KING KHALID UNIVERSITY

Quality System Manual at King Khalid University

Third Edition – Rajab 1445 AH – February 2024

Deanship of Development and Quality

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

قائمة المحتويات

1. Overview

The emphasis on quality assurance reflects its vital importance in affirming the educational institutions' excellence, their academic programs, administrative units, and the integrity of their processes, as well as ensuring the quality of their outcomes. This validation not only secures the confidence of direct beneficiaries but also garners trust from the broader community, hence the necessity for developing this manual. The manual for assuring the quality of academic programs was initially prepared as the first edition (1441 - 2020), during a period when academic programs were preparing for national and international accreditation, signifying a foundational approach to formalize quality assurance practices.

Subsequently, recognizing the ongoing need for adherence to quality standards, the manual was updated to its second edition (1444 - 2023), reinforcing the university's dedication to quality assurance. As the university's programs began to achieve accreditation success, the third edition (1445 – 2024) of the manual was crafted to provide an all-encompassing view of the university's quality system. This edition aims to maintain a higher level of quality across all activities, focusing on the key components of King Khalid University's quality system in both administrative and academic spheres. It culminates with a showcase of documentation developed by various entities within the university alongside the updated templates from the Education and Training Evaluation Commission, highlighting the comprehensive effort to ensure continuous improvement and trust in the university's quality assurance processes.

1.1 Objectives of the Manual

The Quality Assurance Manual aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Provide a comprehensive overview of the university's Quality Management System for both administrative and academic operations.

- Clarify the pathway and mechanisms for implementing review processes and the quality system.

- Identify the organizational structures and committees responsible for applying the administrative and academic quality system.

- Explain the processes for closing the evaluation and quality loop.

- Support academic programs in implementing and developing procedures that ensure their quality.

- Specify the steps and requirements necessary for ongoing monitoring of academic programs, both prior to and following their accreditation.

1.2 Quality Assurance Management Policy and Mechanisms

King Khalid University has anchored its quality system management on the institutional accreditation standards of the National Center for Academic Accreditation and Assessment, which is part of the Education and Training Evaluation Commission. This approach was chosen for the comprehensiveness of these standards, their criteria and benchmarks, which cover all components of the quality system in universities. In its commitment to establishing an internal quality system, King Khalid University created the Center for Academic Evaluation and Development during the third session of the university council for the academic year 1425/1426 AH, held on 3/3/1426 AH under decision number (3-3-1425/1426). Subsequently, the Center for Academic Evaluation and Development was transformed into the Deanship of Academic Development and Quality, following the university's recommendation in its second session for the academic year 1430/1431 AH, held on 19/01/1431 AH. This proposal was presented to the Higher Education Council in its sixtieth session held on 22/06/1431 AH, which approved the establishment of the Deanship through decision number (18/60/1431). The center was officially converted to the Deanship of Academic Development and Quality in 1431 AH, and later renamed to the Deanship of Development and Quality in 1445 AH. In pursuit of compliance with quality standards, the university obtained full institutional accreditation in 2017 from the Education and Training Evaluation Commission, thereby meeting the requirements of the quality system. However, obtaining accreditation is not seen as an endpoint but as a catalyst for continuous improvement, in line with the principle of closing the quality loop.

Furthermore, the university has endeavored to establish an organizational structure for its quality system, which includes units and standing committees for internal review to oversee the execution of tasks by various university entities. Besides the institutional accreditation standards as a critical component, the university adopted other elements to form its internal quality system. These elements include policies and procedures, strategic planning, risk management, administrative quality, academic, research, and community activities, quality reports, and internal review committees. Regarding academic programs, the program accreditation standards of the National Center for Academic Accreditation and Assessment serve as the main guide.

King Khalid University employs specific mechanisms for reviewing policies, procedures, and its quality system. Changes in the policies of national and international accrediting bodies significantly influence the university's internal accreditation procedures. The university regularly reviews its organizational structure, which was last revised and approved in 2023. Higher committees and standing committees undertake comprehensive reviews according to their mandates. For instance, the Higher Committee for Graduate Studies focuses on graduate studies policies and the review of the Program Development Manual. For undergraduate programs, the Standing

Committee for Plans and Curricula updates the guidebook for developing study plans. Regarding program accreditation processes, the Standing Committee for Program Accreditation conducts periodic reviews of all related procedures.

King Khalid University is committed to continuously refining its vision, mission, policies, procedures, and manuals to align with the latest quality standards across all its entities. The university's vision and mission were formulated following a consensus among participants in surveys and consensus workshops, ensuring widespread endorsement and comprehension of its vision, mission, and policies.

University Vision: A globally leading university committed to human empowerment, regional development, and economic advancement.

University Mission: A vibrant academic environment that stimulates the creation and application of knowledge, research and innovation, enhances social responsibility, and contributes to achieving sustainable development through the optimal investment of our capabilities and resources.

The university has outlined the following strategic objectives to guide its efforts:

1. Enhance the quality of learning outcomes to align with labor market demands and sustainable development goals.

2. Promote research and innovation to meet societal and economic needs.

3. Strengthen social responsibility and volunteerism.

4. Improve the quality of university life.

5. Achieve institutional excellence.

6. Diversify and develop revenue sources to ensure their sustainability.

Many deanships, units, and departments have updated their procedural guides (Appendix 5.1) in pursuit of the principle of continuous development, improvement, and evaluation of the quality system, which is a main component of the quality system at King Khalid University (Figure 1). King Khalid University adopts a policy of continuous improvement, periodic review, and closing the evaluation and quality loop, which starts with planning, followed by implementation, then analysis, then making recommendations and corrective actions for improvement, and then returning to planning after adopting the recommendations to start a new cycle with a developed plan to reduce and avoid errors and enhance quality. All entities within the university participate in the quality system through:

1. Fulfilling their objectives and missions and generating reports.

2. Delivering outstanding services to beneficiaries and incorporating their feedback.

3. Engaging in constant development and involving stakeholders and experts.

4. Analyzing data and indicators to devise and monitor improvement plans.

5. Documenting data and referring to it for making informed, evidence-based decisions

In the realm of administrative quality, according to the manual issued by the Institutional Excellence Unit at King Khalid University, the quality policy is one of the initial steps to undertake when implementing a Quality Management System using the requirements of the international standards ISO 9001. The essence of this policy is to convey a message to customers about the effectiveness of the management system within the institution. Judging the quality of the service is based on understanding the customers' expectations of the service level and their perception of the actual service performance provided. It then involves identifying the gap or alignment between these expectations and perceptions.

1.3 The Importance of Quality Assurance

Quality assurance processes, evaluation, and monitoring procedures gain their importance from contributing to achieving the following:

1. Ensuring the preservation and development of the required quality level, maintaining quality at levels similar to good practices in distinguished institutions in other parts of the world.

2. Reassuring stakeholders such as students, parents, employers, specialized professional associations, official bodies, and the broader community about the high level of quality in the educational institution or academic program.

3. Facilitating continuous improvement that encompasses all university activities and academic programs, compared against local or global standards, and striving to meet or exceed these standards as much as possible. This highlights the importance of having mechanisms for quality development and implementation, leading to the continuous improvement of all university activities and academic programs to surpass the minimum quality standards required, which in turn leads to accreditation and its renewal.

4. The implementation of quality assurance processes serves as evidence of the university/academic program achieving its mission, with performance aligned with predefined strategic objectives. Consequently, it is expected that all academic and institutional functions across various areas—teaching and learning, scientific research, community partnership, among other activities—will be carried out with necessary improvements based on evaluations from all stakeholders and beneficiaries regarding the quality of the aforementioned areas.

Quality assurance procedures in educational institutions are not limited to the academic programs they offer but also encompass facilities, equipment, employment, the institution's relationship with its target groups, and the administrative processes that link all the aforementioned aspects. This means that the quality assurance system should cover all individuals and organizational and academic units. Despite the importance of focusing on the academic qualifications of faculty members and students, the adequacy of learning resources, equipment, and other inputs, attention must also be paid to the implemented processes and their outcomes and outputs, with a greater focus on their quality in parallel with the quality of the inputs. King Khalid University is committed to implementing a quality assurance system and processes across all its academic and administrative units.

