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ACEEU
ACCREDITATION COUNCIL
FOR ENTREPRENEURIAL &
ENGAGED UNIVERSITIES



Standards & Guidelines

Entrepreneurship Accreditation
for Academic Units
(Divisional Accreditation)

Purpose of this document

This document sets out the standards against which an academic unit¹ aiming at entrepreneurship 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.

¹ *Academic unit* in this sense refers to a generic term designating units within a higher education institution, such as school, faculty, department and similar. In a similar sense the term "divisional accreditation" is striving to capture the same constituents. In the official accreditation title of the applicant academic unit will use the terminology based on the status of the applicant (e.g. *Entrepreneurial Department Accreditation, Engaged School Accreditation*, and similar).

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Introduction

ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

This document presents the standards against which academic units will be evaluated in their procedure to get awarded ACEEU's entrepreneurship accreditation for academic units. In addition, the document features guidelines that support applicant academic units 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 academic units. 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 academic unit. 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 academic unit.

UNDERSTANDING OF THE ENTREPRENEURIAL ACADEMIC UNIT

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

“An entrepreneurial academic unit is oriented towards and strategically positioned to deliver a range of societal contributions, with a focus on economic impacts. The unit 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 academic unit accordingly develops its organisational capacity and support structures to enable people to take risks and to act intrapreneurially and

entrepreneurially. An entrepreneurial academic unit 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 this is a divisional accreditation and that with respect to autonomy there may be some overlaps and/boundaries between divisional level and institutional level. Therefore, to be able to make an unbiased assessment of the scope of entrepreneurial activity that the division has decision-making power over, it is important to clearly specify what entrepreneurial activities the division decides upon and what activities are within the jurisdiction of the institution. Furthermore, even though this is a divisional accreditation (pertaining only to one faculty/school/department), in some standards it is important to highlight the level of interdisciplinarity among other divisions within the same institution. Therefore, it is critical to emphasise the scope of interdisciplinarity within Standards pertaining to Education, Research, and Third Mission.

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 applicants 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, academic units need to avoid a promotional description of the academic unit 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 applicants are not limited to the example evidence put forward in this document. Each academic unit 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**

- 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 academic unit is oriented towards and strategically positioned to deliver a range of societal contributions with a focus on economic impacts. This is reflected in the academic unit's commitment, shared goals and financial planning.

Standard 1.1: Commitment

STANDARD

The academic unit has made a public and strategic commitment to entrepreneurship.

GUIDANCE FOR SELF-EVALUATION

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

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

NOTE: Please specify to what extent you have the capacity to execute the abovementioned and to what extent (if any) this is within jurisdiction of the institution you are attached to. Furthermore, please specify to what extent (if any) is your unit's commitment aligned with commitment of the institution you are attached to. Please comment on, for instance, if your unit possesses a strategy, to what extent is it aligned with the university strategy when it comes to entrepreneurship.

Standard 1.2: Shared Goals

STANDARD

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

**GUIDANCE FOR
SELF-EVALUATION**

Please describe and evaluate how the academic unit's commitment to entrepreneurship is being enacted by people at different levels of the unit and across the unit as a whole.

Evidence that you could make references to includes organisational charts, action plans, and job descriptions within the unit.

NOTE: Please specify to what extent you have the capacity to execute the abovementioned and to what extent (if any) this is within jurisdiction of the institution you are attached to. Furthermore, please specify to what extent (if any) are your shared goals aligned with shared goals of the institution you are attached to. Please comment on, for instance, if your unit has an action plan, to what extent is it aligned with your university action plan when it comes to entrepreneurship.

Standard 1.3: Financial Planning

STANDARD

The academic unit 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 academic unit 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 references to includes overview reports of activities that generate income, levels of external funding, plans for investment in facilities and people dedicated to entrepreneurship.

