



# HEEACT

Higher Education Evaluation and  
Accreditation Council of Taiwan

## **HEEACT Overseas Program Accreditation Handbook (2021)**

**Higher Education Evaluation and Accreditation Council of Taiwan**

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# I. Introduction

## 1. General Information

The HEEACT Overseas Program Accreditation Handbook is developed in conjunction with The National Accreditation Agency for Higher Education (BAN-PT) based on the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) staff capacity building research project in 2018.

The handbook will provide a guideline for the higher education institutions (HEIs) and the programs which intend to apply for HEEACT overseas program accreditation. This handbook will enable the applying unit(s) (hereinafter referred to as “applicant(s)”) to understand the requirements of application, scope of the accreditation within the standards and indicators, processes of submission of self-assessment reports (SAR), on-site visits and further results.

### 1.1 Basic principles of the procedure

This HEEACT Overseas Program Accreditation Handbook aims to support the actual procedure of implementing the quality assurance (QA) process and monitoring the process of the programs of HEIs overseas.

### 1.2 Requirements and the process of application

In order to be accepted as a subject of HEEACT overseas program accreditation, the applicant(s) should meet the following requirements:

- a. Be accredited by the national QA agency in order to apply for HEEACT overseas program accreditation.
- b. Have a first cohort of graduated students.

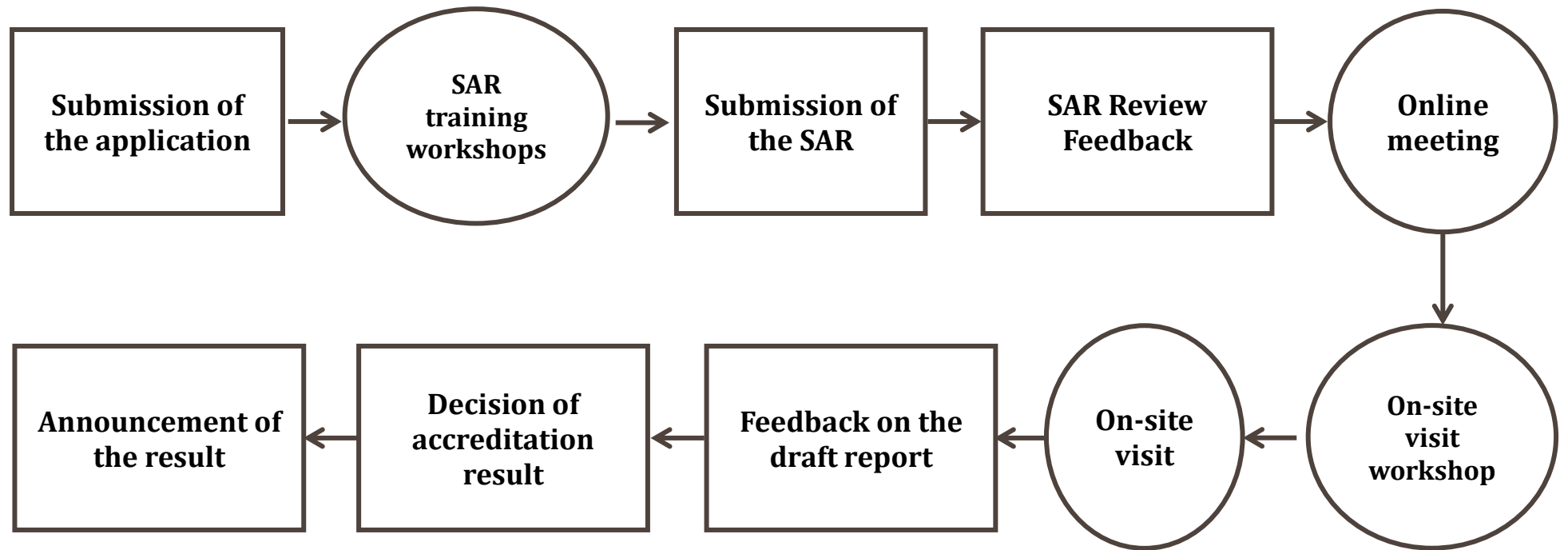
### 1.3 Accreditation Process and Procedures

The accreditation process pursues the principles of peer review and follows the steps shown in the following table and figure:

