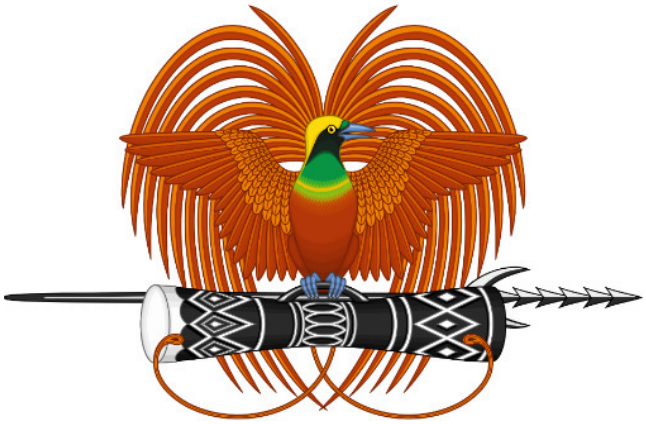

PNG National Standards for Higher Education Institutional Registration

Made pursuant to the
Education (General Provisions) (Amendment) Act, 2020
Higher and Technical Education Reform Act, 2020

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PNG National Standards for Higher Education Institutional Registration for PNG Higher Education Institutions

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Contents

1. ***FOREWORD*** ***4***
2. ***STANDARD 1: THE INSTITUTION OPERATES IN ACCORDANCE WITH CLEARLY DEFINED PURPOSES AND COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING STRATEGIES.*** ***5***
3. ***STANDARD 2: THE INSTITUTION IS COMMITTED TO HONESTY AND INTEGRITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION*** ***8***
4. ***STANDARD 3: THE INSTITUTION HAS EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE MECHANISMS*** ***10***
5. ***STANDARD 4: FINANCIAL RESOURCE ADEQUACY AND SUSTAINABILITY*** ***11***
6. ***STANDARD 5: INSTITUTIONAL MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE*** ***13***
7. ***STANDARD 6: THE INSTITUTION'S PROGRAMMES, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT ARE ADEQUATE TO ACHIEVE THE EXPECTED STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES*** ***16***
8. ***STANDARD 7: THE INSTITUTION ENSURES THAT ITS TEACHING AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL ARE APPROPRIATE IN NUMBER, QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE, AND SKILL.*** ***18***
9. ***STANDARD 8: THE INSTITUTION ENSURES THAT ITS STUDENTS HAVE ACCESS TO APPROPRIATE LEVELS OF SOCIAL, WELFARE, AND SUPPORT SERVICES.*** ***20***
10. ***STANDARD 9: THE INSTITUTION ESTABLISHES EFFECTIVE PROCESSES TO PROVIDE, MAINTAIN, AND MODERNIZE LEARNING RESOURCES.*** ***21***
11. ***STANDARD 10: THE INSTITUTION DEMONSTRATES A COMMITMENT TO SOCIAL INCLUSION AND ROBUST ENGAGEMENT WITH STAKEHOLDERS.*** ***22***
12. ***STANDARD 11: INSTITUTIONAL CAPABILITY FOR PROGRAMME OFFERINGS*** ***23***
13. ***STANDARD12: RESEARCH EXCELLENCE AND ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP*** ***24***
14. ***CONCLUSION*** ***25***

▪ FOREWORD

In light of the evolving landscape of higher education and the imperatives of quality assurance and accountability, the enactment of the *Higher Education (General Provisions) Act 2014 (amended) in 2020* marks a significant milestone in Papua New Guinea's educational governance framework. As Papua New Guinea continues to advance its higher education sector to meet the demands of a dynamic global landscape, the establishment of national standards for institutional registration and recognition emerges as a paramount necessity.

These standards, rooted in the *Higher Education (General Provisions) Act 2014 (amended) in 2020*, serve as a pivotal instrument for ensuring the integrity, quality, and credibility of higher education institutions operating within Papua New Guinea. By delineating clear criteria and benchmarks for institutional registration and recognition, these standards establish a framework conducive to fostering excellence, innovation, and continuous improvement across the higher education sector.

The formulation and implementation of national standards for institutional registration and recognition align with Papua New Guinea's overarching aspirations for educational advancement, economic development, and societal progress. By providing a robust regulatory framework, these standards facilitate the harmonization of educational practices, promote transparency and accountability, and safeguard the interests of students, faculty, institutions, and the broader community.

The establishment of national standards for institutional registration and recognition underpins Papua New Guinea's commitment to regional and international cooperation in higher education. By adhering to recognized best practices and quality assurance principles, Papua New Guinea positions itself as a credible and reputable partner in the global higher education arena, fostering collaboration, exchange, and mutual recognition of qualifications.