2. Quality System at King Khalid University

There are key directives for managing the quality system at the university (Figure 1), through which the university has established an organizational structure for its quality system (Figure 2) and updated the formation of quality assurance committees (Figure 3). Although many academic programs have received national and international accreditation, this is only part of ensuring quality at the university, in addition to the significance of the internal quality system in achieving comprehensive quality that satisfies all beneficiaries within the university.

Accreditation standards, policies and procedures, strategic planning, risk management, and administrative and academic quality are among the foundational elements of quality at King Khalid University. A SWOT analysis has been conducted, followed by the identification of indicators for each entity with a set timeline for implementation, as proper planning acts as a compass guiding all agencies, deanships, centers, units, colleges, and departments within the university. The Strategy and Initiatives Department oversees the implementation of the university's strategic plan. Working towards the satisfaction of all beneficiaries, staff, and faculty, and selecting competent leadership are crucial in achieving a comprehensive quality system. The university has established a digital system for nominating academic leaders, emphasizing its importance.

Figure (1): University Quality Assurance System Processes.

Circle labels:
- Quality Standards
- Internal Audit and Quality Reporting
- Organizational structure of the quality system at the university, colleges and programs
- Academic Quality
- Quality Assurance System Operations at King Khalid University
- Policies, procedures and tasks
- Administrative Quality
- Risk Management
- Strategic Planning

2.1 Institutional Quality Standards

2.1.1 Institutional Accreditation Standards

King Khalid University has shown a keen interest in quality assurance, being among the first universities to achieve full institutional accreditation in 2017. The standards of the National Center for Academic Accreditation and Assessment play a significant part in the university's external quality assurance, as it continuously meets these standards and benchmarks. Institutional accreditation is based on an evaluation conducted at a specific time to highlight the institution's quality outcomes and outputs, ensuring consistency between its goals and performance. Thus, quality assurance is a prerequisite for accreditation, seen as an ongoing process, while accreditation offers an external review to verify the presence and activation of these processes.

The university's achievement of full institutional accreditation is evidence of its commitment to these standards. Accreditation is not an endpoint; the university continues to document its practices even after accreditation to ensure the quality of services provided to all university beneficiaries. This accreditation has contributed to achieving some of the objectives of the human capacity development program, including improving the quality of core learning outcomes; enhancing the ranking of educational institutions; and ensuring the alignment between learning outcomes and labor market needs. The university is committed to continuous improvement and has formed several committees for the renewal of accreditation, which include:

1. Performance Indicators Committee
2. Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee
3. Institutional Accreditation Standards Committees
4. Institutional Self-Study Report Writing Committee

Institutional accreditation granted by the National Center for Academic Accreditation and Assessment, which is part of the Education and Training Evaluation Commission, results in a certificate or recognition from the accrediting body that the educational institution has met the quality standards set by the accreditor. After obtaining accreditation, the quality assurance processes within the educational institution ensure the continuous application of the standards evaluated during the accreditation process. Therefore, accreditation is not truly effective unless all stages and steps of quality assurance are activated and implemented to ensure the continuity of the entire process.

2.1.1.1 Graduates Attributes

The university dedicated efforts to developing its graduates' attributes through an integrated project founded on principles and criteria consistent with quality requirements. This endeavor spanned almost an entire year and was finalized with the endorsement of the University Council during its sixth session on 23/6/1443 AH, under decision number (4/6/43). The defined attributes were as follows:

No.	Attributes	Sub-attributes
1	Ethics and identity (being ethical)	Moderation, quality, integrity, commitment, excellence, transparency, achievement, complementarity, independence, flexibility, positivity, collaboration, lifelong learning, tolerance, consultation, acceptance, justice.
2	Linguistic and quantitative competencies (being linguistically and quantitatively competent)	Linguistic, mathematical and statistical competencies.
3	Professional and disciplinary Knowledge (intellectually rigorous)	Extensive, deep, diverse, and practical disciplinary knowledge
4	Discipline-specific and life skills (skilled/competent)	Scientific research skills, applying disciplinary knowledge, problem-solving skills, critical, innovative, logical, and visual thinking skills.
5	Technical and digital capabilities (or technically proficient)	Cognitive, skillful, and emotional competence in the field of digital technologies.
6	Entrepreneurship and competitiveness (entrepreneur and competitive)	Initiative, proactive, persevering, and invested in knowledge and personal capabilities.
7	Leadership and responsibility (leader and responsible)	Strategic vision, decision-making, effective communication, self-management motivation, resource management.
8	Local and global citizenship (conscious and active)	Intercultural awareness and understanding of systems, rights, obligations, trends, and local and global issues. Contribution to national strategies, engaging with community issues and actively participating in voluntary work.

The importance of defining graduates' attributes lies in the following:

1. They outline the profile of a graduate capable of contributing to the realization of Vision 2030 of the Kingdom, meeting labor market requirements, and competing on local, regional, and global scales.

2. They serve as a foundation for deriving the learning outcomes of academic programs.

3. They aid in the development of academic programs in all their components, in light of contemporary trends.

4. They support the enhancement and improvement of teaching and academic practices.

5. They guide the professional development of faculty members.

The attributes of graduates set by an educational institution dictate the learning outcomes of various programs, as these outcomes are crucial for realizing the attributes desired in university graduates. Therefore, it is essential for the learning outcomes of programs to align with the university's graduate attributes. This relationship can be encapsulated in the following points:

1. The attributes of graduates are a primary basis for shaping the learning outcomes of programs and courses.

2. Learning outcomes, within their three domains (knowledge and understanding, skills, and values , autonomy, and responsibility), must cover all the attributes of the university's graduates.

3. The attributes of graduates anticipate the labor market's demands for knowledge and skills, with learning outcomes serving as the mechanism to fulfill these demands.

