



**By-Laws
and
Standard Operating Procedures
(SOPs)**

**National Agriculture Education Accreditation Council
Higher Education Commission, Sector H-9, Islamabad**

Contents

	Page
1 General-----	1
2 Establishment and Functions of the Council-----	2
3 Appointment of Chairperson and the Vice Chairperson-----	3
4 Composition and constitution of the Council-----	3
5 Honorarium and Allowances of the Members-----	4
6 Registration and Filling of Vacancies-----	4
7 Meetings of the Council-----	4
8 Principles and Objectives-----	5
9 Scope-----	6
10 Functions of the Council-----	7
11 Accreditation of Degree Programs-----	8
12 Institutions-----	9
13 National Recognition-----	9
14 Committees-----	10
15 Accreditation Visits-----	10
16 Secretariat of the Council-----	10
17 Authentication of Decisions-----	11
18 Powers to Make rules/ Procedures-----	11
19 Annual Report-----	11
20 Right of Appeal on Accredited Programs-----	11
21 Standards Operating Procedures (SOPs) for Accreditation Councils	13

1. General:-

The economy of Pakistan predominantly is based on agriculture. Realizing it, provincial and federal agencies have incredibly increased the funding to develop this sector on scientific and sound footings. Very special role, regarding the streaming and funding of the agriculture education in the country, is being played by Higher Education Commission. Unfortunately, besides harvestable benefits, it has catalyzed the mushroom growth of agriculture education institutions; some of them neither have proper expertise nor infrastructure. It is therefore, imperative to ensure quality and purposefulness of educational programs; it needs direction, guidance, and mechanism to achieve quality standards. There is a dire need of assessment of education institutions with respect to curricula, student's learning, educational delivery systems, strength of faculty and students, laboratories, research, agri. farms and other infra structures that promote the healthy activities among students and teachers. Accreditation processes are considered an effective instrument to achieve these goals.

Accreditation protects and promotes the interest of all stakeholders e.g. academicians, parents, students, academic administrators, employers, and taxpayers. It serves to notify parents and prospective students that a program has not met minimum standards, faculty, deans and administrators of a program's strengths and weaknesses and way of improve the program; Employers that graduates are prepared to begin professional practice, taxpayers that their funds are spent well; and the public that graduates are aware of public health and safety considerations.

Realizing the benefits and needs of accreditation, the establishment of National Agriculture Education Accreditation Council (NAEAC) was strongly recommended in one day joint meeting of Deans' Committee for Restructuring of Agriculture Subjects held on December 18, 2004 at HEC Regional Centre, Lahore, for accreditation of degrees in agriculture in Pakistan.

Agriculture is major academic discipline and professional field in Pakistan. A large number of educational institutions offer degree programs in agriculture related areas in public sector. It has therefore become essential that an internationally acceptable and industrially viable set of citation may be evolved for various degree programs in agriculture related degree awarding institutions. For this purpose, it is proposed that an

accreditation authority be setup, which would periodically evaluate, scrutinize, and monitor the standards followed in different degree awarding institutions and their affiliated colleges. This authority shall be termed as the National Agriculture Education Accreditation Council (NAEAC).

2. Establishment and Functions of the Council:-

Whereas, Higher Education Commission was constituted on 11th September, 2002 by the promulgation of Ordinance, F.NO. 2(1)/2002. Pub And whereas the Higher Education Commission has been authorized in article 3 Sub-Section (e) to set up national or regional evaluation Council or authorize any existing Council or similar body to carry out accreditation of Institutions including their departments, faculties and disciplines by giving them appropriate rating. The Commission shall help build capacity of existing Councils or bodies in order to enhance the reliability of the evaluation carried out by them.

Whereas, now there is an urgent need for the constitution of the **National Agriculture Education Accreditation Council (NAEAC)** for the smooth and the efficient working of the affairs of the Higher Education Commission regarding the accreditation of institutions and their departments, faculties and disciplines by giving them appropriate ratings, now therefore, the said Council by the name of National Agriculture Education Accreditation Council (NAEAC) is established with immediate effect with the following, organization, objectives, functions and duties to perform:

i. Controlling Authority:-

The Controlling Authority of the Council shall be the Chairman, Higher Education Commission, who may supervise the affairs of the Council.

ii. Establishment of the Council:-

As soon as may be, the Higher Education shall, by notification establish a Council to be called National Agriculture Education Accreditation Council (NAEAC).

