



UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN CAPE (UWC)

POLICY ON QUALITY MANAGEMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN CAPE

DATE OF LAST APPROVAL: C2007/1

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UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN CAPE
UNIVERSITEIT VAN WES-KAAP



UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE

QUALITY MANAGEMENT POLICY

1. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the quality and quality assurance of our core business of teaching, learning and research and the supporting management processes are maintained and improved via critical self-evaluation. The policy once adopted, must be understood and maintained at all levels within the university. Through quality promotion activities and critical self-reflection, a cascading approach should be adopted to fully develop the Internal Quality Management System (IQMS). At each level, staff must understand and assume responsibility for the implementation of the quality regime.

2. Defining Quality and Quality Assurance

2.1. Quality

The notion of quality accepted by the University in 1993¹ is based on value added within fitness for purpose. This means that quality is evident when our activities match our goals effectively. It also means that quality is conceived of as dynamic. Our mission and goals have to be evaluated in the dynamic environment of national policy and the changing requirements and expectations of many different stakeholders in society. A process of self-reflection and self-evaluation is thus essential for ongoing value addition, and is integral to the Strategic Plan and the Institutional Operating Plan.

2.2. Quality Assurance

Quality assurance is concerned with the extent to which goals are met on an ongoing basis, and with the effectiveness of processes of planning, monitoring, adapting, innovating and evaluating. The University's approach to improvement is based on the following principles specified in the Strategic Plan.

- (i) Ongoing *improvement* through critical self-review and other quality promotion measures. That process may be advanced significantly by some consolidation of activities and focusing of resources, but consolidation will not bring about improvement of itself.
- (ii) *Adaptation* by creating response to new circumstances. Managed, strategic adaptation may provide a new edge to research and teaching in relation to developments in the society or the environment.

¹ SAB 93/1

- (iii) *Change* in the sense that the present situation is unsatisfactory in some significant way e.g.

"It may involve starting something altogether new, such as e.g. to fulfil a previously neglected mission obligation or to make use of a strategic opportunity which was previously ignored. It may also involve addressing something that is seriously wrong or dysfunctional in the current situation".

2.3. Self-Evaluation

The process of quality assurance, whether internal or external, has three purposes: (1) internal quality assessment, (2) quality improvements and (3) accreditation

The process of self-evaluation takes place within UWC itself and within the academic and support services network. This is the internal self-evaluation element. Self-evaluation processes are intended to help the institution and departments to improve. Self-evaluation should precede and be the firm foundation for all planning efforts, and should enhance institutional openness.

When self-evaluation is related to accreditation its primary purpose is to provide a base for thoroughly assessing the extent to which the institution meets external standards.

3. Quality Assurance and Values

The values and principles informing the *Mission Statement that forms part of the Strategic Plan* should be addressed within each self-evaluation report submitted by departments or units. Their importance is in articulating an institutional culture supportive of the mission and strategic goals, and particularly conducive to quality education and research.

The following are core values that the institution should strive towards:

- Respecting and striving for excellence in teaching , learning and research.
- Cultivating a socially responsive, people-centred approach to education.
- Expecting high standards of integrity, ethics and respect from staff and students.
- Promoting high standards of service provision and continuous improvement.
- Valuing collegiality and a climate of critical professionalism.
- Valuing diversity and a commitment to equity and fairness.
- Placing a high premium on collaboration, team work, accountability and shared responsibility.
- Nurturing democratic leadership and innovative problem-solving

4. Institutional Oversight and Management of Quality

4.1. Council

Overall institutional governance is the responsibility of the Council of the University. It is accountable for the execution of its statutory responsibilities. It also has overarching responsibility for good governance of the institution including quality assurance.

4.2 Senate

The custodian of academic policy matters is the Senate. It must satisfy itself that the institution's policy and practices are aligned with national statutory requirements. Senate exercises its authority on academic issues through formally constituted Faculties and standing sub-committees at both institutional and Faculty level with oversight responsibilities. The committees reporting directly to Senate are Academic Planning, Assessment, and Higher Degrees. They are responsible for advising the Senate on matters pertaining to its area of responsibility. Senate from time-to-time may delegate specific task to these Committees.

