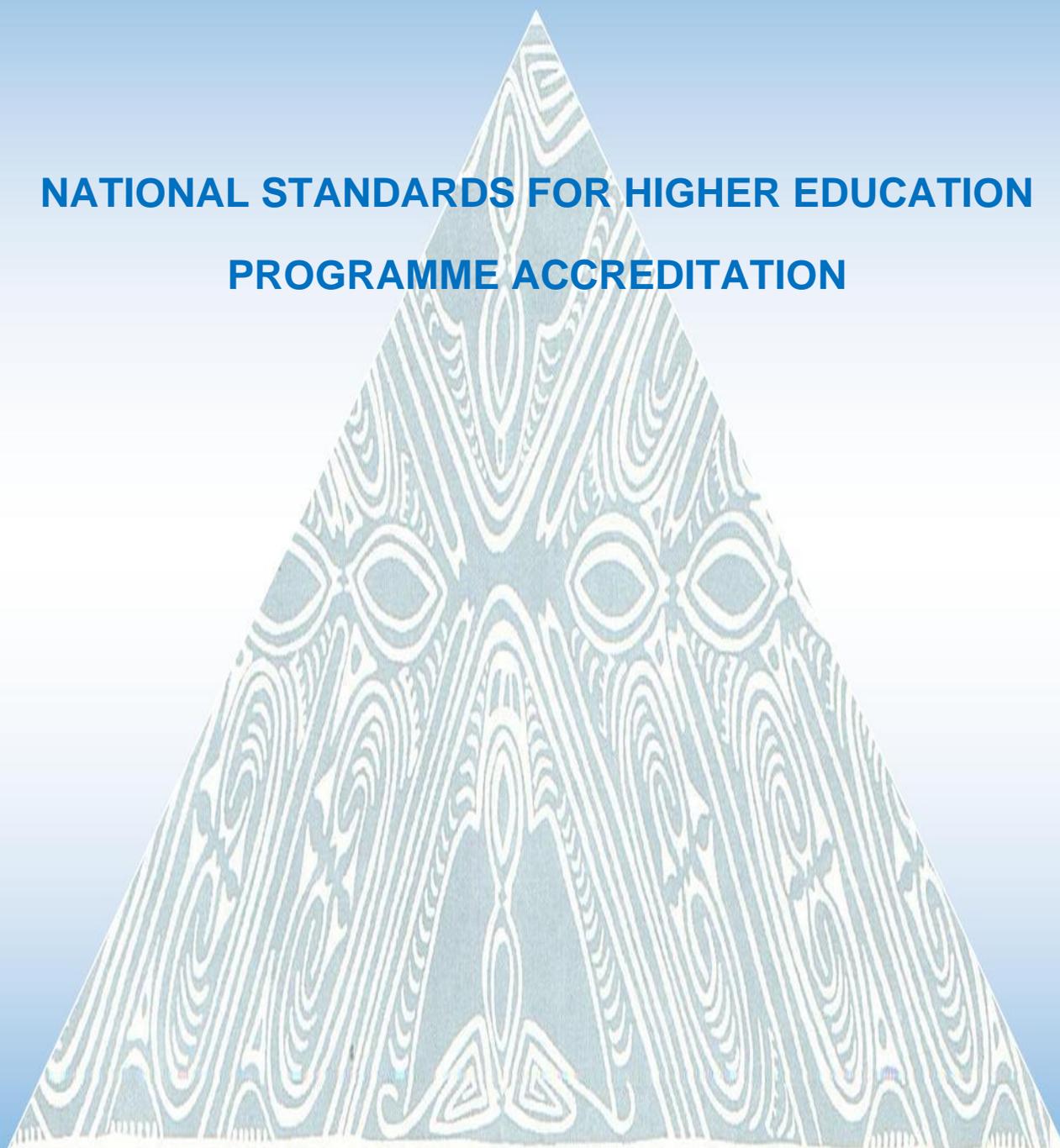




**NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION  
PROGRAMME ACCREDITATION**



**NATIONAL HIGHER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION BOARD**

The illustration used for this cover is a garamut drum design (Artist: Kawa of Wongan) from Sepik River region. The image is taken from *Mak Bilong Sepik: A selection of Designs and Paintings from the Sepik River* collected by Helen Dennett (Wewak: Wirui Press, 1975).

