



# BUSINESS GRADUATES

ASSOCIATION

LEADERS NEVER STOP LEARNING

## Accreditation Guidance

Responsible  
Management



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Learning

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# 1. GUIDANCE FOR BUSINESS SCHOOLS

## 1.1 Introduction

The Business Graduates Association is an international impartial authority on business education, and is part of the Association of MBAs and Business Graduates Association (AMBA & BGA). The organisation was established in 1967. BGA's charitable objective is to advance the principles of responsible management, positive impact and lifelong learning at institutions offering business and management education. BGA is a leading professional membership association connecting Business Schools and employers, students and graduates.

### 1.1.1 Governance

AMBA & BGA is a charity registered in the UK, governed by a Board of Trustees known as the International Management Board (IMB). A full list of the organisation's trustees can be found on the BGA website at <https://businessgraduatesassociation.com/about-us/team/>

Accreditation oversight is devolved by the IMB to the BGA Accreditation Board (BAB), a sub-committee of the International Accreditation Advisory Board (IAAB). The AMBA & BGA Articles of Association can be found on the [BGA website](#).

### 1.1.2 Who is this document for?

This document is for Business School staff who are considering accreditation of their Business School or those with a re-accreditation visit due.

### 1.1.3 What is the document for?

This document is intended as an introduction to BGA accreditation only. It should not replace communication with BGA staff who can provide support and critical information before the BGA assessment visit.

The guidance in this document provides details about the BGA accreditation criteria such as expected documentation to be submitted, charts, and descriptions required under each section.

BGA ensures high quality, timely and customer-focused accreditation based on a unique formula of a dedicated account manager for support and advice, a Peer Review Team (PRT) and appropriate documentation. Three types of accreditation are covered in this document:

**1) Accreditation of new institutions:** Institutions following this route will be required to make a full application through all three stages of the process, submit relevant documentation including their Continuous Impact Model (CIM), Self-Assessment Form (SAF) and Self-Audit Report (SAR), and receive a visit from a BGA PRT.

**2) Re-accreditation:** BGA accreditation is awarded for a defined period of time, and institutions are prompted when their accreditation is due for renewal. Institutions will need to complete the final stage of the process and also submit relevant documentation including the SAF and SAR and receive a visit from a BGA PRT.

**3) AMBA & BGA joint accreditation:** AMBA-accredited institutions can apply for AMBA & BGA joint accreditation. The joint accreditation emphasises the importance of an institution's overall impact and value creation for students, employers, and communities, with a focus on responsible management, while maintaining the same level of rigour found in AMBA's accreditation of post-graduate business programmes (primarily the MBA). The process has been designed to minimise work by combining the AMBA & BGA accreditation principles and required documentation, as well as streamlining the creation of impact metrics.

A joint accreditation can only be started if an institution is already AMBA or BGA accredited. Both accreditation processes will be handled separately if an institution wishes to undergo both accreditations for the first time. It is therefore recommended that an institution undergoes one of the two accreditation's separately in the first instance.

A joint accreditation requires the following documents:

- AMBA Self-Assessment Form
- BGA Self-Assessment Form (for the second sample programme)
- AMBA Self-Audit Report
- Impact & Responsible Management Exercise (Found in the BGA Self-Assessment Form)

Care has been taken to ensure that the rigour of the process is maintained. While every effort will be made to add significant advice on quality enhancement during the joint accreditation (which is an important element of both AMBA and BGA accreditation process) the focused nature of this visit will be primarily based on quality assurance.

For a comprehensive review of the AMBA accreditation criteria, please see the [AMBA website](#) for further details.

### **Institution definition**

An 'institution' is classified as any degree-awarding organisation such as a Business School, university, or similar entity at which the business degree is regionally or nationally recognised. BGA will work with the organisational entity, or Business School, to determine the most appropriate parameters for the institutional scope.

## 2. CORE PRINCIPLES OF BGA ACCREDITATION

### 2.1 Rationale

BGA's rigorous assessment criteria ensure that only institutions who can fully demonstrate their quality are accredited. BGA's accreditation is focused on measuring changes in impact, developing feedback loops, and applying feedback to improve against BGA's accreditation criteria. This consultative, in-depth and detailed approach means that the highest standards of teaching and learning are guaranteed by BGA accreditation.

BGA believes that institutions should demonstrate best industry practice and understand changing trends to innovate and continuously meet market demands. The BGA accreditation process reflects this commitment to fostering innovation and challenges institutions to continuously perform at the highest level.

### 2.2 Guiding principles

The BGA accreditation process is designed to provide stakeholders such as potential students and employers with a quality indicator so that they can make informed choices and decisions. BGA represents its stakeholders by ensuring that BGA only accredits institutions which demonstrate current best practice in business and management education, including a clear grasp on responsible management impact, coverage of relevant syllabus topics, and a provision of support for students and alumni which enhance the overall learning experience. The BGA accreditation process also emphasises that institutions have a clear grasp of their key strategic objectives, and can provide relevant impact metrics that showcase their ability to meet their objectives.

As a registered charity, accreditation also facilitates BGA's work to improve standards in business education and share best practice with emerging markets and developing Business Schools. BGA's experienced peer review teams, thought leadership and research, and representation of the business education sector all contribute to achieving this.

The accreditation process is meant to both examine and consult the institution, where it receives recommendations in terms of programme and curriculum design, methods on teaching and delivery, alumni services, admissions strategies, and much more.