3. Appointment of Chairperson and the Vice Chairperson:-

The Controlling Authority shall appoint persons of national eminence holding basic degree in discipline of Agriculture i.e. B.Sc. (Hons) Agriculture and proven ability who has made significant contribution to higher education as teacher, researcher or administrator in the domain of Agriculture as a Chairperson and a Vice Chairperson on such terms and conditions as it may determine. The controlling Authority will appoint Vice Chairperson on the recommendations of Chairperson.

4. Composition and constitution of the Council:-

The Council shall consist of following members, to be nominated by the Controlling Authority from Provincial Agricultural Universities in the first and subsequent instances namely:-

- a. The Chairperson with prescribed qualification as above (3).
- b. The Vice Chairperson with prescribed qualification as above (3).
- c. A Representative of Higher Education Commission
- d. A Representative of Ministry of Science and Technology preferably a basic degree holder in agriculture i.e. B.Sc. (Hons) Agri.
- e. A Representative of Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock preferably a basic degree holder in agriculture i.e. B.Sc. (Hons) Agri.
- f. One Representative each from Provincial Agricultural Universities, Agriculture Research Institutes and Agriculture Department.
- g. Four members from leading agriculture industry preferably with a strong academic background.
- h. All Deans/Principals of Agriculture Universities/ Colleges recognized by HEC having basic degree in agriculture i.e. B.Sc. (Hons) Agri. with PhD in Agriculture domain and having at least ten years of university level teaching and research experience in the same domain.
- i. One member shall be designated by the Chairperson as the Secretary of the Council who shall be incumbent with additional responsibilities.

- j. The Chairperson and the members shall hold office for a period of four years and shall be eligible for re-appointment but for not more than two consecutive tenures.
- k. The Chairperson and the members may not be removed from office before the expiry of their term except on proven charges of corruption, inefficiency, permanent disability or failure to attend three consecutive meetings without initiation in advance.

5. Honorarium and Allowances of the Members:-

The Chairperson and members shall not be entitled to any salary or benefits for their services except such honorarium/ remuneration and allowances as may be prescribed.

6. Registration and Filling of Vacancies:-

- a. The Chairperson or any member may, by writing under his hand addressed to the Controlling Authority, resign from his office.
- b. Any vacancy occurring in the membership of the Council due to death, removal or resignation shall be filled by the Controlling Authority.
- c. In the case of vacancy occurring in the office of the Chairperson, the Controlling Authority may nominate any Member of the Commission to act as Chairperson for a maximum period of three months during which period the Controlling Authority shall fill in the vacancy by appointing a regular Chairperson.

7. Meetings of the Council:-

- a. A meeting of the Council shall be held at least twice a year on such day, time and place as the Chairperson may determine as per HEC Notification No.4-16/QAA/HEC/2011/, dated July 15, 2011 (Annexure-I).
- b. For the purpose of a meeting of the Council, 60% of the nominated members shall constitute the quorum. However, meetings pertaining to review of policies and procedures 75% of the nominated members shall constitute the quorum.
- c. The Chairperson or, in his absence, the Vice Chairperson shall preside the meeting. A member to be nominated by the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson

shall preside the meeting in case of absence of both Chairperson and Vice Chairperson.

- d. All discussion of the Council shall be expressed in terms of the opinion of the majority of its members present and voting. In the event of an equality of votes, the Chairperson or, as the case may be, the Member presiding the meeting shall have a casting vote.

8. Principles and Objectives:-

- a. The proposed accreditation is to be used to assure quality in agriculture degree programs in educational institutions. It would require an educational institution or program to meet certain defined standards or criteria. The accreditation is not to be confused with certification. In general, institutions and programs are accredited, and individuals are certified.
- b. Accreditation shall be a mandatory process for all relevant academic programs offered by public and private sector institutions. The incentive for obtaining such accreditation shall be enhanced recognition in the agriculture community and prospective students.
- c. Accreditation will be carried under the umbrella of HEC and via the proposed National Agriculture Education Accreditation Council, a body to be established.
- d. Systematize and execute a comprehensive process of accreditation of the agriculture degree programs, and assist and advise institutions in planning their academic programs.
- e. Support the intellectual development of students interested in pursuing agriculture profession and provide professional assistance to organizations.
- f. The proposed authority shall take into consideration the following aspects for accreditation of degree programs in the agriculture related subjects:
 - i. Overall scope and structure of the degree program
 - ii. Curricula/ syllabi
 - iii. The requisite infrastructure
 - iv. The faculty

