



Part XV: IQA Accreditation Mark Usage and Brand Management Code

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Formulating Institution: IAPUC Quality Accreditation Committee, International Association of Private Universities and Colleges

Applicable Scope: All private higher education institutions that have obtained IAPUC-IQA accreditation qualifications, as well as all stakeholders using the IAPUC-IQA Accreditation Mark

Preface

The IAPUC-IQA Accreditation Mark is the visual carrier of authoritative quality credentials granted by the internal quality accreditation system of the International Association of Private Universities and Colleges. It is not an ordinary decorative emblem, but a weighty quality commitment—it conveys a clear message to students, parents, employers, partner institutions and the general public: accredited private universities or colleges have attained and continuously maintained internationally recognized quality standards within the framework of their educational missions.

The credibility of the Mark stems from the rigor of the accreditation system and the genuine quality of accredited institutions. Every legitimate use of the Mark consolidates such credibility; every abuse or misuse of the Mark erodes it. For this reason, IAPUC adopts a prudent, standardized and rigorous management approach to the use of the Accreditation Mark.

This Code is formulated to establish a clear, comprehensive and enforceable framework for the usage and brand management of the Accreditation Mark. The core concern of this Code is to fully empower accredited institutions to leverage the Accreditation Mark to demonstrate their quality achievements while upholding the ethical bottom line of authenticity, accuracy and non-misleading representation to the public. IAPUC believes that the vitality of a brand lies in the authenticity of the quality it represents—protecting the Mark is protecting the value of accreditation.

Chapter I General Provisions

Article 1 Purposes and Basis

This Code is formulated for the following purposes:

- (1) To establish the legal status, intellectual property ownership and usage authorization principles of the IAPUC-IQA Accreditation Mark;
- (2) To stipulate the visual standard system of the Accreditation Mark and ensure visual consistency of the Mark in all application scenarios;
- (3) To clarify the usage authority, scope of application and prohibited matters for the Mark under all accreditation grades and statuses;
- (4) To establish mechanisms for the application, approval, supervision and violation disposal of Mark usage;
- (5) To protect the credibility represented by the Accreditation Mark and prevent its abuse, misleading use and fraudulent use.

This Code is formulated based on:

- Provisions on accreditation status publicity and Accreditation Mark granting stipulated in the *IAPUC-IQA Accreditation Manual*;
- Provisions on accreditation decision-making and accreditation status changes specified in the *IAPUC-IQA Accreditation Procedure Specifications*;

- Principles of authenticity, accurate representation and integrity stipulated in the *IAPUC-IQA Academic Ethics and Code of Conduct*;
- Relevant international conventions and best practices for intellectual property protection.

Article 2 Scope of Application

This Code applies to:

- (1) All private higher education institutions holding valid IAPUC-IQA accreditation (including provisional accreditation, formal accreditation and comprehensive accreditation);
- (2) Institutions with expired, revoked, suspended or invalidated accreditation status—covering their obligations to cease the use and conduct follow-up settlement of the Mark;
- (3) The use of the Accreditation Mark by IAPUC itself and its authorized institutions;
- (4) Any third party that intends to cite, reproduce or display the IAPUC-IQA Accreditation Mark.

Article 3 Basic Principles

The management of the IAPUC-IQA Accreditation Mark is governed by the following basic principles:

Principle	Core Connotation
Authenticity	The use of the Mark must be based on the current valid accreditation status. Institutions shall not imply possession of unobtained accreditation grades or an accreditation scope beyond the actual coverage by any means.
Consistency	The visual presentation of the Mark shall strictly comply with the visual standards specified in this Code, with no deformation, alteration or splitting permitted.
Non-Misleading Nature	The use of the Mark shall not mislead students, employers or the general public in their understanding of an institution's accreditation status, accreditation scope or accreditation implications in any manner.
Traceability	IAPUC reserves the right to supervise and trace all usage activities of the Accreditation Mark.

Timeliness	Any changes in accreditation status (upgrade, downgrade, revocation, expiration) shall be immediately and accurately reflected in the usage of the Mark.
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Chapter II Legal Status and Visual Standards of the Accreditation Mark

Article 4 Legal Status of the Mark

(1) The IAPUC-IQA Accreditation Mark (including the "IQA Accredited" badge and its variants) is the exclusive intellectual property of the International Association of Private Universities and Colleges (IAPUC), protected by international intellectual property laws and treaties.

(2) IAPUC is the sole owner of the Accreditation Mark. Any use of the Mark by institutions or individuals is based on explicit authorization from IAPUC, and such authorization is limited, revocable, non-exclusive and non-transferable.

