MEDIA COUNCIL OF MALAWI

ACCREDITATION GUIDELINES

2020
REGULATIONS GOVERNING ACCREDITATION BY THE MEDIA COUNCIL OF MALAWI

1. Legal Basis

These guidelines are developed in conformance and for purposes of the performance of the roles of the Media Council of Malawi as established by its Constitution (2020)

2. Effective Date

This Regulation shall come into force from the date of adoption by the Media council of Malawi General Assembly

3. Amendments

This Regulation may be amended by the the National Governing Council, in consultation with the general assembly, as and when required.

4. Scope of Application

This Regulation shall apply to all local and international journalists and media practitioners, operating in Malawi on either long or short-term assignments.

5. Definition of a Journalist

Journalist – means any person who:

1. Holds a diploma or degree in journalism, mass communication or any other media related field from an institution of higher learning recognized by NCHE and is recognized as such by the council;
2. Who holds such other qualifications as recognized by council and earns a living from the practice of journalism; and,
3. Any person who habitually engages in the practice of journalism and is recognized as such by the council

Unless the context requires otherwise, the words and terms used in this Regulation shall have the same meaning as assigned in the Media Council of Malawi Constitution

6. Accreditation of journalists and Media Practitioners

6.1 Any journalist or Media Practitioner, being a citizen of and/or resident in Malawi, who wish to engage in the practice of Journalism must be accredited by the Media Council of Malawi. The application shall be made in the prescribed form, and such other information or documents as the Council may request for.

6.2 Accreditation shall be granted only to both an individual and an organization. Where a media Enterprise wishes to seek accreditation for more than one journalist employed by it, each of the journalists or media practitioners concerned shall submit separate applications for accreditation.
7. Consideration of applications

7.1 The Council shall, on receipt of an accreditation application under Clause 6 above, proceed to consider it forthwith on the basis of the following factors and pass an appropriate order:

i. whether the applicant is a bonafide journalist or Media Practitioner;
ii. whether the applicant has the necessary qualifications and experience to be considered for accreditation;

7.2 If the Council decides to grant accreditation, it shall issue the applicant with an “accreditation card” immediately bearing his photograph and signature. The said card shall constitute official proof of accreditation.

7.3 If the Council decides to deny accreditation, it shall notify the applicant in writing of this decision as soon as practicable but not later than fourteen days from the date of submission of the application, stating the reasons for the denial.

7.4 In the event the Council has to make clarification prior to issuance of the accreditation card or has reasonable grounds not to immediately issue the accreditation card as per clause 7.2, such clarification shall be made within 14 days.

8. Requirements for accreditation

8.1 The requirements for the consideration of accreditation of a local journalist shall be, but not limited, to the following:

i. A letter from the employer
ii. Professional Certificate that is either a Degree or Diploma in Communication from a recognized training institution
iii. Portfolio of work done either in Print or Broadcast
iv. A clear electronic passport size photograph

8.2 The requirements for consideration of accreditation of freelance journalists shall be, but not limited, to the following:

i. recommendation from the media Enterprises he has worked or is working for where applicable
ii. Letter of recommendation from institution of internship
iii. Professional Certificate that is either a Degree or Diploma in Communication from a recognized training institution
iv. Portfolio of work done either in Print or Broadcast
v. A clear electronic passport size photograph

8.3 The requirements for the consideration of accreditation of Media practitioners shall be, but not limited, to the following:

i. A letter from the employer
ii. Professional Certificate that is either a Degree or Diploma in Communication from a recognized training institution
iii. Portfolio of work done either in Print or Broadcast
iv. A clear electronic passport size photograph

8.4 The requirements for the consideration of accreditation of students shall be, but not limited, to the following:

i. Enrolled in a degree or diploma program approved by the Council
ii. A letter from the Head of Department of the Institution
iii. Valid School Identity Card
iv. A clear electronic passport size photograph

9. Rights of accredited journalists

Accredited journalists will have the right to:

i. attend briefings, press conferences, press releases by the government or public sector organizations and other events organized for the press; and
ii. inclusion in official visits by the State and Government officials.

10. Duties and Obligations of accredited persons

Accredited persons will:

i. observe the Code of Conduct for the practice of Journalism
ii. observe the rules and guidelines issued by the Council; and
iii. carry the accreditation badge on them at all times while on duty

11. Withdrawal of accreditation

Accreditation may be withdrawn by the Council:

i. on the expiry of an accreditation date;
ii. when a journalist is dismissed from the service of a media enterprise;
iii. when a journalist violates the Media Council Constitution, rules, guidelines or orders issued by the Council; or
iv. as per Clause 11 above.