- v. Level of compatibility with international standards and trends
- vi. Level of Skill Development by the degree program evaluated on the basis of both theory and practical in core as well as allied disciplines of Agriculture
- vii. The students support
- viii. The laboratory facilities
- ix. Facilities for students activities and other amenities
- x. Financial aid/ assistance
- xi. Level of job placement of agricultural graduates

9. Scope:-

The degree programs of the following disciplines of agriculture shall fall in the purview of the proposal accreditation.

- a. Agronomy and Crop Physiology
- b. Plant Breeding and Genetics
- c. Agricultural Entomology
- d. Agricultural/ Plant Pathology
- e. Forestry, Range Management and Wildlife
- f. Horticulture
- g. Soil and Environmental Science
- h. Agricultural Economics
- i. Marketing and Agribusiness
- j. Food Science and Technology
- k. Agricultural Education and Extension
- l. Animal Science
- m. Weed Science
- n. Plant Protection

Additional emerging disciplines and degree programs pertaining to the agriculture shall be added in this list in the future for example Agri. Biotechnology, etc. NAEAC shall consider the equivalence in various degree programs before accreditation of degree programs.

10. Functions of the Council:-

- a. To organize and carry out a comprehensive program of accreditation of agriculture programs leading to degree.
- b. The NAEAC shall propose policies, procedures, and criteria or may suggest changes or revisions of the same for Accreditation.
- c. The NAEAC shall administer the accreditation process based on the approved policies, procedure, and criteria.
- d. The NAEAC shall approve the list of evaluators to participate in the process of accreditation of academic programs.
- e. The NAEAC shall constitute Accreditation Inspection Council (AIC) for the evaluation of relevant academic programs for accreditation. AIC (to be constituted from the approved list of evaluators) shall make recommendations to NAEAC the final decision of the accreditation or necessary action will be made by NAEAC.
- f. Procedure and decisions on all appeals with respect to accreditation actions shall be the responsibilities of the NAEAC.
- g. Accreditation decision will be based exclusively on the suitable criteria, policies and procedures as approved by the NAEAC.
- h. To publish a list of Ranking of agriculture qualifications/ programs.
- i. To promote intellectual development and understanding of subject areas that impact accreditation activities in the agriculture profession.
- j. To prepare, print and publish information on any or all aspects of agriculture and its applications.
- k. To collect, index and publish information on any or all aspects of agriculture, its teaching applications, its application and uses to industry and to maintain or support any library, bureau, and database or information system conducive to this end.
- l. To select program evaluators.
- m. To train and asses program evaluators.

- n. To assist academic institutions in planning their educational programs for accreditation.
- o. To identify to the public, prospective students, student counselors, parents, educational institutions, professional societies, potential employers, governmental agencies, and state licensing or certification boards of specific programs that met minimum criteria for accreditation.
- p. To provide guidance for the improvement of the existing educational programs and development of future programs leading to the agriculture profession.
- q. To stimulate the improvement of agriculture education and research in Pakistan.
- r. To develop Accreditation Policies and processes.
- s. To develop guidance and procedures for program Evaluators.
- t. To develop Guidelines and Procedures for Programs and Institutions.
- u. To develop Guideline for Selection of Evaluators.
- v. To identify and develop Guidelines for Ensuring “No Conflict of Interest”.
- w. To develop program Evaluator’s Training Manual Self Study Questionnaire.
- x. To develop Forms and Templates.
- y. Collect information and statistics on accreditation of higher education of agriculture and its respective Institutions as it may deem fit and may cause it published.
- z. The NAEAC shall decide about the equivalence of degrees in the domain of Agriculture and shall notify to various recruiting agencies etc.

11. Accreditation of Degree Programs:-

- a. The Council shall publish a list of Accreditation Programs as prescribed.
- b. All institutions in Pakistan which grant a Recognized Agriculture Qualification must apply to the Council to have such qualification accredited.