**Table 1 Timeline of overseas program accreditation**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Accreditation Tasks</b>
8 weeks	Time between the confirmation of application* and Self-assessment Report (SAR) training workshops
36 weeks (at most †)	Time between SAR training workshops and SAR submission
2 weeks	The initial review of the SAR
6 weeks	SAR Review Feedback addressed by reviewers (hereinafter “the Panel”)
2 weeks	The applicant’s responses to the SAR Review Feedback
2 weeks	Holding an online meeting for the Panel and the applicant to discuss further details about the SAR (2 <sup>nd</sup> SAR Review Feedback)
1 week	Holding an on-site visit workshop
2–3 weeks	The time between the on-site visit workshop and the on-site visit.
4-5 weeks	The time between the on-site visit and delivery of the draft Review Report to the applicant.
2 weeks	The time between the applicant’s receipt of the draft Review Report and submitting responses to HEEACT.
3 weeks	Completion of the Review Report
3–4 weeks	The final decision-making of the accreditation result by the Accreditation Recognition Committee.
2 weeks	The announcement of the result on TQID.
<p>* At least one online meeting will be held before the official signing of the contract in order to clarify the responsibilities of both parties and other related issues.            † The applicant can submit the SAR earlier than 36 weeks.</p>	

**Figure 1 Overseas program accreditation process**



## **2. Goals of the Accreditation**

The HEEACT overseas program accreditation has the following objectives:

- (1) To help programs enhance their quality and develop distinct features;
- (2) To promote the establishment of internal QA mechanisms and self-improvement mechanisms within programs;
- (3) To help programs increase their international visibility;
- (4) To enhance cross-border student mobility.



## II. Quality Assurance Standards, Sub-Standards, and Core Indicators

QA standards were developed according to the principles of the fitness of purposes and the quality culture enhancement. The plan-do-check-act (PDCA) mechanism is applied to the internal QA and the external QA processes. Student learning outcomes and measures are the focus of the program accreditation. The three major standards and 12 sub-standards are indicated as follows:

### **Standard I: Program Development, Governance, and Self-improvement**

- 1-1 Educational goals, distinct features and development plans;
- 1-2 Curriculum planning and implementation;
- 1-3 Operations and administration support;
- 1-4 Self-assessment and continual improvement.

### **Standard II: Faculty and Teaching**

- 2-1 Faculty composition and its relation with the program's educational goals, curriculum, and students' learning needs;
- 2-2 Capacity building and related support systems for faculty members;
- 2-3 Academic career development and related support systems for faculty members;
- 2-4 Teaching, academic, and professional performance of faculty.

### **Standard III: Students and Learning**

- 3-1 Management of student enrollment and retention;
- 3-2 Course-related learning and support systems;
- 3-3 Other forms of learning and support systems;
- 3-4 Student/graduate learning outcomes and feedback system.

In addition to the HEEACT standards, the applicant(s) will be allowed to add one standard which represents their features and uniqueness. For more details, please refer to Appendix A.

## **III. Accreditation**

### **1. Appointment of Reviewers**

HEEACT will appoint two to four reviewers to conduct an on-site visit.

### **2. Submission of the SAR**

The applicant must submit a SAR and the related documentation written in English, which will serve as the primary basis for desk review and the on-site visit. Each application must be accompanied by two electronic copies of the SAR in Word and PDF files and fact sheets of the program. While conducting the SAR, the applicant can follow the checklist for documentation preparation.

The main text of the SAR must describe the current state of affairs within each program level (e.g., undergraduate level, master's level, and doctoral level). The SAR should not exceed 80 pages. The report should be written in 12-point standard Cambria font with 1.5 spacing. Supporting documents (appendices) have no page restriction (electronic files).

The SAR template is presented in Appendix B, the fact sheets are presented in Appendix C, and the SAR checklist is presented in Appendix D.

### **3. Itinerary of On-Site Visit**

An on-site visit to the applicant for the overseas program accreditation is usually completed in 2 days. The date and itinerary of the on-site visit may be adjusted as required. The itinerary of a typical on-site visit is presented in Table 2.

During the on-site visit, the Panel will review the program according to the HEEACT standards by using the following methods: visitation of facilities, meetings, interviews with stakeholders, and document review. The stakeholders may include the directors, deans, faculty members, administrative staff, students, graduates, and industry representatives. The applicant should provide the proposed interviewee list to HEEACT beforehand for selection (please refer to Appendix E for the guidelines).