(3) The Accreditation Mark is the authoritative visual symbol of the IAPUC-IQA accreditation system. No unauthorized reproduction, imitation or use of confusingly similar marks is permitted in any form.

Article 5 Standard Form of the Mark

The standard form of the IAPUC-IQA Accreditation Mark consists of the following design elements, which fully correspond to the visual standard plate in Appendix A of this Code:

(1) Association Authority Signature Area

Located in the upper half of the Mark, presented in Prussian Dark Blue (HEX:#003153):

- Line 1: INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION
- Line 2: OF PRIVATE
- Line 3: UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES

(2) Accreditation Status Declaration Area

Located below the Association Signature Area, presented in Gilded Accreditation Gold (HEX: #C4A35A):

- Accredited

(3) Overall Proportion and Spatial Relationship of the Mark

The relative size, spacing and alignment of all elements shall strictly follow the specifications in Appendix A of this Code, with no arbitrary adjustment allowed.

Article 6 Color Specifications of the Mark

The color usage of the IAPUC-IQA Accreditation Mark shall strictly comply with the official IAPUC-IQA color system specifications. The Mark has the following authorized color versions with corresponding applicable scenarios:

Version	Association Signature Area Color	Accreditation Declaration Area Color	Background Requirements	Applicable Scenarios
Full-Color Standard Version	Prussian Dark Blue #003153	Gilded Accreditation Gold #C4A35A	White or light-colored background	Official websites, digital media, color printing
Monochrome Dark Version	Prussian Dark Blue #003153 or Ink Black #1A1A1A	50% grayscale of Gilded Accreditation Gold #A0A0A0 or unified dark color	White or light-colored background	Black-and-white printing, monochrome application scenarios
Reverse White Version	White	White	Prussian Dark Blue #003153, Ink Black #1A1A1A or institutional dark background	Dark background application scenarios

No color versions other than those listed above may be independently created and used.

Article 7 Safe Space and Minimum Size of the Mark

(1) Safe Space: A blank area (safe space) equal to at least one quarter of the overall height of the Mark shall be reserved around the Mark. No text, graphics, images or other visual elements shall be placed within the safe space. When the Mark is displayed alongside other logos, an equivalent spacing shall be maintained between all logos.

(2) Minimum Size: In printed materials and digital media, the width of the Mark shall not be less than 25 millimeters (or equivalent digital pixels – no less than 72 pixels at 72dpi resolution). For special process carriers such as trophies and souvenirs where the minimum size cannot be met due to process limitations, a waiver approval from the IQA Office shall be obtained in advance.

(3) Institutions shall not display the Mark in a size significantly smaller than other quality-related logos on the page or layout, unless written permission is obtained from the IQA Office.

Article 8 Prohibited Modifications to the Mark

The following modifications to the IAPUC-IQA Accreditation Mark are strictly prohibited:

(1) Deformation Prohibition: No stretching, compression, tilting, rotation or distortion of any part of the Mark is allowed;

(2) Color Alteration Prohibition: No colors other than those specified in Article 6 of this Code shall be used for the Mark;

(3) Splitting Prohibition: The Association Signature Area and the Accreditation Declaration Area shall not be used separately and must be presented as an integrated whole. For special space-limited application scenarios (e.g., social media avatars, digital advertising banners), simplified alternatives containing only institutional abbreviations or minimal marks may be used upon approval by the IQA Office;

(4) Border Addition Prohibition: No outer border shall be added to the Mark, though the Mark may be placed on an appropriate background color block for layout purposes;

(5) Element Addition Prohibition: No text, graphics, shadows or other visual elements shall be overlaid on the Mark;

(6) Redrawing Prohibition: The textual part of the Mark shall not be redrawn through hand-drawing, manual tracing or font conversion;

(7) Special Effect Prohibition: No shadow, glow, three-dimensional, gradient or other special visual effects shall be applied to the Mark – the Mark shall be presented in a flat, clear and unadorned manner;

(8) Embedding Prohibition: The Mark shall not be embedded into other logos, emblems or graphic designs to become part of other patterns.

Chapter III Mark Usage Authorization and Permissions

Article 9 Basic Rules for Usage Authorization

(1) Institutions that have obtained IAPUC-IQA accreditation (including provisional, formal and comprehensive accreditation) shall automatically acquire non-exclusive authorization to use the corresponding grade of Accreditation Mark within the accreditation validity period from the effective date of the accreditation decision.

(2) The Mark usage authorization is granted on an institutional basis. Branch campuses and teaching sites of the institution shall enjoy equal Mark usage rights, provided that usage is under the name of the parent institution, which shall bear all

usage liabilities.