The imperative for national standards for institutional registration and recognition as per the *Higher Education (General Provisions) Act 2014 (amended) in 2020* underscores Papua New Guinea's unwavering dedication to advancing higher education excellence, enhancing institutional accountability, and promoting the nation's socio-economic development agenda. As Papua New Guinea navigates the complexities of the 21st-century knowledge economy, these standards serve as a cornerstone for shaping a vibrant, inclusive, and globally competitive higher education landscape reflective of Papua New Guinea's aspirations.

Professor Fr Jan Czuba
Acting Secretary

▪ STANDARD 1: THE INSTITUTION OPERATES IN ACCORDANCE WITH CLEARLY DEFINED EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES AND COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING STRATEGIES.

Relevant Policies: The institution is required to articulate unequivocal vision, mission statements, and objectives. It is incumbent upon the institution to formulate and uphold policies that furnish a functional framework for the realization of the vision, mission, and objectives, encompassing pivotal domains such as student affairs, financial management, human resources, staff and student discipline and wellbeing, occupational health and safety, crisis and disaster management, and provisions for staff and students with specialized needs, among other pertinent areas.

1.1 Legal Establishment and Ownership: The institution must be legally established or recognized as a durable entity, with clear ownership structures in place, including compliance with the Higher Education (General Provisions) Act 2014 (Amended) 2020 or business registration requirements if applicable.

1.2 Historical Performance: The institution's lineage, including any parent entities, predecessors, subsidiaries, or related entities, should demonstrate a history of sound performance in managing business operations and delivering education while adhering to regulatory requirements.

1.3 Educational Vison, Mission and Objectives: The institution articulates a clear statement outlining its educational purposes, vision, mission, objectives, or goals, including a commitment to fostering graduate employability and, when applicable, a commitment to undertake research.

1.4 Business Viability: The institution maintains a realistic business model and develops a comprehensive 5-year enrollment plan, complete with annual targets aimed at ensuring financial sustainability and viability.

1.5 Educational Calendar: The institution annually publishes an educational calendar outlining key dates and milestones.

1.6 Facility and Resource Accessibility: The institution ensures uninterrupted access to and utilization of facilities and resources necessary for program delivery.

1.7 Health, Safety, and Comfort Standards: The institution implements appropriate measures and provides adequate facilities to ensure the health, safety, and comfort of students, staff, and visitors on campus. This includes:

a. Provision of on-site water, sanitation, power, and compliant buildings.
b. Implementation of sufficient security measures on and around each campus.
c. Adherence to building requirements specified in PNG codes or regulations, including those pertaining to on-site accommodation.
d. Compliance with occupational health and safety regulations, including the provision of on-site safety equipment and first aid training.
e. Establishment of safety zones around power equipment to mitigate risks. Development of evacuation procedures for natural disasters such as fires, earthquakes, floods, or landslides.

1.8 Support for Special Needs: The institution ensures that students and staff with special needs are provided with adequate facilities, resources, and support services to facilitate their educational endeavors.

2. Requirements for Overseas Institutions:

In accordance with Papua New Guinea standards, international standards and to uphold the integrity of education collaborations, overseas institutions seeking to offer educational programs in Papua New Guinea (PNG) must adhere to the following stipulations:

2.1 Legal Recognition and Approval: The overseas institution must possess legal recognition and approval in its home country to confer qualifications equivalent in level and type to those offered in PNG.

2.2 Use of Protected Titles: Overseas institutions may be required to obtain permission from the National Higher and Technical Education Board to use protected titles, such as "university," for their operations in PNG.

2.3 Educational Collaboration Agreements: Institutions engaging in educational collaborations with PNG entities, including those operating through franchise arrangements, must formalize their agreements through a legally binding contract. This contract should include:

a. Identification of the parties involved.
b. Assurance of full recognition of qualifications obtained in PNG at the overseas institution's home campus.
c. Assurance of recognition by professional accreditation, licensing, or registration bodies in the overseas institution's home country, or justification if such recognition is not feasible.
d. Assignment of responsibility for managing quality systems to ensure the maintenance of standards.
e. Procedures for resolving disputes between the parties.
f. Protocols for securing program accreditation.
g. Procedures for program management, ongoing monitoring, and implementation of changes.
h. Assessment and moderation procedures.
i. Financial arrangements and provision of resources.

j. Obligations for reporting to the Department of Higher Education, Research, Science, and Technology.
k. Specifications for qualification wording.
l. Administrative responsibilities, including student enrollment, welfare services, assessment decisions, result reporting, and remuneration.
m. Protocols for student protection in case of agreement termination.
n. Responsibilities regarding health and safety.
o. Provision of student support services.
p. Clearly defined termination or review procedures for the agreement.

