

**CRITERIA AND PROCEDURES FOR THE
DESIGNATION
OF
AVIATION TRAINING
CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE**

An ICAO, AFI PLAN initiative to foster safer African skies



Table of Contents

DOCUMENT VERSION/REVISION RECORD 3

INTRODUCTION 4

1. OBJECTIVES..... 4

2. *ACRONYMS* 4

3. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS..... 5

4. BENEFITS 5

5. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA 6

 a. Organisational Requirements 6

 b. Facility Requirements 8

 c. Personnel Requirements..... 9

 d. Training Programme Requirements..... 9

 e. Quality Management System 9

6. PROCEDURE FOR DESIGNATION OF COE 10

7. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS 12

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- Latest changes reflected in ***bold italics***.

INTRODUCTION

The Centre of Excellence (CoE) applies to any organization that wants to create and use excellent state of art and showcase its technological, service and business oriented capabilities in a competitive environment.

A CoE is an organization, focused on optimizing application or service characteristics such as quality, performance, or availability. It provides management an automation platform for processes, consulting, support services, leadership as well as advocacy to optimize these attributes.

The objective of creating CoE in any sector is always customer centric and is meant for providing unique solutions to their customers.

The Aviation Training Centers of Excellence was initiated in response to the need for harmonization of training requirements and rationalization of training capacities in Africa. Endorsed by the ICAO, AFI PLAN this initiative is designed to harness pockets of excellence on the continent and spread this expertise throughout Africa with the explicit agenda of improving aviation safety

1. OBJECTIVES

Application for Center of Excellence accreditation is purely voluntary. The criteria and framework reflected in this framework, is designed to ensure Training organizations designated as Centers of Excellence will provide value- add across the entire learning value chain within their region of operation.

2. ACRONYMS

AATO	Association of Aviation Training Organizations
AFI PLAN	Regional Comprehensive Implementation Plan for Aviation Safety in Africa
ATO	Aviation training Organization
CAA	Civil Aviation Authority
COE	Center of Excellence
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
QMS	Quality Management System
SME	Subject matter expert
TAB	Training Advisory board

3. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

- **Center of Excellence:** An institute which houses best practices in a specific focus area.
- **Unconditional accreditation:** The training program has no major deficits with regard to facility, content and structure. Recommendations can be given that should be considered with regard to improving the quality of the training program.
- **Accreditation with conditions:** The training program is accredited. It has, however, weaknesses or inconsistencies that are nonessential with regard to content or structure, but must be corrected to ensure the long-term quality of the study program. This means that the study program needs, at least in some areas, improvement. But it does not imply any disqualification of the study program, which in fact may be demanding in terms of quality. The concerned training center must make these improvements within a certain time period.
- **Suspension of the procedure:** The training program is not accredited now, but there is the prospect of accreditation. Essential deficits with regard to content, structure and facility must first be corrected, before the training program can be presented again to AATO.
- **Rejection:** The accreditation is denied as the training program has fundamental deficits which further revision cannot correct.
- **Compliance:** means conforming to a rule, such as a specification, policy, standard or law. It is either a state of being in accordance with established guidelines, specifications, or legislation or procedure.
- **Assessment:** Process of collecting evidence and making judgments on whether competence has been achieved or not.
- **Training value chain:** The learning and development process, viz. Needs analysis, Design & Development, Delivery, Evaluation.

4. BENEFITS

Designation as a Center of Excellence implies that you are recognized as a premium service provider of your product in your region. Notwithstanding the economic implications of such a position, the macro impact of enhancing safety in the region is immeasurable.

5. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

a. Organisational Requirements

i. **Structure:** In terms of structure, the *designated* training centre must satisfy the following:

- Departments and Faculties should be separated according to training specifics.
- The organogram of the school should include the following positions; Accountable Manager, Quality Assurance Manager, Head of Training, Chief Flight Instructor (as applicable), Chief Ground Instructor (as applicable), Instructors and Management personnel.
- The following elements of organizational structure should be highlighted by the school with reference to its peculiarities; departmentalization, formalization, span of control and centralization.
- Considering the dynamic nature of the aviation industry, the training school must show through its organizational structure that it is able to respond swiftly to operational challenges.

ii. **Administration:**

Clearly identifiable registration and enrolment procedures must be available in the school to be designated as a COE.

