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Onaizah Colleges كليات عنيزة
Quality Assurance Administration

OC Guidebook for Proposing, Establishing and Modifying Academic Programs (2024)

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Introduction

Forward

The establishment and ongoing development of relevant, high-quality academic programs is essential to the mission and strategic goals of any higher education institution. This handbook provides a comprehensive guide and set of procedures for proposing new programs and modifying existing ones. It is intended to assist academic departments, college leadership, and OC administration in ensuring that programs align with institutional priorities and meet the needs of the student populations they aim to serve.

The handbook details the required proposal elements including the program's mission, learning outcomes, curriculum, course descriptions, and resource requirements related to staffing, facilities and equipment. Proposal templates are provided to ensure consistency and completeness of submissions as they move through the approval process from the department to college to university levels.

In developing new programs and revising current ones, this handbook can help focus efforts on meeting the educational and workforce needs of the region and country, in line with Saudi Vision 2030. By providing a clear framework and common language around academic program development, this guide enables OC to grow its impact through relevant, well-designed programs. The result will be graduates well-prepared to contribute to the economic and social development of the Kingdom as well as the local community.

Purpose and objectives of the handbook

The purpose of this handbook is to clarify the procedures and policies followed at Onaizah Colleges for proposing, establishing, and modifying academic programs, in line with the standards of quality and academic accreditation. The handbook also outlines the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders in the program development process.

The key objectives of this handbook are:

1. To provide a comprehensive guide for faculty and administrators involved in developing new academic programs or modifying existing ones at OC.
2. To ensure that all academic programs at OC align with the college's mission, strategic goals and the National Qualifications Framework.
3. To standardize the process of program development across different departments and colleges and maintain consistency in program quality.
4. To clarify the approval process and authority matrix for program development proposals, from the department and college councils up to the OC BoT.
5. To emphasize the importance of needs assessment, market analysis, and resource planning when proposing new programs.
6. To provide templates and guidelines for developing program specifications, including mission, goals, learning outcomes, curriculum, and study plan.

By adhering to the policies, procedures and guidelines outlined in this handbook, the college can ensure that its academic offerings are consistently meeting the standards of academic excellence and contributing to the achievement of its strategic goals and mission.

Key definitions and terminology

To ensure clarity and a common understanding among all stakeholders involved in the program development process, it is essential to define the key terms and concepts used throughout this handbook.

Academic Program: A structured set of courses, learning experiences and assessment activities leading to the award of a qualification such as a diploma or degree, in a specific field of study.

Program Mission Statement: A concise statement that defines the primary purpose, values and goals of the academic program, and how it aligns with the mission and goals of the college and the university.

Program Goals: Broad statements that describe the long-term strategic aims and desired outcomes of the program, in terms of student learning, research, community engagement and other relevant aspects.

Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs): Specific, measurable statements that describe what students should know, be able to do, and value by the time they complete the program. PLOs are aligned with the program goals and mission and form the basis for curriculum design and assessment.

Curriculum Mapping: The process of aligning program learning outcomes with specific courses in the study plan, to ensure that all PLOs are adequately addressed and assessed throughout the program.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs): Specific, measurable statements that describe what students should know, be able to do, and value by the time they complete a particular course. CLOs are aligned with the PLOs and form the basis for course assessment.

National Qualifications Framework (NQF): A comprehensive system that defines the levels, credit hours, and expected learning outcomes for various types of qualifications awarded by higher education institutions in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Saudi Standard Classification of Education (SASCED-P): A coding system used to classify academic programs and qualifications according to their field of study, level, and type (academic, applied, technical or vocational).

Needs Assessment: A systematic process of gathering and analyzing data to determine the current and future needs for a proposed academic program, in terms of student demand, labor market requirements, and societal needs.

Benchmarking: The process of comparing a proposed or existing program with similar programs offered by other institutions, locally or internationally, to identify best practices, set performance targets, and make improvements.

Program Proposal: A formal document that outlines the rationale, goals, structure, curriculum, resources, and implementation plan for a new academic program, submitted for approval by the relevant authorities.

Program Specification: A detailed document that describes the key features of an academic program, including its mission, goals, learning outcomes, curriculum structure, admission requirements, assessment methods, and quality assurance mechanisms.

Course Specification: A detailed document that describes the key features of a course within an academic program, including its learning outcomes, content, teaching and assessment strategies, and resources required.

Program Review: A periodic, comprehensive evaluation of an existing academic program to assess its quality, relevance, and effectiveness in achieving its stated goals and learning outcomes, and to identify areas for improvement.

Continuous Quality Improvement: An ongoing process of monitoring, evaluating, and enhancing the quality of an academic program through regular assessment, feedback, and data-driven decision making.

Overview of the academic program development process at OC

The academic program development process at Onaizah Colleges follows a systematic approach with multiple stages and stakeholders involved to ensure new programs are well-planned and existing programs are regularly evaluated and improved.

The key stages are:

- Proposal Initiation: New program proposals can be initiated by faculty, departments or college administration based on identified needs, market demand or strategic priorities. The proposal should be based on the approved template discussed below.
- Needs Assessment and Feasibility Study: A thorough analysis is done on student demand, labor market trends, employer expectations, societal needs, and impact on college resources and budget.
- Proposal Development: A detailed proposal is created including the program's mission, goals, learning outcomes, curriculum, admission requirements, resources needed and implementation plan, using the standard college template.
- Department and College Review: The proposal is reviewed and approved by the department council for alignment with department goals and resources. If approved, it goes to the college council for further review.
- BoT Review: Proposals approved by the college council are submitted to the OC relevant BoT to assess compliance with academic standards, strategic goals, and resource capacity. The Councils makes a recommendation to the Universities Affairs Council.
- Universities Affairs Approval: The final decision to approve the new program is made by the University Affairs Council based on the recommendation from the OC BoT
- Implementation and Monitoring: Once approved, a detailed implementation plan is developed including student admission, faculty recruitment, course delivery and assessment. The program is closely monitored to ensure it meets its stated goals and learning outcomes.
- Periodic Program Review: Existing programs undergo a comprehensive review every 3-5 years to assess their quality, relevance, and effectiveness. The review identifies areas for improvement and ensures the program remains aligned with the college's mission and goals.

Throughout the process, the program development committees work closely with the Quality Assurance Administration to ensure compliance with quality standards and requirements related to the curriculum, study plan, learning outcomes and alignment with the National Qualifications Framework.

Roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders

Based on OC-QMS Guiding Principle #4 which emphasizes that, "OC Stakeholders of both genders should have substantial involvement in planning and reviewing processes, with their feedback obtained, analyzed, and responded to.", the program development process at Onaizah Colleges, outlined and detailed in this guidebook, involves multiple stakeholders, each with clearly defined roles and responsibilities to ensure the quality and relevance of academic programs. The key stakeholders and their roles are as follows:

- Program Development Committee: This committee is responsible for initiating the proposal for a new program or modifications to an existing program. They conduct the needs assessment, feasibility study, and develop the detailed program proposal, including the mission, goals, learning outcomes, and curriculum.
- Department Council: The department council reviews the program proposal to ensure it aligns with the department's goals, resources, and expertise. They provide feedback and recommendations to the program development committee and, if satisfied, approve the proposal for submission to the college council.
- College Council: The college council reviews the program proposal to assess its alignment with the college's mission, strategic goals, and resource capacity. They consider the recommendations from the department council and, if approved, forward the proposal to the OC BoT
- OC Board of Trustees (BoT): The BoT is responsible for reviewing program proposals from all colleges and ensuring they meet the academic standards, quality requirements, and strategic priorities of Onaizah Colleges. They make recommendations to the University Affairs Council for final approval.
- University Affairs Council: As the highest academic authority, the University Affairs Council makes the final decision to approve or reject a new program proposal based on the recommendations from the OC BoT
- Quality Assurance Administration: The QA Administration plays a crucial role in ensuring that all program proposals and curriculums meet the required quality standards and align with the National Qualifications Framework. They review the program specifications, study plans, and learning outcomes and provide feedback to the program development committees.
- Strategic Planning Department: The Strategic Planning Department is responsible for reviewing the program's mission and goals to ensure they align with the overall mission and strategic goals of Onaizah Colleges. They provide guidance and support to the program development committees in formulating appropriate mission statements and goals.
- Faculty Members: Faculty members are involved in the program development process through their participation in the program development committees, department councils, and college councils. They provide subject matter expertise, contribute to curriculum design, and ensure the program's academic rigor and relevance.
- Students and Alumni: While not directly involved in the program development process, students and alumni provide valuable feedback on the quality and relevance of existing programs through surveys, focus groups, and other feedback mechanisms. This input is considered during program reviews and improvements.
- Employers and Industry Partners: Employers and industry partners provide insights into the skills and knowledge required in the job market, which informs the design of new programs and the improvement of existing ones. They may be consulted during the needs assessment and feasibility study stages of program development.

By clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder, Onaizah Colleges ensures that the program development process is collaborative, transparent, and focused on delivering high-quality, relevant academic programs that meet the needs of students, employers, and society.

Relation to the OC-QMS Handbook

This guidebook for establishing, modifying, and proposing new academic programs is closely related to and based on the more comprehensive "OC Quality Management System: Programmatic and Institutional Policies, Processes and Procedures (2023)" handbook (referred to as the OC-QMS Handbook). The OC-QMS Handbook provides the full details, guidelines, templates, and examples for all the quality assurance policies, processes and procedures that are foundational for this guidebook.