Note: Educational collaboration arrangements, such as franchising, must ensure collective adherence to these requirements by all involved parties. This ensures the maintenance of academic standards and the safeguarding of student interests in cross-border educational initiatives

▪ STANDARD 2: THE INSTITUTION IS COMMITTED TO HONESTY AND INTEGRITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Relevant Policies: The institution is required to establish and maintain comprehensive policies governing student and staff conduct, admission protocols, academic integrity, assessment procedures, and mechanisms for addressing complaints, whistleblower Policy, and appeals, among others. These policies collectively support the institution's commitment to honesty and integrity in all aspects of higher education.

2.1 Appropriate Institutional Naming: The institution's name must accurately reflect its nature and educational offerings, ensuring transparency and avoiding any misrepresentation to the public.

2.2 Promotion of Educational Integrity: The institution must demonstrate robust mechanisms to uphold and safeguard educational and academic integrity, fostering ethical conduct among students, staff, management, and governing bodies.

2.3 Fair and Consistent Admission Procedures: Admission policies and procedures must be clearly documented, consistently applied, and designed to ensure that admitted students meet established entry requirements and possess the requisite educational background and English language proficiency for successful educational pursuit.

2.4 Transparent Admission Practices: The admissions process must transparently inform prospective students, before the acceptance of any fees and annually upon enrollment, of their rights and obligations, including:

a. Full disclosure of all associated fees and potential changes throughout the course of study.
b. Policies and criteria for credit transfer or recognition of prior learning.
c. Procedures governing changes to offers, acceptance, enrollment, tuition protection, and refund policies.
d. Special requirements for the chosen course of study, such as physical prerequisites, health assessments, security clearances, internships, or self-funded activities.
e. Student code of conduct and disciplinary procedures.
f. Educational and academic policies, including assessment methodologies.

2.5 Accessible Grievance Mechanisms: It is essential within the academic and legal framework to ensure that both students and staff members possess access to effective grievance and complaint mechanisms, as outlined by institutional policies and required by the *Whistleblower Act of 2020*. These mechanisms must be structured to enable individuals to voice their concerns and grievances without fear of reprisal or retaliation.

2.6 Transparent Information Dissemination: The institution must provide comprehensive, up-to-date, and accurate public information regarding its identity, location, facilities, academic and vocational programs, and educational outcomes to facilitate informed decision-making by stakeholders.

2.7 External Compliance Obligations: The institution must fulfill its external compliance obligations, including the timely submission of required reports and compliance with information requests from the Department of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology or government agencies to ensure adherence to regulatory standards and oversight.

- **STANDARD 3: THE INSTITUTION HAS EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE MECHANISMS**

Relevant Policies: The institution is required to establish comprehensive rules and policies governing governance practices, conflicts of interest, and delegations of authority, among other pertinent matters.

3.1 Composition of Governing Body: The institution must possess a governing body comprising individuals with a suitable blend of experience and expertise to furnish effective oversight of institutional affairs. This governing body should operate within a clearly delineated governance structure. For all institutions operating in Papua New Guinea, compliance with the stipulations outlined in the National Governance Manual is mandatory.

3.2 Accountability of Governing Body: The governing body assumes full responsibility for the activities of the institution and ensures access to adequate information to discharge its duties effectively.

3.3 Suitability of Key Personnel: The institution's key personnel, including members of the governing body, CEO, and senior management, must be deemed 'fit and proper persons' to fulfill their respective roles.

3.4 Independent Oversight: There must exist independent oversight mechanisms to monitor educational and research activities, devoid of any conflicts of interest arising from ownership or managerial interests.

3.5 Educational Governance Arrangements: The institution must establish educational governance structures that provide robust oversight of all educational and research endeavors. This includes delineating terms of reference, establishing membership criteria, and maintaining attendance records for governance committees.

3.6 Management of Conflicts of Interest: All conflicts of interest among members of governance committees must be disclosed annually and at each meeting, with appropriate measures taken to address them.

3.7 Documentation of Governance Proceedings: Accurate and comprehensive business strategic plan, documents related to planning and governance and minutes of the Governing Council must be maintained for each meeting of the governing body and any governance committee convened.

3.8 Delegations of Authority: The institution must maintain a register detailing delegation of authority, encompassing financial, human resources, and educational (academic) realms.

▪ STANDARD 4: FINANCIAL RESOURCE ADEQUACY AND SUSTAINABILITY

Relevant Policies: The institution is required to establish and adhere to policies governing financial management, controls, procurement practices, external and internal audit procedures and internal cash control procedures. Additionally, it must maintain a comprehensive list of external compliance obligations, including statutory reporting requirements under Papua New Guinea law.

4.1 Operational Sustainability: The institution must demonstrate its capacity to sustainably support its operations, ensuring the maintenance of educational quality for a minimum period of five years into the future.

