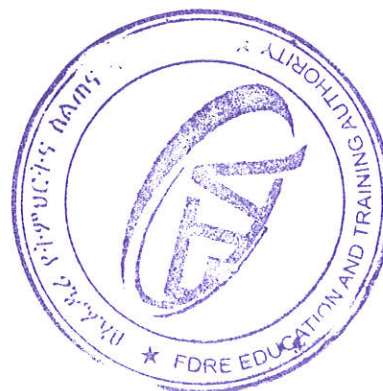
- Within three weeks after receives of the report, the chairperson of the council shall organize Accreditation Council Meeting for review and decide on the status of accreditation.
- The team leader of the team of assessors presents the report to the Council on behalf of the team.
- Having examined the accreditation report submitted and presented, the accreditation council shall pass the accreditation decision.
- The chairperson of the accreditation council shall notify the decision to the director general and the institution
- ETA shall issue the decision and disseminate the outcomes of accreditation to the MOE and the public.

The accreditation decision for program accreditation is categorized in to:

- 1) “Full accreditation” is granted to a program that fulfills 80-100% of the accreditation standards for five years.
- 2) “Accreditation with condition” is granted to a program that fulfills 70-79.99% for three years.
- 3) “Denial of Accreditation” applies to a program that scores less than 70% of accreditation standards. The denied program may reapply for assessment after one year from the date of issuance of decision and in such case the evaluation of the request process shall consider as new applicant.
- 4) The program must attain a score of 50% for each of the standard to be granted for accreditation.

6. Follow up for quality improvement

- The accredited medical program shall submit annual reports for the areas of improvement identified by the team of assessors during the field visit and to show that the program works on continual quality improvement activities as well.



- The authority shall follow up the program based on the report, and it shall conduct special field assessment when deemed necessary.

2.9. Re-assessment

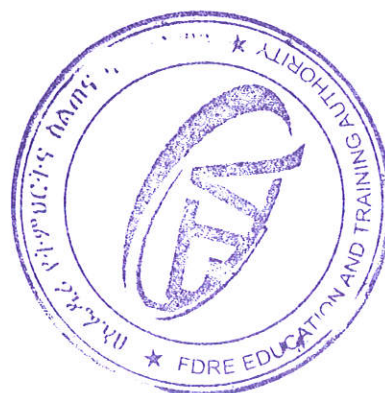
Re-assessment for accreditation shall be made if the following conditions happen:

- a. Where a program fails to get the minimum required grade; it shall apply for reassessment within twelve months.
- b. The program accredited with condition shall apply six months prior to the expiry date of the accreditation.
- c. The evaluation shall be limited to the areas of improvements stated in the accreditation report.
- d. The accreditation decision is based on the maintenance of previous achievement and the limited evaluation findings.
- e. If the areas of improvements are resolved, the authority shall grant full accreditation.
- f. If the areas of improvements are not resolved, the accreditation with condition shall expire and the program may submit a new application for accreditation after one year of date of issuance decision.

2.10. Reaccreditation

- Reaccreditation shall mean subsequent cycle of accreditation that happens after the expiry of validity of the previous accreditation.
- The program shall apply for reaccreditation six months prior to the expiry of the validity of the previous accreditation certificate.
- The fee structure of the reaccreditation will be as per the authority approval.
- The procedure and the standards for reaccreditation shall be as per the existing program accreditation.

The re-accreditation decision for program accreditation is categorized in to:



- “Reaccreditation for five Years” is granted to a program that fulfills 80-100% of the accreditation standards.
- “Denial of Reaccreditation” applies to a program that scores less than 80% of accreditation standards. The denied program may reapply for assessment after one year from the date of issuance and in such case the evaluation of the request process shall consider as new applicant.

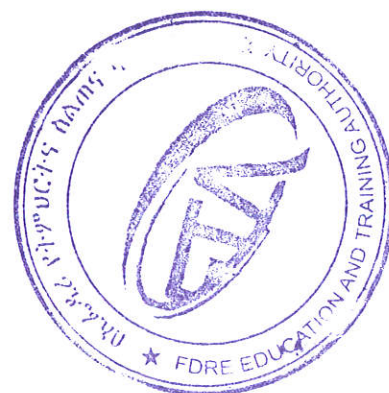
The program must attain a score of 50% for each of the standard to be granted for Reaccreditation.

2.11. Appeal

The right to appeal is granted to HEI/Program as an opportunity to question either the process or outcome of the assessment or decision of the Council on the accreditation report. HEI/program may appeal under the following circumstances.

- Not satisfied with the accreditation decision.
- Not satisfied with the accreditation process.
- The HEI/program intending to appeal may apply to the Director General of the authority using the prescribed form within fifteen (15) working days from the receipt of the accreditation council decision letter or certificate/letter of regret along with adequate justification.
- The application must be submitted along with receipt of non-refundable appeal fee.
- The Director General may direct the appeal to the appeal committee of the authority to investigate the appeal.
- The appeal shall be treated and addressed according to the procedure indicated for appeal process.

Finally, the HEI/program concerned shall be updated on the status of the appeal decision within one month of appeal request.



3. INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

Institutional accreditation is a systematic and thorough process of assessing the performance of HEI's in accordance with the standards in this guideline and enabling it to provide quality higher education. It looks at critical areas of institutional vision, mission, and governance, Institution development and management, research endeavors and learning and teaching and assessment system and practice that can be assessed objectively. The HEI accreditation process as outlined in this handbook will assess HEI's institution based on a set of nine standards which are formulated through wide stakeholder consultations, research, and international best practice. Each Standard has sub-standards and Indicators that are significant, relevant, measurable, and achievable.

