# Oman Academic Accreditation Authority (OAAA)

## The development of EQA systems in the higher education sector in Oman
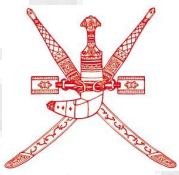
**How have imported systems of quality assurance met the challenges in MENA?**

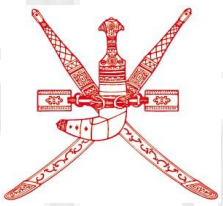**Going Global** 6 March 2013

# Why does OAAA exist?

- The OAAA was originally established in 2001 in response to the growth in private higher education provision and in recognition of the need for a national quality agency.

- OAAA is responsible for institutional and program accreditation of private and public higher education institutions (HEIs); maintaining the national qualifications framework; and signing mutual recognition memoranda with external quality assurance agencies in other countries.

- The OAAA is a fully independent body established by Royal Decree and reports to the national Education Council.

# **ROSQA**

- Requirements for Oman's System of Quality Assurance (ROSQA), was introduced in 2004.

- ROSQA contained institutional and program standards but ROSQA was not based on one specific international model.

- In 2004/2005 two HEIs went through the accreditation process based on ROSQA.

- The results of these processes and initial feedback from the sector suggested that a review of the approach was necessary.

- A review was carried out in 2006 and the outcomes suggested a need to (a) revise ROSQA and (b) support the sector to meet internationally-benchmarked standards.
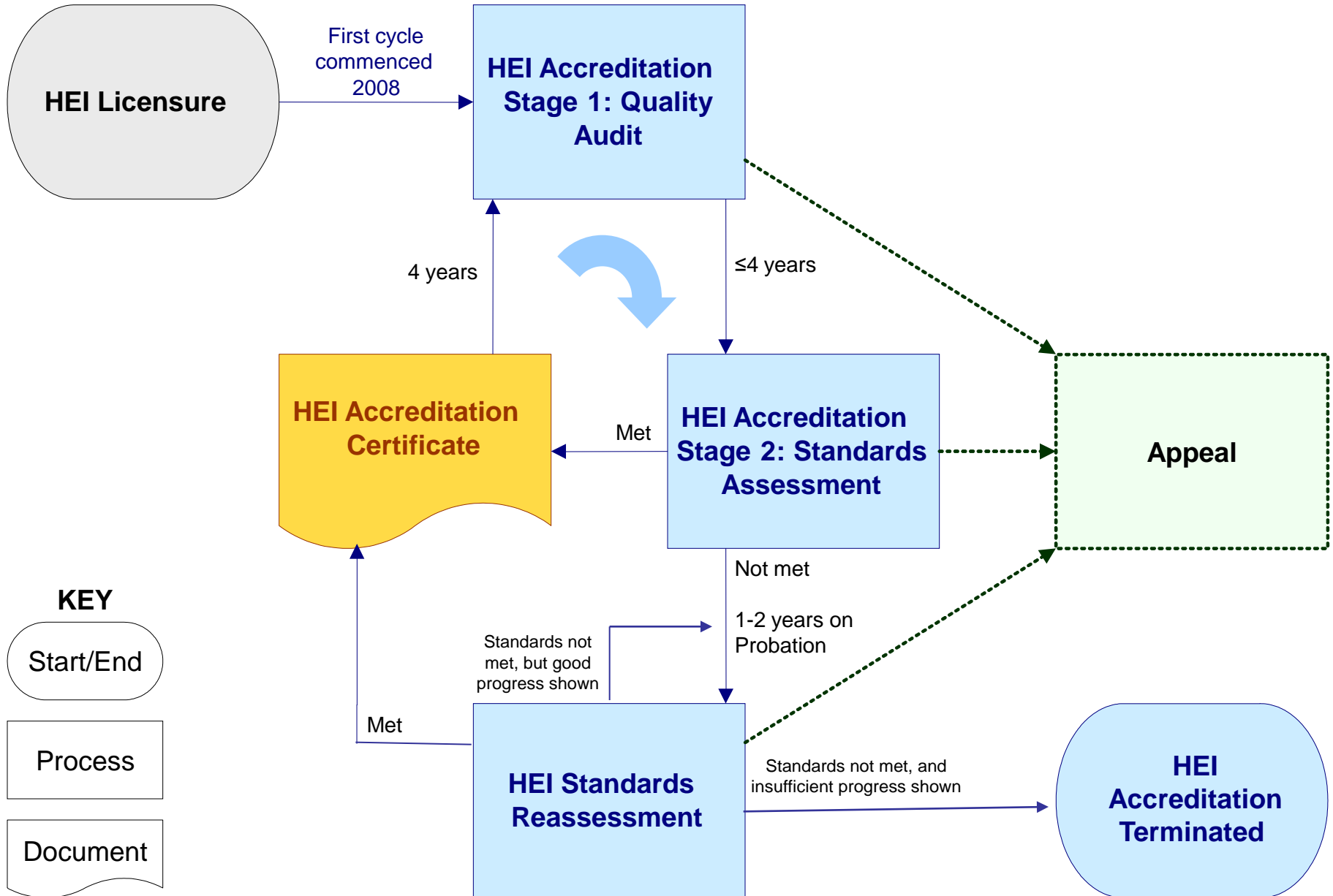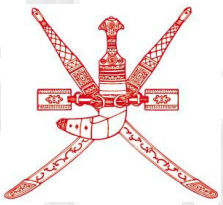
# HEI accreditation

- Following the review of ROSQA, a two-stage institutional accreditation process was developed: Quality Audit and Standards Assessment.

- Quality Audit was introduced in order to support HEIs in developing their internal quality management systems; the resulting report is formative.

- Quality Audit is based on the Australian/New Zealand model (self-study + peer review against strategic objectives)

- By the end of 2013, 51 out of the 63 HEIs in Oman will have been through Quality Audit.

- Institutional standards are currently being developed in line with a range of international benchmarks.
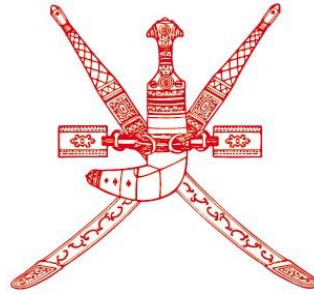
# HEI QA Processes

OAAA

**HEI Licensure**

First cycle commenced 2008 →

**HEI Accreditation Stage 1: Quality Audit**

4 years

≤4 years

**HEI Accreditation Certificate**

Met

**HEI Accreditation Stage 2: Standards Assessment**

Not met

**Appeal**

1-2 years on Probation

Standards not met, but good progress shown

Met

**HEI Standards Reassessment**

Standards not met, and insufficient progress shown

**HEI Accreditation Terminated**

**KEY**

Start/End

Process

Document

# Contextualising QA

- Not possible to "cut and paste" one national system into another context; national systems are not imitations but need to be designed for a specific context with reference to international benchmarks.

- There needs to be sufficient consultation with the HE sector and key stakeholders.

- Training for the sector needs to be provided (both in terms of QA in general and the actual processes that will be used by the agency).

- Need to abide by international good practice, e.g. appeals process; register of external reviewers with international and local reviewers; public reports.

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**For more information about our activities please visit www.oaaa.gov.om**

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