	AFRICA ASSOCIATION OF QUANTITY SURVEYORS
	ACCREDITATION OF UNIVERSITY AND UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY PROGRAMMES LEADING TO REGISTRATION AS A CANDIDATE QUANTITY SURVEYOR / CANDIDATE QUANTITY SURVEYOR TECHNOLOGIST WITH THE AFRICA ASSOCIATION OF QUANTITY SURVEYORS POLICY and PROCEDURES
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Preamble

The Africa Association of Quantity Surveyors (AAQS) is empowered, on application, to register as a Candidate Quantity Surveyor or a Candidate Quantity Surveyor Technologist, a person who holds an appropriate educational qualification recognised by the AAQS and has acceptable training and experience

The majority of applicants for registration are graduates of African universities and universities of technology

The AAQS
- accredits quantity surveying degree programmes to determine those programmes that are recognised for registration purposes, thus avoiding the need to evaluate graduates individually
- is also empowered to take steps leading to the improvement of the standards of professional qualifications of registered persons
- may therefore take steps to influence quantity surveying education in the interests of the public, Candidate Quantity Surveyors and Professional Quantity Surveyors
- publishes the list of accredited degree programmes to inform industry and the public

Purpose of this document

The purpose of this document is to record the Association's current policy and procedures to
- evaluate institution quantity surveying degree programmes and
- accredit programmes that meet the required standards.

Section 1 states the Association's policy on accreditation of institution degrees in quantity surveying

Section 2 provides general guidelines on factors taken into account and criteria used in the accreditation process

Section 3 contains procedures for evaluating degree programmes and specifies the documentation required

Section 4 describes the on-site visit

Section 5 details the reporting method and format

Annexure A provides a detailed list of criteria which are applied in the accreditation process

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 POLICY

1.1 Recognition of autonomy of universities and universities of technology

The AAQS
- respects the autonomy of tertiary institutions and, therefore
- will undertake an accreditation visit to an institution only at the invitation of the institution
- does not prescribe standard or compulsory programme structures, curriculum details or teaching methods

During the period of accreditation, the institution is expected to
- inform the AAQS of significant changes which may affect the accreditation status of a programme and
- if necessary, to initiate a re-evaluation of the programme

1.2 Degree programmes considered for accreditation

The AAQS is willing to consider for accreditation *baccalaureus* degree programmes in quantity surveying of three-year minimum duration at African tertiary institutions (assuming 12 years of schooling) as well as programmes of four or five-year duration, provided that those programmes have the following broad characteristics of ***adequate*** education and training:

1.2.1 Financial management

1.2.2 Project procurement (including quantification)

1.2.3 Contract administration

1.2.4 Information management

1.2.5 Information technology

1.2.6 Professional practice

1.2.7 Professional jurisprudence (including ethics)

1.2.8 Complementary studies

1.2.9 Discretionary studies

Each branch of a degree and any distinct option or major which is identified in the rules published by the relevant institution, is accredited separately

The basic principle upon which the AAQS accreditation policy is founded is that educational service providers elect to have their programmes evaluated for

accreditation purposes at either of two academic qualification levels (currently termed Honours Degree, and Bachelors Degree). These qualifications levels are defined by fundamental and core knowledge areas / unit standards as reflected in AAQS documentation. At both academic qualification levels, the AAQS criteria for programme accreditation would be applied, including outcomes of the programme evaluation in line with published AAQS documentation.

Exit Level Outcomes at the Bachelors level (3 year Minimum study period) will typically equip graduates to:

  Analyse and solve well-defined and frequently-encountered problems related to the built environment.
  Deal with fundamental commercial, entrepreneurial and management issues.
  Communicate effectively on all matters to which their skills and competencies have been applied.
  Use and apply information technology.
  Interpret and apply fundamental economic legal principles.
  Execute tasks requiring numerical and quantification expertise.
  Apply knowledge of technology related to the built environment.