While this guidebook focuses on the specific procedures for establishing and proposing new programs, it frequently refers back to the OC-QMS Handbook for the underlying quality assurance principles and requirements. The policies, procedures and processes mentioned in this guidebook should be understood and implemented based on their detailed descriptions in the corresponding sections of the OC-QMS Handbook. Examples to clarify this are given below:

- Developing the mission and goals for a proposed new program (covered in the "Program Information" section of the new program proposal template) should follow the guidelines for formulating program mission and goals described in process P-P-01 of the OC-QMS Handbook.
- Preparing the program specification for a new program proposal should use the NCAAA template mentioned in this guidebook and follow the detailed instructions provided in process P-P-09 of the OC-QMS Handbook.
- The curriculum and study plan of a proposed program must be verified by the Quality Assurance Administration based on the curriculum mapping and alignment requirements detailed in processes P-P-04, P-P-05 and P-P-06 of the OC-QMS Handbook.

In this way, this guidebook and the comprehensive OC-QMS Handbook have a close, complementary relationship. This guidebook provides specific directions for the program proposal process, while the OC-QMS Handbook provides the broader quality assurance context and detailed policy and process guidelines that inform that process.

Departments should use this guidebook to understand the mechanics of establishing a new program or modifying an existing one but must refer to the OC-QMS Handbook to ensure the proposed or modified program is designed in accordance with the colleges' overall quality assurance system. The two handbooks are intended to be used together to facilitate the development of high-quality, QMS-compliant program proposals.

Proposing and Establishing a New Academic Program in OC

Proposing and establishing a new academic program is a significant undertaking that requires careful planning, analysis, and execution. The Oman College (OC) has established a comprehensive process and template for departments and faculty to follow when developing proposals for new programs.

This chapter will guide you through the key steps and criteria involved in proposing a new academic program at OC, closely following the "Proposal for New Academic Program" template (provided in Appendix). We will cover the justification and needs assessment required, developing the program's mission, and learning outcomes, designing the curriculum, planning for resources, and the proposal submission and approval process.

The template provides a structured framework to ensure that all critical aspects are thoroughly addressed when proposing a new program. It starts with capturing key program information, such as the proposed name, degree awarded, classification codes, the proposing department and committee members.

The proposal then requires defining the program's general goals and rationale, analyzing student and labor market needs, identifying target student segments, and expected graduate occupations. Benchmarking against similar programs at other respected institutions is also called for.

Developing a clear program mission, strategic goals and learning outcomes that align with the college and OC's mission and goals is a crucial part of the proposal. The template also includes sections for detailing the curriculum and study plan, credit hours, tracks, courses, and their descriptions.

Finally, the resource requirements in terms of faculty, labs, equipment, learning resources and facilities must be comprehensively planned for and specified in the proposal.

By following the process and template closely, departments can develop high-quality, well-justified proposals for new programs that meet the needs of students, employers, and the community, and align with OC's strategic priorities. Subsequent sections in this chapter will elaborate on each step of the proposal development process.

Criteria and justification for proposing a new program

Proposing a new academic program at Onaizah Colleges requires meeting several key criteria and providing strong justification. The program proposal template lays out the main areas that need to be addressed.

First and foremost, the proposed program should have clear goals and objectives that align with the mission and strategic priorities of the college and Onaizah Colleges overall. The proposal must describe the general aim of the program and highlight the key academic, professional, and societal needs it will fulfill. This could include addressing skill gaps in the labor market, providing pathways to in-demand careers, contributing to national development goals, or advancing knowledge in emerging fields.

Establishing the rationale for the new program is crucial. The proposal should succinctly list the main reasons and motivating factors for developing the program. This rationale could encompass factors such as:

- Alignment with Onaizah Colleges and college strategic plans
- Synergies with existing programs and research priorities
- Potential for attracting new student segments

- Leveraging unique faculty expertise or resources
- Responding to government initiatives or industry demands
- Enhancing Onaizah Colleges' academic reputation and competitiveness

A well-researched and data-driven needs assessment is a key part of the justification. The program proposal must describe the need and demand for the program from both student and labor market perspectives. Enrollment trends, demographic shifts, and student interest surveys can help gauge potential student demand.

Demonstrating labor market need requires analyzing employment trends, industry growth projections, job postings, and emerging skill requirements both nationally and in the region. Mapping the proposed program's learning outcomes to the knowledge and skills sought by employers is important. Needs assessment data should be aligned with Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 goals where relevant and draw upon national labor market studies and Ministry of Human Resources reports.

The needs assessment should also identify the target student segments for the new program. This could include recent high school graduates, working professionals seeking upskilling, international students, or other specific student groups. Understanding the characteristics, motivations and constraints of target segments helps inform program positioning, curriculum design, and student support strategies.

Benchmarking the proposed program against similar offerings at other respected institutions provides important context and validation for the proposal. The template calls for a comparison table of related programs, detailing their titles, degrees, credit hours and other key parameters. Benchmarking helps calibrate the program in terms of scope, rigor, and competitiveness. It also identifies potential differentiators or gaps that the new program can address.

Compatibility with Onaizah Colleges' existing program portfolio should be considered. The proposal must discuss the relationship between the new program and the college's current offerings, and how it is distinct yet complementary. Articulating the program's unique value proposition is important. Synergies could include shared courses, lab facilities, or faculty expertise that the new program can leverage. Conversely, overlap and cannibalization of current programs must be avoided.

Enrollment projections are another key criterion. The proposal should include a table forecasting student intake over the initial years of the program. Reasonable enrollment targets demonstrate the program's viability and inform resource planning. Projections draw upon the needs assessment findings, benchmarking data, and the college's recruitment trends and targets.

Effective resource planning is central to the proposal's credibility. A comprehensive accounting of the human resources needed is required, specifying the number, rank, specialization, and expertise of the faculty who will teach in the program. Gaps between current and required faculty must be identified, along with strategies for filling them through recruitment or development.

The physical infrastructure and learning resources required must also be detailed. This includes classrooms, labs, equipment, software, library materials and other facilities essential for program delivery. Gaps and plans for addressing them should be specified.

A viable financial model is a key criterion for approval. The proposal must include a multi-year budget encompassing faculty salaries, facilities, equipment, materials, and other operating costs. Offsetting revenues from tuition, fees, grants, and other sources should be conservatively estimated. Demonstrating the program's financial sustainability over time is critical.

Finally, a clear implementation plan demonstrates the feasibility and readiness of the proposed program. The plan should map out key milestones such as curriculum development, faculty hiring, facility preparation,

recruitment, accreditation, and program launch. A realistic timeline assigns accountability and aids monitoring.

In summary, the key criteria for proposing a new academic program include:

- Alignment with institutional mission and strategy
- Clear goals and rationale
- Documented student and labor market need
- Fit with target student segments
- Benchmarking against related programs
- Compatibility with current offerings
- Reasonable enrollment projections
- Sufficient qualified faculty
- Adequate infrastructure and learning resources
- Financial viability
- Implementation readiness

The program proposal template provides a structured approach to compiling the necessary evidence and arguments. A strong proposal makes a compelling, fact-based case for how the new program meets Onaizah Colleges' academic standards, serves student and societal needs, advances strategic priorities, and is feasible to deliver with quality. Thorough research, analysis and planning is required to develop a persuasive program proposal.

Step-by-step process for proposing a new program

Proposing a new academic program at Onaizah Colleges involves following a systematic, step-by-step process as outlined in the program proposal template. This process ensures that all key aspects are thoroughly researched, planned, and documented to create a compelling case for the new program. The main steps are:

- Needs assessment and market analysis
- Developing program mission, goals and learning outcomes
- Curriculum design and course development
- Resource planning (faculty, facilities, budget)

Needs assessment and market analysis

A comprehensive needs assessment is the foundation of a strong program proposal. It provides the evidence base for justifying the program in terms of student demand, labor market need, and alignment with national and institutional priorities.

The needs assessment should include an analysis of the target student segments for the proposed program. This involves profiling the demographics, academic preparedness, career aspirations, and enrollment drivers of prospective student groups, such as:

- Recent high school graduates seeking a degree in the field
- Working adults looking to upskill or change careers
- Employers sponsoring staff for professional development
- International students interested in the specialization

Primary research through surveys, focus groups and interviews can yield valuable insights into student demand and preferences. Secondary research on enrollment trends in related programs, both at Onaizah Colleges and peer institutions, provides helpful context.

Demonstrating labor market demand is equally important. This requires a multi-pronged analysis of the employment landscape for the proposed program's graduates. Key components include:

- Identifying potential career paths and job roles that align with the program's learning outcomes
- Analyzing recent job postings to assess the volume and requirements of relevant positions
- Examining occupational forecasts and industry reports to gauge future demand and skills needed
- Mapping the program's curriculum to the knowledge and competencies sought by employers
- Engaging industry partners and alumni to validate demand and inform program design
- Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030, sectoral development plans, and Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development (MHRSD) studies offer valuable macro-level insights to anchor the market analysis. Aligning the program with national priorities enhances its relevance and appeal.

The needs assessment findings should be synthesized into a clear, data-driven rationale for the program. A compelling narrative weaves together the student, industry and societal needs the program addresses, the gaps it fills, and the value it creates for stakeholders.

