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FREISTATA



## **INTEGRATED QUALITY MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK (IQMF)**

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

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AC	Academic Committee of Senate
CHE	Council on Higher Education
CTL	Centre for Teaching and Learning
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DIRAP	Directorate Institutional Research and Academic Planning
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HEQC	Higher Education Quality Committee
HEQSF	Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework
IQMS	Integrated Quality Management System
LTS	Learning and Teaching Strategy
NDP	National Development Plan
NPPSET	National Plan for Post-School Education and Training
NQF	National Qualification Framework
PoE	Portfolio of Evidence
QM	Quality Management
QMS	Quality Management System
QC	Quality Council
SAQA	South African Qualification Authority
SER	Self-Evaluation Report
TLM	Teaching and Learning Manager
TLMG	Teaching and Learning Management Group
UFS	University of the Free State

## GLOSSARY

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**Benchmark:** A standard, a reference point, or a criterion against which the quality of something can be measured, judged, and evaluated, and against which outcomes of a specified activity can be measured. The term, benchmark, means a measure of best practice performance. The existence of a benchmark is one necessary step in the overall process of benchmarking.

**Benchmarking:** A process by which a higher education institution, programme, directorate, institution, faculty, or any other relevant unit evaluates and compares itself in chosen areas against internal and external, national and international reference points considered as best practices, for the purpose of monitoring and improvement.

**Engaged scholarship:** Refers to the application of academic scholarly work and professional expertise, with an intended public purpose and mutual benefit, that demonstrates engagement with external (and non-academic) constituencies. It aims to generate new knowledge integration, as well as to apply or disseminate knowledge.

**Quality:** Means applying and maintaining educational standards. This principle relates to both complying with specific requirements (quality assurance) and the pursuit of quality (quality enhancement). Pursuing quality involves evaluating products and services against a set standard. The goals of the pursuit of quality, broadly, include improvement, renewal and progress (CHE, 2001).

**Quality assurance:** Is the process of putting in place and delivering on i) the strategic goals and purposes that an institution has identified for itself and ii) the programmes for delivering sets of learning experiences that support students in attaining the qualifications to which they lead; it also refers to the process of evaluating and providing evidence of the extent to which institutions fulfil their own quality assurance objectives. Irrespective of the mode of delivery or model, it is important to have an institutional view on quality assurance and enhancement and its associated processes. For this reason, it is important to view the principles of pursuing quality. Quality assurance refers to “the means through which the UFS ensures and confirms that the conditions are in place for students to achieve the standards set by the UFS, the South African Council for Higher Education and any other professional body (CHE, 2014:10).

**Quality culture:** Refers to a set of interrelated and enacted assumptions, values, attitudes, activities and behaviours, shared by academic and support staff at the University, together, function to deliver the desired quality of learning and teaching, research and engaged scholarship determined by the vision, and strategic goals of the institution.

**Quality enhancement:** Typically refers to “taking deliberate steps to bring about improvement in the effectiveness of the learning experiences of students” (CHE, 2014:11). Quality enhancement is typically targeted at the improvement of throughput rates. Quality assurance and quality enhancement should operate concurrently. The processes of quality assurance are designed to ensure that the required standards are met. While quality enhancement processes raise these standards, creating new benchmarks and standards (CHE, 2014).

**Quality improvement:** Refers to the planned programme of activities that institutionalise a quality culture and that develops quality practices better than those that existed previously. Such quality improvement is usually as a direct response to an internal institutional evaluation and/or an external peer review<sup>1</sup>.

**Quality management system:** Refers to the institutional arrangements that assure the quality of learning and teaching, assessment, research, and community engagement. Such an integrated, internal system supports, develops, enhances and monitors the institution’s delivery of the core functions of higher education.

**Self-evaluation:** The process by which an institution or a department review the effectiveness of its quality management system for assuring, developing and monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, research, community engagement and support services against the pre-determined standards and criteria. The self-evaluation process may lead to the development of a quality improvement plan and/or audit portfolio as a baseline for external audit. The term self-evaluation is used interchangeably with terms such as self-assessment, self-review, and self-study

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<sup>1</sup> CHE Framework for Institutional Audits March 2021.

**Standard:** Standards refer to codes of practice for quality assurance used in higher education, which HEIs must consider and adhere to in all aspects of their activities and all types of higher education provision. One function of standards is to be a 'means of measurement' of the criteria by which quality may be judged.

