EDUCATION ACCREDITATION MANUAL

UNIVERSITY OF TWENTE.

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INTRODUCTION

UT's Shaping 2030 strategy provides a clear vision of how to further develop education and become the number one university that is, above all, entrepreneurial, inclusive and open. To achieve this, our Vision on Learning and Teaching is titled 'Learning-by-Interacting' and focuses the three interlinked goals of 'learning-by-doing', 'building inclusive communities', and 'self-development'.

To ensure expected and wished quality, all UTs Bachelor and Master degrees comply with national standards and guidelines set by the national government and the NVAO. This accreditation is essential for, among other things, the provision of funding, diploma recognition and availability of study loans for students. The NVAO is the entity that safeguards the quality of higher education in the Netherlands and Flanders.

UT has several processes to ensure the quality of its Bachelor and Master education. Derived from the national framework, every degree programme needs to be assessed for accreditation once every six years. The deadline for accreditation is very strict. Exceeding it leads to loss of recognition and funding.

In this manual the internal process for accreditation leading to a successful result is described offering an overview of the necessary steps and possibilities for a degree programme. The manual is meant for the programme and will be shared with programme management about two years prior to the national deadline in place. The following chapters describe the full process in detail and provide a necessary and useful overview of the 'to do's'. The process is built on programme ownership of the assessment procedure, as fostered by the NVAO.

TERMINOLOGY

QA-Team – Quality Assurance Team

SER – Self-Evaluation Report

NVAO – In Dutch: Nederlands-Vlaams Accreditatie Organisatie (Dutch-Flemish Accreditation Organisation)

PD – Programme Director (in Dutch: Opleidingsdirecteur (OLD))

PC – Programme Committee (in Dutch: Opleidingscommissie (OLC))