2.2 The Organizational Structure of the Quality System at King Khalid University

Implementing a quality system is one of the primary objectives for the advancement of King Khalid University. Achieving this goal cannot be done through the efforts of specific individuals alone; it requires the participation of everyone. King Khalid University has an organizational structure for its quality system (Figure 2 above), which represents all parties and committees related to quality assurance. This structure forms a comprehensive framework for the university's quality system.
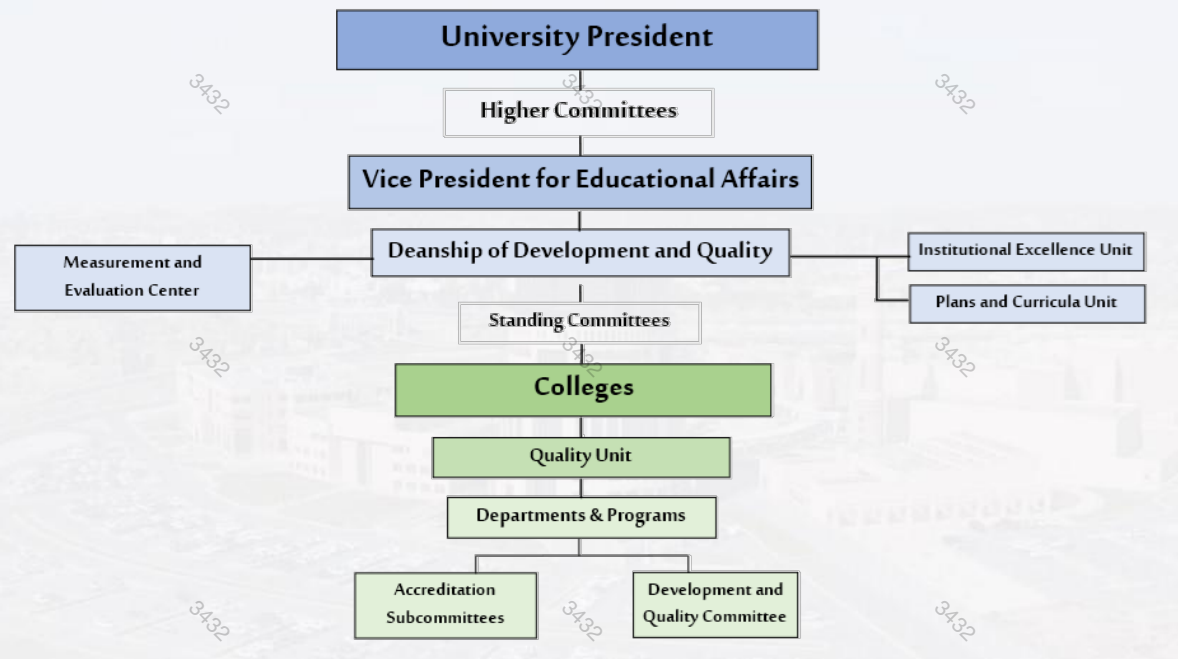
Figure (2): Organizational Structure of Quality System at King Khalid University
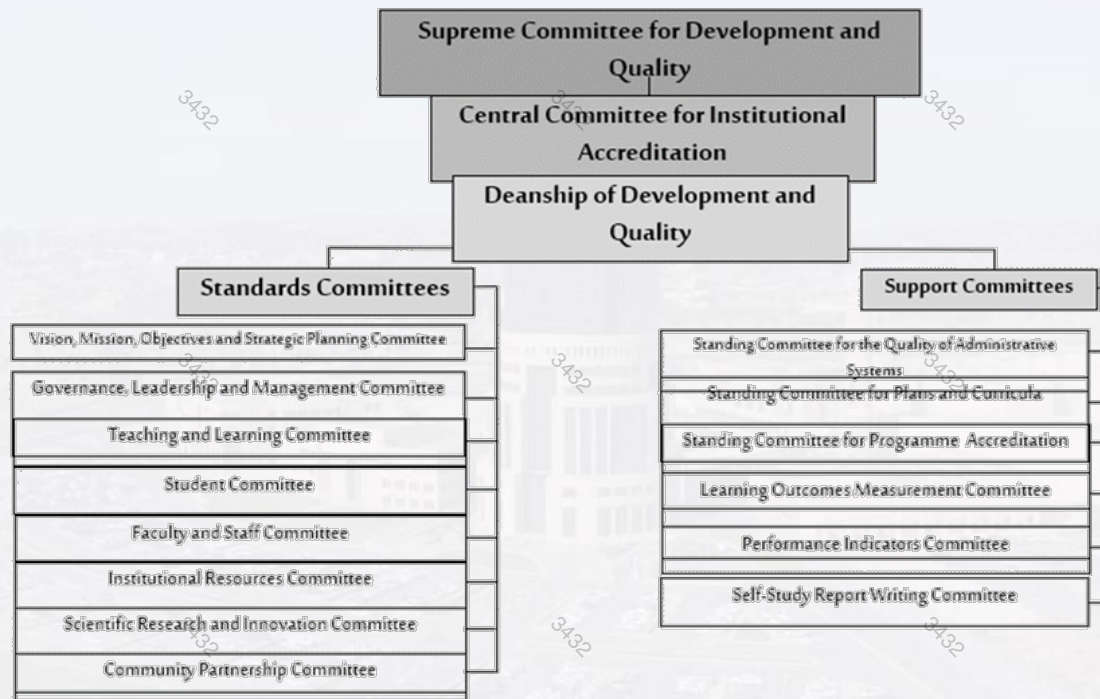
Figure (3): University-Level Quality Assurance Committees.

2.2.1 The Organizational Structure of the Deanship of Development and Quality

The Deanship of Development and Quality is responsible for monitoring academic programs and preparing them for programmatic accreditation. The Deanship has updated its organizational structure (Figure 4) and summarized its key tasks (Figure 5). The Deanship has also announced its vision, mission, and objectives, as follows:

Vision of the Deanship of Development and Quality: To lead in the quality of academic and institutional performance.

Mission of the Deanship of Development and Quality: To provide technical support to the university's programs and units to meet the requirements and standards of institutional and programmatic accreditation, both nationally and internationally.

The following objectives have been identified by the Deanship:

1. To instill a culture of quality within the university.

2. To ensure the quality of institutional and programmatic accreditation.

3. To provide technical consultancy in the field of development and quality.

4. To motivate university staff in the area of quality and accreditation.

5. To encourage university units' initiatives to apply quality standards.

6. To govern the processes of development and quality and improve performance.

Organizational Structure of the Deanship of Development and Quality

Dean

- Deanship of Development and Quality
- Institutional Excellence Unit

Measurement and Evaluation Center
- The Measurement and Evaluation Center Administration
- Data Analysis Unit
- Research and Studies Unit
- Measurement and Tests Unit

Vice Dean for Female Section
- Plans and Curricula Unit
- Reporting Unit

Vice Dean for Quality
- Accreditation Unit
- Quality Assurance Unit

Vice Dean for Development
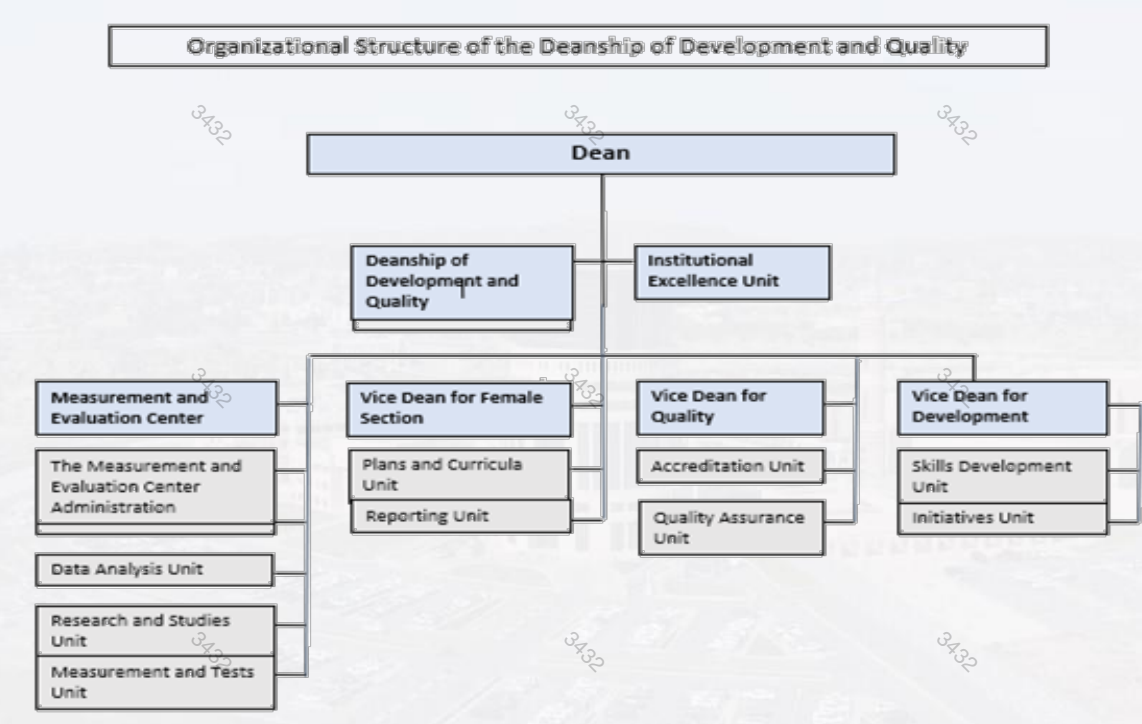- Skills Development Unit
- Initiatives Unit

Figure (4): The Organizational Structure of the Deanship of Development and Quality at King Khalid University

Figure (5): Key Tasks Assigned to the Deanship of Development and Quality

Mission and Objectives of King Khalid University (Graduates Attributes)

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Mission and Objectives of the College

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Mission and Objectives of the Program

↓

Meetings of Department/Program Members

- Graduates.
- Employers and Experts.
- External Reviewers.

Submission to the concerned authority at the university

Implementation of decisions and recommendations ←

Implementation of decisions and recommendations ←

Implementation of decisions and recommendations ←

Continuous improvement feedback →

College Council

→ **Quality Unit at the Faculty**

Department Council

Program Committees, Program Quality Committee and Program Accreditation Subcommittees

Performance indicators

Indirect assessment

- Student evaluation of the course.
- Alumni and employers surveys.
- Student and faculty surveys.

Direct assessment

- Course and Programme Reports.
- Performance Indicators.
- Assessment of learning outcomes.

