

# **Indonesian Accreditation Agency for Higher Education in Health (IAAHEH)**



## **ACADEMIC PAPER**

**MIDWIFERY EDUCATION  
PROGRAM ACCREDITATION**

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## FOREWORD

The Indonesian Accreditation Agency for Higher Education in Health (IAAHEH), as an external quality assurance institution for higher education in health study programs, has been continuously striving to enhance the quality of its accreditation services for higher education study programs in health and to gain recognition at both the national and international levels. Currently, IAAHEH has developed international-level accreditation instruments for health study programs, including midwifery education programs.

This academic paper describes the profile and history of IAAHEH in detail, the background of the agency as an international accreditation body and the process of international accreditation held by IAAHEH. This academic paper was designed to guide midwifery education study programs and assessors to understand the concepts and principles of the accreditation process. It was also equipped with the procedure of accreditation. It is believed that this academic paper will be a strong foundation to understand the aim and benefits of accreditation, and continuous quality improvement of midwifery education.

This academic paper is written by a team of midwifery education experts and practitioners who come from several accredited universities. I extend my thanks for their commitment to writing the book. I believe the expectation of the writers to provide comprehensive basic information on the IAAHEH accreditation program will positively impact midwifery study programs to always improve their quality of education to produce qualified midwifery graduates.

Jakarta, July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Prof. Usman Chatib Warsa, MD., PhD.  
The Chairman of IAAHEH.

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# Chapter 1. IAAHEH History and Profile

## 1.1 History

The establishment of IAAHEH was facilitated and funded by the Government of Republic Indonesia through a world-bank funded project, namely the Health Profession Education Quality Project (HPEQ) which ran from 2009-2014. For this purpose, international consultants were recruited, i.e., Prof Robert Woollard and Dan Hunt from the Liaison Committee for Medical Education (LCME) in 2011. A Project Team was also sent to visit the LCME Office in Washington to learn how a non-government accreditation agency operates. After several workshops involving seven professional organizations and seven educational school's associations were conducted, 14 organizations signed a declaration in 2011 to establish an independent accreditation agency for higher education in health.

Indonesian Accreditation Agency For Higher Education in Health (IAAHEH) or LAM-PTKes was eventually established in 2014 by 7 Health Professional Organizations and 7 Association of Education Schools in Health among those were Medicine (Indonesian Medical Association and Association of Medical Education Schools), Dentistry (Indonesian Dental Association, Association of Dental Education Schools), Nursing (Indonesian Nurses Association and Association of Indonesian Nursing Education Schools), Midwifery (Indonesian Midwives Association and Indonesian Midwifery Education Association), Pharmacy (Indonesian Pharmacist Association and Association of Indonesian Pharmacy Education Schools), Public Health (Indonesian Public Health Association and Association of Indonesian Public Health Education Schools), and Nutrition (Indonesian Nutrition Association and Association of Indonesian Nutrition Education Schools).

## 1.2 Profile

The primary task of IAAHEH is to accredit all health study programs in Indonesia which includes the veterinary study programs that joined in 2020. The number of health study programs has increased from 2950 study programs in 2015 to 5300 study programs in June 2024. At the end of May 2024, the IAAHEH accredited 4547 Study Programs in Health covering different higher education types (vocational, academic, and professional) and programs (diploma, bachelor, master, doctoral, profession, specialist, and sub-specialist). These programs must re-accredit every 5 years before the accreditation status expires or one year after the accreditation decision if they intend to improve their accreditation status.

IAAHEH's vision is to become a globally acknowledged accreditation school to facilitate quality higher education study programs in health. IAAHEH's missions are: (a) to develop IAAHEH in a professional and accountable manner; (b) to improve the quality of accreditation services for higher education study programs in health; (c) to increase the network and recognition of IAAHEH at national and global levels. The core values of IAAHEH are "amanah" (accountable and reliable) and "mandiri" (independent).

