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**THE ACCREDITATION COUNCIL FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND  
ENTERPRISE EDUCATION (ACEEE)**

*--- accrediting for entrepreneurial excellence and leadership*

**THE ACCREDITATION DIVISION OF INSTITUTE OF CLASSIC  
ENTREPRENEURSHIP, NIGERIA (ICENT)**

## **ACCREDITATION PROCESS MANUAL**

## **PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT**

**The Accreditation Process Manual is the central document and starting point for all those aiming at ACEEE accreditation or re-accreditation. Addressing both entrepreneurial tertiary institution as well as engaged tertiary institution accreditation, the document provides relevant background information and guides through the accreditation process.**

## **OTHER KEY DOCUMENTS**

The document refers to other key documents applicant institutions should consult during the (re)accreditation process, including:

- Accreditation Standards for Entrepreneurial Tertiary institution Accreditation
- Accreditation Standards for Engaged Tertiary institution Accreditation
- ACEEE Accreditation Policies
- Application documents
  - Eligibility datasheet
  - Self-evaluation form

All these documents are included in ACEEE's Application Package, available at the ACEEE website.

## **QUESTIONS?**

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the ACEEE Office via email or phone.

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>INTRODUCTION TO ACEEE ACCREDITATION.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>ACCREDITATION PROFILE .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>ACCREDITATION PROCESS .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>PROCESS OVERVIEW.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>INITIAL ACCREDITATION PROCESS .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>RE-ACCREDITATION PROCESS .....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>ACCREDITATION COSTS.....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>ACEEE MEMBERSHIP .....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>APPENDIX: .....</b>	<b>31</b>

## **INTRODUCTION TO ACEEE ACCREDITATION**

The higher education ecosystem has significantly changed over the past decades with tertiary institutions and other education institutions now being considered to not only have a special capability but also a certain responsibility to make a greater social, economic and cultural impact. ACEEE has been founded to contribute to this favourable change through promoting the recognition and development of entrepreneurial and engaged institutions.

## **THE NEED FOR A NEW ACCREDITATION**

Higher education institutions (HEIs) are key actors in today's knowledge society. Since the early 18th century, these institutions have been both education and research oriented organisations. More recently they have become more entrepreneurial and engaged to external stakeholders such as business and society, thereby adding a third mission to their organisation. There are today many reasons why institutions actively engage with their environment. Tertiary institutions aim to provide students with the skills demanded by organisations in the private, public, not-for-profit and governmental sector, to generate the best possible return on their research investments, to address today's societal challenges and to collaborate with a variety of stakeholders for mutual benefit, just to name a few.

Given the benefits of accreditation to provide recognition and to support organisational development and cultural change, most tertiary institutions today accredit their study programmes and many accredit their quality management and international focus. The tertiary institution's entrepreneurial orientation and engagement with their surrounding region and society, however, has been largely neglected in accreditations.

## **ACCREDITATION COUNCIL FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND ENTERPRISE EDUCATION**

The Accreditation Council for Entrepreneurship and Enterprise Education (ACEEE) is the first council focusing on entrepreneurship and enterprise education on an institutional level. ACEEE aims to set a global standard for entrepreneurial and engaged institutions.

ACEEE's focus is reflected in its belief, vision, mission and values.

### **Our belief**

We believe that effective quality assurance in entrepreneurship and enterprise education are inevitable to increase the direct social, economic and environmental impacts that tertiary institutions make in their ecosystems.

### **Our Vision**

To enhance the performance of entrepreneurial tertiary institutions by offering world-class quality assurance/accreditation services in entrepreneurship and enterprise education programmes.

### **Our Mission**

ACEEE's mission is to challenge the status quo in higher education accreditation by moving beyond the so-called third mission of tertiary institutions (an umbrella term for innovation, tertiary institution-business cooperation, civic engagement, outreach, technology transfer etc.), to

academic entrepreneurship, so as to make tertiary institutions engines for societal and economic development.

### **Our Core Values**

The following core values form the foundation on which we perform work and conduct ourselves:

- **Transparency** | We are honest, transparent and fair.
- **Partnership** | We work with others to create mutually beneficial partnerships.
- **Diversity** | We acknowledge the diversity of tertiary institution missions and cultures.
- **Excellence** | Through customer orientation and continuous innovation, we create extraordinary results.
- **Responsibility** | We are committed to meeting the highest professional standards.

### **ACEEE ACCREDITATION**

The ACEEE accreditation process for both entrepreneurial and engaged tertiary institutions has been established through a process of close cooperation between a wide variety of experts from various backgrounds, nationalities and career levels in the fields of entrepreneurship, collaborative innovation, tertiary institution-business cooperation, 3rd generation tertiary institutions and associated fields. These experts have worked collectively on the accreditation process, standards and guidelines as well as policies which combined provide a framework and tool for recognising and advancing entrepreneurship and enterprise education in higher education.

### **BENEFITS OF ACEEE ACCREDITATION**

In addition to promoting entrepreneurship and enterprise education in higher education worldwide, ACEEE provides significant benefits for institutions that aim at, and are awarded, ACEEE accreditation:

#### **Promotion of cultural change**

Given that entrepreneurship and enterprise education have become crucial in a tertiary institution's missions rather recently, tertiary institutions need to drive mind-set and behavioural change among individuals and groups within the organisation. Aiming for ACEEE accreditation creates a mutual goal and requires collaborative efforts, allowing institutions to initiate and support the process of reconstructing or changing the culture across the organisation. Ultimately, this mind-set and behavioural change will drive staff to actively contribute to the generation of social and economic impact.

#### **Acceleration of organisational development**

As the first accreditation of its kind, ACEEE accreditation allows tertiary institutions to evaluate their status-quo in respect to entrepreneurship and enterprise education. Through the accreditation procedures, the results and derived recommendations institutions gain significant insights into their current entrepreneurship and enterprise education practice, ultimately enabling them to make more informed decisions on their strategic planning and operational activities, and

to improve their performance. Associated with ACEEE are also large scale events that are focused on entrepreneurship and enterprise education, allowing tertiary institutions to network with peers, exchange ideas and take home new concepts to implement in their organisation.

