

# REGULATORY FRAMEWORK FOR QUALIFICATION AWARDING BODY (QAB)



**INTER BOARDS COORDINATION COMMISSION (IBCC)  
PAKISTAN**

## **1. Preamble**

This regulatory framework serves as a formal evaluation and approval process undertaken by the Inter Boards Coordination Commission (IBCC) as mandated in its Act XIII of 2023 under Article 3(3)(f). The purpose of this framework is to ensure that the Qualification Awarding Body (QAB) meets the established standards of quality and compliance in Pakistan. Before commencing operations within the country, a foreign QAB/examination body is required to get registered with the IBCC. This rigorous process verifies the credibility, relevance, and alignment of offered qualifications with Pakistan's national education standards. This process involves a comprehensive examination of the QAB's governance, curriculum alignment, assessment standards, and quality assurance practices. Through this, the IBCC ensures that the qualifications awarded by these bodies uphold the integrity and excellence expected within Pakistan's education framework. With the enactment of Act No. XIII of 2023, the IBCC was formally empowered to regulate foreign examination boards operating in Pakistan.

### **i. Objectives of the Regulatory Framework**

- a. To ensure high standards in delivering and certifying qualifications, making its credentials reliable within Pakistan's educational system.
- b. To ensure adherence to transparent and effective governance, operational procedures, and regulatory requirements.
- c. To enable the formal recognition and equivalency of foreign qualifications within the local education system.

### **ii. Scope of the Regulatory Framework**

This framework applies to all QABs/foreign examination boards and institutions offering education programs up to Grade 12 intending to operate within Pakistan.

## **2. Registration of a Foreign QAB/ Examining Body**

Registration is the initial, formal process that a QAB/ examining body undergoes to gain legal recognition and authorization to operate within Pakistan.

### **Purpose of Registration**

- a. To establish the QAB's/examining body's legal presence within the country, ensuring it operates with accountability.
- b. To provide IBCC and other regulatory bodies with fundamental information about the QAB's/examining body's structure, governance, and intended qualifications.

- c. To validate and allow the QAB/examining body to progress towards the registration process, which entails a more detailed assessment of its standards.

### **3. Registration of a QAB/Examining Body**

Before commencing operations in Pakistan, QABs/Examining Bodies must get themselves registered with the IBCC. The IBCC's Regulatory Committee (**Annexure-I**) will assess the QAB on the following standards:

#### **Standard 1: Profile of the QAB**

- a. Full name and address of the QAB.
- b. Organizational structure, including the names and designations of key officials.
- c. Historical background, including years of operation and mission statement.
- d. Legal status of QAB.
- e. The QAB must establish a distinct identity, reflecting its unique status as an awarding body.
- f. It is required to establish an office or assign a representative within Pakistan to ensure physical presence to facilitate operational processes, communication, and accessibility.
- g. Complete contact information, including the address, email, and telephone numbers of the local office or representative, must be provided.

#### **Standard 2: Governance Structure**

- a. The QAB should demonstrate a robust governance structure that upholds public confidence in the qualifications awarded.
- b. Disclosure of governance with their assigned roles.

#### **Standard 3: Competence of QAB**

The QAB must display a thorough process of developing, delivering, and validating qualifications in their country of origin.

#### **Standard 4: Details about Qualifications**

- a. Details about all qualifications may be furnished, including prerequisites, nomenclature, duration, and regulatory authority in the native country.
- b. The QAB may provide evidence of recognition status locally/globally.

## **Standard 5: Curriculum and Content Alignment**

The curriculum and content must meet Pakistan's educational standards, reflecting cultural sensitivity and respect for local norms, to be ascertained by the National Curriculum Council of Pakistan or any other body at the Federal Level.

## **Standard 6: Quality Assurance**

- a. Regular and rigorous quality assurance processes should be in place to uphold high educational standards approved by the Board of Governors, IBCC.
- b. Details of the quality assurance mechanisms, along with the plans for monitoring and enforcement.

## **Standard 7: Equitable Accessibility**

- a. Examinations may be accessible in English, Urdu, and other regional languages prevalent in Pakistan.
- b. Centers may be distributed to provide equitable access to students across urban and rural regions.

## **Standard 8: Teacher and Staff Training**

- a. Local teachers and administrative staff involved with the QAB/examining body must be trained to meet standards and uphold its credibility.
- b. QABs/examining bodies should ensure training adequacy to maintain consistency with defined standards for qualifications approved by the government.

## **Standard 9: Fees and Financial Viability**

- a. The QAB may establish a reasonable fee structure, encouraging inclusivity and making its qualification affordable.
- b. Provision of No Bankruptcy Certificate to ascertain the financial viability

## **Standard 10: Student Support Services**

- a. Comprehensive counselling and support services must be available to students. This includes assistance with examination procedures, study materials, and career planning.
- b. Resources necessary for students' academic success should be part of the QAB's operational offerings.

