



UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

POLICY GUIDELINES **FOR**



QUALITY ASSURANCE

March 2014



UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**POLICY GUIDELINES
FOR
QUALITY ASSURANCE**

Quality Assurance Directorate

2014

Foreword

Higher Education the world over is playing a unique role in establishing Quality Assurance Units or Directorates to take care of their internal quality processes. A Quality Assurance Directorate assumes a broader role as a centre for the sustainable sectional integration within a Higher Education institution. In Ghana, almost all universities (both public and private) have now established and are operating internal quality assurance in their processes. This effort is being pursued in response to the realisation of the importance of higher education in national development.

The Quality Assurance Directorate of the University of Education, Winneba has initiated a number of Quality Assurance meetings and workshops around the campuses of the University with the aim to map out a strategy on how to come up with a Quality Assurance Handbook. Consequently, the Management of the University set up a working group to review the initial draft produced by the Directorate to ensure that all performance indicators and quality benchmarks are agreed upon and owned by all end-user sections and units of the University. The Handbook has now been accomplished and we hope that the Directorate would ensure training of all internal stakeholders within the University on the contents of the Handbook so as to facilitate easy implementation of the benchmarks therein. The University of Education, Winneba has much to gain through this unique opportunity with which stronger cooperation, based on varied experiences among members of the various sections of the University would be harnessed.

I would like to express my firm support for this policy document whose inception stage is occurring during my term of tenure. I also acknowledge the role played by staff of the Directorate and committee members who have contributed to the development of this handbook.

Prof. Akwasi Asabere-Ameyaw
Vice-Chancellor

March, 2014

Preface

The University of Education, Winneba (UEW) notes that the development of a Quality Assurance system to spell out performance indicators and quality benchmarks are a sine-qua-non for the advancement of UEW. Each of the stakeholders, namely the Government/state, UEW Management, academic staff, supporting staff, students, parents, guardians, and the society at large, has its notion of quality as far as their expectations of UEW is concerned. More so, in a global world where universities are being looked at as competitive entities whose performances and visibility should appear on league tables, no university can afford to lag behind. Thus, UEW has no alternative to ensuring quality of its academic programmes, infrastructure, administrative procedures, and policies guidelines than project the university to the public. The National Accreditation Board of Ghana insists on the existence of Quality Assurance as one of the critical requirements for institutional accreditation at the tertiary level of education. Thus, the setting up of a vibrant Quality Assurance Directorate will go a long way to ensure that UEW has a unit that would monitor and coordinate internal quality assurance activities for the achievement of set targets and goals in all sectors of the university.

This policy document gives a detailed description of what quality means to UEW; rationale for setting up the Quality Assurance Directorate; responsibilities of quality assurance officers in the various sectors of the University; the administrative structures of the Directorate and, the implementation and evaluation strategies to be used. It is hoped that when the contents of this policy document are adhered to and implemented UEW would develop a unique quality assurance culture that would contribute immensely to the realisation of the mission and vision of UEW. It is also expected that the university's activities on all its constituent campuses would be harmonised and enhanced for the upliftment of the image of the University, both nationally and internationally.

Prof. Mawuadem Koku Amedeker

University of Education, Winneba
Director, Quality Assurance Directorate

March, 2014

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INTRODUCTION

The concept of Quality Assurance held by University of Education, Winneba is that of continuous improvement in the services rendered by the University, of the products, who are the graduates, and the processes by which the University performs its functions. The purpose of these improvements is to provide a source of assistance and a design of strategies for the continuous enhancement of quality in the University. Since the passing of NAB Act 744 in the year 2007, the National Accreditation Board has been mandated to oversee the accreditation of the contents and standards of the academic programmes of both public and private institutions in Ghana. Consequently, institutional and academic audits have become important in the history of Ghanaian tertiary institutions. Institutional audit involves inspection and evaluation of the institution to advise on ways to improve the institution's culture of operations. The assessment of students is an important element of quality assurance in the University. The outcomes of assessment have a profound effect on students' future careers. For example, the institution's infrastructure in terms of space, equipment and supporting environment may be inspected and advice given on the adequacy, relevance and appropriateness for the academic programmes to be offered.

While institutional audit may follow a five-year review cycle, academic audit may not be done as often but at least once before the accreditation expires. The academic audits will cover institutional evaluations such as subject or programme evaluations; accreditation at subject, programme, and institutional levels.

In order to prepare for institutional or academic audit or both each institution has to have in place an Internal Quality Assurance System for self-assessment at programme and institutional levels (IUCEA, 2010). The University of Education, Winneba (UEW) has, therefore, taken up the challenge by setting up a Quality Assurance Unit in 2003 and upgraded to a Directorate in 2014 in order to enhance efficiency and full coverage of all satellite campuses of UEW.

The activities of the Directorate have been expanded by setting up Quality Assurance Units at the Faculties, Schools, Units and Centres of the University. The Quality Assurance Units on the various campuses come

directly under the supervision of the Quality Assurance Directorate. Since the upgrade to directorate, Quality Assurance now features as a major theme of the Corporate Strategic Plan of the University of Education, Winneba (UEW, 2014).

