



جامعة المجمعة  
Majmaah University

رؤية  
VISION  
2030  
المملكة العربية السعودية  
KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA



# Curriculum Development Guide

## Majmaah University

Administration of Study Programs and Development  
1438 H - 2016



In the name of Allah the most Merciful and prayers and peace be upon the Messengers, as well as you,

Improving learning outcomes and providing students with knowledge and beneficial sciences first start with the successful planning in preparing and developing study plans which is considered to be an important approach used for the implementation, measurement, and improvement at the cognitive and administrative level.

In completion of the editions of the Vice-Rectorate for academic affairs regarding study plans and programs, especially the guide of creating the accreditation of study plans, hence the Vice-Rectorate seeks through this organizational guide to improve programs and study plans taking into account that work must be organized, professional, and institutional and in accordance with the regulations and university standards away from randomization and personal interpretations to achieve continuous development in harmony with the needs of the regional workplace and in conformity with the scientific and technological developments at the international level to provide the society with proficient graduates able to effectively contribute and having a capable generation able to deal with sustainable development and modern technology keeping up the religious values and national properties.

This guide contains the important and brief information which helps the administrators of programs and study plans in departments and colleges to develop their study plans and programs in a scientific and administrative sequence and in accordance with the extent, kind, and place of change.

Accordingly, Majmaah University appreciates the importance of improving the academic performance through revising and evaluating performance through measuring the outcomes which are connected with the continuous reviewing of study plans at the university stage according to the level of program, plan, and course to be always distinctive.

Increasing numbers of male and female students in all university colleges are considered an important motivation and a big responsibility adopted by the Vice-Rectorate for Academic Affairs via availing programs and study plans which are effective, coherent, and competitive. Thus, benchmarks, identifying goals, and improving the cognitive and technical level of study plans are the main basics for improving study plans. Besides, applying the national and international standards in developing study plans is a basic condition whereas the Vice-Rectorate seeks to have perfect study plans according to these standards which in turn help in achieving national and international accreditation.



Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs

# Introduction

Effective study plans, which contain cognitive, academic, and technical aspects, need to be continuously developed. The concept of the development of the study plan means to study the results of the application of the plan and benefit from the feedback and keep up with the structural and cognitive development at a national and global level and to study the needs of the labor market to make changes that aim at improving university education and learning outcomes according to the frameworks and laws in practice at the university.

The preparation and development of the study plan must be according to the standards and principles taking into account the needs of the labor market and consistency in connection with the educational outcomes have a significant effect on the efficiency of study plans and its reflections on quality education and teaching performance in harmony with the policy of education in Saudi Arabia, development plans, and university goals .

**The scientific material of courses must arise from its assets taking into account the latest and global developments which give much concern to the ethics of professions and practiced behavior.**

This guide is designed to provide committee administrators, units of plans and programs of study in the departments and colleges with the necessary information that must be fully understood to develop study plans in a way that unifies the concepts and mechanisms and also deal with the magnitude of the change, type, and location.

The application of national standards, the National Commission standards for academic accreditation, the National Qualifications Framework, as well as international standards for programs that seek international accreditation are very important requiring supervisors to acquire deep study and great familiarity with them, to have study plans with complete elements having the ability to compete scientifically and technically and meet the quality requirements.

This guide is an integral part of the manual preparation and accreditation previously issued by the Vice-Rectorate for Academic Affairs due to the close connection in linking the mechanisms of preparation and creation of academic programs and its mechanisms for development and improvement. So it is necessary to refer first to the preparation and accreditation of the guide of study plans and then start reading curriculum development guide.

It should also be noted here that the mechanisms of accrediting new and developmental study programs are similar in some ways and steps with some differences which will be mentioned later.



# Objectives of the Guide

The objectives of the guide are divided into three main points:

Organizing the work of concerned units of study plans in colleges and special committees to develop programs in scientific departments according to unified academic organization.

Unifying the procedures in the Vice-Rectorship of Academic Affairs regarding developing study plans to get a unified frame for all plans to be adopted by the University Board.

Demonstrating the mechanisms of adopting study plans according to the kinds of development used in terms of scope, place, and time.