Developing program mission, goals and learning outcomes

With the needs assessment laying the groundwork, the next step is articulating the program's mission, goals and intended learning outcomes. These guide all aspects of program design and delivery and must align with Onaizah Colleges' overall mission and strategic goals as outlined in Policy P-01 of the OC-QMS handbook.

Proposed Program Mission and Goals

The program mission is a concise statement of its purpose, distilling the needs it addresses and the impact it seeks to create. An effective mission is inspiring, meaningful, and memorable. It should be developed in consultation with relevant stakeholders, as per the principle of substantial stakeholder involvement emphasized in the OC-QMS guiding principles. The mission statement must answer the following questions:

1-Who you are? [State the name of your program]

2-What you do? [State the primary functions and activities of your program]

3-For whom you do what you do? [State key stakeholders. See principles 3 & 5 in OC-QMS handbook]

4-Why you do what you do? [State your program's purpose, i.e., the primary reasons for its major activities and operations being performed]

In addition, the program mission must fulfill the six criteria outlined in the OC-QMS handbook and summarized below:

1. Consistency with OC mission
2. Awareness of External Context
3. W.I.S.E Mission
4. Concise, Clear, Strategically Wise and Feasible
5. Closely Aligned with Stakeholders' Perceptions and National Trends
6. Closely Aligned with Labor Market Dynamics and Employability Skills

The program goals flow from the mission, translating it into goals. They define what the program aims to achieve in terms of student success, research impact, community engagement, research contribution and other key dimensions. Programmatic goals are strategic in nature and should not be confused with educational goals and objectives as emphasized in the OC-QMS handbook. Program goals must also fall into the key OC strategic themes and priorities outlined in Chapter 1 in the OC-QMS handbook. A program should consider the appropriate flow of formulating its mission and goals based on OC-QMS processes P-P-01 and P-P-02.

Program Learning Outcomes

The program's intended learning outcomes (PLOs) operationalize the goals at the student level. They specify the knowledge, skills, and competencies that graduates are expected to demonstrate, reflecting both disciplinary standards and employer requirements. Effective PLOs are clear, observable, and measurable. They span the knowledge, understanding, skills and values domains, and strictly align with

the appropriate level descriptors of the Saudi Arabian Qualifications Framework (NQF-KSA), as mandated by Policy P-03 of the OC-QMS handbook, and detailed in processes including P-P-03.

A curriculum map matrix aligns the PLOs against the program's courses, ensuring that all outcomes are adequately developed and assessed throughout the student journey. This alignment is key to the program's coherence and effectiveness and is a requirement under Policy P-04 of the OC-QMS handbook and detailed in processes including P-P-04.

Curriculum design and course development

With the PLOs defined, the next step is designing a curriculum that enables students to achieve those outcomes. The program curriculum includes the courses, learning activities, assessments, and other educational experiences that foster student growth and mastery, as outlined in Policies P-04 and P-06 of the OC-QMS handbook.

Curriculum design starts with defining the program structure and credit hour requirements. This involves specifying the total credit hours needed for graduation, and their distribution across core courses, electives, capstone projects, internships, and other components, in line with the standards set by the Ministry of Education and NCAAA, as per Policy P-02 of the OC-QMS handbook.

With the curriculum architecture in place, detailed course planning follows. Each course is mapped to one or more PLOs, and its content, learning activities and assessments are designed to help students achieve those outcomes, as required by Policy P-06 of the OC-QMS handbook. Courses build on and reinforce each other, with clear prerequisites and a logical flow.

Effective course design aligns the intended learning outcomes, teaching and learning activities, and assessments - a principle known as "constructive alignment". Outcomes guide the selection of content, the design of learning experiences, and the development of assessments that authentically measure student achievement, as emphasized in Policy P-07 of the OC-QMS handbook and detailed under process P-P-04.

Courses should employ a variety of teaching strategies and modalities to engage diverse learners. These may include lectures, discussions, case studies, simulations, labs, projects, and digital learning tools, among others. Active, experiential, and collaborative learning approaches promote deeper understanding and skill development, aligning with the continuous improvement focus of OC-QMS.

Assessments should be criterion-referenced, with clear rubrics that articulate expectations for demonstrating mastery of the learning outcomes. Formative assessments provide ongoing feedback to support student growth, while summative assessments measure overall achievement for grading purposes, as outlined in Policy P-07 of the OC-QMS handbook. Authentic assessments, such as projects, portfolios, and performances, evaluate students' ability to apply their learning in real-world contexts, and in alignment with OC Philosophy of Teaching and Learning outlined in the OC-QMS handbook.

The curriculum and course designs should be reviewed by multiple stakeholders, including faculty, industry partners, and academic quality assurance staff, to ensure their relevance, rigor, and coherence, as per the stakeholder involvement principle of OC-QMS. External benchmarking against similar programs can also inform the design process, aligning with the benchmarking principle of OC-QMS.

Resource planning (faculty, facilities, budget)

Implementing a high-quality program requires careful planning and allocation of resources. The three critical resource areas are faculty, facilities, and budget.

The proposal must specify the number and qualifications of the faculty needed to effectively deliver the curriculum and support student learning. This includes full-time, part-time, and adjunct instructors, as well as teaching assistants and support staff.

A faculty hiring and development plan outlines strategies for recruiting instructors with the necessary expertise, diversity, and teaching skills. It also addresses professional development needs to keep faculty current in their fields and continuously improve their pedagogical practices.

Facilities and learning resources are another key consideration. The proposal must detail the physical spaces, equipment, technology, library resources and other infrastructure required for the program. This includes classrooms, labs, studios, maker spaces, study areas, and specialized facilities aligned with the discipline.

A facilities plan identifies any gaps between current and needed resources, and strategies for addressing them. This may involve renovating existing spaces, building new ones, or partnering with other institutions to share resources. The plan should also address ongoing maintenance, upgrades, and tech support needs.

Finally, a comprehensive program budget projects the revenues and costs associated with launching and sustaining the program over a multi-year period, typically 3-5 years. The budget includes:

- Faculty and staff salaries and benefits
- Facilities and equipment costs (new and ongoing)
- Learning materials and library resources
- Technology and software licenses
- Marketing and recruitment expenses
- Student support and extra-curricular activities
- Indirect costs and overhead

Revenues may come from tuition and fees, government appropriations, grants, donations, and other sources. A realistic enrollment projection is key to estimating tuition revenues. The budget should also include a sensitivity analysis to assess the impact of lower-than-expected enrollments or other financial risks.

A sustainable financial model is essential for program success. The budget must demonstrate that projected revenues will cover costs over time, with a reasonable margin for contingencies and future investments. The Financial Affairs Department prepares a comprehensive "estimated cost of establishing the program" according to their standard template. This includes a detailed breakdown of projected revenues and expenses over the first few years of the program's operation.

The program team also develops a realistic enrollment projection, estimating the number of students expected to be admitted each year. This is a critical input for tuition revenue forecasts. The Strategic Planning Administration and College Council carefully review the financial model to ensure it is realistic, sustainable, and aligned with the college's overall financial strategy and resource allocation priorities.

Ultimately, the relevant administrations as well as the Board of Trustees must be confident that the program is a sound financial investment for the institution before granting final approval. Their endorsement signals a commitment to providing the necessary resources to launch and maintain a high-quality program that serves students, advances knowledge, and contributes to the community.

Specific Roles of Key Stakeholders

The initial step involves the program proposing team, primarily consisting of faculty members from the pertinent department, conducting an extensive needs assessment. This assessment serves to substantiate the necessity and viability of the new program by meticulously examining student demand, labor market requirements, and congruence with both national and institutional priorities. The Strategic Planning Administration contributes invaluable guidance and data to bolster the needs assessment, aiding in pinpointing target student segments, scrutinizing enrollment patterns, and benchmarking against comparable programs. Simultaneously, the Quality Assurance Administration ensures the implementation of a thorough assessment methodology and thorough documentation of the findings.

Engaging external stakeholders is of paramount importance at this juncture. The program team should actively seek counsel from industry partners, employers, alumni, and prospective students to corroborate demand and amass input on essential skills and competencies. The Partnerships Administration and Alumni Relations Office play a pivotal role in facilitating these vital connections.

Roles of Stakeholders in Needs Assessment

The needs assessment findings are then astutely synthesized into a lucid and persuasive rationale for the proposed program. The College Council and Board of Trustees meticulously review this rationale to ascertain the program's alignment with institutional goals and its efficacy in addressing strategic needs.

Roles of Stakeholders in Developing program mission, goals and learning outcomes

Building upon the needs assessment, the program team articulates the program's overarching mission, goals, and intended learning outcomes. These foundational elements serve as the guiding principles for all facets of program design and delivery and must be seamlessly aligned with Onaizah Colleges' overall mission and strategic plan.

The Strategic Planning Administration bears the responsibility of verifying that the proposed program's mission and goals are congruent with the institution's trajectory. They diligently ensure that the program's objectives are specific, measurable, and achievable within the proposed timeframe and resource constraints.

Concurrently, the Quality Assurance Administration meticulously reviews the intended learning outcomes to guarantee their clarity, appropriateness to the degree level, and alignment with the Saudi Arabian Qualifications Framework. They also assiduously verify that the outcomes encompass key knowledge and skill domains and are measurable through robust assessment mechanisms.