Qualifying learners are competent to:

  Demonstrate familiarity with and display knowledge and understanding of the content, theory and scholarly positions related to quantity surveying practice and procedure at a fundamental level.
  Demonstrate systematic, well-rounded knowledge and an ability to question basic assumptions related to core theory, practice and basic methodology used in quantity surveying and other disciplines operating in the built environment.
  Display competence in fundamental modes of inquiry employed in the practise of quantity surveying and other disciplines operating in the built environment, in response to well-defined and frequently-encountered problems.
  Analyse and locate the principles and performance of their own work within current practice related to the built environ-ment professions and the construction industry.
  Interpret a wide range of domain-related issues by applying various systems of enquiry appropriate to the discipline of quantity surveying and its allied professions.
  Construct debate around well-defined and frequently-encountered information and situations, to demonstrate competence in interpretation and explanation of such information, etc.
  Prepare written reports in response well-defined briefs and within specific fundamental parameters.
  Communicate effectively with various groups/audiences and the community at large, using both oral and written skills.
  Apply fundamental skills in the theory and practice of quantity surveying relating to the financial and contractual management of new and existing facilities in the built environment.

Demonstrate competence in the use of appropriate problem-solving methods, skills and tools, which include the use of computer software packages.

Exit Level Outcomes at the Honours level (4 year Minimum study period) will typically equip graduates to:

Analyse and solve problems related to the built environment.
Deal with commercial, entrepreneurial and management issues.
Communicate effectively on all matters to which their skills and competencies have been applied.
Use and apply information technology.
Interpret and apply legal principles within the context of the built environment.
Execute tasks requiring numerical and quantification expertise.
Conduct research within the context of the built environment, including consideration of interdisciplinary aspects.
Apply knowledge of technology within the context of the built environment.

Specific exit level outcomes (taking into account that core knowledge related to quantity surveying is appropriately represented in the learning programme).

Qualifying learners are competent to:

Demonstrate familiarity with and display knowledge and understanding of the content, theory and scholarly positions related to quantity surveying practice and procedure at both elementary and intermediate levels.
Demonstrate systematic, well-rounded knowledge and an ability to question critically basic assumptions related to core theory, practice and basic methodology used in quantity surveying and other disciplines operating in the built environment.
Display competence in basic/elementary modes of inquiry employed in the practise of quantity surveying and other disciplines operating in the built environment, in response to specified problems (both concrete and abstract).
Analyse and locate the principles and performance of their own work within current practice related to the built environment professions and the construction industry.
Interpret a wide range of domain-related issues by applying various systems of enquiry appropriate to the discipline of quantity surveying and its allied professions.
Construct debate and argument around newly-encountered information and situations, to demonstrate competence in interpretation and explanation of such information, etc.
Prepare written reports/conduct research projects in response to well-defined briefs and within specific parameters.

1.3   Classes of accreditation

The AAQS grants the following classes of accreditation:

1.3.1 **Full accreditation** for a maximum period of five years is awarded to a programme meeting AAQS requirements

Graduates of fully accredited programmes who complete their studies during the period of accreditation are afforded recognition by the AAQS as having met the educational requirements for registration as a Candidate Quantity Surveyor

Regular accreditation evaluations are undertaken on a five-year cycle

The period of full accreditation may be extended for one year, in
- response to an application by an institution
- exceptional circumstances
- the knowledge that there are no factors adversely affecting the standard of the degree programmes

1.3.2 **Conditional accreditation** is awarded
- when a programme has been identified as having inadequacies which affect the standard of the degree but which, in the opinion of the AAQS, the institution will remedy within a reasonable period of time
- for one, two or three years
- to a new or existing programme

Graduates of conditionally accredited programmes who complete their studies during the period of conditional accreditation, are afforded recognition by the AAQS as having met the educational requirements for registration as a Candidate Quantity Surveyor

The period of conditional accreditation may be
- extended provided that meaningful progress towards improvement is achieved
- converted to full accreditation as a result of a re-evaluation visit if, *in the case of conditional accreditation granted for one year*, the AAQS believes that the deficiencies have been remedied, in which case a re-evaluation visit may be waived

The institution will be required to submit a satisfactory report on improvements that have been made

Full accreditation granted by conversion of conditional accreditation is valid for such additional period as granted by the AAQS

1.3.3 **Provisional accreditation** may be awarded when a new degree programme
- has students who have completed the second year of study
- indicates to the institution and the students in the programme that those parts of the programme already implemented are considered satisfactory and that

the planned further implementation is likely to result in accreditation of the programme

Provisional accreditation is granted for a maximum period of three academic years

The period of provisional accreditation may be converted to full or conditional accreditation by means of a first (regular) evaluation visit which will take place once the first candidates have graduated

Graduates meeting the requirements for the degree during the period of provisional accreditation are granted recognition retrospectively when the degree is awarded full or conditional accreditation

