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Recurring Quality Assurance Priorities in Hospitality Management Programs

A Hybrid Thematic and Longitudinal Analysis of PAASCU Accreditation Findings Across Three Accreditation Cycles

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Executive Summary

This study examined de-identified PAASCU accreditation Best Features (BF) and Recommendations (REC) for Hospitality Management programs in the same five schools across three ordered accreditation cycles: Cycle 1 Formal Survey, Cycle 2 First Resurvey, and Cycle 3 Second Resurvey. The balanced panel contains 146 accreditation findings: 51 in Cycle 1, 47 in Cycle 2, and 48 in Cycle 3. Of these, 24 were Best Features, and 122 were Recommendations. The exact calendar years of the individual visits were not retained in the de-identified consolidation datasets supplied for this analysis; therefore, the study treats the three cycles as ordered accreditation stages and does not make calendar-year trend claims.

Historical instrument or report-version identifiers were likewise not retained in the consolidated datasets. Consequently, comparability was established at the common functional unit of analysis—the narrative BF or REC statement—rather than by assuming item-for-item equivalence of survey instruments across time. This limitation is explicitly incorporated into the interpretation.

In response to the structure of the original research questions and the accreditation-oriented nature of the data, the study is framed as a hybrid deductive-inductive thematic analysis. It follows the staged logic of Braun and Clarke (2006) while explicitly recognizing the combination of sensitizing quality-assurance domains and data-driven code development described by Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006). A formal codebook was developed, theme boundaries were refined, and each finding was assigned one primary code for descriptive frequency analysis. A secondary code was permitted only when a finding materially crossed another domain; secondary codes were used for interpretation but excluded from frequency totals to avoid double counting.

Recurrence was operationally defined before final interpretation. A major theme was considered recurring when it appeared in all three accreditation cycles and was represented in at least three of the five de-identified schools in the cumulative corpus. A persistent recommendation was distinguished from thematic recurrence: persistence was identified when a substantially similar code recurred for the same school in two or more cycles or when a later report explicitly carried forward or reiterated a previous team recommendation. Potential closure or institutionalization was inferred only when a strongly corresponding earlier recommendation later appeared as a Best Feature in the same school; disappearance of a recommendation was treated as indeterminate rather than proof of closure.

Under verified primary coding, all five major themes met the operational recurrence criterion. Industry-Relevant Learning Environment was the most frequently represented theme with 57 of 146 units (39.0%), followed by Curriculum Quality and Continuous Improvement with 38 (26.0%), Student Development and Graduate Readiness with 23 (15.8%), Effective Teaching and Learning Practices with 21 (14.4%), and Assessment for Quality Assurance with 7 (4.8%). Frequency is interpreted descriptively and not as a direct measure of importance or compliance severity.

The longitudinal review identified 18 explicit carry-forward recommendations within Cycles 2 and 3: six each under Curriculum Quality and Continuous Improvement and Industry-Relevant Learning Environment, four under Effective Teaching and Learning Practices, two under Student

Development and Graduate Readiness, and none under Assessment for Quality Assurance. These cases are evidence of persistence or incomplete resolution, not evidence of improvement by themselves. Two strong, but still indicative, recommendation-to-Best Feature transitions were observed: the acquisition and use of Property Management/Point-of-Sale systems for SCH-02 and the later presence of a licensed Property Management System in the HM laboratory of SCH-04. These transitions illustrate how recommendation closure can be tracked more explicitly in future accreditation cycles.

A cross-cutting subtheme—Faculty Professional Currency, Qualifications, and Industry Engagement—was made explicit to prevent faculty qualifications, specialization, industry immersion, and practitioner participation from being dispersed between the learning-environment and teaching-learning themes. The subtheme did not warrant treatment as a sixth major recurring theme under the study's recurrence threshold, but it is analytically important and closely aligned with current PAASCU expectations on qualified teaching personnel, industry practitioners, teaching assignments, and faculty industry immersion.

The recommendations avoid duplicating provisions already substantially covered by current PAASCU standards on curriculum, teaching-learning, assessment, partnerships, human resources, and educational results. For Hospitality Management programs, the study provides an implementation matrix specifying actions, minimum evidence, review frequency, success indicators, and resource-sensitive options. For PAASCU, the study recommends an HM-specific evidence and interpretation guide, a longitudinal recommendation-closure mechanism, a de-identified HM benchmarking database, stronger practicum-quality evidence, clearer interpretation of specialized HM resources including shared or industry-based access, and future-facing monitoring prompts on digital transformation, sustainability, and transferable/digital competencies. The last group is explicitly presented as an emerging benchmark because these priorities were not sufficiently recurrent in the historical corpus to be treated as historical themes.

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I. Introduction

1.1 Background and Rationale

Accreditation is both an external quality assurance process and a structured opportunity for institutional learning. In the PAASCU framework, program quality is examined through interconnected standards and evidence rather than through a single formula. Accreditation findings therefore provide more than isolated judgments: when examined systematically across cycles, they can reveal recurring areas of strength, persistent weaknesses, shifts in implementation, and areas that may require more precise evidence or interpretation.

Hospitality Management is especially sensitive to changes in professional practice, technology, service systems, workforce expectations, and experiential learning requirements. Program quality depends not only on curricular design but also on access to authentic or simulated hospitality environments, the quality of practicum arrangements, faculty professional currency, assessment of student competence, and the capacity to use evidence for program improvement. For this reason, a longitudinal examination of accreditation findings is useful for identifying where quality assurance attention repeatedly concentrates and where recommendations appear to remain unresolved.

A central methodological caution is that recurrence must not be equated automatically with continuous improvement. A recommendation that appears repeatedly may indicate that an important quality issue remains open. Conversely, a recommendation that later appears as a Best Feature may indicate institutionalization or successful closure, although such an inference must be made conservatively. This study therefore separates three questions that were previously conflated: what themes recur across the corpus, what recommendations persist at the school level, and what evidence suggests that a recommendation may have been closed or converted into a recognized strength.

The study also recognizes that the original research questions named several domains that later appeared as themes. Rather than presenting all themes as if they emerged from unrestricted inductive coding, the analysis adopts a hybrid deductive-inductive orientation. Broad quality assurance domains served as sensitizing concepts, while initial codes, theme boundaries, subthemes, and longitudinal status categories were refined through repeated engagement with the accreditation findings. This framing is consistent with the hybrid approach described by Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006) and retains the recursive review principles of Braun and Clarke (2006).