Roles of Stakeholders in Curriculum design and course development

With the learning outcomes clearly defined, the program team embarks on the crucial task of designing a coherent curriculum that empowers students to achieve those outcomes. Faculty members, drawing upon their subject matter expertise, serve as the primary drivers of curriculum and course development.

The Quality Assurance Administration offers invaluable guidance on effective curriculum design practices, such as the constructive alignment of outcomes, instruction, and assessment. They thoroughly review the proposed curriculum to ensure it possesses appropriate breadth, depth, rigor, and progression.

The E-Learning Center provides expert advice on integrating technology to enhance the teaching and learning experience, while the library contributes insights on learning resources to support the curriculum. Industry partners may also be consulted to verify the relevance of the curriculum to employer needs.

The Department and College Councils undertake a meticulous review of the proposed curriculum and courses to ensure they meet the highest academic standards and effectively support the program's goals. The Board of Trustees grants final approval of the curriculum before implementation, signifying their confidence in its integrity and efficacy.

Roles of Stakeholders in Resource planning

Implementing a high-quality program necessitates meticulous planning and judicious allocation of resources. The program team must specify with utmost precision the faculty, facilities, and budget required to effectively deliver the curriculum and support student learning.

The Human Resources Department lends its expertise in developing a faculty hiring and development plan to recruit and retain instructors possessing the necessary qualifications. The Faculty Development Center devises training initiatives to enhance teaching skills and foster pedagogical excellence.

The Facilities Management Department conducts a thorough assessment of the adequacy of existing classrooms, laboratories, and equipment, identifying any additional infrastructure requirements. The Information Technology Department determines the technology needs to support the program, ensuring a seamless integration of cutting-edge tools and platforms.

The Financial Affairs Department collaborates closely with the program team to develop a comprehensive multi-year budget, meticulously projecting revenues, and costs. They ensure the program's financial sustainability and alignment with the institution's overall budget priorities.

The Strategic Planning Administration reviews the resource plan to verify its alignment with the college's strategic priorities and resource allocation model. The Quality Assurance Administration ensures the resource plan is sufficient to deliver the program's intended learning outcomes.

The College Council and Board of Trustees review the resource plan in light of the program's anticipated enrollment and impact. Their endorsement signals the institution's unwavering commitment to providing the necessary resources for a successful program launch.

Proposal submission, review, and approval process

The process for proposing a new academic program at Onaizah Colleges is a comprehensive one, designed to ensure that any new program meets the highest possible standards of quality and aligns with the strategic goals of the institution.

The first step in this process is the formation of the Program Development Committee (PDC). PDC should consist of faculty specialized in the proposed program and should be led by a senior faculty member. PDC would initiate the process through the completion of the New Academic Program Proposal template (Appendix) (Steps 1-3). This template requires the proposing department or college to provide detailed information about the envisioned program, including the proposed name of the program, the type of qualification it will offer (academic, applied, technical, or vocational), the degree that will be awarded upon completion, the program's code according to the Saudi Standard Classification (SASCED-P), and the program's level within the Saudi Arabian Qualifications Framework (SAQF).

The template also requires a clear articulation of the program's mission and goals. This is a crucial aspect of the proposal, as it sets the foundation for the entire program. The mission statement should encapsulate the program's core purpose and values, while the goals should outline what the program aims to achieve in terms of student learning, research, and community engagement. The proposing department or college must engage in sufficient research and consultation to develop a mission and goals that are both ambitious and achievable, and that resonate with the values and priorities of the institution. The drafting of mission and goals should be based on the guidelines provided in the OC-QMS handbook.

Once the mission and goals are developed, they must be carefully reviewed to ensure they align with the overall mission and strategic goals of Onaizah Colleges. The Strategic Planning Administration (SPA) is responsible for overseeing the institution's strategic direction and ensuring that all programs and initiatives are working in concert to achieve the college's vision.

The Strategic Planning Administration carefully scrutinizes the proposed program's mission and goals, checking for consistency and synergy with the college's strategic plan (Step 4). They look for evidence that the program will contribute to the achievement of the OC’s strategic goals and themes, such as enhancing student success, promoting research excellence, or serving the needs of the community. If the alignment is not clear, the Strategic Planning Administration may request revisions or additional justification from the proposing department.

Assuming the Strategic Planning Administration is satisfied with the alignment of the program's mission and goals, they provide their official verification within the template. This verification is a critical milestone in the proposal process, as it signifies that the program has passed the first test of strategic fit and relevance.

Equally important is ensuring that the proposed program meets the quality standards set forth by Onaizah Colleges and the national accrediting bodies. The Quality Assurance Administration (QAA) is tasked with reviewing the proposed curriculum and study plan to verify that they meet all necessary requirements. This is a detailed process that examines every aspect of the program's academic design (Step 5).

First and foremost, the Quality Assurance Administration checks that the curriculum is appropriate for the level of the degree and the type of qualification. They ensure that the program's learning outcomes are clearly defined and aligned with the Saudi Arabian Qualifications Framework. This framework specifies the knowledge, skills, and competencies that students must demonstrate at each level of higher education, from diploma to doctoral degrees.

Next, they review the program's structure and course sequence. They check that the curriculum provides a logical progression of learning, with foundational courses preceding more advanced ones. They also verify that the curriculum includes an appropriate mix of theoretical and practical components, and that it incorporates relevant internships, projects, or research experiences.

The Quality Assurance Administration also carefully examines each proposed course. They review the course descriptions, their potential learning outcomes, teaching methods, and assessment strategies to ensure they are appropriate and effective. They may suggest modifications to course content or delivery to better align with best practices in the field.

In addition to the curriculum review, the Quality Assurance Administration also verifies that the program has adequate resources to support student learning. This includes checking that the program has sufficient numbers of qualified faculty, appropriate classroom and lab facilities, and access to necessary equipment and technology, based on the strategic targets of the relevant KPIs.

If the Quality Assurance Administration identifies any deficiencies or areas for improvement, they provide detailed feedback to the proposing department. The department must then revise the proposal to address these issues before it can move forward.

Once the Quality Assurance Administration is satisfied that the proposed program meets all initial quality standards, they provide their official approval. This approval certifies that the program is academically sound and ready for implementation, pending the completion of the remaining steps in the proposal process.

The next step involves a review by two critical support units: the Human Resources Administration (HRA) and the Educational Technologies & Learning Resources Administration (ETL). The Educational Technologies & Learning Resources Administration (in step 6) reviews the proposal to ensure that the program has the necessary technological infrastructure and learning resources to support student success. This includes checking that the program has access to appropriate software, databases, and online learning platforms. They also verify that the library has sufficient holdings in the program's subject area, including books, journals, and electronic resources.

If the Educational Technologies & Learning Resources Administration identifies any deficiencies, they work with the proposing department to develop a plan for acquiring or upgrading the necessary resources. This may involve purchasing new software licenses, subscribing to additional databases, or allocating funds for library acquisitions.

The Human Resources Administration reviews the proposal to ensure that the program has the necessary faculty and staff to operate effectively (step 7). They check that the college can provide a sufficient number of faculty with the appropriate qualifications and expertise to teach the proposed program and its courses. They also verify that the college has adequate administrative and support staff to handle tasks such as student advising, record-keeping, and program management in general.

If the Human Resources Administration identifies any gaps in staffing, they work with the proposing department to develop a plan for recruiting and hiring the necessary personnel. This may involve advertising for new positions, reallocating existing staff, or providing professional development to current faculty to prepare them to teach in the new program.

Once the Human Resources Administration and the Educational Technologies & Learning Resources Administration have provided their input and approval, the proposal moves on to the financial review stage.

Developing a new academic program requires sufficient financial resources, and it is critical that these resources are carefully planned and managed. This is the responsibility of the Financial Administration.

The Financial Administration (FR) works with the proposing department to develop a detailed budget for the program based on their approved template (step 8). This budget must account for all anticipated expenses, including faculty and staff salaries, benefits, facilities costs, equipment and technology expenses, library acquisitions, and any other operational costs. The budget must also project the program's revenue, including tuition, fees, and any external funding sources.

The Financial Administration carefully reviews the budget to ensure that it is realistic and sustainable. They check that the projected expenses are reasonable and in line with institutional norms. They also verify that the projected revenue is sufficient to cover the program's costs over time.

If the Financial Administration identifies any issues with the budget, they work with the proposing department to make necessary adjustments. This may involve trimming expenses, seeking additional revenue sources, or phasing in the program over a longer period to spread out the costs.

Once the Financial Administration is satisfied with the budget, they provide their official approval. This approval certifies that the program is financially viable and that the necessary resources will be available to support its implementation and ongoing operation.

With the approval of the Strategic Planning Administration, Quality Assurance Administration, Human Resources Administration, Educational Technologies & Learning Resources Administration, and Financial Administration, the proposal is now ready for review by the academic governance bodies.

The first stop is the relevant Department Council(s). This council, composed of all faculty members in the proposing department, carefully reviews the proposal to ensure that it meets the academic standards and aligns with the department's mission and capabilities. They discuss the program's merits and vote on whether to recommend its approval (step 9).

If the Department Council votes to recommend the program, the proposal moves on to the College Council. The College Council, chaired by the dean and including representatives from each department, considers the proposal from a broader perspective. They assess whether the program fits with the college's overall academic portfolio and strategic direction. They also consider the program's potential impact on the college's resources and reputation. (Step 10)

If the College Council also votes to recommend the program, the proposal is then sent for external review. This is a critical step in the process, as it provides an objective assessment of the program's quality and viability from experts in the field.