(3) The Mark usage authorization is non-transferable. Institutions shall not transfer the Mark usage rights to any third party through licensing, sale, donation or other means, including but not limited to cooperative education partners, affiliated institutions or associated enterprises.

Article 10 Usage Scope and Permissions

10.1 Usage Scope for Institutions with Comprehensive and Formal Accreditation

Institutions holding comprehensive accreditation (6-year validity) and formal accreditation (4-year validity) may use the IAPUC-IQA Accreditation Mark on the following carriers:

- (1) Official institutional websites and official social media accounts;
- (2) Admission and publicity materials (printed publications, digital advertisements, prospectuses, etc.);
- (3) Degree certificates, transcripts and official academic documents;
- (4) Student handbooks, academic catalogs and course introductions;
- (5) Campus identifiers, gate plaques and on-campus displays;
- (6) Official letterheads, business cards and official email signatures;
- (7) Display boards and promotional materials for academic conferences and admission campaigns;
- (8) Press releases and media reports related to accreditation.

10.2 Usage Scope for Institutions with Provisional Accreditation

Institutions holding provisional accreditation (2-year validity) may use the Accreditation Mark on the above-mentioned carriers, subject to the following simultaneous requirements:

- (1) Use a dedicated Mark version corresponding to the provisional accreditation grade – the Association Signature Area and the Accreditation Declaration Area shall both be presented in dark blue, visually distinguished from the gold declaration of formal accreditation;
- (2) Clearly mark the words "Provisional Accreditation" and the accreditation validity period adjacent to the Mark, with the font size no smaller than the regular body text size.

10.3 Fully Prohibited Usage Carriers

Regardless of accreditation grade, the Accreditation Mark shall under no

circumstances appear on the following carriers:

- (1) Any form of commercial commodities (e.g., clothing, water cups, stationery, souvenirs), except for commemorative items for accreditation celebration activities specially licensed by the IQA Office;
- (2) Commercial advertisements not directly related to institutional academic quality and school-running standards;
- (3) Any occasion that may cause the public to mistakenly believe that IAPUC endorses the institution's financial status, investment value or non-educational services;
- (4) Political propaganda, religious promotion or other activities unrelated to educational functions.

Article 11 Norms for Citation and Declaration

(1) When citing their IQA accreditation status in written texts, institutions shall adopt accurate and complete expressions:

- Comprehensive Accreditation: "[Institution Name] is a comprehensively accredited institution certified by IAPUC-IQA"
- Formal Accreditation: "[Institution Name] is a formally accredited institution certified by IAPUC-IQA"
- Provisional Accreditation: "[Institution Name] is a provisionally accredited institution certified by IAPUC-IQA"

(2) Vague expressions such as "IAPUC-accredited" or "IQA accredited institution" are prohibited to avoid ambiguity regarding accreditation grade and status.

(3) Institutions shall ensure the timeliness of accreditation information in promotional content. If accreditation is nearing expiration and re-evaluation is pending, promotional materials shall indicate "Accreditation valid until [date]" or "Current accreditation validity period is expiring, re-evaluation in progress".

Chapter XII Mark Management Upon Accreditation Status Changes

Article 12 Types of Accreditation Status Changes

Accreditation status changes include:

- (1) Accreditation grade adjustment – upgrade from provisional to formal or comprehensive accreditation, downgrade from comprehensive or formal to provisional accreditation, or other grade adjustments;
- (2) Expiration of accreditation validity – normal expiry, early invalidation or overdue lapsed re-evaluation;

(3) Accreditation revocation – voluntary withdrawal, revocation due to non-compliance with standards, or revocation due to regulatory violations.

Article 13 Mark Usage Obligations Upon Status Changes

(1) Accreditation Upgrade: Upon receiving the upgrade notice, institutions may use the new grade Accreditation Mark from the new effective date and cease the use of the old grade Mark. All Mark replacements across all usage scenarios shall be completed within 60 days of the upgrade effective date.

(2) Accreditation Downgrade: Upon receiving the downgrade notice, institutions shall immediately (no later than 15 days after notice receipt) adopt the downgraded Mark version and corresponding annotations in all usage scenarios. For printed stock materials within a reasonable transition period (generally not exceeding 30 days after downgrade effectiveness), institutions may conduct remedial treatment via sticker coverage or supplementary explanations.

(3) Accreditation Expiry or Invalidation:

1. For normal accreditation expiry or lapsed re-evaluation: Institutions shall cease the use of the Mark in all newly released materials on the exact expiry date; the Mark displayed on digital channels such as official websites and social media shall be removed or updated with status annotations within 15 days after the expiry date.