1.2 Research Questions

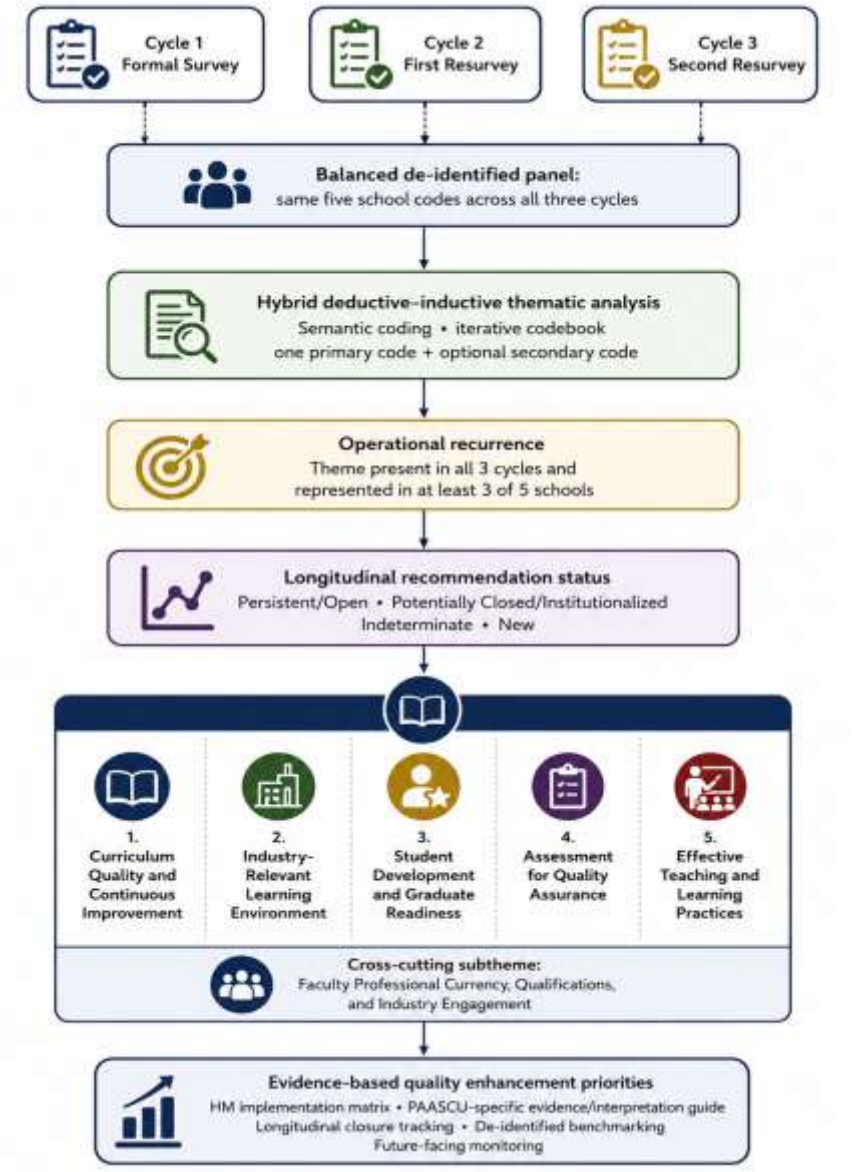
1. What major quality assurance themes recur in PAASCU Best Features and Recommendations for Hospitality Management programs across the three accreditation cycles?
2. How are the recurring themes distributed across accreditation cycles, de-identified schools, and finding type (Best Feature or Recommendation)?
3. Which recommendations demonstrate longitudinal persistence, and where is there evidence suggestive of recommendation closure or institutionalization into a later Best Feature?
4. What cross-cutting subthemes require clearer theme boundaries, particularly in relation to faculty professional currency, qualifications, and industry engagement?

5. What actionable quality enhancement priorities follow for Hospitality Management programs and for PAASCU when the historical findings are interpreted alongside current PAASCU standards and emerging industry priorities?

1.3 Conceptual and Analytical Framework

The analytical framework links the three accreditation cycles to a balanced de-identified school panel, hybrid thematic coding, an explicit recurrence rule, and a separate longitudinal recommendation-status analysis. The framework prevents frequency, recurrence, persistence, and closure from being treated as equivalent concepts. It also places the five major themes and the faculty professional-currency subtheme within an evidence-based quality enhancement process.

Figure 1. *Conceptual and Analytical Framework of the Study*



II. Methodology

2.1 Research Design and Analytical Orientation

The study employed qualitative document analysis with a hybrid deductive-inductive thematic analysis. Document analysis is appropriate for systematically examining institutional records to identify patterns, meanings, and recurring concerns (Bowen, 2009). The thematic component followed the recursive six-phase logic of Braun and Clarke (2006), while the hybrid framing acknowledges that the analysis combined broad quality assurance domains already visible in the study questions with data-driven code refinement (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006).

The analysis was primarily semantic: codes were assigned to the explicit content of accreditation findings. Interpretive judgments were required to determine primary versus secondary coding and to assess longitudinal continuity, but the coding sought to remain traceable to the wording and function of each BF or REC statement. Descriptive counts were used to show distribution and verify claims of frequency; they were not used as inferential statistics or as weights of accreditation importance.

2.2 Data Sources, Selection, and Scope

The source corpus comprised the consolidated, de-identified accreditation findings for five Hospitality Management programs across three accreditation cycles. The same school codes—SCH-01, SCH-02, SCH-03, SCH-04, and SCH-05—were present in each cycle, forming a balanced longitudinal panel. All available Best Features and Recommendations in the three consolidated datasets were included; there was no sampling of individual findings within the supplied corpus.

Table 1. *Corpus profile by accreditation cycle (N = 146 findings)*

Accreditation cycle	Stage	Schools represented	Best Features	Recommendations
Cycle 1	Formal Survey	SCH-01 to SCH-05	8	43
Cycle 2	First Resurvey	SCH-01 to SCH-05	7	40
Cycle 3	Second Resurvey	SCH-01 to SCH-05	9	39
Total	Three ordered stages	5 schools	24	122

The de-identified datasets did not retain the exact calendar years of the individual visits. Accordingly, Cycle 1, Cycle 2, and Cycle 3 are treated as ordered accreditation stages rather than as calendar-year observations. The study does not infer the timing or duration between visits beyond their sequence.

The datasets also did not retain historical survey-instrument version identifiers. Therefore, formal item-level equivalence of instruments across the three cycles cannot be established from the supplied materials. The comparative analysis is restricted to the common functional unit present in all datasets—the narrative accreditation finding classified as BF or REC. Current PAASCU

standards are used only for present-day policy alignment in the implications and recommendations sections; they are not assumed to be identical to the historical instruments used in every cycle.

2.3 Unit of Analysis and Operational Definitions

Each individual accreditation finding was treated as one unit of analysis. A Best Feature is a commendable practice or strength identified by an accreditation team. A Recommendation is an improvement action identified by an accreditation team. To address the ambiguity of the term recurring, the study applies the following operational definitions consistently.

Table 2. *Operational definitions used in thematic and longitudinal analysis*

Concept	Operational definition	Interpretive caution
Major recurring theme	A primary theme appears in all three accreditation cycles and is represented in at least 3 of the 5 schools in the cumulative corpus.	Recurrence establishes breadth and continuity of attention; it does not establish importance, compliance severity, or improvement.
Persistent recommendation	A substantially similar primary code appears for the same school in at least two cycles, or a later report explicitly reiterates/carries forward a previous team recommendation.	Persistence is evidence of an issue remaining salient or incompletely resolved, not evidence of successful improvement.
Potential closure/institutionalization	An earlier recommendation is followed by a later Best Feature in the same school with strong semantic and functional continuity.	This is suggestive, not definitive, because the consolidated findings do not include full closure documentation.
Indeterminate status	A recommendation does not recur and no later Best Feature clearly corresponds to it.	Absence from a later report is not treated as proof that the issue was closed.
New issue	A recommendation appears without a traceable prior-cycle counterpart within the three-cycle panel.	A new issue may reflect changing context, new evidence, or changes in accreditation emphasis.

2.4 Coding Framework and Theme Boundaries

An iterative codebook was developed to strengthen transparency and reduce overlap. The codebook specifies the code, definition, inclusion rule, exclusion rule, primary theme, allowable secondary theme, and decision rule. The complete codebook is presented in Appendix D.

Each finding received exactly one primary code for descriptive tabulation. An optional secondary code was allowed only when a finding contained a substantively independent concern that crossed a second domain. Secondary coding supported interpretation of relationships among themes but was excluded from frequency counts to prevent double counting. When a finding could plausibly fit more than one theme, the primary code was assigned according to the principal object of the recommendation or commendation: what the institution was being asked to change, maintain, or demonstrate.

Theme boundaries were specifically refined in three areas. First, facilities, systems, and access to industry-relevant learning environments were retained under Theme 2, while the instructional use of those resources could receive a secondary Theme 5 code. Second, international exposure was

treated as one possible modality of experiential learning or student development, not as a universal benchmark of graduate readiness. Third, faculty qualifications, specialization, practitioner participation, and industry immersion were consolidated as the cross-cutting subtheme Faculty Professional Currency, Qualifications, and Industry Engagement, primarily located under Theme 5 with secondary Theme 2 coding where direct industry linkage was material.

2.5 Data Analysis Procedure

Phase 1: Familiarization with the data. The 146 BF and REC statements were reviewed across all three cycles and by school code to understand the content, sequence, and possible carry-forward language.

Phase 2: Initial coding. Semantic codes were assigned to the explicit meaning of each finding. Broad quality-assurance domains served as sensitizing categories, while specific codes were revised when the corpus revealed distinctions not adequately captured by the initial framework.

Phase 3: Codebook development and searching for themes. Related codes were grouped into conceptual themes. Definitions, inclusion and exclusion rules, allowable secondary themes, and decision rules were documented and iteratively refined.

