



## OMAN ACADEMIC ACCREDITATION AUTHORITY

### OAAA POLICY ON FEES CHARGED FOR OAAA EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE ACTIVITIES AND APPEALS

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## **OMAN ACADEMIC ACCREDITATION AUTHORITY**

# **OAAA POLICY ON FEES CHARGED FOR OAAA EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE ACTIVITIES AND APPEALS**

### **1. Purpose**

This policy outlines the fees applied by the Oman Academic Accreditation Authority (OAAA) for the conduct of External Quality Assurance (EQA) activities, and the fees applied for lodging an appeal against an OAAA EQA Report or Decision, as well as fees for deferrals of a scheduled EQA activity. The policy details the process for the administration, invoicing and collection of fees.

### **2. Scope**

This policy applies to Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) making EQA submissions or applications for appeal against EQA Reports or Decisions to the OAAA.

### **3. Policy Statement**

- a. Royal Decree 54/2010, Article 18 permits the OAAA to charge fees for services and activities carried out in the performance of its functions.
- b. The OAAA operates on a cost recovery basis for EQA activities and has set fees for the conduct of EQA activities, whether for a single HEI or a network of HEIs. The applicable fee is provided in the Fee Schedule (see Appendix A), with the relevant government decisions reference (see Appendices B, C, D, E, and F).
- c. Institutional Accreditation fees for Stage 1 (Quality Audit) and Stage 2 (Standards Assessment) are set and charged at different rates according to the HEI's Institutional Classification, whereas the fee for General Foundation Program Quality Audit (GFPA) is fixed and applies equally to HEIs regardless of their classification. The applicable fee is provided in

the Fee Schedule together with the relevant government decision reference. The fee for Standards Assessment (Stage 2) of a network of HEIs is calculated as per Article 2 of Decision 3/2018 (Appendix C), whereas the fee for Quality Audit of the General Foundation Programme of a network of HEIs is calculated as per Article 1 of Decision 16/2019 (Appendix F).

- d. The fee for lodging an appeal against OAAA Reports or Decisions is fixed regardless of an HEI's classification. This fee is non-refundable irrespective of the outcome of the appeal.
- e. The fee charged for investigating an appeal is dependent on the costs incurred by the OAAA during the conduct of the investigation. If the appeal is successful, the OAAA will bear all costs incurred during the investigation of the appeal. If the appeal is unsuccessful, the HEI will bear all costs incurred during the investigation of the appeal.
- f. The OAAA issues an invoice for the fees for the conduct of an EQA activity or upon receipt of a lodged appeal application. The HEI is invoiced for the costs incurred by the OAAA during the investigation of the appeal if the appeal is unsuccessful. In the event that the required fee is not paid in accordance with the invoice, the OAAA reserves the right to defer or cancel future EQA activities or appeals processes or to withhold the outcome of the EQA activities involving the HEI until such time that the fee is paid.
- g. There are no circumstances in which fees are waived.
- h. All fees are published in the official Gazette with an indication for when and for which Institutional Classification the fees are applicable. The OAAA notifies HEIs when any fees are revised.
- i. The Fee Schedules are periodically revised in accordance with government directives and to reflect the costs incurred by the OAAA in the conduct of its activities.

#### **4. Procedure**

- a. The Deputy Chief Executive Officer Administration and Finance (DCEO A&F) is advised of scheduled EQA activities on an annual basis, with regular follow up by the Deputy Chief Executive Officer Technical Affairs (DCEO TA) to ensure current and accurate information is provided.
- b. Following publication of EQA schedules, HEIs scheduled to undergo an EQA activity, whether individually or as a network, are requested to provide information required for fee calculation

for the relevant EQA activity. HEIs, or HEI networks, scheduled to undergo Institutional Accreditation Stage One (Quality Audit) or Institutional Accreditation Stage Two (Standards Assessment) or General Foundation Programme Quality Audit need to confirm their submission as scheduled, or notify the OAAA of their request to defer the EQA, at least six months prior to their EQA submission date. The assigned PSO undertakes the responsibility, after consultation with DCEO TA, of informing the Finance Department Affairs, AFAD, accordingly, at least three months prior to scheduled EQA submission date.

