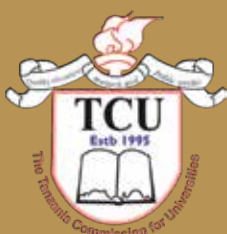# Inter-University Council for East Africa

A ROAD MAP TO QUALITY
Handbook for Quality Assurance in Higher Education

Volume 4: Implementation of a Quality Assurance System

DRAFT

Inter-University Council for East Africa

A Road map to Quality

Hand book for Quality Assurance in Higher Education

Volume 4: Implementation of a Quality Assurance System

FOREWORD

The Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) is a strategic institution of the East African Community (EAC) responsible for the development and coordination of higher education and research in the region. EAC considers higher education as critical for the attainment of socio-economic development and regional integration, and as such after having been recognized as the surviving institution of the former Community responsible for coordinating the networking of university institutions in the region, IUCEA has assumed a broader role as a building block for the achievement of sustainable socio-economic development and regional integration. In that regard, the mission of IUCEA now focuses on the promotion of strategic and sustainable development of higher education systems and research for supporting East Africa's socio-economic development and regional integration. IUCEA has set its vision to become a strategic institution of the East African Community responsible for promoting, developing and coordinating human resources development and research in the region.

Following its revitalization and subsequent ratification of the Protocol in 2002, IUCEA initiated a reform process aimed at re-positioning itself in order to address its expanded mandate within the Community. Such reforms became even more necessary after the enactment of the IUCEA Act in 2009, which effectively mainstreamed the institution into the EAC framework. The reforms prompted the need to establish an appropriate environment for harmonization of higher education systems so as to promote the EAC regional integration agenda as envisioned in the Common Market Protocol. Among the important steps towards harmonization of higher education in the region is the setting up of a regional quality assurance system for universities that was initiated in 2006. The project aimed at harmonizing regional quality assurance by establishing common East African quality assurance framework, establish regional quality assurance office at the IUCEA Secretariat, set regional higher education benchmark quality standards based on internationally recognized standards, prepare a use-friendly quality assurance handbook based on existing national benchmark standards and systems, and streamline national and institutional quality assurance systems according to the local perspectives. It is also aimed at promoting international competitiveness of universities in East Africa.

The initiative involves establishment of appropriate guidelines, procedures and standards, including benchmarks for academic programmes. It also focuses on capacity building through providing appropriate training on the implementation of the quality assurance system to staff in universities and national commissions and councils for higher education in the Partner States. The initiative is also linked to the establishment of a regional qualifications framework, whose development is already in progress. The regional qualifications framework will articulate harmonization of education and training systems, and qualifications thereby clearly indicating the programme learning outcomes, the different qualification levels, credit system and recognition of prior learning, among others. Hence, the framework will easily facilitate mutual recognition of qualifications across the region as envisioned in the EAC Common Market Protocol. All these interventions are aimed at transforming East Africa into a common higher education area, as the ultimate goal of the Community.

In developing the regional quality assurance system in higher education in East Africa, IUCEA in collaboration with the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and the Germany Rectors' Conference (HRK) within the framework of their joint Higher Education Management support programme referred to as "Dialogue on Innovative Higher Education Strategies (DIES)" started to work on this initiative through a consultative process involving Permanent Secretaries and other senior officials from Ministries responsible for Higher Education in the Partner States, national commissions and councils for higher education, namely the Commission for Higher Education (CHE)

of Kenya, National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) of Uganda, and the Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU) in Tanzania, and universities. Later on the National Council for Higher education of Burundi and the Council for Higher education of Rwanda joined the initiative after the two countries were admitted as members of the EAC. The process involved a number of consultative meetings and workshops at country and regional level, aimed at building consensus and to map out a strategy on how to establish a regional quality assurance framework, including development of an operational tool in the form of a Quality Assurance Handbook. The consultative forums were also aimed at ensuring that all performance indicators and quality benchmarks were agreed upon and owned by all end-user institutions.

Preparation of the Quality Assurance Handbook titled "Roadmap to Quality" that started with the development of the first Draft in March 2007 was carried out in a consultative manner, involving an expert from the Netherlands who was commissioned by DAAD. The expert worked closely with a team conversant with the East African higher education systems, and staff from the national commissions and councils for higher education in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. The third draft of the handbook that had been developed by July 2007 was a single volume but after using it in the pilot process it was decided to break it down into four volumes to make it user-friendlier. The four volumes of the handbook are as follows:

Volume 1:   Guidelines for self-assessment at program level
Volume 2:   Guidelines for external quality assurance
Volume 3:   Guidelines for self-assessment at institutional level
Volume 4:   Implementation of a quality assurance system

Volumes 1 and 2 have already been printed and are in use after having undergone refinement through pilot self-assessment and external quality assurance at program level that involved 45 university institutions in the region. Meanwhile, Volumes 3 and 4 have undergone rigorous editing and are now ready for use.

On behalf of the IUCEA Secretariat and on my behalf, I would like to express our full support and commitment to this initiative. We value this initiative as an effective approach in harmonizing the quality of higher education in East Africa. In particular, we wish to extend sincere appreciations to the EAC Partner States and the EAC Secretariat for supporting the establishment of the regional quality assurance system for East Africa, and to the IUCEA Executive Committee for putting in place appropriate institutional framework for operationalization of the system through the use of the quality assurance handbook. The IUCEA Secretariat is convinced that universities in East Africa have much to gain through this unique opportunity where stronger collaboration and networking based on varied experiences among institutions in the region and abroad will be realized.

In order to ensure that the handbook becomes a useful tool for the quality assurance development process to a wider community of universities in the region, about 100 universities staff members in the region, as well as some staff from the national commissions and councils for higher education in the five EAC Partner States (Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda) have received training on the use of the handbook. The training sessions were carried out in Germany and through several regional workshops in East Africa as a capacity building initiative that IUCEA has been undertaking in collaboration with DAAD, HRK and the national commissions and councils for higher education in the EAC Partner States. Through the capacity building initiative a team of local quality assurance experts has emerged and is now spearheading the process through the development of appropriate quality assurance training modules that are used in training sessions now taking place in the region. For the capacity building program, the selection of staff members to be trained was

based on the need to build up a critical mass of well-informed experts at the IUCEA Secretariat, national commissions and councils for higher education in all the five EAC Partner States, and in universities in the region.

I would like to express sincere appreciations to Drs. Ton Vroeijenstijn [former quality assurance expert of the Dutch Association of Universities, former steering group member of the European Network for Quality Assurance (ENQA), former Secretary of the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) and international consultant in more than 30 countries], for his leadership and guidance during the development of the quality assurance handbook. Members of the team of East African Quality Assurance experts is highly appreciated for their expertise and editorial inputs in the development of this handbook. These are Prof. Mayunga H.H. Nkunya, the then Executive Secretary of Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU) and first Chairperson of the IUCEA Standing Committee on Quality Assurance; Prof. Mike Kuria, Daystar University; Dr. Josephine Arasa, United States International University, and Dr. Halima Wakabi Akbar, Islamic University in Uganda.

In a special way, I wish to sincerely acknowledge the dedication and commitment of the former IUCEA Executive Secretary, Prof. Chacha Nyaigotti-Chacha in steering the process to establish the regional quality assurance system for East Africa at its first years of inception (2006 – 2010), before his term of office ended. The dedication and commitment of IUCEA Staff in planning, administering and implementing activities towards the establishment of the quality assurance system is highly acknowledged. This spirit is what has significantly contributed to the development of this handbook. In this respect, I wish to extend my sincere appreciations to Dr. Cosam Chawanga Joseph (Quality Assurance Officer), Ms. Juru Marie Eglantine (Assistant Quality Assurance Officer), and Ms. Mildred Warugaba, (Secretary to the Office of Deputy Executive Secretary) for their invaluable contribution to this process.

In a particularly special way, we wish to extend our sincere appreciations to DAAD and HRK, which have been working together within their DIES programme, for extending support in a collaborative manner. Their support draws experience from DAAD's successfully implementation of a project to establish a quality assurance system in higher education in Central America from 2002-2007, and through the support rendered by the two institutions to similar processes in other regions of the world. IUCEA is aware that through the Central American initiative, hundreds of quality assurance officers, self-evaluation coordinators, as well as peers, have been trained, and that in that region a regional multi-stakeholder council was founded and two regional Accreditation Agencies are now in operation. These are success stories from which IUCEA had envisaged to draw experience.

Given the valuable quality assurance guiding principles and checklists contained in the handbook, IUCEA is hopeful of harnessing successful outputs dwelled on the implementation strategies outlined therein, that build on the existing capacities in universities and national commissions and councils for higher education in the Partner States. The varied nature and level of development of structures and capacities in universities is behind the approach of "harmonization of quality assurance systems" adapted for this initiative in East Africa.

Prof. Mayunga H.H. Nkunya,
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, IUCEA

STATEMENT FROM DAAD

The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) as a joint organisation of higher education institutions in Germany promotes international academic relations, primarily through the exchange of students, academicians and researchers. The DAAD is the agency responsible for raising the international profile of the German higher education institutions and simultaneously serves as a "mediating organisation" in the foreign, European, development and higher education policies of the Federal Republic of Germany. Within this frame, the DAAD jointly with the German Rectors' Conference (HRK), organises the Higher Education capacity development programme referred to as DIES (Dialogue on Innovative Higher Education Strategies). As its key component, DIES supports the establishment of regional Quality Assurance systems in Higher Education in different parts of the world.

Based on this, IUCEA, DAAD and HRK have identified a number of activities to be carried out in order to fully establish the East African Quality Assurance System, such as (i) organising dialogue events with top leadership of East African Universities, Ministries and Regulatory Bodies on national and international Quality Assurance Systems in Higher Education (ii) intensively training Quality Assurance Coordinators of the IUCEA Member Universities and officers of Regulatory Bodies (iii) conducting pilot self-evaluations and peer reviews for about 50 study programmes and (iv) developing subject specific regional benchmark standards. This initiative has been financially supported by funds from the German Ministry for Economic Co-operation on Development (BMZ). Many institutions in Germany and Europe have been providing technical expertise. Most prominently the Project Quality Management of HRK, the University of Oldenburg and institutions in the German State of Lower Saxony have been proactively supporting the learning events.

The starting point of all this has been the development of the "Road Map to Quality", the East African Quality Assurance Handbook. A joint East African developed a draft version - European expert group coordinated by Prof. Mayunga H.H. Nkunya and Drs. Ton Vroeijenstijn and was approved by the Governing Board of the IUCEA. After this the handbook format and contents have been permanently adapted on the basis of suggestions made by practitioners and lessons learned during the implementation of pilot programme assessments.

The DAAD and HRK are proud that IUCEA and its member institutions in the five countries (Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda) have been selecting us as their international partners. We are convinced that this handbook truly reflects the spirit of this joint initiative: highest international standards are combined with down to earth practical instruments – and this gained the formal endorsement by the relevant official bodies. We now wish all of you successful application and concrete improvements arising from assessments,

Dr. Helmut Blumbach
Director,
DAAD Department of Programs, Southern Hemisphere

Table of Contents

This volume is part of the handbook *A Road map to Quality*. The handbook is one of the outcomes of the workshop *Supporting a Regional Quality Assurance Initiative in East Africa,* organised by the IUCEA, together with DAAD in June 2006. The discussions during the two days showed clearly the need for Quality assurance in East Africa. Quality assurance may have different definitions but the basic idea is that Higher Education must convince all stakeholders that they are doing their utmost best to prepare young people to fit in their communities and to lead productive lives.

In the framework of the *Regional Quality Assurance Initiative*, IUCEA with support of DAAD, had organized a course for the QA-coordinators at the universities in East Africa. In the meantime there was decided to organize a self-assessment exercise in selected universities in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. The self-assessment would be followed by an external assessment. Using the experiences of the first round, IUCEA and DAAD organize a second course for QA-coordinators in 2008/2009 and start a second pilot project for self-assessment and external assessment in a other group of selected universities.

The IUCEA handbook "*A Road Map to Quality*" is published in 5 volumes. Each of the volume aims at a specific topic and a specific target group.

Although each volume can be used independently, they form all an integral part of the handbook. The handbook contains the following volumes:

- **Volume 1:** *Guidelines for Self- assessment at program level* aims at the faculty/department offering an instrument to learn more about the quality of the programs at offer by means of an effective self- assessment at program level
- **Volume 2:** *Guidelines for external program assessment* explains the procedures and processes for an external assessment at program level. The specific target group is the external expert team, but also the faculty/department to be assessed.
- **Volume 3:** *Guidelines for Self-assessment at institutional level* aims especially at the central management of an institution and offers an instrument to discover more about the quality of the institution
- **Volume 4:** *The implementation of a Quality Assurance system* aims at all level of an institution, but is especially useful for the Quality Assurance coordinators for the development and installation of an Internal Quality Assurance system
- **Volume 5:** *External Quality Assurance in East Africa* provides the reader with background information about the state-of-the-art in external quality assurance in East Africa and discusses the role of the regulatory bodies in the light of international developments.

