WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY

QUALITY MANAGEMENT
AND
ASSURANCE POLICY

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QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND ASSURANCE POLICY

Sponsor Division	Quality Assurance
Responsible Department	Quality Assurance

Related WSU Policies	
Policy name	**Policy Name**
Quality Management and Assurance Policy	

Change History	

Approval Authority	Council
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Chairperson of Council: Mr T Zakuza

1. PREAMBLE

Walter Sisulu University (WSU) commits itself to provide institution-wide quality management, value and reward excellence, uphold and protect the integrity of the University. WSU furthermore commits itself to addressing equity and diversity imperatives.

2. PURPOSE

The primary purpose of the Quality Management and Assurance Policy is to assure, promote and enhance the effectiveness and impact of the quality measures employed in the University's core business activities of teaching and learning, research, community engagement and support services, as well as the quality of the total student life experience at WSU in the context of national imperatives. This is a developmental agenda designed to capacitate all stakeholders.

WSU accepts that through continuous quality improvement, all staff should take personal responsibility for their own professional quality and standards in all their activities. Where appropriate, academic departments and administrative departments will have a responsibility to tailor procedures and structures to their own functional requirements. All WSU policies and procedures will be well documented and readily accessible to staff, students and other stakeholders.

The University will rigorously and continuously monitor the effectiveness of its quality assurance systems to ensure that they are operating in accordance with good practice, in the best interests of total student life experience and the maintenance of good academic standards. WSU will work constructively with external agencies, in particular the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) of the Council on Higher Education (CHE) and the relevant professional bodies.

WSU will evaluate its achievements against appropriate national and international benchmarks. The WSU procedures will reflect principles of rigorous peer review, as

the University aims to identify areas for improvement, to foster collaboration and exchange of best practice, and to encourage an ethos of critical self-evaluation.

Therefore WSU is committed to:

- Offer accredited quality academic programmes.
- Recruit, select, train and develop staff to ensure that our students receive appropriate education and training.
- Design and develop laboratories, workshops and other facilities to meet local, regional and national training needs.
- Encourage students and other community members to make suggestions and give opinions so as to improve our services.
- Solicit feedback through advisory committees from commerce and industry on improvements of curricula and training needs.
- Foster research and collaborative partnerships for international competitiveness.
- Encourage widespread involvement of staff, students and other stakeholders in the quality management and assurance processes.
- Focus on efficient management, planning and resource allocation processes to achieve excellence and ensure continuous improvement.

3. SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy applies to all divisions, departments, units, and any external bodies doing work for WSU.

This policy applies to the core functions of the University:

- Learning and Teaching
- Research
- Community Engagement

- Support and Gorvenance
- Student life and participation

The IQMF, relevant policies and procedure manuals will guide the implementation of quality assurance in these core functions.

4. DEFINITIONS

Terms

"Quality": Quality in the context of higher education is best defined as 'Fitness of Purpose' and 'Fitness for Purpose'. Therefore WSU strives to provide relevance, efficiency and excellence in both the programme offerings and the environmnent in which these are offered.

"Quality Assurance": Quality assurance refers to the evaluation and assessment of the extent to which the Institution is delivering on its promise to stakeholders.

"Quality Management": Quality management refers to the design and implementation of policies, standards and procedures including quality assurance and control of processes that are meant to ensure consistency in the product or service offered by the Institution.

"Quality Management System": A quality management system is a formalized system that documents processes, procedures, and responsibilities for achieving quality policies and objectives. A QMS helps coordinate and direct an organization's activities to meet customer and regulatory requirements and improve its effectiveness and efficiency on a continuous basis.

"Professional Bodies": means any body of expert practitioners in an occupational field, and includes an occupational body which grants accreditation to academic programmes.

"External bodies/agencies": Any individual or legal entity that does work for or on behalf of WSU, e.g. mentors in the workplace.