Course coordination must be of acceptable global standards. The school should have a designated Course Coordinator.

Record keeping should show personal details of course participants including grades obtained at tests, assignments and examinations. This should be available in electronic and paper format.

Based on an approved evaluation process, the school should present certificates to participants on completion of training and it should be recognized by the local CAA (*as appropriate*).

iii. **Management Processes:**

The management processes of the *training center* should focus on quality of training, customer satisfaction, and course delivery mechanisms.

The school must show that its processes are automated to a large extent and information technology is put to effective use.

The management process of the *training center* should be designed to encompass both the identification of existing processes and the design of new process to increase productivity and performance.

The management process in place should include mechanisms for monitoring course delivery by Instructors, students' performance over time and modern technology deployed in classroom instruction or e-learning systems.

iv. Track record

The *training center* should show a track record of students' performance over a five-year period. It should also show business and intellectual content improvement strategies over the same period.

v. Defined Strategy & Business Sustainability:

The *training center* must show that its talent management (Instructors & key staff) is aligned with its business strategy.

The *training center* must show a plan for its extended structure; market reach and strategic relationships with other aviation *training centers*.

The *training center* must indicate new skills and capabilities that will be required and how this will affect workforce composition and development needs.

The talent management practices necessary to create a high performance workforce that would guarantee qualitative aviation training.

The operating culture of the *training center must be clearly identified*.

Performance indicators and benchmarks.

A financial plan showing *financial performance* of the *training center* in the last five years and future financial objectives for the next five years *must be provided*.

vi. Local Regulatory Approval:

The *training center* must show that it is an approved ATO by the local CAA since inception and, *where applicable*, other approvals to date.

The *training center* must have current *valid ATO approval* from the local CAA.

b. Facility Requirements

i. Minimum classroom facilities

- Classrooms should be well furnished with tables and chairs
- Well carpeted or with tiles
- *An effective environmental control system that ensures heating and cooling as appropriate, depending on the weather*
- *Adequate lighting that promotes optimum classroom learning and screen projection.*
- *Noise reduction design for a high noise environment.*
- It is recommended that a lecturer/student ratio of 1:15 should be accommodated *in a classroom environment.*

ii. Training aids

The *training center* should have a minimum of the following training aids,

- Whiteboard appropriate for the class
- TV/Video/DVD set for showing films as appropriate
- Relevant Laboratory in the specific area e.g. engineering, language etc
- Relevant training manuals
- Projectors

iii. Student accommodation

- The *training center* should have its accommodation or contract/ agreement with local Hostels/Hotels suitable for students
- Accommodation should meet the basic needs; comfort, *meals*, water, reliable electricity and *alternate power supply facilities.*
- Transport must be *arranged* to and from the *training center.*

iv. Simulators & laboratories

The centre should have modern simulators, *as applicable*, and laboratories for the relevant training fields including (but not limited to)

- Air traffic control
- Flight simulator
- Laboratories relevant to the training provided

v. Course development capacity

- The Centre should show evidence of at least one *approved* course developed by the centre

- Should have enough resource persons for that purpose

vi. Research facilities

- Well furnished, *catalogued* library with reference books, journals, annexes, manuals etc in aviation and related fields.
- Computers connected to internet for research purpose.

c. Personnel Requirements

Centers of Excellence must have adequate training personnel to facilitate optimum functioning across the entire training value chain.

Training personnel must meet the following criteria:

- i. Have the relevant qualifications required to present training programmes.
- ii. Adequate training experience in the field of lecture (recommended at least 3 years)
- iii. Designated subject matter experts must have at least *five* years field experience in the appropriate subject.
- iv. Instructional designers must possess *appropriate* qualifications from a recognized body/institute.
- v. *Is CAA certified, where applicable.*

d. Training Programme Requirements

Where applicable, content of training programmes must meet ICAO standards. All programmes must be accredited by the representative body chosen by the African Association of Aviation Training Organization to accredit training programmes. Any changes to training syllabi must be forwarded to the accreditation body for approval. Curricula must be reviewed every three years for validity and relevance. Proof of such review must be forwarded to the accreditation body.

e. Quality Management System

In order to be an approved training center of excellence, the center must have a Quality Management System that:

- i. Creates an appropriate climate within the organization with regard to a quality culture
- ii. A customer orientation whereby customer requirements are agreed and customers are an integral part of delivery.