The handbook A Road Map to Quality aims to support the universities in East Africa in:

- Implementing good practices for quality assurance
- Applying the standards and criteria, as formulated by competent authorities
- Developing an adequate IQA system that fits international developments
- Discovering their own quality by offering self-assessment instruments for IQA, the teaching/learning process, and for some institutional aspects

The handbook or parts of it can be downloaded from the website of the IUCEA. Hardcopies can be ordered from the IUCEA.

The current volume *Implementation of a Quality Assurance System* offers guidelines for the realization of a quality assurance system in the university.

The volume is written in a broad and general approach. However, the tool has to be adapted to the specific situation of the university and to the specific situation of the faculty/department.

The content is based on experiences and good practices all over the world. Universities should look at what is going on internationally, while developing quality assurance mechanism. At the same time, universities cannot neglect the developments in the region and in the different countries. The most important materials that are taken into account are the documents prepared by the national councils or commissions for Higher Education:

- In Kenya this is the "*Handbook on processes, standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance*" from the Commission for Higher Education ;
- In Tanzania it is the document *titled "Quality Assurance and Accreditation System for Institutions and Programs of Higher Education*" from Tanzania Commission for Universities.
- In Uganda, it is "*the Quality Assurance Framework for Uganda Universities*" from the National Council for Higher Education

Another document that is integrated in the handbook is the so-called Entebbe matrix. The mentioned documents are on the CD attached to this volume.

Provides the reader with some ideas about quality and quality assurance, while Section 2 contains the tool for a successful analysis of the state-of-the-art of the Internal Quality assurance system in the institution.

1   Quality Assurance in Higher Education

1.1 What is Quality Assurance

Nowadays, so much attention is paid to quality that people might think that quality is an invention of the last decades. One may have the impression that Higher Education had no notion of quality before 1985. But of course this is not true. Attention to quality is not new: it has always been part of the academic tradition. It is the outside world that now emphasises the need for explicit attention to quality. Several reasons can be given for Quality Assurance:

- All academics want to train graduates who meet the needs of society. We all like to deliver a "product" that is wanted. We all like to be proud of our graduates.

- The labour market expects higher education institutions to provide the students with adequate knowledge, skills and attitude important for the right job fulfilment.

- Internationalisation of the profession and a world that is becoming a global village brings us greater competition than before. A university not only has to compete inside the country, but also with other countries, not only in East Africa but also with higher education in the US and the EU. Globalisation not only has negative aspects, but also positive ones. It offers our graduates the opportunity to enter the world market, but under the condition that the degree qualifications have quality.

- There is need for "consumer protection": our students and their parents are spending a lot of time in and money on their education. Therefore, they have the right to receive a quality education.

- In the 1950s and 1960s, the nature of higher education especially in the developed countries has observed significant changes. The elite university changed into an institute of mass higher education. More and more students were being enrolled in higher education, and so creating pressure on national budgets. Expenditure per student became much lower, but the government had to assure society that this did not endanger quality. This problem was aggravated by economic recessions. On behalf of society, governments wanted a better insight into the costs and benefits of higher education. Higher education, in their view, cost too much or was not efficient enough.

- The relationship between higher education and society changed. Society became increasingly interested in higher education. Also the relationship between higher education and the labour market became a topic for discussion. Some disciplines, e.g. social sciences, psychology and history, had a lot of students, but few available jobs. Other disciplines like engineering often had a shortage of students, and society could use more graduates. Such a situation caused pressure on higher education to steer the student flow in the desired direction.

- Quality has become increasingly important for higher education institutions, because of the question as to whether it is still possible to deliver the same quality within the given frameworks.

- One can talk of a 'quality gap': on one hand, governments are striving to increase the numbers of enrolling students (higher education for as many as possible); on the other hand, we see a continuous decrease in investments. Higher education institutions have to do more with less money. But at the same time quality is expected to be maintained or to improve.

- Student exchange and international cooperation require insight into quality. There has always been an exchange of students between countries, but with the world becoming a global village; it has become increasingly clear that it is very important to know about the quality at the other institutions. Questions to be asked, are: 'Can I recognise this curriculum ?' or 'Is this program good enough?'

In the early days universities and academic staff did pay attention to quality, but this was often done in an unstructured way. Nowadays, Quality Assurance must be structured. But what do we mean by Quality Assurance? The National Council for Higher Education of Uganda defines Quality Assurance as *the mechanism put in place to guarantee that the education is 'fit for purpose,' i.e., is good. Every higher education must have appropriate and effective internal structures and mechanisms for monitoring its quality control procedures to ensure quality assurance"*[1] .

The Commission for Higher Education of Kenya defines Quality Assurance as: "*The means by which an institution can guarantee that the standards and quality of its educational provisions are being maintained and/or enhanced. It is the means through which an institution confirms that conditions are in place for students to achieve standards set by the institution.*"[2]

In the glossary at the website of INQAAHE, Assurance of quality in higher education is described as a process of establishing stakeholder confidence that provision (input, process and outcomes) fulfils expectations or measures up to threshold minimum requirements.[3]

Quality assurance (or quality management) may be described as the systematic, structured and continuous attention to quality in terms of maintaining and improving quality. Continuous quality care is a *sine qua non* for quality assurance[4] .

One of the tools in quality assurance is quality *assessment*. By quality assessment we mean *every structured activity that leads to a verdict on the quality of the institution as a whole or one of the core activities: the teaching/learning process, research or community outreach*. It might be based on self-assessment or based on the assessment by external experts.

There is no real difference between assessment, evaluation and review. These terms are seen as interchangeable.

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1 NCHE, Quality Assurance Framework for Uganda Universities, October 2006.
2 CHE, Commission for Higher Education handbook, compiled by R.A. Odengo, draft 2006.
3 Harvey, L., 2004–6, Analytic Quality Glossary, Quality Research International, http://www.qualityresearchinternational.com/glossary/
4 Vroeijenstijn, A.I (1995), Improvement and Accountability: Navigating between Scylla and Charybdis, London, Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Higher Education has developed its own approach to Quality Assurance during a period of intensive quality assurance, (see figure 1).
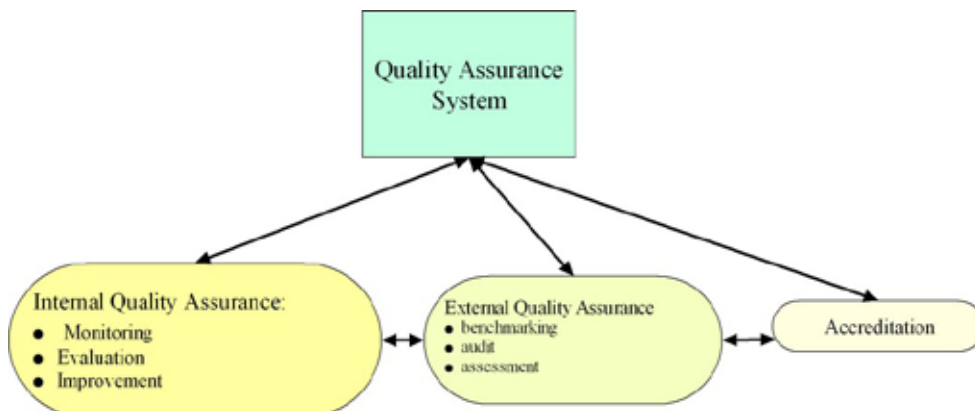

Figure 1 *The quality assurance system in HE*

The Quality Assurance system in Higher education has internal and external elements:

- The internal quality assurance, including monitoring instruments, evaluation instruments and activities aiming at improvement.

- External quality assessment, including benchmark activities, external audit or external quality assessment

- A specific element in the Quality assurance system is accreditation. Accreditation is the coping stone of the QA system

1.2 Higher Education and the application of the ISO-standards

Talking about quality assurance in Higher Education, the question coming in mind is why Higher Education has developed its own specific quality assurance model and not applies the ISO-standards. Some countries are trying to apply ISO. In Kenya there is a covenant between the Ministry of Education and the universities that they will apply the ISO-standards and follow the ISO model.

Of course, higher education may learn from industry, but as already said, quality and the quest for quality in higher education cannot be compared with quality and the quest for quality in industry. A university is not a cookie factory.
When we talk about the quality of a product or the quality of a service, the definition often used is the satisfaction of the client. The client has certain expectations about the product or service and wants "value for money".

While quality, in general, is already a difficult concept in itself, quality in higher education is much more confusing, because in Higher Education it is not always clears what the "product" is and who the "client" is. Is the "graduate" the "product" that we offer society and the labour market? Or is the graduate-to-be, the student, our "client" and the program that we offer the "product"? We must conclude that a university has a multiple client and a multiple product

system. Of course some of the aspects and standards used by ISO are applicable to Higher Education. But a difficulty for applying ISO in Higher Education is that ISO is much more about procedures and processes, while in higher education we like to catch both the *quality of the process* and *the quality of the product*. Applying the ISO standard, we cannot assess the real content and outcome quality.

Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)

Quality is primarily the responsibility of the higher education institution itself. Although the government has a special responsibility regarding quality assurance in many countries, it is the university (and especially its staff and students) that is responsible for providing and assuring quality. Therefore, it is important that each university develops an efficient Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) system. There is no one model that fits all. It is up to the university to decide what model fits it best. However, there are some basic conditions that have to be met. Of course, experiences at other universities may also be used in developing an IQA system equipped with the basic elements for monitoring, evaluation and improvement. At least the IQA system should cover the Deming cycle: plan, do, check and act (PDCA) (see Figure 2).
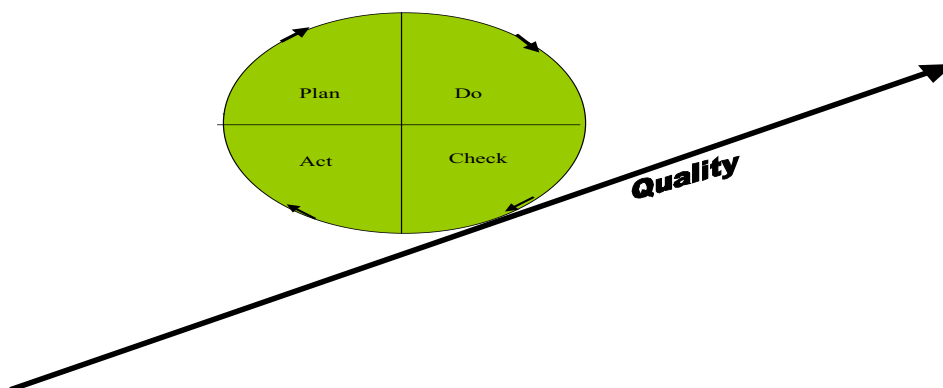
Figure 2: Deming Cycle (PDCA)

External Quality Assurance and accreditation

A Quality Assurance system not only has an internal aspect. External elements also exist. External assessment (See Volume 2 of this handbook) is an important instrument. A university is also accountable to the outside world. The taxpayers must be convinced of our quality. Accreditation is an important accountability instrument with which we can verify our quality. The United States of America already has a long tradition in this field but the rest of the world adopted this concept only a few years ago.

There are many interpretations of accreditation and there are different views on it. There is no general definition endorsed by everybody. A general accepted description is: *Accreditation is a formal decision, based on evaluation of past performance, indicating that certain standards, certain minimum requirements are met*. Sometimes, accreditation is seen as a bureaucratic process that tries to control higher education, but accreditation may have also positive effects, because it:

- Provides us with a quality label that we can use in competition;
- Offers opportunities for benchmarking
- Delivers feedback on the self-assessment.

Accreditation is never an end in itself, but should rather serve higher education.

1.3 Towards an Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) system

One of the aims of the IUCEA-DAAD project is to help the universities to introduce an Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)-system. Looking at the developments in the region, we see that the universities are at different stages of development

Some of them are still in the initial phase of development and have many problems and many obstacles to face.. The following are   among the obstacles being encountered:

- Lack of quality assurance awareness
- Resistance against innovations
- Resistance of staff because they feel threatened
- There is not enough knowledge on quality assurance available in the university. Training is needed.
- There is resistance because quality assurance is time consuming and costly ("We have other things to do").
- It is difficult to define what quality is; the QA indicators are not always clear;
- The purpose and the added value are not always clear
- Lack of clear communication between the staff and the institutions management

To overcome the problems it is important to:

- Understand clearly what IQA means;
- Know the available instruments
- Know about the requirements set for an IQA system;
- Design the system very clearly and to formulate the strategy to introduce it;
- Tune the system to external developments.