1.3.4   Accreditation granted in any of the foregoing three categories may be reviewed if major changes are made to a programme during a period of accreditation, in which case the institution concerned is expected to
- notify the AAQS of such changes
- provide all the information which may be requested by the AAQS

The Education and Training Committee of the AAQS (ETC) is responsible for most aspects of accreditation and its terms of reference are stated in section 1.5

1.4   Accreditation evaluation

The quality of a degree in quantity surveying depends on more than
- curriculum structure
- syllabus
- examinations

The following are considered to be of critical importance in determining the quality of a candidate's educational experience:
- academic staff
- qualities acquired by students
- departmental leadership
- departmental and faculty environment
- resources available to support the programme

1.5   Terms of reference

The AAQS does not award accreditation to a degree programme without
- prior examination of the required documentation and
- an on-site evaluation

Various categories of evaluation visits and their possible outcomes are detailed below

1.5.1 New degree programmes

A institution department wishing to introduce a new degree programme is advised to take the following steps:

1.5.1.1 At the planning stage, relevant portions of the documentation described in **section 4** should be submitted to the AAQS for initial evaluation. The documentation should indicate the
- degree designation
- proposed date of introduction
- responsible department
- head of department
- programme structure
- detailed syllabuses
- proposed teaching staff
- resources that will be available to support the programme

The ETC will
- appoint an accreditation team (refer to **section 1.9**) to examine the documentation and advise on the likely accreditability of the programme, if implemented as planned
- consider the accreditation team's report
- provide an opinion to the university
- comment on the proposed programme

The AAQS will decline to accredit a degree programme until sufficient graduates have been produced to allow a full and valid judgement of graduate quality to be made

1.5.2 Revised degree programmes

A department wishing to restructure an existing accredited programme is required to inform the AAQS of its intentions. In each case, the ETC will determine an appropriate course of action, in consultation with the Dean and Head of Department

1.5.3 Regular evaluation of fully accredited degree programmes

In the fourth year of a period of accreditation, the AAQS will remind the institution, by letter to the Registrar; Dean; and Head of Department of the termination date of the current accreditation and enquire whether the institution wishes to initiate an accreditation visit to take place during the following (fifth) year

Regular visits to Departments of Quantity Surveying are usually arranged simultaneously with those to other allied departments in a faculty for example, a Department of Construction Management

1.5.4 Re-evaluation of conditionally accredited degree programmes

Where conditional accreditation has been granted, the AAQS will, twelve months before the end of the period remind the institution, by letter to the Registrar; Dean; and Head of Department of the termination date of conditional accreditation and that the institution should either submit the required report on improvements made or initiate the required re-evaluation visit before the end of the period

Should the institution consider that the necessary improvements have been made earlier than the term set by the AAQS, it may submit a report detailing the changes

The ETC will then decide whether
- full accreditation be granted or
- a re-evaluation visit is necessary

1.5.5 Existing non-accredited programmes

An institution may invite the AAQS to conduct an evaluation of an existing degree which is not currently accredited and this evaluation may be conducted in two stages:

1.5.5.1   The institution will be asked to prepare a full set of documentation as specified in **section 4**

         In addition, if the programme previously has been refused accreditation, or awarded accreditation but the accreditation has been withdrawn the documentation must describe the steps that have been taken to meet the AAQS requirements for accreditation

         The AAQS will appoint an accreditation team that will advise the ETC whether there is a *prima-facie* case for a full accreditation visit

1.5.5.2   If the visit is justified, the evaluation visit will be conducted

1.6 Withdrawal or withholding of accreditation

Accreditation of an existing programme is withdrawn if
- the programme has become so deficient that the institution can not reasonably be expected to remedy the deficiencies within a reasonable time or
- the institution is unable or unwilling to remedy the deficiencies

The AAQS reserves the right to withdraw accreditation at any time

Where a degree programme has enjoyed uninterrupted full accreditation for one or more five year cycles, the AAQS would not normally withdraw accreditation until the
- programme has been afforded conditional accreditation for a period
- institution has been unable or unwilling to remedy the deficiencies to AAQS satisfaction

When an existing non-accredited programme is judged to be so deficient that full or conditional accreditation is withheld, the AAQS may set a minimum time appropriate to the circumstances before a re-application for evaluation may be submitted

1.7   Expiry of period of accreditation

Full, conditional and provisional accreditation shall terminate at the end of the period stated, unless the period has been extended or converted as a result of an accreditation visit timed to allow the evaluation process to be completed before the termination date