The external review is conducted by at least three subject matter experts (as mandated by the recent Ministry of Education Bylaws) who are not affiliated with Onaizah Colleges. These reviewers are typically senior academics or professionals with significant experience in the discipline. They are tasked with providing a detailed evaluation of the program's curriculum, learning outcomes, assessment methods, and resources (step 11).

The external reviewers sign and submit their reports, which include an overall assessment of the program's quality, appropriateness of its curriculum, PLOs and so on, in addition to any specific recommendations for improvement. These reports are then appended to the proposal and submitted to the Board of Trustees for consideration.

The Board of Trustees (BoT) is the highest governing body of Onaizah Colleges, and their approval is required for any new academic program. The Boards carefully review the proposal, including the external review reports, to make a final determination on whether the program should be approved (step 12).

The final step in the new program proposal process is approval by the General Secretariat of the Universities Affairs Council (GS). Once the Boards of Trustees has recommended approval of the program, the complete proposal package, including the template and all required attachments, is submitted to the General Secretariat.

The General Secretariat conducts a final review to ensure that the proposal is complete and complies with all relevant regulations and standards (step 13). If they identify any issues or require additional information, they may return the proposal to the college for revision.

Assuming the proposal passes this final check, the General Secretariat officially approves the establishment of the new academic program. They notify OC of the approval and work with them to determine an appropriate timeline for launching the program.

The launch of a new program is a significant undertaking that requires careful planning and coordination. The college must ensure that all necessary resources are in place, including faculty, staff, facilities, technology, and learning materials. They must also develop a detailed implementation plan that outlines key milestones and responsibilities.

Typically, a new program will launch with a small initial cohort of students. This allows the college to test its curriculum, teaching methods, and support services on a manageable scale. As the program demonstrates its effectiveness and attracts more interest, the college can gradually increase enrollment in subsequent years. All positions (e.g., Program Director) and committees required by OC-QMS must be formed. Once the program is launched, it should strictly follow the quality system, processes and procedures outlined in the OC-QMS handbook.

Throughout the implementation process, the program is subject to ongoing monitoring and evaluation. The Quality Assurance Administration works with the program director and Quality Assurance Committee to assess student learning outcomes, course evaluations, and other key metrics. They identify areas for improvement and work with the program to make necessary adjustments.

In addition, all academic programs at Onaizah Colleges are subject to periodic program reviews as detailed in the OC-QMS handbook. These comprehensive evaluations, conducted every five years, assess the program's quality, relevance, and viability. The review process involves a self-study by the program faculty and committees, an external review by subject matter experts, and an action plan for improvement.

In conclusion, the process for establishing a new academic program at Onaizah Colleges is a comprehensive and collaborative endeavor. It involves rigorous planning, review, and approval at multiple levels, from the proposing department to the highest governing bodies of the institution. The process is designed to ensure that all new programs meet the required standards of academic quality, strategic relevance, and operational feasibility. The flow of the proposal and approval process and its (13) steps are summarized in Figure 1 below.

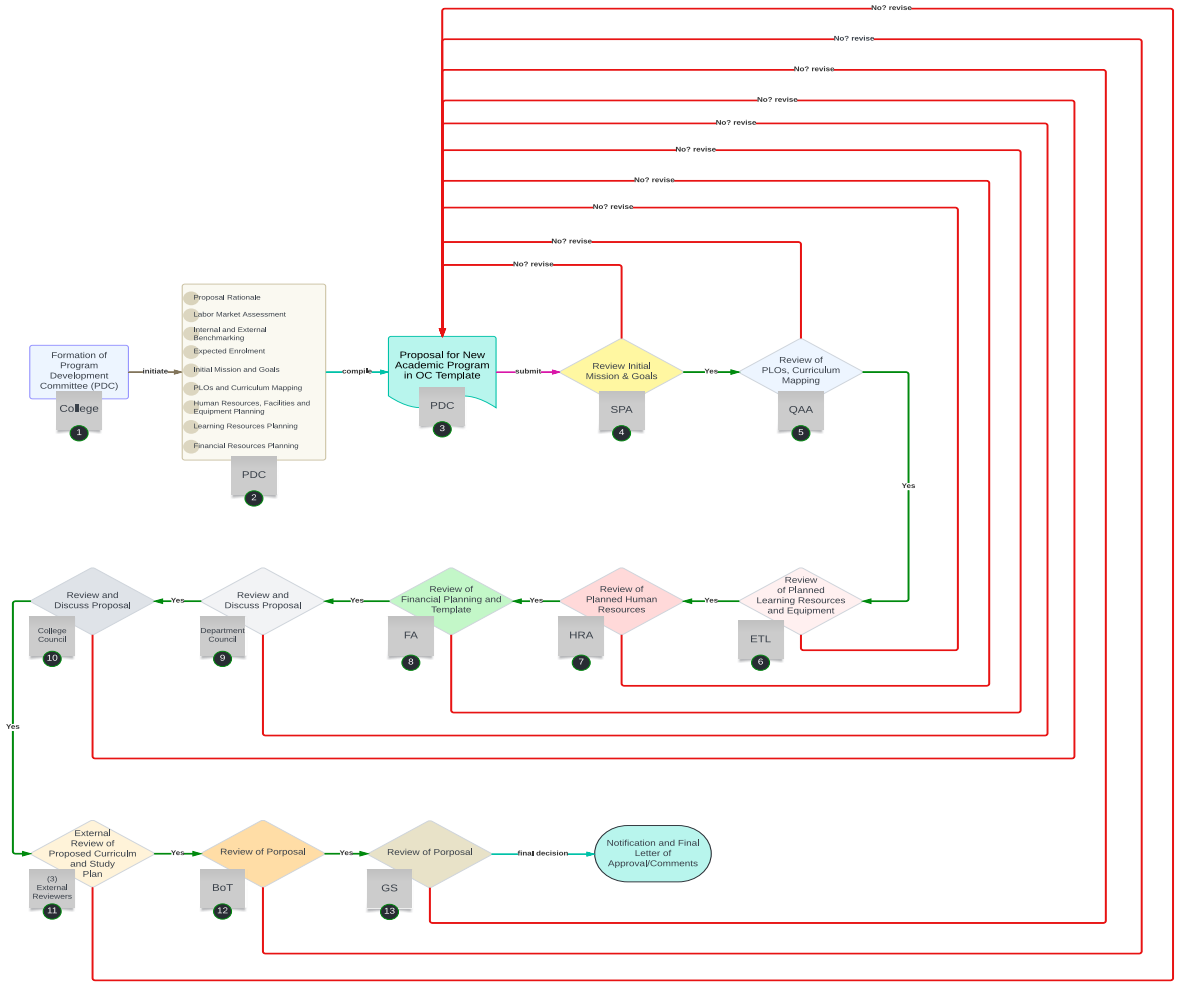


Figure 1: Flowchart of New Program Proposal submission, review, and approval process

Modifying Existing Programs

Main Reasons for Modifying an Existing Academic Program

According to the OC Quality Management System (QMS) Handbook, there are several key reasons why an existing academic program may need to be modified:

- Alignment with OC's mission and strategic goals: As per Policy I-04, OC should establish, monitor, and implement a five-year strategic plan, reviewing its mission and strategic goals at least every three years. If the review process reveals that an existing program is no longer fully aligned with OC's updated mission and goals, modifications to the program may be necessary.
- Continuous quality improvement: OC's QMS places a strong emphasis on continuous quality improvement rather than merely satisfying required standards (Guiding Principle 3). Several policies, such as P-02, P-04, P-06, P-09, P-12, P-14, P-15, P-18, and P-20, require periodic reviews and updates of various aspects of academic programs. These reviews may identify areas for improvement that necessitate program modifications.
- Stakeholder feedback: OC is committed to substantial involvement of stakeholders in planning and reviewing processes, with their feedback obtained, analyzed, and responded to (Guiding Principle 4). Policies P-05 and P-09 mandate regular surveys and course evaluations to obtain feedback from various stakeholders. If this feedback indicates issues or potential improvements, it may trigger program modifications.
- Changes in external factors: External factors such as developments in the field of study, evolving job market requirements, updates to national standards and frameworks, or new government regulations may necessitate adaptations to keep the program current and relevant. OC's commitment to providing competitive university education (as stated in its mission) requires programs to be responsive to these external changes.
- Evidence-based evaluations: OC's evaluation of quality must be evidence-based and outcome-focused (Guiding Principle 5). Policies P-09, P-12, P-14, P-16, and P-19 require collection and analysis of data related to graduate attributes, program learning outcomes, course learning outcomes, stakeholder satisfaction rates, and KPIs. If this evidence suggests that the program is not achieving its intended outcomes, modifications may be necessary.
- Benchmarking results: Policy I-11 specifically mentions the use of external benchmarks and best practices to inform KPIs and planning processes. If benchmarking reveals that the program is lagging behind comparable programs or not meeting industry standards, this could be a reason for program modification.
- Periodic review findings: OC's QMS policies require periodic reviews of Course Teaching and Assessment Matrices (CTAs), Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs), and Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs). These reviews may be triggered by suggestions and recommendations from the program's Professional Advisory Board/Committee, emerging trends and needs of the labor market, evolving requirements and technologies in the program field, or emerging national and international trends related to the program. If these reviews reveal significant gaps or opportunities for improvement, they could necessitate modifications to the existing program to ensure it remains current, relevant and aligned with the latest developments and requirements.

