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## About ABE

The Association of Business Executives (ABE) is a professional body established in 1973 with the primary objective that holders of the ABE qualification will be more effective managers in business and public administration.

The Association is unique among professional bodies in that it provides a non-specialist business education to practising and aspiring managers and executives, as well as a route to further study through Bachelor's and MBA programmes and other professional programmes.

The Association of Business Executives is proud to have recognition as an awarding body from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA). ABE is working towards QCA accreditation for all of its programmes and has received this for its new Business Management Courses.

**Mission Statement** The Association of Business Executives enhances the intellectual, social and economic development of individuals and communities through the provision of relevant, high-quality, affordable qualifications.

## Summary of Procedure and Conditions for Teaching Organisations Seeking Accreditation

### Introduction

- 1.1 *ABE will accredit organisations operating in the United Kingdom and overseas provided the Association's conditions set out below are met.*
- 1.2 In so far as is consistent with regulations of overseas education ministries, the same conditions apply in all countries. Where organisations have to be specifically approved by their national education ministry, ABE will refuse to recognise any organisation not so approved. In such cases evidence of government approval will form part of the accreditation documentation. Additionally accreditation already received from other accrediting organisations will be considered. UK colleges must have DfES approval.
- 1.3 The accreditation of an organisation (normally for a period of between one and three years) will be based on inspection wherever possible of the teaching services offered and consideration of student and staff welfare (including aspects of health and safety requirements) and other relevant aspects of the organisation's management and organisation. Accreditation will imply a trust in the management to maintain acceptable standards, as determined by ABE, in all activities undertaken by that organisation and to operate within the requirements of the law of its country.

- 1.4 An organisation will be required to reapply for accreditation at the end of the nominated period of accreditation. If a major change occurs after accreditation, ABE must be informed immediately. Should an organisation cease to comply with ABE's conditions, accreditation will be withdrawn. Where an organisation has accreditation for a period of more than one year, it will be expected to complete an annual update form (AC2). Completion of this form is mandatory.
- 1.5 Effective control of the organisation must be the responsibility of an accountable management. The organisation should be led, directed and administered by a proprietor or designated Principal/Director with clearly defined responsibilities for implementing policy, for the day-to-day running of the organisation and for the quality of its work. Such registers and records must be kept and such information and returns provided as ABE may, from time to time, require.

**As a matter of policy ABE does not get involved in:**

- legal disputes between colleges and students
- setting and method of payment of college tuition fees

**However, ABE reserves the right to remove accreditation where the service to students does not match the expected standard.**

## General Requirements

- 1.6 Accreditation will be based, among other things, on:
- inspection of the teaching services wherever possible, including consideration of lesson plans and observation, if deemed necessary
  - consideration of student welfare and staff conditions
  - continuity of acceptable standards
  - control by accountable management
  - an existing teaching history of not less than two years' duration. This rule may be waived, at ABE's discretion, if there are particular circumstances warranting this

- 1.7 Organisations normally eligible for accreditation include those which:

a) Offer courses throughout the year, both full time and part time

### **AND**

b) Exist as a distinct organisation or as a co-located part or separate branch of a larger organisation, (where part of a larger organisation, accreditation will relate to the co-located part and not to the organisation as a whole).

- 1.8 Failure on the part of any accredited organisation to respond to ABE communications, continuously comply with the conditions set by ABE, or comply with the annual accreditation update (form AC2) may lead to accreditation being withdrawn. ABE reserves the right, on reasonable grounds, to visit an organisation or to review its accreditation at any time.

## Educational Requirements

- 1.9
- a) The organisation must be conducted at a level of efficiency which is satisfactory with regard to its objectives and is in the best interests of the students.
  - b) The organisation must provide courses appropriate to the needs of the ABE students. Course delivery must be appropriate to the stated syllabus contents and objectives outlined in the ABE programme and provided within a suitable educational framework.
  - c) There must be satisfactory arrangements to ensure that students are not placed on inappropriate courses.
  - d) The teaching must be suitable, efficient and adequate in scope and character. To this end, there must be satisfactory academic supervision and, when appropriate, training of staff.
  - e) The teaching staff must be adequate in number and possess the qualifications and experience necessary to meet the standards of the course. All staff should enjoy satisfactory working conditions. No one should be employed who on medical grounds or on grounds of professional misconduct would be considered unsuitable for employment in an education organisation. Note that it is a requirement of organisations that they provide authenticated copies of teachers' qualifications, as well as CVs of the nature outlined in form AC1, prior to accreditation. Without these accreditation may be refused.

## Premises

- 1.10 a) The organisation should have reasonable security of tenure of premises for those periods of the year in which courses are offered. If the location/name of an organisation changes during the period of accreditation, or there is a change in the ownership, nature or scale of the organisation, then it must not be assumed that accreditation is continued; accreditation must be re-sought.
- b) The premises must be suitable and properly equipped in relation to the courses offered. There must be adequate teaching and learning facilities in terms of libraries, equipment (including access to relevant IT/computer facilities) and general teaching accommodation, according to the nature of the courses and the number, ages and gender of the students and staff. Organisations are expected to retain statistical data relating to the nature of the student cohort (age, gender, educational background).
- c) Following accreditation, ABE must be informed without delay of any closure or change of premises, the acquisition of additional premises and the opening of annexes – even if these changes are only temporary. It must not be assumed that accreditation automatically applies to changed premises.
- d) ABE reserves the right at its discretion and without prejudice to refuse accreditation on the grounds of inappropriate or excessive competition due to proximity of existing accredited organisations.