National Standards for Higher Education Programme Accreditation

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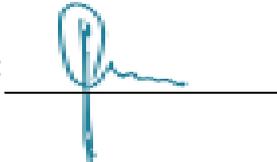
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These National Standards for Higher Education Programme Accreditation is hereby adopted and certified by the National Higher and Technical Education (NHTEB) on the 29<sup>th</sup> March 2017.

Signed by:   
Fr. Jan Czuba  
**CHAIRMAN-NHTEB**

# NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAMME ACCREDITATION

## Higher Education (*General Provisions*) Act 2014

The National Standards for Higher Education Programme Accreditation was approved in principle by the National Higher and Technical Education Board (NHTEB) on the 13<sup>th</sup> October 2016 and formally adopted on the 29<sup>th</sup> of March 2017. Guidance on what is expected is provided in the following pages.

These set of standards apply to both higher education and to technical and vocational education and training (TVET) qualifications, as described in the PNG National Qualifications Framework. They apply to similar programmes, including foundation and bridging programmes. Typical qualification titles include the words 'certificate', 'diploma', and 'degree'.

If a programme is offered by a university, or by an institution formally affiliated with a PNG university, or if the programme is part of an approved national TVET training curriculum, the programme does not need to be accredited by NHTEB.

Under the Act, the NHTEB may recognize the programme accreditation decisions of any other agency or professional licensing or accreditation body in respect of a higher education or TVET programme as meeting requirements of these National Standards.

All of the Standards must be met for programme accreditation to be granted.

Programme accreditation can be granted with conditions that an institution must implement.

## Standards

1. **The programme is consistent with the Papua New Guinea National Qualifications Framework.**
2. **The programme is well-designed.**
3. **Programme resourcing and information are adequate.**
4. **Programme teaching and learning are of high quality.**
5. **Admission criteria are appropriate.**
6. **Assessment is appropriate and effective and expected student learning outcomes are achieved.**
7. **Programme monitoring, review, updating and termination are appropriately managed.**

## STANDARD 1

**The programme is consistent with the PNG National Qualifications Framework (PNGNQF).**

### Guidance

The programme **title and level of instruction** must be consistent with the level descriptors of the PNGNQF.

The duration of the programme outcomes must be consistent with the PNGNQF.

For 'volume of learning', use 1200 hours as the minimum expected time spent annually by a full-time student on all forms of learning activities, including private study by students.

Student learning activities may include: pre-lecture weeks reading; participation in lectures and tutorials; participation in laboratory sessions; online learning activities; conduct of private research; work on individual and team assignments; writing essays; problem-solving and project work; individual consultation with teachers; practicums, placements and work-integrated learning; preparation for tests and examinations; and taking tests and examinations.

The calculation is based on a comparison with international models, and a 40-50 hour week of learning activities and a 30 week academic year.

## STANDARD 2

### The programme is well-designed.

#### Guidance

The institution must have robust internal processes for design and approval of the programme, which:

- provide realistic projections of the demand and resources required for the programme
- take account of external standards and requirements, e.g. published discipline standards, professional accreditation, input from relevant external stakeholders, and comparable standards at other reputable tertiary institutions, and
- ensure appropriate development of key graduate attributes including English language proficiency
- use peer review before the programme is approved.

The content of the programme must be drawn from a substantial, coherent and current body of knowledge, scholarship or application in one or more academic or practical disciplines.

Where the programme is in an emerging or highly specialized field of knowledge or is strongly multidisciplinary, the institution must demonstrate that programme content draws appropriately on more established bodies of knowledge or practical application.

The design of the programme must show appropriate consideration of entry and exit pathways, including credit transfer and articulation from other studies and to further studies.

The programme must be designed to ensure equivalent student learning outcomes regardless of a student's place or mode of study.

Programme documentation must clearly present the rationale, objectives, structure, delivery methods, assessment approaches and student workload requirements for the programme, and include any compulsory requirements for completion of the programme.

Programme documentation must show that the programme has an overall coherence and is designed to provide appropriate engagement by students in intellectual inquiry consistent with the nature and level of the units being taught and the expected learning outcomes of the programme.

If the programme is a Masters Degree (Research) or a Doctoral Degree, the institution must ensure that:

- academics who are the supervisors of students are actively carrying out research and publishing in relevant discipline areas
- students are able to form part of a scholarly intellectual community for their discipline, and
- there are appropriate policies, supervision, services, resources and support for students.

If the programme is to be offered through arrangements with another entity whether in PNG or overseas, the programme documentation must specify the detailed quality assurance arrangements that have been made with the other entity to ensure student learning outcomes are equivalent to those when the programme is offered directly by that other entity.