### **Amplification of the recognition of excellence**

There is an ongoing debate if tertiary institutions are educating their students with the appropriate skills and capabilities, if they conduct impactful research, and if they fulfill their societal role as knowledge provider. ACEEE accredited institutions receive acknowledgement for addressing the above and related issues and promote themselves as a suitable organisation for current and future students, employees and partner from the public and private sector. The accreditation also contributes to the institution's standing amongst national and international funding bodies, governmental organisations, the scientific community as well as the general public.

## ACCREDITATION PROFILE

**While several other accreditations involve entrepreneurship and/or enterprise education elements, they are targeted towards another main goal, e.g. education, internationalisation or quality management. ACEEE's accreditation for entrepreneurial and engaged tertiary institutions is the world's first comprehensive approach to accredit institutions with respect to their third mission, clearly promoting the entrepreneurship and enterprise education orientation of an institution.**

ACEEE provides institutional accreditation for both entrepreneurship and enterprise education. Tertiary institutions can apply for accreditation (either divisional or institutional) or dual accreditation (both divisional and institutional). The accreditation process takes between 10 to 16 months with estimated staff efforts of 240 to 440 hours for single accreditation, depending e.g. on the tertiary institution's experience with accreditation procedures, the availability of written information and the institution's pro-active behaviour. ACEEE's entrepreneurial tertiary institution accreditation is awarded for a period of 5 years.

### Accreditation types

The below descriptions highlight ACEEE's understanding of entrepreneurial and engaged tertiary institutions and provide a reference point for those tertiary institutions interested in applying for one or both accreditations.

#### *Divisional Accreditation*

Divisional accreditation focuses on the microcosm of an academic unit (individual faculty, department, school and centre) to strengthen its role within the institution and in its surroundings. ACEEE's Divisional Accreditation allows single academic units in tertiary institutions, including faculties, schools departments and centres, to showcase to students, tertiary institution stakeholders, industry stakeholders and society their unwavering dedication to entrepreneurship and enterprise education.

The objectives, process and standards of divisional ACEEE accreditation are aligned to institutional ACEEE accreditation, providing a coherent system for higher education institutions. On the following pages, we provide you with all details for divisional accreditation and point to the main differences between ACEEE's two accreditation levels.

#### *Institutional Accreditation*

Institutional accreditation utilises a comprehensive, holistic approach to bring about a systemic change at a tertiary institution and bridge the gap between academia, and wider economy and society. Institutional ACEEE Accreditation allows tertiary institutions to showcase to students, tertiary institution stakeholders, industry stakeholders and society their unwavering dedication to enterprise management and/or entrepreneurship on the institution level.

Institutional ACEEE accreditation offers a unique playbook for capitalising on stakeholder engagement on systemic, tertiary institution level, fuelling institutional change, placing the

tertiary institution on the global radar, and ultimately creating impact beyond traditional boundaries.

### **Accreditation levels**

ACEEE is committed to advancing higher education ecosystems with regards to entrepreneurship and enterprise education. Next to promoting those institutions that are already leaders in the field, ACEEE also aims to support and acknowledge promising and well-performing organisations in their efforts to develop their entrepreneurship and enterprise education activities. In accordance with this two-fold objective, accreditations are offered at two levels.

#### ***Standard accreditation***

Standard accreditation is awarded to those institutions that meet the standards as set by ACEEE's Accreditation Council.

#### ***Premium accreditation***

Premium accreditation is awarded to those institutions that provide an exceptional performance with regards to the standards. Please refer to the ACEEE's Standards and Guidelines document for more information.

Please note that the graphical presentations of the seals above are exemplary. Premium accreditation is awarded for both entrepreneurial tertiary institution accreditation as well as engaged tertiary institution accreditation.

## **KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Accreditation procedures are complex undertakings involving a variety of stakeholders at both sides, the applicant institution as well as the accreditation organisation. To make the procedure as efficient as possible, it is key that all stakeholders not only understand their own but also the function and structure of other stakeholder groups.**

### **Accreditation Council**

#### **FUNCTION**

The Accreditation Council is ACEEE's highest decision making body. It approves changes to the accreditation process, standards and guidelines as well as policies. Changes can be proposed by individual members of the council, by the Accreditation Office, or members of the Advisory Board. The Council oversees initial and re-accreditations in order to ensure the consistent application of the set standards.

The Accreditation Council functions as a pool of experts from which various other committees are formed, including:

- Accreditation Committees
- Institutional Review Committees
- Appeal Panels

The members might also serve on Peer Review Teams that visit applicant institutions.

#### **STRUCTURE & APPOINTMENT**

The Accreditation Council is composed of a chair, vice-chair and a minimum of 12 and a maximum of 40 members. The members of the council are recognised experts in the field. Members might be recruited from institutions that have received ACEEE accreditation in the past, given that they bring in specific expertise with respect to ACEEE's accreditation process, standards and guidelines, and policies. The majority of members currently hold or have held management positions within higher education institutions or institutions in the field of entrepreneurship and enterprise education. The members are appointed by the chair and vice-chair of the council.

### Accreditation Office

#### **FUNCTION**

The Accreditation Office is the operational backbone of ACEEE. It is the first point of contact for interested institutions, applicants as well as already accredited institutions. Apart from other activities, the Accreditation Office helps tertiary institutions with questions regarding eligibility, the accreditation process, billing and status updates. Next to providing services to current and future members, the Accreditation Office also supports the Accreditation Council, the Advisory Board as well as the Accreditation Committees and Peer Review Teams that are set up for each

accreditation process. The Accreditation Office works closely with the Chair and Co-chair of the Accreditation Council.

## **STRUCTURE**

The Accreditation Office is composed of a head and a support team. The size and structure of the support team is reviewed every twelve months with the main performance criterion being its ability to respond to inquiries within two to three business days.