2. For voluntary accreditation withdrawal: Institutions shall cease the use of the Mark in all newly released materials from the withdrawal effective date; the Mark on digital channels shall be removed within 15 days of the effective date.

(4) Accreditation Revocation:

1. Institutions shall immediately cease the use of the Mark in all newly released materials upon receiving the revocation notice;

2. All publicly displayed Marks (including official websites, social media and on-campus physical identifiers) shall be removed within 15 days of notice receipt;

3. Institutions shall issue official notifications of accreditation status changes to current students and recent graduates within 30 days of notice receipt;

4. If the institution files an appeal against the revocation decision, it shall prominently mark "Accreditation status pending appeal ruling" alongside all displayed Marks during the appeal review period, with equal visibility to the Mark itself;

5. If the final appeal ruling upholds the revocation, all Mark removals shall be completed within 15 days of ruling service;

6. Revoked institutions shall not claim "previously IAPUC-IQA accredited" in any scenario; however, they may truthfully and non-misleadingly state "Held IAPUC-IQA accreditation from [Year] to [Year], subsequently revoked" without implying ongoing valid accreditation.

Chapter V Third-Party Usage and Media Reporting

Article 14 General Prohibition on Third-Party Usage

Any third party other than accredited institutions (including but not limited to consulting agencies, admission agents, ranking bodies, publishers and media) shall not use the IAPUC-IQA Accreditation Mark in their publicity, products or services without written permission from IAPUC.

Article 15 Mark Usage in Media Reporting

(1) News media may reasonably cite and display official institutional images containing the Accreditation Mark when truthfully reporting on accredited institutions, provided that the original form of the Mark and the institutional original usage context are maintained.

(2) Media shall not intercept, extract or separately enlarge the Accreditation Mark from institutional logos to imply IAPUC endorsement of reported content.

(3) Third parties such as ranking bodies and education exhibition organizers shall apply to the IQA Office for usage permission if intending to use the Accreditation Mark as an identifier for "accredited institutions", and shall comply with the permitted usage methods and scope.

Article 16 Usage Restrictions for Cooperative Education Partners

Cooperative education partners of accredited institutions shall not use the IAPUC-IQA Accreditation Mark in their independent promotional materials unless all of the following conditions are simultaneously met:

- (1) The partner is substantially co-delivering a degree program covered by IQA accreditation with the accredited institution;
- (2) The IQA Office has granted written approval for the partner to use the Mark within a specified scope;
- (3) The partner clearly and visibly annotates in all usages that "This program is academically quality-assured by [Accredited Institution Name], which holds [Accreditation Grade] IAPUC-IQA accreditation".

Chapter VI Supervision and Violation Disposal

Article 17 Supervision Mechanism

(1) The IQA Office conducts ongoing supervision over Accreditation Mark usage through the following means:

- Regular random inspections of official websites and major promotional materials of accredited institutions;
- Acceptance and review of reports and complaints from students, the public and

third parties;

- Active monitoring of IAPUC-IQA Mark appearances in media reports and market publicity.

(2) The institutional quality representatives of accredited institutions bear internal supervision responsibilities for the compliance of institutional Mark usage.

Article 18 Types of Violations

The following acts constitute violations of the Accreditation Mark usage specifications:

(1) Unauthorized Usage: Use of the Accreditation Mark by non-accredited institutions or third parties without permission;

(2) Over-Scope Usage: Use of the Mark by accredited institutions on prohibited carriers or occasions;

(3) Mismatched Grade Usage: Use of a Mark version inconsistent with the institution's current actual accreditation grade (e.g., provisional accreditation institutions using the gold declaration Mark for formal accreditation without required annotations);

(4) Post-Expiry Usage: Failure to cease Mark usage within the specified time limit after accreditation expiry, invalidation or revocation;

(5) Distorted or Altered Usage: Presentation of the Mark in violation of visual standards;

(6) Misleading Usage: Any Mark usage that causes or may cause public misunderstanding of an institution's accreditation status, scope or implications;

(7) Forgery and Imitation: Forging the Accreditation Mark or using imitative designs to imply accredited status by non-accredited institutions;

(8) False Representation: Falsely claiming accreditation grade, scope or validity period in written statements.