## STANDARD 3

### **Programme resourcing and information are adequate.**

#### **Guidance**

Resourcing for the programme must be adequate to meet the institution's projected enrolments for the programme and for students to achieve the expected learning outcomes. This resourcing includes the provision of necessary teaching spaces, laboratories, consumables and other funding to run the programme.

The numbers, qualifications, experience, expertise and sessional/full-time mix of academic/teaching staff who teach or tutor the programme, and support/professional staff, must be appropriate to the nature, level, and mode of delivery of the programme and the attainment of expected student learning outcomes.

The institution must ensure that all students readily have access, directly or arranged by the institution, to electronic and/or physical library and information resources required to achieve the learning outcomes of the programme.

The institution must ensure there are adequate ICT resources to facilitate student learning consistent with programme requirements and mode of delivery.

The institution must provide accurate and sufficient information about the programme to prospective and current students.

## STANDARD 4

### **Programme teaching and learning are of high quality.**

#### **Guidance**

The institution must formally designate a staff member to take responsibility for the overall programme, including programme coordination and updating (a 'programme coordinator').

The numbers, qualifications, experience, expertise and sessional/full-time mix of both academic staff who teach or tutor the programme, and support staff, must be appropriate to the nature, level, and mode of delivery of the programme and the attainment of expected student learning outcomes.

The institution must ensure that staff who teach students in the programme:

- are appropriately qualified in the relevant discipline for their level of teaching (normally qualified to at least one PNGNQF qualification level higher than the programme being taught or with equivalent professional experience)
- in the case of supervision of students in a programme that leads to a Doctoral Degree (Professional) award located at level 10 of the PNGNQF, are qualified at level 10 of the PNGNQF or have equivalent professional experience
- in the case of supervision of students in a programme that leads to a Doctoral Degree (Research) award located at level 10 of the PNGNQF, are qualified at Doctoral Degree (Research) level or have equivalent research experience
- have a sound understanding of current scholarship and/or professional practice in the discipline that they teach
- have an understanding of pedagogical and/or adult learning principles relevant to the student cohort being taught
- engage students in intellectual inquiry appropriate to the level of the programme and unit being taught; and,
- are advised of student and other feedback on the quality of their teaching and have opportunities to improve their teaching.

The institution must ensure that staffs who teach on a programme are reasonably available for students seeking academic assistance for units within the programme.

The institution must have effective mechanisms to identify and support students who are at risk of not progressing academically.

The institution must have effective arrangements to assure the quality of student work placements, practicum and other forms of work-integrated learning in the programme, including assuring the quality of supervision.

## STANDARD 5

### Admission criteria are appropriate.

#### Guidance

Admission criteria for the programme must:

- be appropriate for the PNGNQF level of the programme and required learning outcomes
- take account of external benchmarks,
- ensure that students have adequate prior knowledge and skills to undertake the programme successfully.

The institution may require successful completion of a bridging programme for students to be admitted.

The institution must ensure that students who are enrolled are sufficiently competent in the English language to participate effectively in the programme and achieve its expected learning outcomes.

Credit for previous studies or skills (including articulation, recognition of prior learning and credit arrangements) must be consistent with the PNGNQF and preserve the integrity of the qualification to which they apply.

Decisions on the admission of students must be made by appropriately qualified personnel under formally delegated authority. There must be a system of checks and balances and internal review to prevent any fraud or corruption in the admission process and to ensure that decisions on admission are not made solely by one person.

## STANDARD 6

**Assessment is appropriate and effective and expected student learning outcomes are achieved.**

### Guidance

Assessment for the programme must be consistent with the institution's approved assessment policy.

Assessment tasks for the programme and its units must provide opportunities for students to demonstrate achievement of the expected student learning outcomes for the programme.

Assessment must be undertaken by appropriately qualified academic staff.

Timely and adequate feedback must be provided to students on their assessed work.

Programme management must ensure consistent and appropriate assessment, ideally including comprehensive moderation of assessment.

The institution must be able to demonstrate appropriate progression and completion rates and that students who complete the programme have attained key graduate attributes.

The institution ideally should maintain, monitor and act on comparative data on the performance of students in the programme, including information on the performance of student cohorts by entry pathway, mode of study and place of study, such data to include: student attrition; student progress; programme completions; and grade distributions.

The academic standards intended to be achieved by students and the standards actually achieved by students in the programme ideally should be benchmarked against similar accredited programmes offered by reputable tertiary institutions.