The BGA accreditation criteria is overseen by the BGA Accreditation Board (BAB) which is formed of deans and senior academics from AMBA & BGA's global network of accredited Business Schools. Relevance and consistency is key to the accreditation process; the accreditation criteria are reviewed fully every five years. The BAB will conduct the next full review of the BGA accreditation criteria in 2024, and will include extensive consultation with key stakeholders; employers, graduates, students and Business Schools.

## 3. ACCREDITATION PROCESS

### 3.1 New institutions

There are three stages for institutions without prior BGA accreditation. At each stage there are documents to submit and corresponding payments in order to progress to the next stage. The three stages are:

- Application stage
- Development stage
- Assessment stage

Institutions must be fully paid members of BGA before they can initiate BGA accreditation. In addition to this, they must also meet the following eligibility criteria:

- i) The institution must have been in continuous operation for at least five years
- ii) The institution must possess degree-awarding powers (in events of not having this, schools should obtain a recommendation letter from an AMBA or BGA accredited Business School and provide a letter for the strategic reasons of not having degree-awarding powers)
- iii) The institution must have graduated at least three student cohorts from one of its programmes
- iv) The institution must have audited financial statements showcasing financial sustainability

### 3.2 Application stage

Interested institutions are advised to first contact the BGA accreditation team at [accreditation@businessgraduatesassociation.com](mailto:accreditation@businessgraduatesassociation.com) so that they may discuss the mission and key strategic objectives of the institution and the relevant BGA accreditation criteria with the senior management team of the institution. This time can be used to answer any questions regarding the criteria or process. The BGA team is also happy to meet with senior members of the institution at BGA's London office and correspond via e-mail and telephone. BGA accreditation staff may also be able to visit the institution, even if it is based overseas, under certain circumstances.

Once the institution is ready to make a formal application, please contact BGA at [accreditation@businessgraduatesassociation.com](mailto:accreditation@businessgraduatesassociation.com) so that it can be allocated a specific account manager who will progress the application through to completion.

New institutions must confirm that they understand the BGA accreditation process and criteria by sending a formal letter of intent, agreeing to the relevant terms and conditions. An example of this can be found in Appendix 2. The institution will also be asked to submit their accreditation application form, as well as a signed copy of the BGA Standard Assessment Costs. All documents are easily accessible online on the [BGA accreditation page](#).

The BGA account manager will be able to provide the institution with guidance and support when completing the forms, which is used to determine that

- i) The main eligibility criteria for accreditation are being met by the institution
- ii) The institution does not progress any further and complete unnecessary work or payments without this check being carried out by a member of BGA staff.

Once the application form has been reviewed, and any issues resolved, the institution will be formally invited to become a candidate for accreditation and will progress to the next stage.

Please note that once BGA has received the non-refundable application stage fee and application form from the institution, it is anticipated that it can take up to four weeks for BGA to confirm the institution's eligibility.

### 3.3 Development stage

Once the institution is formally recognised as a candidate for accreditation, it will progress to the development stage of the accreditation process. The development stage consists of: the selection of an academic mentor from the AMBA & BGA network of Business Schools; and the development of impact metrics using BGA's Continuous Impact Model (CIM), which measures changes in impact under six distinct dimensions. These are:

- Intent
- Graduate achievement
- Value creation
- Society
- Ecosystem
- Scholarship

Institutions will be required to develop impact metrics, which are tailored to their mission and key strategic objectives, under a few or all of the listed dimensions above. The academic mentor will play a key role in advising the institution on developing and measuring appropriate metrics - however it is not in their remit to operationalise the CIM or produce any other accreditation documentation. For a full description and guidelines on the CIM and how to develop impact metrics, please see the document 'Continuous Impact Model' on the [BGA accreditation page](#).

The academic mentor and the BGA accreditation team will support the institution by offering consultative feedback designed to help improve the institution under each of the six dimensions listed above. The institution will be required to submit measurements against each metric at the end of each year to their accreditation account manager and academic mentor. If the institution can demonstrably show positive improvements with narratives that support the changes, the data will be submitted to the BAB for review.

In instances when the submission is deemed unacceptable by the BAB, full written feedback will be supplied by the mentor as to why further development is required regarding the impact metrics. Note that it can take up to four weeks for the BAB to fully review CIM progress and provide the institution with feedback on whether it can proceed to the next stage in the accreditation process.

### 3.4 Assessment stage

The BGA account manager will inform the institution whether eligibility has been confirmed. In some cases BGA will arrange for a member of BGA staff to complete a pre-assessment visit. This can be useful for institutions who are new to accreditation and require additional support. In such instances, the institution will be asked to bear any costs incurred by this visit.

Once eligibility is confirmed by the BAB, and any necessary pre-assessment visit is complete, the institution moves into the assessment stage. At this point, the account manager will send the institution the Self-Assessment Form (SAF) template for the institution to complete, which is a data-driven document that collects information about an institution's programmes, faculty, students, alumni initiatives, and more.

Alongside the SAF, the institution will also be asked to complete a final document known as the Self-Audit Report (SAR). The SAR contains more detailed information about the institution, its initiatives under social responsibility, and programmes, and must demonstrate how each of the BGA accreditation criteria are met using the impact metrics developed during the development stage. It is a narrative document of approximately 80-100 pages in length, and is an opportunity for an institution to showcase its strengths against the BGA criteria. The institution will receive a SAR template, which contains the BGA accreditation criteria and expectations under each criteria that the institution will need to address in the SAR.

Both the SAF and SAR will be due for submission three weeks before the assessment visit, allowing the Peer Review Team (PRT) sufficient time to become familiar with the materials. Prior to submission, the account manager will work together with the institution to set dates for the assessment visit to take place. In most cases, the institution will need at least three months' notice to prepare and arrange for the assessment visit.