In summary, the main reasons for modifying an existing academic program at OC stem from its commitment to continuous quality improvement, alignment with its mission and goals, responsiveness to stakeholder feedback and external changes, and evidence-based decision making - all of which are key principles and policies outlined in its Quality Management System Handbook.

Types of Modifications Allowed in Existing Programs

Based on the OC Quality Management System (QMS) Handbook, there are several types of modifications that can be made to an existing academic program:

- Modifications to program mission, goals, and learning outcomes: As part of the periodic review process, a program may need to update its mission statement, goals, and learning outcomes to ensure they remain aligned with OC's strategic direction, responsive to stakeholder feedback, and reflective of changes in the field of study.
- Modifications to program structure and curriculum: This could involve adding, removing, or modifying courses to keep the program current and relevant. It may also include changes to the sequencing of courses, prerequisites, or the balance between compulsory and elective courses. Such changes are often informed by feedback from the Professional Advisory Board/Committee, trends in the labor market, evolving technologies, and national or international developments in the field. The program specification document would need to be updated to reflect these changes.
- Modifications to teaching and assessment strategies: Periodic reviews of Course Teaching and Assessment Methods and Strategies (CTAs), Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs), and Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) may identify opportunities to improve teaching and assessment methods. This could involve incorporating new pedagogical approaches, technologies, or assessment techniques to enhance student learning and better align with program outcomes. This would require updates to the relevant course specifications and the program specification.
- Modifications to learning resources and infrastructure: As a program evolves, its resource requirements may change. This could necessitate updates to laboratory equipment, software, library resources, or other learning facilities to support the modified curriculum and teaching methods.
- Modifications to program policies and procedures: Program modifications may also require updates to policies and procedures related to student admission, progression, graduation requirements, or quality assurance processes to ensure they remain consistent with the revised program structure and outcomes.

It's important to note that while these types of modifications are allowed and even encouraged as part of OC's commitment to continuous improvement, they must follow a systematic approval process. This involves thorough planning, justification based on evidence and stakeholder input, and approvals from relevant committees and authorities as outlined in the QMS Handbook. The extent and impact of the modifications will determine the level of scrutiny and approval required.

Process for Proposing and Implementing Program Modifications

Process for Proposing Modifications to an Existing Academic Program

The process for proposing modifications to an existing academic program at OC is outlined in under Process P-P-08 and relevant to Processes P-P-09 and P-P-10 of the OC-QMS Handbook. It involves the following key steps:

Periodic Reviews

- Regular reviews of the program are conducted by the Program Director and the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) to identify areas for improvement. These reviews consider:
- Analysis of Course Teaching and Assessment Plans (CTAs), Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs), and Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) as per P-E-04 and P-E-05
- Feedback and suggestions from the program's Professional Advisory Board/Committee (P-P-14)
- Emerging trends in the labor market, evolving technologies and requirements in the field
- National and international developments in the discipline

Proposal Development

Based on the review findings, the Program Director, in collaboration with the QAC and faculty members, develops a proposal for program modifications. This includes:

- Updating the program specification using the ETEC template TP-151 in the language of instruction (P-D-01)
- Revising course specifications as needed (P-D-02)
- Ensuring the proposed changes align with the program's mission, goals, and learning outcomes (P-P-01, P-P-02)

Department Approval

The proposal is first submitted to the Department Council for review and approval. The Department Council ensures the proposed changes are feasible, align with the department's goals, and meet quality standards.

College Approval

After department approval, the proposal is forwarded to the College Council. The College Council reviews the proposal to ensure it aligns with the college and institution's mission, strategic goals, and quality assurance policies. The College Council has the final authority to approve the proposed modifications to the academic program.

Implementation and Communication

Once approved by the College Council, the modified program is implemented. The Program Director is responsible for communicating the changes to all relevant stakeholders, including students, faculty, and staff (P-P-15). The updated program specification and course specifications are made publicly available.

Throughout this process, the roles and responsibilities of various entities (Program Director, QAC, Department Council, College Council) are guided by the Authorization Matrix provided at the end of the OC-QMS Handbook.

Reviewing program mission, goals and outcomes

As part of the modification process, the program's mission statement, goals, and learning outcomes are reviewed and updated as needed to ensure continued alignment with OC's strategic direction, responsiveness to stakeholder feedback, and relevance to the field of study. This is in line with several OC-QMS policies and processes:

- Policy P-02 requires that program mission statements are aligned with OC's mission. The process P-C-02 outlines the steps for reviewing and updating program mission statements.
- Policy P-03 mandates that program goals are consistent with the program mission. Process P-C-03 guides the review and revision of program goals.
- Policy P-04 states that program learning outcomes (PLOs) must be aligned with program goals. The PLOs are reviewed and updated following process P-C-04.
- Policy P-05 emphasizes using benchmarking data in the continual improvement of programs, which would include reviewing the mission, goals and outcomes. Process P-C-05 details how benchmarking is conducted.
- Policy P-09 requires annual program reports that include analysis of achievement of program learning outcomes. This feeds into the review process as per P-C-09.

Revising curriculum and course content

The modification proposal includes revisions to the program structure and curriculum. This may involve adding, removing, or modifying courses, as well as changes to course sequencing, prerequisites, or the balance between compulsory and elective courses. The revised curriculum is detailed in the updated program specification and course specifications. Several policies and processes guide this:

- Policy P-06 requires that course learning outcomes (CLOs) are aligned with PLOs. Process P-C-06 outlines how CLOs are developed and mapped to PLOs.
- Policy P-07 mandates that course specifications are prepared according to the approved OC template. Process P-C-07 details the preparation and approval of course specifications.
- Policy P-08 states that programs are evaluated annually, with results used for improvement. This evaluation, as per process P-C-08, would inform curriculum revisions.
- Policy P-12 requires the use of KPIs in program development and review. Process P-C-12 guides the selection and use of KPIs, which would shape curriculum decisions.

Updating resources and plans

Program modifications often require updates to learning resources, facilities, and associated plans. This could include:

- Identifying new learning resources and equipment needs, along with a mechanism for providing them, as per policy P-16 and process P-C-16.
- Updating the field training plan and specification, as outlined in policy P-14 and process P-C-14.
- Verifying human resource needs with the Administrative Affairs department, in line with policies P-18 (process P-C-18) and I-06 (process I-P-06).

These resource requirements are documented in the modification proposal and relevant specifications for approval and implementation, following the guidelines in policies P-19 (process P-C-19) and I-01 (processes I-P-07 to I-P-09).

Authority Matrix for Approving Changes in Academic Programs

The updated authority matrix plays a crucial role in clarifying the various roles and responsibilities involved in the process of approving changes to academic programs. It outlines the specific authorities of different entities such as the course team, quality assurance committee, quality unit, department council, and college council in proposing, reviewing, recommending, and providing final approval for various aspects of academic programs.

The matrix covers a wide range of subjects related to academic programs, including program name, code, total hours, mission, strategic goals, KPIs, study plan, learning outcomes, assessment methods, teaching strategies, curriculum mapping, and program specifications. It also addresses course-level changes such as course name, code, credit hours, level of offering, prerequisites, main objective, learning outcomes, teaching strategies, assessment methods, and course specifications.

For each subject of change, the matrix clearly defines the role of the relevant entities. The course team or the designated entity is responsible for proposing the change and submitting it to the appropriate authority, such as the quality assurance committee or the quality unit. The quality assurance committee and quality unit then review the proposed change and provide their recommendation for approval.

In some cases, additional entities like the Strategic Planning Administration or the Field Training Unit may also be involved in reviewing and providing recommendations. The department council and college council play a significant role in reviewing and recommending approval for most of the changes before the final approval is granted.

The final approval authority varies depending on the subject of change. For program-level changes, the college council holds the final approval authority in most cases. However, for certain course-level changes, the department council has the final say.

By clearly delineating the responsibilities and approval authorities, the matrix ensures a systematic and well-coordinated process for implementing changes in academic programs. It promotes transparency, accountability, and effective decision-making while maintaining the quality and integrity of the academic offerings at OC.

The approved authority matrix in OC is given in Table 1 below.