Phase 4: Reviewing themes and boundaries. Themes were checked for internal coherence and external distinctiveness. Overlap was resolved through primary-coding rules and limited secondary coding. The faculty professional-currency subtheme was made explicit at this stage.

Phase 5: Defining themes, recurrence, and longitudinal status. Final theme definitions were established. The recurrence threshold, persistence rule, potential closure rule, and indeterminate status were then applied consistently across the panel.

Phase 6: Producing the report and verifying descriptive distributions. The final narrative was developed from the coded corpus. The retained research record does not document a second coder or separate verifier; accordingly, the analysis is reported as a single-researcher coding process and no intercoder-reliability claim is made. After finalization of the codebook, the researcher conducted a separate verification pass by recomputing the frequency, accreditation-cycle, finding-type, and aggregate school-coverage distributions directly from all 146 coded BF/REC rows and reconciling the resulting totals with the final tables. This verification was separate from the earlier summary tabulations and is not presented as independent second-coder validation.

2.6 Longitudinal Recommendation-Closure Analysis

The longitudinal analysis was conducted separately from the thematic frequency analysis. Explicit textual signals such as “previous team’s recommendation” or “reiterates” were treated as strong evidence of carry-forward. In addition, same-school findings were compared across cycles at the code level to identify recurring concerns and possible recommendation-to-Best Feature transitions. Because the consolidated data do not include institutional action plans, closure reports, or the full evidentiary basis of survey-team judgments, all inferred transitions are described as potential or indicative rather than definitive.

2.7 Trustworthiness and Auditability

Credibility and consistency were strengthened through a common codebook, explicit boundary rules, a one-primary-code policy for frequency counts, retention of de-identified school codes across cycles, and a documented distinction among recurrence, persistence, closure, and indeterminate status. Representative coding examples are shown in Appendix B. A complete row-level coding matrix was not included among the materials retained with this manuscript for finalization; therefore, this version does not present a separate school-by-cycle audit appendix or claim full external row-level auditability. Aggregate corpus, theme, cycle, finding-type, and school-coverage results are reported in Tables 1 and 3-5.

The descriptive frequency table was recalculated directly from the 146 consolidated BF/REC rows rather than relying on pre-existing summary tabs. This step was necessary to ensure that claims about which themes were most frequently represented were supported by the underlying units of analysis.

2.8 Ethical and Confidentiality Considerations

The analysis uses internal accreditation documents and preserves school anonymity through the supplied de-identified codes. No attempt was made to re-identify institutions. The study reports only the level of detail necessary to support thematic and quality-assurance conclusions and recognizes that the underlying accreditation reports are proprietary PAASCU documents.

2.9 Limitations

This study has several limitations that should be considered in interpreting its findings. The corpus consists of de-identified consolidated BF/REC statements rather than the complete survey reports, evidence exhibits, school responses, or closure documentation. While the exact visit years for each school and accreditation cycle were identified and retained for the analysis, the study does not seek to establish causal relationships or make broad generalizations beyond the corpus examined. In addition, historical versions of the survey instruments were not retained; thus, comparability across accreditation cycles is considered functional at the BF/REC unit level rather than based on item-by-item instrument equivalence. Frequency counts are descriptive and should not be interpreted to mean that a more frequently occurring theme is necessarily more important than a less frequently occurring theme in accreditation judgment. Furthermore, secondary codes were not included in the frequency totals; consequently, complex findings may have cross-theme meanings beyond the primary count.

Another limitation concerns the availability of the row-level coding audit matrix. A complete audit matrix was not retained with the manuscript materials available for finalization; therefore, external verification of all 146 individual code assignments is limited based on the materials included in this publication. To support transparency and methodological traceability, however, the manuscript provides the final codebook, representative coding examples, and aggregate reconciliations. Potential recommendation-to-Best Feature transitions are treated as indicative only, as the disappearance of a recommendation is not considered evidence of closure. International exposure is likewise treated as one optional modality of experiential learning and is not used as a universal benchmark of graduate readiness. Finally, current PAASCU standards and

contemporary industry sources are used for present-day interpretation and future monitoring, rather than to retroactively redefine historical findings.

III. Findings and Discussion

3.1 Corpus Profile

The final corpus contains 146 units of analysis from a balanced panel of five schools across the three accreditation stages. Recommendations account for 122 findings (83.6%), while Best Features account for 24 (16.4%). This distribution is important for interpretation: the corpus is naturally weighted toward improvement-oriented statements because accreditation reports use recommendations to identify areas requiring action. Theme frequency should therefore be read as the distribution of accreditation attention in the available findings, not as a scorecard of institutional performance.

3.2 Final Thematic Framework and Verified Distribution

Table 3. *Final recurring themes and primary-code distribution*

Theme	Core scope	n	%	Cycles	Schools
1. Curriculum Quality and Continuous Improvement	Curriculum review; syllabus/content/reference currency; outcomes mapping; structure, sequencing, compliance, contact hours.	38	26.0	3/3	5/5
2. Industry-Relevant Learning Environment	Industry/practicum access; laboratories and simulation; hospitality systems; library/IT/resource access; experiential exposure.	57	39.0	3/3	5/5
3. Student Development and Graduate Readiness	Co-curricular/professional development; tracer/employability; student support; professional competency and values.	23	15.8	3/3	5/5
4. Assessment for Quality Assurance	Assessment instruments/rubrics; grading/evaluation; program outcomes assessment and use of evidence.	7	4.8	3/3	3/5
5. Effective Teaching and Learning Practices	Student-centered methods; flexible/technology-enhanced learning; research-integrated learning; faculty professional currency and instructional support.	21	14.4	3/3	5/5

All five themes satisfy the study's recurrence rule because each appears in all three cycles and in at least three of the five schools. Industry-Relevant Learning Environment, not Curriculum Quality and Continuous Improvement, is the most frequently represented primary theme in the verified corpus. The smaller frequency of Assessment for Quality Assurance should not be interpreted as lower importance; it means that fewer standalone BF/REC units were primarily about assessment under the one-primary-code rule.

Figure 2. *Distribution of primary-coded themes across 146 accreditation findings*

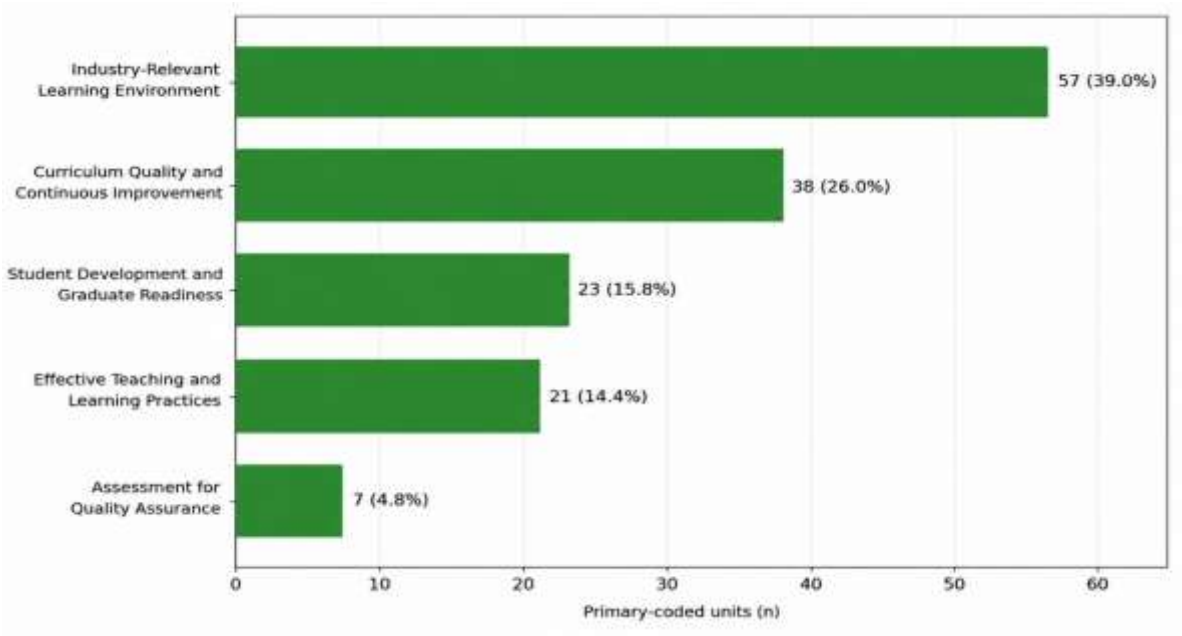


Table 4. *Primary-theme distribution by accreditation cycle*

Cycle	T1 Curriculum	T2 Industry environment	T3 Student/graduate	T4 Assessment	T5 Teaching/faculty
Cycle 1	13	21	5	3	9
Cycle 2	15	18	9	1	4
Cycle 3	10	18	9	3	8
Total	38	57	23	7	21

