<u>**Approved in 4th Council Meeting**</u>

Bangladesh Accreditation Council (BAC) Standards for Accreditation of Academic Program

The Bangladesh Accreditation Council (BAC) Standards for program accreditation consist of statements that are internationally recognized and widely accepted as good practices in higher education. The following standards are mandatory for accreditation of academic program in higher education. The Program offering Entity (PoE) has to maintain documentations as evidence of compliance.

Standard 1: Governance

Governance system must work in a manner that ensures better management of the program towards the achievement of mission and objectives of the HEI/PoE in a way that effectively benefits the stakeholders.

Criterion 1-1: Defined vision, mission and objectives of the PoE are in accordance of those of the HEI and demonstrate the way that will serve the purposes of the stakeholders and society at large.

Criterion 1-2: The PoE has well-communicated strategic plan that effectively guide its activities and is effectively implemented to achieve the defined vision, mission and objectives of the HEI/PoE.

Criterion 1-3: The HEI has an administrative setup with well-defined and well-communicated policy to receive complains and redress the issues on sexual harassment for safe and sound environment.

Criterion 1-4: The PoE strictly maintains the academic calendar containing schedule of all academic activities under the academic program.

Criterion 1-5: The HEI/PoE has a documented class size policy and maintains class size that is appropriate for effective management of the teaching-learning-assessment to ensure better attainment of learning outcomes.

Criterion 1-6: The HEI/PoE is maintaining IT based student database/portfolio with contact details of students and their next of kin, academic details and other credentials and managed by dedicated staff with easy access.

Standard 2: Leadership, Responsibility and Autonomy

To be responsive to the emerging changes and needs of the stakeholders, the HEI/PoE must have effective institutional leadership with defined responsibilities and sufficient autonomy.

Criterion 2.1: The HEI/PoE has an organizational structure with defined responsibilities in accordance with the legal framework under which the HEI is established.

Criterion 2.2: The HEI/PoE maintains a set of values to foster social responsibility, diversity and inclusivity.

Criterion 2.3: The PoE and Head of the PoE have sufficient autonomy with financial support to introduce innovative approaches for effective teaching-learning, research and management of the academic program.

Standard 3: Institutional Integrity and Transparency

The HEI/PoE must act responsively to meet the needs of the stakeholders and manage the academic program maintaining institutional integrity with transparency and accountability.

Criterion 3-1: HEI/PoE maintains a well-defined and well-communicated transparent, fair and appropriate policy for recruitment of both faculty and professional staff.

Criterion 3-2: HEI/PoE maintains well- defined and well-communicated code of conduct for the students, faculty and professional staff, and policy to promote and recognize morale values and ethical practices.

Criterion 3-3: The admission process ensures transparency and fairness in selecting the right candidate for admission in the academic program.

Criterion 3-4: The HEI/PoE regularly publishes and provides student handbook containing mission and objectives of the PoE, curriculum of the program, graduate profile, academic calendar, disciplinary rules, academic and examination rules etc.

Criterion 3-5: The HEI/PoE has a well-designed and informative website with easy access for all.

Criterion 3-6: The HEI/PoE has well-defined and well-communicated policy and procedure to redress student grievances and complaints on issues like abusive behavior, bullying, cybercrime etc. with fairness and transparency avoiding discrimination.

Standard 4: Curriculum

Curriculum must be outcome-based and consistent with the qualifications framework (QF) of Bangladesh for higher education. It should be comprehensive enough to guide the faculty and students towards systematic attainment of learning outcomes and fulfilment of mission and objectives of the PoE.

Criterion 4-1: The curriculum of the program is designed and reviewed following a well-defined procedure by a specific body or committee with representation from the industry/employers and alumni.

Criterion 4-2: Curriculum aims at producing graduates focusing on graduate profile/attributes, that are defined following the identified needs of the stakeholders and learning domains in the QF of Bangladesh for higher education.

Criterion 4-3: Program learning outcomes (PLOs) are defined within the scope of mission and objectives of the PoE and aligned with graduate profile/attributes.

Criterion 4-4: Program learning outcomes (PLOs) are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound.

Criterion 4-5: Curriculum of the program is designed in compliance with the qualifications framework (QF) of Bangladesh for higher education in terms of graduating credits and credit value.

Criterion 4-6: Program learning outcomes and courses are aligned to make the content of the curriculum appropriate and adequate.

Criterion 4-7: In case of Bachelor degree program curriculum of the program includes minimum 25% of total credits for general education courses with clearly defined course learning outcomes and mapped with PLOs and learning domains of QF. In case of Master's degree program curriculum of the program includes minimum 10% of total credits for general education courses with clearly defined course learning outcomes and mapped with PLOs and learning domains of QF.