- c. The current Fee Schedule is updated on the OAAA website as directed by authorised government departments.
- d. In the case of Quality Audits and Institutional Standards Assessment, the fee is based on the number of Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) students enrolled by the HEI in the previous academic year. The number of FTEs claimed by the HEI must be verified by the Higher Education Admission Centre (HEAC).
- e. DCEO A&F ensures that HEIs undergoing an EQA activity are issued a Fee Payment invoice at least two months prior to the planned HEI EQA submission date.
- f. Fees are expected to be paid in full as specified in the invoice.
- g. A receipt is issued by the OAAA to the HEI acknowledging the fee has been paid.
- h. In the event that the required fee is not paid at the required time in accordance with the invoice, the OAAA reserves the right to defer or cancel the EQA activity or to withhold the outcome of the EQA activity.

## 5. Abbreviations

DCEO A&F	Deputy Chief Executive Officer Administration and Finance
DCEO TA	Deputy Chief Executive Officer Technical Affairs
EQA	External Quality Assurance
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent
GFPQA	General Foundation Programme Quality Audit
HEI	Higher Education Institution
OAAA	Oman Academic Accreditation Authority

## 6. Definitions

**External Quality Assurance (EQA):** Any OAAA Quality Audit or Standards Assessment activity such as:

- Institutional Quality Audit
- Institutional Standards Assessment
- Program Standards Assessment
- General Foundation Programme Quality Audit
- Reaccreditation of HEI or Program Activities
- Reassessment Activities resulting from the HEI or the Program being placed on Probation.

**Full-Time Equivalent (FTE):** Number of full-time students plus half the number of part-time students.

## 7. References

Decision 4/2017, dated 17 January 2017 concerning the determination of the fees for General Foundation Program Quality Audit (GFP QA) and Appeals against GFP QA Reports; published in the Official Gazette, Issue 1178, on 22 January 2017 (see Article 1 in Appendix D).

Decision 8/2017, dated 6 February 2017, concerning the fees for Institutional Accreditation Stage 1 and Appeals against IQA Reports; published in the Official Gazette, Issue 1181, on 12 February 2017 (see Article 1 in Appendix B).

Decision 3/2018, dated 22 January 2018 regarding the determination of the fees for Institutional Accreditation-Stage 2 (Institutional Standards Assessment) for public and private Institutions of Higher Education; published in the Official Gazette, Issue 1228, on 28 January 2018 (see Article 1, 2 & 3 in Appendix C).

Decision No. 4/2018, dated 22 January 2018 regarding the setting of EQA dates for public and private Institutions of Higher Education; published in the Official Gazette, Issue 1228, on 28 January 2018 (see Article 1 in Appendix E).

Decision No. 16/2019, dated 27 March 2019 regarding amendments to some provisions of Decision 4/2017 Concerning the determination of the fees for General Foundation Programme

Quality Audit (GFP QA) and Appeals against GFP QA Reports; published in the Official Gazette, Issue 1287, on 31 March 2019 (see Article 1 in Appendix F).

OAAA Appeals Manual: [http://www.oaaa.gov.om/Institution.aspx#Inst\\_Appeals](http://www.oaaa.gov.om/Institution.aspx#Inst_Appeals)