- Having improved and competent study plans in reference to cognitive and technical fields taking into account the perfect quality of standards at both the national and international levels.

## Who Benefits from the Guide

1. Heads of study plans committees in various departments
2. Heads of study plans and programs in colleges
3. All who have an administrative relation with the interim accreditation for the study plan (head of department, dean of college, permanent committee of study plan, vice-rectorate for academic affairs represented with study plans and development, and university board).

## Concepts of the Guide

This paragraph states the meaning of vocabularies frequently mentioned in the guide:

According to the concepts and definitions used in the academic accreditation and quality assurance in KSA. Thus:

- Academic program: is an organized program for academic students to follow in the academic field which qualifies them professionally whereas they deserve an academic degree at the end of the program. The academic program can also be an integrated group of administrative, technical, and academic elements which reflects the mission and objectives of the department through using evaluation and educational tools to achieve the desired learning outcomes in harmony with the standards of quality education.
- **Program specification**: is a comprehensive and diverse guide of an academic program which helps us identify the necessary information about this program and make it distinctive and different from other programs.
- **Courses' Specification**: is the teacher's guide in recognizing the content of the course and the mechanisms of teaching, evaluation, and its development in the way which suits the academic program.

Commitment with course and program specifications as well as the plan set for the program help having harmonization and easiness in recognizing the strengths and weaknesses for each program which can in turn make the process of evaluation and development very easy.

- **Study Plan:** is a group of obligatory, optional, and free courses which in total represent the requirements of graduation whereas the student has the responsibility to successfully pass all the courses of the decided study plan with the average specified by the Board of Higher Education, 1428, Page 57).  
To fulfill the academic program and get the awarded degree, there are conditions for graduation which has been clearly stated regarding the credit hours and other conditions set by the department and college without any contradiction with the policies of the college, university, and accreditation.
- **Objective of the Study Plan:** is to translate the goals of the university through a group of academic materials which form the study plan aiming at providing students with knowledge, concepts, skills, attitudes, and values which enables them to perform their jobs, works, and professions they are assigned to.
- **Development:** means the comprehensive revision for the program and study plan based on the program and courses' reports, recommendations of consultative and scientific counsels, and discarding the individual revisions for some courses.
- **Work Areas:** have to do with public and private sector which is provided with competent and skillful graduates by scientific departments.



## Definition of Administration

Is an administration for preparing and adopting study and academic plans for the sake of developing the constructional and cognitive sides to raise the quality level improving its outcomes and meeting the demands of the workplace. It also has to do with developing the academic affairs in the related vice-rectorate, colleges, and deanships to ensure the continuity and effectiveness of work.

### Vision

Progression and excellence of study plans and academic programs developing the educational affairs.

### Mission

Achieving the standards of the local community and national growth setting mechanisms and plans contribute to build plans and academic programs, feeling proud of their learning outcomes, applying the national and international criteria, and contribution towards the development of the educational affairs at the university.

## Objectives of Administration

1. Setting clear mechanisms and specifications to prepare, adopt, and develop study plans and academic programs according to the national and international standards.
2. Supporting colleges and cooperation within related areas to raise the capability of study plans and academic programs achieving the standards of academic accreditation.
3. Issuing guides and forms identifying the references in preparing and developing study plans to unify the framework of study plans and academic programs as well as the mechanisms of work to achieve the goals of the university.
4. Cooperation with public and private sectors and partnership with national and international universities to achieve the desired quality of study plans and academic programs and meet the demands of the workplace.
5. Developing the educational affairs in related colleges and deanships through tracing its strategic and implemented plans as well as studying and analyzing reports received.
6. Improving and developing the work of vice-rectorate administrations to raise their effectiveness.

## Meaning of Developing Study Plans

Developing study plans is making some changes in the parts of the study plan based on cognitive and technical levels and used for the purposes of continuous improvement of the study plan seeking for progression and updating the outcomes in harmony with the latest scientific and educational events.