### **Advisory Board**

## **FUNCTION**

The Advisory Board advises the Accreditation Council and the Accreditation Office. Advise might include but is not limited to:

- Adjustments of ACEEE’s accreditation process, standards and guidelines, and policies
- Services offered to members
- Changes in national or international accreditation
- Opportunities for ACEEE’s development
- Future challenges ACEEE has to face
- Potential candidates for ACEEE’s Accreditation Council

## **STRUCTURE & APPOINTMENT**

The Advisory Board is composed of a chair and a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 12 members. Members of the advisory board can include a variety of stakeholders, including representatives from higher education institutions, intermediaries (such as technology transfer offices, incubators, and science parks), businesses, governmental organisations or other organisations supporting innovation, entrepreneurship and enterprise education (e.g. regional development offices or associations active in the field). The chair and members of the Advisory Board are appointed by the Accreditation Council chair and vice-chair.

### **Accreditation Committees**

## **FUNCTION**

Accreditation Committees are formed to manage the initial or re-accreditation procedure of a single institution. During each accreditation, the Accreditation Committee reviews the self-evaluation reports and prepares an “Initial Evaluation Report”, including a recommendation on the continuity of the process. The Accreditation Commission appoints the Peer Review Team with the applicant institution being able to challenge the appointment. Having received and reviewed the report of the Peer Review Team, the committee prepares a “Final Evaluation Report”, including a recommendation to the council to grant accreditation without conditions, with condition(s) or refuse the accreditation.

## STRUCTURE & APPOINTMENT

Each Accreditation Committee is composed of three members of the Accreditation Council, one of whom will act as Chair of the committee. The members of the committees are selected based on the following conditions:

- ability to judge the respective application institution from a technical perspective
- ability to relate to the applicant institution's environment (e.g. culture)
- availability during the accreditation lifetime

Both the chair and the additional members of the Accreditation Committees are appointed by the chair and vice-chair of the Accreditation Council. In case applicant institutions determine any potential conflicts of interests between the members of the Accreditation Committee and their accreditation process, they can challenge the appointment (see ACEEE's Conflict of Interest Policy for more information).

### Peer Review Teams

## FUNCTION

Peer Review Teams are formed to visit the applicant institution and assess the institution on the basis of the self-evaluation report as well as information gathered through interviews and observations during the visit. The Peer Review Teams compose a "Peer Review Visit Report", including a recommendation to the Accreditation Committee to grant accreditation without conditions, with condition(s) or refuses accreditation.

## STRUCTURE & APPOINTMENT

Each Peer Review Team is composed three individuals that all currently hold or have held senior positions in the world of education or business with extensive experience in the field of entrepreneurship and/or enterprise education. One of them will act as chair of the team. The members of the Peer Review Teams can, but do not have to, be members of the Accreditation Council and are selected based on their ability to judge the respective applicant institution as well as their availability. A member of the Accreditation Committee cannot act as a Peer Review Team member in the same accreditation procedure.

The members of Peer Review Teams are appointed by the Accreditation Committee overseeing the respective accreditation procedure. In case there are several potential candidates that fulfill the criteria for participation in the Peer Review Team, those candidates that are located the nearest to the premises of the applicant will be preferred as long as it does not affect the quality of the judgement.

In case applicant institutions determine any potential conflicts of interests between the members of the Peer Review Team and their accreditation process, they can challenge the appointment (see ACEEE's Conflict of Interest Policy for more information).

## **Institutional Change Review Committees**

### **FUNCTION**

Institutional Change Review Committees investigate all changes that might significantly affect the quality or scope of the institutions approach towards entrepreneurship and/or enterprise education. Please refer to the ACEEE's Institutional Change Policy for detailed information on the institutional change review procedure and the function of the committee.

### **STRUCTURE & APPOINTMENT**

Each Institutional Change Review Committee is comprised of a chair and two additional members, all being members of the Accreditation Council. For further information on the selection of the committee members, please refer to the ACEEE's Institutional Change Policy.

## **Appeal Panel**

### **FUNCTION**

Appeal Panels handle all appeals in accordance with ACEEE's Appeal Policy. Please refer to the ACEEE Policies document for detailed information on the appeal procedure and the function of the Appeal Panel.

### **STRUCTURE & APPOINTMENT**

Each Appeal Panel is comprised of a chair and two additional members, all being members of the Accreditation Council. For further information on the selection of the Appeal Panel members, please refer to the Appeals Policy.

## **Legal Representative of the Applicant Institution**

### **FUNCTION**

The applicant's legal representative is the central stakeholder with respect to management and administrative issues, being responsible for:

- applying for eligibility,
- signing the (re-)accreditation agreement between the applicant institution and ACEEE
- authorizing the payment of fees
- challenging the nomination of Accreditation Committee, Peer Review Team and Institutional Change Review Committee members (optional)
- presenting a position statement on the peer review report and/or final evaluation report (optional)
- appealing decisions (optional)

## **Accreditation Manager**

### **FUNCTION**

ACEEE requires the applicant institution to appoint an Accreditation Manager who becomes the driving force within the tertiary institution seeking entrepreneurial and/or engaged tertiary

institution accreditation. Optimally, the Accreditation Manager is well connected within the institution, has experience in accreditation procedures and has been granted a reduction of other responsibilities for the time of the accreditation procedure.

The Accreditation Manager is expected to actively move the accreditation procedure forward by preparing the required documents and fostering the integration and input of the legal representative when required. As the main contact point for the ACEEE Office, the Chair of the Accreditation Committee as well as the Peer Review Team members, the Accreditation Manager shall be able to respond to requests within 2 to 3 business days.

## ACCREDITATION PROCESS

**The ACEEE accreditation process is a standardised, multi-step endeavour, involving a variety of stakeholders. Following their successful initial accreditation, tertiary institutions are required to apply for re-accreditation every five years.**

### PROCESS OVERVIEW

#### Key elements

Initial accreditation starts with an eligibility application in which it will be determined if the applicant falls within the scope of the accreditation. Having declared eligible, an agreement is signed and the institution undertakes a self-evaluation of their entrepreneurship and/or enterprise education practices.

Following this, the institution will be visited by a 3-person Peer Review Team with the final evaluation being undertaken by the Accreditation Committee and the Accreditation Council. As result, the institution will be granted accreditation for a 5-year period with or without conditions, or accreditation will be rejected.