The quality of our academic programmes (both undergraduate and graduate) is to be monitored comprehensively and regularly by the University and National Accreditation Board to ensure that the programmes are relevant and appropriate for award of degrees that would be recognised nationally and internationally. The guidelines for internal and external quality assurance in this document have been developed for the use of students, staff, departments, faculties, the Academic Board, and the University Council.

RATIONALE

The University of Education, Winneba espouses its mission and vision through its activities and interactions with the global world. The University of Education, Winneba considers the development of this policy document as devolution of the powers of central governance to units and sections of the University. It is hoped that this would enable the University to remain competitive as a public tertiary education institution that would attract high calibre students and remain in business. The University, thus, provides guidelines in this document that would enable commitment to maintaining high academic standards and global competitiveness through a series of supervisory activities in line with its mission and vision.

Mission

To train competent professional teachers for all levels of education as well as conduct research, disseminate knowledge, and contribute to educational policy and development.

Vision

To be an internationally reputable institution for teacher education and research

Purpose

This policy document informs the need to record and track any changes resulting from the quality assurance processes that the University of Education, Winneba has adopted for monitoring its academic programmes and associated activities. Further, the document outlines processes that would effectively communicate the changes to all stakeholders (e.g. students, faculties, departments and supporting departments). The University of Education, Winneba is committed to a consistent comprehensive approach to quality outcomes, believing that quality is attainable through an organised Quality Assurance processes that include but not limited to curriculum development, curriculum review, and programme approval.

Aims of the Handbook

This Handbook aims at providing guidelines that would enable the University of Education, Winneba to:

- implement good practices for quality assurance

- apply the standards and criteria as formulated by the National Accreditation Board and National Council for Tertiary Education
- develop an adequate internal quality assurance system that will match international standards
- develop her own self-assessment instruments for internal quality assurance of the teaching and learning processes and other functions for which the University was established

THE CONCEPT OF QUALITY ASSURANCE

The concept of Quality Assurance is closely linked to continuous improvement, which is an on-going effort to improve products, services or processes. Also 'assurance' means the act of having confidence in the University's operations and the quality of its services. Quality concept is broad and diversified, and involves issues from planning, processing to performance of the product or service (Mulmi, 2009). Academic audit is done to ensure that the institution is complying with the academic standards agreed upon with the National Accreditation Board for all academic programmes.

This guideline emphasises the following four principles for realisation of quality as propounded by Suarez (Suarez, 1992, p. 5):

1. Quality is conformance to requirements
2. The system of quality is problem prevention
3. The performance standard is zero defects
4. The measurement of quality is the price of non-conformance

The first principle requires that management communicates effectively what is to be achieved through leadership, training, and fostering of a climate of cooperation.

The second principle requires that errors are eliminated before they occur. Thus, Management must commit to an error prevention-oriented work environment.

The third principle requires that leaders must help others in their pursuit to conform to requirements by providing resources. Thus, the heads of various sections of the University should ensure that resources are made available for the smooth operations within their sector.

The fourth principle helps management to focus on quality improvement as non-conformance is a tool for determining an organisation's effectiveness and efficiency. The involvement of all staff at all levels in the operations of the University is very crucial.

Quality Assurance in Higher Education Institutions

It has been noted that a number of changes have been occurring in the administration of higher education institutions worldwide. Some of the changes, which are government policy-induced concern increasing productivity in the face of dwindling funds; increased students' involvement in higher education; ICT integration into teaching and learning; and globalisation of higher education, which enables students' mobility (Sha & Jarzabkowski, 2013). Furthermore, these changes call for systematic processes necessary to promote quality.

The University of Education, Winneba recognises her role as an education provider which should meet stakeholders' expectations of providing quality education. In this light, the University has set up a vibrant quality assurance system, which gives autonomy to all UEW campuses to follow a quality assurance audit trail. Each campus would assess the quality of academic and non-academic processes that go into delivery of the mandate of training professional teachers for the nation and elsewhere.

Appointments

Director: There shall be a Director of the Quality Assurance Directorate who shall be of professorial level (or equivalent) as per the Statutes of the University. The appointment shall be for a period of three years and may be renewable for one more term upon satisfactory performance. In the circumstance where a person below professorial level is appointed, the term of office shall be two years and may be renewed for one term.

Heads of Quality Assurance Units: There shall be Heads of the Quality Assurance Units on all campuses of the University who shall hold a qualification in Quality Assurance. The Unit Heads shall be designated as Quality Assurance Officers. It is expected that the Quality Assurance Officers would progress along the rank on which they were appointed.