### **Standard 11: Legal Compliance**

- a. Compliance with all applicable laws and regulations in Pakistan, specifically the Right to Information Act.
- b. All necessary NOCs and licenses must be obtained, and legal documents must be completed for operating legally within the country.

### **Standard 12: Collaboration with Local Institutions**

- a. Details of already made partnerships with local educational institutions.
- b. Details of facilitations for local engagement and knowledge exchange to benefit the educational ecosystem.

### **Standard 13: Regular Review and Adaptation**

- a. Review processes to adapt the standards and practices in response to the changes in education, technology, and society.
- b. A yearly report summarizing these updates and changes.

### **Standard 14: Examination Framework and Data**

- a. QAB must ensure that all examinations are conducted through external, globally/nationally recognized examination and assessment bodies renowned for their credibility and integrity.
- b. Examinations must be conducted in centers that adhere to the guidelines of relevant regulatory authorities, i.e., JCQ, IBCC, etc., ensuring secure delivery and management.
- c. Remote or online examinations must meet international security standards, including proctoring and identity verification.
- d. Qualifications based primarily on internal assessments, such as the American High School Diploma, shall adhere to a structured process that combines continuous assessments, standardized testing, and final evaluations. To uphold credibility, fairness, and alignment with international academic standards, globally recognized frameworks such as Advanced Placement (AP) examinations or any other criteria defined/approved by the IBCC Forum be utilized.
- e. The QAB is required to maintain and provide examination-related data and statistics, including passing rates and demographics.
- f. A detailed report of examination and assessment data should be submitted, as and when required

### **Standard 15: Conflict of Interest**

- a. The QAB must have a system to identify and manage conflicts of interest, ensuring that no bias or unfair advantage influences qualification processes.

- b. Procedures for monitoring and managing conflicts of interest are required to maintain public trust and ensure fair treatment of all learners.

#### 4. Application Registration Process

- i. **Document Submission:** The QAB must submit a complete application form (**Annexure- II**) with all required documents covering every criterion and must deposit the prescribed registration application fee (**Annexure- III**).
  - ii. **Application Review:** The IBCC will review the application to assess compliance with the outlined standards and may request additional information or modifications if necessary.
  - iii. **Site Inspection:** A site inspection may be conducted to verify the presence, facilities, and operational processes of the QAB in its country of origin and Pakistan. The Regulatory Committee constituted by the competent authority may conduct post-approval visit of the of QAB and its affiliated study centers in Pakistan at any time.
  - iv. **Evaluation Report:** The Regulatory Committee will prepare a comprehensive evaluation report assessing the applicant's adherence to the standards mentioned in this regulatory framework and the feasibility of the proposed operations of QAB in Pakistan.
  - v. **Decision:** Based on the evaluation report, the Competent Authority of IBCC will made final decision. The respective decision will be communicated to the applicant in writing and may include:
    - a. **Provisional Registration** (pending specific improvements).
    - b. **Regular Registration** (valid for four years).
    - c. **Denial of Registration** (with actionable recommendations for improvement).
5. **Enduring Compliance:** Annual reports and regular updates must be submitted to maintain the registration status.
6. **Renewal of Registration**
- a. The QAB must apply for renewal of its registration after the prescribed period, and a renewal fee will be charged. The renewal will be subject to adhering to the standards mentioned in this regulatory framework, the inspection team's satisfactory report, and subsequent approval of the Regulatory Committee.
  - b. Earlier approved foreign Examination Boards operating in the country will also have to get themselves registered with the IBCC
7. **Termination of Registration:** The Board of Governors, IBCC reserves the right to revoke registration in the wake of:

- a. Non-compliance with established guidelines and regulations.
- b. Evidence of malpractice, fraud, or activities that compromise the integrity of a qualification, its examinations, and assessments.
- c. Failure to provide required annual reports or other documentation.

## 8. Additional Provisions

- a. **Confidentiality:** All information provided by Applicants will be treated as strictly confidential and will only be used for registration.
- b. **Updates to Regulations:** The Board of Governors, IBCC reserves the right to amend this framework to reflect changes in national or international standards. Registered bodies will be notified of any updates.
- c. **Assistance and Development:**
  - i. Foreign Examination Boards working as 'Not for Profit or Charity' are encouraged to utilize some portion of their income in Pakistan for the betterment of education and assessment at Secondary/ Higher Secondary level, which will be utilized with mutual consent of the government and the concerned QAB.
  - ii. The Foreign Examination Boards working for Profit shall contribute towards the training and development of examiners and assessors as recommended by the Board of Governors, IBCC.
- d. **Appeals Process:** Applicants have the right to appeal against the decisions within 30 days of receiving notification. Appeals must be submitted to the Executive Director, IBCC in writing and include supporting documentation.
- e. **Dispute Resolution:** If disputes arise, these are initially addressed and attempted to be resolved by the Executive Director of the IBCC. If a dispute remains unresolved, it will be presented to the Board of Governors of IBCC, which shall have the authority to make the final decision.