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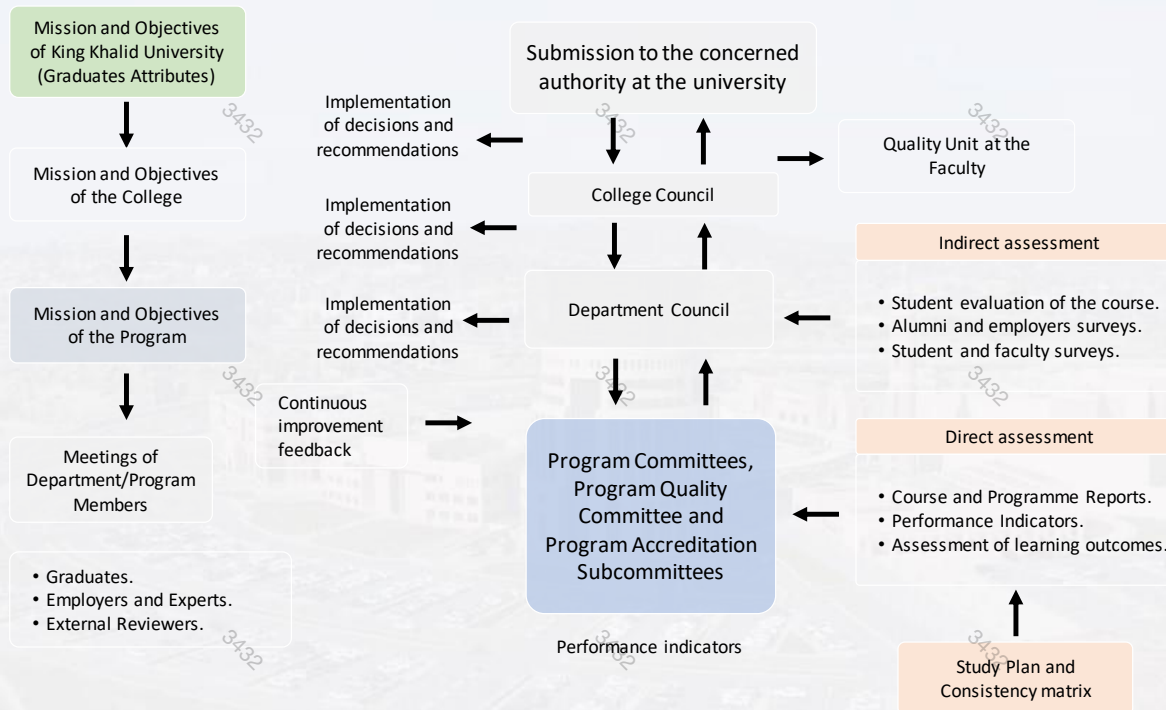**Study Plan and Consistency matrix**

Figure (6): The Quality Assurance System in the Programs, Academic Departments, and Colleges of King Khalid University.

2.3 Tasks and Responsibilities

2.3.1 Tasks at the University and Deanship Levels:

His Excellency the University President issues an administrative decision annually delegating administrative and financial responsibilities and authorities to the University Vice-Presidents and Deans. The most recent of these decisions was dated 20-03-1445, corresponding to October 5, 2023 (No. 22826).

2.3.2 Tasks at the College Level:

The university has prepared guides that specify the tasks at the level of its colleges, including the university's organizational guide which outlines the responsibilities of the college dean. One of the most important tasks is "monitoring the progress of quality processes and academic accreditation at the college, preparing the necessary reports, and submitting them to the relevant university vice-president."

- **Guide to College Committees:**

The University's vice-presidency for Educational and Academic Affairs developed a comprehensive guide for the committees within the colleges, outlining their mechanisms, duties, and performance indicators (document number 93454/0, dated 21/10/1440). This updated guide supersedes the previous job description manual, with the goal of improving and advancing the organizational structure and development of institutional work.

Here are the main tasks and roles of the College's Vice-Deanship for Educational Development and Quality Improvement:

1. Ensure continuous monitoring of programs applying for accreditation by the Vice-Deanship, its committees, and units, review their documentation, supervise compliance with their requirements, and return any incomplete documents to the programs before forwarding them to the Development and Quality Deanship.

2. Oversee the execution of the college's strategic and the programs' operational plans, and compile reports on their progress.

3. Develop the college's quality assurance manual in alignment with the university's quality assurance guidelines and manage the creation of program-specific quality assurance manuals through the Quality Unit (Decision No. 22824 dated 20-3-1445).

4. Coordinate the academic accreditation plan via the college's Quality Unit, manage the process of addressing the conditions for conditionally accredited programs, establish a committee for each condition, and conduct regular follow-ups during the preparation of the condition-lifting forms (TP-111) and review each program's draft before its submission to the Deanship.

5. Verify the technical and regulatory aspects of meeting accreditation conditions and fulfilling the notes and comments sent by the Deanship.

6. Monitor the preparation of recommendation reports and periodic reviews for programs with full and conditional accreditation.

7. Supervise the preparation of reports on learning outcomes and the measurement of annual performance indicators by the programs, devise improvement plans, and present them to the relevant councils.

8. Oversee the preparation of annual program reports and semester-specific course reports for the Education and Training Evaluation Commission,

9. Ensure the updating of program files applying for accreditation according to the latest templates provided by the Education and Training Evaluation Commission.

2.3.3 Tasks at the Program Level

The academic department is a crucial pillar for performing various academic and administrative tasks that distinguish the college and the university, elevating their status locally and globally. The university has prepared a guide for the committees within the academic department (mechanisms, tasks, and indicators) alongside the previous guide for college committees, specifying the tasks for each committee.

Here are the main tasks and roles of the program related to quality:

1. Appoint a quality coordinator to facilitate direct communication regarding accreditation files.

2. Ensure that all program members fulfill the required documentation for accreditation.

3. Collect evidence for the accreditation standards specific to the Education and Training Evaluation Commission.

4. Oversee the procedures for updating the department's and program's website.

5. Review each program's files and have them approved by the department council for submission to the college.

6. Ensure the readiness of facilities and equipment according to accreditation standards.

2.4 Strategic Planning

The university has developed three strategic plans. The first plan was launched for the period (2014 – 2017), followed by the second plan covering the period (2018 – 2020), which was extended to 2022. The third strategic plan (for the period 2023 – 2030) was aligned with the Asir region development strategy and the Ministry of Education's strategic plan. Nationally, the university's third strategic plan was aligned with the Kingdom's Vision 2030. Periodic reports were prepared to monitor the implementation of the university's strategic plan, which guides all its processes. Additionally, performance indicator reports related to the strategic plan's initiatives were prepared, along with a report on the closure of the previous strategic plan.

A strategic plan governance guide document was prepared, defining the roles and tasks of the relevant entities to ensure the plan's execution in alignment with the university's strategic objectives. To oversee the implementation of its strategic plan, the university had previously established a Strategic Planning Unit, which was renamed in 2023 to the Unit of Strategy and Initiatives. Furthermore, a Supreme Committee was formed to monitor the performance of the strategy.

2.5 Risk Management

The Risk Management Unit at the university has developed a comprehensive guide for risk classification, which includes strategic risks, administrative and financial risks, technical risks, and risks associated with the university environment. This is to establish a general framework for risk management, create an organizational structure, present a risk register, and outline how to handle and analyze risks. To adopt the best international standards, risks are managed based on the International Standard for Risk Management (ISO 31000). The university's risk management processes and procedures are also evaluated, and systems are implemented to ensure occupational safety for facilities and individuals.

2.6 Administrative Quality

Regarding administrative quality and Quality Management Systems (QMS), a Quality Management System is defined as an integrated framework of policies and procedures designed for planning, executing, and delivering products or services. Its primary aim is to ensure an organization's capability to meet customer expectations consistently. The system emphasizes the principle of continuous improvement for the services and products provided. According to ISO 9001 standards, a QMS is versatile and can be implemented in any organization, public or private, regardless of its industry, size, or geographic location.

To enhance its Quality Management System and performance evaluation mechanisms, the university has undertaken updates to its QMS planning and procedures. It has developed a comprehensive guide detailing the stages of building a quality system, including a

readiness prototype and a checklist for organizations preparing to apply for a conformity certificate. Among the notable responsibilities of the Institutional Excellence Unit is the selection and accreditation of training and qualification agencies in alignment with the university's policies. This involves coordinating with proposed entities to select a dedicated quality team and supervising their qualification and training processes, ensuring the university's continuous stride towards excellence in quality management.