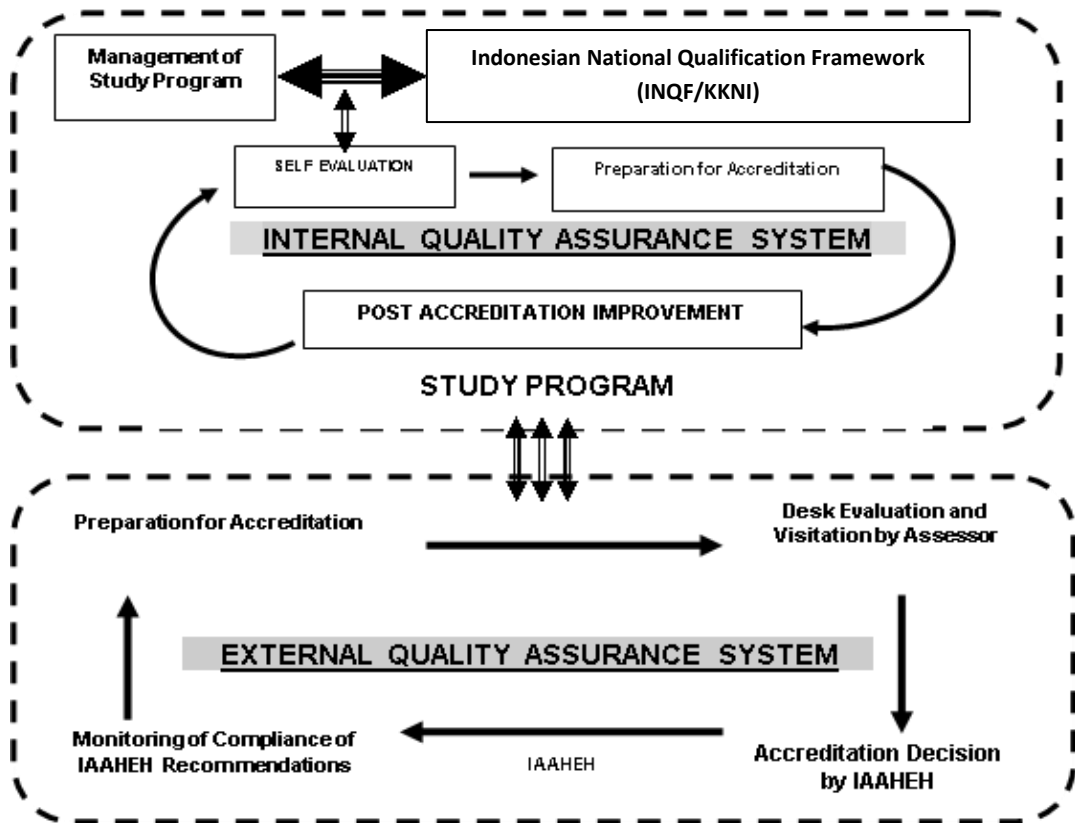
### 1.2.1 Operational Values

In delivering its services, IAAHEH is driven by its operational values as follows:

#### a) The Culture of Continuous Quality Improvement

The Culture of Continuous Quality Improvement is the commitment to improve the performance of study programs so that quality becomes a culture in all study programs. Continuous Quality Improvement is achieved when there is a close connection between the internal quality assurance system and the external quality assurance system. IAAHEH believes that the internal quality assurance system is the starting point for external quality assessment. This belief is applied in the accreditation process, which begins with the study

program's Self-Evaluation Report based on the results of their internal quality assurance system. This report will be used as the basis for the desk evaluation. Upon the completion of site visits and the validation process by the Accreditation Board, IAAHEH announces the accreditation decision and the recommendations for the improvement of the study program. This relationship is depicted in the following diagram:



*Figure 1. The Relationship between Internal Quality Assurance System and External Quality Assurance System*

#### **b) Quality Cascade**

Quality that is interrelated between the quality of higher education in health with the quality of medical and health practices and eventually the quality of community health (Quality Cascade). The accreditation system ensures the quality of schools will produce quality graduates who will deliver quality medical and health practices.