Once the assessment visit dates are set, the account manager will organise the accreditation PRT, a panel of three senior staff from the AMBA & BGA faculty of assessors who are trained to assess institutions against the BGA accreditation criteria and CIM. In order to comply with UK Anti-Bribery and Corruption legislation, institutions may not suggest specific team members for the visit, but may instead suggest accredited institutions based in the region from which an assessor may work at. BGA cannot, however, guarantee that an assessor from an accredited institution in the region is available. The final PRT information will be provided by BGA to the institution as soon as it is confirmed.

Institutions will also be asked to review the base room requirements, found in the appendix, and a template 'Agenda' for the assessment visit that will indicate which members of institution's staff should attend each session. Information on the accreditation visit, what to expect, and how to prepare, can be found in section 2.4. The base room requirements can be found in the appendix. BGA uses the same template agenda at all assessment visits to ensure each institution has the same opportunity to present themselves to the BGA PRT.

Following the accreditation visit from the PRT, a full invoice for travel, accommodation and subsistence incurred by the PRT during the visit will be compiled and submitted to the institution. This is known as the "Recharges Invoice". It is anticipated that the recharges invoice can take between four to six weeks to compile and submit to the institution.

Once the assessment visit is complete the PRT will produce a final report, usually within six weeks of the date of the accreditation visit. This report will be sent to the institution once BGA has received full payment for any costs incurred by the PRT. During this stage, BGA welcomes any amendments the institution would like to make to the factual parts of the documentation. Please note that it is not possible to change any opinions or analysis in the PRT's report.

Once BGA has received the institution's feedback, the report will be submitted to the BAB Endorsement Committee who will review the recommendations from the PRT and make a final decision. The institution will receive an update from their account manager once the decision has been endorsed (usually within four weeks) and a copy of the final version of the Accreditation Report as well as an Impact Report, showcasing the institution's impact measurements. The report will also contain information about when the institution will be due for re-accreditation.

## 4. RE-ACCREDITATION PROCESS

Institutions which have previously been accredited by BGA, and are due for re-accreditation, will undergo a review of the already established impact metrics and the final stage of the accreditation process. They are also listed and explained below:

- Review of impact metrics
- Assessment stage

### 4.1 Review of impact metrics

BGA will send the institution a reminder between twelve and nine months before the re-accreditation visit is due. The institution will be asked to sign the BGA 'Re-Assessment Costs' schedule to confirm that it is happy with the charge for the re-assessment visit and to pay for any assessor expenses incurred during the visit. In preparation for the assessment visit, institutions should view and download copies of the [BGA accreditation criteria](#) online.

The institution will be required to submit an update on their impact metrics six months in advance of the re-accreditation visit. It is expected that institutions will have continuously collected data to feed into their developed impact metrics. A narrative is expected to accompany the review to explain any changes.

An institution may decide to include further metrics if significant changes have been made to the mission and key strategic objectives of the institution. In these cases, it is best to inform the BGA account manager of the changes providing information about which metrics are affected and whether an academic mentor is required to play a supportive role.

The BGA account manager will review the impact metrics and will include any feedback if necessary for the creation of the accreditation documents in the next stage.

### 4.2 Assessment stage

The institution will need to arrange dates for the assessment visit with BGA and provide a named point of contact for BGA to liaise with. The following documents will be required three weeks before the assessment visit:

- Self-Assessment Form (SAF)
- Self-Audit Report (SAR)

The BGA account manager will be able to provide guidance and support when an institution is completing these documents.

The BGA account manager will be able to confirm the names of the Peer Review Team (PRT) approximately three months before the assessment visit. The base room requirements and a template agenda for the visit will be sent to the institution, which indicates the members of staff should attend each session. BGA uses the same template agenda at all assessment visits to ensure each institution has the same opportunity to presenting themselves to the BGA PRT.

Following the accreditation visit from BGA, a full invoice for travel, accommodation and subsistence incurred by the PRT during the visit will be compiled and submitted to the institution. This is known as the “Recharges Invoice”. It is anticipated that the recharges invoice can take between four to six weeks to compile and submit to the institution.

Once the assessment visit is complete, the PRT will produce a final report, usually within six weeks of the date of the accreditation visit. This report will be sent to the institution once BGA has received full payment for any costs incurred by the PRT. During this stage BGA welcomes any amendments the institution would like to make to the factual parts of the documentation. Please note that it is not possible to change any opinions or analysis in the PRT’s report.

Once BGA has received the institution’s feedback, the report will be submitted to the BAB Endorsement Committee who will review the recommendations from the PRT and make a final decision. The institution will receive an update from its BGA account manager once the decision has been endorsed (usually within six weeks) and a copy of the final version of the Accreditation Report as well as an Impact Report, showcasing the institution’s impact measurements. The report will also contain information about when the institution will be due for re-accreditation.

## 5. AMBA & BGA JOINT ACCREDITATION PROCESS

Institutions which have previously been accredited by AMBA, and who are due for re-accreditation, are eligible to combine their AMBA accreditation with a BGA accreditation. An AMBA & BGA accreditation visit uses a condensed approach to limit both workload and costs for the institution. A joint accreditation visit involves a full two day visit with an agenda focusing on the MBA, a second sample programme, and the institution as a whole.

Institutions will have to meet both the AMBA and BGA accreditation criteria to pass, and the accreditation outcome is coterminous, meaning the weaker of the two will determine the accreditation cycle. For example, if the PRT recommends a five-year BGA accreditation but a three-year AMBA accreditation, the next joint visit will take place in three years (subject to the BAB's approval).

