



University Accreditation Program Policy

Document 223162

Context and purpose

The CIA University Accreditation Program (UAP) Policy establishes standards for accrediting universities as a foundational element of the CIA education and qualification system, under the following criteria:

- Appropriate coverage of the CIA education syllabus;
- Academic controls, quality assurance, and reviews;
- Partnership with the profession;
- The number and type of faculty dedicated to teaching in the accredited program; and
- Professional representation of the Institute dedicated to the program in each university.

Through a collaborative approach with universities and ongoing monitoring and review, the system for accrediting universities ensures that participants graduating from an accredited program meet the eligibility requirements of the CIA.

For quality control, the CIA relies on the work of accreditation and review panels, the designated committee, and professional staff; the professional integrity and ethics of an accreditation actuary (AcA); and robust triennial reviews, including the appointment of an external examiner to each university.

The CIA has established a designated committee to manage UAP. The Education and Qualification Council (EQC) holds the authority for accrediting universities and courses and for admitting members of the CIA.

Scope

This policy applies to CIA accredited universities and is a guide to those universities wishing to apply for accreditation under the UAP. It also outlines the conditions for participants to obtain qualifications for membership in the CIA.

The CIA does not guarantee that the UAP recognition it grants to participants towards Associate (ACIA) and Fellow (FCIA) enrolment in the Institute will be recognized by other actuarial organizations towards other designations. However, the CIA's goal is to ensure to the greatest extent possible that the ACIA and FCIA are internationally portable designations and that members of the CIA continue to have broad career choices and mobility.

Under the principles of control and good judgment, the CIA, acting through its relevant committees, reserves the right to apply, interpret, and enforce the policy as the CIA deems appropriate.

Policy statements

1. Recognized program and track record for teaching actuarial science

- 1.1. The university must have an identifiable actuarial program leading to a bachelor's degree that requires at least three (3) years of full-time (or equivalent) study; or a master's degree actuarial program that requires at least one (1) year of full-time (or equivalent) study and which adequately

covers the required CIA syllabus. This does not preclude a university from holding short intensive courses, or from conducting part-time studies;

- 1.2. The university must have a satisfactory track record of teaching actuarial science subjects and will demonstrate its commitment to operating and supporting its actuarial program on a long-term basis; and
- 1.3. The university must demonstrate a suitable minimum academic standard for admission to the actuarial program; and
- 1.4. It is desirable that the university has an active research program.

2. Ethics and academic integrity controls and discipline

- 2.1. The university must have appropriate ethics statements, policies, and procedures relating to issues of importance to the CIA profession, particularly issues of plagiarism, fraud, and cheating, and demonstrate that they are consistently applied.
- 2.2. The university must demonstrate appropriate controls (prevention) and disciplinary processes related to academic and other forms of misconduct;
- 2.3. The university must communicate the Code of Conduct and Ethics for Participants in the CIA Education System and the Policy on the Enforcement of the Code of Conduct and Ethics for Participants in the CIA Education System to participants through course outlines, program website, or other efficient means.

3. Quality assurance

- 3.1. The university must demonstrate satisfactory internal systems of quality assurance to provide confidence in their education and assessment processes to participants, employers, the public, and the CIA;
- 3.2. The CIA will from time to time request certain information and documents from the university to support its quality assurance reviews. The CIA will provide reasonable notice to the university of the request and the university must make every reasonable effort to provide the required information in a timely manner;
- 3.3. At a minimum, document requests will include final course outlines, completed Instructor Acknowledgement Forms, and participant grades in a format suitable for CIA reconciliation of final grades;
- 3.4. The CIA may request with reasonable notice, other material relevant to the UAP review processes of the CIA which may include examination and grading templates and copies of participant examinations for specific courses selected for review; and
- 3.5. The CIA may from time to time request verification of participant achievements, data on annual graduating classes, and other information regarding participant entry into the profession. The university will accommodate all reasonable requests within a timely manner, in accordance with university data and privacy policies.

4. Partnership

- 4.1. Through the accreditation agreement, the university commits to a partnership with the CIA upon which the UAP is based, including the development and monitoring of metrics to strengthen and support accreditation standards;
- 4.2. The university must work cooperatively with the CIA, the participant and actuarial employer community to ensure awareness of the CIA and the profession in general among participants;

- 4.3. The university must provide opportunities for the CIA to participate in participants' professional orientation, by way of guest lectures and visits to actuarial science classes or other events;
- 4.4. The university should promote the active participation of its actuarial faculty in actuarial matters through academic and professional bodies. Examples of such active participation may be presenting actuarial-based content at meetings and conferences, or participating on CIA committees; and
- 4.5. Where possible, the university should develop relationships with the local actuarial employer community through such activities as co-op employment, internships, and job placement strategies.