Table 5. *Primary-theme distribution by finding type*

Theme	Best Features	Recommendations	Total
T1 Curriculum Quality and Continuous Improvement	1	37	38
T2 Industry-Relevant Learning Environment	15	42	57
T3 Student Development and Graduate Readiness	6	17	23
T4 Assessment for Quality Assurance	0	7	7
T5 Effective Teaching and Learning Practices	2	19	21
Total	24	122	146

3.3 Theme 1: Curriculum Quality and Continuous Improvement

Theme 1 accounts for 38 findings (26.0% of the corpus) and appears in all three cycles and all five schools. It encompasses four principal code families: stakeholder-informed curriculum review;

syllabus, content, and reference currency; outcomes alignment and curriculum mapping; and curriculum structure, compliance, sequencing, and contact hours. The pattern shows that curriculum quality was a recurring quality assurance priority even though it was not the most frequent theme overall.

Recommendations repeatedly addressed updated references and journals, syllabus standardization, relevant course content, curriculum review with industry and alumni participation, regulatory requirements, course sequencing, subject codes, lecture/laboratory separation, and laboratory/contact-hour requirements. Cycle 3 also contains an explicit recommendation to map course learning outcomes to program learning outcomes. These findings support a continuing concern with constructive alignment and curricular currency rather than a one-time compliance exercise.

The boundary of Theme 1 is defined by the primary object of change. For example, a recommendation to increase laboratory hours because of curriculum/contact-hour requirements is coded primarily as curriculum structure, even though the learning environment is implicated. By contrast, a recommendation to acquire or utilize a laboratory system is coded under Theme 2. This distinction reduces the overlap identified during review.

The theme is predominantly recommendation-based: 37 of its 38 units are recommendations. This imbalance indicates that curriculum-related findings in the corpus function mainly as developmental requirements rather than commendations. It should not be interpreted as evidence that curriculum systems failed overall; the available BF/REC corpus does not contain the full ratings or evidence base needed for such a conclusion.

3.4 Theme 2: Industry-Relevant Learning Environment

Theme 2 is the most frequently represented primary theme, with 57 findings (39.0%). It appears in all three cycles and all five schools. Its core code families are industry partnerships and practicum access; hospitality laboratories, simulation facilities, and industry systems; library, IT, and learning-resource access and utilization; and experiential or international industry exposure.

The findings reflect the practice-oriented character of Hospitality Management education. They include calls for broader practicum venues, closer practicum supervision, Property Management Systems and other hospitality/travel software, updated audiovisual and digital resources, stronger library utilization, Wi-Fi and IT access, adequate culinary tools and laboratories, and industry linkages that enable authentic or simulated learning. Best Features likewise frequently recognize training centers, practicum supervision, licensed systems, simulation venues, and industry-linked experiences.

A key interpretation is that quality should not be reduced to ownership of expensive facilities. The educational question is whether students have reliable access to appropriate environments, systems, tools, supervision, and opportunities that support intended competencies. A program may demonstrate adequacy through owned facilities, shared facilities, formal industry access, or blended arrangements when access is documented and student attainment is evidenced. This

resource-sensitive interpretation is consistent with the principles-based character of PAASCU quality assurance and avoids equating quality with capital expenditure alone.

International exposure appears in several findings, but the analysis treats it as one modality rather than a universal graduate-readiness benchmark. Domestic industry immersion, high-quality local practicum, simulation, industry-led projects, competitions, and other authentic learning experiences can serve similar developmental purposes when they are aligned with program outcomes and evaluated for student learning.

3.5 Theme 3: Student Development and Graduate Readiness

Theme 3 contains 23 findings (15.8%) and is represented in all three cycles and all five schools. It includes co-curricular and professional-development participation, graduate tracking and employability, student support and scheduling, and professional competency and values development. Six of the 23 findings are Best Features, showing that student-development practices are more visibly represented among strengths than several other themes.

Across the cycles, accreditation teams recognized or recommended competitions, skills-related clubs, student participation in events, student support arrangements, attendance and scheduling improvements, value formation, and graduate tracer studies. Tracer studies recur because they provide post-graduation evidence of program effectiveness, employability, and the relevance of competencies. However, graduate readiness is broader than employment data alone; it also includes professional behavior, communication, teamwork, adaptability, and the demonstrated ability to apply learning in practice.

The boundary separates student outcomes from the mechanisms used to produce them. A practicum facility is primarily Theme 2; the student competencies demonstrated through practicum may be secondarily Theme 3. Similarly, a tracer study is primarily Theme 3 when its purpose is to understand graduate outcomes, and may receive a secondary Theme 4 code when the focus is on use of the data within an assessment system.

3.6 Theme 4: Assessment for Quality Assurance

Theme 4 is the least frequent primary theme, with seven findings (4.8%), but it meets the recurrence rule because assessment-related findings appear across all three cycles and in three of the five schools. The theme includes assessment instrument quality and rubrics, assessment policies and grading, and program-outcomes assessment and evidence use.

Representative concerns include the use of test questions that measure higher-order thinking, objective practicum evaluation, review of grading weights for educational tours, development of rubrics for non-discrete assessments, and explicit program-outcomes assessment. These findings show that assessment is treated not merely as grading but as a mechanism for validating learning and informing decisions.

The low standalone count is partly a boundary effect of the one-primary-code rule. Assessment language can appear within curriculum, practicum, or graduate-outcome findings, but such units

were counted under the primary object of the recommendation. Secondary coding preserves these cross-links without inflating totals. Thus, frequency should not be interpreted as the relative weight PAASCU assigns to assessment; current PAASCU standards explicitly establish assessment as a core teaching-learning system.

3.7 Theme 5: Effective Teaching and Learning Practices

Theme 5 contains 21 findings (14.4%) and appears in all three cycles and all five schools. Its principal code families are student-centered and varied teaching methods, technology-enhanced and flexible learning, research-integrated and inquiry-based learning, and the cross-cutting faculty professional-currency subtheme.

Recurring teaching-learning recommendations call for varied and student-centered methodologies, interactive discussions, greater use of instructional and audiovisual materials, stronger student participation, research collaboration, and flexible learning practices. Best Features include evidence of flexible learning environments and multimodal instruction. The common quality assurance concern is not the adoption of a particular pedagogy for its own sake, but the deliberate selection and evaluation of methods that support intended outcomes and meaningful student engagement.

3.7.1 Cross-Cutting Subtheme: Faculty Professional Currency, Qualifications, and Industry Engagement

The analysis makes faculty professional currency explicit because the original thematic structure risked dispersing faculty-related findings across the learning-environment and teaching-learning themes. Relevant findings include regular hotel and restaurant training for HM faculty, inviting hotel practitioners to teach part-time, exploring modalities that attract industry practitioners, ensuring faculty teach within their areas of specialization, faculty immersion with industry partners, and instructional support for faculty use of current technologies and methods.

These findings are primarily coded under Theme 5 because faculty competence and deployment directly shape teaching quality. A secondary Theme 2 code is permitted when the finding specifically concerns industry immersion, practitioner linkage, or access to contemporary industry practice. Under the operational recurrence threshold used for major themes, this faculty cluster is retained as a defined cross-cutting subtheme rather than declared a sixth major theme; nonetheless, it has clear strategic importance for Hospitality Management quality assurance.