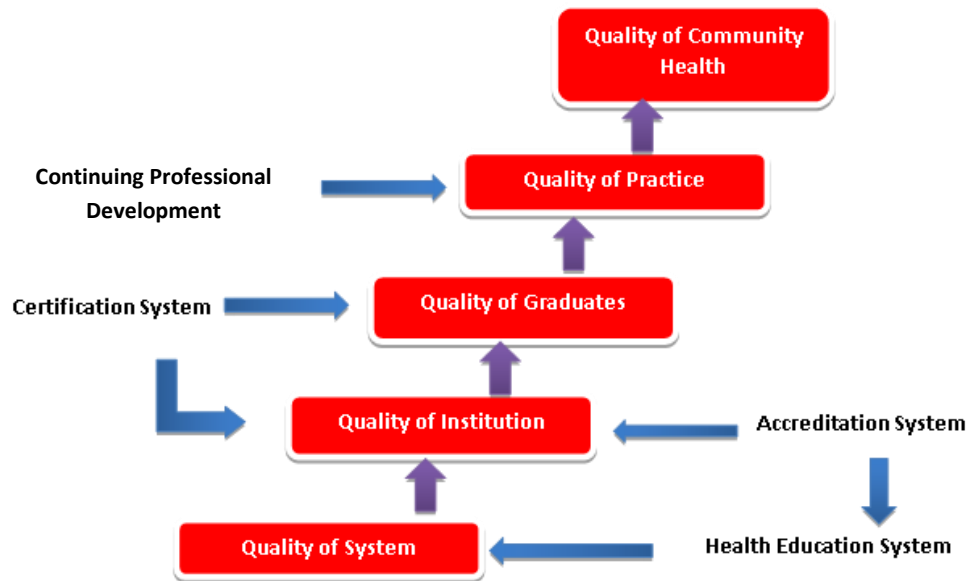


Figure 2. Quality Cascade

### c) The Conceptualization - Production - Usability Concept

The concept of production and use of the health profession which demands continuity between the career paths of health workers from education, graduation, and placement to professional development (Conceptualization - Production - Usability (CPU):

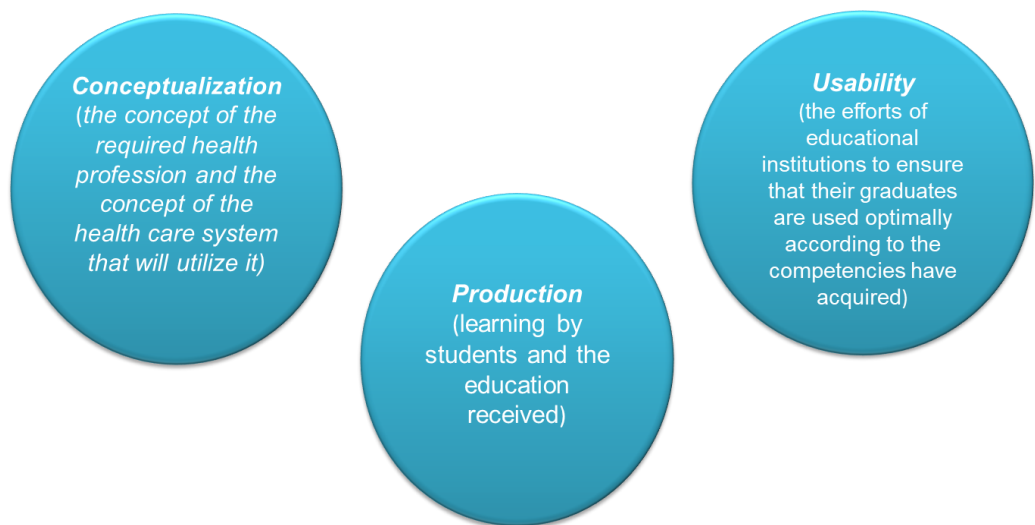
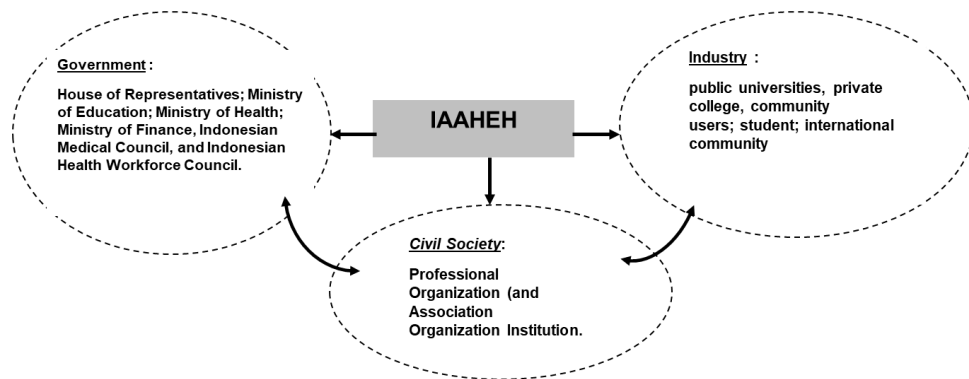