4.2 Budgetary Allocations: Annual budgets should reflect adequate resource allocations, encompassing staffing costs and other essential expenditures, to effectively achieve the intended outcomes of formal educational and research activities and individual programs.

4.3 Compliance with External Requirements: The institution is obligated to fulfill the requirements set forth by external regulatory entities, funding agencies, and auditing organizations.

Guidance: This compliance includes adhering to reporting directives, ensuring timely acquittals, and submitting audited financial statements. Public, Church, and private institutions that receive more than 50% of their funding from the Government are required to adhere to the provisions delineated in the *Public Finances (Management) Act 1995* and the *Audit Act 1989*, as amended. Conversely, non-government entities that receive less than 50% of their funding from the Government must ensure the availability of independently audited financial statements.

4.4 Financial Management Practices: The institution shall adopt and implement sound financial management, accounting, and reporting practices, ensuring the maintenance of complete, accurate, and up-to-date financial records.

4.5 Procurement Integrity: Appropriate controls must be instituted to safeguard the integrity of all financial operations, particularly in the realm of procurement activities.

4.6 Student Fee Protection: The institution must establish financial safeguards to protect student fees, including the maintenance of a separate bank account for tuition fees. These measures are vital to facilitate the provision of refunds in the event of institutional closure or program cessation.

4.7 Internal Cash Control Procedures: The institution must establish internal cash control procedures, which are frameworks aimed at safeguarding financial assets, ensuring accountability, and mitigating risks associated with cash transactions within the institution.

Guidance: These procedures typically encompass a series of measures such as segregation of duties, authorization protocols, regular reconciliations, physical security measures, and robust documentation practices. By adhering to these internal cash control procedures, Higher Education Institutions can uphold transparency, integrity, and fiscal responsibility in managing their financial resources, thereby fostering trust among stakeholders and promoting effective financial management practices.

4.8 Internal Audit: The institution must establish mechanisms for external financial audit and, for large institutions, for internal audit.

Guidance: Internal audit a systematic and independent evaluation of the institution's operations, financial systems, and compliance processes. It aims to assess the effectiveness of internal controls, identify areas for improvement, and ensure alignment with regulatory requirements and best practices. Internal auditors conduct comprehensive reviews of various functions, including financial management, academic operations, human resources, and information technology, to provide assurance to management and stakeholders regarding the institution's governance, risk management, and control processes. By facilitating transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement, internal audit plays a crucial role in enhancing the institution's overall effectiveness and achieving its strategic objectives

▪ STANDARD 5: INSTITUTIONAL MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

Relevant Policies: The institution is required to establish and adhere to a comprehensive framework of governance, code of ethics and conduct, conflict of interest, council governance policy, academic freedom policy, educational, research and administrative policies and other polices as outlined below.

These policies collectively establish a framework for efficient institutional management and governance, aligning with the institution's vision, mission, values, and strategic objectives. They are designed to uphold principles of accountability, integrity, and ethical conduct.

5.1 Governance Structure Policy: Defines the institutional governance structure, including the roles, responsibilities, and authority of governing bodies such as the board of trustees or governors, academic senate, and administrative leadership.

5.1.1 Organizational Structure: The institution maintains a stable and well-defined organizational structure, incorporating appropriate management, research and educational positions across various tiers.

5.1.2 Administrative Policies: The institution formulates and implements policies and procedures concerning:

a. Institutional governance and delegations of authority.
b. Financial management, controls, and safeguards.
c. Human resource management, including recruitment and staff development.
d. Health and safety protocols.
e. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) management and acceptable use policies, encompassing social media guidelines.
f. Information management and record-keeping practices.
g. Asset management.
h. Infrastructure and facilities maintenance.
i. Risk management strategies.
j. Procurement processes.
k. Oversight of outsourced or third-party education or training delivery

5.1.3 Record Management: The institution ensures secure storage, backup, and disaster recovery plans for all records, including both physical and electronic formats.

5.1.4 Student Records: The institution maintains adequate systems to record and report student achievements, with robust controls to prevent unauthorized access or tampering. Student records are maintained in perpetuity.

5.1.5 Student Access: Students have access to their individual achievement records, facilitating transparency and accountability

5.2 Code of Ethics and Conduct Policy: Establishes ethical standards and expectations for all members of the institution community, including administrators, faculty, staff, and students, to ensure integrity, transparency, and accountability in decision-making and behavior.

5.3 Conflict of Interest Policy: Addresses situations where personal, financial, or professional interests may conflict with the institution's mission or ethical standards, providing guidelines for disclosure, management, and resolution of conflicts of interest.

5.4 Council Governance Policy: Outlines the composition, selection process, term limits, duties, and responsibilities of the board of trustees or governors, including meeting procedures, committees, and reporting requirements.

5.5 Academic Freedom Policy: Affirms the institution's commitment to academic freedom and intellectual inquiry, protecting the rights of faculty, researchers, and students to pursue knowledge, research, and expression without undue interference or censorship.