NOTE: Please specify to what extent you have the capacity to execute the abovementioned and to what extent (if any) this is within jurisdiction of the institution you are attached to. Furthermore, please specify to what extent (if any) is your unit's financial planning aligned with financial planning of the institution you are attached to. Please comment on, for instance, if your unit has revenue-generating reports, to what extent are they aligned with your university reports when it comes to entrepreneurship.

PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY

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

Standard 2.1: Leadership

STANDARD

The academic unit'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 academic unit.

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

NOTE: Please specify to what extent you have the capacity to execute the abovementioned and to what extent (if any) this is within jurisdiction of the institution you are attached to. Furthermore, please specify to what extent (if any) is your unit's leadership aligned with leadership of the institution you are attached to. Please comment on, for instance, to what extent are leadership values and principles aligned with your university leadership values and principles when it comes to entrepreneurship.

Standard 2.2: Staff Profile

STANDARD

The academic unit 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 academic unit's staff is continuously aligned to the entrepreneurship strategy. Highlight how the academic unit's 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 references to includes an 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).

NOTE: Please specify to what extent you have the capacity to execute the abovementioned and to what extent (if any) this is within jurisdiction of the institution you are attached to. Furthermore, please specify to what extent (if any) is your unit's staff profile aligned with financial planning of the institution you are attached to. Please comment on, for instance, if your unit has revenue-generating reports, to what extent are they aligned with your university reports when it comes to entrepreneurship.

Standard 2.3: Incentives and Rewards

STANDARD

The academic unit 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. Applicants may add incentives and rewards that are in the development phase, but are required to highlight the status of development (e.g. in terms of the expected time of implementation and the approval(s) required before implementation

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

NOTE: Please specify to what extent you have the capacity to execute the abovementioned and to what extent (if any) this is within jurisdiction of the institution you are attached to. Furthermore, please specify to what extent (if any) are your unit's incentives and rewards aligned with the incentives and rewards of the institution you are attached to. Please comment on, for instance, if your unit has staff-evaluation policies, to what extent are they aligned with your university staff-evaluation policies when it comes to entrepreneurship.

DRIVERS AND ENABLERS

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

Standard 3.1: Culture

STANDARD

The academic unit 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 academic unit aims to enhance its entrepreneurial culture.

Evidence that you could make references to includes a set of shared values and beliefs, coverage of entrepreneurial topics in the unit'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).

NOTE: Please specify to what extent you have the capacity to execute the abovementioned and to what extent (if any) this is within jurisdiction of the institution you are attached to. Furthermore, please specify to what extent (if any) is your unit's culture aligned with the culture of the institution you are attached to. Please comment on, for instance, if your unit has social media channels, to what extent are they aligned with your university social media channels when it comes to entrepreneurship.

Standard 3.2: Internal Support Structures

STANDARD

The academic unit'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.

Furthermore, please describe how the collaborations and intersections between structures between *other* academic units in your university aids in the abovementioned endeavours.

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

NOTE: Please specify to what extent you have the capacity to execute the abovementioned and to what extent (if any) this is within jurisdiction of the institution you are attached to.

Standard 3.3: Service Alignment

STANDARD

The academic unit 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 unit's internal structures and external services are aligned to assist staff and students to be more entrepreneurial.

Evidence that you could make references 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).

NOTE: Please specify to what extent you have the capacity to execute the abovementioned and to what extent (if any) this is within jurisdiction of the institution you are attached to.

EDUCATION, RESEARCH AND THIRD-MISSION ACTIVITIES

An entrepreneurial academic unit 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 unit's education, research and external-facing activities.

Standard 4.1: Education

STANDARD

The academic unit 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.

NOTE: Please specify to what extent you have the capacity to execute the abovementioned and to what extent (if any) this is within jurisdiction of the institution you are attached to. Furthermore, please specify to what extent (if any) is your unit's education aligned with the education of the institution you are attached to. Please comment on, for instance, if your unit has practice-based learning, to what extent is it aligned with your university practice-based learning.