Figure 3. Conceptualization-Production-Usability

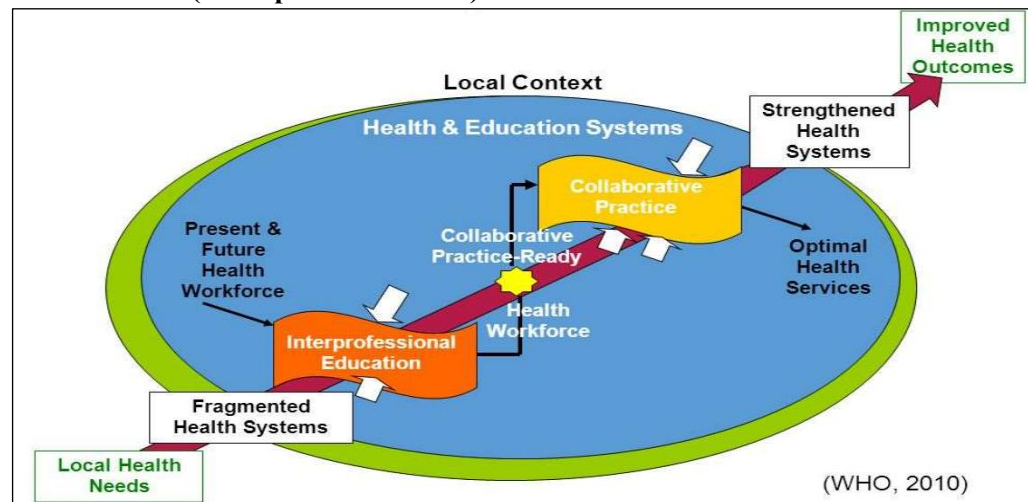
**d) Trusted by all stakeholders (Trustworthy)**



*Figure 4. Relationship between IAAHEH and Stakeholders*

IAAHEH strives to gain trust from the different stakeholders, namely the government, higher education schools and academic communities nationally and internationally, as well as civil society which include Professional Organizations, Association of Education Schools, the Indonesian Medical Council, and the Indonesian Health Workforce Council.

**e) Interprofessional Education (IPE) as the Foundation for Interprofessional Collaboration (Inter-professionalism).**



*Figure 5. Relationship between Interprofessional education and interprofessional collaboration*

IAAHEH encourages the implementation of IPE in higher education in health by including IPE as one of the scoring elements in the accreditation criteria. IAAHEH believes that implementing IPE will push the realization of Interprofessional Collaboration which will increase the quality of service and therefore improve patients' outcomes.

**1.2.2 National Recognition**

IAAHEH has obtained a number of recognitions from national agencies. Recognition by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology. The approval to establish IAAHEH



from the Indonesian Government was obtained through the Ministerial Decree No. 291/P/2014 about Operational IAAHEH.

#### Recognition by the Ministry of Human Rights and Laws

The approval to operate legally as an accreditation agency was obtained from the Ministry of Human Rights and Laws through Ministerial Decree No. AHU-30.AH.01.07

The decree of the Ministry of Education and Culture No 83/P/2020 on International Accreditation Agency implied that since IAAHEH has been recognized by WFME and APQR, it can operate as an international accreditation agency in Indonesia. WFME and APQR are included in list A of the Decree.

The decree of the Ministry of Education and Culture No 385/P/2021 on Criteria and Procedures for Recognition of International Accreditation Institutions.

The decree of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology No 236/O/2024 on International Accreditation Agencies. This decree gives IAAHEH an authority to conduct international accreditation for study programs in faculties of medicine in Indonesia and other countries.

### **1.2.3 Recognition by the International Agencies**

Internationally, IAAHEH is recognized by Asia Pacific Quality Register (APQR) for the duration of 2018 – 2023. APQR is a non-governmental and non-profit network in Asia Pacific that has been striving for “Enhancing the Quality of Higher Education in the Asia-Pacific Region” and "Dissolving Boundaries for a Quality Region".

IAAHEH is also recognized by WFME under the WFME Recognition Program until 2028. WFME is the only global organization established by the WHO and WMA in 1972 that is mandated to safeguard the quality of medical education.

Currently IAAHEH has also gained recognition by the AQAF. AQAF is ASEAN Quality Assurance Framework - an initiative under the EU Share Program. The purpose of AQAF is to provide a common core of QA principles that demonstrates good international practices and serves as a benchmark and neutral point of reference for national quality assurance agencies.