**Student Welfare**

1.11 Satisfactory arrangements must be made for those aspects of the welfare of students for which the organisation either undertakes, or can reasonably be expected to undertake, responsibility. This may include but not be limited to: health and safety aspects, accommodation (including décor) and student support services.

**Promotional  
Material**

1.12 Any brochure, prospectus or advertisement issued by the organisation or its agents must describe accurately what the organisation offers to prospective students. *Accreditation must not be claimed or implied when it has not been granted formally in an official letter from ABE or when it has been withdrawn or suspended.* When it has been granted, reference to accreditation may be made only in a form of words approved by ABE.

## **Student Records System**

1.13 The organisation must ensure that its student records system will be centrally administered by suitably trained staff. As part of this system, each student should have a confidential personal file, in which their personal details should be securely stored. A computerised system should comply with any relevant data protection legislation in force in the country where the organisation is situated.

1.14 The record should show:

- the student's enrolment details (inc age, gender, education)
- particulars of their sponsor, if any
- the names of their tutors
- in-course progress records
- actual and projected examination dates
- examination results, with grades obtained
- attendance records
- for UK colleges only please attach copies of correspondence with Home Office regarding absences by non-UK nationals

1.15 Access to these confidential records should be restricted to:

- administrators responsible for maintaining them
- the Principal and officials
- tutors
- the student
- ABE officials engaged in accreditation or monitoring

## **Monitoring**

1.16 Lesson observation may take place up to once per term at the discretion of ABE. Student enrolments and pass rates will be taken as a gauge of general organisational performance and will have a bearing on continuing accreditation and re-accreditation. Organisations may, at the discretion of ABE, be subject to ad hoc inspections.

## Application Procedure

- 2.1 An organisation wishing to become accredited must notify the Accreditation Manager, who will provide an up-to-date copy of the application form (form AC1).
- 2.2 On completion of the form it must be returned to ABE with any requested supporting documents. Such documentation may include but not be limited to:
- current accreditation fee
  - organisational prospectus
  - names, qualifications, experience and responsibilities of staff teaching each of the subjects in the ABE programme(s)
  - details of library/learning centre facilities
  - details of reprographic facilities available to staff and students
  - other inspection/accreditation details whether provided by a ministry, accreditation body or other organisation
  - all other documentation as may be requested on form AC1

All copies of documents must be certified as true and correct by the Principal/Head of organisation.

- 2.3 Informal discussion of the accreditation process may occur prior to the formal accreditation visit; this may be at the discretion of ABE or the college Principal/Head of organisation. A formal visit to the organisation will be the normal process for accreditation, unless physically not possible. Organisations will be given prior notice of visitation and areas for inspection therein. The organisation must provide facilities for a meeting of the visiting panel and for a brief meeting with the senior officials (e.g. the Director, Assistant Director, Principal or Vice Principal) together with the Head of Department concerned and the Course Tutor.

**APPEALS:** If the organisation considers that ABE has not followed the procedures specified in the ABE Accreditation Handbook, the organisation may appeal against the decision. ABE will not accept appeals on the grounds of 'interpretation of', or 'disagreement with', points of detail. The organisation may obtain the appeals procedure from the Accreditation Manager.

## If There Is a Major Change Following Accreditation

- 3.1 Accreditation will be granted for a period of between one and three years, as ABE may determine, and is subject to the organisation meeting the conditions for accreditation. If, subsequently, any significant change occurs, whether or not it lessens the organisation's ability to meet these conditions, the organisation must at once report this to ABE. *An organisation may not use the ABE logo prior to having received written notification of accreditation from ABE.*
- 3.2 ABE will consider the situation and take whatever steps may be necessary to determine the impact of the change. It will then make whichever of the following decisions is believed to be appropriate:
- the change is minor only: hence accreditation is continued.
  - ABE requests the organisation to effect specified improvement within a stated period. Accreditation will continue until the end of this period, when ABE will review the situation.
  - ABE withdraws accreditation, and will not register any more students from the organisation. Existing students will be allowed to continue there, if they wish, until their next examination. When they have sat this, they must arrange to study elsewhere.
- Appeals against an ABE decision can only be undertaken via a formal appeals procedure.
- 3.3 ABE will communicate the decision to the organisation as soon as is practicable. In the event of accreditation being withdrawn, ABE will simultaneously notify students of their position. ABE's website will also be adjusted to show any decision with regard to an organisation's accreditation.
- 3.4 An organisation from which accreditation has been withdrawn may re-apply for accreditation unless it has been otherwise informed. The procedure will be the same as for accreditation. *In the event that an organisation has accreditation withdrawn, or fails an accreditation, it must immediately desist from using the ABE logo.*