Alongside accrediting the institution, AMBA & BGA accreditation involves in-depth auditing of two sample programmes. One is the MBA, which must meet the AMBA criteria, the second is a programme that will be chosen by the BGA team. In the event that the institution offers undergraduate business programmes, BGA will likely recommend that such a programme is submitted alongside the MBA for the joint visit.

### 5.1 Letter of intent

An institution wishing to undergo a joint accreditation must submit a letter of intent showcasing they understand the costs and process involved in a joint accreditation process. Alongside the letter of intent, the institution is required to submit a scanned copy of the 'AMBA & BGA Standard Assessment Costs' document. Both should ideally be submitted nine months prior to the re-accreditation visit. The assigned accreditation account manager will be able to provide both the letter of intent and standard assessment cost templates.

It is highly recommended that an institution contacts their AMBA account manager to discuss the joint accreditation process in detail and whether the institution meets the BGA accreditation criteria. Once ready, it can submit the two required documents to [accreditation@businessgraduatesassociation.com](mailto:accreditation@businessgraduatesassociation.com).

### 5.2 Assessment stage

The institution will need to arrange dates for the assessment visit in accordance with AMBA requests. The following documents will be required three weeks before the assessment visit:

- AMBA Self-Assessment Form
- BGA Self-Assessment Form (for the second sample programme)
- AMBA Self-Audit Report
- Impact & Responsible Management Exercise, a document of no more than five pages in length showing clear and concise arguments and KPIs on how the institution addresses the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and exerts impact on stakeholders.

Institutions undergoing joint accreditation are not required to undergo the CIM exercise. The Impact & Responsible Management Exercise replaces the CIM exercise in the joint accreditation process.

The AMBA account manager will be able to provide guidance and support when an institution is completing these documents. It is recommended that the SAF and SAR documents are submitted to AMBA & BGA at least three weeks prior to the assessment visit.

Please see the AMBA accreditation criteria on the official AMBA website [here](#).

## 6. THE ACCREDITATION VISIT

BGA will convene a PRT, which will include a BGA accreditation director and three senior staff from other AMBA or BGA accredited institutions. AMBA & BGA maintains a Faculty of Assessors in excess of 100 individuals who carry extensive experience in undergraduate and postgraduate business education; many are Deans of Business Schools, Programme Directors/Managers or Module/Unit Leaders. BGA will endeavour to ensure no representatives of local competitor institutions are placed on the PRT, however if there are any questions or concerns, institutions are advised to contact their account manager. The institution has the right to veto any assessor of the PRT if it is uncomfortable with the suggested assessors. A list of assessors used by BGA can be accessed on the ['BGA Assessor Page'](#).

Unlike other accreditation organisations, AMBA & BGA pays their PRT members a consultancy fee, and strives to ensure that the service received by the PRT is professional, consistent, and consultative in nature. Feedback on assessment from the PRT visits is highly encouraged and can be discussed in confidence with a BGA account manager. All members of the BGA Faculty of Assessors receive initial training and regular refresher sessions. In most cases, BGA aims to select at least one member of the PRT from the continent in which the institution operates, and BGA also aims to add an international member to every team so that the institution can gain the most from the peer review process. BGA also ensures that any new assessors (maximum one per team) are always paired with an experienced PRT. The PRT plays a vital role in offering the institution strategic feedback on its short to mid-terms objectives, offering various solutions and ideas that can help the institution improve. Senior members of the institution are also encouraged to engage actively with the PRT during the visit with questions to particular issues or challenges they are experiencing.

Institutions are required to provide the PRT with a 'base room' that can be used throughout the accreditation visit. This should be a separate room to that used for the formal meetings. The base room should be private, and the PRT will work there and leave personal items including luggage. In addition to the documentation submitted to the PRT in advance of the visit, institutions may provide base room documentation digitally. Schools may choose to provide a digital base room where documents are organised by category and are easily accessible via a service such as DropBox or OneDrive. The BGA account manager will inform the institution of any specific additional documents that should be provided. See the appendix for further information.

BGA will arrange travel for the PRT members to the city where the accreditation is taking place, however it is strongly recommended that the institution organises airport transfers in addition to pick up and return to the hotel each day. It is recommended that the PRT travel as a group where possible throughout the assessment visit. BGA asks institutions to organise suitable hotel accommodation for the PRT members. The BGA account manager will advise the best time and way to arrange this.

Hotel accommodation should be of good standard, and preference should be given to establishments which are located close to the institution. Long commutes between the hotel and the institution should be avoided. PRT members are happy to walk to the institutions from the hotel if it is a suitable distance, however institutions are advised to check with the BGA account manager about this, as PRT members may have heavy bags and documents or lack suitable outdoor clothing.

A sample of what an accreditation visit schedule looks like can be found in Appendix 9.

### 6.1 Accreditation outcomes

At the end of the second day of the visit, the PRT will provide initial verbal feedback to the institution, which will include a preliminary accreditation decision, a set format is used to deliver this. The format includes commendations, recommendations and conditions of accreditation. Please bear in mind that this feedback is preliminary in nature and will need to be ratified by the BAB Endorsement Committee in the post-assessment stage of the process.