5.5.1 Educational and Research Policies: The institution institutes a set of rules, policies, and procedures to ensure consistency, coordination, and clarity across all its endeavors. Essential educational policies include but are not limited to:

a. Student Code of Conduct
b. Students attributes
c. Admissions
d. Equity and social inclusion, encompassing provisions for persons with disabilities
e. Student support services, including academic assistance
f. Credit and Recognition of Prior Learning
g. Academic and Research integrity
h. Assessment and moderation
i. Student progression, attrition, completion, and graduation
j. Student appeals
k. Student evaluation of teaching and units
l. Learning resources
m. Programme design, development, and review
n. Programme and unit monitoring and updating
o. Programme review and discontinuation (including teach-out)
p. Academic quality assurance, incorporating feedback, monitoring, and benchmarking
q. Intellectual property rights (as applicable).

5.6 Strategic Planning and Decision-Making Policy: Establishes procedures for developing and implementing institutional strategic

plans, setting goals, allocating resources, and making informed decisions aligned with the institution's mission, vision, and values.

5.6.1 Data Analysis: The institution collects and analyzes data on student progress and success to identify areas for improvement in programs, teaching methodologies, and learning environments.

5.6.2 Outsourced Activities: The institution maintains current service-level agreements or other contractual arrangements for outsourced or third-party activities, ensuring accountability and quality assurance.

5.7 Risk Management Policy: Identifies, assesses, and mitigates risks associated with institutional operations, academic, finances, compliance, human resources, reputation, and other areas, ensuring proactive measures are in place to address potential threats and opportunities.

5.8 Transparency and Disclosure Policy: Promotes openness and transparency in institutional operations, financial reporting, decision-making processes, and communication with stakeholders, fostering trust and accountability within the institution and the broader community.

5.9 Academic Governance Policy: Defines the structures, processes, and responsibilities related to academic affairs, including curriculum development, academic standards, faculty governance, student rights and responsibilities, and program accreditation.

5.9.1 Qualification Issuance: The institution issues formal educational qualification certificates only to students who have fulfilled the requirements of their respective qualifications. Additionally, educational records (transcripts) are provided to all students upon completion of individual units.

5.9.2 Multi-Campus Assurance: In instances where the institution operates multiple campuses or learning centers, it ensures consistent quality of provision to uphold educational standards comparable to those of the main campus.

5.10 Compliance and Legal Affairs Policy: Ensures compliance with relevant laws, regulations, accreditation standards, and institutional policies, establishing mechanisms for monitoring, reporting, and addressing non-compliance issues.

- **STANDARD 6: THE INSTITUTION'S PROGRAMMES, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT ARE ADEQUATE TO ACHIEVE THE EXPECTED STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Relevant policies: The institution is required to establish comprehensive policies governing program design, development, approval, delivery, and periodic review processes, as well as policies pertaining to assessment methodologies, among other pertinent aspects.

6.1 Curriculum Development Policy: Outlines procedures for the design, review, and revision of academic programmes to ensure alignment with the PNG National Qualifications Framework, stated learning outcomes, industry standards, and emerging trends in the field.

6.2 Learning Outcomes Assessment Policy: Establishes guidelines and procedures for assessing student learning outcomes at the programme, and institutional levels, including methods for data collection, analysis, and utilization to improve teaching and learning effectiveness.

6.3 Teaching and Learning Policy: Defines expectations for instructional practices, pedagogical approaches, and faculty development initiatives aimed at enhancing student engagement, critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and overall learning experiences in all modes of study including online and blended learning.

6.4 Assessment and Evaluation Policy: Specifies criteria, methods, and tools for evaluating student performance, including formative and summative assessments, grading practices, feedback mechanisms, and procedures for academic appeals and grievances.

6.5 Academic Standards Policy: Sets academic standards and expectations for student achievement, including minimum requirements for admission, progression, and graduation, as well as criteria for awarding academic honors and distinctions.

6.6 Program Accreditation Policy: Ensures compliance with accreditation standards and requirements set by relevant accrediting bodies or agencies, including procedures for self-assessment, external review, and continuous improvement of academic programs.

6.7 Student Support Services Policy: Addresses the provision of academic advising, tutoring, counseling, and other support services to help students succeed academically and achieve learning outcomes, promoting equity, inclusivity, and accessibility for all learners.

6.8 Technology Integration Policy: Guides the integration of educational technologies and digital resources into teaching and learning activities to enhance student engagement, collaboration, and access to learning materials, while ensuring privacy, security, and equity considerations are addressed.

6.9 Continuous Quality Improvement Policy: Establishes and implements mechanisms for ongoing review, evaluation, and enhancement of academic programmes, teaching practices, and assessment strategies based on feedback from stakeholders, including students, faculty, employers, and alumni.