4.3. Management of Quality

The Council delegates executive authority to the Rector who, as the Chief Executive Officer, is assisted by a Senior Management team. The Senior Management Team has the responsibility for the management of the University (and so for quality) and is accountable to the Council, which it must satisfy that it has operated within policy or in the interests of the institution according to sound management principles. The management of quality is therefore a line function and the responsibility of Senior Management and Deans. It is central to their Key Performance Areas.

5. Quality and Accountability

Quality Assurance is primarily an internal process, enabling us to monitor and evaluate our progress towards achieving our stated goals. It enables us in various ways to give account of ourselves for the appropriate and efficient use of funds to the public, the state, students, the internal academic community, institutional partners, and supporters in the donor community.

6. Other Internal and External Policy related documents

- (i) The Strategic Plan of the University.
- (ii) The Institutional Operating Plan of the University.
- (iii) The Council on Higher Education Framework and Criteria for Institutional Audits and new programmes.

7. Internal Quality Management System

The quality of education is influenced by many functions within the university. The activities of academic departments, and supporting administrative functions, ranging from the library to the finance department, have a significant effect on the quality of education. The core academic units provide the teaching and learning opportunities of study programmes with assistance from support and administrative services.

The university's Internal Quality Management System (IQMS) draws on existing practices, including current quality assurance processes, as well as aligning and developing new approaches to monitor the performance of all University structures. It must give effect to the broad goals as described in the seven areas of the Strategic Plan viz.

- (i) Teaching and Learning
- (ii) Research and research development
- (iii) Leadership, management and governance
- (iv) Human resources management and equity planning
- (v) Enrolment management and student development

- (vi) Financial planning and income diversification
- (vii) Communication and marketing

While the Strategic Plan sets the broad direction, the Institutional Operating Plan creates the opportunity to give practical effect to existing goals, practices, processes and culture within the above areas through self-review. This involves a range of quality promotion, control and resource allocation measures conducive to continuous improvement, to enable us to monitor and evaluate institutional progress towards achieving our goals. During the evaluation process, the above areas must be considered in relation to one another in the light of changes in the internal and external environment.

For each area, appropriate differentiated mechanisms for quality assurance, relevant to specific activities will be established and maintained on the basis of agreed objectives and managed strategically in terms of our stated goals under Leadership, Management, and Governance.

8. Monitoring Review and Improvement Process

The process of self-reflection to gain self-knowledge forms the basis of our IQMS and must lead to clearly understood processes of improvement, adaptation and change. In support of its IQMS the university has five key measures by which quality is assured in terms of the key areas of our Strategic Plan. These are:

- (i) Submission of new modules and programmes for critical review and approval.
- (ii) Submission of changes to curricula of existing programmes for critical review and approval.
- (iii) Annual reflective reports from all academic, service and management departments and visits to discuss these reports.
- (iv) Regular scheduled programme reviews combined with
- (v) Regular scheduled departmental reviews.
- (vi) Moderation (Internal and External)

The monitoring and review of the Quality Assurance process as stipulated within these policy directives are managed by the various senior and line managers within the institution and with due regard to their Key Performance Areas.

9. Review Date of Policy

June 2010

10. Appendix to this policy

Procedures and policies pertaining to the

- 10.1. Submission of new modules and programmes.
- 10.2. Changes to curriculum of existing programmes.
- 10.3. Annual reflective reports: All academic, service and support departments.
- 10.4. Assessment Policy
- 10.5. Moderation Policy
- 10.6. Programme reviews.
- 10.7. Departmental reviews

- 10.8. Quality Assurance: Continuing Education (Short Courses)
- 10.9. Service Learning Guidelines
- 10.10. Teaching and Learning Policy
- 10.11. Moderation Policy
- 10.12. Certification Policy