The PRT who visit the institution have only the following options available to them:

New institutions:

- Accreditation for 5 years
- Accreditation for 3 years
- Deferral of accreditation (with a reduced visit within one year)
- Denial of accreditation

Re-Accreditation:

- Accreditation for 1 year
- Accreditation for 3 years
- Accreditation for 5 years
- Removal of accreditation

In instances where a shorter period of accreditation has been awarded (e.g. one year), the institution is usually asked to report back to BGA within a defined period of time, in order to indicate how any changes are being implemented to address any concerns raised. This is called a Progress Report, and is usually supported by documentary evidence. In some circumstances, BGA may arrange for a reduced assessment team (usually two members) to visit the institution to ensure that the concerns have been addressed and resolved sufficiently.

In instances where institutions have multiple delivery sites or partners, BGA is ideally required to visit at least one overseas location during the accreditation cycle. This will be pre-arranged with the institution and will be a one day visit undertaken by an BGA representative. A full template agenda will be provided by BGA.

Any report and findings made during the accreditation visit are confidential to BGA and the institution. Other than the institution's accreditation status (i.e. accredited or non-accredited), BGA does not share the outcomes of the assessment such as length of accreditation or the written reports with third parties, and all BGA accreditation assessors are trained to understand the importance of confidentiality. The Impact Report is the only aspect of the accreditation that is communicated externally.

## 6.2 Finalising the accreditation

The accreditation is only complete once the BGA account manager has sent the institution a copy of the BAB-endorsed Accreditation Report and the Impact Report, along with the certificate "Completion Letter". The institution will also receive an official confirmation letter from BGA. New institutions will receive a certificate of accreditation. Re-accredited institutions will receive an updated certificate.

BGA will enter the details of the accreditation onto the BGA website site once the PRT and the institution are happy with the final report. Institutions can request a formal presentation and acknowledgement of BGA accreditation at the next annual Global Conference by speaking to their account manager.

Please note that in order to maintain BGA Accreditation, institutions are required to pay their annual membership fees.

## 6.3 Appeals

In exceptional circumstances, institutions may appeal specific aspects of the BAB-endorsed accreditation decision such as; failure to follow due process or a disregard of material facts. Appeals on the basis of accreditation judgements will not be accepted. Appeals are rare and need to be supported with evidence. They should be submitted in writing to [accreditation@businessgraduatesassociation.com](mailto:accreditation@businessgraduatesassociation.com) within two weeks of receipt of the final report.

## 6.4 Payments

At each stage of the accreditation process, BGA will send an invoice when payment is due. If the institution has a purchase order number that they would like BGA to use, then they are advised to let their account manager know so that the purchase order number can be included in all invoices. Institutions should note that all payments are non-refundable. Some payments are also limited by set periods of time, and will expire if the institution does not proceed to the next stage within the specified period. See the BGA [website](#) or the '[BGA Standard Assessment Cost](#)' document for further details on accreditation fees.

## 6.5 Timescale

The BGA accreditation process is designed to move at each institution's own pace, and progression between stages rely on the production of documentation as well as collection of data that supports measurable positive impact. BGA endeavours to provide a timely, efficient and customer focused process and progresses each application to the next stage as quickly as possible. Institutions can expect the full BGA accreditation process to take at least two years. Please see appendix 8 for a detailed breakdown.

## 6.6 Impact report

Upon completing the standalone BGA accreditation process, the institution will be given an impact report consisting of two pages that highlight the strengths of the institution. The impact report will draw its narrative and conclusions from the impact metrics developed by the institution, highlighting the areas the institution delivers the most impact and value addition for key stakeholders. The report does not disclose sensitive data about the institution or areas where the institution may require further improvement in.

The impact report may be used as a marketing tool to communicate to prospective students, and can be made available as a resource on the institution's official website.

Institutions undergoing joint accreditation for the first time do not receive an impact report as they are not required to have fully developed impact metrics for their assessment visit. An impact report will be made available upon them completing their re-accreditation.

## 7. MAINTAINING THE RELATIONSHIP WITH BGA

### 7.1 Promoting BGA Accreditation

Promoting BGA accreditation is an essential part of demonstrating the world-class quality of the institution's impact in the highly competitive market for potential students. BGA also supports institutions by promoting their accreditation to reach potential students in a number of ways.

#### 7.1.1 Maintaining the Business School profile

Institutions are advised to keep their Business School profile up to date on BGA's [Business School search](#). The search function is where the institution's impact report is available to the general public, and contains essential information for prospective students, faculty, and employers. Institutions can make changes to their profile by contacting [accreditation@businessgraduatesassociation.com](mailto:accreditation@businessgraduatesassociation.com).

#### 7.1.2 Using the BGA logo

The Business Graduates Association is recognised worldwide as a quality brand. BGA-accredited institutions are encouraged to use the 'BGA Accredited' logo on marketing collateral, website and course literature. Institutions who become accredited receive the accredited logo alongside general guidelines.

#### 7.1.3 Business Impact

BGA accredited institutions receive a feature article in BGA's magazine, *Business Impact*. The articles showcase how the institution achieved accreditation, as well as the institution's efforts in sustainability and social responsibility practices. *Business Impact* is available to the entire AMBA & BGA network, as well as their associated student networks.

#### 7.1.4 Awards

The AMBA & BGA Excellence Awards recognise high achievers from the Business School industry, and every year accredited institutions, as well as their students and graduates, are invited to participate in the competition.

#### 7.1.5 Conferences and workshops

BGA organises three annual conferences: Global, Asia Pacific and Latin America. BGA conferences are a great way to meet staff from other BGA institutions to share ideas, best practice and to engage with current trends within business and management education. All BGA institutions are eligible and encouraged to nominate speakers, themes or topics for the conference programme, and if interested should contact [membership@businessgraduatesassociation.com](mailto:membership@businessgraduatesassociation.com).