- iii. Promotes people-based and participative management philosophy that stresses problem-solving and seeking improvement opportunities in teams.
- iv. Promotes an ethos of continuous improvement

In considering the above, the *training center* of excellence must ensure that:

- i. Their *quality* aims are clear;
- ii. *Quality* processes are identified;
- iii. Procedures for quality management policies are in place;
- iv. Sustainability of quality management strategies are in place;
- v. They have the ability to develop, deliver and evaluate learning programmes;
- vi. They have the necessary financial, administrative and physical resources to deliver their programmes;
- vii. They have clear learner-centred policies and ways of dealing with learning programmes;
- viii. They are able to conduct off-site or work-site activities;
- ix. They have clear policies for assessment and its management; and,
- x. Have policies for programme development in terms of content, people, procedures, practices and resources.

6. PROCEDURE FOR DESIGNATION OF COE

a. General

- i. An application for COE initial approval shall be made on a form and in a manner established by the Head Office of AATO (considered as competent authority) & by completing AATO's FORM-1.
 - ii. The Aviation Training Centers Approval shall be granted to the institution by AATO (considered as competent authority) after a through audit and investigation has been conducted by AATO based on eligibility standard defined in _____.
- b. An application for *designation* as a COE shall include the following additional information:
- i. registered name and address of the applicant,
 - ii. address requiring the approval,
 - iii. intended scope of approval,
 - iv. name and signature of the accountable manager,
 - v. date of application.

c. **Approval procedure**

- i. **Submission of an accreditation application:** The aviation training center who seeks the accreditation/approval applies for it by filling AATO's FORM-1. The form will be sent online or by post to the Head Office of AATO.
- ii. **Collection of relevant documents:** AATO will request all the necessary documents including
 1. Training Policy document,
 2. Curriculum (Syllabus & course ware material) of the training for which the accreditation is sought,
 3. Examination sample,
 4. Practical training guidelines,
 5. Description of teaching methods employed,
 6. Description of training facilities,
 7. Qualification records of instructors
 8. Certificate sample,
 9. Evidence of internal capacity for development of courses,
 10. Evidence of the number of trainees currently on the course,
 11. Any material which demonstrates the marketing and promotion of the course,
 12. Any action or improvement plans.
13. **Check for completeness of the documentation:** The office will check out the completeness of the documents before it forwards to the standing expert committee.
14. **Payment of service fee:** The training center will pay the entire necessary service fee to AATO before the document is forwarded to the standing expert committee for further review.
15. **Forwarding the documentation to the standing expert committee:** Once the payment has been made, the documentation will be passed to the standing expert committee who will appoint auditors to commence the audit.
16. **Appointment of auditors:** The standing committee appoints an expert group *of at least* three people to conduct the audit.
17. **Schedule audit program:** The auditors will put together a program for the on-site visit detailing who they wish to talk to,

what facilities they would like to view and what additional materials they want to examine.

18. Communicate the schedule to the training center: The audit schedule will be sent to the Training Center in advance of the audit – two weeks before.

19. Conduct audit: The auditors conduct the audit on-site for a minimum of three consecutive days.

20. Prepare report: The auditors prepare the audit report which includes their recommendation on the approval based on document review and on-site visit.

21. Submit report: The standing committee with the consultation of the expert group finalizes the report and communicates the same to the training center.

22. Decision: On the basis of the evaluation, the decision will be

- a. Unconditional accreditation,
- b. Accreditation with condition,
- c. Suspension,
- d. Rejection

(in case of rejection, re-application can only be done after a period not less than 12 months)

iii. **Award of accreditation certificate:** AATAA will award the accreditation certificate to the training center based on the above decision.

iv. **Re-accreditation:** The accreditation is valid only for three consecutive years and the training center has to apply at the end of the third year for renewal of its accreditation which requires again the same application and award process.

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