## 8. Document History

Version	Date Approved	Approved by	Circulation Date	Brief Description
1	24 March 2016	OAAA Board	7 April 2016	Developed following an OAAA decision 1/2016 stipulating that HEIs will pay a fee in order to undergo an OAAA EQA activity.
2	30 June 2016	OAAA Board	14 July 2016	This version contains the OAAA Board Decision (20/2016, dated 19 May 2016) pertaining to the Fees for Institutional Accreditation Stage 1: Quality Audit and Appeals against OAAA Reports and Decisions.
3	30 March 2017	OAAA Board	Did not get uploaded on OAAA Website	This version contains the OAAA Board Decision (4/2017), dated 17 January 2017 pertaining to the Fees for General Foundation Program Quality Audit and Appeals against GFPQA Reports. Also, this version contains OAAA Board Decision (8/2017) on the amended Fees for Institutional Accreditation Stage 1: Quality Audit and Appeals against IQA Reports.
3.1	11 May 2017	Executive Committee	15 May 2017	This version replaced v3 of this policy which was approved by OAAA Board on 30 March 2017 and was about to be uploaded on OAAA Website when a new OAAA Decision (12/2017), which was published on the Official Gazette (1189) on

				9 Apr 2017 concerning ISA Fees and Appeal + ISA of government HEIs as a Network. Therefore, this version contains this new Decision (Appendix C).
4	22 Feb 2018	OAAA Board	February 2018	<p>Amendments were made to this version following the issuance, in the Official Gazzetti, of OAAA Decision (3/2018) regarding the determination of the fees for Institutional Accreditation-Stage 2 (Institutional Standards Assessment) for public and private Institutions of Higher Education + Decision (4/2018) regarding the setting of EQA dates for public and private Institutions of Higher Education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>'as well as fees for deferrals of a scheduled EQA activity. The policy details the process for the administration, invoicing and collection of fees'</i>, was added to the Policy Purpose section.</li> <li>- Rearrangement of the Fee Schedule Table in Appendix A + Adding the last column to it with details of the OAAA Decision (4/2018) on Fee for Deferrals granted less than six months prior to the scheduled EQA activity submission date.</li> <li>- Replacement of the previous Decision (12/2017) in Appendix C with the new Decision (3/2018) C regarding the determination of the fees for Institutional Accreditation-Stage 2 (Institutional Standards Assessment) for public and private Institutions of Higher Education- Adding the new OAAA Decision (4/2018)</li> </ul>

				<p>on Fee for Deferrals granted less than six months prior to the scheduled EQA activity submission date.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Few editorial changes throughout the policy text.</li> <li>- Updating and rearrangement of the References (Section 7 of the policy).</li> </ul>
5	27 June 2019	OAAA Board	15 July 2019	<p>This version includes amendments to the Fees Policy following the issue of Decision 16/2019, dated 27 March 2019 (Appendix F) in relation to GFPQA for a network HEIs. In particular, the amendments in this version include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The statement: <i>“whether for a single HEI or a network of HEIs”</i> was added to item 3.b of the policy statement.</li> <li>b. The following phrase was added to end of item 3.c of the policy statement: <i>“The fee for Standards Assessment (Stage 2) of a network of HEIs is calculated as per Article 2 of Decision 3/2018 (Appendix C), whereas the fee for Quality Audit of the General Foundation Programme of a network of HEIs is calculated as per Article 1 of Decision 16/2019 (Appendix F)”</i>.</li> <li>c. Item 4.b was amended to read: <i>“Following publication of EQA schedules, HEIs scheduled to undergo an EQA activity, whether individually or as a network, are requested to provide information required for fee calculation for</i></li> </ul>

				<p><i>the relevant EQA activity. HEIs, or HEI networks, scheduled to undergo Institutional Accreditation Stage One (Quality Audit) or Institutional Accreditation Stage Two (Standards Assessment) or General Foundation Programme Quality Audit need to confirm their submission as scheduled, or notify the OAAA of their request to defer the EQA, at least six months prior to their EQA submission date. The assigned PSO undertakes the responsibility, after consultation with DCEO TAD, of informing the Finance Department Affairs, AFAD, accordingly, at least three months prior to scheduled EQA submission date.”</i></p> <p>d. Appendix ‘F’ incorporating Decision 16/2019, pertaining to GFPQA for a network HEIs, was added. Also, the issuance of this Decision was highlighted in the table of Appendix A.</p>
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## Appendix A: Fee Schedule