#### 7.1.6 Research

BGA accredited institutions receive exclusive access to the latest research publications, global statistics and a direct line to the BGA research department. BGA also provides advocacy and lobbying through AMBA & BGA's policy work for the business education sector.

### 7.1.7 Student and graduate membership

BGA offers an extensive student membership platform (and graduate membership for accredited institutions) exclusively tailored to students as well as alumni of accredited institutions. The platform is fully designed to support students and alumni in their careers by giving them the following services:

- Employer training videos, written tutorials and interactive career resources;
- CV builder, aptitude tests, career assessments and bite-size online courses;
- Webinar series on career advice and soft-skills development;
- *Business Impact* access, housing a plethora of global business stories and thought-leadership;
- Up to 30% off best-selling leadership and management books from leading publishers including Routledge, Harvard Business Press, MIT Press, Bloomsbury, Kogan Page and Wiley;
- Exclusively negotiated benefits with hand-picked partners including IHG, The Economist, VIP Lounge Access and more.

## APPENDIX 1: BGA ACCREDITATION PROCESS

### Application stage

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- 1) Institution expresses interest in accreditation
- 2) Institution sends formal 'Letter of Intent' agreeing to assessment terms & conditions
- 3) Institution sends signed 'Standard Assessment Costs' document
- 4) Institution completes and sends the accreditation application form
- 5) Institution pays non-refundable application stage fee (valid for one year)
- 6) Institution invited to be a formal candidate for accreditation

### Development stage

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- 1) Institution pays annual mentor fee
- 2) Institution assigned academic mentor
- 3) Institution develops impact metrics using the Continuous Impact Model (CIM)
- 4) Institution measures and details impact metrics
- 5) Institution submits impact metrics to the BAB with approval from the academic mentor
- 6) BAB sends institution confirmation to proceed to the assessment stage

### Assessment stage

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- 1) Institution completes Self-Assessment Form (SAF)
- 2) Institution completes Self-Audit Report (SAR)
- 3) Institution pays assessment stage fee
- 4) Preparation of assessment visit and peer review team (PRT)
- 5) PRT assessment visit is made
- 6) Initial feedback given to the institution
- 7) Institution pays assessment visit PRT expenses

### Post-assessment

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- 1) Report compiled by PRT
- 2) Factual checking of report by the institution
- 3) Report considered by BAB for endorsement
- 4) Final Accreditation decision of up to five years for new institutions or deferral of one year. For re-accreditation up to five years may be awarded, or removal of accreditation.
- 5) Full re-assessment due at the end of accreditation cycle

## APPENDIX 2: EXAMPLE LETTER OF INTENT

Before BGA can begin the accreditation process, it needs to have received a letter of intent from the institution. **Before completing the letter of intent, the institution should request the relevant 'Standard Assessment Costs' document for the region from the accreditation team. The cost schedule can also be downloaded on the BGA portal.** The letter must be written on the institution's headed paper and signed by the Head of School (dean or equivalent). It must include the following wording:

*I confirm that <name of school> accepts the Business Graduates Association's criteria for accreditation, and I confirm that we have read and accept the expenses detailed in the STANDARD ASSESSMENT COSTS document and understand the process for BGA accreditation as detailed in the BGA Accreditation Criteria.*

In addition, please attach a copy of the accreditation costs (which BGA will provide) signed by the Dean / Head of School.

This should be addressed to: AMBA & BGA, 25 Hosier Lane, London, EC1A 9LQ, United Kingdom.

The letter and signed cost schedule can be scanned and submitted by email to the designated BGA account manager.

## APPENDIX 3: ACCREDITATION VISIT – ADDITIONAL FEES

During the assessment visit, the Peer Review Team (PRT) of four will incur expenses for:

- Subsistence (food, drinks, Wi-Fi, printing)
- Travel relating to the assessment visit, including airport transfers
- Any other reasonable expenses attached to the assessment visit

Hotel accommodation is booked and paid for by the institution in advance of the visit for all four members of the PRT. This may also include the cost of meals the day before the visit. On average a PRT member will not require more than three nights' accommodation, and no less than one night. Where long-haul travel occurs (e.g. including a time-difference of more than eight hours, a fourth night's accommodation for assessors will be required. This will depend largely upon their origin and travel time/availability.

All BGA PRT members are required, as paid consultants, to adhere to BGA's own expenses policy which states that only expenses related to the assessment visit activities can be claimed. All PRT members are asked to submit receipts and expense claims directly to BGA (not via the host institution) and they are scrutinised by BGA before the final re-charge invoice is generated. Institutions are also entitled to request full copies of all receipts if they so wish.

AMBA & BGA adheres to UK Anti-Bribery & Corruption Legislation. BGA assessors are not encouraged to invite guests (such as family members) to assessment visits. When this occurs guests should play no part in the assessment visit and the assessor will need to pay the hotel directly for any additional expenses such as double occupancy rate and additional breakfast.

## APPENDIX 4: ELIGIBILITY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

New institutions applying for accreditation are reviewed first by an BGA accreditation team member who examines the 'Application Form'. Institutions that pass this stage are then asked to work in their impact metrics during the development stage. Final submission of the impact metrics are reviewed by the Eligibility Committee, which is part of the BGA Accreditation Board (BAB). Institutions cannot progress any further until the Eligibility Committee have approved the impact metrics.