**COMPOSITION OF THE REGULATORY COMMITTEE OF  
INTER BOARDS COORDINATION COMMISSION (IBCC)**

- |  |                   |
|--|-------------------|
| 1. Executive Director, IBCC                              | Convener          |
| 2. One Vice-Chancellor or his Nominee                    | Member            |
| 3. One Chairperson of the Local Examination Board (BISE) | Member            |
| 4. A Curriculum Expert                                   | Member            |
| 5. An Exam & Assessment Expert                           | Member            |
| 6. One Domain (Subject) Expert                           | Member            |
| 7. Director General/Director of IBCC                     | Member/ Secretary |

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**Inter Boards Coordination Commission (IBCC)  
Registration Application Form for Qualification Awarding Body (QAB)**

**SECTION 1: Organizational Information**

**Full Name of Qualification Awarding Body (QAB):**

**Vision of QAB:**

**Mission of QAB:**

**Objectives of QAB:**

**Year of Establishment:**

**Legal Status of QAB (Registration Certificates & Licenses)**

**Address of QAB:**

**Detail of Chief Officer/Executive/CEO of QAB:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Designation: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Local Office Representative Details in Pakistan:**

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Designation: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION 2: Governance & Management**

**1. Hierarchy/Governance Structure**

**2. Detail of Key Officials:**

**3. Infrastructure Details:**

**SECTION 3: Competence of QAB**

**1. Competency Demonstration:** QAB's expertise in developing, delivering, and validating qualifications

**2. Quality Assurance:** Outline the quality assurance mechanisms, data management, and reporting procedures:

**SECTION 4: Qualifications Details**

**1. Detail of Qualification/Program Information** (Global recognition, Pre-requisites, Course Contents, Compulsory Subjects, Curriculum Course/Catalogue, Credits, Fee structure, Grading Criteria and Assessment Method)

**SECTION 5: Curriculum and Assessment Alignment**

**1. Compliance:** Curriculum of Qualification is aligned with National Curriculum Standards of Pakistan

2. **Content Adaptation:** Provide a certificate verifying that the curriculum is designed to be culturally and religiously sensitive and aligned:

3. **Assessment Alignment with Curriculum:** Describe how assessment is aligned with curriculum:

### **SECTION 6: Quality Assurance**

1. **Continuous Monitoring Mechanisms:** Provide continuous plans for monitoring and enforcement of quality standards

### **SECTION 7: Language Accessibility**

1. **Language Support:** Indicate available mode of learning & examination:

- English
- Urdu
- Other Regional Languages (Specify): \_\_\_\_\_

2. **Examination Centre Distribution:** Describe equitable distribution of centres:

### **SECTION 8: Teacher and Staff Training**

1. **Details of Training Programs**

2. **Details of the mechanism for the verification of teachers' competencies:**

### **SECTION 09: Fees and Financial Viability**

1. Attach fee structure of qualification(s)
2. Attach details of scholarship programs, if any
3. Attach No Bankruptcy Certificate

## SECTION 10: Student Support Services

1. **Handbook for Guidance:** Provide details of student counseling services:

2. **Provision of Resources:** List resources available to students for academic success:

## SECTION 11: Legal Compliance

Attach NOC(s) and license(s) from the relevant authorities in Pakistan, if any

## SECTION 12: Collaboration with International & Local Institutions

1. **Membership/Partnership with International & Local Institutes:** Provide details of collaborations:

2. **Resource Sharing Initiatives:** Describe resource-sharing mechanisms:

## SECTION 13: Regular Review and Adaptation

1. **Continuous Improvement Plans:** Attach the continuous improvement plan and last year's report on updates and changes

## SECTION 14: Examination Framework and Data

1. **Examination Conduct:** Attach the details regarding the conduct of the examination and assessment. If any third party is involved in the Process, kindly attached the relevant details along with a copy of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

2. **Remote Examination Standards:** Describe Physical & Remote examination security measures

3. **Examination Data Reporting:** Provide examination-related data and statistics:

**SECTION 15: Conflict of Interest**

1. **Conflict Management System:** Attach Conflict Management Policy

2. **Mitigation Measures:** Describe measures to ensure fairness:

**Declaration**

I hereby declare that the information provided in this application is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Designation: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**INTER BOARDS COORDINATION COMMISSION (IBCC)  
ISLAMABAD**

**Fee Structure for Registration**

Sr. No.	Description of Fee	Fee in USD
1.	New / Renewal Application Fee	\$ 1000/-
2.	Inspection / Periodic / Unscheduled Visit	(as per cost incurred on the visit of Regulatory Committee)
3.	Grant of New Registration / Renewal Fee along with qualification(s)	\$ 4,000/-
4.	New Additional Qualification(s) Fee	\$ 1000/-
5.	Decision Review / Appeal Fee	\$ 1000/-

**Note:** Any additional fee, if applicable, shall be paid by the QAB as per the requisition of the relevant authority in Pakistan.