6.10 Academic Integrity Policy: Ensures adherence to principles of academic honesty, integrity, and ethical conduct among students and faculty, outlining expectations, consequences, and procedures for addressing academic misconduct, plagiarism, and cheating.

6.11 Program Structure and Units: Each programme delineates its structure and constituent units, encompassing admission criteria, credit allocation, progression and completion prerequisites, anticipated student workloads, modalities of study, delivery methods, and pedagogical approaches employed.

6.12 Collaborative Arrangement: The institution, if it engages in a collaborative arrangement with another entity to oversee or administer aspects or the entirety of a program, implements robust mechanisms to oversee and ensure the quality of all facets of the arrangement, with the objective of attaining commensurate learning outcomes.

These policies collectively support the institution's commitment to providing high-quality educational programs that effectively prepare students to achieve the expected learning outcomes and succeed in their academic and professional endeavors.

6.13 Requirements for Overseas Institutions:

Overseas institutions seeking to offer programmes in Papua New Guinea (PNG) must adhere to stringent criteria ensuring that the programmes offered maintain equivalence to those available within their respective home countries. The term 'equivalent' within these standards is defined as possessing identical learning outcomes and receiving comparable recognition of qualifications by both the offering institution and other relevant accrediting bodies, except in instances where accreditation or licensing constraints preclude such recognition by external entities.

Programmes positioned at the Papua New Guinea National Qualifications Framework (PNGNQF) Level 7 and beyond are expected to undergo appropriate contextualization tailored to the unique educational landscape of Papua New Guinea. This contextualization ensures that programmes at these levels effectively address the specific needs, contexts, and challenges prevalent within the Papua New Guinean educational framework.

- **STANDARD 7: THE INSTITUTION ENSURES THAT ITS TEACHING AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL ARE APPROPRIATE IN NUMBER, QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE AND SKILL.**

Relevant Policies: The institution is required to establish and adhere to comprehensive human resources policies and procedures encompassing recruitment, position descriptions, staff performance management, and professional development initiatives.

7.1 Teaching Staff Qualifications:

- Higher education lecturers must hold an academic qualification, or possess equivalent professional experience, at a level one tier higher than the programme they teach (or at the same level for Level 10 programs) and demonstrate proficiency in teaching within the relevant field of study.
- TVET and skills teachers are required to demonstrate proficiency in competency-based training, assessment, and vocational competence equivalent to the level being delivered and assessed, supplemented by recent industry experience (within the last 10 years) in the respective field of study.

7.2 Staff Adequacy for Program Delivery: The institution ensures that for each programme and unit, there is an adequate number of lecturers, trainers, teachers and academics relative to the student cohort, based on an appropriate lecturer-student ratio specific to the field of study.

7.3 Senior Management and Administrative Staff: The institution maintains a sufficient number of qualified senior management, administrative, and technical staff to effectively carry out its operational activities.

7.4 Employment Conditions: Staff employment conditions are equitable and compliant with the current employment legislation of Papua New Guinea.

7.5 Professional Development: The institution invests in enhancing the knowledge and capabilities of all staff members through initiatives such as upgrading qualifications and facilitating continuous professional development (CPD) to ensure staff remain current in their respective fields.

7.6 Job Descriptions: Each employee is provided with a written job description delineating their responsibilities and reporting relationships, which is comprehensively explained to them upon employment.

7.7 Performance Management and Appraisal: The institution implements an effective performance management, appraisal, and feedback system to foster a culture of research and learning and continuous improvement among staff members.

- **STANDARD 8: THE INSTITUTION ENSURES THAT ITS STUDENTS HAVE ACCESS TO APPROPRIATE LEVELS OF SOCIAL, WELFARE, AND SUPPORT SERVICES.**

Relevant Policies: The institution is required to establish and maintain policies addressing student welfare, educational support services, and related matters.

8.1 **Provision of Residential Accommodation:** The institution guarantees access to safe and affordable accommodation of suitable standards for students not residing with parents, relatives, or guardians. Accommodations may be institutionally owned or contracted to reputable entities.

8.2 **Meeting Diverse Learning Needs:** The institution designs programs to cater to the varied learning requirements of its student body, including orientation courses, transitional support, and ongoing academic language and learning assistance.

8.3 **Access to Food and Beverage:** Adequate provisions are made for students and staff to access food and beverages while on campus, either through on-site facilities or personal arrangements.

8.4 **Health and Counseling Services:** The institution provides on-site or nearby health and counseling services staffed by qualified professionals to address the diverse needs of students. Arrangements for specialized services are made when necessary.

8.5 **Religious Observance Facilities:** Residential students have access to facilities for religious observance, including chaplaincy services, to accommodate their spiritual needs.

8.6 **Social and Cultural Support:** The institution fosters social and cultural engagement among residential students, acknowledging their diverse backgrounds and offering appropriate facilities such as sports, recreation, and cultural clubs.

8.7 **Student Representation:** Mechanisms are in place to ensure student representation in decision-making processes, and the institution values and respects the student voice.

8.8 **Career Advisory Services:** Graduating students are guided on accessing career advisory services and post-graduation support to facilitate their transition into the workforce.

- **STANDARD 9: THE INSTITUTION ESTABLISHES EFFECTIVE PROCESSES TO PROVIDE, MAINTAIN AND MODERNIZE LEARNING RESOURCES.**

Relevant Policies: The institution is required to develop and implement policies governing learning resources management, as well as policies concerning ICT management and acceptable use, among others.

9.1 **Provision of Physical Facilities:** The institution ensures the availability of properly equipped physical facilities, including library, classrooms and laboratories, to facilitate effective teaching and student learning experiences, as appropriate to its modes of delivery.

9.2 **Sufficiency of Learning Resources:** Learning and assessment resources, encompassing ICT, machinery, equipment, and tools, are adequately provided to enable all students to attain the learning outcomes of the program.

9.3 **Digital Facilities and Cybersecurity:** Digital facilities, including internet access to databases, are sufficient and secured in accordance with appropriate cybersecurity measures to support the institution's teaching, learning, and research endeavors.

9.4 **Equipment Servicing and Maintenance:** The institution establishes procedures for the regular servicing, maintenance, and repair of all equipment, including ICT resources, to ensure their operational functionality.

9.5 **Availability of Learning Resources:** Adequate and up-to-date written and visual learning resources, in both hard and soft copies, are made accessible to students enrolled in the programme.

9.6 **Information Literacy Skills Development:** Students are equipped with the necessary skills to effectively seek, obtain, and utilize information resources, both online and in hard copy, to support lifelong learning endeavors.

9.7 **Learning Management System (LMS):** Where online or blended learning modalities are utilized, the institution maintains a comprehensive learning management system containing detailed information on each program and unit offered.

9.8 **Accessibility to Teaching Staff:** Students enrolled in the programme are provided reasonable access to teaching staff for raising questions, addressing issues, or seeking clarification, regardless of the mode of study. For wholly online learning, access to teaching staff may be facilitated through the learning management system, email, or mobile phone networks.

- **STANDARD 10: THE INSTITUTION DEMONSTRATES A COMMITMENT TO SOCIAL INCLUSION AND ROBUST ENGAGEMENT WITH STAKEHOLDERS.**

Relevant Policies: The Institution is required to demonstrate a commitment to social inclusion and robust engagement with stakeholders by adhering to the following policies:

10.1 Diversity and Inclusion Policy:

10.2 The institution articulates clear equity goals for social inclusion, addressing factors such as gender, nationality, cultural diversity, religious backgrounds, and disability. The policy includes consideration of accessibility for students and staff. Its policies and procedures, including admission and student support policies, are aligned with these goals to foster an inclusive environment.

10.3 Stakeholder Engagement Policy: The institution develops policies outlining its commitment to engaging with key stakeholders, including industry and employer groups, alumni, local communities, and other relevant entities. These policies define the strategies and mechanisms for fostering productive partnerships and collaborations aimed at enhancing educational activities and promoting community engagement.

10.4 Community Outreach Policy: The institution implements policies and initiatives for community outreach, establishing channels for collaboration and communication with local communities to address societal needs, promote social cohesion, and contribute to the broader community welfare.

10.5 Alumni Relations Policy: The institution formulates policies for maintaining strong connections with alumni, fostering relationships that support ongoing engagement, networking opportunities, and contributions to the institution's mission and activities.

10.6 Cultural Competence Policy: The institution establishes policies aimed at promoting cultural competence among its stakeholders, fostering understanding, respect, and appreciation for diverse cultural perspectives within the institution and the broader community.

10.7 Social Responsibility Policy: The institution adopts policies that reflect its commitment to social responsibility, emphasizing ethical conduct, sustainable practices, and contributions to the welfare of society through education, research, and community engagement initiatives.

STANDARDS 11 AND 12 ARE SPECIFICALLY FOR UNIVERSITIES:

- **STANDARD 11: INSTITUTIONAL CAPABILITY FOR PROGRAMME OFFERINGS**

Relevant Policies: The university awards its own qualifications in at least two fields of study and offers programmes from entry level to postgraduate studies.

11.1 Scope of Programme Offerings: The University must plan to offer programmes in at least two fields of study at the bachelor level or higher, encompassing a diverse range of disciplines. Fields of study may include, but are not limited to, education, agriculture, science, social sciences, technology and engineering, health sciences, and business studies.