### Eligibility Committee members

Dr Mark Oakley	Former pro vice-chancellor	Aston University, UK
Professor Philip McLaughlin	Former founding co-dean and director	Kedge Business School France
Professor Martyn Jones	Deputy vice-chancellor (international)	Kingston University, UK

## APPENDIX 5: ENDORSEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Each accreditation report produced by the Peer Review Team (PRT) is subject to review by three members of the Endorsement Committee, also another part of the BGA Accreditation Board (BAB). Accreditation recommendations are not finalised until they have been endorsed by this committee and a full list of Endorsement Committee members is shown below:

### Endorsement Committee members

Professor Andrew Lock (Chair)	Former dean	Leeds University Business School, University of Leeds, UK
Professor Philip McLaughlin	Former founding co-dean and director	Kedge Business School France
Dr Mark Oakley	Former pro vice-chancellor	Aston University, UK
Carlos Ramos MBA	International adviser	AMBA & BGA, Argentina
Professor Martyn Jones	Deputy vice-chancellor (international)	Kingston University, UK

## APPENDIX 6: ENDORSEMENT PROCESS (POST-ASSESSMENT)

The final endorsement of accreditation is made by the BGA Accreditation Board (BAB), based on a recommendation from the Peer Review Team (PRT) in the format of a comprehensive report. Once an onsite visit has taken place, the process for endorsing the PRT's recommendation is as follows:

1. The assessment report is compiled by the BGA accreditation director
2. The report is agreed by the PRT (four members)
3. The report is returned to the institution for factual verification
4. The report is submitted to three members of the endorsement committee
5. The final accreditation decision is confirmed or rejected with the following possible outcomes:
  - a. Accreditation for one, two, three or five years for re-accreditation, and three or five years for new institutions
  - b. Deferral of accreditation (with a reduced visit within one year, available for new institutions only) or
  - c. Definitive denial of accreditation.
6. If accreditation is endorsed, a full on-site peer reviewed re-assessment is carried out at the end of the agreed accreditation period (maximum of five years).

## APPENDIX 7: BGA ACCREDITATION APPEAL PROCESS

On receipt of the final accreditation decision provided by the BGA Accreditation Board (BAB), the institution has the opportunity to appeal the decision. BGA's appeal process is outlined below:

- I. The institution has the right to appeal an accreditation decision made by the BAB. Appeals can only be accepted based on the grounds of a failure to follow due process or a disregard of material facts. Appeals simply on the basis of accreditation judgements will not be accepted.
- II. A BAB Appeal Sub-committee will be established, consisting of three members of the BAB to be nominated by the BAB Chair, who were not a member of the original BAB Endorsement Committee and who have no conflict of interest with the institution or the accreditation process of the institution.
- III. The institution may make written representations in writing to the Appeal Sub-committee, in which the institution will have the opportunity to provide all the evidence that will be considered. It is incumbent on the institution to provide all the information and evidence necessary to state its case for appeal at this time.
- IV. The appeal should be sent to the relevant account manager with responsibility for the appealing institution, within two weeks of receiving the final endorsed accreditation report.
- V. The BAB Appeal Committee will consider any appeal made and return its official decision within four weeks of receipt of the appeal.
- VI. The Appeal Sub-committee will come to a majority verdict, and this decision will be final. In the case of significant disagreement amongst the Appeal Committee of the BAB, the matter may be referred to BGA's International Management Board (IMB).

## APPENDIX 8: TIME FRAMES

### BGA TASKS

### ESTIMATED TIME FRAME

#### Application stage

Review institution application form      Within four weeks of receipt of application form

#### Development stage

Selection of academic mentor      Within four weeks

Confirm eligibility      Within four weeks of receipt of impact metrics

#### Assessment stage

Issue assessment and impact report to institution      Within six weeks of assessment visit

Endorse report      Within four weeks of receipt of institution comment

### INSTITUTION TASKS

### ESTIMATED TIME FRAME

#### Application stage

Submit letter of intent      At time convenient to the institution

Pay application stage fee      Within four weeks of sending letter of intent

Submit application form      Within one year of payment of application stage fee

#### Development stage

Pay development stage fee      Within four weeks of acceptance into the development stage

Collection and submission of impact metrics to BAB      At least eighteen months

#### Assessment stage

Submit Self-Assessment Form (SAF) + Self-Audit Report (SAR)      Within three years of acceptance into assessment stage (three weeks prior to assessment visit)

Pay assessment stage fee      At least eight to twelve weeks before assessment

Pay PRT expenses invoice      Within 30 days of receipt of invoice

## APPENDIX 9: ACCREDITATION ASSESSMENT AGENDA

### Day One

Time	Agenda item	Criteria	Personnel
09.00-09.30	Tour of facilities (teaching, it and library facilities) Assessors		
09.30-13.00	Private meeting (assessment team in base room)		Assessors
13.00-14.00	Lunch with Dean & key staff		Dean Senior executive team
14.00-16.00	The institution	1	Dean (15 min. Presentation)
	Faculty	2	Programme directors
	Students	3	Senior academic faculty
	Programmes	4	Admissions/marketing staff
16.00-16.15	Private break		Assessors
16.15-18.00	Impact	5	Careers/alumni staff
	Responsible management	ALL	Dean (optional) Staff responsible for CSR

**Day Two**

Time	Agenda item	Criteria	Personnel
09.00-10.00	Sample Programme One Management	4	Programme Director/s Senior academic faculty Dean (optional)
10.00-11.00	Private meeting with students, graduates & employers (representatives) for Sample Programme One)	All	Current students, graduates and key employers
11.00-11.15	Private break		Assessors
11.15-12.15	Sample Programme Two	4	Programmes Director/s Senior academic faculty Dean (optional)
12.15-13.15	Private meeting with students, graduates & employers (representatives) for Sample Programme Two)	All	Current students, graduates and key employers
13.15-14.15	Private lunch		Assessors
14.15-15.15	Open discussion with faculty		Sample of faculty – some from sample programmes (non-management faculty only)
15.15-16.30	Private meeting of assessment team		Assessors (base room)
16.30-17.00	Feedback to institution		Dean and any other personnel as institution sees fit

## APPENDIX 10: BASE ROOM REQUIREMENTS

### Introduction

The base room is both the private workspace for the PRT and the area where essential documentation not already provided in the Self-Assessment Form (SAF) and Self-Audit Report (SAR) is located.

