

THE UNIVERSITY COUNCIL OF JAMAICA

THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS

Accreditation is a two-part process with 10 steps. Part 1, Registration, entails steps 1 – 5 and part 2, Accreditation, which includes steps 6 – 10.

REGISTRATION

To be eligible to submit programmes for accreditation, institutions must first seek registration by the University Council of Jamaica (UCJ). The aim of registration is to certify that an institution meets certain minimum operating standards required for the conduct of a tertiary institution in Jamaica. It is a **first step towards the accreditation of programmes** offered by an institution. Registration, therefore, is a pre-accreditation status. The criteria for registration are closely related to the criteria for accreditation since they are meant to provide registered institutions with a foundation for logical development towards accreditation. Accreditation is a voluntary process.

Step 1 APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION

- The scheduling of a preliminary meeting with the institution to discuss the quality assurance framework, the requirements of the documentation and the registration process;
- The institution's submission of an Application for Registration;
- The processing and review of documents submitted by the institution to determine eligibility for Registration visit.

Step 2 SITE VISIT

- The selection and training of an evaluation team for the Registration visit;
- The interviewing of relevant stakeholders of the institution on-site and evaluation of the institution's facilities and resources by the evaluation team.

Step 3 REPORT WRITING

- The preparation of the Registration report by members of the evaluation team.

Step 4 INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE

- The Registration report is sent to the President/Principal of the institution for review;
- The institution prepares a written response to the UCJ to address the recommendations in the Registration report.

Step 5 REGISTRATION DECISION

- The review of the Registration report and the institution's response by the Accreditation, Curriculum and Development Committee (AC&D) and the submission of a recommendation to Council;

- The Council's review of the recommendation of the AC&D;
- Council may delay a decision and ask that the institution address particular issues. In such a case, the application would revert to Step 4 of the process;
- The decision of Council is communicated to the institution in writing.

ACCREDITATION

Once registered, an institution has a maximum of four years to submit programme(s) for accreditation. Accreditation is the status granted to a programme that has been found, through self-study and peer review, to meet or exceed established standards for educational quality. Accreditation promotes the improvement of educational quality through self-evaluation, self-regulation and accountability. The role of the accrediting body is to ensure the attainment and maintenance of quality through application of educational standards.

Step 6 APPLICATION FOR ACCREDITATION

- The scheduling of training of staff of the institution in preparing for accreditation;
- The institution's submission of a completed application for programme accreditation;
- The processing and review of documents submitted by the institution to determine eligibility for an accreditation visit.

Step 7 ACCREDITATION SITE VISIT

- The selection and training of an evaluation team for the accreditation visit;
- The interviewing of relevant stakeholders of the institution including students, graduates and employers of graduates and an evaluation of the institution's facilities and resources by members of the evaluation team.

Step 8 REPORT WRITING

- The preparation of the Accreditation report by members of the evaluation team.

Step 9 INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE

- The Accreditation report is sent to the President/Principal of the institution for review;
- The institution prepares a written response to the UCJ to address the recommendations in the Accreditation report.

Step 10 ACCREDITATION DECISION

- The review of the Accreditation report and the Institution's response by the Accreditation, Curriculum and Development Committee (AC&D) and the submission of recommendation to Council;
- The Council's review of the recommendation of the AC&D;
- Council may delay a decision and ask that the institution address particular issues. In such a case, the application would revert to Step 9 of the process;
- The decision of Council is communicated to the institution in writing.