Institutions that have been awarded ACEEE accreditation are required to continuously improve their approach towards entrepreneurship and enterprise education and to apply for re-accreditation around 3.5 years into their accreditation cycle in order to get re-accredited by the end of their accreditation period. The re-accreditation process is similar to the initial accreditation process with the key steps being agreement, self-evaluation, peer review and final evaluation. The focus of the re-accreditation process, however, differs slightly as it puts emphasis on continuous improvement and how the institutions continue to satisfy the ACEEE standards.

The following figure presents the initial accreditation process as well as the re-accreditation process (continuous improvement review) in a simplified version. Please refer to the next sections for a step-by-step description of ACEEE's initial accreditation and re-accreditation process.

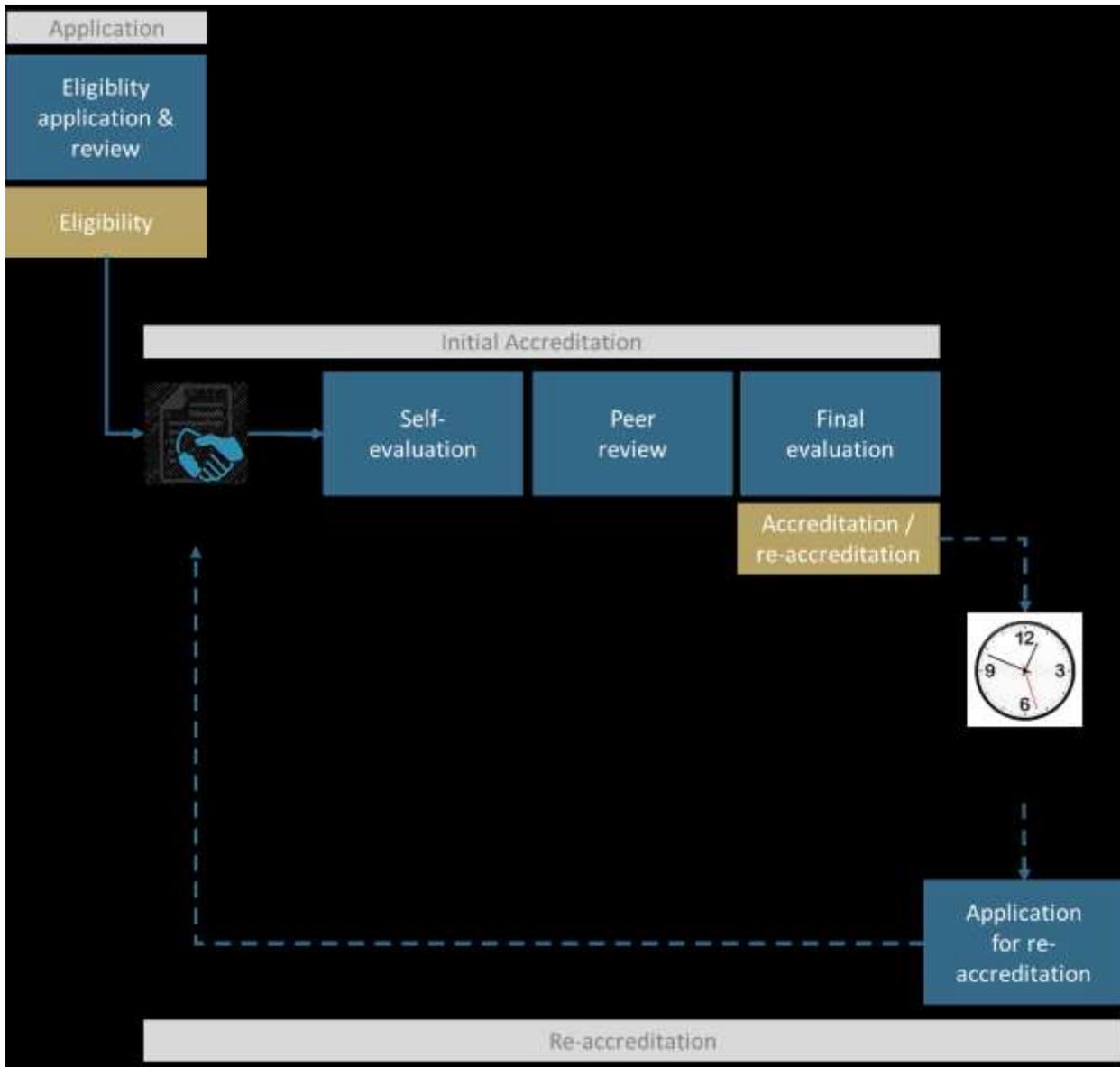


Figure 1: Process overview

## PROCESS MANAGEMENT

Applicant institutions are supported throughout the accreditation procedure by ACEEE's Accreditation Management System. The web-based system allows applicants to:

- determine the current status of their application
- access key documents needed for the procedure
- upload all required material during the accreditation procedure

The Accreditation Management System is accessible via the ACEEE website.

### Example timetable (initial accreditation)

The following table highlights the main actor(s) in each step of the accreditation process and presents the average time frame required for the step. The time frames are indicative and depend significantly on the applicant's commitment to the process. For example, some institutions might be able to sign the contract within a week, whereas others need a longer period of time. Similarly, institutions can speed up the process of the Accreditation Committee respectively the Peer Review Team selection by waiving their right to challenge the selection, as opposed to waiting for the expiration of the 30-day challenge period.

On average, an initial accreditation (single accreditation) takes 10 months. In the most favourable circumstances and when actively driven by the applicant institution, an accreditation may be achieved in 8 months. The average time-frame for re-accreditation can be expected to be 9 months, however, re-accreditation might be achieved in 6 months given an optimal environment. While the re-accreditation process is not much shorter than the initial accreditation one, it should be noted that several steps require much less efforts by the applicant institution (e.g. for the self-evaluation only an update is necessary, compared to a full evaluation in an initial accreditation procedure).