5. Faculty

- 5.1. The university must demonstrate that it is able to attract and retain sufficient and appropriate academic and other faculty to sustain an actuarial program, and must meet any requirements for faculty as established by this policy;
- 5.2. At a minimum, the university must employ the following:
 - 5.2.1. Two (2) full-time faculty members who are either Associate (ACIA) or Fellow (FCIA) of the CIA.
 - 5.2.2. One (1) additional full- or part-time faculty member who either holds a recognized Associate or Fellow designation or who is primarily teaching actuarial courses or who has an active actuarial research program; and
 - 5.2.3. Relative to the actuarial program size, sufficient additional full- or part-time faculty members, and instructors, preferably who hold a Fellow- or Associate-level actuarial designation, or whose teaching duties are mainly directed to accredited courses, to sustain the program and ensure faculty succession planning over the long term.
- 5.3. Where a university loses faculty that may affect its ability to meet the policy requirements due to attrition or other causes, the university must notify the designated committee immediately and provide a plan to address the gap.

6. Accreditation Actuary

- 6.1. The AcA serves as the university's point of contact through which communication with the CIA occurs. The AcA is responsible for coordinating the terms of the accreditation agreement between the university and the CIA;
- 6.2. The university must nominate one (1) person who is employed by the university as the AcA;
- 6.3. The appointment of the nominated AcA is subject to approval by the EQC upon recommendation by the designated committee;
- 6.4. The AcA must be familiar with the university's culture and structure and is expected to collaborate with the chair of the actuarial program or department head, faculty, and course instructors to establish and maintain the university's accreditation. This includes having the ability to provide meaningful input, as appropriate within the university's mechanism for curriculum development, as it relates to accredited course content and grading and examination procedures for accredited courses;
- 6.5. At a minimum, the AcA must have the following qualifications:
 - 6.5.1. ACIA or FCIA designation; and
 - 6.5.2. At least five (5) years' experience as a practising actuary or in actuarial education and research; and

6.5.3. Be a CIA member in good standing.

- 6.6.** Should the university wish to change its AcA for any reason (including temporarily accommodating short-term absences such as maternity or sabbatical leave), it must inform the designated committee within one (1) month of the university knowing of the change and provide a rationale for the change as well as a timeline for instituting the change. The replacement AcA is subject to the approval of the EQC upon recommendation by the designated committee. The designated committee reserves the right to institute a review of the university based on a change in AcA.
- 6.7.** Where a university loses its AcA, the university must immediately inform the CIA, and must temporarily identify an individual, who must be approved by the CIA, to fulfil the AcA role until a replacement is found. The university must fill the vacancy within one (1) year.

7. CIA Education Syllabus coverage

- 7.1.** The accredited university degree must cover the specified components of the ACIA syllabus to a satisfactory level, as determined by the CIA from time to time, to be accredited. Courses required by the CIA are defined as mandatory courses (see definitions and abbreviations section).

Provisions applicable to mandatory courses:

- 7.2.** Upon request by the CIA, the university must provide a detailed mapping of all courses covering the specified components of the CIA syllabus, indicating whether the courses are required (see definitions and abbreviations section) by the university for the degree or elective for participants to take;
- 7.3.** The EQC will approve the mandatory courses as determined by the CIA to cover the ACIA syllabus, and the conditions under which a participant must complete those courses, in order to be recognized for CIA qualification purposes;
- 7.4.** The mandatory courses must provide a participant with an appropriate level of knowledge of the subjects defined in the ACIA syllabus, an adequate understanding, and the ability to apply the concepts to problem solving in actuarial scenarios; and
- 7.5.** The depth of coverage by the mandatory courses must provide participants with the knowledge and understanding of the material required for their eligibility for the ACIA Capstone examination.

8. Evaluation and course administration

Provisions applicable to mandatory courses and preferred practices

- 8.1.** The CIA considers the use of a variety of formative and summative assessment methods as best practice to provide participants with the opportunity to demonstrate competence.
- 8.2.** The CIA relies on universities to administer appropriately robust evaluations in the assessment of the learning objectives of mandatory courses within the spirit of partnership and the parameters of this Policy.
- 8.3.** University assessments should:
- 8.3.1. Inform participants of their abilities and their progress;
 - 8.3.2. Contribute to participant learning and confirm their understanding of the material; and
 - 8.3.3. Be fair, valid, and appropriately administered;
- 8.4.** Recognizing that university evaluations may take place on-campus or using remote settings, the CIA has established certain preferred practices for both situations.