The subtheme is strongly aligned with current PAASCU expectations. The current Hospitality/Tourism instrument asks whether teaching assignments are consistent with faculty qualifications, whether there is an adequate number of industry practitioners in technical and allied fields, and identifies faculty industry immersion and MOAs with industry partners as supporting evidence (PAASCU, 2025). This alignment supports more explicit HM-specific interpretation of faculty currency without requiring a wholly new general standard.

3.8 Longitudinal Persistence and Recommendation Closure

The longitudinal analysis confirms that recurring themes and continuous improvement are not synonymous. Eighteen recommendations in Cycles 2 and 3 explicitly refer to a previous team recommendation or formally reiterate a prior issue. These explicit carry-forwards provide the strongest evidence in the consolidated corpus that some concerns remained open across successive accreditation stages.

Table 6. *Explicit carry-forward recommendations within the three-cycle panel*

Primary theme	Explicit carry-forward recommendations in Cycles 2-3	Interpretation
T1 Curriculum Quality and Continuous Improvement	6	Persistent curriculum/syllabus/reference or related structural concerns.
T2 Industry-Relevant Learning Environment	6	Persistent resource-utilization, practicum, or industry-environment concerns.
T3 Student Development and Graduate Readiness	2	Persistent student/graduate-outcome or related support concerns.
T4 Assessment for Quality Assurance	0	No explicit carry-forward language under the primary Theme 4 coding in Cycles 2-3.
T5 Effective Teaching and Learning Practices	4	Persistent varied-methodology, instructional-resource, or participation concerns.
Total	18	10 explicit carry-forwards in Cycle 2 and 8 in Cycle 3.

The presence of an explicit carry-forward should be interpreted as persistence or incomplete resolution unless the full follow-up evidence demonstrates otherwise. This distinction changes the quality-improvement narrative: accreditation is a catalyst for continuous improvement, but repeated recommendations are indicators that the improvement loop may not yet be closed.

The corpus also contains two strong examples of possible recommendation-to-Best Feature conversion. For SCH-02, a Cycle 2 recommendation called for student training on a Property Management System used in industry; Cycle 3 later commended acquisition of Property Management and Point-of-Sale systems for the Front Office course and practicum center. For SCH-04, Cycle 1 recommended familiarization with Property Management Systems; Cycle 3 later commended maximization of school laboratories supported by a licensed Property Management System in the Front Office area. These transitions are consistent with institutionalization, but the study labels them “potential closure” because the consolidated records do not include the complete implementation and validation trail.

Table 7. *Recommended longitudinal status model for accreditation recommendations*

Status	Evidence rule	Meaning	Recommended tracking field
Persistent/Open	Explicit reiteration/carry-forward or same substantive code recurs for same school.	Issue remains salient and requires verified follow-through.	Open / Partially Addressed

Status	Evidence rule	Meaning	Recommended tracking field
Potentially Closed/Institutionalized	Earlier REC is followed by a closely corresponding BF in the same school, but complete implementation or closure evidence is unavailable in the consolidated corpus.	Indicative of possible successful implementation or institutionalization; confirmation requires review of the underlying implementation and closure evidence.	Potential closure / verification required
Indeterminate	Earlier REC disappears without clear counterpart.	Insufficient evidence to infer closure.	Status to be verified
New	No traceable prior-cycle counterpart.	Newly observed issue or newly emphasized evidence requirement.	New recommendation

3.9 Alignment with Current PAASCU Standards: Existing Coverage and Incremental Opportunities

Several recurring concerns in the corpus are already substantially covered by the current PAASCU principles-based framework. The analysis therefore distinguishes between existing standard coverage and incremental HM-specific opportunities. The current PAASCU Hospitality, Tourism Management, and Nutrition & Dietetics survey instrument (2025 revised edition) already includes stakeholder participation in curriculum review; current regulatory alignment; program and course learning outcomes; evaluation of teaching-learning methods and current innovations; faculty assignment aligned with qualifications; assessment review and use; tracer studies; employability; stakeholder satisfaction; qualified personnel; adequate industry practitioners; and faculty industry immersion. The broader PAASCU Quality Standards also address networks, linkages, and partnerships (PAASCU, 2020, 2025).

For present-day regulatory context, the analysis also recognizes CHED Memorandum Order No. 62, series of 2017, which provides the Policies, Standards and Guidelines for the Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management and Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management. The CMO is used here only to contextualize current regulatory alignment and minimum program expectations; it is not used to recode or retroactively reinterpret the historical PAASCU accreditation findings (Commission on Higher Education, 2017).

Table 8. *Current PAASCU coverage and non-duplicative HM-specific opportunities (PAASCU, 2020, 2025)*

Historical recurring concern	Current PAASCU coverage	Incremental HM-specific opportunity
Curriculum review, stakeholder participation, outcomes alignment	Sub-area 4.1 / Standard 11 already addresses design, review, stakeholder participation, regulatory alignment, outcomes, syllabi, and employer/industry feedback.	Do not add a duplicative general standard. Clarify HM-specific evidence sufficiency and link curriculum review actions to a longitudinal closure record.
Teaching methods, innovation, flexible modalities	Sub-area 4.2 / Standard 12 already addresses selection, evaluation, current innovations and trends, flexible modalities, stakeholder feedback, and learning outcomes.	Provide HM examples of simulation, service operations, industry-integrated projects, research-informed practice, and evidence of learning impact.
Assessment use for improvement	Sub-area 4.3 / Standard 13 requires appropriate assessment, review, and use of results for improvement.	Strengthen traceability from assessment evidence to action, follow-up, and verified effect rather than adding a new assessment principle.
Graduate readiness and tracer studies	Educational Results already requires monitoring of employability, learning outcomes, and stakeholder satisfaction and lists tracer/employer studies as evidence.	Develop a comparable HM outcomes dashboard and de-identified benchmarking fields, not a duplicate tracer-study requirement.

Historical recurring concern	Current PAASCU coverage	Incremental HM-specific opportunity
Industry partnerships and practicum	PAASCU Standard 16 addresses partnerships; program evidence already includes internship reports, industry immersion, and MOAs.	Strengthen HM-specific practicum quality: competency mapping, supervisor quality, student attainment, feedback, and partner review—not merely existence of an MOA.
Faculty qualifications and industry currency	Human Resources and Teaching-Learning provisions address qualification, teaching assignment, industry practitioners, faculty immersion, and partner MOAs.	Define evidence of current HM professional currency, appropriate specialization, practitioner contribution, and how faculty updating affects teaching.
Specialized HM laboratories and systems	Learning, Physical, and IT Resources addresses adequacy, currency, access, laboratories, hardware, and software, but HM-specific resource interpretation is comparatively less explicit.	Develop an HM-specific evidence/interpretation guide for kitchens, front-office/PMS/POS, housekeeping/F&B simulation, safety, maintenance, utilization, and equivalent shared/industry access.

This alignment supports a change in recommendation logic: the principal value of the study is not to propose additional generic standards wherever recurring findings exist. Instead, the evidence points to opportunities for more specific interpretation, longitudinal follow-up, comparability, and HM-context evidence within an already established principles-based framework.

3.10 Emerging Industry Priorities Underrepresented in the Accreditation Findings

The historical corpus should not be forced to produce themes it does not substantiate. Sustainability is only sparsely represented, and digitalization appears mainly through Property Management Systems, Point-of-Sale systems, travel software, Wi-Fi, audiovisual resources, and flexible/online learning. These are important, but they do not amount to a recurrent historical theme of enterprise-level digital transformation. Accordingly, sustainability and broader digital transformation are treated as external future-facing benchmarks rather than historical recurring themes.

Current international tourism and labor-market sources justify monitoring these priorities prospectively. UN Tourism identifies digital transformation as important to innovation, competitiveness, growth, and sustainable development, and its World Tourism Day 2025 focus on "Tourism and Sustainable Transformation" reinforces sustainability as a sector-level strategic priority. The World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs Report 2025 identifies technological literacy, AI and big data, analytical thinking, leadership and social influence, service orientation/customer service, resilience, and environmental stewardship among important or rising skills. These external signals are relevant to future Hospitality Management quality assurance but should not be retroactively counted as recurrent themes in this historical dataset.