CELT – Centre of Expertise in Learning and Teaching

S&P – Strategy & Policy

EB – Executive Board
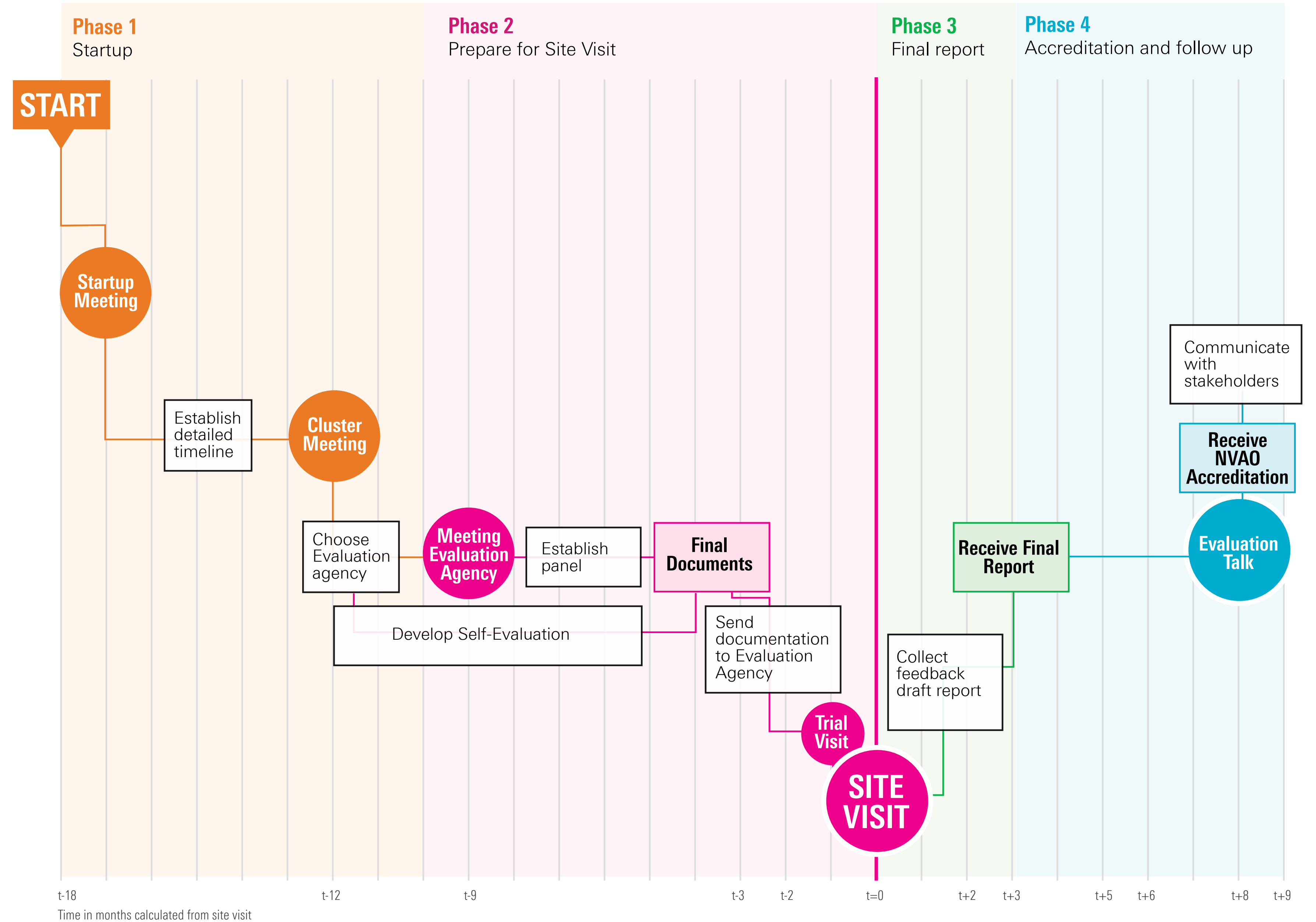
FB – Faculty Board

FC – Faculty Council

"**This accreditation is essential for, among other things, the provision of funding, diploma recognition and availability of study loans for students.**"

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OVERVIEW PHASES
Click on a phase below for more detailed steps.

START

Startup Meeting

Establish detailed timeline

Cluster Meeting

Choose Evaluation agency

Meeting Evaluation Agency

Establish panel

Final Documents

Develop Self-Evaluation

Send documentation to Evaluation Agency

Trial Visit

SITE VISIT

Collect feedback draft report

Receive Final Report

Communicate with stakeholders

Receive NVAO Accreditation

Evaluation Talk

t-18   t-12   t-9   t-3   t-2   t=0   t+2   t+3   t+5   t+6   t+8   t+9

Time in months calculated from site visit

PHASE 1

STARTUP

It takes approximately a year and a half up to a year to apply for accreditation. This includes aligning with the cluster, tendering for an Evaluation Agency, development of Self-evaluation, and fine-tuning with people involved. To have a safe margin we will start the accreditation process approximately 2 years before the NVAO deadline.

START: E-MAIL FROM QA-TEAM

The QA-Team will send an e-mail to set everything in motion. The email is sent to:
- Programme Management.
- The Quality Assurance Officer within faculty.

(ORGANISE) STARTUP MEETING

The PD will initiate a startup meeting with the QA-Team. Goal of this start meeting is to provide an overview of the total process ahead, including the deadlines and to establish the scope of the assessment of the degree programme. Does the programme deliver special features or tracks that should be considered within this assessment? The QA-Team sends a concluding mail after the start meeting with:
- Summarized workflow of accreditation process.
- Annex NVAO Framework.
- Priorities for PD to be aware of which agencies preferred?
- Detailed planning accreditation process.
- First ideas support CELT and first ideas panel members.

ESTABLISH DETAILED TIMELINE

Based on the startup meeting and additional input from the QA-Team, a detailed timeline can be constructed by the Programme Management. This timeline is shared with the QA-Team for feedback.

CLUSTER MEETING

In the Netherlands, all programmes of the same sort are assessed at the same time by the same external peers. For this, a national way of working is in place. Degree programmes are often part of a cluster.

A cluster meeting will be organized to tune on specific preferences regarding the assessment process, including the preferred Evaluation Agencies, planning and ideas for panel members. The cluster meeting is led by one of the institutions involved. The meeting is chaired by the PD or the central Policy Advisor involved in the UNL-national platform for Quality Assurance. The chairing cluster organises clusters meetings until an Evaluation Agency is contracted.

In the first cluster meeting points of the assessment procedure are addressed that are also (as a preparation) addressed in the internal startup meeting prior to the cluster meeting.

CHOOSE EVALUATION AGENCY

The Evaluation Agency is hired by Programme Management and takes care of the panel composition process (by tuning with cluster and NVAO), agrees on individual needs of the programmes and writes the final report with which the institution eventually applies for accreditation.

Within UT we invite programmes to take ownership of the process and seek for an Evaluation Agency that is supportive to specific needs and wishes from the programme. For example regarding a development oriented approach in which dialogue is central, and the choice of panel members.
- Consult the QA-Team for a top 3 evaluation agencies.
- Send signed quotation to agency (secretary /cc QA-Team).

PHASE 2

PREPARING SITE VISIT

The site visit requires preparation on different levels and with different stakeholders. An evaluation agency will provide support on panel composition, and the organisation of the site visit. Parallel to that documentation needs to be prepared, and the site visit days need to be organised.