**Table 2 Itinerary of On-Site Visit**

		<b>Time</b>	<b>Agenda</b>
Day1	Morning	08 : 30 - 09 : 00	Arrival
		09 : 00 - 10 : 00	Preparatory meeting
		10 : 00 - 10 : 20	Opening and the applicant's presentation
		10 : 20 - 10 : 50	Interview with the program head
		11 : 00 - 12 : 00	Group interview(s) with faculty members
	Afternoon	12 : 00 - 13 : 00	Lunch break
		13 : 00 - 13 : 40	Document review and preparation of the group interviews
		13 : 40 - 14 : 40	Visit facilities and equipment
		14 : 50 - 16 : 00	Group interview(s) with undergraduates (and post-graduate) students
		16 : 00 - 17 : 00	Internal Panel meeting/Questions addressed on the first day
Day2	Morning	09 : 00 - 10 : 00	Arrival and internal meeting
		10 : 00 - 11 : 00	Group interview(s) with alumni
		11 : 00 - 12 : 00	Group interview(s) with employers (representatives from industry)
		12 : 00 - 13 : 00	Lunch break
	Afternoon	13 : 00 - 14 : 00	Group interview(s) with staff
		14 : 00 - 15 : 00	Document review and draft Review Report writing
		15 : 00 - 16 : 00	Exit meeting with the program head, faculty and staff members
		16:00	Departure/End of the on-site visit
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regarding guidelines for the applicant's presentation, please refer to Appendix F.</li> </ul>			

If an on-site visit is not possible for the Panel to conduct due to natural disasters, travel constraints or unexpected events, HEEACT should plan and execute a virtual site visit via an online platform. The guidelines for the facility tour video are provided to facilitate the applicant's preparation (see Appendix G). A virtual site visit has identical goals and works very similarly to an on-site visit.

However, the schedule for a virtual site visit may subject to change depending on time difference and circumstances with further notice.

## 4. Accreditation Results

An applicant may be awarded one of the statuses for HEEACT overseas program accreditation:

- a. Accredited for a period of 6 years
- b. Accredited for a period of 3 years
- c. Denied

HEEACT provides certificates in Mandarin and English for each degree level of the accredited program. The accreditation results are published on the TQID website in the overseas accreditation section. Please refer to Table 3 for more details of the accreditation results.

**Table 3 Accreditation Results**

<b>Accreditation results</b>	<b>Further actions</b>
Accredited for a period of 6 years	The accredited program must submit a self-improvement report after three years of being accredited which describes the implementation of related improvement measures and consequences.
Accredited for a period of 3 years	The accredited program must submit a self-improvement report after two years of being accredited which describes the implementation of related improvement measures and consequences.
Denied	The program should reapply for HEEACT overseas program accreditation, which will be seen as a new application.

## 5. Appeal

If an applicant disputes the accreditation result, it may lodge an appeal to HEEACT within 30 calendar days of the announcement. HEEACT then convenes the Appeals Review Committee for further actions.

## IV. Accreditation Fees

Fees required for accreditation include the following:

1	Application fee
2	Initial costs and preparatory expenses (including SAR workshops)
3	Reviewer Training
4	Desk review of the SAR
5	On-site visit expenses (excluding the accommodation and transportation expenses of the Panel)
6	Committee meetings: on-site visit report review, feedback and decision making
7	Result announcement and accreditation certification fee
8	Administration Fee (HR, data analysis, meeting, printing)

The application fees are paid by the applicant along with the submission of the application. The payment methods are as following:

- **Payment in one installment:** The payment must be made before the SAR workshops.
- **Payment in separate installments:**
  - (1) The first installment of the application fee (US\$ 1,000) plus the 20% of the entire accreditation fee shall be made within 30 calendar days after the contract is signed (receiving the first invoice).
  - (2) The second installment (50% of the total fee) shall be made within 15 calendar days after passing the desk review of SAR (receiving the second invoice).
  - (3) The third installment (30% of the total fee) shall be made within 30 calendar days after the on-site visit (receiving the third invoice).

The accreditation fees may vary according to the country of the applicant and currency. The applicant will be responsible for the cost of the flight tickets and accommodation of the Panel. Besides, local logistics and transportation of both the Panel and HEEACT coordinators shall be covered by the applicant. These costs are NOT included in the application fee and accreditation fees. For the final and detailed agreement on the payment, please refer to the contract.