In such cases the ETC shall satisfy itself that the
- AAQS has taken all reasonable measures to initiate a re-evaluation (refer to **1.5.3** and **1.5.4**)
- failure to arrange a visit is as a consequence of the institution's wishes, refusal or default

Expiry of accreditation without an evaluation visit shall be reported to the Executive Committee of the AAQS (EXCO), who will determine the course of any further action

1.8   Conditions, criticism and comments

In making its report to the AAQS, the ETC shall
- identify factors or circumstances which, in its opinion, adversely affect the standard achieved by the programme
- advise whether the factors indicate
    - withdrawal of accreditation or
    - granting of accreditation for a limited period
  subject to the identified issues being addressed within a stated period

Where conditions have to be met before full accreditation is granted, the institution must be given freedom to determine the way in which it will bring about improvements

In addition, the ETC should make comment and offer constructive criticism which will benefit the programme

Deficiencies, comments and constructive criticism must be raised with the Dean of the Faculty, Head of Department and relevant staff members at interviews during the accreditation visit

1.9   An ETC accreditation team

1.9.1 Appointment

An ETC accreditation team is appointed
- for each degree programme to be evaluated
- in consultation with the AAQS.

1.9.2 Composition

The team is composed of at least five members:
- two or more registered quantity surveyors who are
    - active in industry or in the profession
    - members of the AAQS
- one registered quantity surveyor who
    - has had significant recent experience in evaluating quantity surveying degree programmes for accreditation purposes
    - is a members of the AAQS
- one assessor who is an experienced academic planning / course development expert
- the AAQS Hon Secretary or nominee, who acts as *rapporteur*

The individual specialities of the members who are registered quantity surveyors should be spread as far as numbers permit across the sub-disciplines of the degree programme under evaluation

A member of the team is appointed by the AAQS as chairman

At each institution, local quantity surveying practitioners may be invited to accompany the ETC accreditation team and assist in the evaluation process

1.9.3 Observers

Observers, for example a second team of visiting quantity surveyors or academics observing the accreditation process on behalf of registering bodies abroad, may be present
- with the agreement of the host institution and the approval of the AAQS / ETC
- but shall not influence the formulation of the recommendation of the team

1.9.4 Visit Chairman

When more than one team is present during a single accreditation visit, a Visit Chairman will be elected by the AAQS ETC from amongst the members of the visiting team

The responsibilities of the Visit Chairman include
- general co-ordination and problem solving during the visit
- liaison between teams on matters of mutual interest
- courtesy visits to members of the executive management of the institution
- meeting with student leadership
- presentation of reports at subsequent AAQS and ETC meetings

1.9.5 Eligibility

Membership of an accreditation team is not extended to persons who have any relationship with the institution concerned to such an extent that their judgement may be unduly influenced by such relationship (i.e. staff or members of the institution's advisory committees): Provided that this restriction does not apply to persons who act as external examiners for the institution

1.9.6 Additional Delegates

The President or Vice-President of the AAQS may accompany the accreditation team in order to pay courtesy visits to office bearers or staff of the institution, but shall not participate in the deliberations of the visit

1.10 Confidentiality

Apart from reflecting the outcome of each accreditation evaluation according to the list. of recognised degrees, the AAQS will not divulge details of investigations, documentation, correspondence and discussions between the AAQS, the accreditation team and the institution concerned without the approval of that institution

The details of any ETC report to an institution will not be disclosed to the AAQS except under the following conditions:
- When a complaint against the Education and Training Committee is lodged with the AAQS
- Where accreditation is not accorded to an institution

1.11 List of accredited degrees

The AAQS undertakes to publish annually a list of all degrees accredited at that time and in the past, indicating the initial years of the respective accreditation periods

In the case of a programme no longer accredited, the termination date will also be shown

The list will not distinguish between full and conditional accreditation, as the latter will be listed separately

Dates of validity of accreditation refer to the academic year in which the individual completes the prerequisites to graduation, including re-examination early in the following year

Institutions are expected to inform their students in each degree programme of the current status of and changes to the accreditation conditions of the degree programme

Institutions are encouraged to publish the status of their accredited degrees and are not required to distinguish between full and conditional accreditation in public documents. However, provisional accreditation status must be clearly stated