Table 9. *Emerging priorities underrepresented in the historical accreditation corpus*

Emerging priority	Status in the historical corpus	Future quality-assurance monitoring implication
Broader digital transformation	Partially visible through PMS/POS, travel software, Wi-Fi, audiovisual resources, and flexible learning; not a recurrent strategic-transformation theme.	Monitor data/AI literacy, digital customer experience, cybersecurity awareness, analytics, system integration, and responsible technology use where relevant to program outcomes.
Sustainable transformation	Sparse; isolated sustainability-related evidence does not meet the recurrence threshold.	Monitor curriculum integration, sustainable operations, resource stewardship, responsible tourism/hospitality, and measurable student competencies without retroactively reclassifying historical findings.
Transferable managerial and human skills	Present in scattered findings on critical thinking, leadership, values, teamwork, communication,	Track analytical thinking, adaptability, leadership, service orientation/customer service, collaboration,

Emerging priority	Status in the historical corpus	Future quality-assurance monitoring implication
	competitions, and employability but not organized as a future-skills framework.	communication, and lifelong learning through outcomes and authentic assessment.
Environmental stewardship	Not sufficiently recurrent as a historical theme.	Consider explicit outcomes/evidence where institution/program mission and industry context make environmental stewardship material.

IV. Conclusions and Implications

4.1 Conclusions

The study provides a longitudinal analysis of Best Features (BF) and Recommendations (REC) across three accreditation cycles involving the same five de-identified schools. The consistent representation of these schools across all three cycles provides a basis for ordered-cycle comparison of BF/REC findings and allows the study to examine the recurrence, persistence, and evolution of identified themes over time. All five major themes met the study's explicit recurrence rule, defined as their presence in all three accreditation cycles and in at least three of the five schools.

Among the five major themes, **Industry-Relevant Learning Environment** emerged as the most frequently represented primary theme, with 57 occurrences (39.0%), followed by **Curriculum Quality and Continuous Improvement**, with 38 occurrences (26.0%). This finding underscores the importance of systematic thematic coding in identifying the areas most frequently reflected in accreditation findings.

The findings further demonstrate that recurrence and continuous improvement should be interpreted separately. The 18 explicit carry-forward recommendations in Cycles 2 and 3 indicate persistence or incomplete resolution of identified concerns, but do not, by themselves, constitute evidence of improvement. Similarly, two strong but indicative recommendation-to-Best Feature transitions involving Property Management Systems demonstrate the potential value of longitudinal closure tracking. These cases also underscore the need for corresponding evidence of implementation, effectiveness, and validation before a recommendation can be considered fully addressed or closed.

Faculty Professional Currency, Qualifications, and Industry Engagement emerged as a strategically important cross-cutting subtheme. Making this dimension explicit strengthens the boundaries of the thematic analysis and reflects current PAASCU expectations concerning faculty qualifications, appropriate teaching assignments, industry practitioners, and faculty immersion. At the same time, many of the generic improvement areas identified in the historical corpus are already substantially addressed by current PAASCU standards. The stronger policy contribution of the thematic research therefore lies not in duplicating existing standards, but in providing Hospitality Management-specific interpretation, strengthening evidence quality, supporting longitudinal follow-up, and informing benchmarking and future quality enhancement.

Finally, **digital transformation, sustainable transformation, and future-skills development** are relevant external priorities that were underrepresented in the historical corpus. These areas should therefore be treated as prospective areas for monitoring and policy consideration rather than presented as recurrent historical themes. Taken together, the findings support a more evidence-informed approach to accreditation and quality enhancement that distinguishes recurrence from improvement, emphasizes longitudinal evidence of implementation and closure, and considers emerging priorities without retroactively redefining historical accreditation findings.

4.2 Implications for Hospitality Management Programs

Hospitality Management programs should treat accreditation findings as inputs to an evidence-based management cycle rather than as isolated compliance items. Each recommendation should have a responsible owner, target evidence, review date, defined success indicator, and closure status. This approach improves continuity when leadership changes and makes the program's quality-assurance narrative demonstrable across future visits.

Programs should also distinguish resource adequacy from resource ownership. Where acquisition of specialized systems or facilities is not financially feasible, shared-facility arrangements, formal access to industry laboratories or systems, simulation partnerships, and structured off-campus access may be credible alternatives when student access, safety, supervision, and attainment are documented. The quality question is whether intended competencies are achieved reliably and equitably.

International experience may add value, but programs should not treat it as the default indicator of graduate readiness. A strong local practicum, industry project, competition, simulation, practitioner-led learning, or other authentic experience can be equally defensible when linked to intended outcomes and evaluated using appropriate evidence.

4.3 Implications for PAASCU

For PAASCU, the findings support strengthening the longitudinal and discipline-specific interpretation of existing principles rather than proliferating generic standards. Current standards already address curriculum, teaching-learning, assessment, partnerships, human resources, resources, and educational results. The study therefore points toward more precise HM evidence guidance, a recommendation-closure mechanism, de-identified benchmarking, and future-facing prompts that preserve PAASCU's principles-based and context-sensitive approach.

V. Recommendations

5.1 Actionable Implementation Matrix for Hospitality Management Programs

The following matrix translates the five themes into actions that a dean, program chair, quality assurance officer, or faculty team can implement and monitor. Suggested frequencies are management defaults and may be adjusted to institutional risk, policy, and accreditation cycle. Evidence should be proportionate to the decision being supported.

Table 10. *Implementation matrix for Hospitality Management programs*

Theme	Evidence-based priority	Actionable implementation	Minimum evidence	Suggested frequency	Success indicator	Resource-sensitive option
T1 Curriculum Quality and Continuous Improvement	Regular, stakeholder-informed curriculum review and documented alignment.	Maintain a version-controlled curriculum map; review program/course outcomes, content, references, sequencing, regulatory requirements, and stakeholder inputs; log decisions and closure actions.	Approved curriculum map; review minutes; employer/ alumni/faculty/ student feedback; revised syllabi; action/closure log.	Syllabi annually; formal program review at least every 2-3 years or when regulation/ industry change warrants.	High-priority review actions closed on time; reduced repeat recommendations on references/syllabi/ alignment; traceable rationale for changes.	Use focused virtual stakeholder panels and shared digital review tools; prioritize high-risk courses instead of redesigning all courses at once.
T2 Industry-Relevant Learning Environment	Assure quality of practicum, industry access, laboratories, systems, and learning-resource utilization.	Map each practical competency to an owned, shared, simulated, or industry-based learning venue; approve partners; define supervision; review utilization, safety, maintenance, and student attainment.	Partner/MOA file; competency-to-venue map; practicum handbook; supervisor/ student evaluations; utilization logs; safety/ maintenance records; attainment evidence.	Partner and facility review annually; practicum evaluation every cohort/term.	Required competencies achieved; positive employer/ supervisor evidence; fewer repeated resource/ practicum findings; documented effective use of available resources.	Formal shared-facility or industry access agreements; scheduled access to partner PMS/POS/labs; pooled equipment; simulation alternatives with documented competency attainment.
T3 Student Development and Graduate Readiness	Use multiple outcome indicators to monitor holistic student and graduate readiness.	Maintain a dashboard combining tracer/ employment results, employer feedback, student	Tracer study; employer feedback; practicum outcomes; student-development records; competency	Student-development dashboard each term/year; tracer/employer study every 1-2 years where feasible.	Improving competency and employability indicators; action taken on employer/graduate feedback; equitable participation in	Use local industry projects, practitioner mentoring, competitions, and simulations where overseas exposure is not feasible; evaluate

Theme	Evidence-based priority	Actionable implementation	Minimum evidence	Suggested frequency	Success indicator	Resource-sensitive option
		achievement, co-curricular/ professional activities, practicum outcomes, and relevant certifications/ competitions. Treat international exposure as optional.	evidence; intervention records.		development opportunities.	learning equivalence.
T4 Assessment for Quality Assurance	Strengthen valid, fair, aligned assessment and documented use of results.	Review assessment blueprints/ rubrics; moderate high-stakes assessments; map evidence to outcomes; analyze results; assign improvement actions and verify effect in the next cycle.	Assessment plan; blueprints/ rubrics; moderation records; outcome results; action log; evidence of follow-up.	Course-level each term; program-level aggregation at least annually.	Assessment evidence covers intended outcomes; actions are closed and show measurable improvement; fewer recurrent assessment-quality issues.	Prioritize moderation of capstones, practicum, and high-risk assessments; use shared rubric banks and peer review rather than costly systems.
T5 Effective Teaching and Learning Practices	Sustain student-centered pedagogy and faculty professional currency.	Audit teaching assignments against qualifications/ specialization; maintain a faculty updating plan including industry immersion/ practitioner engagement; evaluate teaching methods and technology use against student outcomes.	Faculty profile/assignment matrix; development plan; immersion/ practitioner records; peer/student feedback; teaching innovation evidence; outcome evidence.	Faculty assignment audit each term/year; professional-currency review annually; teaching-method review each term.	Appropriate assignment coverage; evidence of current industry/ pedagogical updating; improved engagement/outcomes; reduced repeat teaching-method recommendations.	Use short industry attachments, practitioner co-teaching, virtual masterclasses, peer mentoring, open digital tools, and consortia-based faculty development.