Table 1: OC-Approved Authority Matrix

Subject of change	Course Team	Quality Assurance Committee (QAC)	Quality Unit (QU)	Quality Assurance Administration (QAA)	Strategic Planning Administration (SPA)	Field Training Unit (FTU)	Senior Committee for Planning and Quality (SCPQ)	Department council	College council
1. Name of program	---	Proposal to change program name and submission to QU	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	---	---	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Final Approval
2. Program code	---	Proposal to change program code and submission to QU	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	---	---	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Final Approval
3. Program Total Hours	---	Proposal to change program hours and submission to QU	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	---	---	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Final Approval
4. Program Mission	---	Proposal to change program mission and submission to QU	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	---	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Final Approval
5. Program Strategic Goals	---	Proposal to change program goals and submission to QU	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	---	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Final Approval
6. Program KPIs, KPIs-Goals Mapping	---	Proposal to change KPIs and KPIs-Goals Mapping and submission to QU	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	---	---	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Final Approval
7. Modification of Program	---	Proposal to change program study plan,	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	---	---	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Final Approval

study plan (and/or adding/removing courses)		adding or removing courses and submission to QU							
8. Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)	---	Proposal to change program learning outcomes and submission to QU	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	---	---	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Final approval
9. Program assessment methods of PLOAP (PLOs Assessment Plan)	---	Proposal to change program assessment methods of PLOAP and submission to QU	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	---	---	--	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Final approval
10. Program Teaching Strategies/Learning Activities of PLOAP	---	Proposal to change program teaching strategies/learning activities of PLOAP and submission to QU	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	---	---	---	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Final approval
11. Program Curriculum Mapping (PLOs-Courses Matrix)	---	Proposal to change curriculum mapping matrix and submission to QU	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Review and Recommendation for Approval	---	---	---	Final approval	---
12. Program Specification	---	Proposal to change program specification and submission to QU	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	---	---	---	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Final approval
13. Course Name/Title	Proposal to change Course name and Submission to QAC	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	---	---	---	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Final approval

14. Course code	Proposal to change Course code and Submission to QAC	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	---	---	---	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Final Approval
15. Credit hours	Proposal to change Credit hours and Submission to QAC	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	---	---	---	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Final Approval
16. Level at Which the Course is offered	Proposal to change level in which the course is offered and submission to QAC	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	---	---	---	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Final Approval
17. Pre-requisites and co-requisites of the course	Proposal to change pre-requisites and co- Requisites of the course and submission to QAC	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	---	---	---	---	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Final approval
18. Course Main Objective	Proposal to change course main objective and Submission to QAC	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	---	---	---	Final approval	--
19.Course Learning outcomes	Proposal to change Course learning outcomes and Submission to QAC	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	---	---	---	Final approval	---
20. CTA (CLOs – TSs-AMs Mapping)	Proposal to change Course Teaching Strategies/Learning Activities/Assessment Methods/CLOs Matrix and	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	---	---	---	Final approval	---

	Submission to QAC								
21.Course Specification including Textbooks and Learning Resources	Proposal to change Course Specification and Submission to QAC	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	---	---	---	Final approval	---
22. Field Experience Specification	Proposal to change Field Experience Specification and Submission to QAC	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	---	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	---	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Final approval
23. Exit Exam Specification	---	Proposal to change Exit Exam Specification and Submission to QU	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	Reviewing and recommendation for approval	---	---	---	Final approval	---

Implementing Approved Changes

Once changes to academic programs are approved through the appropriate channels outlined in the OC Authority Matrix, the next crucial step is effective implementation. In line with OC-QMS Policy I-02 which emphasizes fostering a quality culture among stakeholders, the program director, as the "Responsible" party per the Authority Matrix, should take the lead in developing a detailed implementation plan. This plan should outline specific actions, responsibilities, milestones and timelines, while considering resource allocation, stakeholder communication, and impacts on current students.

The implementation plan should be part of the annual program operational plan (Processes P-P-16 and P-P-17), and it must include provisions for regular monitoring and reporting, as required by OC-QMS Policy I-03. The quality assurance committee, serving in a "Support" role according to the Authority Matrix, should assist the program director in overseeing progress and ensuring alignment with OC-QMS requirements. Process P-D-07 which defines the roles of the Quality Assurance Administration, Quality Units, and Quality Assurance Committees should guide their involvement.

Throughout implementation, the program director should actively engage faculty, staff, and students to facilitate smooth adoption of the changes. Updates should be provided to relevant committees and leadership, including the college council and dean, as per their consultation and information roles specified in the Authority Matrix.

To meet the OC-QMS's emphasis on evidence-based evaluation (Guiding Principle 5), thorough documentation of the implementation process is essential. Records to be maintained should include the implementation plan, progress reports, meeting minutes, and assessment data. Monthly updates to the quality assurance committee and semesterly reports to the college council are recommended. Process P-E-04 on indirect assessment of program learning outcomes can be leveraged to evaluate the impact of implemented changes.

The accumulated documentation will serve multiple purposes - demonstrating compliance with OC-QMS requirements, informing future program reviews, and enabling the sharing of best practices. By systematically implementing approved changes, documenting the process, and integrating it with OC-QMS policies and procedures, academic programs can close the quality loop and drive continuous enhancement in support of OC's mission and strategic goals.

Continuous Improvement and Closing the Loop

Continuous improvement is at the heart of Onaizah Colleges' Quality Management System (OC-QMS). It is not enough to simply establish or modify academic programs; we must continuously assess their effectiveness, identify areas for improvement, and take action to enhance the quality of our educational offerings. This process of "closing the loop" ensures that our programs remain relevant, responsive, and aligned with our mission and strategic goals.

The continuous improvement cycle for academic programs at OC involves the following key steps:

Assessment and Evaluation

Regular assessment and evaluation of academic programs is essential for identifying strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for improvement. This includes:

- Annual program reviews (Policy P-08, Process P-C-08)
- Assessment of program learning outcomes (Policy P-04, Process P-C-04)
- Evaluation of course learning outcomes (Policy P-06, Process P-C-06)
- Analysis of key performance indicators (Policy P-12, Process P-C-12)
- Gathering feedback from students, faculty, alumni, and other stakeholders (Policy P-15, Process P-C-15)

Analysis and Reflection

The data and insights gathered through assessment and evaluation activities must be carefully analyzed and reflected upon by the program team, quality assurance committee, and other relevant stakeholders. This involves:

- Identifying areas of strength and excellence to be celebrated and shared
- Determining areas of weakness or concern that require attention and improvement
- Exploring root causes and contributing factors for identified issues
- Benchmarking performance against internal and external standards and peers

Planning and Implementation

Based on the analysis and reflection, the program team should develop an action plan for addressing identified areas for improvement. This plan should be:

- Aligned with the program's mission, goals, and learning outcomes
- Prioritized based on the potential impact and urgency of the issues
- Resourced appropriately with personnel, time, and funding
- Communicated clearly to all relevant stakeholders
- Implemented in a timely and efficient manner

Monitoring and Evaluation

As the action plan is implemented, it is crucial to monitor progress and evaluate the effectiveness of the improvements. This involves:

- Setting clear targets and milestones for each action item
- Assigning responsibilities and accountabilities for implementation
- Regularly tracking and reporting on progress to relevant committees and stakeholders
- Assessing the impact of the improvements on program quality and student learning
- Celebrating successes and acknowledging contributions of those involved

Documentation and Sharing

Throughout the continuous improvement process, it is important to document the activities, findings, and outcomes. This documentation serves several purposes:

- Demonstrating compliance with OC-QMS policies and procedures
- Providing evidence for accreditation and external review processes
- Facilitating knowledge sharing and best practice dissemination within OC
- Informing future program planning and improvement efforts

By engaging in this ongoing cycle of assessment, reflection, planning, implementation, and documentation, OC academic programs can continuously evolve and improve to better serve our students and stakeholders. The OC-QMS provides the framework and tools to support this process, but it is the commitment and engagement of our faculty, staff, and leaders that truly drives the culture of continuous improvement at Onaizah Colleges.

Concluding Remarks

This handbook has provided a comprehensive overview of the policies, procedures, and guidelines for proposing, establishing, and modifying academic programs at Onaizah Colleges. It has emphasized the importance of aligning programs with the college's mission, strategic goals, and the National Qualifications Framework. The handbook has also outlined the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders in the program development process, from initiation and needs assessment to implementation and continuous quality improvement.

By following the standards and processes described in this handbook, OC can ensure that its academic offerings are of high quality, relevant to the needs of students and society, and consistent with the requirements of academic accreditation. The templates provided for program and course specifications, along with the guidelines for curriculum mapping and alignment of learning outcomes, will help to standardize the program development process across different departments and colleges.

The OC Authority Matrix clarifies the approval process for program development proposals, ensuring that they receive the necessary review and recommendations from the department and college councils, the Board of Trustees, and the University Affairs Council. This multi-level approval process helps to maintain the integrity and quality of OC's academic programs.

Importantly, this handbook emphasizes the need for continuous quality improvement through regular program reviews, assessment, and data-driven decision-making. By engaging in ongoing evaluation and enhancement of its programs, OC can respond to changing needs and expectations, and maintain its position as a leading provider of higher education in the region.

In conclusion, the OC Guidebook for Proposing, Establishing, and Modifying Academic Programs serves as a valuable resource for faculty, administrators, and quality assurance personnel involved in program development. By following the policies, procedures, and guidelines outlined in this handbook, OC can continue to develop and deliver high-quality, relevant, and innovative academic programs that contribute to the achievement of its mission and strategic goals, and to the advancement of knowledge and human capital in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

This OC Guidebook for Proposing, Establishing, and Modifying Academic Programs is a living document, subject to regular review and updates to ensure it remains aligned with OC's evolving policies, procedures, and external requirements.