The following procedures are used to develop the standards:

- The accreditation department has trained ETA accreditation experts at various times by local and international accreditation experienced experts on how to develop standards and guidelines.
- Identification of countries with best accreditation experience
- Review of various countries' accreditation standards
- ETA institutional accreditation standards were developed.
- The standards were reviewed by various experts from universities and professional associations.
- The standards were mapped with various international and national standards (ETA institutional quality audit standards)
- The standards were commented on by accreditation experts both inside and outside the country and their comments were included.
- Presented to ETA management and the management provided their remarks Commented by ETA management.
- The ETA management comments are incorporated and finalized.

The developed standards for institutional accreditation:

- Meet minimum criteria.



- Appropriate with purpose of accreditation
- Demonstrate accomplishment of mission and vision
- Evaluate adequate resources.
- Meet international requirements and address national/local issues.

The nine standards are:

1. **Vision, Mission, and Governance**
2. **Curriculum and program management**
3. **Learning and Teaching**
4. **Assessment and Evaluation**
5. **Students**
6. **Academic and Support Staff**
7. **Resources**
8. **Research, and Community Engagement**
9. **Continual Quality Improvement**

Each standard is identified by a number and name (e.g. standard 1: **Vision, Mission, and Governance**). The sub-standard of each standard is numbered with two digits (e.g. 1.1 and 1.2) for two sub-standards under standard 1. Each sub-standard has a set of indicators (e.g. sub-standard 1.1: mission and vision) numbered three digits as 1.1.1, 1.1.2, and 1.1.3 etc.

STANDARD 1: VISION, MISSION, AND GOVERNANCE

1.1 Vision and Mission

- 1.1.1 The HEI has a publicly available vision and mission statements, which has been formally approved by the governing body, and subjected to comprehensive stakeholder engagement in its development and review.



- 1.1.2 The vision and mission statements of the HEI appropriately reflect the characteristics of the institutions.
- 1.1.3 The stated vision and mission align with national priorities and global developments in the sector.
- 1.1.4 The HEI has vision and mission accepted and widely understood by its governing bodies, administration, faculty, staff, students, service providers and key stakeholders.

1.2 Governance

- 1.2.1 The HEI has an effective governance system in place that is in line with its mission and strategy.
- 1.2.2 The HEI ensures the creation of institutional memory through institutional archive and documentation.
- 1.2.3 The HEI management periodically reviews and evaluates the effectiveness of strategy and operation.
- 1.2.4 The HEI regularly evaluates procedures and practices for qualified academic leadership appointments and accordingly appoints, encourages, and evaluates academic officers.
- 1.2.5 The HEI plays a basic policy-making role and oversees the academic, research and financial affairs to ensure integrity and reputation of the institution.
- 1.2.6 The HEI ensures academic or scholar autonomy and freedom for its staff and students in the areas of their expertise and pursuit of knowledge.
- 1.2.7 The HEI assures that the established academic guidelines and rules are consistently followed; advocates for effective student learning opportunities and academic results.
- 1.2.8 The HEI Continually maintains budget adequacy and conducts frequent reviews of institutional funding, grant activities, including public and self-financing arrangements.
- 1.2.9 The institution ensures a balanced and transparent budget allocation to the core functions of teaching-learning, research, and community engagement.

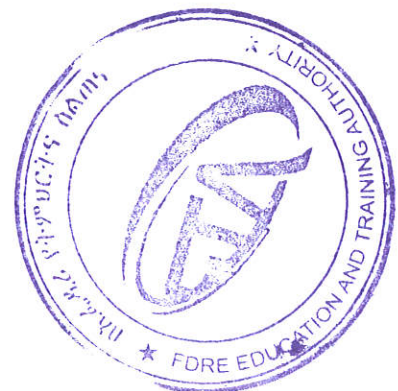


- 1.2.10 The HEI has a comprehensive strategy, which is derived from the mission, and that supports the HEI in the implementation of its mission setting short, medium, and long-term goals and objectives.
- 1.2.11 There is demonstrable strategic alignment between the HEI's quality management system for core academic activities and its vision, mission, and strategic goals, as well as its governance and management processes.
- 1.2.12 The different roles and responsibilities of the governance structures, management and academic leadership in the HEI are adhered in practice and communicated to stakeholders involved based on principles of transparency, accountability, and authority.
- 1.2.13 The HEI has mechanisms to ensure functional integration and comparability of educational quality in institution with geographically separated campuses.
- 1.2.14 The HEI has a system in place for periodic review of its vision, mission and governance structure involving relevant stakeholders.
- 1.2.15 The HEI has governance principles addressing inclusiveness and diversity through representation of academic staff, students, and other stakeholders.

STANDARD 2: Curriculum and Institution Management

2.1 Curriculum development

- 2.1.1 The HEI has a clearly defined process and system in place for the planning, design, approval, monitoring, evaluation, and review of study programs. The system also ensures active involvement of the academic staff, alumni, relevant stakeholders, the management, and the governing body in the process.
- 2.1.2 The HEI ensures the study programs incorporate the core contents of the discipline that are essential for understanding the concepts, principles and methods that support the attainment of learning outcomes.
- 2.1.3 The HEI has a system in place to ensure the study programs fulfil the requirements of the discipline and incorporate indigenous knowledge; topics of national and international



importance, taking into account the appropriate discipline standards and international best practices for the programs.

- 2.1.4 The HEI ensures the feedbacks of the alumni are incorporated in the curriculum to enhance the achievement of the learning outcomes.