### FEE SCHEDULE

Quality Audit	Institutional Standards Assessment (Including ISA for a network of HEIs)	General Foundation Program Quality Audit (Including GFPQA for a network of HEIs)	Program Standards Assessment	Appeal	Deferral request made less than six months before submission
In accordance with Gazette Issue 1181, Decision No 8/2017 (see Appendix B)	In accordance with Gazette Issue 1228, Decision No. 3/2018 (see Appendix C)	In accordance with Gazette Issue 1178, Decision No 4/2017 (see Appendix D)  Also In accordance with Gazette Issue Number 1287, Decision 16/2019 (See Appendix F)	To be advised	5,000 OMR for lodging an appeal (non-refundable). If the appeal is upheld, the OAAA will bear the costs incurred during the investigation of the appeal. If the appeal is not upheld, the HEI shall bear all costs incurred during the investigation of the appeal.	In accordance with Gazette Issue 1228, Decision No. 4/2018 (see Appendix E)

## Appendix B: Decision 8/2017

**Gazette, Issue: 1181 date 12 February 2017**

***(Translated into English from the original Arabic text)***

### **Concerning the determination of the fees for Institutional Accreditation Stage 1 (Institutional Quality Audit) and Appeals against Institutional Quality Audit Reports**

Pursuant to Royal Decree 54/2010, establishing the Oman Academic Accreditation Authority, and Decision No. 20/2016 regarding the determination of the fees for the Institutional Accreditation, Stage 1 and the appeal against the Institutional Quality Audit Reports and Conclusions, and upon the approval of the OAAA Board and the consent of the Ministry of Finance, and for the public interest, it is hereby decided:

#### **Article 1**

The fees for Institutional Accreditation Stage 1 (Institutional Quality Audit) for public and private HEIs shall be determined on the basis of their classification and the number of Full-time Equivalent (FTE) students registered therein, as follows:

<b>Higher Education Institutional Classification</b>	<b>Fees (OMR)</b>
University	25,000 OMR + (2 OMR x FTE)
University College	20,000 OMR + (2 OMR x FTE)
College	15,000 OMR + (2 OMR x FTE)

The number of FTE students is determined according to the following formula:

Number of full-time students in the HEI + half the number of part-time students in the same HEI.

#### **Article 2**

OAAA sends the Institutional Quality Audit Reports to the public and private HEIs, and publishes these Reports on the OAAA website ten (10) working days from the date they are sent to the HEI, unless the HEI notifies OAAA, within this period, of its intention to appeal the Report.

#### **Article 3**

Public and private HEIs may appeal against the Institutional Quality Audit Reports up to 60 days from the date they are sent to them, and upon the payment of a non-refundable fee of 5000 OMR.

An Appeals Committee, especially established for the purpose, shall examine the appeal and decide about it within 30 days of its submission. The HEI shall bear all the costs incurred by OAAA, in the event the appeal is not upheld. In the event the appeal is upheld, the Institutional Quality Audit Report shall be amended and published on the OAAA website.

#### **Article 4**

This Decision annuls Decision No.20/2016 referred to, and any other decision that contravenes its provisions.

#### **Article 5**

This Decision shall be published in the Official Gazette and it comes into effect from the day following the date of its publication.

Issued on: 9 Jumada Al Awal 1438 H

6 February 2017

**Dr. Hamad Bin Hashim Al-Dhahab**

Acting Chairperson, OAAA

## Appendix C: Decision 3/2018

Gazette, Issue: 1228; Decision No. 3/2018, 28 January 2018  
(Translated into English from the original Arabic text)

### Oman Academic Accreditation Authority

#### Decision No. 3/2018

#### Regarding the determination of the fees for Institutional Accreditation-Stage 2 (Institutional Standards Assessment) for public and private Institutions of Higher Education