> An Internal Quality Assurance system (IQA system) is a system aiming at setting up, maintaining and improving the quality and standards of teaching, scholarship (student learning experience), research, and service to community.
>
> The overall objective is to continuously promote and improve the quality of the core activities and the institution as a whole

If we like to assure our quality, it is necessary to establish a structured quality assurance system that makes it possible to monitor our quality, to evaluate our quality and to improve the quality. There is no single approach or system that is applicable to all universities. Each university has to build its own system.

However, when developing an IQA system, there are some basic conditions that have to be taken into account. These are as follows:

- It should be kept as simple as possible;
- It should not be a bureaucratic process;
- It should have the support of management and staff;
- There must be a right balance between a centralised and decentralised approach;
- Effective instruments should be used;
- The internal quality assurance system must be tuned to national and international developments.

Internal Quality assurance has a pivotal position in the framework of accreditation. Therefore, in some cases there are requirements formulated for an IQA-system, like as done by the ASEAN Universities Network[5] and by the European Association for Quality Assurance (ENQA)[6]. Those requirements are not only applicable for the Asian universities or European Universities, but also for the African universities. The requirements can be summarized as follows:

1. **Policy and procedures for IQA**
   An institution should have a clear policy and associated procedures for the assurance of the quality and standards of their programs and awards. The university should commit itself explicitly to the development of quality culture and quality awareness. To achieve this, the university develops and implements a strategy for the continuous enhancement of quality. The strategy, policy and procedures should have a formal status and be publicly available. They should also include a role for students and other stakeholders.

2. **A monitoring system**
   An institution should have a structured monitoring system to collect information about the quality of its activities. At least the monitoring system should include:

   - Student evaluations
   - A student progress system
   - Structured feedback from the labour market
   - Structured feedback from the alumni

3. **Periodic review of the core activities (teaching and learning, research and community service)**
   An institution should have formal mechanisms for periodic review or evaluation of the core activities: The programs and degrees, the research activities (if applicable) and community service.

4. **Quality assurance of student assessment**
   An institution should have clear procedures to assure the assessment of students. Students are assessed using published criteria, regulations and procedures, which are applied

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5 AUN (ASEAN University Network Quality Assurance), Manual for the implementation of the Guidelines, Bangkok 2 0 0 7 .
   The aims of AUN are equivalent to the aims of the IUCEA
6 ENQA (2005),   Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area, Helsinki, 2005

consistently. There are clear procedures to assure the quality of the examinations.

5. **Quality assurance of teaching staff**

An institution should have ways of satisfying itself that the staff members are qualified and competent to conduct the core activities of the institution: teaching and learning, research and community service.

6. **Quality assurance of facilities**

An institution should have clear procedures to ensure that the quality of the facilities needed for student learning are adequate and appropriate for each program offered.

7. **Quality assurance of the student support**

An institution should have clear procedures to assure the quality of the student support and student counselling.

8. **Self- assessment**

An institution conducts regularly a self-assessment of its core activities as a whole at least once every 5 years, to learn about the strengths and weaknesses. This self-assessment will lead to a quality improvement plan.

9. **Internal audit**

A self-assessment might be part of the external quality assessment/accreditation process and the self-assessment report as an input for the external review team. If the self-assessment is not connected to the EQA, the institution is expected to organise an audit, based on the self-evaluation report.

10. **Information systems**

An institution should ensure that it collects, analyzes and uses relevant information for the effective management of its core activities.

11. **Public information**

An institution should regularly publish up-to-date, impartial and objective information, both quantitative and qualitative, about the programs and awards that it is offering.

12. **A Quality assurance handbook**

An institution should have a QA handbook, where all regulations, processes and procedures concerning Quality Assurance are documented. All people concerned (i.e. stakeholders) should publicly know the existence and contents of this handbook.

1.4 An analysis model for the Internal Quality Assurance system

Although there is no Internal Quality Assurance system that fits all universities, common good practice shows that it is possible to develop an analysis model for a well-functioning QA-system. We can distinctly identify the following elements:

- *Monitoring instruments*

  The monitoring instruments are needed to keep track of our performance and developments. This is why we have to collect data about:

  - The student progress

- Dropout and pass rates
- Feedback from the labour market and alumni
- Research performance

As long as the data are in line with the targets we have set, there is no reason to worry. If there are deviations, it might be necessary to take action and analyse the situation.

- *Evaluation instruments*

   Evaluation instruments that a university can use are:
   - Student evaluation. A university should carry out students' evaluations. In fact this should be a regular activity in the institution to learn what students think about the program, the staff, the delivery methods etc.
   - Course and curriculum evaluation. Although the students will evaluate the course during the student evaluation, there might also be a need to include other stakeholders.
   - Research evaluation. An institution should have a mechanism to evaluate the quality of research by staff members whether funded internally or externally and ensure that researchers have opportunities to disseminate the research findings and to have the same peer review.
   - Community service evaluation. An institution should have a system to regular review of the community outreach. The institution should regularly evaluate if it is achieving what it wants to achieve in community service.

Evaluation does not make sense if there are no actions to enhance the quality and to overcome the shortcomings. Therefore, it is necessary to have opportunities for staff development and staff training.

- *Specific QA-processes*

   There are some specific QA processes within the scope of IQA that are important for assuring the quality of some activities:

   - quality assurance of the student assessments
   - quality assurance of the staff
   - quality assurance of the facilities
   - quality assurance of student support.

- *Specific instruments for IQA.*

   There are some specific instruments for Internal Quality Assurance:
   - Self-assessment or SWOT-analysis. This might be at institutional level or at the level of the core activities. Self-assessment is a powerful instrument for discovering our quality and finding an answer to the following questions:
   - Are we doing the right things?
   - Are we doing the right things in the right way?
   - Are we achieving our goals?

These instruments will be used once every five or six years. They will be combined with external assessment or accreditation.

-        Inter-collegial assessment

If there is no formal accreditation, the instrument of inter-collegial assessment may be applied.

-        an adequate information management system is indispensable.
-        Finally, the presence of a QA handbook should show the maturity of the IQA system.

Figure 3 illustrates the above-mentioned instruments. The model contains all the elements of an Internal Quality Assurance system.
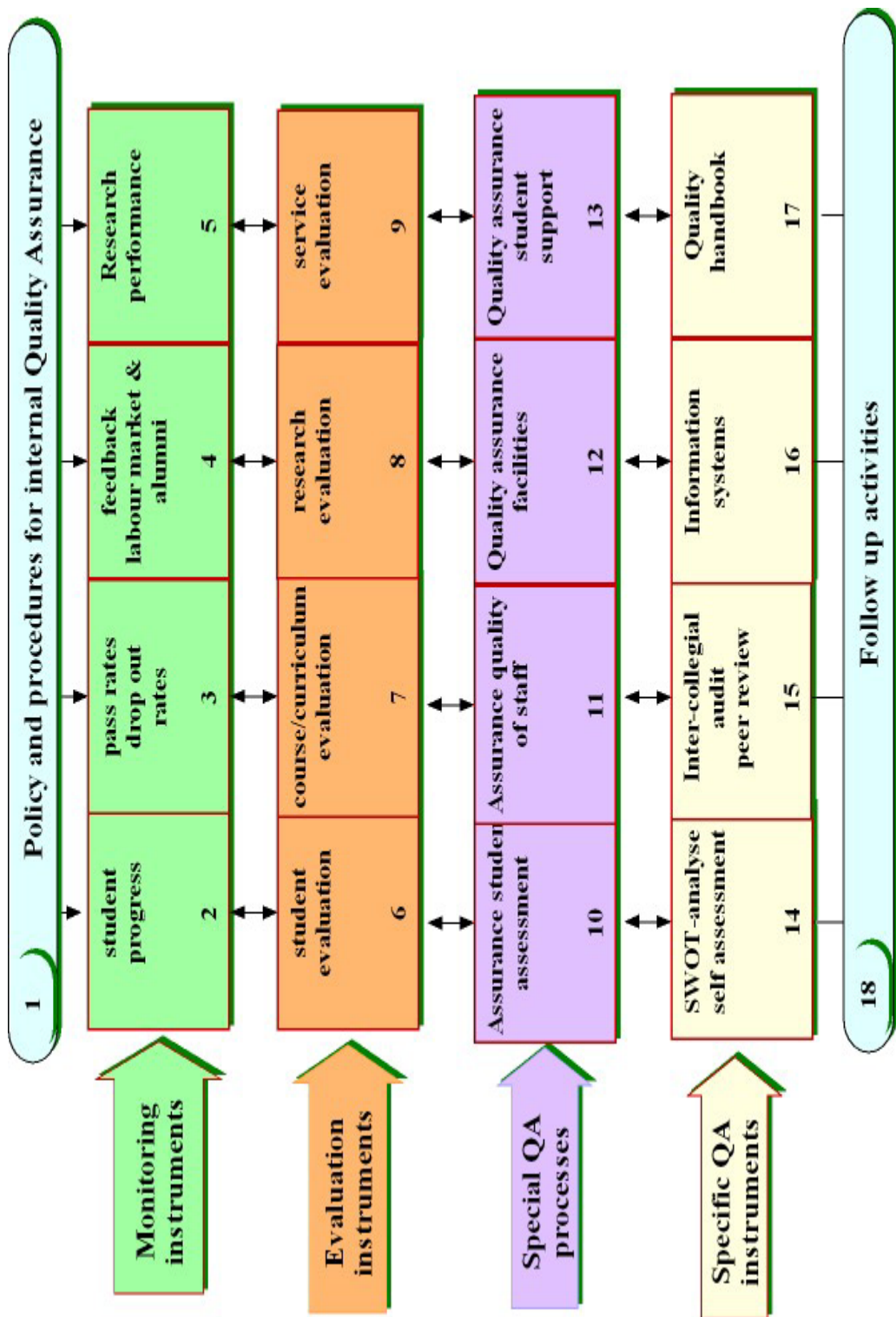
Figure 3: Analysis model for the self-assessment of the IQA system

Policy and procedures for internal Quality Assurance (1)

Monitoring instruments	Evaluation instruments	Special QA processes	Specific QA instruments
student progress (2)	student evaluation (6)	Assurance student assessment (10)	SWOT-analyse self assessment (14)
pass rates drop out rates (3)	course/curriculum evaluation (7)	Assurance quality of staff (11)	Inter-collegial audit peer review (15)
feedback labour market & alumni (4)	research evaluation (8)	Quality assurance facilities (12)	Information systems (16)
Research performance (5)	service evaluation (9)	Quality assurance student support (13)	Quality handbook (17)

Follow up activities (18)

1.5 Harmonization of the QA system

The aim of the IUCEA-DAAD project is to not only promote the introduction of an IQA-system inside the universities, but also promoting the harmonization of the QA system in the country and in the region by applying some general accepted guidelines. This does not mean that all universities and all countries are expected to have the same system and the same approach. Harmonization is not the same as uniformity. It is a big challenge for the region with all the cultural, political and historical differences to strive for harmonization, while keeping the differences.

Harmonization means that the basics in Quality Assurance we are applying are equivalent, but each university and each country can add its own specific needs and instruments. There are several reasons for harmonization of Quality Assurance:

- Considering developments internationally and within the region, it is important that university degrees in one country are recognized in other countries. The basic quest for such recognition is the need to know more about the quality and how such quality is assured.
- Regarding student mobility we need to know the quality of the curricula in other institutions. It helps greatly when we know how the quality is assessed and assured.
- Internationalisation of professions and globalisation offers graduates a broader perspective for job opportunities. In order for our graduates to exploit such opportunities their quality should be known and acceptable internationally.

Harmonization of the QA-system does not only concern Internal Quality Assurance, but also the external element, especially Accreditation. Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda have their own approach and are in different stages of development. Of course, for the development of accreditation, the national, social and political contexts have to be taken into account.

However, it will be at least necessary to develop equivalent systems with equivalent standards, processes and procedures. More about the development of accreditation can be found in Volume 5 of the handbook.

2. Self-assessment of the IQA system

An efficient Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) system is necessary to assure our quality. To learn about the quality of the IQA system, the university has to organise a SWOT analysis or self-assessment. This chapter shows how to conduct such a self-assessment. The guidelines and included criteria are based on international experience and good practice[7]. The guidelines given for the self-assessment of the IQA system should not be seen as a straitjacket, because the IQA system may differ from university to university. Therefore, it should be seen as a benchmark aimed at helping us see to what extent do we reach the internationally accepted standards for IQA. If we do not reach the internationally accepted standards then we should ask ourselves why not. The model in Figure 3 will be used for the critical self-assessment.

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[7] The guidelines are, among others, based on the AUN-QA guidelines (AUN, 2007) and on the publication Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area, (ENQA, Helsinki, 2005)

The following aspects will be treated:

- The policy of the institution concerning Internal Quality Assurance
- Monitoring instruments
- Evaluation instruments
- QA procedures to safeguard specific activities
- Specific QA instruments
- Follow up activities

How to use the model?

1. In section 2.1 under the heading of the aspect (e.g. *Monitoring of student progress* or. *Quality assurance of the facilities*[8]) the criteria to be met are given.

   Concerning criteria we have to keep in mind that there are no absolute and objective criteria and standards. The criteria for assessing the quality given in the handbook are based on:

   - The common denominator of the criteria as formulated by:
     - The Commission for Higher Education of Kenya
     - The Tanzanian Commission for Universities
     - The National Council for Higher Education of Uganda.
   - The criteria as formulated in the Entebbe matrix
   - The criteria as formulated by external quality assurance agencies such as European, Asian, and South African.

   In general, one may say that the formulated criteria can be seen as the minimum criteria. **An explanation** and interpretation of the criteria is given where necessary.

2. The self-assessment aims at finding evidence that the institution is meeting the criteria. Therefore, one has to look at the criteria and try to find indications of meeting the criteria:

   - give a description of the state-of-the-art of the aspect
   - make a critical analysis of the state-of-the-art. (Is one satisfied with it or not?)
   - describes the strengths and weaknesses concerning the mentioned aspect
   - what evidence is there that you are meeting the criteria?
   - if there are problems or if you are not satisfied, what actions are planned to overcome the shortcomings?

3. To help you to find evidence, under the heading "looking for evidence" a set of questions are formulated that can be used in finding the needed indications. This is not a conclusive list. Be aware that the questions are not to be seen as a questionnaire that needs to be completed. They are only hints.

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8 *The number refer to the number of the segment in the model*

If it is the first time the institution is involved in a structured self-assessment of the IQA system, there will be a lot of blank spots. It will not always be possible to fill all segments. So a number of aspects will be left unanswered this time, but will force the institution to take action. Do not worry about it. This is something for improvement in the future.

In order to organise an effective self-assessment, one has to take into account some basic principles:

- Primarily, a self-assessment should never be felt as threatening. A self- assessment should not be used to assess an individual, should never be used for punishment or reward and should never be used to blame someone.

- A self- assessment aims at improvement and enhancement of the quality.

- It is necessary to create a broad basis for the self- assessment and to sensitize staff and students. The whole organisation has to prepare itself for it.

- Looking at quality is more than testing the performance. It also means organisational development and shaping the institution. Everybody has to be responsible and involved for real self-assessment.

- The management of the institution must support fully the self-assessment. Relevant information is needed for an effective policy and good management. The self-assessment serves to acquire structural insight in performance of the university.

- Carrying out critical self-evaluation demands a good organisation. Primarily someone has to coordinate the self-assessment process. It would be good to charge someone specifically with the self-evaluation project. The coordinator has to meet some requirements:

  - In order to obtain the required information, it is important that the coordinator has good entry at all levels of the institution;

  - Therefore, it is very important that the coordinator has good contacts within the university, with the central management as well as with the faculties and the staff members;

  - The coordinator must have the authority to make appointments.

- It is desirable to install a working group in-charge of the self-assessment. It is important that the group is structured in such a way that the involvement of all sections is assured. The working group is in charge of the self-assessment, gathering data, analysing material and drawing conclusions.

- It is assumed that self-assessment is an analysis supported by the whole faculty/ department. Therefore, it is important that everyone should be at least acquainted with the contents of the self-assessment report and should recognise it as a document from his or her own institution. The working group may organise a workshop or seminar to discuss the draft SAR.

- Not everyone has to agree with all the points in the self-assessment report. There may be disagreement as to what are seen as weaknesses and strengths and what is to be considered as the cause of the weaknesses. Should there be very big differences of opinion between certain groups or bodies, then the SAR should report on it.

2.1 The organisation of the self-assessment

The university determines how self-assessment is carried out. However, it is good to make use of experiences gained elsewhere. On the basis of experience with self-assessment in other universities some suggestions may be made that can facilitate the process (the organisation of the process is given in Table 2):

- Self-assessment should never be the work of one single person.
- Make a group responsible for the self-assessment.
- This group should consist of some three to five people, chaired by a coordinator appointed by the faculty. Students should be involved in the self-assessment.
- A clear timetable should be set up, assuming a total amount of time available of about five to six months between the moment of the formal announcement and the actual visit.
- The topics that have to be considered in the self-evaluation (see section 2) should be distributed among the committee members and each member made responsible for collecting information, and for analysing and evaluating the data from the self-assessment.
- The draft results should be discussed on the largest scale possible. It is not necessary to have consensus concerning the report; it is, however, necessary for as many people as possible to be aware of its contents.

Table 1: Organising a self-assessment

Date	Activity
8 months before the planned end of the self-assessment	Appoint the leader of the assessment process Compose the assessment team, including students
The following 6 months	Dividing up the cells to be dealt with Each person responsible for collecting information and data collects that information Writing drafts of the cells
4 months after the start	Discussion on the drafts in the group Second draft
About 5 months after the start	Discussion of the 2nd draft with all faculty staff and students during an open hearing
6 months after the start	Edit the comments of the hearing for the final draft

2.2 Self-assessment of the IQA-system

1. Policy and procedures for Internal Quality Assurance

- *An institution has a clear policy and associated procedures for the assurance of the quality and standards of its programs and awards. The university commits itself explicitly to the development of quality culture and quality awareness.*

- *To achieve this, the university develops and implements a strategy for the continuous enhancement of quality. The strategy, policy and procedures should have a formal status and be publicly available.*

- *They also include a role for students and other stakeholders.*

Explanation

A clearly formulated policy and formulated procedures for quality assurance provide a framework for developing and monitoring the effectiveness of the quality assurance system. They also help to generate public confidence in institutional autonomy. The formulated policy contains the statements of intent and the principal means by which these will be achieved.

Looking for evidence

- *Does the university have a clearly formulated policy on IQA?*
- *Does the policy statement explicitly contain:*
    - *the relationship between teaching and research at the institution;*
    - *the institution's strategy on quality and standards;*
    - *how the quality assurance system is organised;*
    - *the responsibilities of departments, schools, faculties, institutes, colleges and other organisational units and individuals for assuring quality;*
    - *the involvement of students in quality assurance;*
    - *the ways in which the policy is implemented, monitored and revised?*

THE MONITORING SYSTEM (CELL 2-4)

2. Monitoring student progress

- *Student progress is systematically recorded and monitored, feedback to students and corrective actions are made where necessary.*

Explanation

How students are monitored and supported by staff is essential to a good student career. A university must ensure that a good physical, material, social and psychological environment is in place.

Looking for evidence

- *Is attention paid to study progress? Is student progress recorded? Does the recording lead to problems being pointed out in time? When is the first contact made with problem cases?*

- *Does this result in remedial and/or preventive actions being introduced for the individual student or program development?*
- *Is special attention paid to coaching first-year students? If so, how does it work?*

3. Monitoring dropout and pass rates

> • *An institution has a structured monitoring system to collect information about the drop out and success rates among the students.*

Explanation
It is important that an institution monitors the dropout and success rates of the students.

- *Pass rates or success rate: number of students, successfully finishing the program*
- *Dropout rate: number of students that does not finish the program. The dropout may enrol in another academic program in or outside of the department, but for the program he or she has left is counted as drop out.*

Looking for evidence
- *What is the opinion of the department about the pass rate? If not satisfactory, what measures have been taken to improve the pass rate?*
- *Have any fluctuations in the success rate been noticed over the last five years?*
- *How high is the dropout rate? Are there explanations for the dropout rate?*
- *Does the department know where the dropout students are going?*

4. Feedback from labour market and alumni

> *The institution must have a structured method to obtain feedback from all stakeholders for the measurement of their satisfaction. The monitoring system includes at least:*
> - *Structural feedback from the labour market*
> - *Structural feedback from alumni*

Explanation
An important element of the Internal Quality Assurance system is to collect the feedback from the stakeholders in a structured way, especially the labour market and the alumni. How do we know what they think about the performance of our graduates?

Looking for evidence
Opinion from the labour market

- *Do structured contacts exist with employers and the labour market for getting feedback on graduates?*
- *How do employers appreciate the graduates? Are there any specific complaints? Do the employers appreciate specific strengths?*
- *How do we cope with complaints from the labour market?*

Opinion from alumni (graduates)

- *Does the department interview alumni on a regular basis?*

- *What is the opinion and feedback of graduates when they are employed?*

- *Is the feedback of the alumni used to adapt the program?*

5. Monitoring research performance

- *An institution has a structured monitoring system to collect information on the quality of its core activities. This includes monitoring the research output (number of publications), the number of grants of the staff etc.*

Explanation

Since generally research is one of the core functions of institutions of Higher Education it is important to keep track of the research performance of the institution.

Looking for evidence

Does the university have an efficient monitoring system keeping:
- *records concerning the number of publications registered by staff*

- *records on the number of research grants*

- *citation indices*

EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS (CELL 6-9)

6. Student evaluation

- *The institution makes use of student evaluation on a regular basis*
- *The outcomes of the student evaluation are used for quality improvement*
- *The institution provides the students with feedback on what is done with the outcomes of evaluation*

Explanation

Students are the first to judge the quality of teaching and learning. They experience the delivery method. They have an opinion about the facilities. Of course, the information given by students has to be counterbalanced by other opinions. Nevertheless, the university is expected to carry out student evaluations and to use the outcomes for improvement.

Looking for evidence

- *Does the university use student evaluations in a structured manner?*

- *Who is responsible for the evaluations?*

- *What is done with the outcome of the evaluations? Are there any examples of these evaluations contributing to improvements?*

- *What is the input of the students who are members of the internal quality assurance committees.*

7. Course and curriculum evaluation

> - *An institution has formal mechanisms for the periodic review or evaluation of the courses and the curriculum*

Explanation
The confidence of students and other stakeholders in higher education is more likely to be established and maintained through effective quality assurance activities which ensure that programs are well designed, regularly monitored and periodically reviewed, thereby securing their continuing relevance and currency. The quality assurance of programs and the degrees awarded is expected to include:

- *Development and publication of explicit intended learning outcomes;*
- *Careful attention to curriculum and program design and content;*
- *Specific needs for different modes of delivery (e.g. full-time, part-time, distance-learning, e-learning) and types of higher education (e.g. academic, vocational, professional);*
- *Availability of appropriate learning resources;*
- *Formal program approval procedures by a body other than that teaching the program;*
- *Regular periodic reviews of programs (including external panel members).*

Looking for evidence
Does the university carry out:

- *Course evaluation, including the above-mentioned aspects?*
- *Curriculum evaluation, including the above-mentioned aspects?*

8. Research evaluation

> - *The institution with a task in research has a system for regular review of research outcomes.*

Explanation
Research assessment is important to learn about the quality of the research efforts of an institution.

Looking for evidence
- *Does the institution involve the outside body in research assessment?*
- *Is the research of the institution assessed when applying for grants?*
- *Does the institution organise research assessment at a regular basis?*

9. Service evaluation

> - *The institution has a system for regular review of the community outreach.*

Explanation
A university is not only responsible for teaching and learning and doing research. It is

also responsible for serving the society. This will differ from country to country. Consultancy involves a broad range of activities. In general, the term consultancy covers the provision of professional advice or services to an external party for a fee or other non-monetary consideration.

It is important to evaluate regularly if the institution is achieving what it wants to achieve from the community outreach services. Therefore an evaluation system is important.

Looking for evidence
- *Does the university evaluate the role it is playing in the local, national and international community?*
- *Are the non-profit activities of the university evaluated?*

SPECIFIC QA PROCESSES (CELL 10 -13)

10. Quality assurance of the student assessment

- *An institution has clear procedures to assure the assessment of students.*
- *Students are assessed on the basis of published criteria, regulations and procedures that are applied consistently.*
- *There are clear procedures to assure the quality of the examinations.*
- *There is an appeals procedure.*

Explanation
Student assessment is one of the most important elements of higher education. The outcomes of assessment have a profound effect on students' future careers. It is therefore important that assessment is carried out professionally at all times and takes account of the extensive knowledge that exists on testing and examination processes. Assessment also provides valuable information for institutions about the efficiency of teaching and learner support. Student assessment procedures are expected to:

- Be *designed to measure the achievement of the intended learning outcomes and other program objectives;*
- *Be fit for purpose, whether diagnostic, formative or summative;*
- *Have clear and published grading/marking criteria;*
- *Where possible, the assessment is not relying on the verdicts of single examiners;*
- *Take account of all the possible consequences of examinations regulations;*
- *Have clear regulations covering student absence, illness and other mitigating circumstances;*
- *Ensure that assessments are conducted securely in accordance with the institution's stated procedures;*
- *Be subject to administrative verification checks to ensure the accuracy of the procedures;*
- *Inform students clearly about the assessment strategy being used for their program, what examination regulations or other assessment methods they will be subject to, what will be expected of them, and the criteria that will be applied to the assessment of their performance.*

- *Does the assessment method foster open, flexible, reflective and outcome-based assessment?*
- *Are the criteria made explicit?*
- *Are the assessment strategies in line with clearly defined learning outcomes?*
- *Is a range of assessment methods used?*
- *Is the scope and weighting of the assessment known to all concerned?*
- *Are the standards applied in assessment explicit and consistent across the curriculum?*
- *Are procedures regularly applied to ensure that, as far as possible, assessment schemes are valid, reliable and fairly administered?*
- *Do students have ready access to reasonable appeals procedures?*
- *Is the reliability and validity of the assessment methods documented as required and regularly evaluated?*
- *Are new assessment methods developed and tested?*

The formulated questions have to be answered in general, taking into account the common approach across all programs, not just in a specific program. What is the general practice in the university?

11. Quality Assurance of the academic staff

An institution has means to satisfy itself that its staff are qualified and competent to conduct the core activities of the institution: teaching and learning, research and the community service:
- *Adequate staff appointment procedures*
- *An adequate staff appraisal system*
- *Staff development activities*

Explanation

The academic staff is the single most important learning resource available to most students. It is important that those who teach have full knowledge and understanding of the subject they are teaching, have the necessary skills and experience to communicate their knowledge and understanding effectively to students in a range of teaching contexts, and can access feedback on their own performance. Institutions should ensure that their staff recruitment and appointment procedures include means of making certain that all new staff have at least the minimum necessary level of competence. Teaching staff should be given opportunities to develop and extend their teaching ability and should be encouraged to value their skills. Institutions should provide low-performing teachers with opportunities to improve their skills to an acceptable level and should have the means to remove them from their teaching duties if they continue to be demonstrably ineffective.

As far as the university is concerned, the qualifications and competencies of the research staff must be checked and controlled. The same goes for the contribution to society and the community.

Looking for evidence
- *How is the staff recruitment system organised?*

- *How is the promotion system organised? What criteria are important for promotion?*
- *Are staff appraisals carried out? How are these done? What are the consequences?*
- *Has a clear HR policy been put in place?*
- *Are staff development activities carried out?*

12. Quality assurance of the facilities

> *An institution has clear procedures to ensure that the quality of its facilities needed for student learning are adequate and appropriate for each program offered:*
> *- Adequate checks on the computer facilities*
> *- Adequate checks on the library*
> *- Adequate checks on the laboratories*

Explanation

In addition to their teachers, students rely on a range of resources to assist their learning. These vary from physical resources such as libraries or computing facilities to human support in the form of tutors and other advisers. Learning resources and other support mechanisms should be readily accessible to students, designed with their needs in mind and responsive to feedback from users of these services. Institutions should routinely monitor, review and improve the effectiveness of the support services available to their students.

Any research facilities and the facilities needed for the contribution to society and the community must also be subjected to regular scrutiny.

Looking for evidence
What procedures are there to assure the quality of the:

- *Lecture halls, etc?*
- *Libraries?*
- *Laboratories?*
- *Learning resources*
- *Research resources?*
- *Community service resources*

13. Quality assurance of student support

> - *An institution has clear procedures to assure the quality of the student support and student advice.*
> - *In establishing a learning environment to support the achievement of quality student learning, teachers must do everything in their power to provide not only a physical and material environment that is supportive of learning and is appropriate to the activities involved, but also a social or psychological environment.*

Explanation

It is important that the quality of student support is assured. This may include student advice and/or counselling plus the physical and material environment.

Looking for evidence

What procedures are there to assure the quality of the student support activities?

- *A tutoring system?*

- *Student advice and/or counselling?*

- *Student housing?*

- *Sports facilities?*

SPECIFIC QA INSTRUMENTS (CELL 14-17)

14. The SWOT-analysis or self-assessment

> *An institution regularly (but at least once every 5 years), conducts a self-assessment of its core activities and of the institution as a whole to learn about its strengths and weaknesses. This self-assessment must lead to a quality improvement plan.*

Explanation

A self-assessment process or a SWOT analysis is a powerful instrument for learning more about the quality of the core activities and the quality of the institution as a whole. It will answer the basic questions whether the institution is doing the right things right and whether it is able to achieve its goals. Often a self-assessment process is connected with external assessment or accreditation, because the accrediting body or external assessors require for a self-assessment report as input. Even when there is no connection with an external assessment, it will be productive for the university to conduct self-assessment on a regular basis.

Looking for evidence

- *Does the university already have experience with the instrument of self-assessment?*

- *Is there any connection with external assessment/accreditation?*

- *If not yet done, are there plans to conduct self-assessments on a regular basis?*

- *If the institution has or has not yet conducted self-assessments, how does it know its quality?*

15. The inter-collegial audit/peer review

> *A self-assessment process might be part of an External Quality Assessment (EQA) or accreditation process where the self-assessment report acts as input for the external review team. If the self-assessment is not connected to the EQA, the institution will be expected to organise its own audit based on the self-assessment report.*

Explanation

The self-assessment process gives a good idea about our quality of an institution. However, this is not enough. The institution has to check its own view against the views of the outside world. Therefore, it is advisable to organise an inter-collegial audit. This means that experts/ colleagues from other departments or other universities check the findings of the SAR.

- *Does the university have an audit system?*
- *How often is the system used?*
- *Does the university have trained auditors? Where were they trained?*
- *What does the university do with the outcomes of an audit? Give some examples.*

16. Information systems

a. The management information system

> *An institution should ensure that it collects, analyses and uses relevant information for the effective management of its core activities.*

Explanation

Institutional self-knowledge is the starting point for effective quality assurance. It is important that institutions have the means to collect and analyse information about their own activities. Without this they will not know what is working well and what needs attention, or the results of innovative practices.

The quality-related information systems required by an individual institution will depend to some extent on local circumstances, but are at least expected to cover:

- *student progression and success rates;*
- *employability of graduates;*
- *student satisfaction with their programs; effectiveness of teachers;*
- *profile of the student population;*
- *available learning resources and their costs;*
- *the* institution's own key performance indicators.

An efficient information system is also important for benchmarking the university in question with other institutions in the region.

Looking for evidence

- *What does the university do with the information collected by the monitoring system?*
- *Does the executive management use the collected information?*
- *Is the university using the instrument of benchmarking? How is it using the instrument?*

b. Public information system

> *An institution should regularly publish up-to-date, impartial and objective information, both quantitative and qualitative, about the programs and awards that it offers.*

Explanation

In fulfilling their public role, higher education institutions have a responsibility of providing information about the programs they offer, the intended learning outcomes of these, the qualifications they award, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures used,

and the learning opportunities available to their students. Published information might also include the views and employment destinations of past students and the profile of the current student population. This information should be accurate, impartial, objective and readily accessible and should not be used simply as a marketing opportunity. The institution should verify that it meets its own expectations in respect of impartiality and objectivity.

Looking for evidence
- *What procedures does the university have to assure the quality of the information?*
- *How does the university ensure that the information is impartial?*

17. The QA handbook

> An institution has a QA handbook that documents all regulations, processes and procedures concerning Quality Assurance. This handbook is public and known to all the people concerned.

Explanation
A QA handbook should contain all the documents (or references to the documents), processes and procedures concerning activities in the Quality Assurance process.

Looking for evidence
- *Does the university already have a QA handbook?*
- *What is the content of the QA handbook? Sum up the chapters.*
- *What documents, processes and procedures are already available?*
- *What documents, processes and practices need to be developed?*
- *Who will collect and compile all the information?*

18. The follow up

> There is clear evidence that the institution uses the information from the monitoring system and the outcomes of evaluations to improve the quality.
>
> The institution has clearly formulated quality action plans, based on the results of self-assessment and external assessments.

Explanation
Quality assurance and the activities in the framework of Internal Quality Assurance only make sense if the outcomes and information are used for the enhancement and improvement of the quality of institution core activities. Without follow up actions, evaluation is a waste of time. A self-assessment process must lead to a quality improvement plan for the near future.

Looking for evidence
- *The institution has a clear policy for enhancement and improvement of the quality*

- *The institution uses the information collected by the monitoring system and the outcomes of evaluation to develop a yearly quality improvement plan*
- *There are examples showing the results of Quality Assurance.*

2.3 The Self-assessment report (SAR)

After finishing the self-assessment of the Internal Quality Assurance system one will write down the outcomes of the assessment in a Self- Assessment Report (SAR). The SAR is an important document. On one hand it contains the basic information for the external expert team that will come and assess the quality of the program. On the other hand it is the basic document for the institution's formulation of an action plan or quality plan for the coming years.

The content of the SAR follows the lines of the aspects discussed during the self-assessment process. For each aspect to be treated one should:

- *clearly describes the state-of-the art. An outsider must understand the situation.*
- *analyse the situation. What is your opinion about it? Satisfied or not? If not, why not?*
- *Describe how far you meet the formulated criteria. What evidence can you provide?*
- *describe the weakness and the strengths.*

The SAR is not a questionnaire that has to be completed. This means that the questions under the heading "looking for evidenced" should not be answered by "Yes," "no", or "I do not know".

The leading questions do not need to be treated separately. You can write a coherent text, covering the hints.

Do not repeat the text of these Guidelines in the SAR. The heading of the aspect is sufficient.

Content of the self-assessment report

Table 2 defines the content of the self-assessment report. Be sure to discuss the report within the faculty and ensure that everybody is able to recognise himself/herself in this picture

Table 2:   Content of a self-assessment report Internal Quality Assurance

Introduction • How was the self-assessment carried out? • Short description of the university
Chapter 1: Policy and procedures for Internal Quality Assurance
Chapter 2: The Monitoring instruments 2.1 Student progress 2.2 Pass rates and drop out 2.3. Program organisation 2.4 Feedback labour market + alumni 2.5 Research performance
Chapter 3 Evaluation instruments 3.1 Student evaluation 3.2 Course and curriculum evaluation 3.3. Research evaluation 3.4.Service evaluation
Chapter 4: Specific Quality assurance processes 4.1 Assurance student assessment 4.2 Quality Assurance of staff 4.3. Quality assurance of facilities 4.4. Quality assurance of student support
Chapter 5: Specific instruments 5.1 Self-assessment/Swot analysis 5.2. Inter-collegial audit/peer review 5.3. Information system 5.4 Quality Assurance handbook
Chapter 6: Follow-up activities
Chapter 7 Strengths-weaknesses analysis 7.1 Summary of strengths 7.2 Summary of weaknesses Quality plan for the coming years

2.4 Strengths/weaknesses analysis

The self-assessment is followed by a strengths-weaknesses analysis. This serves as a checklist to see how far the university is in compliance with the given criteria. This is best done as shown in Table 3 and the checklist (see the Appendix 1). There are 12 specific aspects for assessment, and 47 sub-criteria in total. The checklist in Appendix 1 shows all the criteria and sub-criteria.

Table 3: Topics for the assessment of the IQA system

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Policy and procedures for QA							
2	Monitoring							
3	Periodic review of the core activities (education, research and community services)							
4	Quality assurance of the student assessment							
5	Quality assurance of staff							
6	Quality assurance of facilities							
7	Quality assurance of the student support							
8	Self- assessment							
9	Internal audit							
10	Information systems							
11	Public information							
12	A Quality Assurance Handbook							

The quality of the different aspects of the program will be assessed on a scale of 1-7. The marks have the following meaning:

1 = absolutely inadequate; immediate improvements must be made

2 = inadequate, improvements necessary

3 = inadequate, but minor improvements will make it adequate

4 = adequate as expected

5 = better than adequate

6 = example of good practice

7 = excellent

The overall assessment of the different aspects is based on the scores given to each sub-aspect in the category. But of course not all sub-aspects have the same weight. This means that you cannot calculate an average mathematically. You have to balance the various sub-aspects and to judge the weighting of each of them. Positive aspects may compensate for some negative ones. Marking each aspect leads to a verdict on each aspect of the model. Filling in the total score in Table 3 produces a good overview of the strengths and weaknesses.

Do not start to complete the checklist, before you have finished the text of the SAR. First, start with the text and then the marking, and not the other way round. By doing so, the marks may help you to see if there is any discrepancy between the marks and the wording.

Summary of strengths
Summarise the points that the institution considers to be its strengths and mark the points that you are proud of.

Summary of weaknesses
Indicate which points the institution considers to be weak and in need for improvement. Also indicate what you are going to do about this.

2.5 Follow up after the self-assessment

The self-assessment report will lead to many follow-up activities:

- If connected with an external assessment, the expert team will visit the institution and discuss with you the SAR. The assessment might lead to recommendations for improvement.
- If not connected with any formal external assessment, the university may decide to invite some colleagues from other universities to carry out an inter-collegial assessment and request for the formulation of recommendations (you may use Volume 2 *Guidelines for external assessment*).
- In all cases, the outcomes of the self-assessment must be translated into a *quality plan* that shows what activities the university will undertake in the near future. The self-assessment will show us where we are now and will give us the direction to where we would like to be say in 5 years' time.

Only with a clear follow up and a quality and action plan, the investment in the self-assessment and the SAR make sense.

Appendix 1: Checklist on the Quality of an IQA system

Requirements of Stakeholders	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Policy							
• The institution has a clear policy on IQA							
• There is a clear formal strategy on IQA							
• The role of all stakeholders is clearly described							
Overall opinion							
Monitoring:							
• Student progress is systematically recorded and monitored, feedback to students and corrective actions are made where necessary.							
• The institution has a structured monitoring system to collect information about the success rates and the drop out among the students.							
• The institution must have a structured method to obtain feedback from all stakeholders for the measurement of their satisfaction. The monitoring system includes structural feedback from the labour market							
• The institution must have a structured method to obtain feedback from all stakeholders for the measurement of their satisfaction. The monitoring system structural feedback from alumni							
• The institution has a structured monitoring system to collect information on the quality of its core activities. This includes monitoring the research output (number of publications), the number of grants of the staff etc							
Overall opinion							
Periodic review of the core activities (teaching and learning, research and the contribution to society and the community)							
• The institution make use of student evaluation on a regular base							
• The outcomes of the student evaluation are used for quality improvement							
• The institution provides the students with feedback what is done with the outcomes							

• The institution has formal mechanisms for the periodic review or evaluation of the courses and the curriculum							
• The institution, with a task in research has a system for regular review of research outcomes.							
• The institution has a system for regular review of the community outreach.							
• Periodic review of the contribution to society and the community							
Overall opinion							
Quality assurance of the student assessment							
• Criteria for assessments							
• Assessment procedures							
• Regulations to assure the quality of assessment							
• Appeals procedures							
Overall opinion							
Quality assurance of staff							
• Adequate staff appointment procedures							
• Adequate staff appraisal system							
• Staff development activities							
Overall opinion							
Quality assurance of facilities							
• Checking the computer facilities							
• Checking the library facilities							
• Checking the laboratories							
Overall opinion							
Quality assurance of student support/advice							
• Information for students							
• Student advice/support							
• Student welfare							
• Student housing							
• Sports facilities							
Overall opinion							
Self-assessment							

• Self-assessment of the IQA system								
• Self-assessment of teaching/learning								
• Self-assessment of research								
• Self-assessment of the contribution to society and the community								
• Self-assessment of the university								
Overall opinion								
Internal audit								
• Internal audit of teaching/learning								
• Internal audit of research								
• Internal audit of the contribution to society and the community								
• Internal audit of the university								
Overall opinion								
Information systems								
• Information management system in general								
• Information management system for teaching/learning								
• Information management system for research								
Overall opinion								
Public information								
• Public information on the university								
• Public information on the educational programs and awards/degrees offered								
• Public information on research activities								
Overall opinion								
Quality Assurance handbook								
• Presence of a QA handbook								
• Handbook is known to staff and students								
Overall opinion								
Overall verdict								

Appendix 2: List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

CHE	Commission for Higher Education
DAAD	Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst (German Academic Exchange Service)
EC	European Commission
ECA	European Consortium for Accreditation
ECTS	European Credit Transfer System
EDIA	Evaluation, Development, Implementation, Audit/Assessment
ENIC	European Network of Information Centres
ENQA	European Association of Quality Assurance
EQA	External Quality Assessment
EUA	European University Association
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
GATE	Global Alliance for Transnational Education
HR	Human resource
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HRK	German Rectors' Conference
IAUP	International Association of University Presidents
INQAAHE	International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education
IQA	Internal Quality Assurance
ISO	International Organisation for Standardization
IUCEA	Inter-University Council of East Africa
JQI	Joint Quality Initiative
NARIC	National Academic Recognition Information Centre
NCHE	National Council for Higher Education
NACTE	National Council for Technical Education
NAO	Netherlands Accreditation Organisation. Nowadays NVAO
NVAO	Netherlands/Flemish Accreditation Organisation
PDCA	Plan-do-check-act
PI	Performance indicator
QA	Quality Assurance

QAD	Quality Assurance Division
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency
SAR	Self-assessment report
SWOT-analysis	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats analysis
TCU	Tanzanian Commission for Universities
TEEP	Transnational European Evaluation project
UOIA	Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act

Appendix 3: Glossary9

This is an international analytic glossary of issues related to quality in higher education. Each item is listed below with a core definition synthesized from various sources. For a full analytic review including context, associated issues, related terms and sources click on the underlined term in the alphabetical listing below.

Prepared for the International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) and the EAIR Special Interest Group on Quality by Professor Lee Harvey, Centre for Research and Evaluation, Sheffield Hallam University, November 2004–December 2006.

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A

ACADEMIC INFRASTRUCTURE: Academic infrastructure is the name given to the array of quality-related processes and practices in the United Kingdom.

ACADEMIC RECOGNITION: Academic recognition is a set of procedures and processes for the acknowledgement and acceptance (subject to conditions), between institutions and countries, of higher education qualifications.

ACADEMIC YEAR: The academic year is:
1. The duration of a specific program of study (which may not last a complete 12 months and is divided into terms, semesters or quarters).
2. The start and finish dates of the annual cycle of a university or national higher education system.

ACCESS: Access is the process of enabling entry to higher education. Access has two linked but distinct meanings.
1. The general concept that relates to making higher education accessible.
2. A shorthand for programs that provide preparation for entry to higher education, such as the UK Access to HE courses.

ACCESS COURSES: Access courses are preparatory programs for students to gain entry to higher education.

ACCESS FUND: Access fund is money specially earmarked to support non-traditional students in gaining access to higher education.

ACCESSIBILITY: See access

ACCOUNTABILITY: Accountability is the requirement, when undertaking an activity, to expressly address the concerns, requirements or perspectives of others.

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9 *The Glossary is copied from the INQAAHEE website. Citation reference: Harvey, L., 2004–6, Analytic Quality Glossary, Quality Research International, http://www.qualityresearchinternational.com/glossary/ last updated December 2006*

ACCREDITATION: Accreditation is the establishment or of the status, legitimacy or appropriateness of an institution, program or module of study.

ACCREDITATION BODY: An accreditation body is an organisation delegated to make decisions, on behalf of the higher education sector, about the status, legitimacy or appropriateness of an institution, or program.

ACCREDITATION MILL:

ACCREDITATION OF PRIOR EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING (APEL): APEL is the formal acknowledgement (based on professional assessment) of learning acquired from previous experience, usually from experience unrelated to an academic context.

ACCREDITATION OF PRIOR LEARNING (APL): Formal acknowledgement (based on professional assessment), by way of granting credit, of students' previous learning: credit is given towards a program of study or towards professional body accreditation.

ACCREDITATION DURATION: Accreditation decisions are usually limited to a fixed and stated period of time, after which the institution or program is required to engage with a more or less rigorous re-accreditation process.

ACCREDITATION PORTFOLIO: An accreditation portfolio is the accumulated evidence germane to establishing accredited status.

ACCREDITATION STATUS: Accreditation status is the embodiment of the decision made by the accreditation body.

ACCREDITATION SURVEY: Accreditation survey is a term mainly applicable in the US context and refers to a process of checking compliance.

ACCREDITORS: Accreditors are agencies that provide recognition to institutions as part of an accreditation process (see also accreditation body).

ACTION: Action is a term used in the United States to imply a judgment or decision following an *accreditation. (see also adverse action)

ADDITIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES: Additional learning opportunities are elements of the program of study that augment the usual classroom teaching of the syllabus content.

ADVERSE ACTION: Adverse action is a term used in the US to refer to failure to achieve/ retain accreditation.(see also action)

AGENCY: Agency is, in the context of quality in higher education, shorthand for any organisation that undertakes any kind of monitoring, evaluation or review of the quality of higher education.

AIM: An aim is an overall specification of the intention or purpose of a program of study or institutional mission or policy.

ALUMNUS: An alumnus (plural alumni) is a graduate of an institution.

APPROVAL: Approval is an overarching term to cover various forms of academic recognition of a program or institution.

APPRAISAL OF STUDENT LEARNING: Appraisal of student learning is the process of providing formative and summative feedback to students on the development of their learning

ARTICULATION AGREEMENT: See credit transfer

ASSESSMENT: A general term that embraces all methods used to judge the performance of an individual, group or organisation.

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING: Assessment of student learning is the process of evaluating the extent to which participants in education have developed their knowledge, understanding and abilities.

ASSESSMENT OF TEACHING AND LEARNING: Assessment of teaching and learning is the process of evaluating the quality and appropriateness of the learning process, including teacher performance and pedagogic approach.

ASSOCIATE DEGREE: See foundation program

ASSURANCE: Assurance of quality in higher education is a process of establishing stakeholder confidence that provision (input, process and outcomes) fulfils expectations or measures up to threshold minimum requirements.

AUDIT: Audit, in the context of quality in higher education, is a process for checking that procedures are in place to assure quality, integrity or standards of provision and outcomes.

AUDIT PANEL: See review team

AUDIT REPORT: An audit report is a codification of the process, findings and outcomes of the audit process, usually prepared by the auditors and project team.

AUSPICES: Auspices is the provenance under which a quality monitoring agency operates.

AUTHORISED VALIDATING AGENCY (AVA): An AVA is an organisation or consortia licensed to certify, authorise or authenticate programs of study.

AUTONOMY: Autonomy is being able to undertake activities without seeking permission from a controlling body.

B

BACHELOR-MASTER'S: Bachelor-master's is the shorthand for a two-cycle system of higher education that is being introduced across the European Higher Education Area as part of the Bologna process.

BACHELOR DEGREE: A bachelor degree is the first-level higher education award, usually requiring three or four years' study but more in some medical subjects.

BENCHMARK: A benchmark is a point of reference against which something may be measured.

BENCHMARK STATEMENT: A benchmark statement, in higher education, provides a reference point against hich outcomes can be measured and refers to a particular specification of program characteristics and indicative standards.

BENCHMARKING: Benchmarking is a process that enables comparison of inputs, processes or ouputs between institutions (or parts of institutions) or within a single institution over time.

BEST PRACTICE: Best practice refers to effective, ideal or paradigmatic practice within an organisation that others would benefit from adopting or adapting.

BINARY SYSTEM: A binary system is one that has higher education taught in two different type of institution, traditional (academic) universities alongside more vocationally-oriented institutions.

BLENDED LEARNING: Blended learning is a flexible approach that combines face-to-face teaching/learning with remote (usually internet-based) learning.

BLOCK GRANT: Block grant is a term used to refer to the core funding provided by a national government (via a funding council) to a higher education institution.

BOLOGNA PROCESS: The Bologna Process is an ongoing process of integration and harmonisation of higher education systems within Europe.

BRUGES PROCESS: The Bruges Process is the development of European co-operation on vocational education and training.

C

CERTIFICATION: Certification is the process of formally acknowledging achievement or compliance: it can be used to signify the achievement of an individual, such as a student, or of an institution.

CLASSIFICATION: Classification is the process of identifying types of institution based on their core functions or economic status.

CODE OF PRACTICE: A code of practice is a documented set of recommended or preferred processes, actions or organisational structures to be applied in a given setting.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE: A community college, in the USA, is an intermediate college between compulsory education and higher education, although it offers some programs that may be defined as higher education.

COMMUNITY-BASED EDUCATION: Community-based education (CBE) is learning that takes place in a setting external to the higher education institution.

COMPARABILITY: Comparability is the formal acceptance between two or more parties that two or more qualifications are equivalent.

COMPETENCE: Competence is the acquisition of knowledge skills and abilities at a level of expertise sufficient to be able to perform in an appropriate work setting (within or outside academia).

COMPLIANCE: Compliance is undertaking activities or establishing practices or policies in accordance with the requirements or expectations of an external authority.

CONSISTENCY (AS A DEFINITION OF QUALITY): See perfection

CONTINUING EDUCATION: Continuing education is:
1. a generic term for any program of study (award-bearing or not) beyond compulsory education.
2. post-compulsory education of a short-term nature that does not lead directly to a major higher education qualification.

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD): Continuing professional development (CPD) refers to study (that may accumulate to whole programs with awards) designed to upgrade knowledge and skills of practitioners in the professions.

CONTROL: Control is the process of regulating or otherwise keeping a check on developments in higher education.

CO-OPERATIVE EDUCATION: Co-operative education includes work experience as part of the learning experience.

CO-OPERATIVE STUDY: See sandwich; co-operative education

CORRECTIVE ACTION: Corrective action is process of rectifying problems.

CORRESPONDENCE COURSE: A correspondence course is a study unit undertaken by the student remotely from campus via written communication with teachers.

COURSE: See program

CREDIT: Recognition of a unit of learning, usually measured in hours of study or achievement of threshold standard or both.

CREDIT ACCUMULATION: Credit accumulation is the process of collecting credit for learning towards a qualification.

CREDIT TRANSFER: Credit transfer is the ability to transport credits (for learning) from one setting to another.

CRITERIA: Criteria are the specification of elements against which a judgment is made.

CRITERIA-REFERENCED ASSESSMENT: Criteria-referenced assessment is the process of evaluating (and grading) the learning of students against a set of pre-specified criteria.

CURRICULUM: Curriculum is the embodiment of a program of learning and includes philosophy, content, approach and assessment.

D

DEGREE: Degree is the core higher education award, which may be offered at various levels from foundation, through bachelors, masters to doctoral.

DEGREE CYCLE: See bachelor-master's

DELEGATED ACCOUNTABILITY: Delegated accountability refer to the process of allowing institutions and higher education systems to take control of ensuring quality providing they are accountable to principle stakeholders, not least government.

DEPARTMENTAL AUDIT: See internal sub-institutional audit

DIPLOMA: Diploma is:
1. a generic term for a formal document (certificate) that acknowledges that a named individual has achieved a stated higher education award.
2. an award for a specific level of qualification (diploma level) which in some countries is between a bachelor and a masters-level award.
3. a term for any award beyond bachelors level up to but excluding doctoral level awards, including continuing education certification.

DIPLOMA MILL: A diploma mill is an organisation or institution that issues certified qualifications for an appropriate payment, with little or no requirements for the individual to demonstrate full competence at the relevant degree level in the discipline area.

DIPLOMA RECOGNITION: See academic recognition

DIPLOMA SUPPLEMENT: A diploma supplement is a detailed transcript of student attainment that is appended to the certificate of attainment of the qualification.

DISSERTATION: A dissertation is an extended (usually written) project involving research by the student, which contributes significantly towards a final assessment for a (higher) degree.

DISTANCE EDUCATION: Distance education is higher education undertaken by students in a setting remote from the physical campus of the higher education institution.

DISTRIBUTED EDUCATION: Distributed education occurs when the teacher and student are situated in separate locations and learning occurs through the use of technologies (such as video and internet), which may be part of a wholly distance education program or supplementary to traditional instruction.

DOCTORAL DEGREE: The doctoral degree is the highest level of award in most higher education systems.

DURATION OF ACCREDITATION: See accreditation duration

E

EFFECTIVENESS: Effectiveness is the extent to which an activity fulfils its intended purpose or function.

EFFICIENCY: Efficiency is the extent to which an activity achieves its goal whilst minimising resource usage.

EMPLOYABILITY: Employability is the acquisition of attributes (knowledge, skills, and abilities) that make graduates more likely to be successful in their chosen occupations (whether paid employment or not).

EMPOWERMENT: Empowerment is the development of knowledge, skills and abilities in the learner to enable them to control and develop their own learning.

ENHANCEMENT: Enhancement is a process of augmentation or improvement.

EQUIVALENCY EXAMINATION: See accreditation of prior learning

EUROPEAN CREDIT TRANSFER SYSTEM (ECTS): ECTS is a system for recognising credit for learning and facilitating the movement of the recognised credits between institutions and across national borders.

EVALUATION: Evaluation (of quality or standards) is the process of examining and passing a judgment on the appropriateness or level of quality or standards.

EVALUATION OF INSTITUTIONS: See external evaluation; external institutional audit

EVALUATIONS OF QUALITY ASSURANCE MECHANISMS: See audit

EX-ANTE ASSESSMENT: Ex-ante assessment involves undertaking an evaluation of the conditions for the launch of a program or institution.

EXCELLENCE: Excellence means exhibiting characteristics that are very good and, implicitly, not achievable by all.

EXCEPTIONAL: (as a definition of quality): see excellence

EX-POST ASSESSMENT: Ex-post assessment involves undertaking a review of an operational program or institution.

EXTERNAL EVALUATION: External evaluation is:
1. a generic term for most forms of quality review, enquiry or exploration.
2. a process that uses people external to the program or institution to evaluate quality or standards.

EXTERNAL EVALUATION TEAM: External evaluation team is the group of people, including persons external to the program or institution being reviewed, who undertake the quality evaluation.

EXTERNAL EXAMINER: An external examiner is a person from another institution or organisation who monitors the assessment process of an institution for fairness and academic standards.

EXTERNAL EXPERT: External expert is someone with appropriate knowledge who undertakes a quality or standards review (of any kind) as part of a team or alone and who is external to the program or institution being reviewed.

EXTERNAL INSTITUTIONAL AUDIT: An external institutional audit is a process by which an external person or team check that procedures are in place across an institution to assure quality, integrity or standards of provision and outcomes.

EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCY (EQA-AGENCY): See Agency

EXTERNAL QUALITY EVALUATION: See external evaluation

EXTERNAL QUALITY MONITORING (EQM): External quality monitoring (EQM) is an all-encompassing term that covers a variety of quality-related evaluations undertaken by bodies or individuals external to higher education institutions.

EXTERNAL REVIEW INDICATOR: An external review indicator is a measurable characteristic pertinent to an external quality evaluation.

EXTERNAL SUB-INSTITUTIONAL AUDIT: An external sub-institutional audit is a process by which an external person or team check that procedures are in place to assure quality, integrity or standards of provision and outcomes in part of an institution or relating to specific aspect of institutional provision or outcomes.

F

FACHHOCHSCHULE: Fachhochschule is a non-university higher education institution, in Germany and Liechtenstein, focusing on vocational education.

FACULTY: Faculty is:
1. the organisational unit into which cognate disciplines are located in a higher education institution
2. a shorthand term for the academic (teaching and research) staff in a higher education institution.

FACULTY AUDIT: See internal sub-institutional audit

FACULTY REVIEW: Faculty review has two different meanings, the first based on faculty as a term for academic staff, the second based on faculty as an organisational unit:
1. Faculty review is a process of reviewing the inputs, process or outputs of a faculty as an organisational unit; its structure, mode of operation, mission, aims and objectives.
2. Faculty review, (meaning review of academic staff) evaluates the performance of researchers and teachers. (See also assesment of teaching and learning)

FEES: Fees are the financial contribution made by students to their higher education

FITNESS OF PURPOSE: Fitness of purpose evaluates whether the quality-related intentions of an organisation are adequate.

FITNESS FOR PURPOSE: Fitness for purpose equates quality with the fulfilment of a specification or stated outcomes.

FOLLOW UP: Follow up is shorthand for procedures to ensure that outcomes of review processes have been, or are being, addressed.

FORMAL LEARNING: Formal learning is planned learning that derives from activities within a structured learning setting.

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT: Formative assessment is evaluation of student learning that aids understanding and development of knowledge, skills and abilities without passing any final judgement (via recorded grade) on the level of learning.

FOUNDATION DEGREE: A foundation degree is an intermediary (sub-degree) qualification in the UK designed in conjunction with employers to meet skills shortages at the higher technician level.

FOUNDATION PROGRAM: A foundation program provides an introduction to degree-level study.

FRAMEWORK FOR QUALIFICATIONS : See qualifications framework

FRANCHISE PROGRAMS: Franchise programs are study units of one higher education institution adopted by and taught at another institution, although the students formally obtain their qualification from the originating institution.

FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE): Full-time equivalent is the proportion of a nominal full-time student in higher education that a non-full-time student is judged to constitute.

FURTHER EDUCATION: Further education is post-compulsory education at pre-degree level, which may include (the opportunity to take) qualifications also available at the level of compulsory schooling.

G
GRADING: Grading is the process of scoring or ranking student academic work as part of assessing student learning.

GRADUATE: A graduate is someone who has successfully completed a higher education program at least at bachelor degree level.

GUIDELINES:

H

HIGHER DEGREE: A higher degree is an award beyond the basic-level higher education qualification.

HIGHER EDUCATION: Higher education is usually viewed as education leading to at least a bachelor's degree or equivalent.

HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION (HEI): See institution

HOGESCHOLE: A non-university higher education institution, in the Netherlands and Belgium, focusing on vocational education.

I

IMPACT: Impact in the context of quality in higher education refers to the consequences that the establishment of quality processes (both internal and external) has on the culture, policy, organisational framework, documentation, infrastructure, learning and teaching practices, assessment/grading of students, learning outcomes, student experience, student support, resources, learning and research environment, research outcomes and community involvement of an institution or department.

IMPROVEMENT: Improvement is the process of enhancing, upgrading or enriching the quality of provision or standard of outcomes.

INFORMAL LEARNING: Informal learning is:
1. learning that derives from activities external to a structured learning context.
2. unstructured learning within a structured learning environment.

INSPECTION: Inspection is the direct, independent observation and evaluation of activities and resources by a trained professional.

INSTITUTION: Institution is shorthand for institution of higher education, which is an educational institution that has students graduating at bachelor degree level or above.

INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION: Institutional accreditation provides a licence for a university or college to operate.

INSTITUTIONAL AUDIT: See external institutional audit; internal institutional audit.

INSTITUTION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION: See institution

INSTITUTIONAL OUTCOMES: See outcomes

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW: See external institutional audit; review

INTERDISCIPLINARY: Interdisciplinary refers to research or study that integrates concepts from different disciplines resulting in a synthesised or co-ordinated coherent whole.

INTERNAL AUDIT: See internal institutional audit, internal sub-institutional audit

INTERNAL EVALUATION: Internal evaluation is a process of quality review undertaken within an institution for its own ends (with or without the involvement of external peers).

INTERNAL INSTITUTIONAL AUDIT: Internal institutional audit is a process that institutions undertake for themselves to check that they have procedures in place to assure quality, integrity or standards of provision and outcomes across the institution.

INTERNAL SUB-INSTITUTIONAL AUDIT: Internal sub-institutional audit is a process that an institution has for checking that procedures are in place to assure quality, integrity or standards of provision and outcomes within a department, faculty or other operational unit or that specific issues are being complied with across the institution.

INTERNAL QUALITY MONITORING: Internal quality monitoring (IQM) is a generic term to refer to procedures within institutions to review, evaluate, assess, audit or otherwise check, examine or ensure the quality of the education provided and/or research undertaken.

INTERNSHIP: See sandwich

J

JOINT DEGEE: A degree awarded by more than one higher education institution.

JUNIOR COLLEGE: See community college

K

KITEMARK: Kitemark is a generic term, derived from a British symbol, for a process of approval of a product or service.

L

LEARNING OBJECTIVE: See objective.

LEARNING OUTCOME: A learning outcome is the specification of what a student should learn as the result of a period of specified and supported study.

LEAGUE TABLES: League tables is a term used to refer to ranking of higher education institutions or programs of study.

LEVEL:
1. Level refers to the complexity and depth of learning.
2. Level refers to the formally designated location of a part of a study program within the whole.

LEVEL DESCRIPTOR: A level descriptor is a statement that provides an indication of appropriate depth and extent of learning at a specific stage in the program of study.

LICENSING: Licensing is the formal granting of permission to (a) operate a new institution (b) a new program of study (c) practice a profession.

Lifelong learning: Lifelong learning is all learning activity undertaken throughout life, whether formal or informal.

M

MANAGEMENT AUDIT: Management audit, in higher education, is a process for checking that management structures and abilities are appropriate for assuring quality, integrity or standards of provision and outcomes.

MASTER'S DEGREE: Master's degree is an award higher than a bachelor's degree.

MOBILITY: Mobility is shorthand for students and academics studying and working in other institutions, whether in the same country or abroad.