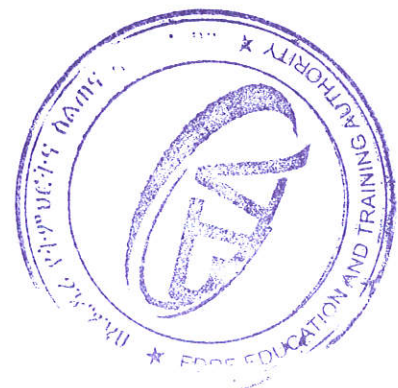
2.2 Program Management

- 2.2.1 The HEI has a system in place to obtain feedback from employers and alumni and utilize the information for curriculum improvement.
- 2.2.2 The owner of the programs must have autonomy, authority and established procedures for programs planning and monitoring.
- 2.2.3 The institution makes information about study programs available to the public, including provisions about credits, learning outcomes, methodology, admission, registration, progression and completion.
- 2.2.4 The institution plans the study programs in a way that enables it to manage all of the study programs in a way that is harmonious with the academic calendar.

STANDARD 3: Learning and Teaching

3.1 Learning and Teaching policy and system

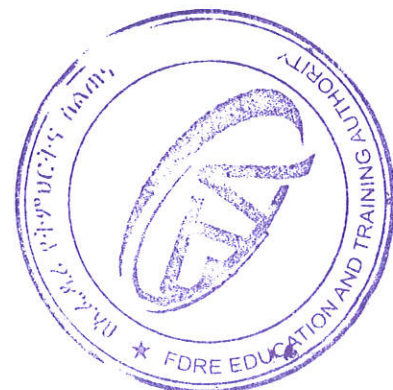
- 3.1.1 The HEI has a transparent policy for learning and teaching of the study programs and publicly provides information about the study programs, including provisions about credits, learning outcomes, methodology and admission, progression, and completion.
- 3.1.2 The HEI designs learning mechanisms and modalities through which the students' exposure to learning and teaching at the institution is experienced as positive and enabling of their success.
- 3.1.3 The HEI ensures that the content, approach, and learning and teaching methods of the curricula are consistent with, and supportive of, their learning outcomes. In addition, it ensures the learning and teaching activities are consistent with the curriculum.



- 3.1.4 The HEI provides a conducive learning environment and provides adequate learning resources including adequate facilities, laboratories (wherever applicable), libraries, IT infrastructure and support for its students in which scholarly and creative achievements are nurtured.
- 3.1.5 The HEI has a variety of learning and teaching methods including appropriate use of learning technologies to enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes and to ensure that students take responsibility for their own learning.
- 3.1.6 The HEI has extracurricular and co-curricular activities that will enrich students' experiences, and foster intellectual, personal, and interpersonal developments.
- 3.1.7 The interaction between research and education must be reflected in the curriculum, inform current teaching, and encourage and prepare students for engagement in research, scholarship, and development.
- 3.1.8 The learning teaching strategies are learner centered and motivate student's self-reflection and engagement in the learning process.

3.2 Learning and Teaching monitoring and evaluation

- 3.2.1 The HEI has a system in place for the students to provide feedback on their learning experience, the quality of the teaching and assessments. The results of student feedback are analyzed, and results are used to improve teaching and are also presented at appropriate decision-making structures for relevant action.
- 3.2.2 The HEI has a system in place for periodic monitoring, assessment and evaluation of the learning teaching approaches for quality improvement and attainment of the learning outcomes.
- 3.2.3 The institution has industry linkages with appropriate organizations for the delivery of its programs and regularly reviews the effectiveness of the linkage.



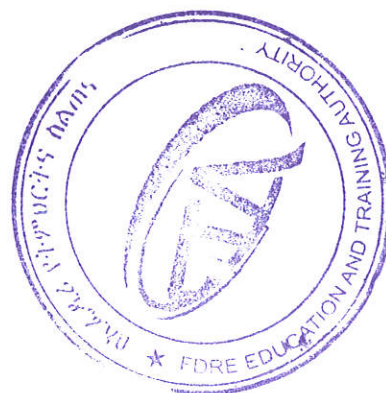
STANDARD 4 Assessment and Evaluation

4.1 Assessment policy and system

- 4.1.1 The HEI has clear assessment regulations, policies and procedures which are comprehensive, consistently applied, fair and transparent.
- 4.1.2 The HEI enforces a policy against plagiarism and other forms of malpractice.
- 4.1.3 The HEI assessment policies ensure that all programs have well-established internal and external moderation processes in place which are applied to both coursework assessments and examinations.
- 4.1.4 The HEI has a system in place to ensure the validity, reliability, consistency, and fairness of the student assessment.
- 4.1.5 The HEI has a system in place so that feedback on performance and results of assessment are constructive, timely, and where required, linked to mechanisms for student learning support. It has also established procedures for student appeals of assessment.

4.2. Assessment method

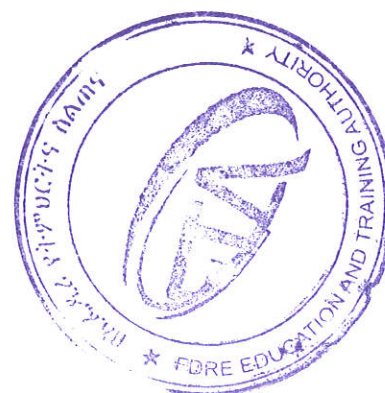
- 4.2.1 The HEI ensures the use of a variety of methods and tools to assess learning outcomes and competencies. Both summative and formative assessments are used in the institution.
- 4.2.2 The HEI ensures that the principles; methods and practices of student assessment are aligned with learning outcomes and the curricula. This should be reviewed periodically to ensure its effectiveness.
- 4.2.3 The HEI ensures that the assessment methods are documented and communicated to students on the commencement of programs.