S/N	Steps	Actor(s)		Indicative timeframe
1	Information procurement	-	Applicant	-
2	Eligibility application	ACEEE		2 weeks
3	Eligibility review	ACEEE		2 weeks
4	Signing of the contract		Applicant	1 to 2 weeks
5	Payment of application fee		Applicant	1 to 2 weeks
6	Appointment of Accreditation Committee	ACEEE		3 weeks
7	Accreditation Committee challenge		Applicant	2 weeks
8	Self-evaluation		Applicant	10 weeks
9	Initial Evaluation Report	ACEEE		1 to 2 weeks
10	Payment of peer review fee		Applicant	3 weeks
11	Appointment of Peer Review Team	ACEEE		2 weeks
12	Peer Review Team challenge		Applicant	4 weeks
13	Peer review visit planning	ACEEE	Applicant	4 weeks
14	Peer review visit -	ACEEE	Applicant	-
15	Peer review report	ACEEE		2 weeks
16	Position statement on peer review report		Applicant	2 weeks
17	Final Evaluation Report	ACEEE		3 weeks
18	Position statement on final report		Applicant	2 weeks

19	Final evaluation	ACEEE		2 weeks
20	Publication	ACEEE		1 weeks

TOTAL

10 months

## INITIAL ACCREDITATION

The process for initial accreditation contains 20 steps. Each step is isolated and stands on its own, allowing all stakeholders to easily determine the current status of an application and the tasks that have to be performed next and by whom.

## INFORMATION PROCUREMENT

### STEP 1

#### **Applicant**

Before officially applying for eligibility and ACEEE accreditation, tertiary institutions should inform themselves about the accreditation's focus, its procedure, standards and guidelines, and policies. The ACEEE website ([www.homeofentrepreneurship.com/aceee](http://www.homeofentrepreneurship.com/aceee)) provides a great deal of information, with the most important documents being the ACEEE "Application Package" and FAQ. However, interested institutions are encouraged to engage with the ACEEE Office to clarify any potential questions or concerns they might have.

## ELIGIBILITY APPLICATION

### STEP 2

#### **Applicant**

The interested institution completes and submits an "Eligibility Application" through the ACEEE website (<https://www.homeofentrepreneurship.com/aceee>). Through the eligibility application, ACEEE will determine if the tertiary institution falls within the scope of the accreditation and whether or not it is likely that the tertiary institution may be awarded ACEEE accreditation. The latter, however, should be considered as a preliminary evaluation that is of advisory nature and thus does not limit institutions to proceed.

To be considered eligible, the tertiary institution needs to:

- highlight a true commitment to entrepreneurship and/or enterprise education and have a reasonable prospect of satisfying the ACEEE standards within two years of being declared eligible
- has reasonable autonomy in order to develop and implement strategies, structures, policies and operational activities fostering entrepreneurship and/or enterprise education
- demonstrate sufficient institutional stability

Central documentation to be provided includes:

1. Request for accreditation letter
2. Eligibility datasheet

The datasheet needs to be provided in MS Word format to give ACEEE representatives the opportunity to insert feedback.

## ELIGIBILITY REVIEW

## STEP 3

### **ACEEE**

The chair/vice-chair of the Accreditation Council reviews the institution's eligibility application within 30 days after submission. The applicant institution will be notified of the result of the eligibility review via email. In case of a negative decision, ACEEE will provide the tertiary institution with the ground for rejection. The tertiary institution has the right to appeal the decision, following the procedure outlined in ACEEE's Appeals Policy. Should the committee decide that the tertiary institution is eligible for ACEEE accreditation, the applicant will receive an agreement and information on the payment of the application fee, together with the notification of the eligibility review result.

### **SIGNING OF THE CONTRACT**

## STEP 4

### **Applicant**

Being declared eligible, the tertiary institution signs the accreditation agreement and sends two original signed copies to the address specified in the agreement's accompanying letter. The chair of the Accreditation Council will sign the agreement and return one original copy to the applicant.

### **PAYMENT OF APPLICATION FEE**

## STEP 5

### **Applicant**

The tertiary institution pays the non-refundable application fee as specified in the letter that has been sent with the agreement. With the receipt of payment of the application fee, the accreditation procedure officially starts, the tertiary institution becomes a member of ACEEE and receives its login details to access the Accreditation Management System that will support the institution throughout the entire accreditation procedure.

### **APPOINTMENT OF ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE**

## STEP 6

### **ACEEE**

As soon as the accreditation procedure has started, the chair/vice-chair of the Accreditation Council will appoint an Accreditation Committee for the accreditation procedure. Refer to the section "Key stakeholders and responsibilities" in this document for more information on the function and structure of the committee. The applicant institution will be informed via email about the appointed committee members.

### **ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE CHALLENGE**

## STEP 7

## **Applicant**

Within 30 days of receipt of the appointed committee, the applicant institution has the right to challenge any committee member by pointing out actual or potential conflicts of interest. The procedure for challenging an Accreditation Committee member is defined in ACEEE's Conflict of Interest Policy.

Should the applicant institution not have any objection against the appointed committee, it can waive the right to challenge the committee by uploading a waiver (a template is provided in the ACEEE Application Package) to the Accreditation Management System. With receipt of the waiver, the accreditation procedure will immediately move to the next step, thus speeding up the process. Without providing the Accreditation Council with a waiver, the procedure automatically continues with the next step after the 30-day committee challenge period has expired.

## **SELF-EVALUATION**

### **STEP 8**

#### **Applicant**

The institution completes a self-evaluation report and submits it through ACEEE's Application Management System. All documents required for the self-evaluation process as well as any supporting guidelines can be found in the Application Management System as well as in the Application Package that is available at the public ACEEE website.

The report must be reflective, as opposed to promotional, and feature a critical, evidence-based assessment. The applicant should at all times keep in mind that the self-evaluation report needs to allow the Accreditation Committee to undertake an initial evaluation and serves as a supporting document for the site visit. The report should not exceed 50 pages. Therefore, the applicant should ensure to provide comprehensive information in a concise matter. The report needs to be submitted in PDF and MS Word format (the latter to allow committee members to make notes within the document).

Unless explicitly prohibited by the applicant, ACEEE may use the information provided for aggregate reporting. ACEEE assures both confidentiality and anonymity in this case.