- 8.5.** 'Remote' refers to any online, take-home, or out-of-campus educational assessment that is not administered in an in-person supervised environment by the university.
- 8.6.** The following are preferred practices for in-person and remote assessments:
- 8.6.1. Evaluations should be hand-written, or computer based.
 - 8.6.2. Where evaluation is remote, individual participant projects may be used, provided the projects' deliverables and components such as datasets and reports are individualized. If any coding is required by the participants, coding should differ between participants to avoid sharing.
 - 8.6.3. Long-answer-style questions are preferred.
 - 8.6.4. Where multiple-choice questions are used, participants should be provided with opportunities to demonstrate their work.
- 8.7.** Course outlines provided to the CIA must include details of how the final grade will be calculated. Any deviation from the documented evaluation methods must be reported to the CIA through the Instructor Acknowledgement Form;
- 8.8.** Upon completion of each mandatory course offering, the instructor attests, through the Instructor Acknowledgement Form, that the syllabus was covered appropriately and that it was assessed as documented in the course outline. If an instructor deems that alternative practices enhanced the education and/or assessment of their participants, the instructor should document the deviation using the form and provide an explanation of how the alternate evaluation process provided a better assessment of the participant.

9. Enhancing academic integrity of remote examinations

The following measures are recommended to enhance the academic integrity of remote evaluations:

- 9.1.** Publish exams online at the same time for all participants, with a total publication and completion time limit corresponding to the exam duration plus a limited period of about 15 minutes for upload if paper answers are to be uploaded.
- 9.2.** Hold multiple versions of exams, where questions are either randomized by online testing software or individualized for participants.
- 9.3.** If an examination platform is used for completing an exam online, the platform should block internet and computer access over the duration of the examination, if possible and permitted by the university.
- 9.4.** Implement time-stamp examinations showing when accessed, closed, and uploaded by participants.
- 9.5.** Establish exam proctoring with cameras, if possible and permitted by university.
- 9.6.** Where used, tailor individual projects so that collaboration is impossible, for instance by using different datasets or coding requirements.
- 9.7.** Include a statement based on honor to be signed by each participant on each assessment such as:

I understand that this assessment is part of an accredited course under the University Accreditation Program of the Canadian Institute of Actuaries (CIA). In addition to the University rules governing academic integrity, I understand that I am subject to the Code of Conduct and Ethics for Participants in the CIA Education System and related policy. I swear on my honor to have completed the work on my own and in accordance with the assessment's rules and instructions.

- 9.8. Exam questions should be designed with consideration of the availability of any reference material, such as textbooks, study manuals, or publicly available sample questions.
- 9.9. Where multiple-choice questions are used, measures should be taken to generate different answer keys for participants, such as:
 - 9.9.1. permutation of questions;
 - 9.9.2. using different numbers in corresponding questions;
 - 9.9.3. using different questions;
 - 9.9.4. Using original material where possible and avoiding straight copy/paste of publicly available examination questions.

10. Process for participants

- 10.1. Participants should be encouraged by their university to engage with the CIA at an early stage in their actuarial program to ensure they are fully apprised of the requirements should they choose to use their education at the accredited university towards qualification with the CIA. Information on how participants can engage with the CIA can be provided upon request and will be communicated during career outreach and information sessions at universities.
- 10.2. Participants pursuing membership in the CIA via the University Accreditation Program must become a member of the CIA in order to register for and participate in any CIA educational activities such as the ACIA modules or ACIA capstone examinations.
- 10.3. Mandatory courses for each accredited university will be maintained on the CIA website.
- 10.4. The CIA will provide information regarding UAP credit equivalencies for the purposes of employer recognition and will make every effort to ensure that employers understand UAP as potentially compared to qualifications achieved through other actuarial organizations.
- 10.5. Current UAP information, participant requirements, application processes, and transition rules will be made available on the CIA website and updated from time to time as applicable. Participants are responsible for being aware of the requirements and deadlines pertaining to qualification with the CIA.
- 10.6. Should a university participant not be able to complete all mandatory courses due to circumstances out of their control, the university must be proactive in communicating with the CIA and recommending suitable replacement course(s). Participants may still be eligible to register for the ACIA capstone examination but will be responsible for ensuring they learn the required content.

