Council on Higher Education Institutional Audit Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Compiled by DIRAP
February 2022

Institutional Audit SteerCom Approved 9 February 2022

Contents

1   INTRODUCTION

This Institutional Audit (IA) Stakeholder Engagement Plan is presented to engage significant stakeholders during the pre- and post-audit stages of the upcoming May 2022 Council on Higher Education (CHE) IA. This is a conscious process that requires external and internal stakeholders involvement. The Plan stipulates the purpose, significant/key stakeholders, engagement scope, communication plan, and process. This IA Stakeholder Engagement Plan forms the foundation for achieving stakeholder support through addressing their unique and distinctive needs and interest in the IA.

2   PHILOSOPHICAL PRINCIPLES

The philosophical principles underpinning this Plan specifically and the IA in general are the University:

- sees Quality Assurance and Management the responsibility of all, not just the Quality Assurance Office;
- is ultimately responsible for setting its own quality standards to which it will be held to account;
- acknowledges that by its very nature, Quality Assurance is a moving target and is therefore committed to continuous quality improvement and will invest and deploy the necessary resources (time, scholarship, human, material) within affordability; and
- approaches Internal Quality Assurance with openness, transparency, and in a dialogical manner

3   PURPOSE

The purpose of the IA Stakeholder Engagement Plan is to signify a commitment to stakeholder inclusiveness. Its purpose is to communicate with stakeholders at the institutional, faculty, departmental and student level to share the goals and outcome of the IA. Stakeholder's, role, and expectations will be communicated. Their voices will be heard and deliberately considered. The ultimate purpose is for stakeholders to take a participative role in the IA's success.

4 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the IA Stakeholder Engagement Plan, prior to and following IA site visit, are to:

- enhance engagement and transparency through regular communication within the University and between stakeholders to streamline the processes;
- ensure that references to IA documentation and evidence included, but not limited to the IA Self-Evaluation Report (SER), are communicated;
- provide a firm foundation for staff members responsible and accountable for their part in the IA;
- communicate the outcomes, improvement plan and implementation following the IA site visit and report; and to
- emphasise the importance of continuous improvement.

5 STAKEHOLDERS

Internal and external stakeholders relevant to this Stakeholder Engagement Plan are the UFS governance structures, senior management (academic and support), academic and support staff, undergraduate and postgraduate students, unions, alumni, donors, Advisory Boards (inclusive of industry partners and students), and the community.

6 SCOPE OF ENGAGEMENT

Table 1 below, outlines the scope of engagement, stakeholders, and method and role during engagement throughout the engagement process, inclusive of all three campuses. A more detailed description and timeline follow the Stakeholder Engagement Process (see Section 8).

TABLE 1: SCOPE OF ENGAGEMENT

Scope of Engagement	Stakeholders	Method and Role during Engagement
Governance	Members of the: • Executive Committee of the Senate (ECS) • Senate • Council • Student Representative Council (SRC) • Faculty Boards	Method: • IA briefing sessions • Progress reports • IA Panel report • Improvement plan
Senior Management	Members of the: • University Management Committee (UMC) • Rectorate	Method: • IA briefing sessions • Progress reports • IA Panel report • Improvement plan
Institutional Audit Steering Committee (IASC)	Members of the: • IASC Committee *See IA Project Plan for members*	Method: • Scheduled meetings Role: • Approval of the IA planning process and stakeholder engagement activities • Advise on the direction of the engagement plan • Act as engagement agents
Faculty Institutional Audit Steering Committees (FIASC)	Members of the: • FIASC Committee *See IA Project Plan for members*	Method: • Scheduled meetings Role: • Present IA planning process and stakeholder engagement activities • Act as engagement agents
Academic Staff	Institutional Audit Steering Committee Academic Staff Members	Method: • IA briefing sessions • SER briefing sessions
Support Staff	Institutional Audit Steering Committee Support Services Staff Members	Method: • IA briefing sessions • SER briefing sessions
SRC Students	Institutional Audit Steering Committee Student Affairs	Method: • IA briefing sessions • SER briefing sessions
Alumni	Department of Institutional Advancement Alumni Office Alumni	Method: • Communication brief
Professional Bodies	Relevant Professional Bodies: Health Professions Council of South Africa's (HPCSA) ■ South African Council for the Property Valuers Profession (SACPVP) ■ South African Council for the Project and Construction Management Professions (SACPCMP) ■ South African Institute for Professional Accountants (SAIPA) ■ South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA) – Centre for Accounting ■ South African Nursing Council (SANC).	Method: • Communication brief
Community	Advisory Boards	• Method: Communication brief

7 COMMUNICATION PLAN

The Communication Plan (see also Communication and Marketing's Communication Plan August 2021) keeps stakeholders engaged. The type, frequency, content, and repository is explained below:

- **Type**: UFS Website, Intranet, *Digest, Bult* (external communication) and *Dumela* (internal communication) will be used as the main avenue to communicate with stakeholders. The UFS' institutional social media platforms, Facebook, Twitter (@UFSweb), Instagram (UFSUV), Pinterest and YouTube (where appropriate), will be considered when communicating to students. In addition, communication briefs, emails, briefing/information sessions, formal meetings, and Question/Answer (QA) sessions will be arranged.