Pursuant to Royal Decree 54/2010, establishing the Oman Academic Accreditation Authority; Decision no. 47/2012, promulgating the OAAA financial bylaws; Decision no. 12/2017, stipulating the fees for Institutional Accreditation-Stage 2 (Institutional Standards Assessment-ISA) and the fees for appeals against the Reports and Accreditation Outcomes; to the approval of the OAAA Board; the approval of the Ministry of Finance; and for the public interest, it is hereby decided:

#### Article 1

The fees for Institutional Accreditation-Stage 2 (Institutional Standards Assessment) for public and private Institutions of Higher Education shall be determined on the basis of their classification and the number of Full-time Equivalent (FTE) students registered therein, as follows:

HEI Class	Fees (in Omani Riyals)
University	25,000 OMR + (2 OMR x FTE)
University College	20,000 OMR + (2 OMR x FTE)
College	15,000 OMR + (2 OMR x FTE)

#### The Numbers of FTE students is determined according to the following formula:

Number of full-time students in the HEI + half the number of part-time students in the same HEI

#### Article 2

The HEIs (Colleges and Institutes) under the supervision of one government body and assessed as a network shall be exempted of the provisions of Article 1. Their fees for Institutional Accreditation-Stage 2 (Institutional Standards Assessment) shall be calculated as follows:

15,000 OMR (for the first HEI) + 8,000 OMR (for each subsequent HEI) x (Number of HEIs in network-1) + 2 OMR x FTE

The Numbers of FTE students is determined according to the following formula:  
Number of full-time students in the HEI + half the number of part-time students in the same HEI,  
or 20.000 (twenty thousand), whichever is lower.

### **Article 3**

The Institutional Standards Reassessment (ISR) fees shall be determined as follows:

<b>HEI Classification</b>	<b>Fees</b>
University	10,000 OMR + number of criteria to be reassessed x 200 OMR
University College	10,000 OMR + number of criteria to be reassessed x 150 OMR
College	10,000 OMR + number of criteria to be reassessed x 100 OMR

### **Article 4**

The OAAA shall send the Reports and Accreditation Outcomes of ISA and ISR (Institutional Accreditation-Stage 2) to the concerned public and private HEIs. It shall also publish the Accreditation Outcomes of ISA and ISR on its website 10 days after sending the Reports and Accreditation Outcomes to their concerned HEIs, unless the HEI notifies the OAAA, within that period, of its wish to appeal.

### **Article 5**

Public and private HEIs may appeal against the results of ISA and ISR and Accreditation Outcomes up to 60 days from the date they are sent to them, and upon the payment of a non-refundable fee of RO5000. An Appeals Committee, specially established for the purpose, shall examine the appeal and decide about it within 30 days of its submission. The appealing HEI shall bear all the costs, in the event the appeal is not upheld. In the event the appeal is upheld, the result of the ISA or ISR shall be amended accordingly and published on the OAAA website.

### **Article 6**

Decision 12/2017, referred to above, shall be considered null and void, along with any other resolution that conflicts the present Decision or contravenes its provisions.

### **Article 7**

This Decision shall be published in the Official Gazette and it comes into effect from the day following the date of its publication.

Issued on: 4<sup>th</sup> Jumada Al Awal 2439 H

22 January 2018

**Dr Abdullah Mohammed Al-Sarmi**

Chairperson, OAAA

## **Appendix D: Decision 4/2017**

**Gazette, Issue: 1178; Dated 17 January 2017**  
**(Translated into English from the original Arabic text)**

### **Concerning the determination of the fees for General Foundation Programme Quality Audit (GFP QA) and Appeals against GFP QA Reports**

Pursuant to Royal Decree 54/2010, establishing the Oman Academic Accreditation Authority, and upon the approval of the OAAA Board and the consent of the Ministry of Finance, and for the public interest, it is hereby decided:

#### **Article 1**

A fee of 15,000 OMR (fifteen thousand Omani Riyals) is determined for General Foundation Programme (GFP) Quality Audit for any public or private HEI whose General Foundation Programme is audited by OAAA.

