



Business Technology Management Accreditation Council (BTMAC)

Policies and Procedures April 2016

Policies

1. Accreditation applies to programs, not to departments or faculties.
2. Application for accreditation is voluntary and is undertaken only at the invitation of a particular institution.
3. The accreditation process comprises two parts: a program evaluation by a visiting team and accreditation decision by the BTM Accreditation Council. The evaluation of the program is based on the detailed data provided by the institution and on the collective opinion of the members of the visiting team. The accreditation decision is made by the Council, not the team, and is based on the qualitative and quantitative considerations.
4. For purposes of accreditation, a program is characterized by a formally approved and published curriculum that is regarded as an entity by the institution and that can be considered independently. The program will have program educational objectives, student outcomes, a curriculum, faculty, and facilities. All options in the program are examined. Following the principle that program is only as strong as its weakest link, a program is accredited only if all such options meet the criteria.
5. The BTM Accreditation Council evaluates and accredits programs at publicly funded educational institutions with verifiable and recognized governmental, national, or regional authority to confer degree, diploma, continuing education certificate or post-graduate programs.
6. Accreditation of a program is granted only after students have graduated from the program. However, an accreditation visit for a new program may be undertaken during the final academic year of the first graduating class of that program. Accreditation of such a new program is granted only if and when students graduate from the program in the year in which the accreditation visit takes place. The effective date of such accreditation will include the first graduating class. Should the program fail to produce graduates in the academic year of the visit, accreditation will be denied.
7. For new programs, a Recognition Review may be undertaken. The Business Technology Management Accreditation Council (BTMAC) will offer an informal review to programs

that have not yet produced graduates and do not qualify for an accreditation visit. The purpose of the informal evaluation is to provide comment and advice to the institution with respect to the program. The review will focus solely on the alignment of the program to the BTM Learning Outcomes. To be successful, a program needs to demonstrate that it produces learning outcomes that are largely aligned with the BTM Learning Outcomes and Competency Standards. Programs that are successful in the review will be allowed to use the term BTM Recognized on communications for a maximum of four (4) years. No undertaking is given by the BTMAC as to the eventual accreditation of the program.

8. Accreditation is granted for a period of time. For programs accredited under the BTM 1.0 (or 2.0), and Master's criteria, the accreditation period will be up to and not normally exceeding 6 (six) years. For programs accredited under the Certificate criteria, the accreditation period will up to and not normally exceeding 4 (four) years.
9. If the BTMAC judges, that there are areas of concern, accreditation may be granted for a shorter term: 3 (three) years for BTM 1.0. (2.0) and Master's; 2 (two) years for a Certificate program. The areas of concern and method by which the BTMAC will assess if all concerns have been addressed will be explicitly stated. The assessment methods will include either the review of a report submitted by the institution or a visit by an accreditation team. It is expected that the institution will take action to bring the program into full compliance with the criteria.
10. The BTMAC can deny accreditation to programs that omit instruction in a significant portion of a subject in which BTM professionals may reasonably be expected to have competence.
11. The BTMAC provides means for reconsideration. Appeals, requests for reconsideration, and requests for a revisit may be done only in response to a Not-To-Accredit decision. Also, appeals or requests for reconsideration can be based only upon the grounds that the Not-To-Accredit decision of the Council was inappropriate because of errors of fact or failure to conform to the Council's published criteria. In lieu of an immediate appeal, an institution may first request reconsideration. If such a request is denied, the institution may appeal the original Not-To-Accredit decision. Requests for reconsideration must be made in writing to the Chair of the Council within 30 days of receiving notification of the decision. Appeals must also be made in writing to the Chair of the Council within 60 days of receiving notification of the decision or the notification of the denial of a request for reconsideration. A notice of appeal must be submitted in writing to the Chair of the Council within 60 days of receiving a notification of not-to-accredit. The submission must include the reasons why the decision is inappropriate because either errors of fact or failure of the Council to conform to the published criteria. Improvements made to a

program subsequent to the completion of the initial team visit will not be considered by the appeal committee.

12. The name of a program seeking accreditation must be descriptive of the program's content and be stated exactly the same way on the graduate's transcript and in the institution's literature.
13. Any significant change that takes place during the term of accreditation, a program must report to the BTMAC the nature of this change. Any material change related to the accreditation criteria may give rise to reporting obligation and may necessitate a reassessment.
14. The BTMAC reserves the right to alter the accreditation status of any program at any institution if it is discovered that such program is not in compliance with any of the BTMAC criteria.
15. The BTMAC will publish a list of accredited programs only. Information such as to whether a program not on the accredited list has been under consideration by the Council will not be made available except to the appropriate officials of the institution offering the program.
16. An institution may not simultaneously use the same program title to identify both an accredited program and a non-accredited program.