- c. The Recognized Agriculture Qualification granted by institutions recognized by the respective authorized bodies outside Pakistan shall also be recognized by the Council as per need in case of Pakistan graduates of agriculture program.
- d. Every institution in Pakistan which has an Accreditation Program shall furnish such information as the Council may, from time to time, require as to the courses of study and examination to be undergone in order to obtain such-Recognized Agriculture Qualification.
- e. The Council shall appoint such number of Program Evaluator as it may deem requisite to attend at any or all of the examinations held by the institutions in Pakistan for the purpose of granting Recognized Agriculture Qualification which are Accreditation or in respect of which Accreditation has been sought.

12. Institutions:-

Programs will be considered for accreditation if any offered by an institution of higher learning in one of the following categories:

- a. Institutions chartered by Federal or Provincial governments.
- b. Institution affiliated by the chartered universities or degree awarding Institutions.
- c. Institutions offering degree programs under affiliation/ collaboration with foreign universities under the approval from HEC.
- d. Institutions that operate a sub-campus/ branch-campus, and conduct program that is substantially equivalent to the one located on the main campus.
- e. When a multi-campus will be considered as a separate institution in the evaluation process.

13. National Recognition:-

- a. NAEAC shall be a nationally and internationally recognized body for Higher Education Accreditation of Agriculture in Pakistan. It shall be responsible for the accreditation of educational programs leading to degree in the agriculture discipline.

- b. Its endorsement and certification shall be valued and drawn on by professional and technical societies, by employers, and by the institutions themselves for self-appraisal and improvement.
- c. NAEAC shall run and execute the accreditation program on behalf of HEC under its guidance and instructions.

14. Committees:-

- a. The Council may set up as many committees as may be required to effectively perform its functions.
- b. The composition and functions of a committee shall be such as the Council may determine.

15. Accreditation Visits:-

- a. NAEAC shall constitute an Accreditation Inspection Committee (AIC) for purpose of inspection visit to evaluate each respective candidate program from the approved list of evaluators.
- b. The Chairperson of the Council shall head the AIC or, a Member of Council as nominated by the Chairperson of NAEAC.
- c. The inspection process shall be carried on in a manner to evaluate programs preferably alternatively one from public sector and one from private sector.

16. Secretariat of the Council:-

- a. The office of the Chairperson's current employment shall be designated as the Secretariat/ Headquarters of the Council to monitor and coordinate all its activities.
- b. The Secretariat shall be supported by Office Manager and relevant supporting staff to be hired by the Higher Education Commission as per its terms and conditions. Such staff will be appointed on permanent grounds for the proper continuation of the record.

17. Authentication of Decisions:-

All decisions of the Council shall be authenticated by the signature of the Chairperson or of any other member authorized by it in this behalf and all other orders or instruments issued or executed by or on behalf of the Council shall be authenticated by the signature of an officer of the Council authorized by its.

18. Powers to Make rules/ Procedures:-

The Council may, with the prior approval of the Controlling Authority, by notification, make rules/ procedure for carrying out the purpose of its establishment.

19. Annual Report:-

The Council shall also submit to the Controlling Authority after the end of every year a report on the state of accreditation of agriculture education degree programs and other activities during that year.

20. ¹Right of Appeal on Accredited Programs:-

The Council as per its bye-laws of clause-10 sub-section-f provides the right for appeal against the decision of AIC and outcomes of accredited degree programs but so far no such appeal has been filed. As in the certain cases grievances of the host institution regarding the conduct, approach and accreditation outcomes of their degree programs may arise, provision for right of appeal has been made in NAEAC bye-laws. Detailed procedure for the same is proposed as under:

a. Appeal by the Institution and Duration of Appeal:

In case an institution wishes to appeal for a review of the action on accreditation taken by AIC & NAEAC, a written application along with the prescribed fee should be sent to the Secretariat within 30 days of the date of notification of the action/outcome.

b. Scrutiny by the NAEAC Secretariat:

The Secretary – NAEAC, after initial scrutiny will refer the application/pro-forma and other relevant documents to the Appeals Committee for further processing; all

¹ Approved by the Council in its 7th meeting held on November 27, 2012 under agenda item No.VI

the relevant documents must be provided by the host institution to the secretariat as and when required.

c. Appellant Committee:

On receipt of such an application, and being satisfied about its prima facie case, the Chairman - NAEAC may appoint a special Committee or Executive Committee, consisting of a minimum of three members including Chairman and two subject specialists who were not initially involved in the visitation, to conduct the appeal review. A meeting of the Committee will be convened, wherein the aggrieved institution and the members of the AIC may be invited to present their viewpoints. The Committee may also visit the institution, if necessary. The recommendations of this Committee will be considered by the Chairman–NAEAC before arriving at the final decision. The decision of the Appellant Committee will be final.

d. Appeals Fee:

It is proposed to charge a non-refundable fee of Rs.30,000/- for the purpose of appeal at the time of application for appeal.



Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) For Accreditation Councils

Purpose: The purpose of these Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) is to provide guidelines to Accreditation Councils which will adopt it for personnel management, administration, finance, audit and execution.

Scope: These SOPs shall apply to all Accreditation Councils established by HEC till such time that HEC provides funding.

Council Employees:

1. The Chairperson and members of the Council shall not be entitled to any salary or benefits for their services except such honorarium and allowances as may be prescribed by the Controlling Authority¹.
2. The job vacancies shall be advertised in the national press. The applications received shall be scrutinized by the scrutiny committee for eligibility of candidates and short listing shall be carried out based on academic qualification, relevant experience, and other requirements as per advertisement.
3. The short listed candidates shall be interviewed by a Council Selection Committee appointed by the Chairperson of the Council in accordance with standard procedures.
4. Council staff shall be appointed on the recommendations of the Selection Committee.
5. The services of the Council employees will be contractual, initially for a period of one year. The contract may be renewed based on satisfactory performance.
6. The appointment during the period of contract shall be liable to termination on thirty (30) days notice on either side or payment of basic pay in lieu thereof, without assigning any reasons.

1. Controlling Authority: Chairman, Higher Education Commission

7. An employee would be at the disposal of the council and may be employed in any manner required by the appropriate authority without claim for additional remuneration.
8. The employee would be granted leaves as admissible under the Revised Leave Rules, 1980. However, the provision contained in rules 5(c), 8, 11, 14, 16, 17, 18-A, 19, 27, 33, 34, 35, 36, and 30 of Rules ibid shall not apply. All leave at the credit of the employee will lapse on the termination of contract.
9. Government Conduct and Disciplines rules, 1964 shall be followed by Council employees as amended from time to time.
10. Removal from Service (Special Powers) Ordinance 2000 shall be applicable on council employees.

Financial and Accounting Procedures:

1. Budget of each Council will be prepared in accordance with the HEC defined parameters and approved by the respective Councils.
2. The Council will maintain its account which will be operated with dual signatures as per its assigned persons.
3. Proper and updated record of expenditure will be maintained in the form of disbursement vouchers, Bill of claim, Cashbook and Budget register etc.
4. The council shall establish an internal / commercial audit mechanism. The auditors will be selected by the Council.
5. Annual accounts and audited reports after approval of the authority² will be submitted to the HEC.
6. The Chairperson of Council will act as DDO for operation of the accounts.
7. The financial and accounting procedures of Council shall be governed as per its prescribed rules.
8. For accreditation, the fee structure will be determined by the Council.
9. TA/DA shall be admissible as per Govt. rules.

2. Authority: Chairperson of the respective Council

10. In addition to TA/DA, the remuneration may be paid to the evaluators for any assignment as prescribed by the Council.

Procurement Rules:

1. Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) procurement rules and procedures shall be followed for all types of purchases and acquisition of stores for Council to avoid audit objection and ensure transparency in the procurement process.
2. As per rules, procurement of stores/supplies having value less than Rs.25,000/- shall be purchased without any bid or quotation.
3. An indent shall be raised of the needed store items and administrative approval for the purchase shall be acquired.
4. All supplies / items shall be purchased from the pre-qualified/approved suppliers.
5. Indenting stores worth more than Rs. 0.100 million shall be purchased through pre-qualified suppliers on competitive basis with at least three sealed quotations.
6. Time limit for receiving the quotations from pre-qualified suppliers shall be at least 15 days.
7. Sealed quotations received by mail shall be opened and evaluated through an evaluation committee. All the committee members shall sign comparative statement prepared along with recommendations and shall sign all the documents of quotations.
8. Invitation for quotations as well as direct purchases shall be made only with the prior approval of competent authority.
9. Supply order shall be valid for 15 days with 15% repeat order.
10. Council Secretariat shall examine the stores and enter the durable on respective page number of the stock register.