Article 19 Violation Disposal

The IQA Office shall adopt the following disposal measures for verified violations based on the severity of circumstances:

Disposal Level	Applicable Circumstances	Disposal Measures
Written Reminder	Minor or initial violations caused by unintentional negligence with no substantial misleading consequences	Issue a written reminder and require rectification within 30 days

Rectification Notice	Obvious violations or incomplete rectification after prior reminder	Issue an official rectification notice requiring full correction within 30 days; record the violation in the institutional accreditation file
Violation Circular	Severe violations or repeated recidivism	Report to the Accreditation Decision Committee (ADC) and file a negative record in the institutional accreditation archive
Suspension of Mark Usage Rights	Malicious violations, fraudulent promotion via Mark usage or other serious breaches	Suspend the institution's Mark usage rights for a period determined by the circumstances and publish a violation notice on the official IAPUC website
Accreditation Revocation	Forgery of accreditation and Marks, deliberate fraud against students or the public, illegal use of the Mark, or other extremely serious violations	Initiate accreditation revocation procedures in accordance with relevant provisions of the <i>IAPUC-IQA Accreditation Procedure Specifications</i>

(1) The IQA Office shall grant institutions the right to statement and defense prior to taking disposal measures.

(2) Institutions dissatisfied with disposal decisions may file appeals in accordance with the *IQA Accreditation Appeal, Complaint and Dispute Resolution Management Measures*.

(3) IAPUC reserves the right to safeguard Mark rights and interests through legal means against violations by non-accredited institutions or third parties, including but not limited to issuing cease-and-desist letters, claiming compensation for damages and pursuing corresponding legal liabilities.

Article 20 Reporting Mechanism

Any person may report suspected unauthorized or non-compliant usage of the Accreditation Mark to the IQA Office via the official IAPUC website or written submission. Reports may be submitted in real-name or anonymous form. The IQA Office shall register and review all received reports and provide confidentiality protection for real-name reporters.

Chapter VII Supplementary Provisions

Article 21 Authorization Revocation for Mark Usage

In addition to automatic adjustment of Mark usage rights due to accreditation status changes, IAPUC reserves the right to independently revoke Mark usage authorization under the following circumstances:

- (1) The institution fails to effectively rectify violations after receiving disposal sanctions for breaching this Code;
- (2) The institution uses the Accreditation Mark for illegal activities;
- (3) Other circumstances where continued authorization is reasonably deemed by IAPUC to seriously undermine the credibility of the accreditation system.

Article 22 Relationship with Other Normative Documents

This Code forms a unified IAPUC-IQA normative system with the following documents:

Document	Relationship with This Code
<i>IAPUC-IQA Accreditation Manual</i>	This Code elaborates on post-accreditation supervision and accreditation status publicity provisions stipulated in the Accreditation Manual
<i>IAPUC-IQA Accreditation Procedure Specifications</i>	The granting, modification and revocation of accreditation status shall comply with the Procedure Specifications, while this Code specifies Mark management obligations upon status changes
<i>Guidelines for Annual Information Disclosure and Material Change Reporting by Accredited Institutions</i>	Mark usage compliance in annual information disclosure constitutes part of information disclosure quality assessment
<i>IQA Accreditation Appeal, Complaint and Dispute Resolution Management Measures</i>	Appeal procedures for violation disposal under this Code are aligned with the above Measures

Article 23 Code Interpretation and Revision

- (1) This Code shall be interpreted by the IAPUC Quality Accreditation Committee.
- (2) IAPUC reserves the right to revise this Code in response to brand management needs and practical development. Revised versions shall take effect upon approval by the IAPUC Council with an appropriate transition period.

Article 24 Effective Date and Transition Arrangements

(1) This Code shall take effect upon approval by the IAPUC Council.

(2) Institutions already holding valid accreditation at the time of Code implementation shall complete compliance self-inspection of existing Mark usage practices within 90 days of implementation and submit a self-inspection report to the IQA Office. For non-major non-compliance issues identified during self-inspection, institutions may submit a rectification plan together with the self-inspection report and will not be held liable for violations during the rectification period (generally not exceeding 90 days).

Appendix A: IAPUC-IQA Accreditation Mark Visual Standards

- Full-color standard version Mark plate
- Monochrome dark version Mark plate
- Reverse white version Mark plate
- Safe space and minimum size schematic diagram
- Explanation of differences between Mark versions for various accreditation grades
- Prohibited usage example diagram (demonstration of non-compliant effects such as stretching, color alteration and splitting)

Appendix B: Mark Usage Application and Filing Form

1. Basic institutional information
2. Current accreditation grade and validity period
3. Mark usage plan (usage carriers, estimated dissemination scope)
4. Quality representative signature
5. IQA Office approval column

Document Approval

Role	Name/Position	Date
Compiled by	IAPUC Quality Accreditation Committee Brand Management Standards Working Group	May 2026
Reviewed by	IAPUC Quality Accreditation Committee	Pending
Approved by	IAPUC Council	Pending

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