## **INITIAL EVALUATION REPORT**

### **STEP 9**

#### **ACEEE**

Based on the submitted self-evaluation report, the Accreditation Committee members will prepare an Initial Evaluation Report. The report shall be brief (approximately 3-5 pages) and state if the committee has enough evidence to assume that the applicant could be awarded ACEEE accreditation. The report has purely informative character and, thus, has no effect on the applicant's ability to proceed in the accreditation. The purpose of the report is to highlight potential issues and prevent applicants from additional efforts and costs should an accreditation be impossible or very unlikely.

## **PAYMENT OF PEER REVIEW FEE**

### **STEP 10**

#### **Applicant**

The institution pays the non-refundable peer review fee as specified in the letter sent with the Initial Evaluation Report. With the receipt of payment, the accreditation procedure will move to the next step.

## **APPOINTMENT OF PEER REVIEW TEAM**

### **STEP 11**

#### **ACEEE**

The chair of the Accreditation Committee will appoint a Peer Review Team that will visit the applicant institution. Refer to the section “Key stakeholders and responsibilities” in this document for information on the structure of the team. The applicant institution will be informed via email about the appointed team.

## **PEER REVIEW TEAM CHALLENGE**

### **STEP 12**

#### **Applicant**

Within 30 days of receipt of the appointed Peer Review Team, the applicant institution has the right to challenge any team member by pointing out actual or potential conflicts of interest (refer to ACEEE’s Conflict of Interest Policy). The procedure for challenging a Peer Review Team member is defined in ACEEE’s Conflict of Interest Policy.

As in the case of the appointment of the Accreditation Committee, the applicant institution can waive the right to challenge the Peer Review Team by uploading a waiver (a template is provided in the ACEEE Application Package) to the Accreditation Management System and thus speed up the process.

## **PEER REVIEW VISIT PLANNING**

### **STEP 13**

#### **Applicant**

#### **ACEEE**

As soon as the Peer Review Team cannot be challenged anymore by the applicant institution, the planning of the peer review visit starts, with key activities being:

- The chair of the Peer Review Team will prepare a preliminary schedule (based on the example that can be found in appendix 1) for the visit. The schedule will highlight the different activities

to be undertaken as well as the individuals the Peer Review Team would like to meet and the facilities it would like to visit.

- The ACEEE Office will facilitate the process of finding a date for the peer review visit that is suitable for the Peer Review Team, the tertiary institution's Accreditation Project Manager as well as all individuals (or appropriate replacements) that are specified in the preliminary schedule of the visit.

- The ACEEE Office will provide all Peer Review Team members with the respective documentation for the visit, including the Eligibility Application and the Self-evaluation Report provided by the applicant institution as well as the Initial Evaluation Report created by the Accreditation Committee.

- The applicant institution works directly with the individual members of the Peer Review Team to arrange travel and accommodation. All costs associated with the peer review visit are covered by the applicant institution, in accordance with ACEEE's Travel and Reimbursable Expenses Policy.

## **PEER REVIEW VISIT**

### **STEP 14**

#### **Applicant**

#### **ACEEE**

The visit lasts between one and two full days during which the Peer Review Team meets those people that are key in developing, implementing and monitoring the institution's strategies and activities related to entrepreneurship and/or enterprise education.

After the visit, the applicant institution works directly with the individual Peer Review Team members to reimburse expenses they had and are related to the peer review visit and to cover daily allowance. Refer to ACEEE's Travel and Reimbursable Expenses Policy for more information.

## **PEER REVIEW REPORT**

### **STEP 15**

#### **ACEEE**

Within 30 days of the visit, the Peer Review Team prepares a Peer Review Report in which it assesses the applicant institution against ACEEE's standards. The report is based on the Self-evaluation Report presented by the applicant, enriched by the experience the Peer Review Team gained during their visit. The report will be drafted by the chair of the Peer Review Team and shared with the other team members to receive feedback. The report shall reflect the consensus of the team members. In case of disagreement, the opposing opinions shall be clearly highlighted.

The report contains a recommendation for the accreditation decision which may be:

- Accreditation without conditions
- Accreditation with conditions
- Denial of accreditation

The chair of the Peer Review Team sends the report via email to the ACEEE Office. The office will forward the digital report to the applicant institution and in copy to the Accreditation Committee.

## **POSITION STATEMENT ON PEER REVIEW REPORT**

### **STEP 16**

#### **Applicant**

Within 30 days of the receipt of the Peer Review Report, the applicant institution can hand in a position statement in which it comments and/or provides evidence on factual inaccuracies. The chair of the Peer Review Team will correct factual errors and might also take into account comments of the applicant institution. In case of minor edits, the chair shall make these revisions alone. In case of major changes, the chair shall discuss these with the entire Peer Review Team. The chair will document all changes and send the final report, together with the recommendation, to the ACEEE Office.

Should the applicant institution not wish to provide any response to the report, it can waive the right to provide a position statement by uploading a waiver (a template is provided in the ACEEE Application Package) to the Accreditation Management System. With receipt of the letter, the accreditation procedure will immediately move to the next step. Without such a letter, the procedure would continue after the 30-day period has expired.

## **FINAL EVALUATION REPORT**

### **STEP 17**

#### **ACEEE**

The Accreditation Committee prepares a Final Evaluation Report based on all documented material (e.g. Self-evaluation Report, Initial Evaluation Report, Peer Review Report, position statement on Peer Review Report) and recommends to the Accreditation Council the granting accreditation without conditions, or accreditation with condition(s) or rejection of accreditation.

## **POSITION STATEMENT ON FINAL EVALUATION REPORT**

### **STEP 18**

#### **Applicant**

Similar to the position statement which can be provided for the Peer Review Report, the applicant institution can hand in a statement in which it comments on the Final Evaluation Report and/or provides evidence on factual inaccuracies. This statement needs to be uploaded to the Accreditation Management System within 30 days of receipt of the Final Evaluation Report.

Changes will be processed as detailed in step 16 of this process description. The committee chair will send the final report, together with the recommendation, to the Chair of the Accreditation Council.