4.2 Accronyms

AAC: Academic Advisory Committee

APP: Annual Performance Plan

CHE: Council on Higher Education

CLTD: Centre for Learning and Teaching Development

CQAC: Campus Quality Assurance Committee

DHET: Department of Higher Education and Training

DVC: Deputy Vice-Chancellor

ECSA: Engineering Council of South Africa

HEMIS: Higher Education Management Information System

HEQC: Higher Education Quality Committee

HEQSF: Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework

HPCSA: Health Professions Council of South Africa

IMC: Institutional Management Committee

IOP: Institutional Operational Plan

ISP: Institutional Strategic Plan

IQMF: Integrated Quality Management Policy

NQF: National Qualifications Framework

QACs: Quality Assurance Committee(s)

QAM: Quality Assurance Manager

QAOs: Quality Assurance Officer(s)

QEP: Quality Enhancement Project

QMD: Quality Management Directorate

SAQA: South African Qualifications Authority

Senex: Senate Executive

SRC: Students Representative Council

WSU: Walter Sisulu University

5. POLICY CONTENT AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

5.1 Policy Statement

This Quality Management and Assurance Policy gives broad guidelines on quality management systems within the institution. These include teaching and learning, research, community engagement, support services and total student experience in line with WSU's vision, mission, values, goals, objectives and strategies.

5.2 Policy Guidelines

The Policy is informed by the following documents:

- The Higher Education Act 101 of 1997 as amended.
- The CHE's Higher Education Quality Committee Founding Document, January 2001.
- The CHE's HEQC Framework documents on institutional audit and programme accreditation.
- National Qualifications Framework Act 67 of 2008 and the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework of 2013.
- WSU's Annual Performance Plan (APP) as approved by Council and the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET).
- WSU's Institutional Strategic Plan (ISP) as approved by Council.

The WSU Quality Management and Assurance Policy should also be read in conjuction with:

- NPHE, 2001
- Programme for Transformation of HE, 1997

- WSU Evaluation of Teaching Policy
- WSU Internal Programme Review Policy
- WSU Curriculum Development Policy
- WSU Teaching and Learning Policy
- WSU Staff Development Policy

5.3 PRINCIPLES

The quality assurance strategy is integral to the work of all staff, who have the responsibility for quality assurance by ensuring that quality principles are adhered to. This encompases ensuring that the quality of WSU's academic programmes are in line with the following principles:

5.3.1 ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND EXCELLENCE

To ensure that quality and excellence in academic programmes, continuous curriculum innovation and adherence to the SAQA/NQF/HEQSF guidelines are maintained. Input from academic, vocational and societal sources, which will culminate in the integration of knowledge, skills and attitudes (values) to produce high levels of capability or applied competence in learners, will be solicited.

5.3.2 ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

It will be the responsibility of the Institution, through its Quality Assurance mechanisms, to ensure that the achievement of academic quality is supported by appropriate administrative policies and procedures.

5.3.3 RELEVANCE AND RESPONSIVENESS

Relevance:

To ensure the relevance of academic offerings with regard to the identity of the University and with specific reference to integration of

technology and infusion of innovation, and entrepreneurial skills in the learning, teaching and curriculum design of the University.

Responsiveness:

To ensure the responsiveness of all WSU programmes to local, regional and national developmental needs.

All academic programmes offered at WSU should meet the needs of commerce and industry concerned. To this end, input will be solicited from:

- Advisory Committees;
- Work Integrated Learning/Experiential training and its evaluation;
- Surveys and impact studies as conducted from time to time;
- Utilization of teaching and learning activities which are underpinned by discipline specific/interdisciplinary and educational research undertaken by the academic staff involved.

5.3.4 FINANCIAL VIABILITY

The Institution will strive to ensure that:

- It has the capacity to provide adequate enabling resources to sustain the programme(s);
- It has the capacity to attract sufficient enrolment and subsidy;
- Its academic programmes achieve high throughput rates;
- It generates funds through third stream income.

6. STATUTORY STRUCTURE TO APPROVE, ADJUST AND REVIEW THE POLICY

The University's Council will approve the policy after it has been tabled at departmental/faculty boards, support unit level, campus management committee, campus senate, institutional Senex, AAC, Senate, IMC and Institutional Forum.

7. ADMINISTRATION OF THE POLICY

The Office of the Director: Quality Assurance is responsible for the administration of this policy. The Office of the DVC, through the Quality Management Directorate is responsible for the enforcement of this policy.

7.1   QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND ASSURANCE STRUCTURES

7.1.1 CAMPUS QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

The Campus Quality Assurance Committee (CQAC) is made up of members who have the mandate to effectively carry out the recommendations made by QMD, the Faculty and other Quality Assurance sub-committees and other relevant internal structures as well as the DHET, the CHE and other professional bodies, and provide guidance in all the academic and administrative aspects of the institution.

a)   Membership
- Campus Rector (Chairperson)
- Campus Deputy Directors
- Deans of all the Faculties
- Director Quality Assurance (ex officio)
- Transformation Manager (ex officio)
- Audit Manager (ex officio)
- Director Special Projects (ex officio)
- One representative from each Faculty preferably the Chairperson of the Faculty Quality Assurance Committee
- Quality Assurance Manager
- Campus HEMIS Manager
- Manager CLTD
- One representative from each of the recognized staff unions
- One representatives from the Campus SRC

- Secretary from the Office of the Campus Rector

b) **Terms of Reference**

- To discuss both academic and support services quality assurance activities for continuous improvement purposes.
- To develop and maintain the University's quality management, quality assurance and quality enhancement strategies in the context of the institutional Strategic Plan.
- To advise Campus Management Committee and Campus Senate Committee on the University's response to national, internal and external quality enhancement initiatives where appropriate.
- To be responsible for the preparation of appropriate documents to external quality assurance agencies (e.g. CHE , ECSA, HPCSA) on behalf of the University and/or Senate.
- To be responsible for appropriate follow-up action arising from reports from internal and external quality assurance agencies.
- To determine the procedures for the validation of courses on behalf of Senate.
- To determine procedures for the review of courses, subjects and services and to consider the reports of such reviews.
- To assist in the formulation and review of matters of quality with regard to policies, procedures, mechanisms, processes and academic regulations.
- To discharge such other responsibilities as may be devolved by the Vice-Chancellor, Institutional Management Committee and Institutional Senate Committee.
- To identify, record and monitor policies that have an impact on quality throughout of the University.

The CQAC will ensure that there is synergy in all the activities within the Campus to promote academic excellence and organizational effectiveness.

c) Committee Procedures

- The CQAC shall meet quarterly before the Campus Senate,
- Normal meeting procedures will apply,
- The members of the Committee shall be notified by the Secretary at least seven days before the meeting and relevant documents to be circulated timeously.

7.1.2 CAMPUS QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE (CQAC) SUB-COMMITTEES

Each Faculty in the campus shall have a QA Sub-Committee.

a) Membership

- The Dean of the Faculty shall be the Chair or his/her representative.
- One senior representative below the Deputy Director from each support service departments and academic department.
- The Quality Assurance Manager.
- One student from the faculty appointed by the relevant Students' Association.
- Secretary to be appointed by the Dean of the faculty excluding all the standing members.

b) Terms of Reference

- To be responsible to Campus Quality Assurance Committee (CQAC) for the quality assurance procedures and processes in respective units/faculties.

- To give initial consideration, on behalf of the CQAC, to all proposals for any kind of collaborative provision involving the university and partner organizations.
- To co-ordinate appropriate validation and review arrangements for all collaborative and national provisions.
- To consider, on behalf of the CQAC, any proposed changes to existing programmes, procedures or processes of the operational units
- To discharge such other responsibilities as may be devolved by Campus Senate and/or the CQAC from time to time.
- On behalf of the CQAC, to maintain, operate and develop the quality assurance framework and its regulations for the delivery of education in the university.
- To consider any programme or procedures and processes amendments that cannot be easily resolved by QMD.
- To identify and disseminate good practice in the preparations for the CHE projects, programme accreditation and external audit reports.
- To develop consistency of practice in the operation of the Integrated Quality Management Framework (IQMF).
- To make recommendations to the CQAC on the maintenance of quality in the development of academic programme.

8. CUSTODIANSHIP OF POLICY

The Office of the Registrar is the custodian of this policy. It is responsible for ensuring that the proper procedures and protocols are followed in developing and reviewing policies.

9. REFERENCES

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5. Rhodes University. (2003, June 26). Quality Assurance Policy. Grahamstown, Easterrn Cape, South Africa.

6. Walter Sisulu University. (2014, October 03). Policy on Policy Development. Mthatha, Eastern Cape, South Africa.

Approval:-

Signed _____   Date: _____

Chair of Senate

Signed _____   Date _____

Chair of Council