MEETING EVALUATION AGENCY

- Initiated by the PD.
- Representative(s) of the QA-Team will attend this meeting.
- QA-Team mail is in cc of all communication with agency (e.g. for mandate panel composition; draft panel report; final panel report).

ESTABLISH PANEL

During the site visit the degree programme is assessed by an external panel of peers.

- In cluster/via agency: decide on short list panel members; share short list via QA-Team for approval from rector.
- QA-Team will arange mandate by EB for the panel composition.
- In cluster/via agency: establish panel.

DEVELOP SELF-EVALUATION PORTFOLIO

The panel assessing needs basic information about the programme on the 4 NVAO standards. This basis informations consists of standard documents available within the programme (EER, overview curriculum, overview staff,...), a reflection on the development/ambitions of the programme, and a specific 'student chapter'. The PD chooses the form in which to present the information. Programmes within UT have good experiences with web-based portfolio with reflection on the programme's challenges and links to standard documents, and with written self-evaluation reports.

- Decide on format portfolio and develop draft documentation.
- Get and process feedback on draft from PC and Exam board.
- Get and process feedback on final draft from QA-Team/Rector.
- Final File: send File to QA-Team for approval EB.
- Send approved File (and annexes) SER to Evaluation Agency.

(ORGANISE) TRIAL VISIT

A trial visit is organised by the Programme Management to get the team prepared for the site visit. Optional support from the QA-Team will be discussed in the Startup Meeting.

(ORGANISE) SITE VISIT

The date has been set in an early stage in collaboration between the Programme Management and the secretary from the Evaluation Agency. Together a schedule for the site visit will be set. Programme Management invites relevant stakeholders and makes sure practical support is been handled, like reservation of necessary rooms for panel interviews and pre-briefing, name tags, lunch and drinks. At the end of the site visit, the chair of the panel will share the preliminary conclusions.

- QA-Team is optionally invited for this session.
- QA-Team shares preleminary conclusions of the site visit with the Rector Magnificus.

PHASE 3

FINAL REPORT

Via the Evaluation Agency a draft version of the panel report is shared approximal 6 weeks after the site visit with the request for feedback on factual errors.

COLLECT FEEDBACK DRAFT REPORT

Within six weeks Programme Management will receive a draft report and gets the opportunity to point out errors and inaccuracies.

- Collect feedback from the QA-Team.
- Send feedback to Evaluation Agency.

FINAL REPORT

- Programme Management shares final report with PC and other stakeholders within the faculty.
- QA-Team will apply for accreditation on behalf of the EB before the deadline in place (1 of May or 1 of November) at the NVAO and will inform Programme Management on progress.

PHASE 4

ACCREDITATION AND FOLLOW UP

The NVAO makes a decision on accreditation within 6 months. This is communicated to the QA Team (formally the Executive Board), that will notify the programme management of the outcome. Pending this decision, the QA Team will plan a evaluative talk between the Rector, Programme Director and Vice Dean Education regarding the outcome of the site visit and its concrete take-away for the upcoming years.

DECISION NVAO

After submitting the request for accreditation the decision is pending at the NVAO office. It takes the NVAO approx. 6 months for a final decision after the submission.

- The NVAO will send its decision with central department S&P.
- The QA-Team informs Programme Management, Vice-Dean Education, Rector and quality assurance officer within faculty about the result.
- The QA-Team shares the result with colleagues from CES who take care of registration within DUO.
- The PD shares the result within Faculty, at least with the PC.
- The PD takes care of publishing the result of the developmental talk that was held with the panel on the Faculty site within one year after the official NVAO decision.

EVALUATION TALK

While the NVAO decision is pending, an internal evaluation talk with the Rector is held to discuss and conclude the result of the assessment process for the degree programme and further development.

- The QA-Team will plan the evaluation talk with the PD, Vice-dean Education and the Rector.

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MEETINGS & DELIVERABLES

You can keep track of deadlines and progress with this form.

PHASE 1

DELIVERABLE	DEADLINE	FINISHED?
Startup meeting		
Detailed timeline		
First Cluster Meeting		
Evaluation Agency selected		

PHASE 2

DELIVERABLE	DEADLINE	STATUS
Meeting Evaluation Agency		
Establish Panel		
Final File		
Trial visit		
Site Visit		

PHASE 3 & PHASE 4

DELIVERABLE	DEADLINE	STATUS
Collect feedback on the draft visitation report		
Discuss report with PC		
Evaluation Talk		
Publish conclusions on UT website		

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