## STANDARD 7

**Programme monitoring, review, updating and termination are appropriately managed.**

### Guidance

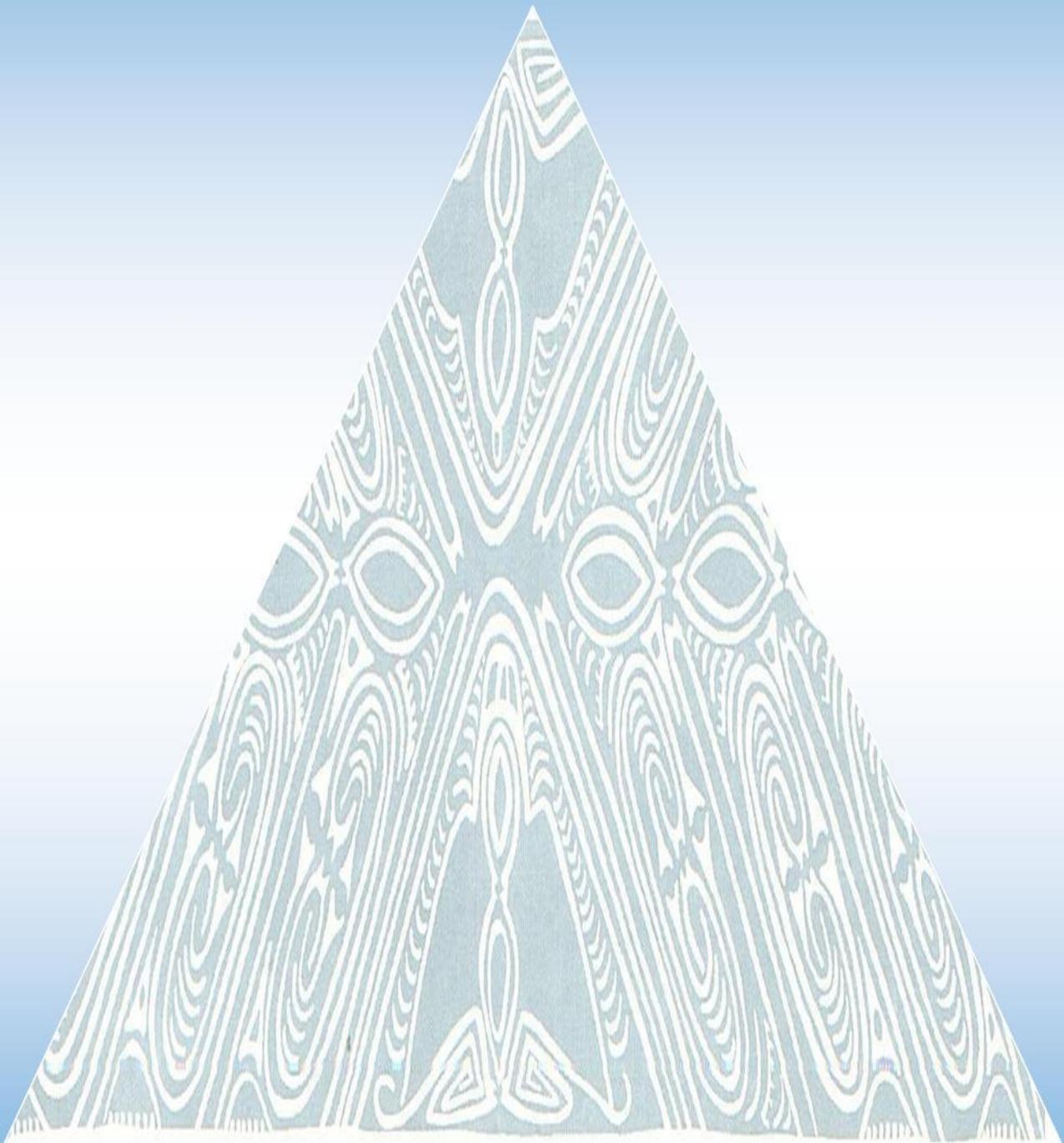
The institution must ensure that the programme is systematically updated, through internal revision and external reviews.

In the process of programme updating, the overall coherence of the programme must be maintained.

Should the institution discontinue the programme, there must be effective teach out or transition plans for all students enrolled in the programme to ensure that these students are not disadvantaged.

The institution must ensure that it issues appropriate and accurate certification documentation and has processes to authenticate awards and protect against fraudulent use.

The institution must take into account benchmarking, stakeholder input, student and other stakeholder feedback.



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