STANDARD 5: Students

5.1 Student admission and selection

- 5.1.1 The HEI has published a student admission and selection policy with clear criteria and process that promotes diversity including gender mainstreaming with consideration of disadvantaged groups and persons with disabilities and special needs. The institution admits students whose capabilities are consistent with these criteria and processes.
- 5.1.2 The HEI has mechanisms in place to check the authenticity of academic credentials submitted for admission.
- 5.1.3 The HEI has a clear policy on, and appropriate mechanism for, appeal and ensures proper representation of students in the screening and selection committee and appeal system.
- 5.1.4 The HEI has a written and well-disseminated policy on tuition fees, refunds, and other related payments.
- 5.1.5 The HEI has policies, regulations and processes regarding articulation practices, course exemptions, credit transfer, and students exchange to and from other programs/institutions nationally and internationally.
- 5.1.6 The HEI has a mechanism in place to control the number of students in the study programs based on the resources and programs standards to manage students and for the effective delivery of the programs.
- 5.1.7 The HEI has mechanisms in place for assessing the abilities of entering students and the provision of appropriate support.
- 5.1.8 The HEI regularly reviews the appropriateness of its admission practices in accordance with fraud detection mechanisms.
- 5.1.9 The HEI ensures that more than 50% of graduates pass the national exit exam.



5.2 Student support and counseling

- 5.2.1 The HEI provides appropriate and adequate student support services, such as physical, social, financial, and recreational facilities, and counseling and health services which are evaluated regularly to ensure their adequacy, effectiveness, and safety.
- 5.2.2 The HEI has a designated administrative unit responsible for planning and implementing student support services including academic and career counseling, staffed by individuals who have appropriate experience consistent with their assignments.
- 5.2.3 The HEI has published and made available to the institution's community about student rights and responsibilities, disciplinary procedures, and actions.
- 5.2.4 The HEI ensures that students and student organizations such as clubs and student union are facilitated to gain managerial and leadership experience, to encourage character building, to inculcate a sense of belonging and responsibility, and to promote active citizenship.
- 5.2.5 The HEI regularly evaluates student support and counseling service to ensure their adequacy, effectiveness, and safety.

5.3 Progression and graduate outcome

- 5.3.1 The HEI has strategies to improve student retention, progression and completion rates including mechanisms to offer appropriate developmental or remedial support to assist students who need such support.
- 5.3.2 The HEI encourages active linkages and continuous relationships with its alumni. The views of the alumni are incorporated in the curricula to enhance the achievement of the learning outcomes.
- 5.3.3 The HEI regularly reviews the effectiveness of its strategies and mechanisms to ensure that appropriate student retention, progression and completion rates are maintained.
- 5.3.4 The HEI has a mechanism to trace employability, task analysis and satisfaction of its graduates or employers and use the finding to influence the curriculum.



STANDARD 6: Academic and Support Staff

6.1. Staff Recruitment and promotion

- 6.1.1 The HEI has a clearly stated and well-defined system in place for the appointment and promotion of staff with appropriate qualifications, competences and skills guided by considerations which are in line with national policy and international best practices.
- 6.1.2 The HEI implements a strategic approach to the planning and management of human resources which is aligned to its mission and strategic objectives. The recruitment strategy seeks a balance/proportion between senior and junior academic staff, between academic and non-academic staff, between academic staff with multidisciplinary backgrounds and specializations.

6.2. Staff development and retention

- 6.2.1. The HEI has an effective academic staff development program and offers the professional development of its staff based on appropriate needs assessment.
- 6.2.2. The HEI provides mentoring and formative guidance for new academic staff as part of its staff development program.
- 6.2.3. The HEI provides the academic staff with the necessary training, tools and technology for self-learning, access to information and for communication.

6.3. Academic Staff

- 6.3.1. The HEI supports and encourages the research activities of its academic staff and ensures their academic freedom.
- 6.3.2. The HEI has an adequate number of full-time academic staff for each study program.
- 6.3.3. The staff to student ratio for each study program is appropriate to the teaching-learning methods and complies with the program discipline standards.
- 6.3.4. The HEI has national and international linkages to provide for the involvement of renowned academics and professionals to enhance its scholarly activities.



6.3.5. The HEI regularly reviews the system in place for staff to ensure its effectiveness.

6.4. Staff performance and appraisal

6.4.1. The HEI has a transparent staff appraisal system addressing the roles of the academic staff in teaching, research, community services and administrative functions and leading to action.

6.4.2. The HEI implements an evidence-based regular staff performance evaluation that involves students, peers, and program leaders and managers.

6.4.3. The HEI utilizes the appraisal data to provide timely and constructive feedback.

6.4.4. The HEI has benefits and awards based on clear performance evaluation results.

STANDARD 7: Resources

7.1. Physical resource and Safety

7.1.1. The HEI has a policy on resource allocation and utilization.

7.1.2. The HEI ensures that learning and teaching resources and facilities are appropriate and adequate to meet the needs of its study programs.

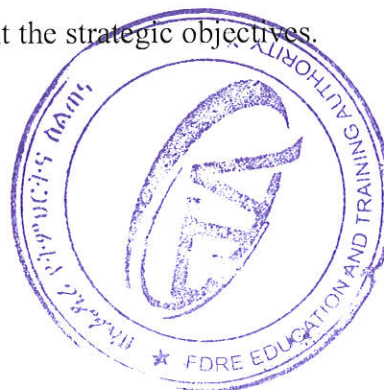
7.1.3. The physical facilities comply with the relevant laws, and with health and safety regulations including accessibility to people with disabilities

7.1.4. The HEI has sufficient and appropriate resources, including equipment and facilities for training, to ensure effective delivery of the curriculum. Educational resources are distributed according to the educational needs of the study program and are well maintained.

7.1.5. The HEI regularly reviews resources to ensure they are appropriate and effectively support learning and teaching.

7.2. Financial resource

7.2.1. The HEI has financial resources, appropriate to the nature and size of the institution and sufficient to undertake its operations and implement the strategic objectives.