5.2 Recommendations for PAASCU

1. Develop an HM-specific evidence and interpretation guide. Retain the principles-based standards but provide discipline-specific examples of sufficient evidence for kitchens and culinary laboratories, front-office/PMS/POS systems, housekeeping and F&B simulation, practicum

supervision, faculty professional currency, safety, maintenance, utilization, and equivalent shared or industry-based access.

2. Institutionalize a longitudinal recommendation-closure mechanism. For every recommendation, carry forward a structured status such as New, Open, Partially Addressed, Closed, or Institutionalized as a Best Feature, with a short evidence reference. This would reduce ambiguity between recurrence and improvement.

3. Establish a de-identified PAASCU Hospitality Management benchmarking database. Aggregate recurring codes, school/cycle coverage, Best Feature patterns, recommendation persistence, and closure rates without revealing school identities. Use the database for commission learning, instrument interpretation, accreditor calibration, and sector-level trend review.

4. Strengthen HM-specific practicum quality evidence rather than duplicating partnership requirements. Beyond the existence of MOAs or industry partners, examine competency alignment, quality of supervision, workplace learning plans, student attainment, employer/supervisor feedback, safety, and periodic partner effectiveness review.

5. Clarify resource adequacy using an access-and-attainment principle. Recognize owned, shared, simulated, and industry-based resource models where they provide reliable access and demonstrable student attainment. This avoids inadvertently equating quality with capital expenditure while preserving expectations for adequacy, currency, safety, and utilization.

6. Make faculty professional currency more visible in HM interpretation. Connect existing Human Resources and Teaching-Learning provisions to HM-specific evidence on faculty specialization, current industry practice, practitioner participation, industry immersion, and the effect of updating activities on instruction and student learning.

7. Add future-facing monitoring prompts without retroactively redefining historical themes. Periodically review whether HM programs are addressing broader digital transformation, sustainability, responsible technology use, analytics, transferable management/interpersonal skills, and environmental stewardship where relevant to program outcomes and industry context.

These recommendations are deliberately non-duplicative. The study does not recommend adding new generic curriculum, teaching, assessment, graduate-tracking, or partnership standards where current PAASCU provisions already address the principle. Instead, it recommends better HM-specific interpretation, evidence quality, longitudinal closure, calibration, and future-oriented monitoring.

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Internal Documents / Primary Data Sources

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Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities. (n.d.-b). Cycle 2 first resurvey accreditation findings for de-identified Hospitality Management programs [Internal accreditation data].

Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities. (n.d.-c). Cycle 3 second resurvey accreditation findings for de-identified Hospitality Management programs [Internal accreditation data].

VII. Appendices

Appendix A. Data Sources and Balanced Panel

The study used all BF/REC findings in the three supplied consolidated datasets. The same five de-identified school codes are represented in every cycle. Exact visit years and historical instrument version identifiers were not present in the datasets and are therefore not reported.

School code	Cycle 1 Formal Survey	Cycle 2 First Resurvey	Cycle 3 Second Resurvey	Panel status
SCH-01	Included	Included	Included	Balanced
SCH-02	Included	Included	Included	Balanced
SCH-03	Included	Included	Included	Balanced
SCH-04	Included	Included	Included	Balanced
SCH-05	Included	Included	Included	Balanced

Appendix B. Sample Coding Matrix

Appendix B presents representative coding examples only. A complete row-level 146-unit coding audit matrix was not retained with the manuscript materials available for finalization and is therefore not reproduced as a supplementary audit file in this version.

Cycle / School	Finding type	Condensed verbatim finding	Primary code	Primary theme	Secondary code (if material)
C1 / SCH-01	REC	Four core required courses were missing under minimum program requirements.	C4 Curriculum Structure, Compliance, Sequencing, and Contact Hours	T1	—
C1 / SCH-02	REC	Review practicum evaluation form for more objective skills and performance assessment.	A1 Assessment Instrument Quality, Rubrics, and Higher-Order Thinking	T4	I1 when practicum-supervision context is interpreted
C1 / SCH-02	REC	Provide regular hotel and restaurant training for HM faculty.	F2 Faculty Industry Immersion and Professional Updating	T5	T2
C1 / SCH-05	REC	Invite hotel practitioners to teach on a part-time basis.	F3 Industry Practitioners in Teaching	T5	T2
C2 / SCH-01	REC	Conduct a tracer study to determine effectiveness of curriculum, co-curricular activities, and classroom instruction.	S2 Graduate Tracking, Employability, and Program Effectiveness	T3	T4
C2 / SCH-02	REC	Train students on a Property Management System used in industry.	I2 Hospitality Laboratories, Simulation Facilities, and Industry Systems	T2	T3
C2 / SCH-04	REC	Use varied teaching methodologies to motivate participation and interaction.	P1 Student-Centered and Varied Teaching Methods	T5	T3
C3 / SCH-02	REC	Assign faculty to courses within their areas of expertise or specialization.	F1 Faculty Qualifications, Specialization, and Teaching Assignment	T5	—

Cycle / School	Finding type	Condensed verbatim finding	Primary code	Primary theme	Secondary code (if material)
C3 / SCH-03	REC	Design rubrics for all non-discrete assessments and include them in syllabi.	A1 Assessment Instrument Quality, Rubrics, and Higher-Order Thinking	T4	T1
C3 / SCH-04	BF	Licensed Property Management System supports maximized use of school laboratories for in-house practicum.	I2 Hospitality Laboratories, Simulation Facilities, and Industry Systems	T2	T5

Appendix C. Key Terms Used in the Study

Term	Operational meaning in this study
Best Feature (BF)	A commendable practice, strength, innovation, or exemplary initiative identified by a PAASCU survey team.
Recommendation (REC)	An improvement action or developmental requirement identified by a PAASCU survey team.
Primary code	The single code representing the principal object of change, maintenance, or evidence in a finding; used for frequency counts.
Secondary code	An optional additional code assigned only when a finding materially crosses a second domain; used for interpretation but not frequency totals.
Major recurring theme	A primary theme present in all three cycles and represented in at least three of five schools.
Persistent recommendation	A substantially similar issue that recurs for the same school in at least two cycles or is explicitly carried forward/reiterated.
Potential closure/institutionalization	A strong semantic and functional match between an earlier recommendation and a later Best Feature for the same school.
Indeterminate status	A recommendation that disappears without sufficient evidence to establish closure.
Faculty professional currency	The continuing relevance of faculty qualifications, specialization, recent industry exposure, practitioner engagement, and professional updating to assigned teaching responsibilities.
Resource adequacy	Sufficient, current, safe, accessible, and effectively utilized learning resources or equivalent access arrangements that enable attainment of intended outcomes.
Hybrid deductive-inductive thematic analysis	An approach that combines sensitizing or pre-existing domains with data-driven coding and theme refinement.
Unit of analysis	One individual Best Feature or Recommendation statement in the de-identified consolidated accreditation dataset.

Appendix D. Codebook and Decision Rules

The codebook below operationalizes the required elements: Code, Definition, Include when, Exclude when, Primary theme, Secondary theme allowed, and Decision rule.