نموذج استحداث/تطوير برنامج أكاديمي

Proposal for New Academic Program in OC

أولاً: معلومات البرنامج First: Program information	
Proposed Program Name/Qualification Name	**اسم البرنامج المقترح/اسم المؤهل**
Degree Awarded	**الدرجة العلمية**
Type of Qualification	**نوع المؤهل**
○ Academic أكاديمي ○ Applied تطبيقي ○ Technical تقني ○ Vocational مهني	
Saudi Standard Classification Code SASCED-P	**رمز التخصص وفق التصنيف السعودي SASCED-P**
Sub-level Code According to SASCED-P	**رمز المستوى الفرعي وفق SASCED-P**
Academic Department	**القسم العلمي**
College	**الكلية**
Members of the Program Development Committee	**أعضاء لجنة استحداث البرنامج**
Communications	**وسائل التواصل**
Phone Number:	رقم الجوال:
Email:	البريد الإلكتروني:

ثانياً: تفاصيل البرنامج Second: Program Details
الهدف العام من البرنامج **The General Goal/Objective of the Program** يتم وصف الهدف العام من البرنامج المستحدث وأبرز الاحتياجات الأكاديمية والمهنية والمجتمعية التى سيلبيها استحداث البرنامج
مبررات استحداث البرنامج **Rationale** يتم ذكر مبررات استحداث البرنامج على شكل نقاط مختصرة
احتياجات الطلبة وسوق العمل **Students Needs and Labor Market** يتم وصف احتياج سوق العمل والطلبة لاستحداث البرنامج مع مواءمة الاحتياج مع رؤية المملكة 2030 والربط مع دراسات سوق العمل الوطنية وتقارير وزارة الموارد البشرية ما أمكن.
فئات الطلبة المستهدفين من البرنامج **Categories of Students Targeted by the Program** يتم وصف فئات الطلبة المستهدفين من إنشاء البرنامج مثلاً: طلبة الثانوية العامة، الموظفون فى قطاع ...، الطلبة الدوليين.. إلخ
المهن المتوقعة لخريجي البرنامج (من الجنسين) **Expected Occupations & Professions** ما هي الوظائف المتوقعة لخريجي وخريجات البرنامج؟
المقارنات المرجعية الداخلية والخارجية **Internal & External Benchmarking** يتم هنا إرفاق جدول يتضمن برامج مشابهة من حيث المسمى والمؤهل والساعات المعتمدة. ينبغي أن تكون هذه البرامج من جامعات مميزة محلياً ودولياً.
علاقة البرنامج بالبرامج الأخرى داخل الكلية وتفرده **Program's Relationship with Other Programs Within the College and Its Uniqueness** يتم هنا ذكر العلاقة بين البرنامج المراد استحداثه والبرامج الأخرى في الكليات ومستوى تفرده عنها.

الأعداد المتوقع قبولهم خلال السنوات الأولى للبرنامج يتم هنا إرفاق جدول تقديري للأعداد المتوقع قبولهم خلال السنوات الثلاث القادمة من إطلاق البرنامج.	**Numbers Expected to be accepted During the First Years of the Program**
الرسالة والأهداف المقترحة للبرنامج رسالة البرنامج وأهدافه الاستراتيجية المقترحة	**The Proposed Mission & Goals of the Program**
موائمة الرسالة والأهداف المقترحة مع رسالة الكليات وأهدافها الاستراتيجية هنا إرفاق مصفوفة موائمة لرسالة البرنامج المقترح وأهدافه مع رسالة وأهداف الكليات	**Alignment of Proposed Mission & Goals with the Colleges' Mission & Strategic Goals**
مصادقة إدارة التخطيط الاستراتيجي على رسالة وأهداف البرنامج المقترحة واتساقها مع رسالة وأهداف الكليات	**Strategic Planning Administration's Verification of the proposed program's mission statement and objectives and their consistency with the colleges' mission and objectives.**

مدير إدارة التخطيط الاستراتيجي:	التوقيع:	التاريخ: .....

ثالثاً: الخطة الدراسية للبرنامج Third: Program Curriculum and Study Plan				
نظام الدراسة	○ فصلي	○ سنوي		Study Mode
نمط الدراسة	○ تقليدي	○ مدمج	○ عن بعد	Delivery Mode
إجمالى الساعات المعتمدة المطلوبة لإتمام البرنامج	..... ساعة معتمدة			Total Credit Hours Required to Complete the Program
المسارات الرئيسة فى البرنامج				The Main Tracks in the Program
نقاط الدخول والخروج المتوقعة وساعاتها المطلوبة تذكر نقاط الدخول للبرنامج (مثلاً: طلبة دبلوم) و/أو نقاط الخروج مثلاً (دبلوم) وساعات كل نقطة فى الخطة.				Expected entry and exit points & their credit hours
قائمة بالمقررات الإجبارية المقترحة وساعاتها ومستوياتها ومتطلباتها (متطلب جامعة – كلية – قسم – برنامج) يضاف هنا قائمة بالمقررات الإجبارية وساعاتها ونوع المتطلب، ومتطلباتها من المقررات الأخرى.				A list of the proposed compulsory courses, their hours, levels, and requirements (University - college - department - program requirements)
قائمة بالمقررات الاختيارية وساعاتها ومستوياتها ومتطلباتها يضاف هنا قائمة بالمقررات الاختيارية وساعاتها ونوع المتطلب، ومتطلباتها من المقررات الأخرى				A list of elective courses, their hours, levels, and requirements
رابط توصيف البرنامج وفق نموذج الهيئة TP-151 ويكون بلغة تدريس البرنامج				Link of program specification according to ETEC's template TP-151 and in the program specification should be in either Arabic or English, depending on the intended language of instruction
(رابط خطة التدريب الميداني للبرامج الصحية فقط)				(Link of the field-training plan and specification for health programs only)
مصادقة إدارة توكيد الجودة على الخطة الدراسية ومتطلباتها				Quality Assurance Administration's Verification of Curriculum and Study Plan Requirements
مدير إدارة توكيد الجودة:	التوقيع:	التاريخ:		

رابعاً: احتياجات البرنامج من الموارد البشرية والمرافق والتجهيزات
Fourth: The Program's Needs of Human Resources, Facilities, and Equipment

٤.١ الموارد البشرية 4.1 Human Resources

الدرجة العلمية أو الوظيفية Degree/ Position	التخصص العام Major specialization	التخصص الدقيق Exact Specialization	العدد المتوفر Available number	العدد المطلوب Required number	آلية توفير النقص (إن وجد) Mechanism of providing shortages (if any)
أستاذ Professor					
أستاذ مشارك Associate Professor					
أستاذ مساعد Assistant Professor					
محاضر Lecturer					
معيد Teaching Assistant					
مدرس Instructor					
إداري Administrator					
فنى Technician					

مصادقة إدارة الشؤون الإدارية على احتياجات الموارد البشرية Administrative Affairs' Verification of Human Resources Needs		
مدير إدارة الشؤون الإدارية:	التوقيع:	التاريخ: .....

4.2 Technical Resources ٤.٢ الموارد الفنية

٤.٢.١ المعامل والتجهيزات والقاعات الدراسية 4.2.1 Laboratories, Equipment and Classrooms				
عدد المعامل المطلوبة لتنفيذ البرنامج Number of laboratories required to implement the program	نوع المعمل Lab type	العدد المتوفر Available number	العدد المطلوب Required number	آلية توفير النقص (إن وجد) Mechanism of providing shortages (if any)

٤.٢.٢ مصادر التعلم والتجهيزات المكتبية 4.2.2 Learning Resources and Office Equipment				
مصادر التعلم Learning resources	التجهيزات المطلوبة Required equipment	العدد المتوفر Available number	العدد المطلوب Required number	آلية توفير النقص (إن وجد) Mechanism of providing shortages (if any)
الكتب والمراجع Books and references				
المجلات العلمية Scientific journals				
أجهزة حاسوبية وإلكترونية Computer and electronic devices				
برامج حاسوبية Computer programs				
مستلزمات مكتبية Office Supplies				

٤.٢.٣ القاعات الدراسية 4.2.3 Classrooms				
عدد القاعات المطلوبة Number of required classrooms	سعتها Capacity	العدد المتوفر Available number	العدد المطلوب Required number	آلية توفير النقص (إن وجد) Mechanism of providing shortages (if any)

مصادقة إدارة تقنيات التعليم ومصادر التعلم على احتياجات الموارد الفنية	Educational Technologies & Learning Resources Administration' Verification of Technical and Learning Resources Needs	
مدير إدارة تقنيات التعليم ومصادر التعلم:	التوقيع:	التاريخ: .....

4.3 Financial Resources ٤.٣ الموارد المالية

يرفق "تقدير تكلفة إقامة البرنامج" وفق نموذج الإدارة المالية. **Attach an "estimated cost of establishing the program" according to the financial Administration template.**

التحكيم الخارجي	**External Reviewers**
يرفق رابط التحكيم الخارجي (3 محكمين في ذات التخصص) للخطة الدراسية بمسماه المقترح (تقرير المحكم موقع + سيرته الذاتية)	Attach the link of the external arbitration (3 arbitrators in the same specialty) for the study plan with its proposed name (the arbitrator's signed report + his/her CV)

عميد الكلية:	التوقيع:	التاريخ:
.....	.....	.....

الاعتمادات

Approvals

ينبغي أن يرفع النموذج بمرفقاته إلى مجلس القسم، ثم مجلس الكلية، ثم يرفع لمجلس الأمناء للتوصية بالموافقة على استحداث البرنامج، ثم يرفع للأمانة العامة لمجلس شؤون الجامعات.

The template and its attachments should be submitted to the Department Council, the College Council, then submitted to the Boards of Trustees for recommendation of approval and finally submitted to the General Secretariat of the University Affairs Council.



رؤية VISION
2030
المملكة العربية السعودية
KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA