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ACEEU

ACCREDITATION COUNCIL
FOR ENTREPRENEURIAL &
ENGAGED UNIVERSITIES



Standards & Guidelines

Entrepreneurial University
Accreditation

Purpose of this document

This document sets out the standards against which an institution aiming at entrepreneurial university accreditation will be evaluated and provides guidelines for the self-evaluation step of the accreditation procedure.

RELATION TO OTHER DOCUMENTS

Please refer to ACEEU's Accreditation Process Manual for more information on the self-evaluation procedure and to the Self Evaluation Form for further information on how to prepare the self-evaluation report.

QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the ACEEU Office via email or phone.

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Introduction

ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

This document presents the standards against which institutions will be evaluated in their procedure to get awarded ACEEU's entrepreneurial university accreditation. In addition, the document features guidelines that support applicant institutions in the preparation of the self-evaluation report.

ACCREDITATION APPROACH

ACEEU has developed a variety of standards that enable to describe and evaluate engaged and entrepreneurial universities. The standards are structured according to the following 5 dimensions which build ACEEU's guiding accreditation framework.

1. orientation and strategy
2. people and organisational capacity
3. drivers and enablers
4. education, research and third stream activities
5. innovation and impact

Within each of the 5 dimensions, there are 3 standards which differentiate the activities and attainments expected of either the engaged or entrepreneurial university. Although the dimensions are common to each accreditation type, universities will need to submit evidence which is appropriate to the specific standards of either the engaged or entrepreneurial university.

UNDERSTANDING OF THE ENTREPRENEURIAL UNIVERSITY

Based on the above presented set of dimensions, ACEEU understands the entrepreneurial university as follows:

“An entrepreneurial university is oriented towards and strategically positioned to deliver a range of societal contributions, with a focus on economic impacts. The institution undertakes education that is focused on the development of entrepreneurial mind-sets and skills, and promotes a wide range of career opportunities, including intrapreneurship, self-employment, and entrepreneurship. Research leads to income and intellectual contributions with a high potential for commercialisation. The priority in third mission activities is entrepreneurship and the university accordingly develops its organisational capacity and support structures to enable people to take risks and to act intrapreneurially and entrepreneurially. An entrepreneurial university is an influential

stakeholder within the entrepreneurial ecosystem and is dedicated to continuous improvement and generation of greater economic impacts in the region.”

IMPORTANT REMARKS

It is important to note that ACEEU provides institutional accreditation, as opposed to accreditations on faculty or department level. This means that institutions are required to show that entrepreneurship and/or engagement is not only promoted and implemented in one faculty or department, but is truly a whole organisational approach. While ACEEU accreditation has been designed for universities, other organisations (such as Science Parks, Incubators, external TTOs) may be eligible to enter ACEEU accreditation procedure if they can clearly highlight a strong link to and impact on the higher education ecosystem (please contact the ACEEU Office for more information).

It is also important to bear in mind that ACEEU’s accreditation procedures are designed for the global higher education environment and thus need to take into account a great diversity of education systems and approaches towards entrepreneurship and engagement. Acknowledging this wide diversity, however, does not mean that expectations regarding the fulfilment of the standards are lowered for certain regions. The basis for the evaluation of the standards is the generic quality that can be expected on an international level (for more information please refer to the section “Assessment of Standards” in ACEEU Process Manual). Rather, acknowledging diversity requires an accreditation to provide applicant institutions with the opportunity to present its approach towards entrepreneurship and/or engagement in the best possible way. As a consequence, ACEEU’s guidelines for self-evaluation are kept rather broad, as opposed to a detailed, step-by-step questionnaire.

While the guidance for self-evaluation is kept broad, institutions need to avoid a promotional description of the university and its approach. Rather, it is expected that descriptions are objective and based on a critical analysis of the subject matter. It has also to be noted that institutions are not limited to the example evidence put forward in this document. Each institution should develop its own approach to present its case and provide the respective evidence supporting this presentation.

STRUCTURE OF THE DOCUMENT

Chapter two will provide an overview of the 15 standards while chapter three presents the standards as well as guidance for self-evaluation. Each of the 5 dimensions is introduced with a short opening statement, outlining its focus on the link of the 3 standards to the dimension.

Standards overview

Dimension 1: **Orientation and strategy**

- Institutional Commitment
- Shared Goals
- Financial Planning

Dimension 2: **People and organisational capacity**

- Leadership
- Staff profile
- Incentives and rewards

Dimension 3: **Drivers and enablers**

- Culture
- Internal Support Structures
- Service Alignment

Dimension 4: **Education, research and third stream activities**

- Education
- Research
- Third Mission Activities

Dimension 5: **Innovation and impact**

- Continuous improvement
- Influence within the Ecosystem
- Impact

Standards and guidelines

ORIENTATION & STRATEGY

An entrepreneurial university is oriented towards and strategically positioned to deliver a range of societal contributions with a focus on economic impacts. This is reflected in the institutions commitment, shared goals and financial planning.

Standard 1.1: Institutional Commitment

STANDARD

The university has made a public and strategic commitment to entrepreneurship.

GUIDANCE FOR SELF-EVALUATION

Please describe and evaluate, making reference to any relevant evidence, your university's strategic commitment to entrepreneurship and how this priority is related to the overall organisational strategy.

Evidence that you could make reference to includes written documents (e.g. vision, mission, strategic plan) available to university staff, students and external stakeholders.

Standard 1.2: Shared Goals

STANDARD

The university has established entrepreneurship goals, with measurable targets and deadlines, which are understood and owned by a range of people in the organisation.

GUIDANCE FOR SELF-EVALUATION

Please describe and evaluate how the institutional commitment to entrepreneurship is being enacted by people at different levels of the organisation and across the organisation as a whole.

Evidence that you could make reference to includes organisational charts, action plans for units and job descriptions.

Standard 1.3: Financial Planning

STANDARD

The university has a sustainable commitment to entrepreneurship which can be identified in its commercial activities, financial income and expenditure plans.

GUIDANCE FOR SELF-EVALUATION

Please describe and evaluate how the university can be confident that it has sufficient financial resources to achieve its entrepreneurship goals, now and in the foreseeable future.

Evidence that you could make reference to includes overview reports of activities that generate income, levels of external funding, plans for investment in facilities and people dedicated to entrepreneurship.

PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY

An entrepreneurial university develops its people and organisational capacity to take risks and to act intrapreneurially and entrepreneurially. This is reflected in the institution's leadership, staff profile and incentives and rewards.

Standard 2.1: Leadership

STANDARD

The university's values and its approaches to leadership combine to foster entrepreneurship, including risk-taking.

GUIDANCE FOR SELF-EVALUATION

Please describe and evaluate how the actions of leaders enable individuals (academics and professional services staff) to think and act entrepreneurially. Highlight any values and approaches that are common across the university.

Evidence that you could make reference to includes leadership values and guiding principles, as well as job descriptions/person specifications and any initiatives that encourage risk-taking.

Standard 2.2: Staff Profile

STANDARD

The university manages its profile of academic and non-academic staff to meet the current and future demands of the entrepreneurship strategy.

GUIDANCE FOR SELF-EVALUATION

Please describe and evaluate how the profile of university staff is continuously aligned to the entrepreneurship strategy. Highlight how the university staff dedicated to entrepreneurship currently is and will be kept sufficient, balanced and adequate in respect to expertise and experience.

Evidence that you could make reference to includes overview of entrepreneurship staff (e.g. functions, expertise, experience, gender), recruitment policies and examples of recent job ads, staff development policies and opportunities, and examples of external contributors (e.g. entrepreneurs-in-residence).

Standard 2.3: Incentives and Rewards

STANDARD

The university has a coherent system of incentives and rewards to stimulate staff to undertake and support entrepreneurship activities.

GUIDANCE FOR SELF-EVALUATION

Please describe and evaluate any incentives and rewards which are designed to stimulate staff to participate in entrepreneurial activity and highlight the role of entrepreneurship in the staffs' performance evaluation.

Evidence that you could make reference to includes staff evaluation policy, promotion policies, listing of incentives and rewards.

DRIVERS AND ENABLERS

An entrepreneurial university develops a comprehensive support system that enables individuals and groups to innovate. This is reflected in the institution's culture, internal support structures and alignment with external services.

Standard 3.1: Culture

STANDARD

The university promotes a culture conducive to thinking and acting entrepreneurially.

GUIDANCE FOR SELF-EVALUATION

Please describe and evaluate the different mechanisms and activities through which the university aims to enhance its entrepreneurial culture.

Evidence that you could make reference to includes set of shared values and beliefs, coverage of entrepreneurial topics in the university's communication, social media channels and website sections specifically dedicated to entrepreneurship, listing of entrepreneurship events, and entrepreneurship-oriented communities (e.g. student entrepreneurship society).

Standard 3.2: Internal Support Structures

STANDARD

The university's internal support services and facilities enable individuals to progress through the stages of their entrepreneurship journeys.

GUIDANCE FOR SELF-EVALUATION

Please describe and evaluate how the support structures help students, staff and externals at each stage of their entrepreneurial journey.

Evidence that you could make reference to includes listing of internal services and facilities (e.g. mentoring, coaching, funding, advice, incubation).

Standard 3.3: Service Alignment

STANDARD

The university enhances its internal support structures by brokering access to external services, thus providing a comprehensive support system for entrepreneurship.

GUIDANCE FOR SELF-EVALUATION

Please describe and evaluate how the university's internal structures and external services are aligned to assist staff and students to be more entrepreneurial.

Evidence that you could make reference to includes descriptions of links to external services and facilities (e.g. advisory services for start-ups, co-working spaces, local government business support offices).

EDUCATION, RESEARCH AND THIRD-MISSION ACTIVITIES

An entrepreneurial university undertakes education that is focused on the development of entrepreneurial mind-sets and skills, and promotes a wide range of career opportunities including intrapreneurship, self-employment, and entrepreneurship. Research leads to income and intellectual contributions with a high potential for commercialisation. Third mission activities are focused on entrepreneurship. This is reflected in the university's education, research and external-facing activities.

Standard 4.1: Education

STANDARD

The university provides a variety of opportunities for students to improve their entrepreneurial knowledge, skills and actions, and thus supports a wide range of graduate careers, including intrapreneurship, self-employment, entrepreneurship.

GUIDANCE FOR SELF-EVALUATION

Please describe and evaluate formal and informal entrepreneurship education opportunities and explain how these are appropriate to different subject disciplines and career routes.

Evidence that you could make reference to includes overviews of entrepreneurship(-related) courses and non-curricular education activities, examples of practice-based learning, details of extra-curricular

activities, examples of teaching and learning approaches, and, if applicable, any initiatives that enable students to combine creation of a start-up or entrepreneurial activity with the undertaking of a study.

Standard 4.2: Research

STANDARD

The university's research aims to support the creation of economic impacts and also to contribute to the field of entrepreneurship.

GUIDANCE FOR SELF-EVALUATION

Please describe and evaluate how the university promotes the production of intellectual contributions that have potential economic benefits (e.g. supporting the regional innovation system). Highlight also particular research projects that have contributed new knowledge to the field of entrepreneurship.

Evidence that you could make reference to includes research strategy plans and goals, statistics on and examples of interdisciplinary and applied research, and intellectual outputs (e.g. journal articles) in the field of entrepreneurship.

Standard 4.3: Third Mission Activities

STANDARD

The university undertakes a wide range of external commercial activities.

GUIDANCE FOR SELF-EVALUATION

Please describe and evaluate how the university (including leaders, academics and professional services staff) drives the commercialisation of its intellectual and physical resources, including the operation of legal entities that are owned or linked to the university.

Evidence that you could make reference to includes information on and examples of licensing and research income, consultancy projects, spin-offs, patent portfolio, commercial facilities usage.

INNOVATION AND IMPACT

An entrepreneurial university is an influential stakeholder with the entrepreneurial ecosystem and is focused on greater economic impacts in the region. This is reflected in the university's approach to continuous improvement, its level of influence with stakeholders and the impact it generates.

Standard 5.1: Continuous Improvement

STANDARD

The institution is achieving continuous improvement in entrepreneurship by regularly evaluating its performance against targets.

GUIDANCE FOR SELF-EVALUATION

Please describe and evaluate how the university monitors its performance and uses this evaluation to drive up performance in education, research and commercial activities. Highlight how the university encourages and enables innovative ideas and experimentation.

Evidence that you could make reference to includes list of performance indicators and data sources, processes and policies on performance evaluation and continuous improvement, and examples of innovative practice.

Standard 5.2: Influence within the Ecosystem

STANDARD

The university is an influential stakeholder in the entrepreneurship ecosystem.

GUIDANCE FOR SELF-EVALUATION

Please describe and evaluate how the university is influential in the advancement of entrepreneurship policy and practice on regional, national and international level. Highlight collaborations with national and international partners.

Evidence that you could make reference to includes entrepreneurship policy development activities, holding of entrepreneurship-related responsibilities in business, governmental and professional bodies, and external awards given to the university in recognition of its achievements and influence.

Standard 5.3: Impact

STANDARD

The university generates a wide range of benefits through entrepreneurship and is working towards greater economic impacts in the region.

GUIDANCE FOR SELF-EVALUATION

Please describe and evaluate the indirect and direct, short-term and long-term impacts the university delivers.

Evidence that you could make reference to includes quantitative data on businesses and jobs created, number of businesses and people advised or trained with respect to entrepreneurship, and examples of knowledge spill over and innovation.

Assessment of standards

The Accreditation Committee and the Peer Review Team will evaluate the institution against each of the standards using the following scales. The basis for the evaluation is the generic quality that can be expected on an international level.

Unsatisfactory	The institution does not meet the standard. At least one aspect of the standard that is meaningful in the institution's case is not satisfied.
Satisfactory	The institution meets the standard on an acceptable level. If any aspect of the standard is not fulfilled on an acceptable level, this aspect is not meaningful in the institution's case.
Excellent	The institution systematically and substantially exceeds the standard. The institution provides an exceptional performance with regards to all aspects of the standard that are meaningful in the institution's case. Evidence (data, examples etc.) proving this exceptional performance exist and the institution can be regarded as an international good practice example with respect to this standard.

In extraordinary cases, a standard might be evaluated as "N/A - Not considered applicable or relevant." Such a case, however, requires a review and written consent of the Accreditation Council chair and vice-chair. The requirements for premium accreditation presented below are not affected by the exclusion of a standard.



Standard accreditation

To receive ACEEU accreditation, institutions need to reach at least the "satisfactory level" for all standards.



Premium accreditation

In order to get awarded ACEEU's premium accreditation, the university is required to provide an excellent performance in at least 12 standards in total, including 2 standards in each of the 5 dimensions.



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