7.2.2. The HEI has a risk management strategy and ensures risk assessment and external financial auditing.

7.3. Registrar services

7.3.1. The HEI has policy and procedures for academic records and registrar service.

7.3.2. The HEI has an automated information management system that can be employed to periodically collect, store, and analyze the required student academic data/records and information.

7.4. Library and ICT facilities

7.4.1. The library has adequate and current references, electronic resources and databases, qualified staff and other facilities including appropriate information and communication technology mediated reference materials, to support academic programs and research activities.

7.4.2. The HEI has information and communication technology infrastructure appropriate to the nature and size of the institution including computer laboratories that are required for the study programs.

STANDARD 8: RESEARCH AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

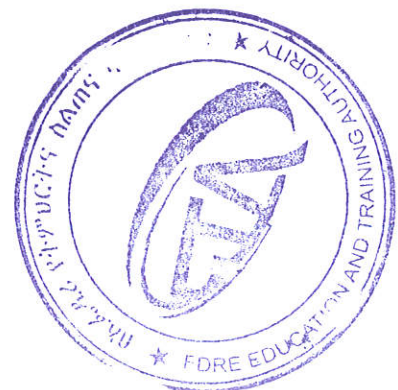
8.1 Research

8.1.1 The HEI has research policies and strategies.

8.1.2 The HEI provides adequate budget and sufficient facilities and equipment for the research activities of its staff and students in line with its strategies to promote research activities.

8.1.3 The HEI encourages research collaboration and cooperation across the institutions and externally.

8.1.4 The HEI ensures that its research activities conform to internationally accepted methodological standards, complying with ethical standards. The HEI ensures that academic misconduct, including plagiarism, is prevented.



- 8.1.5 The HEI ensures that the outcomes of research are appropriately integrated into the learning and teaching activities and community engagements.
- 8.1.6 The HEI regularly reviews the effectiveness of its approach to research planning and management to ensure quality research outputs and outcomes are achieved.

8.2 Community engagement

- 8.2.1 The HEI has research and community engagement policies and strategies.
- 8.2.2 The HEI must define the community/communities it serves for assessing their needs and requirements and takes these into consideration for its activities.
- 8.2.3 The HEI has a well-defined, coordinated and institution-wide approach to the identification of, and engagement with, industry, employers, professions, and the community at large.
- 8.2.4 The HEI has dedicated resources and a budget for community engagement.
- 8.2.5 The HEI has a system and process for planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating community engagement. It ensures the activities have impact and benefit the intended community.
- 8.2.6 The HEI encourages and supports staff and students to engage in industry and community engagement activities that lead to productive relationships.
- 8.2.7 The HEI ensures community engagement activities based on research findings.

STANDARD 9: CONTINUAL QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

9.1 Continual Quality Improvement system

- 9.1.1 The HEI has a publicly available quality assurance policy and procedure including regular reviewing and updating of its internal quality assurance activities to ensure continuous quality improvement.
- 9.1.2 The HEI has a dedicated unit or department for the internal quality assurance system of the institution which makes continuous efforts to keep abreast with the changes and best practices in quality assurance.



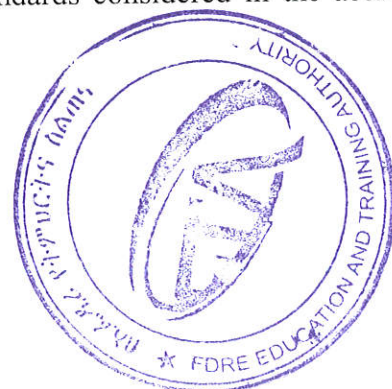
9.2 Monitoring and evaluation

- 9.2.1 The HEI continual quality improvement covers all units and areas of operations. The quality assurance activities provide relevant information and data to support the institution in its management and development and link with the achievement of the institutional goals.
- 9.2.2 The HEI places the focus of its quality assurance activities on the enhancement of quality and the development of a quality culture. The HEI ensures the active involvement of management, academic and support staff, and students in the operational process of continual quality improvement.
- 9.2.3 The HEI champions the spirit of continual quality improvement based on prospective studies and analyses that leads to the revisions of its current policies and practices, taking into consideration past experiences, present conditions, and future possibilities.
- 9.2.4 The HEI strives to get its internal quality assurance system accredited by a relevant, external, and authoritative accreditation body.
- 9.2.5 The HEI periodically reviews its quality assurance system for its effectiveness and impact.

4 GRADING SYSTEM

Institutional grading is the main outcome of the assessment and accreditation process. The Certificate of Accreditation carries a grade assigned to the HEI 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 improvement of the HEI 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 HEIs considers the weighted mean value of all grade scores obtained for each of the nine standards and the sub standards considered in the accreditation



exercise. The sub standards of each Standard have different weightings according to their relative importance.