12. Term of accreditation

12.1. Any accreditation granted shall be non-transferable and shall be valid for a period of twelve months from date of accreditation provided, however, that the Authority may revoke or cancel any accreditation before the expiry of the said period, if it is satisfied that the continued enjoyment of accreditation by the journalist or media practitioner concerned would not be in the public interest, or as per Clause 11 above;

12.2. The accreditation shall be deemed to be legally terminated if the said journalist or media practitioner:

i. becomes incapacitated for reason of physical and/or mental health or otherwise declared insolvent by a competent court of law; or
ii. surrenders his accreditation on his own volition.
13. Renewal of accreditation

13.1 The accreditation granted under this Regulation may be renewed on the receipt of an application in this behalf by the journalist or media practitioner to whom it was granted.

13.2 An application for renewal of accreditation shall be made in writing in Form set out in the prescribed form.

13.3 On application for renewal an applicant is required to surrender the expired press card to the Council.

13.4 An application for renewal of accreditation shall be made not earlier than thirty days and no later than fifteen days, prior to the date of its expiry. Any application made before fourteen days from the date of expiry shall be rejected, and the journalist concerned shall be required to make a fresh application for accreditation.

14. Ad hoc accreditation of foreign journalists

14.1 Any journalist, who is not a citizen of Malawi or who, being a citizen of Malawi, is not ordinarily resident in Malawi, may apply for ad hoc accreditation as a journalist. The application shall be made in the prescribed form.

14.2 The Council shall, on receipt of an application under Clause 14.1 above, proceed to consider it forthwith and pass an appropriate order. The requirements for the consideration of accreditation of foreign journalist shall be, but not limited, to the following:

i. A letter from the employer/organization has published applicants work

ii. Professional Certificate that is either a Degree of Diploma in Communication from a recognized training institution

iii. Portfolio of work done either in Print or Broadcast (Please provide the work not website links)

iv. Valid Work permit for long term accreditation (1 Year)

v. Special pass for short term accreditation (3 months)

vi. Copy of Passport

vii. A clear electronic passport size photograph.

14.3 If the Council decides to grant accreditation, it shall issue an “ad hoc accreditation card” within 24 hours. The said card shall constitute official proof of accreditation.

Provided, however, that the Council may, where it considers it necessary, make the accreditation subject to such conditions as it may specify in this behalf, and, if the journalist concerned accepts such conditional accreditation, he shall be under an obligation to comply with those conditions at all times.

14.4 If the Council decides to deny accreditation, it shall notify the applicant in writing of this decision as soon as practicable but no later than seven working days from the date of application, stating the reasons for refusal.

14.5 Any accreditation granted under this Regulation shall be valid for a maximum period of twelve months from the date of issuance of the ad hoc accreditation card, or for the duration of the coverage of a particular event, or such shorter period as the council may specify.
14.6 The accreditation granted under this Regulation may be renewed on the receipt of an application in this behalf by the journalist to whom it was granted. An application for renewal of accreditation shall be made in writing in Form set out in the prescribed form, and shall fulfil the requirements of Clause 14.1 above.

14.7 An application for renewal of accreditation shall be made not earlier than thirty days and not later than ten days, prior to the date of its expiry. Any application made after the expiry of the said deadline of ten days shall be rejected, and the journalist concerned will be required to make a fresh application for accreditation as provided for in Clause 14.1 above.

15. Register of accredited journalists

15.1 The Council shall maintain a register, hereinafter referred to as “Register of Accredited Journalists” in which the names, addresses and other details of all journalist and media practitioners to whom accreditation has been granted shall be entered in chronological order.

15.2 The Register of Accredited Journalists shall be updated regularly, and any information as to revocation, cancellation or expiry of accreditation shall be noted as soon as practicable against the names of those on the register. The Council may at its discretion publish the register on a quarterly basis in two newspapers of nationwide circulation.

15.3 All Employers will within 7 days of termination or hiring of a journalist or media practitioner will inform the Council of their appointment or termination.

15.4 The Council shall make the Register of Accredited Journalists available for the general public during office hours, if it is required so. The Council shall also make the information on the register available to the general public through the Council’s website.