11. Authority and process

- 11.1. The designated committee is responsible for the operation, monitoring, and administration of the UAP in collaboration with the education staff of the CIA Head Office and under the oversight of the EQC.
- 11.2. Accreditation of universities is conducted by the EQC upon the recommendation of the designated committee.
- 11.3. The EQC is responsible for oversight of the qualification processes and criteria for membership in the CIA and any associated approvals of participant qualifications.

12. Accreditation

- 12.1. Accreditation, if granted, will be on a continuous basis, subject to periodic review, unless a probationary period is applied; and

12.2. Universities will also be subject to a triennial review by the external examiner (EE).

13. Process for initial accreditation

13.1. The university prepares and submits an application to the designated committee using the UAP application form for universities;

13.2. The designated committee appoints an Accreditation Panel (AP);

13.3. The AP reviews the application and supporting documentation and conducts a site visit to the university to meet with university representatives and to review documentation requested by the AP;

13.4. The AP prepares a report, which is forwarded to the designated committee who reviews and subsequently makes a recommendation to the EQC;

13.5. The EQC makes a determination on accreditation of the university;

13.6. The CIA Head Office notifies the university of the decision; and

13.7. Should the university be dissatisfied with the EQC's decision, it may appeal to the CIA based on the appeal process outlined in Section 17 of this policy.

14. Probationary accreditation

14.1. Probationary accreditation may be granted to a university on a temporary basis during which time the university must address all identified issues prior to the end of the probationary period. The conditions and term of probationary accreditation are determined by the EQC.

14.2. A university with probationary accreditation status will have the same rights and benefits as other universities; however, it may have additional specific requirements imposed on it by the designated committee/EQC.

15. University reviews

15.1. Reviews of each accredited university will be conducted periodically as deemed appropriate by the EQC. At a minimum, each university shall undergo a thorough review every three years.

15.2. Reviews will be conducted by an external examiner, accompanied by a representative of the CIA Head Office. Reviews will include the following:

15.2.1. Meetings with university representatives including the AcA, course instructors, the department head, and/or dean or vice-deans as deemed necessary;

15.2.2. For all mandatory courses, review of examination scripts, course outlines, and other relevant material;

15.2.3. Review of participant grades; and

15.2.4. Review of other material as deemed necessary.

15.3. Light touch annual reviews of all mandatory courses offered within that year will be conducted by education staff and the findings reported to the designated committee and referred to an EE if deemed necessary.

15.4. The university, through the AcA, is responsible for ensuring that it immediately reports any item material to consideration of its accreditation and may do so at any point in time.

16. Accreditation and review panels

16.1. An AP is formed to assess the university's application for accreditation. The AP will consist of the following:

- 16.1.1. At least two (2) members of the designated committee;
- 16.1.2. One (1) person who has applicable experience teaching actuarial program courses at a university;
- 16.1.3. One (1) representative of the CIA Head Office; and
- 16.1.4. Other panel members as deemed necessary by the designated committee.

16.2. No member of the panel can have any association with the university being reviewed within the last three (3) years.

16.3. The chair of the designated committee may not serve as chair of the AP.

17. University appeal process

17.1. Within thirty (30) business days of receiving the results of an application for accreditation, or of being notified of the appeal process, the university will notify the EQC through the CIA Head Office that they are appealing the EQC's decision, and will provide supporting information to their appeal. Supporting information must specify in detail what aspect of the UAP policy it feels was not correctly assessed.

17.2. The Director of Education and International Affairs or designate, will conduct an initial review of the appeal documentation, and may request additional information from the university prior to forwarding to the EQC for consideration.

17.3. Within ten (10) business days of receiving the appeal, the EQC will review the appeal and appoint an Appeal Investigation Panel to investigate and draft a response to the appeal.

17.4. The Appeal Investigation Panel will consist of the following:

- 17.4.1. Two (2) members of the designated committee, one of whom was not involved in the original accreditation panel for the university in question;
- 17.4.2. Two (2) members of the EQC; and
- 17.4.3. One (1) Board member.

17.5. The original Accreditation Panel will be notified of the appeal.

17.6. Within ten (10) business days of the appointment of the Appeal Investigation Panel, the President will appoint an Appeal Review Panel. The Appeal Review Panel will include the following:

- 17.6.1. One member of the CIA leadership (Immediate Past-President, President, or President-elect); and
- 17.6.2. Two members of the CIA who hold a Fellow designation from a recognized actuarial organization who have not been involved in the original accreditation process for the university conducting the appeal.

17.7. Within fifteen (15) business days of receiving the appeal and supporting information, the Appeal Investigation Panel will analyze the facts of the appeal, advise the designated committee and EQC of its findings, and forward a final report to the Appeal Review Panel.