### **The Main Objectives for Developing a Study Plan**



1. Excellence in designing study plans in the field of applying the national, regional, and international standards keeping up with the scientific and cognitive development via comparisons between outstanding educational institutions.
2. Excellence of all academic processes at the university including upgrading the learning outcomes to achieve a high ranking both regionally and internationally.
3. Meeting the demands of the workplace and getting along with the changes of the local community.
4. Applying and achieving educational policies and plans, national development, and contribution in serving the local community.

### **Justifications of Developing the Study Plan**

There are a lot of justifications to develop study plans where they might be to some extent systematic and within the strategic plan of the college or department:

1. Five years or more on applying the study plan and completeness of feedback.
2. Keeping up with the upcoming events or changes that arise in the various scientific and educational fields.
3. Improving the quality of study plans through via developing its goals and outcomes.

There are other reasons to develop study plans based on the latest changes:

1. Issuing decisions or changes related to the educational sector and related as well to the study plan.
2. In response to the results of researches, reality of study plans, and future visions for preventive and precautionary purposes.
3. Responding to the demands of national and international commissions regarding academic accreditation at the national and international level.

## Standards of Developing a Study Plan

The development of the study plan is subject to a number of criteria that must be taken into account during the development process and must achieve the goals of development and the most important of these criteria are:

1. Achievement of national standards like Afaq (Horizon) plan and application of National Qualifications Framework and Accreditation bodies, particularly the National Commission for Academic Accreditation in addition to the criteria of Vice-Rectorate for Academic Affairs within the administration of academic programs and development.
2. Considering the vision, mission, and objectives of the university and college.
3. Development must be clear and systematic based on studying the feedback from the results of applying the study plan at the cognitive and constructional level including information about weakness points which must be improved.
4. Development must be done through specialized and competent committees having knowledge on how to build and develop study plans based on scientific methods having academic and educational competencies, especially of what is related to the means of teaching, measurement and evaluation.
5. Effective participation of the concerned people in developing the plan academically and administratively.
6. The process of developing the study plan that must consider the future development, flexibility of study plan, and its ability to keep up with the future educational and scientific advances.
7. Comprehensiveness of development and the observation of reflected changes in the study plan on other elements in plan.

### Basic Requirements for Developing an Academic Program

- Conformity of the program with the mission and objectives of the college which in turn goes with mission and objectives of the university.
- Conformity of program courses with the demands of other academic programs in the college and university.
- Conformity of the academic programs with the requirements of the national commission and international accredited institutions to adopt such programs.
- Conformity of study plans in the program and its technical elements and components with the mechanisms of preparing an academic plan adopted in the university.



- Conformity of the scientific and cognitive content of the program with other corresponding programs at the level of local and international outstanding universities.
- The application of program through its study plan and courses by teaching staff members who are well-qualified psychologically and educationally will lead to achieve the program objectives and improve learning outcomes.

### **Fields of Developing Study Plan**

It refers to the fields of developing a study plan based on a kind of development and its effectiveness in the constructional and cognitive body of the study plan.

#### **Cognitive Development of the Study Plan**

Here it means to develop the study plan scientifically and educationally which will include the development and update of the courses' content in terms of specification, objectives, learning outcomes, books, and resources.

#### **Developing the Quality of Study Plan**

It means to develop the study plan to go with the standards of quality and here are they:

- Vision, mission, and objectives of the academic program.
- Program learning outcomes.
- Methods of teaching, measurement, and evaluation.

#### **Constructional Development of the Study Plan**

It means to develop a matrix of courses for study plans based on the cognitive content and harmonization through setting:

- Course level
- Prerequisite and simultaneous courses
- Number and distribution of credit hours on the courses.
- Course name and code

(\* Please refer to the guide of preparing and accrediting study plans issued by the Vice-Rectorate for Academic Affairs to identify the constructional requirements of the study plan)



## **Demands of Developing the Study Plan**

The phase of developing the study plan is important and precise as it depends on many intersected elements in terms of its objectives, phases of application, and identifying the outcomes. Thus, all requirements of developing the study plan must be available. The following are the most important:

1. The program and study plan must be adopted by the University Board.
2. The existence of complete elements of an implementation plan showing the basic elements that will be developed and the periods of time allocated to each element with a statement of responsibilities and performance indicators in the implementation of each element.
3. Providing the necessary information for development like: data, studies, decisions, and benchmarks.
4. Specialized teams (study plan committee) who can study the study plan and identify the needed requirements for development.
5. Providing the infrastructure requirements for the development of the study plan.
6. The presence of internal and external review and evaluation mechanisms.