Quality Assurance Committee

There shall be an academic board sub-committee having oversight responsibility over the operations of the Quality Assurance Directorate. Terms of Reference for the Quality Assurance Committee

- Review monitoring reports on academic programmes from the Directorate
- Review and approve Quality Assurance plans and processes
- Ensure the Directorate's compliance with its policy guidelines
- Submit annual report to Academic Board

Membership of the Quality Assurance Committee

- Pro Vice-Chancellor
- Principals of Campuses
- Registrar
- Finance Officer
- Director, Quality Assurance Directorate
- University Librarian
- Dean, School of Graduate Studies
- Director, Works and Physical Development
- Internal Auditor
- An Academic Board Representative

Membership of Boards/Committees

The Director of the Quality Assurance Directorate shall be a member of:

- i. Academic Board
- ii. Academic Planning Committee
- iii. Library Committee
- iv. Student/Staff Consultative Committee
- v. Administrative Committee

Functions of Quality Assurance Directorate

The Quality Assurance Directorate will:

- i. monitor and ensure quality in the University's operations
- ii. coordinate the activities of all Campus Quality Assurance Offices
- iii. organise regular training sessions for campus Quality Assurance officers
- iv. publish activities of the various campus quality assurance offices
- v. supervise the QA Units in the performance of QA work
- vi. ensure the use of assessment instruments for the University's operations
- vii. monitor the review of the University's policy documents
- viii. submit report on the Directorate to the Quality Assurance Committee
- ix. develop external quality processes

Functions of Campus Quality Assurance Offices

Each Quality Assurance Office on a campus of UEW will ensure effective implementation of QA policy of UEW through the following activities:

- i. Develop and publish the criteria for assessments of performance of staff and students
- ii. Organise peer review exercises
- iii. Support the various sectors of the University on QA issues in service delivery
- iv. Support faculties and departments in accreditation and re-accreditation of programmes
- v. Ensure peer review mechanisms in the various sectors of the University's operations
- vi. Work with departments to ensure that academic programmes are consistent with the mission of the University
- vii. Collaborate with departments to evaluate teaching through students' appraisal
- viii. Evaluate students' learning behaviours through lecturers' appraisal
- ix. Evaluate guidelines of all sections of the University vis-à-vis their performance
- x. Work with the various sections of the University in areas such as capacity building, good governance, and maintenance of the University's properties and follow-up on procedures, recommendations and action plans
- xi. Monitor the quality of collaboration among the various sections of the University as well as with external partners
- xii. Monitor the implementation of policies to ensure equity and transparency
- xiii. Submit quarterly reports to the Quality Assurance Directorate

Data Management

All data gathered in the process of quality assurance should be analysed by the QA offices on the campuses. The feedback/results should be communicated to the heads of the various sections who will discuss these in confidence with the officers concerned. The following guidelines will apply:

- Instruments used in gathering data must be properly maintained and stored
- The instruments for assessing various sections of the University, which

should be reviewed every five years must be predefined and made known.

- Information obtained from the analysed data should be handled with integrity, confidentiality and tight security in accordance with the university's records management policy
- The information gathered from the analysed data should be used for the effective management of programmes of study and other activities
- The University will offer training opportunities to staff who may require additional support to enhance their skills
- It is important that assessments of the University's operations are carried out professionally at all times in all departments and sections

Policy Documents

Formal policies and procedures provide a framework within which UEW can develop and monitor the effectiveness of its quality assurance systems. The following policy documents exist in the University of Education, Winneba:

- i. Graduate Admission Brochure
- ii. Affiliation Policy
- iii. Gender Policy
- iv. HIV Policy
- v. Anti-Sexual Harassment Policy
- vi. GUSS Policy
- vii. Health and Sanitation Policy
- viii. Policy Guidelines for Security Employees
- ix. Maintenance Policy
- x. Records Management Policy
- xi. Policy on use of ICT Resources
- xii. Repository Policy
- xiii. Financial and Stores Regulation
- xiv. Statutes
- xv. UEW Act – Act 2004
- xvi. Unified Conditions of Service for Unionised Staff of the Public Universities of Ghana
- xvii. Conditions of Service of Senior Members (SM) of the Public Universities of Ghana.

The Quality Assurance Directorate will evaluate all UEW Policy documents for their relevance, transparency in implementation and quality.

Assessment of Courses, Teaching and Students' Learning

The QA Units on the campuses shall each assess the courses, teaching, and learning in all programmes (Regular, Sandwich and Distance) on their campuses about two weeks to the end of each semester. The analysed results of lecturers and students shall be ready after four weeks for distribution to the heads of department for discussions with lecturers on individual basis. The heads of department and course lecturers would discuss students' analysed results with the classes concerned.

Assessment of the Administrative System

The QA Units within the various sections of the administrative system shall assess their performance with instruments they will develop in line with the guidelines of their operations.

The Director of Quality Assurance shall have the responsibility of monitoring and ensuring quality in the University's operations. The quality assurance process will flow from Departments/Sections through Faculties to the Directorate as per the University's modus operandi. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor will, administratively, be responsible for the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC). The Director of Quality Assurance shall submit reports to the QAC on quarterly basis and ensure annual submission of its operations to the Academic Board.

Review of the Quality Assurance Policy Document

This policy document may be reviewed every five years.

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