- **Frequency**: The frequency of communication is associated with both the type and content and will be weekly or monthly depending on stakeholder needs and level of engagement starting in February until May 2022, pre-audit and post-audit until the approval of the improvement plan.

- **Content**: The content includes the IA Self-Evaluation Report (SER), IA Stakeholder Engagement Plan, stakeholders' role, timeframes, status reports, IA visit (on-site and/or online) with reference to the:
    - Purpose
    - Format
    - Role
    - Logistical arrangements
    - Panel
    - Preparation
    - Documents
    - Interviews
    - Schedule

With reference to the post-audit process and feedback, the Audit Report:

- – Purpose
- – Format

Audit Feedback

- – Outcome of the IA
- – Preliminary oral feedback
- – Recommendations
- – Improvement plan
- – Impact on the institution

- **Repository**: All communication will be consolidated into a single platform via the UFS website main page while a web-based collaborative platform, *SharePoint*, for information sharing, monitoring progress and reporting will be considered.

To facilitate the IA site visit an additional process will serve to create ease of navigation through brand visibility to highlight the occasion and its allocated sites and venues.

8   STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

The Stakeholder Engagement Process presents the activity (the level of input, and expectations), timeline (frequency, and start and end dates) and relevant stakeholders (see Table 2). The following process is envisaged and was confirmed during the IASC meeting of 9 February 2022.

TABLE 2: STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

PROCESS	ACTIVITY	Engagement Frequency		STAKEHOLDER
		Start Date	**End Date**	
Institutional Audit Steering and Advising				
Develop IA Stakeholder Engagement Plan	Define the scope, activities and timelines of the IA Stakeholder Engagement Plan	24 Jan 22	03 Feb 22	Project Owner Project Leader Project Manager
Schedule and conduct IA Steercom Meeting for approval of Engagement Plan	Faculty IA Steercom Committee share IA Stakeholder Engagement Plan to seek input on content and process • Confirm stakeholders • Identify participation expectations, and outcomes • Confirm stakeholders role in IA • Capture feedback • Adapt IA Stakeholder Engagement Plan	09 Feb 22	09 Feb 22	IA Steercom Members
Revisit Communication and Marketing August 2021 Communication Plan	Identify the role of Communication and Marketing in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan and the process going forward (communication and dissemination avenues and activities, and timelines)	11 Feb 22	11 Feb 22	Project Owner Project Leader Project Manager Director: Communication and Marketing
Schedule and conduct Faculty IA Steercom Committee Meetings	IA Information briefings	When required		Faculty IA Steercom members and faculty members
Schedule and conduct IA Steercom Meetings	Agenda item prior to the IA: • Logistical arrangements Agenda item following the IA • Audit Feedback • Outcome of the IA • Preliminary oral feedback • Commendations/ recommendations • Improvement plan • Impact on the institution	Prior to the IA: a. 8 March 2022 b. 5 April 2022 Following the Audit: a. Jun 2022 (TBC) b. Aug 2022		IA Steercom members

Governance				
Governance and Senior Management Involvement **Institutional Forum**	− Present IA Stakeholder Engagement Plan − Seek input on content and process − Capture feedback − Adapt IA Stakeholder Engagement Plan − Briefings and updates pre- and post-audit	**Rectorate** Weekly scheduled meeting Item on agenda when required			Project Owner Governance and Senior Management Committee Members
		23 Feb 22	Nov 22	
		Rectorate + SRC IA Process on Agenda			
		3 Mar 22	03 Mar 22	
		UMC Monthly scheduled meeting Item on agenda when required (Strategic Intend)			
		Submission of agenda item documents if required	21 Feb 22 04 Apr 22 09 May 22 13 Jun22 01 Aug 22 17 Oct 22 07 Nov 22	
		Senate Quarterly scheduled meeting Item on agenda and submission of agenda item documents if required			
		Stakeholder Engagement Plan (noting)			
		11 Feb 22	22 Feb 22	
		Preliminary Feedback and Reflection			
		13 May 22	24 May 22	
		Panel Report (if available)			
		5 Aug 22	16 Aug 22	
		UFS Improvement Plan			
		21 Oct 22	01 Nov 22	
		ECS If required constant update and operational intend. Monthly scheduled meeting Item on agenda when required			
		Submission of agenda item documents if required	07 Mar 22 11 Apr 22 16 May 22 06 Jun 22 25 Jul 22 15 Aug 22 05 Sep 22 26 Sep 22 24 Oct 22 14 Nov 22	
		Council Monthly scheduled meeting Item on agenda when required. Submission of agenda item documents if required			
		Self-Evaluation Report (SER) (noting)			
		07 Mar 22	18 Mar 22	
		Preliminary Feedback and Reflection			
		13 Jun 22	24 Jun 22	
		Panel Report (if available)			
		05 Sep 22	16 Sep 22	
		UFS Improvement Plan (if Panel Report was submitted)			
		14 Nov 22	25 Nov 22	
		Academic Committee of Senate			
		Audit SER (noting)			
		03 Mar 22	10 Mar 22	
		Panel Report (if available)			
		19 Aug 22	26 Aug 22	
		UFS Improvement Plan (if Panel Report was submitted)			
		14 Oct 22	21 Oct 22	