2.6.1 Quality Management System in Administrative Entities

The Institutional Excellence Unit has defined the contents of the Quality Management System (QMS) in administrative entities within the university as follows:

1. Vision, mission, and objectives of the administrative entity, identification of strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and challenges, and addressing the risks and opportunities identified.

2. Quality policy and organizational structure of the administrative entity, assignment of responsibilities and authorities according to the organizational structure, and description of goals and tasks of the entity's departments and units according to administrative positions.

3. Identification of required inputs and expected outputs and outcomes for these administrative entities. Determine which segments benefit from their services and outline their expectations.

4. Identification of internal and external issues (influences) faced by the administrative entity and the relevant parties affected by and influencing the QMS ISO 9001:2015.

5. A guide to the core operational procedures (list of actions taken for operations – a schedule of steps for executing each procedure – illustrative diagrams for each part).

6. Quality objectives file (execution steps – performance indicators – responsible party – required resources – completion date – a report showing the results measurement of the objective achievement).

7. Training manual and change planning document (description of the change – justifications for the change – resources needed for the change – mechanisms for monitoring the potential outcomes of the change) both positive and negative (procedures for mitigating or addressing the risks arising from the change – communication mechanism with the parties concerned by the change).

8. Quality manual, general procedures manual, and guide for internal and external forms.

In addition to the above, quality objectives have been identified and plans for their implementation, which include:

- Alignment with the quality policy, considering the mandatory requirements to be applied.

- The ability to measure and monitor them periodically and update them as needed.

- Related to service conformity and beneficiary satisfaction.

- Stakeholders are informed about them.

The scope of work of the Institutional Excellence Unit includes developing organizational structures and qualifying for international certifications and awards.

2.6.2 Objectives and Tasks

- **Objectives:**

  - Enhance the university's performance to achieve institutional excellence locally and globally.

  - Ensure the quality of administrative systems across all university entities.

- **Tasks:**

  - Review organizational structures and manuals based on the university's strategic direction and its need for tasks, responsibilities, systems, and regulatory regulations, and suggest modifications as needed.

  - Develop a methodology, standardized models, and criteria for updating organizational structures, identify the necessary procedures for the updating process, and announce them.

  - Conduct necessary studies to draft job description at the university, along with creating an indicator for establishing, abolishing, or merging administrative units, participating in job descriptions, and reviewing job description cards.

  - Reviewing and evaluating the efficiency of various operations to ensure their quality and providing improvement suggestions aimed at enhancing their effectiveness.

- Review and evaluate the efficiency of various operations, ensure their quality, and provide improvement suggestions aimed at enhancing their effectiveness.

- Manage the process of developing policies and processes applied in organizational units and design forms to ensure effective compatibility and integration between various operations and procedures in different organizational units.

- Simplify and standardize work procedures in administrative units within the university, monitor the update and implementation of procedure manuals, regulations, forms, and the rules governing them, and offer suggestions for their development.

- Establish a comprehensive program for performance management and institutional excellence, including standards and indicators for self-assessment and evaluation of performance.

- Supervise the university's participation in institutional excellence awards.

- Monitor the quality of administrative systems at the university and related projects.

- Oversee the qualification of all administrative units within the university to obtain international conformity certification.

- Identify the training needs of human resources related to the management's work areas and coordinate with the relevant organizational units to meet those needs.

2.6.3 Administrative Entity:

An administrative entity represents a legal body within institutions that are interconnected following a specific structure, whether horizontal or vertical. It is tasked with carrying out the institution's strategic goals, initiatives, and projects. These entities (such as departments, divisions, centers, etc.) are pivotal in achieving designated tasks within an organizational framework. A single entity may encompass multiple administrative entities working collectively towards achieving one or more strategic objectives. The organizational structure emerges from the linkage between these entities, reflecting the institution's structured arrangement according to administrative entities.

2.6.4 Documentation:

The term "documentation" encompasses the systematic recording of methods and standards for quality data assessment based on benchmark references for quality such as suitability, accuracy, reliability, timeliness, adherence to deadlines, accessibility, clarity, comparability, consistency, and completeness. The MyKKU service offers 38 electronic platforms designed for efficient data and document storage, facilitating easy future access. Key platforms include the Injaz system for electronic transactions, the Academia system catering to student and course needs, Blackboard for e-learning courses, self-service portals, academic recommendations, the faculty promotion system, electronic forms, and the academic portfolio for faculty members to upload documents related to committees, research output, qualifications, among others. The university is committed to continually upgrading its digital platforms and developing new ones to enhance the effectiveness and convenience of its services for all members, particularly focusing on academic processes and reporting mechanisms.

2.7 Academic Quality Assurance at the University:

2.7.1 Plans and Curricula:

2.7.1.1 Procedures for Accrediting and Developing Programs, Plans, and Curricula:

The Unit of Plans and Curricula at King Khalid University has prepared a unified guidance manual in three editions for the stages of preparing study plans. Below is a summary of the procedures for accrediting and developing academic programs, plans, and curricula, which go through the following steps:

- The Academic Department's Curriculum and Syllabus Committee is responsible for preparing the file for a proposed new academic program or for one that needs updating. This preparation is based on the Guide for Preparing Academic Programs' Curricula for bachelor's degrees at King Khalid University, the Academic Specialization Standards (Readiness Program) from the Education Evaluation Commission, the National Qualifications Framework, the Unified Saudi Classification Guide for Education Levels and Specializations, and what is stated in the Study and Examinations Regulations concerning academic programs. The process includes considering the views of the Program Advisory Council through a special form designed by the Curriculum and Syllabus Unit, then submitting it to the Department Council for review, approval, or amendment (if any).

- The department council reviews the academic program's study plan, and if there are any modifications or comments, it is returned to the department's Committee on Plans and Curricula.

- After the department council's final version recommendation, the study plan is submitted to the college's Committee on Plans and Curricula for review and verification of compliance with specialized academic standards (Program Readiness) - Education and Training Evaluation Commission, the National Qualifications Framework, and other relevant academic program regulations. It also checks for the completion of all previous administrative stages. The proposed study plan for introduction or development is then presented to the college council for discussion and recommendation for submission to the university's Vice-Presidency for Educational Affairs' Unit of Plans and Curricula or returned to the college's Committee on Plans and Curricula with a list of comments and suggestions for returning to the department.

- After the college council approves the academic program's study plan, it is sent to the Vice-Presidency for Educational Affairs' Unit of Plans and Curricula, where the Standing Committee on Plans and Curricula reviews it to ensure compliance with the general standards and conditions used during the study plan preparation, considering the university's strategic plan and Vision 2030. The plan is then either approved or returned to the college's Committee on Plans and Curricula with reasons stated.

- If the Standing Committee on Plans and Curricula recommends approval, the plan is submitted to the University Council for approval or return with justifications. For diploma and bachelor's programs, it goes directly to the University Council Secretariat. For graduate programs, the study plan is submitted to the Standing Committee for Graduate Studies at the Vice-Presidency for Graduate Studies and Scientific Research to complete the administrative procedures as per the regulations.

- Upon the University Council's recommendation for approval - after verifying the procedure's correctness and fulfilling the study plan construction requirements - and sending it back to the departments, all academic program data including descriptions (program and courses) are uploaded on the Minahaj (Curriculum) platform. Following this, the plan becomes a document that all related entities and colleges offering the same program at the university must adhere to without any modifications to its final version approved by the University Council.

2.7.1.2 Internal Review of Plans and Curricula

The Plans and Curricula Unit was established at King Khalid University for reviewing and monitoring the creation and development of academic programs. Additionally, the Standing Committee for Quality Review of Plans and Programs (number 23189/38/2 dated 05/03/1439H) was formed to ensure the alignment of academic program plans with specialized academic standards (Readiness Program) - Education and Training Evaluation Commission, the National Qualifications Framework, the Saudi Standard Classification of Education Levels and Specializations, and the regulations mentioned in the study and exams bylaws relevant to academic programs. The committee

also ensures programs meet developmental needs and job market requirements, providing feedback to colleges and academic departments. Forms and templates were designed for the committee's use. Departments and colleges' Plans and Curricula Committees are responsible for introducing academic programs and preparing operational plans, with their tasks outlined in the departments and colleges' committee guide. These committees are reformed annually.