## Chapter 2. Purpose and Benefit

International accreditation is the accreditation that is conducted by an accreditation agency that operates outside its jurisdiction and has a legal mandate by an authority from its country of origin and is recognized by the recipient country.

IAAHEH has been given a legal mandate by the Ministry of Education, Research and Technology through the Ministerial Decree of the Ministry of Education and Culture No 83/P/2020 on International Accreditation Agency, No. 385/P/2021 on Criteria and Procedures for Recognition of International Accreditation Institutions, and Ministerial Decree of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology No 236/O/2024. IAAHEH may operate in Indonesia to conduct accreditation based on international standards and best practices of international accreditation procedures.

Midwifery is defined as “skilled, knowledgeable and compassionate care for childbearing women, newborn infants and families across the continuum from pre-pregnancy, pregnancy, birth, postpartum and the early weeks of life” (WHO, 2021). The evidence shows us that midwifery plays a “vital” role, and when provided by well educated, trained, regulated, licensed midwives, is associated with improved quality of care and rapid and sustained reductions in maternal and newborn mortality.

Midwives are essential to the provision of quality of care, in all settings, globally. All women and newborns have the right to a quality of care that enables a positive childbirth experience that includes respect and dignity, a companion of choice, clear and effective communication, pain relief strategies, and mobility in labor and birth position of choice. Midwives are the professionals of choice for childbearing women in all areas of the world. This universal standard is based on initial and ongoing midwifery education development. The midwifery model of care is based on respect for human dignity, compassion and the promotion of human rights for all people. Midwives offer care based on a philosophy, which influences the model of midwifery care.

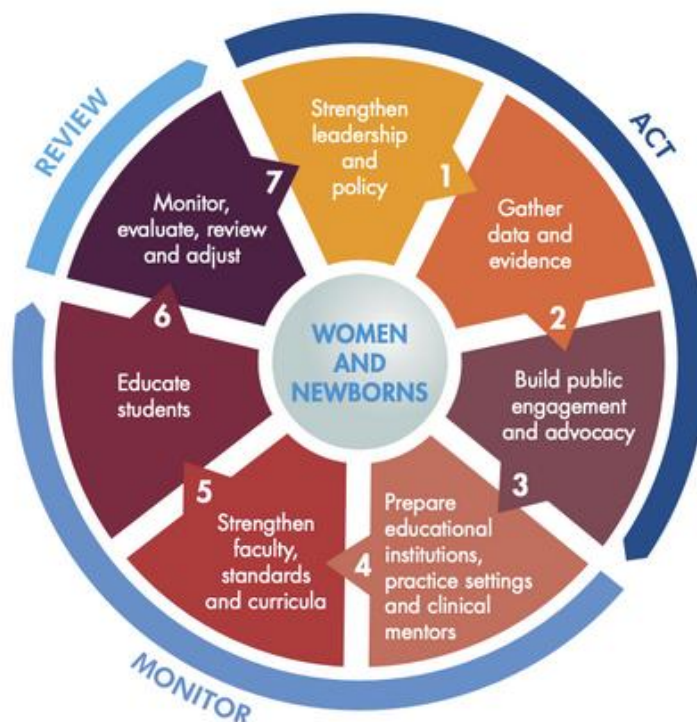
### **Philosophy of Midwifery Care (ICM, 2025)**

- a. Pregnancy, childbirth and the postnatal period are usually normal physiological processes.
- b. Pregnancy, childbirth and the postnatal period are profound experiences, which carry significant meaning for women, girls, gender diverse people, their families and their communities.
- c. Midwives are the most appropriate care providers to attend women during pregnancy, childbirth and the postnatal period.
- d. Midwifery care promotes, protects and supports women’s reproductive and sexual health and human rights, and respects ethnic and cultural diversity. It is based on the ethical principles of justice, equity, and respect for human dignity.
- e. Midwifery care is holistic and continuous in nature, grounded in an understanding of the social, emotional, cultural, spiritual, psychological and physical experiences of women.
- f. Midwifery care is emancipatory as it protects and enhances the health and social status of women and builds women’s self confidence in their ability to cope with pregnancy, childbirth and the postnatal period.
- g. Midwifery care takes place in partnership with women, recognizing the right to self-determination, and is respectful, personalized, continuous and non-authoritarian.
- h. Ethical and competent midwifery care is informed and guided by formal and continuous education, scientific research and application of evidence

Strengthening midwifery education to international standards is a key step to improving quality of care and reducing maternal and newborn mortality and morbidity. Midwifery education is a key solution to the challenge of providing universal and quality maternal and newborn care to meet the Sustainable Development Goals. While improving access to care is critical, ensuring good quality of care has an even greater impact in terms of lives saved.