<table>
<thead>
<tr><th colspan="5" align="center">Institutional Involvement
Academic</th></tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Board Meetings

FIASC Members present IA and SER briefings</td>
<td>Present:
− IA SER submitted
− IA Stakeholder Engagement Plan
− IA visit (on-site and/or online) briefings
− Stakeholders' role
− Briefings and updates pre- and post-audit</td>
<td>8 Feb 22</td>
<td>08 Feb 22
10 May 22
02 Aug 22
18 Oct 22</td>
<td>Health Sciences
FIASC Members
Project Owner
Project Leader
Project Manager</td>
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<td>9 Feb 22</td>
<td>09 Feb 22
11 May 22
03 Aug 22
12 Oct 22</td>
<td>Economic and Management Sciences
FIASC Members
Project Owner
Project Leader
Project Manager</td>
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<td>11 Feb 22</td>
<td>11 Feb 22
13 May 22
05 Aug 22
14 Oct 22
04 Nov 22</td>
<td>Education
FIASC Members
Project Owner
Project Leader
Project Manager</td>
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<td>18 Feb 22</td>
<td>18 Feb 22
06 April 22
06 May 22
12 Aug 22
21 Oct 22</td>
<td>Humanities
FIASC Members
Project Owner
Project Leader
Project Manager</td>
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<td>21 Feb 22</td>
<td>21 Feb 22
16 May 22
02 Aug 22
24 Oct 22</td>
<td>Theology and Religion
FIASC Members
Project Owner
Project Leader
Project Manager</td>
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20 Apr 22
02 Aug 22
11 Oct 22</td>
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FIASC Members
Project Owner
Project Leader
Project Manager</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2 Mar 22</td>
<td>02 Mar 22
09 Jun 22
10 Aug 22
03 Nov 22</td>
<td>NAS
FIASC Members
Project Owner
Project Leader
Project Manager</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr><th colspan="4" style="text-align:center">Institutional Involvement
Portfolio Specific (Research and Support)
Selective Individual Sessions</th></tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Staff members of:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Directorate for Institutional Research and Academic Planning (DIRAP)</td>
<td rowspan="9">Present:
− IA SER submitted
− IA Stakeholder Engagement Plan
− IA visit (on-site and/or online) briefings
− Stakeholders' role
− Briefings and updates pre- and post-audit</td>
<td rowspan="9">Groupings to be finalised and sessions to be scheduled.</td>
<td>− DIRAP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL)</td>
<td>− CTL</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Portfolio Information Sessions</td>
<td>− Research Development
− Postgraduate School
− Library and Information Services
− Animal Research Centre
− Internationalisation
− Sa Doping Control Laboratory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Change, Strategic Partnerships and Societal Impact Information Sessions</td>
<td>− Community Engagement
− Unit For Institutional Change and Social Justice
− Art Gallery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operations Information Sessions</td>
<td>− Finance
− Human Resources
− University Estate
− Information And Communication Technology Services
− Protection Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Affairs Information Sessions</td>
<td>− Student Affairs
− Student Counselling and Development
− KovsieSport
− Housing And Residence Affairs
− Health Services</td>
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<td>Registrar Information Sessions</td>
<td>− Legal Services and Compliance
− Student Academic Services
− Governance And Policy
− Student Recruitment Services
− Meeting Administration</td>
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<td>Internal Auditing Information Sessions</td>
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<td>Communication and Marketing Information Sessions</td>
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<td>Institutional Advancement Information Sessions</td>
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<td>Institutional Advancement</td>
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Unions			Unions
Student Involvement			
SRC IA briefing	Present: − IA SER submitted − IA Stakeholder Engagement Plan − IA visit (on-site and/or online) briefings − Stakeholders' role − Briefings and updates pre- and post-audit	Groupings to be finalised and sessions to be scheduled	− SRC − Student Affairs − IA SteerCom members
Undergraduate and Postgraduate Student IA briefings	IA visit (on-site and/or online) briefings − Purpose − Format − Students role		UFS Website, Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube) will be used as main avenue to communicate with students

The aforementioned actions are not necessarily performed as discrete, sequential steps. Rather, several of the actions are ongoing throughout the IA preparation and engagement process. This Plan is seen as a dynamic document that will, where necessary, adjust to changes required.

The successful implementation of this Institutional Audit Engagement Plan hinges on all relevant stakeholders who embrace their contribution to the Institutional Audit and the UFS' continued efforts to improve its academic performance and efficiency in operations.