1.12   Delegation of authority to grant, withhold or withdraw accreditation

The AAQS has delegated authority to the Education and Training Committee to recommend provisional, full and conditional accreditation to degree programmes and to withhold accreditation from non-accredited programmes

The delegated functions of the Education and Training Committee of the AAQS are to:

1.12.1　　consider and decide on matters of policy relating to accreditation of degree programmes

1.12.2　　draw up and to maintain guidelines on matters of policy and the conducting of accreditation visits, subject to approval by the AAQS

1.12.3　　compile and maintain a list of persons whom the ETC considers eligible for appointment as members of any accreditation team

1.12.4　　consult with such institutes and professional advisory committees as it may consider expedient for purposes of establishing and maintaining such list of eligible persons

1.12.5　　appoint accreditation teams for each degree programme, chairmen, and, in the case of regular accreditation visits, a visit chairperson, which shall include the approval of attendance by observers

1.12.6　　delegate such powers and prescribe the procedures, if any, to the chairman of the ETC as may be necessary to effect the necessary appointments when the ETC is not in session

1.12.7　　approve accreditation visit schedules, reporting deadlines and dates of meetings of the ETC

1.12.8　　consider the full reports of accreditation teams, and afterwards

1.12.9　　grant provisional, full and conditional accreditation to degree programmes and to withhold accreditation from non-accredited programmes, as the case may be

1.12.10　　consider the full reports of accreditation teams, and afterwards

1.12.11　　recommend to the Council, withdrawal of accreditation of any degree programme

1.12.12　　confirm the expiry of accreditation of any degree programme in the event of an institution failing to initiate an accreditation visit

1.12.13   advise the AAQS of such occurrence

1.12.14   issue annually a list of degrees accredited by the AAQS

1.12.15   institute such observation exercises as may be necessary to ensure that AAQS accreditation standards are substantially equivalent to those of foreign accrediting bodies with whom the AAQS has entered into mutual recognition agreements

1.12.16   evaluate such qualifications which have not been accredited or evaluated by the AAQS for purposes of recognition, or have not been recognised as a result of a mutual accreditation agreement with any foreign accrediting body

1.12.17   keep the AAQS informed of decisions taken in terms of these delegated powers

1.12.18   report on trends or other matters of professional and public concern arising from its activities

1.13   Reporting sequence

Where the documentation or information provided on-site is deficient, the Chairman of the ETC may, before, during or after the visit, call for such information to be provided within a specified period

The finalisation of the report on an accreditation visit may be delayed until the information is provided

Preparation and processing of the report follows the sequence shown below. The ETC sets critical dates each year for completion of the various stages:

1.13.1   The accreditation team will prepare a *draft* recommendation which will be discussed with the Dean and the Head of Department by the close of the visit

A draft report will be circulated to all the members of the team for comment and agreement by an agreed date, prior to finalisation

1.13.2   The agreed report and recommendations of the accreditation team will be submitted to the Dean of the Faculty and the Head of Department for general comment by an agreed date

The principal objective is to ensure that the report is free of factual errors

1.13.3   On behalf of the accreditation team, the chairman will approve the final text of the report which will be circulated to all ETC members prior to the following AAQS meeting

1.13.4   The Visit Chairman or the chairman of the ETC presents the recommendations contained in the report to the AAQS

1.13.5 If the decision of the ETC is to grant or withhold full, conditional or provisional accreditation, that decision is final in terms of the AAQS's delegated powers

1.13.6 If the decision of the ETC is to recommend withdrawal of accreditation, the report and ETC recommendation are forwarded to the AAQS for ratification

1.13.7 The Hon Secretary of the AAQS informs the institution of the decision by letter to the Registrar, copied to the Dean and the Head of Department

1.13.8 If the decision is conditional accreditation, the institution will be required to indicate within a reasonable but specified time whether it is in a position to attempt to make the necessary improvements, failing which the conditional accreditation shall expire and the procedures detailed in **section 1.6** shall apply

1.13.9 The AAQS shall be informed of all decisions taken by the ETC

1.14   Approach

All accreditation evaluation visits should be conducted in an open and professional way. In problematical circumstances, however, it may be necessary to adopt a strictly formal and disciplined approach

1.15   Costs

An institution is expected to bear the cost of an accreditation visits conducted by the AAQS

Such costs might consist of

- Air tickets of members of the accreditation team
- Accommodation of members of the accreditation team
- Documentation
- Refreshments and meals during the visit
- Any possible honoraria to members of the accreditation team