The Framework for Action to Strengthen Midwifery Education is a guide to develop high-quality, sustainable pre- and in-service education to save lives. It has been developed by WHO, UNFPA, UNICEF and ICM and includes a seven-step action plan for use by all stakeholders in maternal and newborn health.

### The Framework for Action to Strengthen Midwifery Education



#### Midwifery education is designed to address three strategic priorities:

- All midwives should be educated to high standards and enabled to practice to their full scope
- Midwives should be involved in education policy at the highest level
- Education processes should be coordinated and aligned

#### The purposes of Midwifery Education (ICM 2021) are:

- Prepare students for entry to practice as a midwife;
- Promote high-quality teaching and learning processes;
- Ensure the ICM Essential Competencies for Midwifery Practice (2025) are incorporated into the curriculum;
- Provide a framework for designing, implementing, and evaluating the quality of a midwifery education program;
- Assist programs to engage in continuous quality improvement as an ongoing process;

- f. Enable systematic reporting of quality indicators to the public, the midwifery profession, the health care system, and the educational institution; and
- g. Contribute to systematic improvement of midwifery education programs across the world;
- h. Promote a common understanding and approach to midwifery education program;
- i. Guide the development of new programs or the restructuring of existing programs; and
- j. Assist midwifery accrediting agencies, government health/education departments and education institutions within countries/states to develop or revise their own standards.

Accreditation is a review process to determine if educational programs meet defined standards of quality. Accreditation provides the educational institution an opportunity for critical analysis leading to improve quality, services, and operations. Accreditation will encourage confidence that an institution's or program's presentation of the education it provides is fair and accurate, including the description of services available to students and the accomplishments of its graduates. Once achieved, accreditation is not permanent and is renewed periodically to ensure that the quality of the educational program is maintained.

Study program accreditation is a process of comprehensive evaluation and assessment of a study program's commitment to the quality and capacity of managing a higher education, and to determine the feasibility of an academic program. Evaluation and assessment in the context of study program accreditation is conducted by a team of assessors consisting of peer experts and/or experts who understand the implementation of the study program's academic program. Decisions regarding quality are based on the evaluation and assessment of various evidence related to the established criteria and based on the reasoning and consideration of peer experts. The required evidence includes a written report prepared by an accredited, verified and validated study program through visits or field assessments by the assessor team to the location of the study program.

## 2.1 Purpose

The quality of the study program is a reflection of the totality of conditions and characteristics of input, process, output, outcome, and impact, or performance of the study program which is measured based on a number of set criteria.

International accreditation is one of strategies for supporting WHO Global Strategy for Human Resources for Health in 2030 as it states that all schools have to be accredited, therefore the availability of accreditation is very important. The ICM also encourages the midwifery schools to be standardized globally. Nevertheless, currently, not all governments have provided accreditation services to health professions due to several reasons, such as the size of the country, different priorities, the limited number of schools, etc. Therefore, IAAHEH provides accreditation services to such countries or regions, so that it may support the WHO Global Strategy for Human Resources in Health goal in 2030.

The purposes of international accreditation are:

- a. To prepare the Midwifery Study Programs to obtain a higher international reputation
- b. To facilitate the graduates of Midwifery Study Programs for international recognition
- c. To ensure that the accredited midwifery study program has fulfilled the Midwifery Education Standard by ICM
- d. To encourage study programs to have continuous improvement and to maintain their 'excellence accreditation statuses.

- e. Accreditation results can be used as a basis for consideration in tertiary institution credit transfers, provision of assistance and allocation of funds, as well as recognition from other bodies or agencies.

## **2.2 Benefit**

The study program has the option to apply for international accreditation or national accreditation. For the study program that opts for international accreditation, they will get 'excellence' status if they are fully accredited.