The prerequisites depend also on the aspects that have been selected to develop the study plan and depend also on the size and location of developing the study plan.

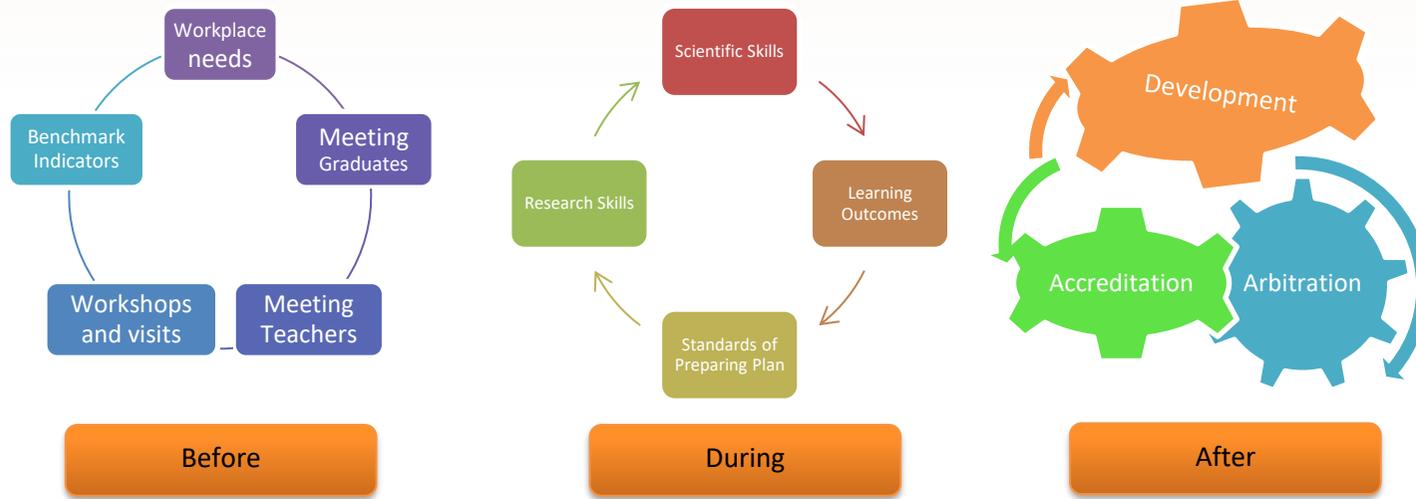


## Procedures and Phases of Developing The Study Plan and its Accreditation

There are many stages for developing the study plan. These stages might be parallel or sequential but they depend also on aspects of development, size, and location. Briefly, the following are the most important phases:

- Identifying the structure of the program and its requirements
- Identifying the needs of students in a manner which is consistent with the requirements of society and the local community and the labor market.
- Identifying the related goals of the programs and learning outcomes.
- Identifying the cognitive structure of the program.
- Developing an agreement on the structure and general framework of the program, the main areas of learning, sequential organization for main topics, and main methods of evaluation.
- Roles and responsibilities should be allocated to the committees, specialists and faculty members to identify the components of each course in terms of its objectives and learning outcomes.
- Development of the program in accordance with the learning outcomes, schedules, content, and proper methods for teaching, learning, and evaluation as well as the demands needed from the available learning resources.
- Developing a suitable strategy to introduce and evaluate the program.
- Implementation, follow-up and supervision of the program.
- Reviewing and improving the program courses and feedback; are the required needs for students and other beneficiaries achieved which have been mentioned earlier?