All information requested here must be provided unless formal approval is provided by BGA or the PRT Chair.

The checklist should be completed, signed, and returned to BGA, at least one week before the assessment visit to confirm that all information requested will be present.

### Set-up

- The base room should provide sufficient desk space to enable four-to-five people to work with large volumes of documentation.
- Luggage may also need to be stored in the base room. Please account for this.
- The base room should not be booked or used for any meetings during the visit.
- The base room must include at least one working PC/laptop with internet access; if a significant amount of material is online then four terminals will be necessary.
- The base room must include a printer within in the base room so that assessors can print securely.
- Access to Wi-fi should be provided to the PRT.
- Full student and teacher access to the virtual learning environment (if applicable) should be available for the PRT in the base room.
- If possible, a key to the base room should be provided so that personal items may be left in there during meetings.
- An internal telephone should be provided in the base room.

### Contact:

- The institution should nominate someone as the PRT's contact person during the visit. This contact should be accessible at all times during the visit and provide an e-mail address and telephone number so the PRT can contact him or her if needed.

## Contents

Documentation to be made available in the base room should include items considered to be too bulky to include in the self-audit documentation. **The base room should include all of the following items of evidence / documentation if they exist, and are listed below against the appropriate BGA criteria.**

Given its commitment to sustainability and responsible management, BGA encourages that as much of the documentation as possible is made available electronically. However, in such cases, all information must be easily accessible and readable on-screen.

### 1: Institution

- Marketing materials for the institution
- Marketing strategy for institution
- Evidence of teaching quality to include details of:
  - national teaching audits (if applicable)
  - management research
  - consultancy
  - research contracts
  - involvement in industry
  - external examiners' reports (if required)
- Evidence of satisfactory outcomes from the institution's own internal, external and national audit processes. This might include minutes of relevant meetings over a period of three years
- Examples of student feedback and response to student reactions to course delivery and content. An audit trail of relevant student committee meeting minutes should be made available
- Minutes of all relevant committee meetings at the institution for the past three years must also be available. This would include, for example, strategic planning committee meetings, faculty meetings, programme committee meetings, student/staff meetings and external advisory board meetings
- Evidence of successful work in the area of sustainability and responsible management, particularly with reference to the UN SDGs.
- Formal agreements with other institutions

## 2: Faculty

If not already supplied in the form of appendices in the self-audit documentation, the PRT needs to be able to examine the following:

- Most recently available CVs of all faculty. The base room documents should facilitate the easy reference of faculty via their unique ID number provided in the SAF and other documents
- Teaching and learning strategy
- Evidence of high-quality scholarship not provided in the SAF or SAR
- Faculty handbook
- Minutes of faculty meetings

## 3: Students

- Student handbook for sample programmes must be available
- Details of any surveys of students offered places on programmes, but declined
- General student data (in an anonymised format) will have been provided in advance via the SAR and SAF – however the PRT may request during the visit for more detailed individual information to be made available

## 4: Programmes

- Minutes of all relevant committee meetings at sample programme level for the past three years must be available. This would include for example programme committee meetings, programme review meetings, student/staff meetings and external advisory board meetings
- Module descriptors for **every core/mandatory module** should be available for all programmes that are being assessed. Module descriptors should also be made available for every **elective/optional module which has been delivered in the past academic year**. All core modules should have module descriptors translated into English if applicable
- Course outlines for any formal study trips including details of assessment and calendar of activities including academic study, company visits, and cultural immersion

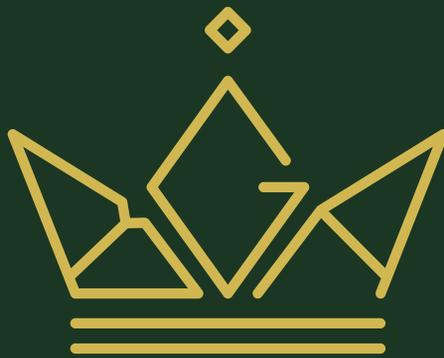
In addition, for **most modules** (compulsory and those options/electives which have run in the past academic year) and for each sample programme examples of the following must be provided:

- marked coursework to include borderline passes, as well as average and high scoring examples, and evidence that this has been used to provide feedback to students

- Student examination papers; to include borderline passes, as well as average and high scoring examples, and evidence that this has been used to provide feedback to students
- Both individual and group projects (with marking sheets), to include borderline passes, as well as average and high scoring examples
- Literary based dissertations with marking sheet, (if applicable) to include borderline passes, as well as average and high scoring examples
- Examples of capstone or integrative element of the programme (such as project) with marking sheet to include borderline passes as well as average and high scoring examples
- For distance learning / blended learning provision, examples of any specific / bespoke learning materials provided
- Sample of teaching materials (core texts etc.)

## 5: Impact

- Full results of career surveys
- Full evidence of Continuous Impact Model (CIM) implementation.
- Any additional evidence of impact



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