There are some benefits of international accreditation of Indonesia Undergraduate Programs in Midwifery Education by IAAHEH, as follows:

- The study programs that have been accredited internationally have more opportunities to develop international collaboration with overseas Study Programs or international organizations.
- The graduates from the study programs recognized internationally as their study programs are listed in the list of IAAHEH international websites and IAAHEH's affiliated international agencies and organizations, e.g., APQR, etc.

## Chapter 3. Concept of IAAHEH Quality Assurance

Being recognized by several international agencies as having met the standards of international accreditation practices, in line with its vision to play a role globally in facilitating the enhancement of quality in midwifery and health profession education, IAAHEH intends to expand its accreditation services to accreditation agencies outside Indonesia's jurisdiction. IAAHEH aims to capitalize on its experiences to promote quality and assist accreditation agencies from other countries to identify their strengths and potential so that quality education can be uplifted. IAAHEH also supports Sustainable Development Goals No 4, i.e., quality education. Quality education for the Midwifery and health profession is very important in ensuring that the health development of a nation can be realized to achieve 'health for all' and to fulfill the call from Alma Ata Declaration in 1978 that 'health is a fundamental human right'.

IAAHEH realizes that there are countries that do not yet have a national accreditation system. Some factors may include: the size of the country and the number of schools in midwifery education and health professions, which cause the cost of setting up a national system to be too expensive and inefficient. These countries should be assisted in being able to take part in external systems of quality assurance as one of the terms of obtaining recognition from its stakeholders as a credible educational school.

### 3.1 Concepts of Quality

There are four groups of stakeholders that must be considered when defining quality: providers (e.g., funding bodies and the community, taxpayers); users of products (e.g., students); users of outputs (e.g., employers); and employees of the sector (e.g., academics and administrators) (Srikanthan & Dalrymple, 2003). Each group has a different perspective on quality.

Quality is not static but rather a dynamic, ever-changing pursuit of excellence that must be considered in the context of the larger educational, economic, political, and social landscape (Bobby, 2014; Ewell, 2010).

As shown in Table 1, the literature revealed four broad conceptualizations of quality: quality as purposeful, exceptional, transformative, and accountable.

**Table 1. Definition of Quality**

Classifications	Definition
Purposeful	Schools' products and services conform to a stated mission/vision or a set of specifications, requirements, or standards, including those defined by accrediting and/or regulatory bodies
Exceptional	Schools' products and services achieve distinction and exclusivity through the fulfilment of high standards
Transformative	Schools' products and services affect positive change in student learning (affective, cognitive, and psycho-motor domains) and personal and professional potential
Accountable	Schools are accountable to stakeholders for the optimal use of resources and the delivery of accurate educational products and services with zero defects.

An accreditation agency needs to have a clear definition of quality. IAAHEH upholds the definition of quality as ‘fitness for purpose’, which belongs to the category of a purposeful approach. IAAHEH believes that every action, activity, and program carried out by an institution must be directed toward achieving the institution’s mission and the objectives of its study programs. In addition, IAAHEH perceives quality as accountability to both internal and external stakeholders. Educational institutions should ensure that resources are adequate and optimally utilized to deliver high-quality educational products and services

### **3.2 Quality Assurance System for Midwifery Education**

Quality assurance (QA) in higher education is not a simple one-dimensional notion about academic quality. Given the varied needs and expectations of a wide range of stakeholders, quality in higher education can be said to be multi-dimensional.

The World Declaration on Higher Education for the Twenty-First Century: Vision and Action (October 1998), Article 11, Qualitative Evaluation considers quality in higher education to be:

“A multi-dimensional concept, which should embrace all its functions and activities, teaching and academic program, research and scholarship, staffing, students, buildings, facilities, equipment, services to the community, and the academic environment. Internal self-evaluation and external review, conducted openly by independent specialists, if possible, with international expertise, are vital for enhancing the quality”.

To develop, implement, sustain, and improve the level of quality in higher education, schools need to install a rigorous quality assurance system. The Regional Report of Asia and the Pacific (UNESCO, 2003) defines quality assurance in higher education as “the systematic management and assessment procedures to monitor the performance of higher educational schools.”

#### **3.2.1 Internal Quality Assurance System**

Each midwifery school is obliged to have an internal quality assurance system in place. An internal quality assurance system as defined above is an ongoing, continuous process of evaluating (assessing, monitoring, guaranteeing, maintaining, and improving) the quality of midwifery education. This implies there should be some structures to be assigned tasks and responsibilities to carry out QA functions. There should be some agreed procedures to ensure that educational programs are implemented as planned, and if there is force majeure, certain risks and mitigation plans are already in place.