# Phases of Comprehensive Development



- Comprehensive development for the study plan demands most necessary phases for development which can be summarized as follows:

## Phase One: Studying the Current Reality of the Study Plan

This stage is important, especially if the development requirements were within the implementation periodical plan for the development of the study plan. At this stage, information and evidences are gathered from the results of questionnaires, studies, and meetings which reflect the experience of the study plan during the previous session which is limited between 4 to 5 years. Among the most important evidences and information are:

1. Surveys results related to the program, the experience of the program and a questionnaire evaluating courses where from which to identify:
  - Excellence and shortcomings in the teaching methods and evaluation methods.
  - The consistency of the study plan with the vision, mission and objectives of the program.
  - The effectiveness of cognitive and technical composition of the study plan.
  - Problems related to the registration of courses and how well they go with previous and concurrent courses.
  - The efficiency of the study plan and its impacts on students' performance and satisfaction by students.
2. Academic Course reports per semester, which are considered as effective feedback in evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the course in terms of content, level, number of hours, textbooks and reference, teaching methods, evaluation and distribution of topics towards scheduled weeks.
3. Reports and results of studying the workplace and its needs for a specialization and the need of the study plans for adding new courses which develop students' skills and support them to get involved in the workplace fast and successfully.
4. Questionnaires of graduates and employers to assess the learning outcomes and efficiency through the virtual application. The results of these questionnaires help to build a cognitive study plan, strengthen the practical skills and special training and graduation projects.

**The program must achieve the practical and scientific skills through the standards related to the achievement of training demands or what represents the practical part of the program**

## Phase Two: Studying Educational Trends, Scientific Developments, Regulations, and Instructions

1. Refers to the reports derived from studying cognitive developments, research and scientific trends by making comparisons with national, regional and international universities to identify the most important scientific developments and future challenges.

Benchmark indicators are considered to be very important scientific tools used in the field of improvement of quality and performance development in the field of preparing or developing academic programs. They are beneficial in recognizing the results and experiences of corresponding programs in other distinctive universities comparing them with the present status of the program to be make use of it as a reference in building the study plan.

2. Access to national trends through the Ministry of Education and official bodies related to education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and looking at their adopted educational policies such as the National Qualifications Framework and the National Commission for Academic Accreditation and Afaq Plan.
3. Knowledge of the regulations and instructions for the construction of the study plan and adoption in the university taking into account the evidences issued by the Vice-Rectorate for Academic Affairs.
4. Results and recommendations issued by the Consultative Council for the department and college regarding the study plan, where they must be documented in a form of reports and evidences.

## Phase Four: Arbitrating the Developed Study Plan

At this stage the study plan is evaluated externally by at least two arbitrators. The arbitrators must be qualified and experienced in the specialty where their rank must not be less than associate professor. The scientific committee in department must study the evaluation results making some comments and the required modifications.

## Phase Five: Adopting the Developed Study Plan

The developed study plan is adopted by the Council of the department and the college. In this phase, all evidences and proofs related to the study plan must be prepared. Here are the most important:

1. Application form for adopting the developed study plan where this form is adopted by the Vice-Rectorate for Academic Affairs in Arabic and English and with accordance to the teaching language (including the form of courses' specifications No. 5).
2. Program specification according to the National Commission for Academic Accreditation.
3. Arbitration of study plan taking into account the required modifications.
4. Meeting minutes of committees and units in the department and college related to developing the study plan.
5. Study reports, workshops, lectures, benchmarks, and questionnaires used for developing the study plan.
6. Reports and meeting minutes of the consultation council for department and college.

All points mentioned above must be submitted to the Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs in an official letter including a recommendation form for adopting the developed study plan (for more information about accreditation of study plans at university, please refer to the guide of preparing and adopting study plans issued by the Vice-Rectorate for Academic Affairs).

## Phase Four: Arbitrating the Developed Study Plan

In this case, the Vice-Rectorate for Academic Affairs is officially addressed to adopt the latest changes. Under the partial development for study plan, there are some points:

1. Creating optional courses for the study plan.
2. Developing the content of an academic course in terms of specification, the textbook, or distribution of topics on weeks with a percentage of 20% where the change must be done according to the standards, instructions, and approval of the department's and college's council.
3. Changing, identifying, or deleting a prerequisite or simultaneous for a course in the study plan.