MODE: Mode of study refers to whether the program is taken on a part-time or full-time basis, or through some form of work-linked learning and may include whether taken on-campus or through distance education.

MODULE: A module is a formal learning experience encapsulated into a unit of study, usually linked to other modules to create a program of study.

MODULE SPECIFICATION: Module specification is statement of the aims, objectives/learning outcomes, content, learning and teaching processes, mode of assessment of students and learning resources applicable to a unit of study.

MONITORING: Monitoring has two meanings:
1. the specific process of keeping quality activities under review;
2. a generic term covering all forms of internal and external quality assurance and improvement processes including audit, assessment, accreditation and external examination.

MUTUAL RECOGNITION: Agreement between two organisations to recognise each other's processes or programs.

N

NEW COLLEGIALISM:

NON-FORMAL LEARNING: See informal learning

NON-TRADITIONAL STUDENTS: Non-traditional students are those entrants to higher education who have population characteristics not normally associated with entrants to higher education, that is, they come from social classes, ethnic groups or age groups that are underrepresented.

NORM-REFERENCED ASSESSMENT: Norm-referenced assessment is the process of evaluating (and grading) the learning of students by judging (and ranking) them against the performance of their peers.

O

OBJECTIVE: An objective is:
(a) a specific statement about what students are expected to learn or to be able to do as a result of studying a program: more specifically this is a learning objective;
(b) a measurable operationalisation of a policy, strategy or mission: this is an implementation objective.

OFF-SHORE PROVISION: Off-shore provision is the export of higher education programs from one country to another.

ONE-LEVEL DEGREE STRUCTURE: One-level degree structure is where a single program of study results in a final (masters-level) award.

OUTCOMES: Outcome is:
1. shorthand for the product or endeavours of a higher education institution (or sector), including student learning and skills development, research outputs and contributions to the wider society locally or internationally (institutional outcomes).
2. shorthand for learning outcome (discussed elsewhere).

OUTCOMES-BASED APPROACH: An outcomes-based approach to learning and teaching specifies in advance what the student should be able to do at the culmination of a program of study.

OUTPUTS: Outputs refers to the products of higher education institutions: including, graduates, research outcomes, community/business activities and the social critical function of academia.

OVERSIGHT: Oversight, in the quality context, refers to the process of keeping a quality process or initiative under observation, such that a person or organisation has a watching brief on developments.

P

PEER: Peer, in the context of quality in higher education, is a person who understands the context in which a quality review is being undertaken and is able to contribute to the process.

PEER REVIEW: Peer review is the process of evaluating the provision, work process, or output of an individual or collective who operating in the same milieu as the reviewer(s).

PERFECTION:

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS: Performance indicators are data, usually quantitative in form, that provide a measure of some aspect of an individual's or organisation's performance against which changes in performance or the performance of others can be compared.

PERFORMANCE AUDIT: Performance audit is a check on the competence of someone to undertake a task.

PERIODIC REVIEW:

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING (PDP): Personal development planning is a structured and supported process to assist students in arranging their own personal educational and career progression.

PH.D (DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY): See Doctoral degree

POLYTECHNIC: A polytechnic is a non-university higher education institution usually focusing on vocational education.

PORTABILITY:

POSTGRADUATE: A postgraduate is someone who is undertaking study at post-first degree level.

PRELIMINARY STUDY: Preliminary study is an initial exploration of issues related to a proposed quality review.

PREREQUISITE: .

PRIMARY DEGREE: A primary degree is the first-level, higher education qualification (often synonymous with a bachelor's degree).

PRIOR LEARNING: Prior learning is previous learning from informal and formal learning situations.

PROCESS: Process, in the context of quality, is the set of activities, structures and guidelines that:
1. constitute the organisation's or individual's procedures for ensuring their own quality or standards.
2. constitute the mechanism for reviewing or monitoring the quality or standards of another entity.

PROFESSION: A profession is a group of people in a learned occupation, the members of which agree to abide by specified rules of conduct when practicing the occupation.

PROFESSIONAL ACCREDITATION: See program accreditation; specialized accreditation

PROFESSIONAL BODY: A professional body is a group of people in a learned occupation who are entrusted with maintaining control or oversight of the legitimate practice of the occupation.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: See continuing professional development.

PROFESSIONAL PROGRAM: A professional program is shorthand for a co-ordinated set of study elements that lead to a recognised professional qualification.

PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION: Professional recognition is the formal acknowledgement of an individual's professional status and right to practice the profession in accordance with professional standards and subject to professional or regulatory controls.

PROGRAM: Program (or program in US/Australian English) is shorthand for a study curriculum undertaken by a student that has co-ordinated elements, which constitute a coherent named award.

PROGRAM ACCREDITATION: Programs accreditation establishes the academic standing of the program or the ability of the program to produce graduates with professional competence to practice.

PROGRAM AIMS: See aim

PROGRAM EVALUATION: Program evaluation is a process of reviewing the quality or standards of a coherent set of study modules.

PROGRAM SPECIFICATION: A program (program) specification documents the aims, objectives or learning outcomes, program content, learning and teaching methods, process and criteria for assessment, usually with indicative reading or other reference material as well as identifying the modules or subunits of the program, setting out core and optional elements, precursors and levels.

PROGRESS FILE: A progress file is an explicit record of achievement, an aid to reflecting on the achievement and a mechanism to enable future planning.

PROJECT TEAM: The project team is the group of people, within a quality monitoring agency, who organise and arrange the external quality process.

PROVISION: Provision is an all-encompassing term that refers to the learning opportunities, research and community activity offered/undertaken by an institution of higher education.

PUBLIC INFORMATION:

PURPOSE:

Q

QUALIFICATION: Qualification is the award to which a formal program of study contributes.

QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK: .

QUALITIES: Qualities are the characteristics, attributes or properties of a person, collective, object, action, process or organisation.

QUALITY: Quality is
1. (n) the embodiment of the essential nature of a person, collective, object, action, process or organisation.
2. (adj) means high grade or high status (as in a quality performance).
3. a shorthand, in higher education, for quality evaluation processes.

QUALITY ASSESSMENT: See assessment

QUALITY ASSURANCE: See assurance

QUALITY AUDIT: See audit

QUALITY CONTROL: Quality control is a mechanism for ensuring that an output (product or service) conforms to a predetermined specification.

QUALITY CULTURE:

QUALITY EVALUATION: See evaluation

QUALITY GUIDELINES: See guidelines

QUALITY MANAGEMENT:

QUALITY MONITORING: See external quality monitoring

QUALITY REVIEW: See review

QUALITY SYSTEM:

QUALITY STANDARD:

QUALITY VALIDATION: See accreditation; validation

R

RANKING: Ranking is a term used to refer to the rating and ordering of higher education institutions or programs of study based on various criteria.

RATIONALE:

RE-ACCREDITATION: Re-accreditation is the re-establishment or re-statement (usually on a fixed periodic cycle) of the status, legitimacy or appropriateness of an institution, program (i.e. composite of modules) or module of study or of the professional recognition of an individual.

RECIPROCITY: Reciprocity is the acceptance by one agency of the outcomes of a quality process conducted by another agency.

RECOGNISED BODIES:

RECOGNITION: Recognition is the formal acknowledgement of the status of an organisation, institution or program.

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING: Recognition of prior learning is formal acknowledgement of previous learning, from informal as well as formal learning situations.

REGIONAL ACCREDITATION: Regional accreditation is recognition of an institution within a **REGIONAL CONTEXT:** it is much the same as national accreditation but is not restricted to national boundaries.

REGISTRATION:

REGULATORY BODY: A regulatory body, in the context of higher education, is an external organisation that has been empowered by legislation to oversee and control the educational process and outputs germane to it.

REPORT: Report (n.) is the documented outcome or results of an evaluation process.

RESEARCH ASSESSMENT EXERCISE (RAE): The RAE is a process, in the UK and Hong Kong, that assesses the quality of research to enable the higher education funding bodies to distribute public funds on the basis of research quality ratings.

REVIEW:
1. Review is generic term for any process that explores the quality of higher education.
2. Review refers to explorations of quality that do not result in judgements or decisions.

REVIEW TEAM: The review team is the group of people undertaking a quality monitoring or evaluation process.

S

SANDWICH: A sandwich program is one that has a significant period of work experience built into it such that the program is extended beyond the normal length of similar programs without the sandwich element.

SELF-ASSESSMENT: Self-assessment is the process of critically reviewing the quality of ones own performance and provision.

SELF-EVALUATION: See self-assessment

SELF-STUDY: See self-assessment

SEMESTER: A semester is a division of the academic year; usually two semesters in a year.

SEMINAR: A seminar is, ideally, a small-group teaching situation in which a subject is discussed, in depth, by the participants.

SITE VISIT: A site visit is is when an external evaluation team goes to an institution to evaluate verbal, written and visual evidence.

SKILL:

SOPHISTER: Sophister refers to undergraduates on their penultimate (junior) or final (senior) year of study.

SPECIALIZED ACCREDITATION: Specialized accreditation refers to any accreditation process that relates to specific discipline areas.

STAFF:

STAKEHOLDER: A stakeholder is a person (or group) that has an interest in the activities of an institution or organisation.

STANDARDS:

STANDARDS MONITORING:

STUDENT EVALUATION:

STUDENT EXPERIENCE:

SUB-INSTITUTIONAL AUDIT: See external sub-institutional audit; internal sub-institutional audit

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT: Summative assessment is the process of evaluating (and grading) the learning of students at a point in time.

SUBJECT ASSESSMENT:

SUBSTANTIAL EQUIVALENCY: Substantial equivalency is a term used in the US to indicate that an overseas program is essentially the same as a US program of study.

T

TECHNIKON: A technikon is a non-university higher education institution, in South Africa, focusing on vocational education.

TERTIARY EDUCATION: Tertiary education is formal, non-compulsory, education that follows secondary education.

THEMATIC EVALUATION: A thematic evaluation is a review of a particular aspect of quality or standards focusing on an experience, practice or resource that cuts across programs or institutions.

THESIS: Thesis is:
1. short hand for doctoral thesis, the outcome of a student research at doctoral level.
2. an argument proposing and developing a theory about a substantive or conceptual issue.
3. an intellectual proposition.

THRESHOLD:

TOTAL STUDENT EXPERIENCE: Total student experience refers to all aspects of the engagement of students with higher education.

TRANSCRIPT: A transcript is a printed or electronic record of student achievement while in higher education.

TRANSFERABLE SKILLS:

TRANSFERABILITY: See credit transfer

TRANSPARENCY:

TRANSFORMATION: Transformation is the process of changing from onr qualitative state to another.

TRANSNATIONAL EDUCATION: Transnational education is higher education provision that is available in more than one country.

TUNING: Tuning, in the context of quality in higher education, refers to the process in Europe of adjusting degree provision so that there are points of similarity across the European Higher Education Area.

TWO-CYCLE SYSTEM: See bachelor-master's

U

UNDERGRADUATE: Undergraduate is a student who is undertaking a first-level degree program of study, normally a bachelor's degree or equivalent.

UNIT: Unit has two meanings in the context of quality in higher education, one as subject and one as object of quality review.

1. unit is the generic name for a quality monitoring department internal to an institution.
2. unit is any element that is the subject of quality review: institution, subject area, faculty, department or program of study.

UNITARY SYSTEM: Unitary system is one that has higher education located in a single type of institution.

UNIVERSITY: University is an institution of higher education that grants its own degrees including the award of Ph.D and normally undertakes leading-edge research, as well as having a social critical role.

V

VALIDATION: Validation is a process of confirming that an existing program of study or a newly designed one can continue or commence operation.

VALUE ADDED: Value added is the enhancement that students achieve (to knowledge, skills abilities and other attributes) as a result of their higher education experience.

VALUE FOR MONEY: Value for money is one definition of quality that judges the quality of provision, processes or outcomes against the monetary cost of making the provision, undertaking the process or achieving the outcomes.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (VET): Vocational education and training is any formal, post-compulsory education that develops knowledge, skills and attributes linked to particular forms of eemployment, although in some interpretations this would exclude professional education.

VIRTUAL EDUCATION:

W

WIDENING ACCESS: See access

WORK-BASED LEARNING: Work-based learning refers to any formal higher education learning that is based wholly or predominantly in a work setting.

WORK EXPERIENCE: Work experience is the linking of a period of activity in a work setting (whether paid or voluntary) to the program of study, irrespective of whether the work experience is an integral part of the program of study.

WORK-RELATED LEARNING: Work-related learning refers to any formal higher education learning that includes a period of learning that takes place in a work setting or involves activities linked to a work setting.

X

Y

Z

ZERO DEFECTS: See perfection