## **FINAL EVALUATION**

### **STEP 19**

#### **ACEEE**

The chair/vice-chair of the Accreditation Council will review all documented materials in order to ensure the consistent application of the set procedure and standards. In case the chair does not observe any breach of the ACEEE procedure and standards and does not hold any objections against the recommendation of the Accreditation Committee, the Accreditation Council will adopt the recommendation. In any other case, the council chair/vice-chair will consult with the accreditation committee to discuss the issues identified.

The final decision will be communicated to the applicant institution orally or via e-mail, with an official letter following within 14 days. The final decision can be appealed within 30 days of the receipt of the official letter (refer to ACEEE's Appeals Policy for more information).

## **PUBLICATION**

### **STEP 20**

#### **ACEEE**

Should the applicant institution be granted ACEEE accreditation, ACEEE will announce the awarding of the accreditation by adding the name of the applicant institution to the list of accredited tertiary institutions on the ACEEE website.

Having been granted ACEEE accreditation, the tertiary institution has the following responsibilities to maintain accreditation:

- The tertiary institution must inform the ACEEE Office in case it expects any substantial institutional changes that might either result in a loss of eligibility or might challenge the institution's ability to fulfill one (or multiple) of ACEEE's standards. Refer to ACEEE's Institutional Change Policy for more information.
- The tertiary institution must maintain their ACEEE membership by paying the yearly membership fee. Refer to the section "Accreditation costs and efforts" in this document.
- The tertiary institution must undertake a re-accreditation procedure (refer to the next section).

## **RE-ACCREDITATION (CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT REVIEW)**

ACEEE accreditation is awarded for a limited period of time. Thus, tertiary institutions are required to apply for re-accreditation to maintain their ACEEE accreditation. Tertiary institutions that have achieved accreditation are expected to promote institutional development and quality improvement in line with the recommended areas for improvement outlined in the Final Evaluation Report of the previous accreditation procedure. The progress made in this respect needs to be documented and provided for the re-accreditation procedure.

As indicated in figure 1, the re-accreditation process is based on the same key steps as the initial accreditation process, namely application, self-evaluation, peer review, final evaluation, with only minor differences being present in the sub-steps. The 13-step re-accreditation process is detailed below. The description highlights differences in the initial accreditation process and refers to the respective step in the initial accreditation process for more information.

### **STEP 1**

#### **Applicant**

The ACEEE accredited tertiary institution applies for re-accreditation at least 12 months before the end of its accreditation period. It is the responsibility of the institution to ensure a timely application that allows achieving re-accreditation by the expiry date of the current accreditation, preventing a period of non-accreditation. Institutions apply by uploading a “request for re-accreditation letter” (a template is provided in the ACEEE Application Package) and an updated datasheet to the Accreditation Management System. (REF. STEP 2)

### **STEP 2**

#### **ACEEE**

The application will be reviewed within 30 days by the Accreditation Council chair/vice-chair with the ACEEE Office sending the respective agreement to the institution in case of a successful application. (REF. STEP 3)

### **STEP 3**

#### **Applicant**

The institution signs the contract, uploads a digital version (PDF) to the Accreditation Management System and sends two originals via post to the address specified in the accompanying letter. (REF. STEP 4 & 5 )

The institution pays the re-accreditation fee.

### **STEP 4**

#### **ACEEE**

ACEEE appoints the Accreditation Committee as well as the Peer Review Team. In contrast to the initial accreditation process, both the Accreditation Committee as well as the Peer Review

Team will each consist of two members, with one member acting as chair. The members of the committee or the team may have been engaged with a prior accreditation of the institution. The applicant institution will be informed via email about the selection of the Accreditation Committee and Peer Review Team. (REF. STEP 6 & 11)

#### STEP 5

Applicant

If desired, the applicant institution can challenge the committee resp. team members and/or speed up the process by waiving the right to challenge either one. (REF. STEP 7 & 12)

#### STEP 6

Applicant

ACEEE

As soon as neither the Accreditation Committee nor the Peer Review Team can be challenged anymore by the applicant institution, both the applicant institution and ACEEE plan the peer review visit.

Simultaneously to the peer review visit planning, the applicant institution prepares a Self-evaluation Report. The focus of the report shall be on how the institution has improved since the last accreditation and how the institution continues to satisfy the ACEEE standards. (REF. STEP 8 & 13)

#### STEP 7

Applicant

ACEEE

The institution is visited by the Peer Review Team with the team paying particular attention to the development over the past years and how this development affects the satisfaction of the ACEEE standards. (REF. STEP 14)

#### STEP 8

ACEEE

Within 30 days after the visit, the Peer Review Team prepares and presents the Peer Review Report. ( REF. STEP 15)

#### STEP 9

Applicant

If desired, the applicant institution presents a position statement on the Peer Review Report (within 30 days after the receipt of the report) and/or waives the right to present a position statement to speed up the process. (REF. STEP 16)

## STEP 10

ACEEE

The Accreditation Committee prepares and presents the Final Evaluation Report. (REF. STEP 17

STEP 11)

Applicant

If desired, the applicant institution presents a position statement on the Final Evaluation Report (within 30 days after the receipt of the report) and/or waives the right to present a position statement to speed up the process. (REF. STEP 18)

## STEP 12

ACEEE

The chair of the Accreditation Council undertakes a final evaluation and grants accreditation with or without condition(s), or rejects accreditation. ( REF. STEP 19)

## STEP 13

ACEEE

The result of the accreditation procedure will be published on the ACEEE website. (REF. STEP 20)

## **ACCREDITATION COSTS**

### **Administrative fees**

Initial accreditation

### **INITIAL ACCREDITATION FEE**

#### ***Single accreditation***

The total fee for single accreditation is N4.5M with the single fees being:

- Application fee: N1.5M
- Peer review fee: N3M

#### ***Dual accreditation***

The total fee for dual accreditation is N7.5M with the single fees being:

- Application fee: N2.5M
- Peer review fee: N5M

Please note that a combined fee can be paid (i.e. should an institution plan to pay the fee from a project budget). Contact us for more information on payment options.