2.7.2 Program Accreditation Standards

The standards of the National Center for Academic Accreditation and Assessment and those of international accrediting bodies form an integral part of the external quality assurance for the university and its entities, as they continually meet these standards and benchmarks. The acquisition of program accreditation certificates by many of the university's academic programs is a testament to adherence to these standards. National and international accreditation and certification is not an endpoint; the university's entities continuously document these practices even after accreditation to ensure the quality of services provided to all university beneficiaries. These accreditations have contributed to achieving some of the objectives of the Human Capacity Development Program, such as improving basic learning outcomes; enhancing the ranking of educational institutions; and ensuring alignment between learning outcomes and job market needs. A list of proposed evidence and documents has been circulated to all programs as a guide to meeting accreditation benchmarks, and programs are required to document their practices in alignment with accreditation standard criteria.

In addition to the DP-102 and DPG-102 forms regarding required documents for undergraduate and postgraduate review/accreditation visits, here is an additional list representing the minimum required documents for accreditation or renewal, noting that collecting sufficient evidence for standard criteria and benchmarks is important:

- Working on previous recommendations and conditions for programs reapplying for accreditation.

- The college's strategic plan and the program's operational plan.

- Annual reports and periodic program follow-up reports.

- Alignment of the mission and objectives with national directions, the university's mission and goals, guiding all activities.

- Organizational structure, policies, and procedures.

- Updating guides, the quality system, performance indicators, and benchmarking.

- Survey result reports.

- Guides for creating and developing study plans and specifictaions and reports of courses and programs.

- Implementation monitoring.

- Development and improvement.

- Learning outcomes measurement system: Measurement plan and reports – Consistency with the National Qualifications Framework – Review of the plan and reports – Exit tests - Professional exams – Readiness project – Review pathways in the department and college.

2.7.3 International Program Accreditation

International accreditation granted by a specialized accrediting body, such as the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET), certifies that a program has met the quality standards set by the accrediting agency. After accreditation is awarded, the program's quality assurance processes ensure the continuous application of the evaluated standards during the accreditation procedures, thus making accreditation meaningful only if all phases and steps of quality assurance are actively implemented and maintained. If a program seeks international accreditation, the accrediting body must be recognized by the Education and Training Evaluation Commission.

2.7.4 National Program Accreditation

The Education and Training Evaluation Commission is the authority in Saudi Arabia responsible for evaluation, measurement, and accreditation of qualifications in both public and private education and training sectors to enhance their quality. Its responsibilities include developing the standards and conditions for educational and training institutions to achieve institutional and programmatic accreditation, and periodically evaluating and accrediting higher education and training institutions according to the standards approved by the commission's board.

2.7.5 Program Accreditation Procedures

Figure No. 7 illustrates the journey of program accreditation, where the Deanship of Development and Quality monitors quality and accreditation files, forming work teams with a reviewer assigned to each program. This reviewer guides, technically supports the program, monitors performance, and submits periodic reports to improve the quality and accreditation files, leading to a recommendation to submit the program files to the accrediting body upon addressing the reviewer's notes. After obtaining accreditation, programs are followed up to submit the program's response to address any conditions and work on recommendations and periodic reports (Figure No. 8). The accreditation follow-up procedures can be summarized as follows:

- Preparation of an operational plan by the Deanship of Development and Quality.

- Periodic monitoring by the deanship's reviewers.

- Submission of periodic reports and providing feedback to programs.

- Recommendation for submission to the accrediting body once the program files are complete and evidence for the standards' benchmarks is gathered.

- Following up on programs with conditional accreditation to submit the program/university's response form.

| 1. Using the updates templates of the education and training evaluation commission. | → | 2. Completing the NCAAA forms and gathering the evidence, proofs, testimonials for each criterion. | → | 3. Signing with the education and training evaluation commission |

| 6. Final visit for accreditation. | ← | 5. Verification visit. | ← | 4. Fill out form B9 to respond to the center's observations before the verification visit. |

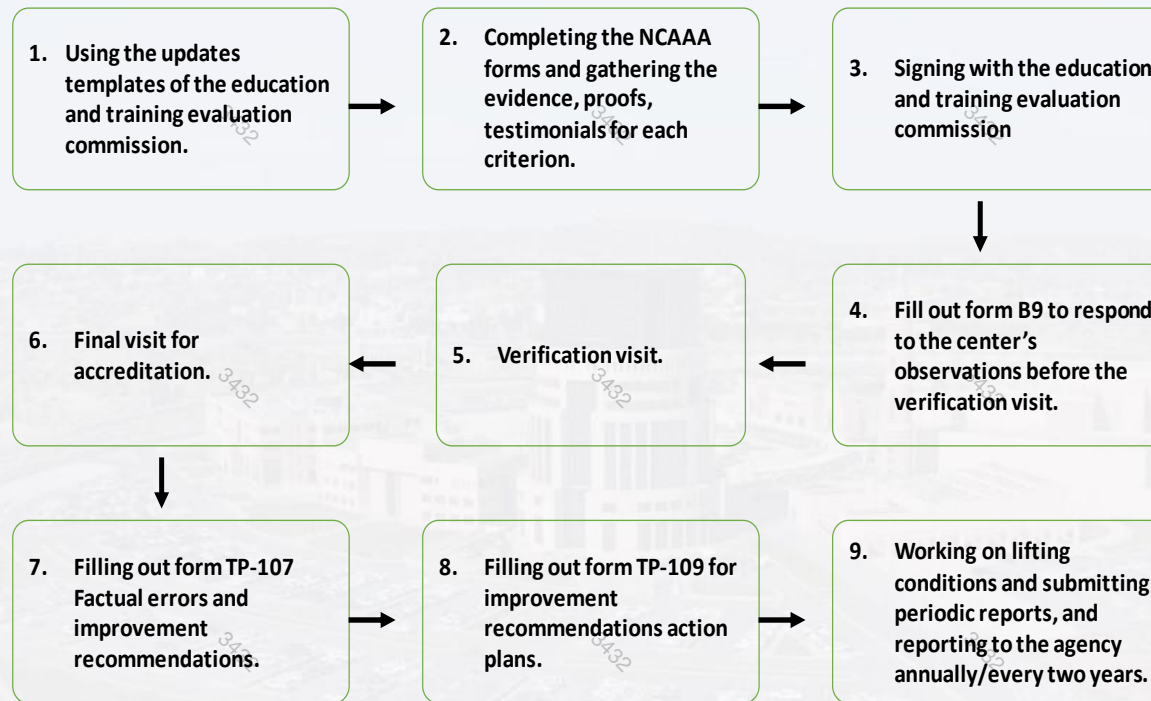| 7. Filling out form TP-107 Factual errors and improvement recommendations. | → | 8. Filling out form TP-109 for improvement recommendations action plans. | → | 9. Working on lifting conditions and submitting periodic reports, and reporting to the agency annually/every two years. |

Figure (7): The journey of program accreditation from the pre-signature phase to the post-accreditation periodic follow-up stage.
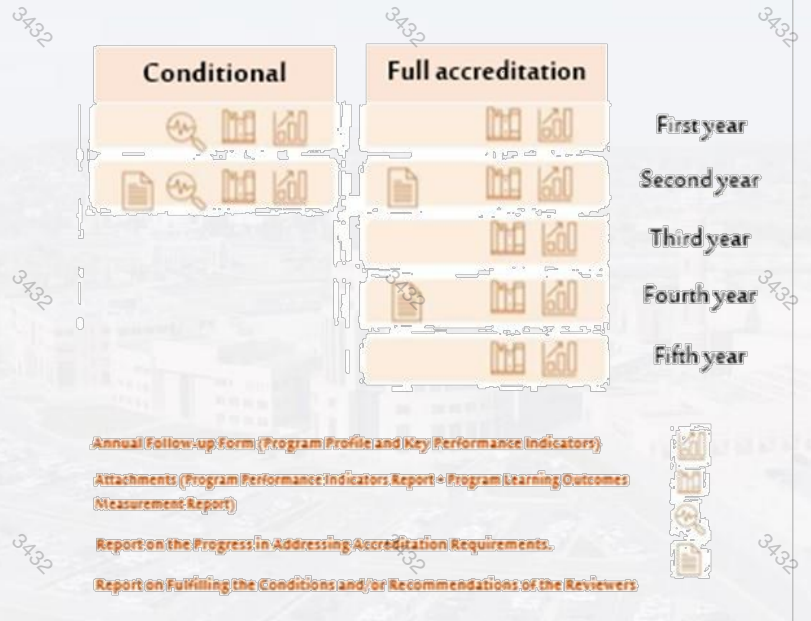
The Annual Plan for Accredited Programs

	Conditional	Full accreditation	
First year			
Second year			
Third year			
Fourth year			
Fifth year			

Annual Follow-up Form (Program Profile and Key Performance Indicators)

Attachments (Program Performance Indicators Report + Program Learning Outcomes Measurement Report)

Report on the Progress in Addressing Accreditation Requirements.