17.8. Within ten (10) business days of receiving the appeal documentation, which will include the original appeal by the university and the Appeal Investigation Panel report, the Appeal Review Panel will make a determination by consensus, on whether the UAP policy was fairly and appropriately applied and will make a determination on any change in accreditation status of the university.

17.9. The Appeal Review Panel will immediately advise the designated committee and EQC, who are charged to implement the decision of the Appeal Review Panel. The Appeal Review Panel will also advise the Board of its decision at this time.

17.10. The university will be notified by the Head Office of the decision within (7) seven days.

17.11. A university may not re-appeal.

17.12. A university that did not receive accreditation may re-apply no earlier than two (2) years after the date of the decision letter from the CIA.

18. University Accreditation Program reviews

18.1. The CIA will conduct full reviews of the UAP as deemed necessary. Reviews may include the following:

18.1.1. The policies and preferred practices that govern the program;

18.1.2. The number and quality of participants obtaining UAP credits;

18.1.3. The results of individual university reviews;

18.1.4. Program budget, including any applicable university or participant fees, revenue, and expenses; and

18.1.5. Feedback from stakeholders.

19. Fees

19.1. Any associated university and participant fees will be established in accordance with the annual budgeting process of the CIA.

Exemptions

There are no exemptions from this policy.

Escalation procedures/management of non-compliance with this policy

A university that fails to comply with this policy, which is outlined in the Accreditation Agreement, may lose its accreditation if the CIA and the university cannot agree on appropriate remedial action within a suitable time frame. If a university loses accreditation, participants will not lose recognition of their qualifications achieved while the university was accredited.

Definitions and abbreviations

Accreditation actuary (AcA): the university's accreditation actuary, nominated by the university and approved by the CIA.

Accreditation Panel (AP): the panel responsible for reviewing assigned university applications and for conducting the site visit.

Accredited university: a university which has been approved by the EQC and is recognized as a provider of foundational education leading to qualification with the CIA.

Actuarial program: an identifiable actuarial program, leading to at least a bachelor's degree, which requires at least three (3) years of full-time (or equivalent) study; or a master's degree program, which requires at least

one (1) year of full-time (or equivalent) study, not a collection of subjects which correspond to the UAP credit requirements.

Assigned due date: a deadline or due date established by the CIA. Course outlines are due ten (10) days following the start date of a course. Instructor Acknowledgement Forms are due twenty (20) days following the end of an accredited course.

Associate/ACIA: Associate of a recognized actuarial organization / Associate of the Canadian Institute of Actuaries.

Board: Board of Directors of the Canadian Institute of Actuaries.

Student: a student member of the CIA.

CIA: Canadian Institute of Actuaries.

CIA Education syllabus: the professional education syllabus as developed and published by the CIA.

Course outlines: course outlines as supplied by the university for accredited courses.

Designated committee: the CIA committee designated by the EQC which has overall responsibility for the University Accreditation Program.

Education and Qualification Council (EQC): The designated Council of the CIA that is responsible for education and qualification matters.

External examiner (EE): external examiner appointed by the CIA to review accredited universities.

Fellow/FCIA: Fellow of a recognized actuarial organization/Fellow of the Canadian Institute of Actuaries.

Full-time faculty member: an active tenured or tenured-track faculty member of the university, doing actuarial-related work including research.

Instructor: an individual employed by the university to teach accredited courses.

Mandatory course: a university course mapped to the CIA UAP syllabus and required by the CIA.

Preferred practices: the CIA's position on university practices and procedures that it deems to be preferred.

Probationary accreditation: status given to a university that the CIA wishes to closely monitor and evaluate.

Recognized actuarial organization: For the purposes of meeting the faculty requirement, recognized credentials include FIA (United Kingdom), FIAA (Australia), FCAS (Casualty Actuarial Society), FCIA (Canada), FSA (Society of Actuaries), FSAI (Ireland), FASSA (Actuarial Society of South Africa).

Required course: a course required by a university for successful completion of a degree.

RP: Review Panel.

The agreement: the accreditation agreement as entered between the CIA and the university.

The policy: the CIA University Accreditation Program Policy.

The university: the university with which the CIA is entering into an accreditation agreement.

Associated documents

Code of Conduct and Ethics for Participants in the CIA Education System

Policy on the Enforcement of the Code of Conduct and Ethics for Participants in the CIA Education System

Policy on Qualification Requirements

UAP Application Form for Universities

UAP Application Form for Participants

References

N/A

Monitoring, evaluation, and review

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