4.1 Differentiation of HEIs and Weightings

HEIs in Ethiopia are broadly differentiated as follows:

- a) Research Universities
- b) Applied Universities
- c) Comprehensive Universities
- d) Education Universities
- e) Science and Technology Universities
- f) University College, Colleges, and Institutes

The weightings for the nine standards are different for different HEI's according to the differentiation. Therefore, the grading sheet is different with respect to the differentiation. The maximum scores for each sub-substandard for different category of HEI's are as follows:

Table 1: Research Universities

Standards	Sub-standards	Weighting
1. Vision, Mission, and Governance	1.1. Vision and Mission 1.2. Governance	8
2. Curriculum and program management	2.1. Curriculum development 2.2. Program Management	6
3. Learning and Teaching	3.1 Learning and Teaching policy and system 3.2 Learning and Teaching monitoring and evaluation	8
4. Assessment and Evaluation	4.1 Assessment policy and system 4.2 Assessment method	7



5. Students	5.1 Student admission and selection 5.2 Student support and counseling	7
6. Academic and Support Staff	6.1 Staff Recruitment and promotion 6.2 Staff development and retention 6.3 Academic Staff 6.4 Staff performance and appraisal	15
7. Resources	7.1 Physical resource and Safety 7.2 Financial resource 7.3 Registrar services 7.4 Library and ICT facilities	15
8. Research, and Community Engagement	8.1 Research 8.2 Community Engagement	25
9. Continual Quality Improvement	9.1 Continual Quality Improvement system 9.2 Monitoring and evaluation	9

Table 2: Applied Universities

Standards	Sub-standards	Weighting
1. Vision, Mission, and Governance	1.1.Vision and Mission 1.2.Governance	8
2. Curriculum and program management	2.1.Curriculum development 2.2.Program Management	6
3. Learning and Teaching	3.1.Learning and Teaching policy and system	10



	3.2.Learning and Teaching monitoring and evaluation	
4. Assessment and Evaluation	4.1.Assessment policy and system 4.2.Assessment method	10
5. Students	5.1.Student admission and selection 5.2.Student support and counseling	7
6. Academic and Support Staff	6.1.Staff Recruitment and promotion 6.2.Staff development and retention 6.3.Academic Staff 6.4.Staff performance and appraisal	15
7. Resources	7.1.Physical resource and Safety 7.2.Financial resource 7.3.Registrar services 7.4.Library and ICT facilities	23
8. Research, and Community Engagement	8.1.Research 8.2.Community Engagement	12
9. Continual Quality Improvement	9.1.Continual Quality Improvement system 9.2.Monitoring and evaluation	9

Table 3: Comprehensive Universities

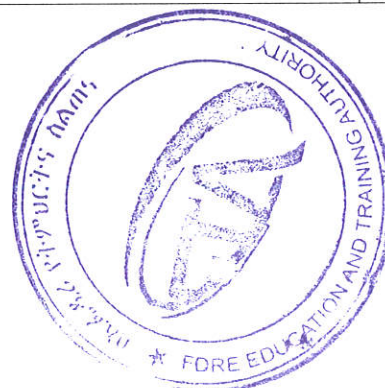
Standards	Sub-standards	Weighting
1. Vision, Mission and Governance	1.1.Vision and Mission 1.2.Governance	8



2. Curriculum and program management	2.1 Curriculum development 2.2 Program Management	6
3. Learning and Teaching	3.1 Learning and Teaching policy and system 3.2 Learning and Teaching monitoring and evaluation	15
4. Assessment and Evaluation	4.1 Assessment policy and system 4.2 Assessment method	15
5. Students	5.1 Student admission and selection 5.2 Student support and counseling	7
6. Academic and Support Staff	6.1 Staff Recruitment and promotion 6.2 Staff development and retention 6.3 Academic Staff 6.4 Staff performance and appraisal	15
7. Resources	7.1 Physical resource and Safety 7.2 Financial resource 7.3 Registrar services 7.4 Library and ICT facilities	15
8. Research, and Community Engagement	Research Community Engagement	10
9. Continual Quality Improvement	9.1 Continual Quality Improvement system 9.2 Monitoring and evaluation	9

Table 4: Education Universities

Standards	Sub-standards	Weighting
1. Vision, Mission, and Governance	1.1. Vision and Mission 1.2. Governance	8



2. Curriculum and program management	2.1 Curriculum development 2.2 Program Management	10
3. Learning and Teaching	3.1 Learning and Teaching policy and system 3.2 Learning and Teaching monitoring and evaluation	15
4. Assessment and Evaluation	4.1 Assessment policy and system 4.2 Assessment method	15
5. Students	5.1 Student admission and selection 5.2 Student support and counseling	8
6. Academic and Support Staff	6.1 Staff Recruitment and promotion 6.2 Staff development and retention 6.3 Academic Staff 6.4 Staff performance and appraisal	15
7. Resources	7.1 Physical resource and Safety 7.2 Financial resource 7.3 Registrar services 7.4 Library and ICT facilities	10
8. Research, and Community Engagement	8.1 Research 8.2 Community Engagement	10
9. Continual Quality Improvement	9.1 Continual Quality Improvement system 9.2 Monitoring and evaluation	9

Table 5: Science and Technology Universities

Standards	Sub-standards	Weighting
1. Vision, Mission, and Governance	1.1.Vision and Mission 1.2.Governance	7



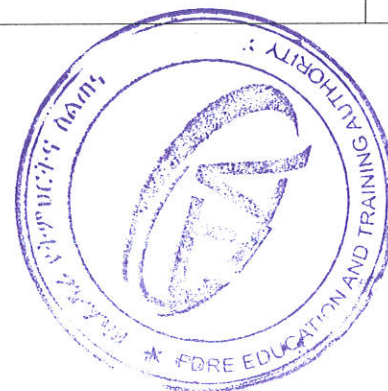
2. Curriculum and program management	2.1. Curriculum development 2.2. Program Management	6
3. Learning and Teaching	3.1. Learning and Teaching policy and system 3.2. Learning and Teaching monitoring and evaluation	10
4. Assessment and Evaluation	4.1. Assessment policy and system 4.2. Assessment method	10
5. Students	5.1. Student admission and selection 5.2. Student support and counseling	7
6. Academic and Support Staff	6.1. Staff Recruitment and promotion 6.2. Staff development and retention 6.3. Academic Staff 6.4. Staff performance and appraisal	15
7. Resources	7.1. Physical resource and Safety 7.2. Financial resource 7.3. Registrar services 7.4. Library and ICT facilities	20
8. Research, and Community Engagement	8.1. Research 8.2. Community Engagement	16
9. Continual Quality Improvement	9.1. Continual Quality Improvement system 9.2. Monitoring and evaluation	9