Procedures

Initiation and timing of the accreditation visit

An accreditation assessment is initiated only at the invitation of an institution. The invitation should be sent to the BTMAC Secretariat by the head (or equivalent) of the program. An accreditation visit normally takes place in either January to April or September to December.

Selection of the visiting team

The BTMAC Secretariat selects a chair and members for the visiting team. A request for a replacement on the visiting team may be made by the institution for good cause. Specialists may be used as resource persons on visiting teams.

Preparation for the accreditation visit

Several months before the date of an accreditation visit, the Secretariat sends the institution documentation required for the visit. This documentation includes: the self-assessment questionnaire, details regarding the procedures to be followed before, during and after the visit, documentation required by the visiting team and the BTMAC and a schedule of the site visit.

Copies (preferably softcopy) of the questionnaire, with supporting documentation, completed by the institution must be received by the Secretariat at least six (6) weeks prior to the visit. If the information is not received by that time, the Secretariat in consultation with the team chair, may cancel the visit.

Accreditation Visit

An accreditation visit normally spans over two days. It provides an opportunity for the visiting team to assess qualitative factors such as intellectual atmosphere and morale, professional attitudes and quality of the staff and students. The visit provides the opportunity for such activities as:

- Interviews with senior administrative officers
- Interviews with faculty to evaluate professional attitudes, moral and balance of opinions
- Interviews with students and graduates
- Tour of facilities
- A review of recent student work (i.e. lab work, exams, anonymized transcripts and other evidence of student performance).

Before the end of the visit, the team will meet with the head of the program to review the perceived strengths and to indicate areas of concern.

Visiting Team Report

The chair of the team acts as editor of the accreditation report. Working with the team members, the chair prepares the draft report. This is a report of the team's findings which includes: strengths, concerns, deficiencies, and recommendations. No recommendation on accreditation is included in the report.

The draft report is sent by the Secretariat to the institution for comments on factual errors and/or omissions.

Accreditation Decision

The accreditation decision is made by the BTMAC as the result of information gained from the accreditation visit process.

In arriving at an accreditation decision following a visit, the BTMAC considers the accreditation history, the information completed in the questionnaire, the visiting team report, the institution's response to the report, and any further clarifying comments by the team chair.

Accreditation Term

Accreditation of a program is granted for a specific term. Accreditation is granted for a period of time. For programs accredited under the BTM 1.0 (or 2.0), and Master's criteria, the accreditation period will be up to and not normally exceed 6 (six) years. For programs accredited under the Certificate criteria, the accreditation period will up to and not normally exceed 4 (four) years.

If the BTMAC judges, that there are areas of concern, accreditation may be granted for a shorter term under a Conditional Accreditation: 3 (three) years for BTM 1.0. (2.0) and Master's; 2 (two) years for a Certificate program. The areas of concern and method by which the BTMAC will assess if all concerns have been addressed will be explicitly stated. The assessment methods will include either the review of a report submitted by the institution or a visit by an accreditation team. It is expected that the institution will take action to bring the program into full compliance with the criteria.

Conditional Accreditation

If an evaluation indicates that the future of a program appears precarious or that there is/are definite weakness(es) or deficiencies exist, conditional accreditation may be granted followed by an "interim review". The accreditation decision will be specific in terms of what criteria

need to be satisfied before full accreditation is granted. The interim review of the shorter accreditation can take on two forms:

- *Interim Report*: The nature of the weakness is such that an on-site visit will not be required to evaluate the remedial actions taken by the institution. A report focusing on the remedial actions taken by the institution will be required.
- *Interim Visit*: The nature of the weakness is such that an on-site visit will be required to evaluate the remedial actions taken by the institution.

The Interim Report and the Interim Visit may result in an extension of the accreditation period.

Not-to-Accredit

A “Not-To-Accredit” decision indicates that a program has deficiencies such that the program is currently or continues to be (in the case of an Interim Visit or Report) in non-compliance with the applicable criteria.

Renewal of Accreditation

An accredited educational institution must apply for renewal of the accreditation after completing the accreditation term.

A program **Evolution Review** is available to institutes which have received one successful accreditation which did not report any Deficiencies. The Evolution Review is a process that provides information to the BTMAC to allow for the assessment of the depth and breadth of changes that have occurred in an accredited program since the last accreditation visit; and provides an opportunity to the accredited program to seek a three-year extension to a six-year accreditation period without the need for an accreditation visit.