Criterion 4-8: The PoE maintains documented course file with course plan specifying pre-requisite course(s) (if any), credit value, teaching learning & assessment methods and facilities/resources that are mapped out as necessary to facilitate the attainment of course learning outcomes.

Criterion 4-9: Provisions of internship/project/dissertation/field work/work integrated learning opportunities are included in the curriculum.

Standard 5: Teaching-Learning & Assessment

Teaching learning practices must be systematic, innovative, practice oriented and motivating to support the attainment of learning outcomes, promoting sense of responsibility and ethical practices. The PoE must follow fair, valid and reliable assessment methods for tracing students' progress.

Criterion 5-1: Teaching learning and assessment practices involve practical evidences and such practices do initiate critical thinking and inspire students to apply acquired knowledge in the real-life situations focusing on higher order thinking skills (HOTS).

Criterion 5-2: Student learning time (SLT), teaching learning and assessment activities in a course are in accordance with the credit value of that course and cover all the course learning outcomes.

Criterion 5-3: Course teachers strictly maintain class schedule, keep records of attendance, records of missed classes and make up classes (if any).

Criterion 5-4: Course plan/outlines are available to the students to make them well informed about the CLOs, topics to be discussed, teaching learning and assessment strategy and rubrics that will be used to assess performance/attainment of learning outcomes.

Criterion 5-5: Students get timely feedback on the performance in all formative/continuous assessments for better learning and preparation for the summative test/semester final examination.

Criterion 5-6: Question papers for semester final examination are moderated by the examination/moderation committee composed of both internal faculty and external member.

Criterion 5-7: The PoE maintains a clearly defined progression rules, which ensure that the students will move to the next higher level of the program after attainment of requisite qualifications.

Criterion 5-8: Course learning outcomes, teaching learning activities and assessment methods are properly aligned in all courses of the program.

Criterion 5-9: PoE maintains provisions of tutorial classes for each course for better understanding of course content and attainment of course learning outcomes.

Standard 6: Student Admission & Support Services

The HEI/PoE must set appropriate entry requirements and select the right candidates for a particular program under a fair and transparent admission policy. Students must have adequate and appropriate supports for better attainment of learning outcomes, exploring potentials, molding personality and preparing them for the real-life situation with sense of responsibility and integrity.

Criterion 6-1: The HEI/PoE maintains a clearly defined and well-communicated admission policy with transfer and withdrawal provisions, entry requirements that reflect the level of qualifications required to match with the nature of the discipline and mission of the PoE. Admission policy is effective to select students who have potentials and are able to afford the academic load to complete the program successfully.

Criterion 6-2: The HEI/PoE maintains a separate administrative setup with a clearly defined and well-communicated comprehensive policy for the international students, which includes admission requirements and formalities, fees, exchange/credit transfer and withdrawal provisions.

Criterion 6-3: A well-structured student affairs department/office at the HEI and policy with clear objectives is functional to organize orientation and awareness sessions on health, stress management, food safety, hygiene, vaccination, cyber law, activities that violate law and order, fire safety etc. for sound physical and mental growth of the students.

Criterion 6-4: PoE organizes orientation session(s) for the freshers to acquaint them with the PoE, academic program, facilities, career requirements, career prospects and career pathways before the start of the program.

Criterion 6-5: The PoE formalized the practice of academic guidance and counseling on course content, good conduct and integrity including cheating, plagiarism, cybercrime/cyber law etc. on a regular basis under a well-defined policy.

Criterion 6-6: A well-organized alumni association of the PoE is functional to support the PoE in quality assurance efforts.

Criterion 6-7: PoE ensures and facilitates the participation of students in co-curricular activities and community services under the management of the HEI on a regular basis to promote creativity, social responsiveness, leadership qualities, values, molding personality towards holistic development.

Criterion 6-8: HEI organizes career counseling and guidance sessions for the graduating students and support them in placement on a regular basis.

Criterion 6-9: Student progress and achievement monitoring system is comprehensive enough to identify the students who are showing poor progress, who are not achieving and who are at risk and to support them for improvement.

Standard 7: Faculty and Professional Staff

The HEI/PoE must have a policy to ensure the availability of adequate qualified faculty and professional staff with reasonable teacher student ratio.

Criterion 7-1: The PoE maintains suitably qualified, professionally skilled and experienced faculty to facilitate the attainment of learning outcomes, modify and update course(s) and curricula in their areas of interest.

Criterion 7-2: HEI is maintaining salary structure with incentives to retain the talented and experienced faculty and professional staff.

Criterion 7-3: The HEI/PoE has policy to support the faculty for further enhancement of academic excellence through advanced studies.

Criterion 7-4: HEI/PoE supports and motivates faculty and professional staff to attend seminar, training workshop, conference, and academic visits at home and abroad for professional development under a comprehensive faculty and professional staff development policy.