*For more information, please refer to the ACEEE Process Manual on “download documents and forms” menu. Please note that applicant institutions are also required to cover travel and accommodation for the Peer Review Team members that will visit the institution, in accordance with ACEEE's Travel and Reimbursable Expenses Policy.*

### **YEARLY MEMBERSHIP FEE**

Accredited institutions are required to pay a yearly membership fee for the services continuously provided by ACEEE. The fee covers membership services such as access to good practices and tools, and the free attendance for one person to one of ACEEE's partner conferences, and helps to promote ACEEE around the globe.

Yearly fee: N650,000

### **RE-ACCREDITATION FEE**

Institutions are required to apply for re-accreditation every 5 years, with the costs being:

#### ***Single accreditation***

- N3M

#### ***Dual accreditation***

- N5M

*Plus travel and accommodation for the Peer Review Team members that will visit the institution*

## **ACEEE MEMBERSHIP**

**ACEEE members are part of an exclusive community of like-minded institutions and individuals that are dedicated to promote entrepreneurship and enterprise education and to enlarge the social, economic and cultural contributions the institution makes.**

**Institutions are required to be an ACEEE member to open the initial accreditation procedure respectively to maintain their accreditation. Initially, an institution becomes a member through the signature of the accreditation agreement and the payment of the application fee. Having been granted accreditation, the institution has to renew its membership on an annual basis through the payment of the membership fee. For more information, please refer to the section “Accreditation costs” in this document.**

### **BENEFITS FOR APPLICANT INSTITUTIONS**

Committed to offering an efficient accreditation procedure and supporting the further development of entrepreneurship and enterprise education practice, ACEEE provides applying members with the following benefits:

#### **Efficient management of accreditation procedures**

All members gain access to the ACEEE Application Management System. The system provides all relevant information, helps to keep track of progress and allows the submission of all documents required through an easy to use system.

#### **Connecting of applicants and accredited institutions**

The ACEEE member directory enables applicants to engage with other applicants or accredited institutions for knowledge and experience exchange on ACEEE accreditation or entrepreneurship and enterprise education in general.

#### **Access to case studies and tools for institutional development**

The ACEEE library contains over 100 case studies and tools that can help applicants to gain new insights and ideas to advance entrepreneurship and enterprise education in their tertiary institution.

#### **Acquisition of event discounts**

Applicants receive exclusive offers on fees for conferences and workshops organised or supported by ACEEE.

### **BENEFITS FOR ACCREDITED INSTITUTIONS**

With the award of ACEEE accreditation begins a new period – the period of promoting the accreditation and further developing the institution to become even more entrepreneurial and/or engaged. ACEEE provides the following benefits to its members:

#### **Exploitation of the full value of ACEEE accreditation**

The ACEEE Marketing Guidebook provides accredited institutions with more than 50 ideas on how to communicate the accreditation as an entrepreneurial and/or engaged tertiary institution.

### Access to case studies and tools for institutional development

ACEEE accreditation is not only an achievement but also a commitment. Accredited institutions can explore the ACEEE library for case studies and tools that can help to become even more entrepreneurial and/or engaged.

### Free attendance of ACEEE organised or supported events

Accredited institutions gain free access (1 ticket) to the annual conference of the Tertiary institution Industry Innovation Network. Covering more than 50 countries and bringing together more than 300 academics and practitioners passionate about entrepreneurship and enterprise education in the education ecosystem each year, the event is the largest of its kind in Europe.

## APPENDIX

### Appendix 1: Example of peer review schedule

From 20:00	Dinner at hotel or restaurant (private area) for the members of the Peer Review Team to discuss the visit 09:00 to 10:30
<b>09:00 to 10:30</b>	<b>Tertiary Institution Management</b> – Meeting with people responsible for entrepreneurship and/or enterprise education at the highest management level (strategic level) [Institutional Commitment] [Shared Goals] [Financial Planning] [Leadership]
<b>10:30 to 10:45</b>	<b>Coffee break</b>
<b>10:45 to 11:15</b>	<b>entrepreneurship and/or enterprise education Leaders</b> – Meeting with people that are central in the implementation of entrepreneurship and/or enterprise education, and, as appropriate, external stakeholders [Third stream activities] [Influence] [Impact]
<b>11:15 to 11:45</b>	<b>Human Resources</b> - Meeting with the person responsible for Human Resources (HR) at board level, head of HR and/or key HR staff dedicated to entrepreneurship and/or enterprise education [Staff profile] [Incentives and rewards]
<b>11:45 to 13:00</b>	<b>Entrepreneurship / Engagement Support</b> – Meeting with heads of central entrepreneurship and/or enterprise education support unit, incl. visit(s) to central infrastructure [Internal support structures] [Ecosystem]
<b>13:00 to 14:30</b>	<b>Lunch</b> – Peer Review Team alone to discuss the visit (the long lunch break will be used to make up time that might have been lost before)
<b>14:30 to 15:00</b>	<b>Communication &amp; Events</b> – Meeting with people that are central in the fostering an internal and external culture of entrepreneurship and/or enterprise education [Culture]

<b>15:00 to 15:45</b>	<b>Education</b> – Meeting with people responsible for education at institutional level, central teaching personal as well as student representatives [Education]
<b>15:45 to 16:30</b>	<b>Research</b> – Meeting with people responsible for research at institutional level, central research personal in entrepreneurship / enterprise management as well as external stakeholders (e.g. from business) [Research]
<b>16:30 to 16:45</b>	<b>Coffee break</b>
<b>16:45 to 17:15</b>	<b>Quality Management and Improvement</b> – Meeting with people responsible for and implementing the institution’s quality management and improvement [Continuous improvement]
<b>17:15 to 18:00</b>	<b>Stakeholder meetings</b> – Meeting with students, alumni, business representatives etc. [All standards]
<b>18:00 to 18:30</b>	<b>Debriefing and preliminary feedback to the applicant by the Peer Review Team</b>
<b>From 20:00</b>	<b>Dinner at hotel or restaurant (private area) for Peer Review Team to discuss the overall evaluation</b>

Please note that Peer Review Teams are encouraged to involve (external) stakeholders such as students, alumni, businesses, government representatives etc. as best as possible in all others phases of the visit.

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