Issues and Questions pertaining to SAQF

SAQF Requirements	KSU perspective
An Awarding Body is a SAQF nationally registered competent body entitled by its establishing legislation or any other formal mandate from a regulatory authority, to regulate, quality assure, and approve, within its remit, the awarding of SAQF registered qualifications. The SAQF registration gives an organization the status of Awarding Body, thus an organization can be referred to as "Awarding Body" only upon registration. Until then it is referred to as the candidate organization.	**"Awarding Body" interpretation** • KSU is a legitimate **"Awarding Body"** as it is a legal entity established by the King's Charter and approved by MOE and HEC to "award a terminal degree". • The **"Award"** is a terminal degree like a Ph.D. in Medicine; MBA in Finance; BA in Psychology; Diploma in Business; etc., etc. meeting the "qualifications" for each level, from levels 5 to 10. • BUT KSU must be "registered" with SAQF and the registered period is for 3 to 5 years • As the **"Awarding body"**, KSU will have oversight, administration and management of all the 350 programs to meet the "qualification" of each level, AND register each of the "Program terminal award" **Question 1:** • KSU will set up a unified central unit at the institution fulfilling the **"Figure 1: Schematic model of standards underpinning Awarding Body Registration"** requirements. • Once they fulfill these requirements, then KSU, then it becomes the legal "awarding body" registered with SAQF to certify KSU 350 programs awarding terminal degrees. • KSU Qualifications Awarding Unit will develop the detailed "qualifications" in compliance with the **"Figure 1: Schematic model of standards underpinning Qualification Registration".** • This will entail KSU to develop 350 sets of "qualification descriptor "for each of the different discipline / program, and use this to certify their registration with the SAQF Register. **Question 2:** • In the review for each "Award", KSU as the awarding body" will ensure that each award fulfills each of the **"Figure 1: Schematic model of standards underpinning Qualification Registration"** before each program / discipline can register with SAQF • The period of validity for each registered program award is 3 to 5 years.
"If an Awarding Body is subject to an external quality assurance process by a quality assurance authority or accreditation body, and has already produced a self-evaluation report or an accreditation report for the qualification, this may be referenced in the process of SAQF registration application, provided that it contains relevant and current information that demonstrates compliance with SAQF standards." (Page 17/47)	**Issue:** Most of the requirements of the **"Figure 1: Schematic model of standards underpinning Qualification Registration"** is already covered in the NCAAA/EEC-SEAA Standard 4 Accreditation requirements. **Question1 :** (a) If a program award has already been accredited by NCAAA/EEC-SEAA, this can be used as evidence of meeting the requirements of **"Figure 1: Schematic model of standards underpinning Qualification Registration".** (b) If (a) is valid, then the program award can use this to register the program award directly upon certification by the KSU Qualifications Awarding Unit, and submitted for registration. (c) If (a) is valid, since an accreditation can be valid from 5 to 7 years, the program award will just resubmit the same accreditation credential to "re-new the qualification of the award" in the SAQF Register, until the next accreditation cycle. (d) For (a), (b) and (c) to be valid, KSU as the awarding Body, must set up the mechanisms within the **"Figure 1: Schematic model**

	*of standards underpinning **Awarding Body Registration***" which is potentially a huge task and order, in addition to the NCAAA/EEC-SEAA mechanism. (e) If (a), (b) and (c) are valid, it is safe to assume that the SAQF Register will accept the "external reviewers of the international panel of reviewers for the accreditation of a program" and the "internal board of assessors appointed by the university for the bi-annual audit and assessment of each program". This means that each program undergo TWO internal audit and assessment cycle in a normal 5 years accreditation cycle.
Use of terminology and types of outcomes	**Key differences:** • SAQF uses the terminology of "level descriptors" and has THREE descriptors of Knowledge; Skills; Competence • NCAAA/EEC-SEAA uses the terminology of "Domains of Learning" and has 5 domains of learning **Key Issue:** • The discrepancies in the use of terminology and its constituent components of the SAQF and NCAAA/ECC-SEAA can potentially lead to the understanding that they two different constructs are not equivalent OR leave it to the awarding body to interpret "as is" and face the "consequences of its own interpretation. **Question 1:** (a) If they are not equivalent, this will mean the KSU has TWO different sets of certifications, which contradicts the intentions of the SAQF and NCAAA/SEAA, and this will bring about confusions and chaos. (b) If they are not equivalent, each program will have to use "TWO potentially similarly intended outcomes" which will be detrimental to use the use of scare and valuable resources, time & efforts of potential duplications (c) If they are not equivalent, then each awarding body has to set up TWO different systems to meet the SAQF and NCAAA/ECC-SEAA **Question 2:** (a) If they are compatible, the KSU as the awarding body can consolidate and map the NCAAA/EEC-SEAA 5 domains of learning into the SAQF 3 descriptors to meet and satisfy both requirements. (b) If they are equivalent, the NCAAA/EEC-SEAA 5 domains of learning will meet and comply with the SAQF 3 descriptors, allowing for ease of "registration of the program awards meeting the SAQF register".
The complexity of SAQF domain of competences is described with three sub-categories: 1. autonomy and responsibility in the application of knowledge and skills; 2. the practice of knowledge and skills in real and work situations; 3. wider attributes	**Issue:** • This is a strong deviation from the learning domains of EEC-SEAA and it can potentially and highly aggravate the compatibility and complexity of the constituents of the "domains" and the "learning outcomes" of both the SAQF and the EEC-SEAA. • This will further aggravate the issues identified in other parts, if these are taken as "TWO different sets of requirements" in terms of framework, mechanism, resources and cost for managing two very different sets of requirements with a seemingly similar set of learning outcomes of both the SAQF and the EEC-SEAA.

	relating to the behavioral and social dimension of learning, work attitude, and ethical considerations.
Other issues	**Issue 1:** • This could potentially be taken as a different "certification" of the program award in addition to the nationally mandated accreditation. **BIG Issue 2:** (a) This will increase the cost paid for the "certification" in addition to the hefty sum of 1.5 million SAR paid for each program accreditation. (b) Since the registration is valid for 3 years, then a program has to double the cost of registration with the SAQF in each accreditation cycle. If each registration is 500,000 SAR, to get SAQF registration and NCAAA/EEC-SEAA accreditation every 5 years, each program will need to pay 2.5 million SAR. **Very BIG Issue 3:** (a) The NCAAA/EEC-SEAA is already a laborious and tedious task for each program, and this SAQF registration of each program can potentially incapacitate the program primary duty of teaching/learning, research and societal responsibility as the NCAAA/ECC-SEAA course & program management is heavily documents based. (b) All programs will be continuously mired with the issues of meeting both the SAQF and NCAAA/EEC-SEAA and a lot of the programs are already procrastinating on fulfilling the NCAAA/EEC-SEAA requirements.

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