Code	Definition	Include when	Exclude when	Primary theme	Secondary theme allowed	Decision rule
C1 Stakeholder-Informed Curriculum Review	Formal review/update of curriculum using stakeholder input.	Finding asks for periodic curriculum review or participation of industry, alumni, students, faculty, employers, parents.	Only seeks a practicum partner or faculty immersion without curriculum-review purpose.	T1	T2/T3 if industry or graduate evidence is substantive.	Primary C1 when the requested decision concerns curriculum design/revision.
C2 Syllabus, Content, and Reference Currency	Currency and consistency of course syllabus content, references, journals, and format.	Finding concerns updated references, course content, syllabus format, learning materials listed in syllabi.	Resource acquisition/use not tied to syllabus content; outcome mapping as principal issue.	T1	T5 if teaching materials/methods are central.	Primary C2 when the artifact being changed is the syllabus/content/reference set.

Code	Definition	Include when	Exclude when	Primary theme	Secondary theme allowed	Decision rule
C3 Outcomes Alignment and Curriculum Mapping	Alignment of CLOs/PLOs/objectives/competencies and curriculum mapping.	Finding asks to define/map outcomes or show contribution of courses to program goals.	Rubric/test quality without curriculum alignment; graduate outcomes tracking.	T1	T4 when assessment evidence is material.	Primary C3 when the main deliverable is an alignment/mapping structure.
C4 Curriculum Structure, Compliance, Sequencing, and Contact Hours	Program structure, course sequencing/codes, regulatory compliance, units/contact/lab hours.	Finding concerns missing required courses, subject codes, sequencing, lecture-lab separation, required hours/units.	Facility acquisition/utilization; pedagogy.	T1	T2 if practical-resource constraints are material.	Primary C4 when the requested change is curricular structure or compliance.
I1 Industry Partnerships, Practicum Access, and Workplace Supervision	Quality and access of industry linkages, practicum venues, supervision, and workplace learning.	Finding concerns partners, practicum venues, immersion access, practicum advisers/supervision, workplace training plan.	General student competition; faculty industry immersion primarily for faculty development.	T2	T3/T5 where student readiness or faculty currency is substantive.	Primary I1 when the action concerns the learning environment or workplace-practicum system.
I2 Hospitality Laboratories, Simulation Facilities, and Industry Systems	Specialized HM facilities, simulation venues, PMS/POS/travel systems, tools/equipment.	Finding concerns kitchens, mock rooms, front-office systems, licensed software, simulation centers, specialized tools.	Library/reference holdings; pedagogy using AV without specialized HM environment.	T2	T5 if instructional use is a separate concern.	Primary I2 when access/availability/adequacy of specialized HM resources is the object.
I3 Library, IT, and Learning Resource Access/Utilization	Access to and effective use of library, internet, audiovisual, computing, and general learning resources.	Finding concerns Wi-Fi, books, journals, AV resources, computer access, library utilization.	References only within syllabus; specialized HM systems.	T2	T5 when the main issue also concerns teaching use.	Primary I3 when resource access/utilization, not syllabus currency, is the main action.
I4 Experiential and International Industry Exposure	Structured experiential opportunities including exposure trips, exchange, international practicum, work/travel.	Finding concerns experiential exposure beyond standard classroom/practicum, including international options.	International exposure asserted as universal readiness requirement; competitions primarily for student development.	T2	T3 when developmental outcome is explicit.	Primary I4 when the action is to create/access the experiential modality; do not treat internationality itself as a quality threshold.
S1 Co-curricular Engagement, Competitions, and Professional Development	Student participation in clubs, competitions, events, conferences, or professional activities.	Finding concerns skills clubs, competitions, events, student-led/co-curricular development.	Practicum access or curriculum structure.	T3	T2 if industry exposure is substantial.	Primary S1 when the principal beneficiary/action is student development outside core course delivery.
S2 Graduate Tracking, Employability, and Program Effectiveness	Post-graduation outcomes, tracer studies, employer evidence, employability.	Finding calls for tracer study, graduate tracking, employment or program-effectiveness evidence.	Current student assessment only.	T3	T4 if use as formal program-assessment data is central.	Primary S2 when the main evidence concerns graduates or post-program outcomes.
S3 Student Support, Attendance, Advising, Inclusion, and Scheduling	Academic support conditions affecting progression and equitable participation.	Finding concerns absenteeism, consultation/advising, individual records, class schedule/breaks, inclusion/access.	Teaching method itself or curriculum sequencing as the main issue.	T3	T5 when directly tied to classroom delivery.	Primary S3 when the intervention is a student-support or participation condition.
S4 Professional Competency and Values Development	Professional attributes, values, leadership, teamwork, communication, and demonstrated competence.	Finding commends or seeks professional attitude, service skills, leadership, communication, values, competency demonstration.	Facility or curriculum mechanism without explicit student-attribute focus.	T3	T5 when instructional method is material.	Primary S4 when the main result described is a student professional attribute or competence.
A1 Assessment Instrument Quality, Rubrics, and Higher-Order Thinking	Quality, validity, objectivity, rubrics, test design, higher-order assessment.	Finding asks for rubric, objective evaluation form, better test questions, assessment validity.	Curriculum mapping without assessment design.	T4	T5/T1 where instructional or syllabus context is substantive.	Primary A1 when the assessment instrument itself is the object of change.
A2 Assessment Policies, Grading, and Evaluation	Policies, grading weights, procedures, and fairness of evaluation.	Finding concerns grading weight, evaluation policy, educational-tour assessment rules.	Tracer studies or program-outcomes use.	T4	T3 when student progression/support is substantive.	Primary A2 when policy/procedure for assigning or interpreting assessment is central.
A3 Program Outcomes Assessment and Evidence Use	Systematic program-level assessment and use of evidence for improvement.	Finding concerns program outcomes assessment, aggregated evidence, monitoring, or use of results.	Single test/rubric issue; tracer study only as outcome tracking.	T4	T1/T3 when curriculum or graduate results are substantive.	Primary A3 when the central action is the program-level assessment/improvement loop.
P1 Student-Centered and Varied Teaching Methods	Interactive, varied, student-centered, active teaching-learning methods.	Finding asks for varied methodologies, interaction, participation, case/activity-based approaches.	Technology/resource acquisition alone; student club/competition.	T5	T3 if student engagement outcome is separate.	Primary P1 when the requested change is what teachers do pedagogically.
P2 Technology-Enhanced and Flexible Learning	Use of learning technology, multimedia, online/flexible modalities to support instruction.	Finding concerns flexible learning, online/face-to-face combinations, AV/digital tools as pedagogy.	Availability of general/specialized technology without instructional-use focus.	T5	T2 when resource access is material.	Primary P2 when teaching delivery through technology/modalities is the object; primary T2 when access/availability is the issue.
P3 Research-Integrated and Inquiry-Based Learning	Research or inquiry activities integrated into student learning.	Finding concerns research colloquia, faculty-student research, research-class delivery.	Research outputs unrelated to teaching-learning.	T5	T4 if assessment of research learning is material.	Primary P3 when the instructional action is research/inquiry-based learning.
F1 Faculty Qualifications, Specialization, and Teaching Assignment	Match of faculty credentials/expertise to assigned courses/roles.	Finding concerns faculty specialization, qualification, teaching assignment, chair qualification.	Industry updating only; practitioner participation as separate staffing model.	T5	T2 if industry-practitioner status is material.	Primary F1 when the action is qualification/assignment fit.
F2 Faculty Industry Immersion and Professional Updating	Current industry exposure or continuing professional updating of faculty.	Finding calls for hotel/restaurant training, industry immersion, trend updating for faculty.	Student immersion or general faculty pedagogy training only.	T5	T2	Primary F2 when maintaining faculty industry currency is the central objective.
F3 Industry Practitioners in Teaching	Use or adequacy of current practitioners as teaching contributors.	Finding asks to invite practitioners, attract practitioners, or ensure practitioner participation in technical teaching.	Industry partner used only as practicum site.	T5	T2	Primary F3 when practitioner participation in teaching is the action.
F4 Faculty Roles, Development, and Instructional Support	Faculty support or role practices not captured by F1-F3.	Finding concerns faculty monitoring roles, support for instructional development, or development needed for teaching function.	Student support or resource acquisition with no faculty-role component.	T5	T2/T3 as context requires.	Primary F4 when the faculty role/support process is the main intervention.