Report on Fulfilling the Conditions and/or Recommendations of the Reviewers

Figure (8): Monitoring of Accredited Programs (Full and Conditional) and the Periodic Files Required for Submission.

2.7.6 Implementing the Quality Assurance System in Programs, Departments, and Colleges

The quality assurance system within a program must be activated and implemented. The most important points regarding academic quality assurance can be summarized as follows:

1. Committing to the criteria for program management and quality assurance standards.

2. Implementing an effective quality assurance and management system within the program, aligned with the university's quality system.

3. The program should analyze all its performance indicators, conduct benchmark comparisons, and utilize reports for planning and development.

4. Conducting comprehensive periodic review of the program, formulating improvement plans, and monitoring their implementation.

- Updating the quality assurance guide for the program and college to align with the university's quality assurance guide.

- Reviewing the operational plan and preparing its report, using the analysis for planning and development.

- Having a system for academic advising (services provided, monitoring, reports, evaluation).

- Having a system for learning outcomes (refer to section 2.7.2).

- Having a system for scientific supervision and research.

- Having a system for faculty training.

- Having a plan for community partnership, analyzing activities, and preparing reports.

- Communicating with students, graduates, experts, and employers, and involving them in quality assurance processes and decision-making.

- Creating surveys, analyzing the results, and using them for improvement and development.

- Having a mechanism for evaluating committees/faculty members.

- Following up on the implementation of recommendations (department council recommendations, committee recommendations, accreditation recommendations).

- Ensuring continuity, where the points mentioned are committed to annually.

As for internal review, a Standing Committee for Program Accreditation has been established, which convenes annually to review how well programs adhere to program accreditation standards. It also reviews all program files and provides feedback for the programs to address the committee's recommendations. These files cover various aspects of quality assurance, including:

- Key performance indicators of the programs
- The plan and measurement of learning outcomes
- The program's quality system manual
- Services offered in relation to academic advising.
- Community services provided.
- Supervision and scientific research.
- Annual reports of the programs and courses
- Programs and courses specifications

2.7.7 Evaluation and Assessment in Academic Programs

There are numerous evaluation files within programs, with the most important ones being the measurement of learning outcomes in academic programs, assessing the achievement of the operational plan's objectives, measuring performance indicators, evaluating research methodologies within the program and community service, and assessing the relevance of evidence collection to accreditation standards criteria. Academic programs employ other indirect methods such as surveys to gather opinions from students and alumni. After every academic evaluation process, it's essential to close the evaluation loop. Regarding performance indicators, a best practice for facilitating optimal evaluation in academic programs includes:

- Distributing all performance indicators (main indicators, operational plan indicators, committee indicators, etc.) to the program/department committees and those responsible for implementation, followed by an analysis of these indicators.

- Documenting all program practices, activities, and committee operations.

All these activities conducted by the program during the academic year are governed by the methodology of planning, implementation, analysis, and improvement, and the results are compiled in the program's annual report (Figure 9 summarizes the pathways for annual review and evaluation of the program).
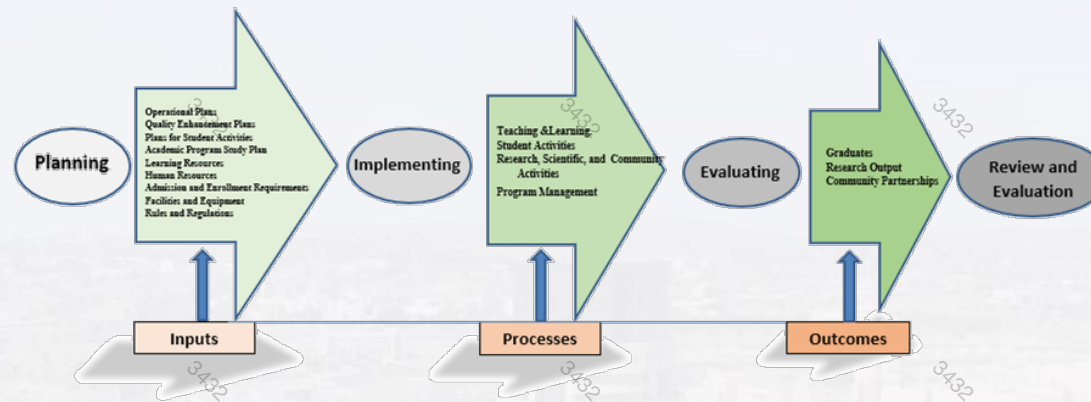
Figure (9): Program Annual Review and Evaluation Pathways

Collecting Pieces of Evidence, Proofs, and Testimonials:

The Deanship of Development and Quality has prepared a guiding manual for fulfilling the accreditation criteria for undergraduate and postgraduate programs (No. 21933 dated 17-03-1445H), suggesting several pieces of evidence and testimonials for each criterion within each standard. Here are some notes on the collection of evidence, proofs, and testimonials:

- Accuracy of evidence and updating practices.

- Close linkage of evidence to the accreditation criteria.

- Coding and naming evidence succinctly, creating hyperlinks, and ensuring all links are accessible.

- Following up on the implementation of each recommendation according to improvement plans and closing the evaluation cycle to ensure their realization.

Closing the Quality Loop:

The quality loop must be closed in all activities and reports. It means having a pre-established plan, followed by implementation, then analyzing the results, identifying strengths and weaknesses, setting improvement priorities, proposing corrective actions, and starting a new cycle with a development plan to reduce errors, improve performance, and enhance the quality of the activity. For example, in the field of learning outcomes, closing the evaluation loop refers to measuring, evaluating, and analyzing learning outcomes, using analysis results to establish necessary recommendations for changes aimed at improving those outcomes, and then re-evaluating them to positively impact student learning. The process of closing the quality and evaluation loop aims to build an integrated system for evaluating learning outcomes for courses and the program, ensuring that the program imparts the knowledge and skills specified in the program description to its students, and that this evaluation is carried out according to specific stages and steps. The goals of implementing the closing of the evaluation and quality loop can be summarized as follows:

- Continuous improvement in all academic and administrative activities.

- Discussing concepts related to the program goals evaluation loop and its learning outcomes.

- Identifying successive stages for closing the program goals evaluation loop and its learning outcomes.

- Identifying strengths and weaknesses in the learning outcomes of courses and the program and developing recommendations and measures to improve the quality of those outcomes and the educational process in general.

Benchmarking and Improvement Cycle:

The benchmarking approach adopted by King Khalid University (at the institutional or program level) provides numerous benefits and is significant in ensuring continuous improvement and enabling the closure of the quality loop. First, benchmarking allows a systematic comparison of program performance, practices, and results against established standards, best practices, or similar programs in other institutions. This process offers valuable insights into areas of strength and those requiring improvement, paving the way for informed decisions and targeted interventions.

2.7.8 Quality Reports and Periodic Monitoring:

Annual reports, performance indicator reports, survey reports, operational plan reports, and learning outcomes measurement reports represent the most important of these reports. They are prepared annually at both the university and program levels. The self-study report is prepared and evaluated every four to five years to ensure compliance with quality standards by the programs and the university.

