



Tender for BAC Higher Education Thematic Research

About BAC

The British Accreditation Council (BAC) is an accreditation organisation based in the UK. BAC was established as a 'not for profit' organisation by the UK's Department of Education and the British Council in 1984 to quality assure independent further and higher education in the United Kingdom. We do this through a system of institutional accreditation which set demanding standards for institutions. While BAC has six different accreditation schemes, the one that is used for institutions delivering higher education degree programmes is the Independent Higher Education (IHE) scheme. By doing this we create transparency for students and other stakeholders such as partnering universities and government.

We currently accredit more than 230 institutions across 20 countries and are continuing to raise our profile internationally.

Reason for the research:

BAC is a full member of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA). Part of our responsibilities as a member is to share the results of the research with other quality assurance agencies and higher education institutions. The purpose of which is to highlight good practice or identify emerging trends or areas for improvement. (Further explanation of the IHE scheme is provided below.)

More information on the BAC IHE Scheme

BAC accredits providers offering higher education and degree under the IHE scheme. The accreditation is valid for four years after which institutions are invited to apply for reaccreditation. The scheme was launched in 2015 and updated in 2018. The pre-2018 scheme broadly covers the same inspection areas and standards although the number of the inspection standards and key indicators will not always be the same as for the updated scheme.

The updated scheme has seven different inspection areas:

- Governance, Strategy and Financial Management
- General and Academic Management and Administration
- Teaching, Learning and Assessment
- Student Support, Guidance and Progression
- Premises, Facilities and Learning Resources
- Quality Management, Assurance and Enhancement
- Online, Distance and Blended Learning

Within each of the inspection areas there are several inspection standards, each with one or more specific key indicators. When an inspection takes place, the inspection team make a judgement on the evidence available if the institution meets the key indicator. This is shown on the inspection report as either 'yes', 'no' or 'not applicable'. Where the judgement of 'no' is shown, the institution

will be assigned an action point that they must meet which is graded as 'high', 'medium' or 'low' priority.

The report then identifies if the institution has met, partially met, or not met the inspection standard. For an inspection to have met the inspection standard all the key indicators must have a 'yes' next to them. An institution can partially meet an inspection standard provided there is at least one 'yes' against one of the key indicators. An inspection standard is not met when all the indicators have a 'no' next to them.

The reports also include an option for identifying strengths of the institution and has comments from the inspectors for each inspection standard.

Research Description:

The researcher will undertake a review of all IHE inspection reports between 2015 – 2019. The research is limited to BAC accredited providers and the information contained within the BAC inspection reports. There are 65 reports to review.

The researcher will identify trends within the inspection reports which include areas requiring improvements (e.g. not meeting BAC standards) and identify areas of strength or good practice. In effect, **lessons to be learnt from the inspection process**.

The researcher will need to quantitatively assess the number of times inspection standards have action points assigned to them. The results will need to be broken down by:

- The inspection standards which are judged to be 'met', 'partially met' or 'not met'
- Key indicator - to show which were judged to not be met, indicated as 'no' in the inspection report;
- Priority of the action point assigned (option of high, medium or low); and
- Location of the provider (by country).

The researcher will need to qualitatively assess the areas of best practice or strengths of the institutions and recurring areas of non-compliance to identify if there are any emerging commonalities or themes within the inspection.

Deliverables

A report written in a style and language appropriate to the target audience and supported by evidence presented in an appropriate manner (using graphs, statistical tables, etc).

The report should clearly emphasise, based on the research, a theme or themes emerging from the research which identify areas for improvement as well as summarising areas of successful compliance with BAC accreditation standards.

BAC will require the following submission process to be followed:

Stage	Description	BAC sign off required?
Stage 1	Research plan setting out objectives and timeline and which demonstrates a clear understanding of the task involved	Yes. BAC will agree the plan before Stage 2 can commence
Stage 2	Presentation of quantitative analysis	Yes. BAC will review analysis with researcher and on acceptance of the analysis authorise commencement of Stage 3
Stage 3	Qualitative analysis of theme or themes arising from Stage 2	BAC will agree the theme or themes to be assessed in depth before authorising commencement of Stage 4
Stage 4	Draft report to be presented to BAC	Yes. BAC will review report for academic rigour and if necessary, ask for clarification or further analysis before authorising Stage 5
Stage 5	Final report to be presented	

BAC Support

BAC will provide all reasonable request for support including meetings with BAC staff in order to ensure the researcher has a full understanding of the inspection and accreditation process.

Presentation

The report should be presented as a Word document or in a Word compatible format. This is an academic piece of work and the language, explanations and referencing should reflect this.

Copyright

BAC will retain copyright, but the author will be free to cite the paper and their authorship will be acknowledged by BAC.

Tender Documents Required

- 1) Academic CV
- 2) Examples of similar work undertaken. This can be presented as hard copy or referenced with an online link to published work
- 3) An estimation of the time frame within which the work can be produced and delivered

- 4) Research plan setting out objectives and timeline and which demonstrates a clear understanding of the task involved
- 5) Gross cost of producing the work. Please note that we are not able to accept a daily rate. The quoted cost will need to cover all of the work and will be cost BAC pays for the final report
- 6) The cost of each stage of the research needs be clearly indicated according to the Stages identified under the Deliverables heading of this document

Payment

BAC will release payment according to the following schedule:

Payment of Stage 1 – Not applicable. Part of the tender process

Payment of Stage 2 – On authorisation of commencement of Stage 3

Payment of Stage 3 – On authorisation of commencement of Stage 4

Payment of Stage 4 & 5 – On acceptance by BAC of the final report

Payment will be against invoices and need to reflect the costs of each stage as set out in the tender document.

Submitting Your Bid

Please submit your bid electronically as an attachment to an email addressed to:

Paul Fear, Chief Executive

Email: paul.fear@the-bac.org

Receipt of your submission will be via email and will be proof of receipt.

Closing Date

Tenders must be submitted by 5pm Tuesday 11 December

The Stranding Committee of the British Council in conjunction of the Chief Executive will determine the successful tender with all tender applicants informed of the

Contact:

Please feel free to contact Paul Fear to have an informal discussion about the work. He can be contacted using the email address below. Please make sure you give a telephone number and a suitable time to call.

Email: paul.fear@the-bac.or