4. Updating the vision, mission, and objectives of the program where the change must be according to the standards, instructions, and approval of the department's and college's council.
5. Partial changes in the requirements of admission, graduation, or training where the change must be according to the standards, instructions, and approval of the department's and college's council.

Admission requirements in the program must be clear and correspond with the nature of the program and in accordance to the student's cognitive and specialty ability to complete the program plan and students' possession for skills and basic information that qualify them to start and end the program properly.

Note: Previous changes don't include changing the number of credit or communication hours, or their distribution as practical hours. In case, there are changes for the previous issues, there must be an official letter directed to the Vice-Rectorate for Academic Affairs including the proposed change and attaching the following:

1. A report about the development done with the related forms.
2. Meeting minutes for department and college to adopt the change.

In this kind of change, the administration of academic program and development studies the proposal and adopts it in case it meets the conditions of the Vice-Rectorship for Academic Affairs, Deanship of Admission and Registration, and Deanship of Quality and Skills' Development.



## Stages of partial development without a need for arbitration when releasing a new study plan

In this case, there must be a letter directed to the Vice-Rectorate for Academic Affairs to adopt only the recent changes. The partial development of the study plan includes:

1. Changing the level of a course.
2. Changing the number of credit hours distributing them on a course.
3. Adding an obligatory or optional course to the study plan.
4. Deleting an obligatory or optional course from the study plan.
5. Changing the name or code of an obligatory or optional course.

With the exception of the issuance of a new study plan if the change in the new study plan did not fall within the Admission and Registration System or students did not register courses and only after the approval of the Deanship of Admission and Registration. In case, there are changes for the previous issues, there must be an official letter directed to the Vice-Rectorate for Academic Affairs including the proposed change and attaching the following:

1. A report about the settled development and the related forms including a statement of justifications.
2. Meeting minutes of the department and college to adopt the change.

In this kind of development, the administration of academic program and development studies the proposal and adopt it in case it meets the conditions of the Vice-Rectorate for Academic Affairs, Deanship of Admission and Registration, and Deanship of Quality and Skills' Development.

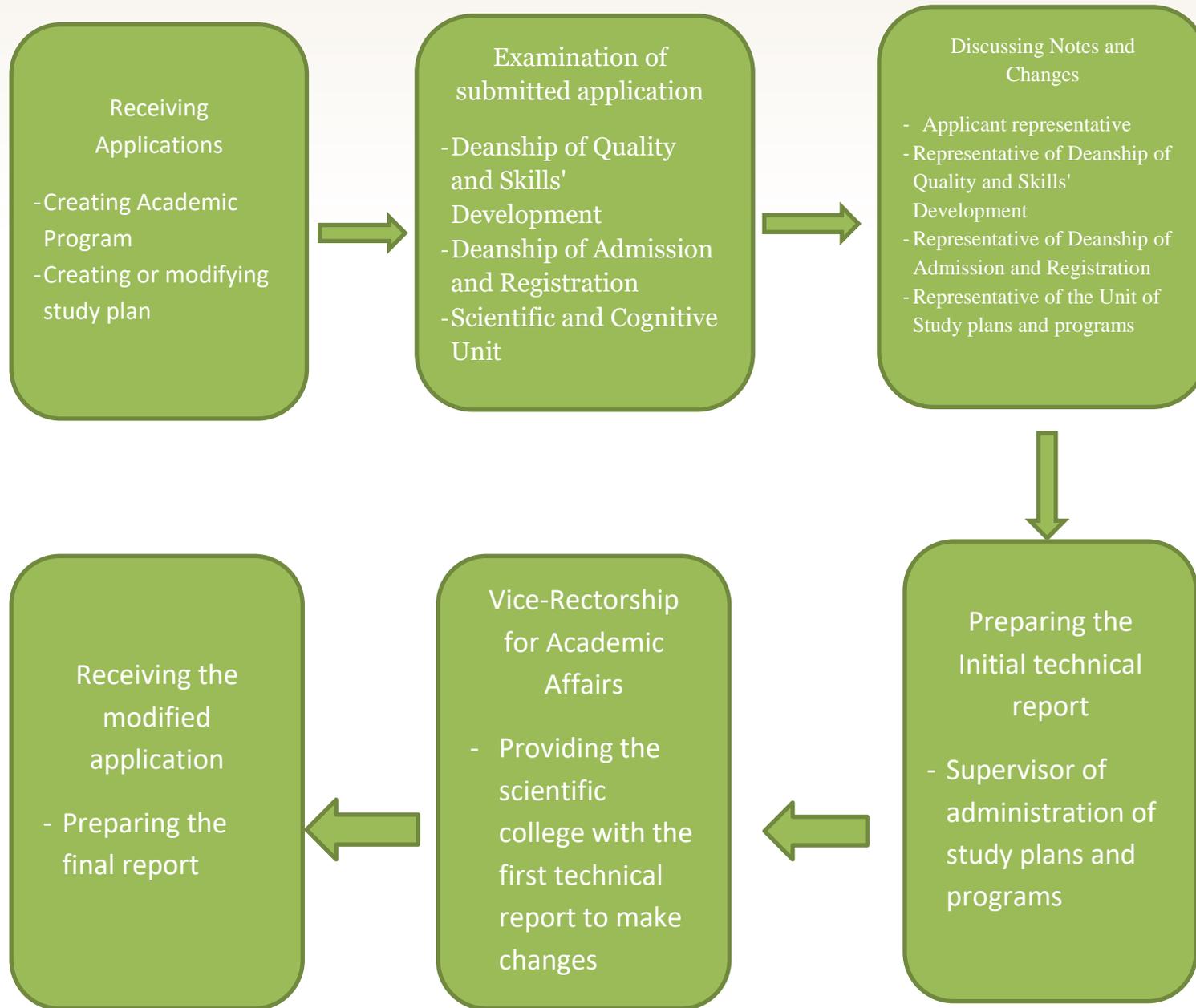
The Vice-Rectorate for Academic Affairs issued a number of adopted forms:

1. A form for creating or modifying a study plan.
2. Course specification form (Form No. 5)
3. Arbitration form for the study plan.
4. A form for creating an academic department.
5. A form for technical reports.
6. A form for evaluating the quality of adopted study plan by the Deanship of Quality and Skills' Development.
7. Adopted evaluation form by the Deanship of Admission and Registration.

Also, there are other accredited forms by NCAAA:

1. Course specification form
2. Program specification form.

Please, refer to the guide of preparing and accrediting study plans adopted by the Vice-Rectorate for Academic Affairs.



**Examination procedures for the study plan is done in the Vice-Rectorate for Academic Affairs**

## Committee of Study Plan in the Department

The committee of study plans in the department submits a proposal to create a study plan developing it whenever the need arises. Coordination must be by the college to make sure that the study plan went through stages. The main stages are:

- The standards are fully complete to prepare the study plan and its conditions.
- The study plan must include the basic elements mentioned earlier.
- Comparing the study plan using the benchmark indicators for the study plan and academic program.

### College's Council

The college's council adopts and submits the plan to the vice-rector of academic affairs provided with all required documents mentioned in the minute of administrative procedures to adopt the plan and program.

### Vice-Rectorate for Academic Affairs

The Vice-Rectorate for Academic Affairs submits the study plan or academic program to the administration of academic programs and development to identify the conditions of the Deanship of Quality and Skills' Development as well as the conditions of the Deanship of Admission and Registration.

### Permanent Committee for Study Plans and Academic Programs

The permanent committee for study plans and academic programs studies the plan or academic program making sure that all of its conditions are complete and meet the demands to be submitted to the University Board as a final version.

### Permanent Committee for Study Plans and Academic Programs

The Board adopts the study plan or the academic program as a final version.



## Change and Levels of Accreditation of the Study Plan

Processes of change (development) for the study plan must be organized, professional, and in an institutional manner and with accordance to the regulations and academic conditions away from randomizations and personal judgments to achieve the continuous development in a way that is Compatible with the local workplace and technological and scientific developments.

The basic cornerstone of the study plan starts from the concerned academic program and ranges up to the accreditation and approval by the University Board. Thus, levels and authorities must be set stating the places of change or development in the study plan and who is the decision maker in making the change or modification as well as how its percentage is demonstrated.

