



MALDIVES QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY
Ministry of Education
Male'

Workplan for Programme Approval and Programme Accreditation 2017

Programme Approval:

Programme Approval is the first stage of Programme Accreditation. The process involves an assessment of academic programme content and planned teaching and learning activities in terms of compliance with the minimum requirements set out by MQA and whether they conform to national regulations. This is an improvement to the previous "Course Approval" process in place at MQA. Programme Approval is the initial permit to start the programme and for Diploma (L5) qualification and above local programmes it is provided for the 1st batch. However the Higher Education Institute (HEI) may enroll students for semesters that fall within the approved duration of the 1st batch.

A detailed Manual has been developed to facilitate the implementation of the Guidelines for Programme Approval and will be in effect from 1st January 2017.

Programme Approval documents submitted to MQA from 1st March 2017 (MQA Circular No.: 218-QAS/CIR/2017/2) must be in accordance with the formats in the new Guidelines and Manual. The documents must also be aligned with the Maldives National Qualifications Framework 2017 V2.2 and Entry Criteria.

Programme Accreditation:

Programme Accreditation is one of the key elements of quality assurance of higher education in the Maldives. Programme Accreditation represents an approval to continue the operation of a programme offered by a HEI. This takes place on a cyclical basis, according to which a programme is to be (re-) accredited every 5 years.

A detailed Manual has been developed to facilitate the implementation of the Guidelines for Programme Accreditation and will be in effect from 1st January 2017.

Embedded programmes approved by MQA such as a three years Bachelor's Degree, where qualifications are awarded separately for the first and second year as a Diploma and Advanced Diploma respectively, the institute must submit for accreditation before the end of each separate year, after which a certificate is awarded.

Programme Accreditation will be carried out only for Diploma (L5) qualification and above local programmes. Those programmes that are conducted at the local higher education institutes, but awarded by foreign institutes need not be submitted for Programme Accreditation as these programmes are already accredited at the country of origin. Such programmes would be recognised by MQA at the Programme Approval stage.

Target for 2017:

Higher Education Institutions must submit their programmes to MQA for Programme Accreditation in accordance to the MQA "Guidelines and Manual for Programme Accreditation".

New local programmes approved from 1st Jan 2017

- Diploma (L5) qualification and above local programmes are subjected to Programme Accreditation and the HEI must formally apply to MQA. The HEI must submit the Self Evaluation Report for the programme to be accredited, prepared in accordance to the MQA Guidelines and Manual, along with the Application Form for Programme Accreditation.
- It is the responsibility of the HEI to initiate the application on time. The application must be received by MQA not later than 6 months prior to the end of the validity of the initial "Programme Approval" or previous accreditation. No applications for Programme Accreditation can be made for a programme that has not received initial Programme Approval before.

Existing local programmes approved before 1st Jan 2017

- A selection will be made for 2018 and HEI's will be invited by the end of 2017, to undertake Programme Accreditation for 2018. The first programmes to undergo Programme Accreditation are suggested to be Master's Programmes. MQA Governing Board will select which Master's programmes to accredit initially. HEI's with more than 2 Master's Programmes would be asked to select any 2 for accreditation in the first cycle.