#### **3.2.2 External Quality Assurance System**

Quality Assurance Systems in higher education are usually referred to as accreditation. In assessing the quality of health professional education, IAAHEH will consider the internal quality assurance system of the midwifery study programs during the accreditation process.



## **Chapter 4. IAAHEH International Accreditation**

### **4.1 The Principles**

The basic requirement is that the accreditation system must be trusted and recognized by all: midwifery schools, students, the profession, the health care system, and the public. Trust must be based on the academic competence, efficiency, and fairness of the system. These characteristics of the system must be known by the users, and consequently, the system must possess a high degree of transparency.

### **4.2 The Governance**

The accreditation system must operate within a legal framework. The system must be under either a governmental law or decree; the statutory instrument will most probably be rules and regulations approved by the government. The legal framework must secure the autonomy of the accreditation system and ensure the independence of its quality assessment from the government, the midwifery schools, and the profession. The legal framework must authorize the accrediting body to set standards, conduct periodic evaluations and confer, deny, and withdraw accreditation of midwifery schools and their program in midwifery education. The framework must lay down the size and composition of the accreditation committee or council and must allow the committee or council to decide on the by-laws specifying the procedure for accreditation, including the appointment of a review or site-visit teams. Furthermore, the legal framework should include rules regarding the declaration of conflict of interest and the handling of complaints.

The accreditation body or agency must have an accreditation board, committee or council, and administrative staff or unit. For specified tasks, such as external evaluations, a review or site-visit team must be appointed by the accreditation committee or council. The accreditation council consists of three members. The members must be highly esteemed and respected within the profession, and preferably of international standing. All members must have an educational background in midwifery.

### **4.3 International Accreditation Standards**

IAAHEH international accreditation standards have been developed with WFME as the main reference. Whilst the IAAHEH international accreditation standards for midwifery schools have been developed by adapting and adjusting various standards as references such as the ICM-MEAP, ACME, ANMEC, and CAMEd for global standards in order to improve quality in basic midwifery education, with the necessary national and/or regional specifications or a comparable set of standards.

#### **4.3.1 Principles-based Standards**

A principles-based approach seeks to set principles that specify the intention of regulation, rather than set rules detailing requirements of health professional education programs. Principles-based standards are not prescriptive and detailed but are stated at a broad level of generality. Those standards address the components of the educational program, such as student support, a curriculum model, or an assessment system. However, those standards do not detail how support should be offered, what curriculum model should be adopted, nor what assessment methods should be used. Those standards ask that the midwifery school states its mission and values, but these do not define what those missions or values should be. Those standards are contextual decisions for local agencies and schools. Therefore, principles-based standards can meet the



different needs of regulatory agencies and midwifery schools around the world, whatever their resources, contexts, purposes, and stages of development. This principles-based approach is designed to guide agencies and schools in any context. They might be used for new midwifery schools, established midwifery schools, and new or established regulatory systems. The new standards invite schools or organizations that wish to use them to interpret them for their own culture, resources, aspirations, and values, while still addressing the specified areas of performance.

#### **4.3.2 Adoption of Global Standards for Midwifery Education**

IAAHEH has adapted and adopted the standards of WFME, ICM-MEAP, ACME, ANMEC, and CAMEd for Basic Midwifery Education.

The following IAAHEH criteria, are:

Criteria 1: Mission and Values

Criteria 2: Curriculum

Criteria 3: Assessment

Criteria 4: Students

Criteria 5: Academic and Support staff

Criteria 6: Educational Resources

Criteria 7: Quality Assurance

Criteria 8: Governance and Administration

#### **4.3.3 Outline of IAAHEH International Accreditation Procedure**

**The following Outline of IAAHEH International Accreditation Procedure are:**

Stage 1. Eligibility and Registration

Stage 2. Online Nurturing

Stage 3. Preliminary and Completing Self-Evaluation Report (SER)

Stage 4. Desk Evaluation (DE)

Stage 5. Survey Visit

Stage 6. Survey Report

Stage 7. Decision of Accreditation Results (Online)

Stage 8. Appeal and Complaints

Stage 9. Post Accreditation Monitoring

The total process requires 36 weeks.

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- Siti Nur Mala Sari
- Siti Sunya Kumala
- Desy Aryani Putri
- Ranti Prahyameita