Criterion 7-5: A comprehensive policy with a set of defined and documented key performance indicators (KPIs) including teaching, research, intellectual contributions of the faculty and professional staff and participation in community development, is well-communicated and in practice at the HEI/PoE to evaluate performances of faculty and professional staff at three levels (i) Head of the PoE, (ii) students and (iii) self-evaluation.

Criterion 7-6: The HEI/PoE maintains a workload distribution policy balancing teaching, research and administrative activities.

Criterion 7-7: The HEI/PoE maintains provision to appoint the recognized and competent practitioners in the related field as guest speaker/faculty/adjunct faculty to bridge the gap between academia and industry/professional life and to provide the students with new ways of thinking and learning with practical orientation.

Criterion 7-8: The PoE maintains ideal combination of faculty with 10% Professor, 20% Associate Professor, 40% Assistant Professor and 30% Lecturer with reasonable teacher student's ratio, depending on the nature of discipline, as necessary for effective teaching learning in the academic program/discipline

Standard 8: Facilities & Resources

The HEI/PoE must ensure availability and access to the appropriate and adequate facilities & resources necessary for effective teaching learning and research depending on the nature of discipline and program.

Criterion 8-1: The PoE maintains a policy for student enrollment in a class/semester on the basis of capacity in terms of free space, number and size of class room, common room, washroom and other facilities like technology and equipment as necessary for attainment of learning outcomes depending on the nature of the program and discipline.

Criterion 8-2: The HEI/PoE has library managed by appropriate library management software and well-trained qualified library professionals with adequate space, workstation, e-library services, periodicals and journals in printed and electronic forms, electronic data bases, easy access, regular allocation of library budget, collection and weeding policy etc.

Criterion 8-3: Necessary physical facilities like, office facilities including secretarial and technical services, fire and safety, free space, workstation, canteen, washroom, prayer room facilities etc. at the HEI/PoE are in good condition with appropriate safety measures, adequate and accessible when needed by the students, faculty and professional staff of the academic program for congenial academic atmosphere.

Criterion 8-4: Laboratory facilities, instructional technology & software, IT learning facilities that are identified through curriculum mapping as necessary to attain the defined learning outcomes of program and course(s) and to conduct research are in good condition with appropriate safety measures, appropriate, adequate and accessible when needed by the students and faculty members under a policy that ensures timely repair/replacement, supply and continuous improvement.

Criterion 8-5: The HEI/PoE maintains a clear policy on adequate financial resource allocation and budgetary control to carry out the regular activities smoothly, to provide facilities and supports that are considered necessary to ensure quality education in the program.

Standard 9: Research & Scholarly Activities

The HEI/PoE must support and promote need-based quality research and innovation for the greater benefit of the stakeholders and society at large.

Criterion 9-1: A comprehensive policy with budgetary provision is functional to develop capacity with appropriate measures to control plagiarism and research culture within the HEI through training and motivation for maximizing intellectual contributions and recognition.

Criterion 9-2: The HEI/PoE encourages faculty to do need-based research focusing on local and global issues under external collaboration.

Criterion 9-3: HEI/PoE maintains a policy and system to disseminate and transfer the research findings to the industry/community/stakeholders through extension services.

Criterion 9-4: The PoE produces high-quality intellectual contributions including research publication in peer reviewed journal that are consistent with its mission and objectives and that impact the development of the discipline and society or community at large.

Standard 10: Monitoring, Evaluation & Continual Improvement

The HEI/PoE must have a comprehensive system of monitoring, evaluation and review of policies and practices to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats with achievable benchmark for sustainable quality assurance and continual improvement.

Criterion 10-1: Well-functional Institutional Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) with documented policies and procedures for quality assurance is in place within the organizational set up of the HEI.

Criterion 10-2: The PoE maintains a formal system of collection and management of stakeholder's feedback, comments of the course teacher and student on the courses, emerging changes in the industry and working life, effectiveness of the courses and academic program.

Criterion 10-3: Using the feedback from the stakeholders the PoE continually and systematically monitor, evaluate and review the effectiveness of the programs, policies and procedures to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and ratify those for sustainable quality assurance and continual improvement with achievable benchmark.

Criterion 10-4: The HEI/PoE maintains university industry collaboration (UIC) for mutual benefits and improvement.

Discipline Specific Requirements for program Accreditation

It is to be noted that the abovementioned standards and criterion are in a very generalized form as these are mandatory for all programs. There will be one expert committee consisting of recognized academics from the discipline/subject of the program under consideration for accreditation. The expert committee will provide a list of discipline specific requirements under the standards on curriculum, teaching-learning assessment and facilities. The Accreditation Committee during external quality assessment will check the availability, adequacy and appropriateness of these requirements for quality education.