Table 6: University College, Colleges, and Institutes

Standards	Sub-standards	Weighting
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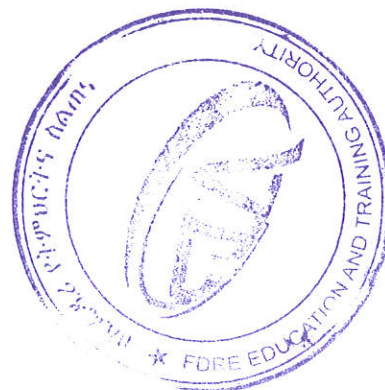


1. Vision, Mission, and Governance	1.1.Vision and Mission 1.2.Governance	8
2. Curriculum and program management	2.1.Curriculum development 2.2.Program Management	6
3. Learning and Teaching	3.1.Learning and Teaching policy and system 3.2.Learning and Teaching monitoring and evaluation	16
4. Assessment and Evaluation	4.1.Assessment policy and system 4.2.Assessment method	16
5. Students	5.1.Student admission and selection 5.2.Student support and counseling	7
6. Academic and Support Staff	6.1.Staff Recruitment and promotion 6.2.Staff development and retention 6.3.Academic Staff 6.4.Staff performance and appraisal	15
7. Resources	7.1.Physical resource and Safety 7.2.Financial resource 7.3.Registrar services 7.4.Library and ICT facilities	15
8. Research, and Community Engagement	8.1.Research 8.2.Community Engagement	8
9. Continual Quality Improvement	9.1.Continual Quality Improvement system 9.2.Monitoring and evaluation	9

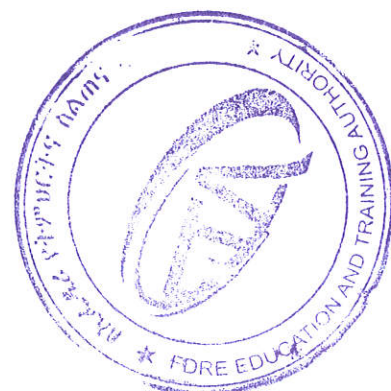


4.2 Process of Grading

The team of assessors uses mainly documentary evidence, discussions, consultations, observations and collective judgment as a method during site visit to collect data for final rating of the institution. For each indicator, the Rubric system of scaling is assigned to evaluate each indicator objectively and the rubric developed for each indicator is annexed to this handbook. For ease of grading, five point's rubrics scales 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 indicator based on the HEI's institutional DCT, SSS, SED, observations, and evidence from the site visit using the rubric.



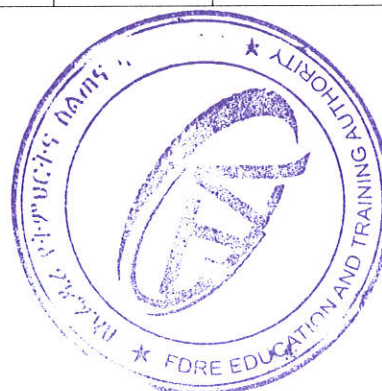
Standard 1: Vision, mission, and Governance			
Substandard 1.1 Vision, and mission	Max. score	Earned Point (1-5) example	Weighted score (Max score*point earned/ 5)
Indicator			
1.1.1 The HEI has a publicly available vision and mission statements, which has been formally approved by the governing body, and subjected to comprehensive stakeholder engagement in its development and review.	0.42	4	0.33
1.1.2 The vision and mission statements of the HEI appropriately reflect the characteristics of the institutions.	0.42	3	0.25
1.1.3 The stated vision and mission align with national priorities and global developments in the sector.	0.42	5	0.42
1.1.4 Have vision and mission accepted and widely understood by its governing bodies, administration, faculty, staff, students, service providers and key stakeholders.	0.42	2	0.16
Substandard 1. 2. Governance			
1.2.1 The HEI has an effective governance system in place that is in line with its mission and strategy.	0.42	4	0.33



1.2.2	The HEI ensures the creation of institutional memory through institutional archive and documentation.	0.42	3	0.25
1.2.3	The HEI management periodically review and evaluate the effectiveness of strategy and operation	0.42	5	0.42
1.2.4	The HEI regularly evaluate procedures and practices for qualified academic leadership appointment and accordingly appoint, encourage, and evaluate academic officers	0.42	4	0.33
1.2.5	The HEI plays a basic policy-making role and oversee the academic, research and financial affairs to ensure integrity and reputation of the institution.	0.42	2	0.16
1.2.6	The HEI ensures academic or scholar autonomy and freedom for its staff and students in the areas of their expertise and pursuit of knowledge.	0.42	1	0.08
1.2.7	The HEI assures that established academic guidelines and rules are consistently followed; Advocate for effective student learning opportunities and academic results.	0.42	4	0.33
1.2.8	The HEI Continually maintains budget adequacy and conduct frequent reviews of institutional funding, grant activities,	0.42	3	0.25



	including public and self-financing arrangements.			
1.2.9	Ensure a balanced and transparent budget allocation to the core function of teaching-learning, research, and community engagement.	0.42	5	0.42
1.2.10	The HEI has a comprehensive strategy, which is derived from the mission, and that supports the HEI in the implementation of its mission setting short, medium, and long-term goals and objectives.	0.42	2	0.16
1.2.11	There is demonstrable strategic alignment between the HEI's quality management system for core academic activities and its vision, mission and strategic goals, as well as its governance and management processes.	0.42	1	0.08
1.2.12	Different roles and responsibilities of the governance structures, management and academic leadership in the HEI are adhered in practice and be communicated to stakeholders involved based on principles of transparency, accountability and authority.	0.42	4	0.33
1.2.13	The HEI has mechanisms to ensure functional integration and comparability of	0.42	3	0.25



educational quality in HEIs which have geographically separated campuses.			
1.2.14 The HEI has a system in place for periodic review of its vision, mission and governance structure involving relevant stakeholders.	0.42	5	0.42
1.2.15 The HEI has governance principles addressing inclusiveness and diversity through representation of academic staff, students, and other stakeholders.	0.42	4	0.33
Total	8	64	5.06