11.2 Awarding of Qualifications: The University is required to award its own qualifications for the programmes it offers. This necessitates a robust internal capability to develop, accredit, and review academic programmes across various disciplines.

11.3 Additional Programme Offerings: The University may offer additional programmes where the qualification is awarded by another university or institution under agreement. However, it must prioritize the awarding of its own qualifications for core programmes.

11.4 Development of Postgraduate Programmes: Realistic plans must be in place for the university to offer postgraduate programmes up to at least master's level within three years from the commencement of operations. This demonstrates the institution's commitment to academic progression and advancement.

11.5 Incorporation of Technical and Vocational Education: The University may incorporate provisions for offering technical and vocational education and training alongside higher education qualifications. This allows for a comprehensive educational framework catering to diverse learner needs and career pathways.

By adhering to these standards, the university ensures its readiness to provide a broad spectrum of academic programmes across multiple disciplines, thereby contributing to the advancement of higher education and the socio-economic development of Papua New Guinea

- **STANDARD 12: RESEARCH EXCELLENCE AND ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP**

Relevant Policies: The institution is required to develop and uphold policies pertaining to research integrity, ethics clearances, staff consultancy or contract research, research grants, and, where applicable, the supervision and management of higher degree by research candidates. The institution engages in research activities aimed at generating new knowledge, adhering to international standards and best practices.

12.1 Academic Leadership for Research: The institution maintains adequate academic leadership to foster the cultivation of research and scholarly activities among both staff and students. This leadership is instrumental in providing guidance, mentorship, and support to facilitate research endeavors.

12.2 Ethical and Methodological Standards: All research activities conducted within the institution adhere to recognized ethical and cultural standards, employing appropriate methodologies consistent with international norms. Adherence to established guidelines, such as the NHMRC Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, ensures integrity and rigor in research practices.

12.3 Ethical Review Processes: Research involving human or animal subjects undergoes thorough review by a duly constituted research ethics body prior to commencement. This body may be internal or external to the institution, ensuring compliance with ethical principles and safeguarding the welfare of research participants.

12.4 Support for Postgraduate Research: Teaching staff engaged in postgraduate programs are afforded opportunities to pursue research activities within their respective areas of expertise. This integration of research into teaching facilitates knowledge dissemination and academic enrichment among students and faculty.

12.5 Financial Management of Research Projects: The institution has established written policies governing the financial management of consultancy or contract research conducted by its staff. These policies ensure transparency, accountability, and responsible stewardship of research funds.

12.6 Supervision and Management of Higher Degree by Research Candidates: If the institution offers higher degrees by research, it has developed and implemented a comprehensive suite of policies governing the supervision and management of research candidates. These policies outline clear expectations, roles, and responsibilities to ensure the academic and research success of candidates.

By adhering to these standards, the universality demonstrates its commitment to fostering a culture of research excellence, ethical conduct, and academic leadership, thereby contributing to the advancement of knowledge and scholarship within the institution and the broader academic community.

▪ CONCLUSION

The National Standards for Higher Education Institutional Registration and Recognition, ratified by the National Higher and Technical Education Board (NHTEB) on August 09, 2024, and formally instituted for implementation since January 02, 2025, mark a pivotal milestone in Papua New Guinea's educational governance framework. Governed by the provisions delineated in the *Higher Education (General Provisions) Act 2014 (amended) of 2020*, all higher education institutions within Papua New Guinea are required to undergo registration and recognition as the higher education provider in PNG.

This document serves as comprehensive guidance outlining the requisite criteria and processes for the initial establishment or renewal of registration and recognition for higher education institutions in Papua New Guinea. Applicable to institutions of diverse affiliations—public, Church, private, and overseas providers—those standards outlined herein are paramount for ensuring compliance and quality assurance in the higher education landscape of Papua New Guinea.

Fulfillment of all prescribed standards is imperative for the grant of registration and recognition. Established institutions are urged to heed the guidance provided herein during external quality assessments against the National Standards for Higher Education Institutional Registration and Recognition. It is anticipated that requisite planning and policy implementation will have been meticulously undertaken prior to such assessments.

In accordance with the Act, overseas universities intending to operate within Papua New Guinea must seek recognition, although registration is not mandated. A distinct application process for the recognition of overseas higher education institutions is facilitated by DHERST, aligning with the stipulations set forth in the *Higher Education (General Provisions) Act 2014 (amended) of 2020,* which delineates the qualifications for recognition of overseas higher education institutions.

This conclusion underscores the adherence to legal frameworks, procedural guidelines, and quality assurance measures inherent in the registration and recognition processes, reflecting Papua New Guinea's commitment to fostering excellence, accountability, and international collaboration in its higher education sector.

THOSE STANDARDS HEREBY SUPPLANT THE STANDARDS SET FORTH ON MARCH 29, 2017.