#### **Article 2**

OAAA sends the GFP Quality Audit Reports to the public and private HEIs, and publishes these Reports on the OAAA website ten (10) working days after they are sent to the HEI, unless the HEI notifies OAAA, within this period, of its intention to appeal against the Report.

#### **Article 3**

Public and private HEIs may appeal against the GFP Quality Audit Reports up to 60 days from the date they are sent to them, and upon the payment of a non-refundable fee of 5000 OMR. An Appeals Committee, especially established for the purpose, shall examine the appeal and decide about it within 30 days of its submission. The HEI shall bear all the costs incurred by OAAA, in the event the appeal is not upheld. In the event the appeal is upheld, the Report shall be amended and published on the OAAA website.

#### **Article 4**

This Decision shall be published in the Official Gazette and it comes into effect from the day following the date of its publication.

Issued on: 18<sup>th</sup> Rabia Al Thani 1438 H

17 January 2017

**Dr. Hamad B. Hashim Al-Dhahab**

Acting Chairperson, OAAA

## **Appendix E: Decision 4/2018**

**Gazette, Issue: 1228; dated 28 January 2018**  
**(Translated into English from the original Arabic text)**

### **Oman Academic Accreditation Authority**

#### **Decision no. 4/2018**

#### **Regarding the setting of EQA dates for public and private Institutions of Higher Education**

Pursuant to Royal Decree 54/2010, establishing the Oman Academic Accreditation Authority; Decision no. 47/2012, promulgating the OAAA financial bylaws; Decision no. 12/2017, stipulating the fees for Institutional Accreditation-Stage 2 (Institutional Standards Assessment-ISA) and the fees for appeals against the Reports and Accreditation Outcomes; to the approval of the OAAA Board; the approval of the Ministry of Finance; and for the public interest, it is hereby decided :

#### **Article 1**

Public and private Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) shall abide by the EQA dates set by the OAAA to each HEI after being notified. HEIs may apply to defer scheduled appointments upon showing acceptable reasons, provided that the deferral application is submitted at least 6 months before the scheduled appointment. Any deferral applications submitted less than 6 months from the scheduled appointment shall incur a fee of 3,000 (three thousand) Omani riyals, and the OAAA shall notify the applicant of the new date within 30 days from the date of the deferral application approval.

#### **Article 2**

This Decision shall be published in the Official Gazette and it comes into effect from the day following the date of its publication.

Issued on: 4<sup>TH</sup> Jumda Al Awal 1439 H

22 January 2018

**Dr Abdullah Mohammed Al-Sarmi**

Chairperson, OAAA

## Appendix F: Decision 16/2019

Gazette, Issue: 1287, dated: 31 March 2019

*(Translated into English from the original Arabic text)*

### Oman Academic Accreditation Authority

#### Decision no. 16/2019

#### **Amendments to some provisions of Decision 4/2017 Concerning the determination of the fees for General Foundation Programme Quality Audit (GFP QA) and Appeals against GFP QA Reports**

Pursuant to Royal Decree 54/2010, establishing the Oman Academic Accreditation Authority; to Decision no. 4/2017 Concerning the determination of the fees for General Foundation Programme Quality Audit (GFP QA) and Appeals against GFP QA Reports; to the approval of the OAAA Board; the approval of the Ministry of Finance; and for the public interest, it is hereby decided :

#### **Article 1**

A new paragraph is to be added to the end of Article 1 of Decision 7/2012 stated above, to read as follows:

As for general foundation programmes that are audited as a one network, the fee will be calculated as follows:

Fee = (15000 OMR) Fifteen Thousands Omani Royal + (Number of Colleges/Institutes in network-1) X (10000 OMR) Ten Thousand Omani Royal
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#### **Article 2**

This Decision shall be published in the Official Gazette and it comes into effect from the day following the date of its publication.

Issued on: 20 Rajab 1440 H

27 March 2019

**Dr Abdullah Mohammed Al-Sarmi**

Board Chairperson, OAAA