For example, under Standard 1 (Vision and Mission), there are 2 substandard and 19 indicators with maximum total score of 8. The weight of each indicator within the total maximum score is calculated as follows:

Total maximum score for Standard one is 8

Weight of each indicator within the total maximum score: $8 / 19 \approx 0.42$ (approximately)

Assessors assign points based on their judgment of each indicator's performance. For instance, Indicator 1.1.1 might receive 4 points for being categorized as "Very Good," while Indicator 1.2.6 could be assigned 1 point for being rated as "Unsatisfactory." Importantly, the final points for each indicator are not determined through simple averaging but through discussions and consensus among the assessment team. To calculate the weighted score for each indicator, the awarded points are multiplied by the proportion of the maximum total score allocated to that indicator. This ensures that each indicator's contribution to the total score reflects its assigned points within the context of the standards total score distribution. Consider Standard 1 with a maximum score of 8, distributed across its 19 indicators.

- Indicator 1.1.1 is awarded 4 points out of its maximum of 5



- average weighted scores calculation: $(4 / 5) * (8 / 19) \approx 0.33$
- Indicator 1.2.6 is awarded 1 point out of its maximum of 5.
- average weighted scores calculation: $(1 / 5) * (8 / 19) \approx 0.08$

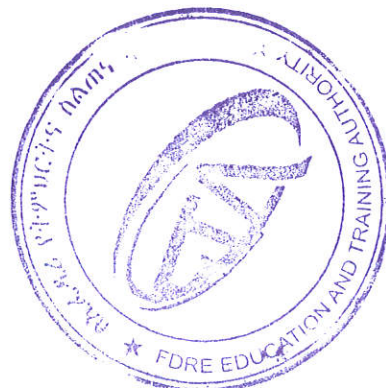
The total weighted score for each standard is obtained by summing up its indicators' average weighted scores. The weighted average score for the rest of the Standards shall be obtained in the same way and added to get the final total score. The final grade shall be awarded based on the range of scores obtained as shown in the table below:

Range of Total Weighted Average Score	Accreditation status	Duration of Accreditation
80-100	Accredited	For Five years
70-79.9	Accredited	For Three years
Less than 70%	Not Accredited	Denied

However, the HEI must score a minimum of 30% in each Standard to get accredited. The accreditation certificate shall be printed on a special paper prepared for this purpose.

4.3 Rating Standard

HEI evaluation processes are carried out with nine standards and indicators. The basic tool used in evaluation processes is the criteria Rubric. The Rubric is a style of assessment tool used in the internal evaluation works of higher education institutions and in writing institutional self-evaluation documents as well as being used in external evaluation processes. It has been developed to increase clarity, objectivity, comprehensibility, consistency and transparency levels in institutional evaluation or decision-making processes.



5 REVIEW OF THE STANDARDS

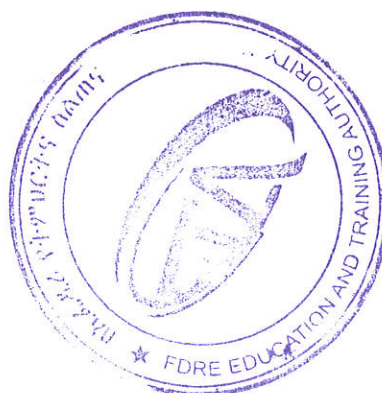
The institutional accreditation standards and guidelines should be reviewed annually (the first review time) and every two years to ensure whether it is relevant and address current aspects of quality, students, stakeholders, community and policy. This review can be done internally by the accreditation department with industries and higher education institutions experts. The standards review should be based on the impact assessment results and indicate the feedback from various stakeholders such as policy makers, employers, alumni, students, and staff members should be taken into consideration when reviewing and revising the standards.

Validation Workshops in-house and open validation workshops have been carried out on the standards and its contents by engaging key stakeholders.

- **In-house validation:** validated by FDRE Education and Training Authority management and their comments have been incorporated.
- **Open validation:** All higher education institutions (both public and private HEIs), and representatives of target industries, representatives of target professional associations, the Ministry of Education and other interested stakeholders have participated in the endorsement workshop.

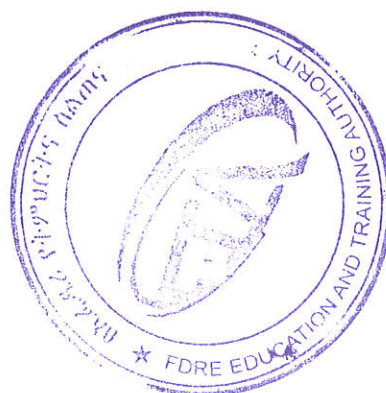
Stakeholder Discussions – FDRE Education and Training Authority held further discussions with specific stakeholders mainly the Higher education institutions. The discussion focused on their feedbacks in which the following issues were addressed:

- objectives of the institutional accreditation;
- required knowledge, skills, and attitude of the graduates;
- processes and accreditation decision;
- contents of each standard and indicators;
- international and national aspects to be addressed in the standards;



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