Standard 4.2: Research

STANDARD

The academic unit's research aims to support the creation of economic impacts.

GUIDANCE FOR SELF-EVALUATION

Please describe and evaluate how the academic unit 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 with new knowledge to the field of entrepreneurship.

Evidence that you could make references 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.

NOTE: Please specify to what extent you have the capacity to execute the abovementioned and to what extent (if any) this is within jurisdiction of the institution you are attached to. Furthermore, please specify to what extent (if any) is your unit's research aligned with the research of the institution you are attached to. Please comment on, for instance, if your unit has a research strategy, to what extent is it aligned with your university research strategy when it comes to entrepreneurship.

Standard 4.3: Third Mission Activities

STANDARD

The academic unit undertakes a wide range of external commercial activities.

GUIDANCE FOR SELF-EVALUATION

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

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

NOTE: Please specify to what extent you have the capacity to execute the abovementioned and to what extent (if any) this is within jurisdiction of the institution you are attached to. Furthermore, please specify to what

extent (if any) are your unit's third mission activities aligned with the third mission activities of the institution you are attached to. Please comment on, for instance, if your unit has third mission activities, to what extent are they aligned with your university third mission activities.

INNOVATION AND IMPACT

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

Standard 5.1: Continuous Improvement

STANDARD

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

GUIDANCE FOR SELF-EVALUATION

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

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

NOTE: Please specify to what extent you have the capacity to execute the abovementioned and to what extent (if any) this is within jurisdiction of the institution you are attached to. Furthermore, please specify to what extent (if any) is your unit's continuous improvement aligned with the continuous improvement of the institution you are attached to. Please comment on, for instance, if your unit has performance indicators, to what extent are they aligned with your university performance indicators when it comes to entrepreneurship.

Standard 5.2: Influence within the Ecosystem

STANDARD

The academic unit is an influential stakeholder in the entrepreneurship ecosystem.

GUIDANCE FOR SELF-EVALUATION

Please describe and evaluate how the academic unit 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 references to includes entrepreneurship policy development activities, holding of entrepreneurship-related responsibilities in business, governmental and professional bodies, and external awards given to the unit in recognition of its achievements and influence.

NOTE: Please specify to what extent you have the capacity to execute the abovementioned and to what extent (if any) this is within jurisdiction of the institution you are attached to. Furthermore, please specify to what extent (if any) is your unit's influence within the ecosystem aligned with the influence in the ecosystem of the institution you are attached to. Please comment on, for instance, if your unit holds entrepreneurship-related responsibilities in business, to what extent is it aligned with your university entrepreneurship-related responsibilities in business.

Standard 5.3: Impact

STANDARD

The academic unit 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 academic unit delivers.

Evidence that you could make references 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.

NOTE: Please specify to what extent you have the capacity to execute the abovementioned and to what extent (if any) this is within jurisdiction of the institution you are attached to. Furthermore, please specify to what extent (if any) is your unit's impact aligned with the impact of the institution you are attached to. Please comment on, for instance, if your unit has quantitative data on businesses and jobs created, to what extent

is this aligned with your university's quantitative data on businesses and jobs created.

Assessment of standards

The Accreditation Committee and the Peer Review Team will evaluate the academic unit 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 academic unit does not meet the standard. At least one aspect of the standard that is meaningful in the academic unit's case is not satisfied.
Satisfactory	The academic unit 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 unit's case.
Excellent	The academic unit systematically and substantially exceeds the standard. The academic unit provides an exceptional performance with regards to all aspects of the standard that are meaningful in the unit's case. Evidence (data, examples etc.) proving this exceptional performance exist and the academic unit 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." This can also pertain to the fact whether the academic unit has decision-making power on the standard in question or the university within which the unit is embedded is the sole decision-making agent. 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, the academic unit needs to reach at least the "satisfactory level" for all standards.



Premium accreditation

In order to get awarded ACEEU's premium accreditation, the academic unit 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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