Policies Related to the Evolution Review

- 1) A program evolution review will only be considered for accredited programs that have had a minimum of one successful accreditation visits prior to the present.
- 2) An accredited program will not be eligible for a program evolution review if there were any deficiencies in the most recent accreditation report.
- 3) Eligibility for an extension of three years is assessed by means of a completed BTMAC Evolution questionnaire.

- 4) The program evolution process should be started no later than six (6) months prior to the expiration of the accreditation date. It is up to the discretion of the BTMAC to accept reports submitted after this date has expired.
- 5) All program evolution documents are reviewed by the BTMAC, which decides whether an extension will be granted.
- 6) The BTMAC decision on a program evolution review is final and not subject to appeal.
- 7) If an extension on the accreditation period is denied, the educational institution will be informed of this decision and the reason(s) for the decision and the standard BTMAC accreditation process is then started. Information collected through the evolution review process can be reused for the standard accreditation process.
- 8) If an extension is granted, it will be for 3 years from the end date of the six-year accreditation period.

Following the three-year extension, the institution requires a full standard accreditation review. The application for the next accreditation application must be submitted to the Secretariat at least 6 months prior to the current accreditation termination date.

Revocation of Accreditation

If, during the period of accreditation, the Council has reason to believe that a program is no longer in compliance with the criteria, the institution will be notified of such reason and will be requested to provide a response. If the response is not adequate, Council may institute a revocation of the accreditation decision.

Revocation begins with the notification of the institution as to the reasons why the procedures are being implemented. An on-site one-day evaluation may be scheduled to determine the facts. The one-day review will include two team members. A comprehensive document showing the reasons for revocation will be prepared and provided to the institution for a response. If the institution's response is not adequate, accreditation will be revoked. The institution is notified of such action together with a supporting statement showing the cause. Revocation constitutes in essence a Not-To-accredit action and may be appealed.

The Appeal Process

Appeals may be done only in response to a Not-To-Accredit decision. Appeals can be based only upon the grounds that the Not-To-Accredit decision of the Council was inappropriate because of errors of fact or failure to conform to the Council's published criteria.

Appeal

A notice of appeal must be submitted in writing to the Chair of the Council within 30 days of receiving a notification of not-to-accredit. The submission must include the reasons why the decision is inappropriate because either errors of fact or failure of the Council to conform to the published criteria.

The Chair of the Council will select three or more members or past members of the Council to serve as an appeal committee. The Chair will designate one of the committee members as Head of the committee.

The appeal committee will be provided with copies of all documentation that has been made available to the institution during the various phases of the accreditation cycle. The appeal committee will consider only the written materials submitted by the institution in determining its recommendation. Representatives from the institution may not attend the meetings with the appeal committee. Improvements made to a program subsequent to the completion of the initial team visit will not be considered by the appeal committee.

The appeal committee's decision will be reported to the Council in writing by the appeal committee Head. The decision rendered by the appeal committee is advice it will give to the Council. The Council will review the appeal committee's decision and then make the final decision on the appeal.

The institutions will be notified in writing of the decision, and the basis for the decision, within 15 days of the final decision.

Changes During Period of Accreditation

It is the obligation of the institution to notify the Council of any significant changes that might affect the accreditation status of an accredited program including significant changes in:

- Program title
- Faculty
- Curricular Objectives
- Curricular Content
- Student Body
- Administration
- Institutional Facilities
- Institutional Commitment
- Institutional Financial Status

A review process will be initiated as a result of the notification by the institutions. The institution will be asked to provide information to the Council. The information does not need to be extensive but must provide sufficient detail about the change so the affect can be assessed. The Council will review the information within 15 days of receipt to determine if modification of the current accreditation is needed. The Council's decision will be based on the degree of certainty about whether the affected program continues to meet the appropriate accreditation decision. The institution will be notified of the Council determination in a timely manner.

If it is deemed that a revisit is required, and if an institution declines an immediate revisit, this shall be cause for revocation of accreditation of the program.

If an accredited program is terminated by the institution, accreditation by the Council is also automatically terminated.

Publication of Accreditation and Public Release Policy

A list of programs, which have been accredited by the Council, is published on the BTMAC website. Information as to whether a program or institution not on the accredited list has been under consideration will NOT be made available except to the appropriate officials of the institution in question.

The educational institution may use the accreditation term only while it is valid and only for the programs that are accredited.

Direct quotation in whole or part from any statement by the Council made to the institution is unauthorized. Correspondence and reports between the Council and the educational institution are confidential documents and should be released only to authorized personnel at the institution.

The educational institution must avoid any implication that programs offered are accredited under program criteria against which they have not been evaluated. Where sub-designation such as "option", "concentration", or similar are used for programs, the institution must clearly identify the program criteria under which accreditation has been obtained.