The following are models of periodic follow-up reports according to the latest models of the Education and Training Evaluation Commission, to be prepared at the beginning of each academic year:

- TP-114 Basic Data and Performance Indicators "Undergraduate" (Excel)

- TPG-114 Basic Data and Performance Indicators "Postgraduate Studies" (Excel)

- TP-115 Follow-up Report for Recommendations and Conditions (if any) for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Studies

- TP-152 Annual Program Report "Undergraduate"

- TPG-152 Annual Program Report "Postgraduate Studies"

2.8 Internal Review

- **At the University Level:**

There are standing committees responsible for reviewing the program files, the most significant of which is the Standing Committee for Program Accreditation. This committee is concerned with submitting periodic reports and feedback about the level of achievement of academic programs. The Standing Committee for Program Accreditation was established by a decision from the university president (number 43645/38/2 dated 16/06/1442H) to study and review academic program files, write a commentary report, and provide recommendations and improvement plans for the programs to work on until the evaluation loop for all academic activities of each program is closed. At the college level, there are committees and units for quality assurance that review program files. The most important of these units are the Quality Assurance Unit, the Measurement and Evaluation Unit, the Alumni Association Unit, and the Academic Advising Unit. Figure 3 illustrates the various committees at the university level that conduct internal reviews.

- **Quality Assurance Committees in Colleges and Departments:**

The quality committees in departments and the quality units in colleges submit their periodic quality reports to the Deanship of Development and Quality, in addition to all quality requirements, performance indicator results, their benchmarking, annual program reports, and learning outcomes measurement reports. The Quality Assurance Unit aims to implement quality principles and standards and sustainable mechanisms for their management and follow-up on report completion from the programs. The main tasks of the quality assurance units can be identified as follows:

- Promoting and supporting the dissemination of quality culture.

- Ensuring that program accreditation requirements are met on time.

- Reviewing program quality files and recommending their submission to the college council.

- Ensuring the evaluation of program activities and the follow-up on evaluating the learning outcomes of the programs.

- Ensuring that programs apply quality mechanisms according to appropriate accreditation standards.

- Identifying improvement plans in programs and evaluation processes and proposing these plans to the committees.

- **Quality Unit:**

In every college of the university, there are Quality Units (according to the decision of the university president number 22824 dated 19/03/1445H) which are technically linked to the Deanship of Development and Quality and form an important part of King Khalid University's quality system and performance quality monitoring. (Figure 6) highlights the importance of this unit in reviewing the department's and program's quality files and recommending their submission to the college council. Furthermore, programs continue to prepare periodic reports and follow up even after accreditation to ensure higher quality in all practices and to achieve improvement recommendations. The program must also implement policies, regulations, and bylaws, and plan, execute, and follow up for continuous improvement.

- **Measurement and Evaluation Unit:**

The Measurement and Evaluation Unit is concerned with all aspects of measuring program achievements in academic departments, including exit exams, question banks, and analyzing test results. The university president issued a decision (number 31415/38/2 dated 01/04/1439H) to establish a unit in each college named the "Measurement and Evaluation Unit," and the vision, mission, and objectives of the unit were defined to achieve the vision of the university's Measurement and Evaluation Center. The primary goal is to enhance the role of the Measurement and Evaluation Center in fulfilling its mission at the college department level, contributing to improving and developing teaching methods and assessment tools in the college, ensuring the correct application of performance evaluation tools, predicting strengths and weaknesses in the college's educational process, and interpreting data and information. One of the unit's most important tasks is to provide all data related to test results, automatically correct them, analyze them, and prepare a report containing result interpretations and recommendations.

- **Program Committees:**

At the program level, program leaders review the quality of their activities by preparing annual program reports, collecting performance indicator data, analyzing it through the program/department committees, and discussing and approving it in the department council and college council. To review these files at the university level, models for review have been prepared, reflecting the university's belief in the importance of continuous feedback in achieving the desired goals, with models for the Standing Committee for Program Accreditation and the Learning Outcomes Measurement Committee for periodic program reviews. Quality assurance is an ongoing process for monitoring the university's outputs and ensuring the quality of all its activities. Therefore, in light of the results of internal quality evaluation processes, and to meet external requirements, the university improves its inputs, processes, and necessary changes.

The university's departments contain a number of academic programs, requiring various committees to manage them and ensure their quality. It is important for committees to interact with each other to achieve program goals, meet improvement recommendations, and fulfill accreditation requirements. The following committees are included according to the guide for departmental academic committees:

- Schedules and Examinations Committee
- Plans and Curricula Committee
- Academic Guidance and Student Affairs Committee
- Graduate Studies and Scientific Research Committee
- Educational Services Committee
- Development and Quality Committee

3.1 Appendix:

3.1 University Publications:

The following is a collection of informational guides prepared by various departments within the university. Many guides are currently being updated to adhere to the principle of continuous improvement.

No.	Title	Responsible Entity
1	User Guide - Students	Deanship of Admission and Registration
2	Student Handbook	
3	Rules and Regulations for Studies and Examinations	
4	Guide to Specializations	
5	Rules for E-Learning at King Khalid University	Deanship of E-Learning
6	Unified Regulations for Postgraduate Studies in Universities and their Executive Rules at King Khalid University	Deanship of Graduate Studies
7	List of Rights and Duties for Graduate Students	
8	Regulations for Fee-based Postgraduate Programs	
9	Terms and Conditions for Internal Affiliation: for Teaching Assistants, Lecturers	
10	Guide for Writing and Formatting Theses	
11	Admission Requirements for Doctorate Programs (non-fee-based) for the year 1442H	
12	Admission Requirements for Master's Programs (non-fee-based) for the year 1442H	
13	Admission Requirements for Postgraduate Studies (fee-based and non-fee-based) for the second phase of the year 1442H	
14	Admission Requirements for Doctorate Programs (non-fee-based) for the first phase of the year 1442H	
15	Admission Requirements for Master's Programs (non-fee-based) for the first phase of the year 1442H	

No.	Title	Responsible Entity
16	Guide for Admission Requirements for Postgraduate Studies (Doctorate) for the year 1441H	
17	Guidelines for filling out the admission application	
18	Guide to Academic E-Transactions: Postponing Admission - Postponing Studies - Course dropping.	
19	Student Guide for E-Services (Research Plans and Theses).	
20	Guide for Approval of Academic Actions (specific to academic departments and colleges).	
21	Faculty Guide for E-Services (Academic Advising, Supervision, Research Plans, and Theses	
22	Guide for College Deans and Department Heads for Approval of Electronic Procedures (Research Plans and Theses).	
23	Procedure for Paying Tuition Fees for Fee-based Postgraduate Programs (new and enrolled students) for the second semester of 1442H	Deanship of Graduate Studies Vice Presidency for Business and Knowledge Economy
24	General Research Program – Procedural Guide Deanship of Scientific Research	
25	Support Program for Research Groups	
26	Unfunded Research	Deanship of Scientific Research
27	Unified Regulations for ScientificResearch atSaudi Universities	
28	Executive Regulations for the Ethics of Research on Living Creatures	
29	Ethics of Research on Living Creatures System	
30	Guide to the Requirements for the Quality Management System ISO 9001:2015 – 1443-2022 Edition.	Institutional Excellence Unit
31	Risk Management Guide at King Khalid University – 1442 Edition	Risk Management

No.	Title	Responsible Entity
32	Unified Guide for Preparing Study Plans at King Khalid University – 1440-1441H Edition	Vice Presidency for Educational and Academic Affairs
33	Quality Assurance Guide for Academic Programs - 2020 - 1441 Edition Deanship of Development and Quality	Deanship of Development and Quality
34	Procedural Guide for Formulating Learning Outcomes for Academic Programs	
35	Procedural Manual for Measuring Learning Outcomes of Academic Programs- 2023 - 1444 Edition	
36	Guide for Compiling Suggested Evidence and Testimonials According to New Standards – First Edition 2023 - 1444	
37	Ethical Framework	Vice Presidency for Development and Quality
38	University Strategic Plan	
39	Executive Rules for the Promotion of Faculty Members	Secretariat of the Scientific Council
40	Executive Rules for the Appointment of Faculty Members	
41	Governing and executive rules for sabbatical leave	
42	Regulatory Procedures for the Standing Advisory Committee for the Nomination of Academic Leaders Advisory Committee	Advisory Committee

3.2 Updated Forms:

The updated forms number 106 dated 06/01/1445H have been sent according to the letter from the National Center for Academic Accreditation and Assessment.

Prepared by the Deanship of Development and Quality

1445 H (2023 - 2024)