**Student success:** Is defined, for the individual student, as the attainment of graduate attributes that are personally, professionally and socially valuable; for the institution, it refers to students' academic persistence in completing their studies, academic results that reflect equity of success in terms of race, gender, and disability, as well as their achieving credible results within a minimum time to completion; successful entry into employment or some other form of economic activity and/or successfully progressing to postgraduate studies<sup>2</sup>.

Various reports, strategic plans, frameworks, policies and procedure documents at national level and/or institutional level, have been referenced to not only contextualise but also conceptualise quality assurance, quality management, and the systems supporting the development of an effective and efficient IQMF. As part of this process definitions, terms or phrases were quoted directly to ensure fidelity to the document, to maintain unambiguously the intended meaning and to prevent the unnecessary reformulation of an approved, well written document. In other instances, excerpts of documents have been combined describe a given concept, but they have nevertheless lost none of their original purpose.

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<sup>2</sup> CHE (January 2014) *Framework for Institutional Quality Enhancement in the Second Period of Quality Assurance*, p. 13.

## **PREFACE**

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The concept of an integrated quality management framework is not new but has evolved in recent years. Quality Management (QM) is experienced worldwide as multifaceted and interweaved with institutional processes and systems. The Integrated Quality Management Framework (IQMF) of the University of the Free State (UFS) stems from, not only a national demand but, an institutional need captured in the Report of Council on risk assessment and management highlighting the lack of an integrated quality assurance system. Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are required to view quality assurance and policy-based planning as a steering mechanism to achieve quality in the higher education sector (CHE, 2020). This framework provides transparency and translates the University's vision and goals into processes and aims to simplify QM practices and principles to attain sustainable improvement. This sustainable improvement is pivotal in the development and nurturing of a quality culture that is engrained into the DNA of the UFS.

## **STRUCTURE OF THE INTEGRATED QUALITY MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK**

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A glossary of quality related terms was provided at the beginning of the IQMF. The first section of the IQMF provides the purpose, scope, and guiding principles. This is followed by the section on the IQMF which includes details of the QMS context, quality components, and structures that support these components. The main body of the IQMF is organised into four areas, namely the QMS of: Teaching, Learning and Assessment; Research; Engaged Scholarship; and Support Services. These are followed by the implementation of the Framework and the evidence of the integration of quality processes.

# 1 INTRODUCTION

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Realising the challenges of higher education transformation and particularly the provision of high-quality education, the UFS has developed this Integrated Quality Management Framework (IQMF) (hereinafter referred to as 'the Framework') as an internal steering mechanism in support of addressing the national goals and improve quality at the University.

Quality improvement has become an important and critical success factor at higher education institutions. Quality as a lever for change and transformation also finds expression in the founding strategic principles of the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), CHE and ultimately within the strategic agenda of the UFS. This IQMF reaffirms the UFS's commitment to be a quality provider of education in line with the national goals and acts as a quality management blueprint to improve and monitor quality assurance institution-wide.

## 2 PURPOSE OF THE IQMF

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The purpose of the IQMF is to build a culture of quality through plans, frameworks, policies processes, and systems. This culture aspires to enhance the quality of the student learning experience leading to student success; quality of teaching and research and engaged scholarship; and the continuous improvement of the UFS's academic standards in the context of its strategic intent, diverse student population, and institutional identity.

Furthermore, the IQMF provides context to establish or update policies and procedures; effectively align approaches to local and internationally acknowledged practice; address the changes in the national higher education landscape; and realise improvement recommendations associated with quality reviews. It also builds upon the Quality Enhancement Framework goals which are:

- addressing race and gender imbalances regarding student enrolment in programmes and fields of study,
- improving throughput, retention and graduation rates,
- developing and managing relevant curricula effectively,
- providing supportive environments that nurture equality of opportunity so that all students and staff have optimal conditions for success in training and learning, and
- achieving equity and development goals with regard to staff.

## 3 SCOPE OF THE FRAMEWORK

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The Framework includes the organisational structure, requirements and responsibilities, policies, and procedures for achieving the University's quality assurance policy. The framework applies to all functions, staff members (both academic and support), and students of the UFS. The framework provides a quality assurance management structure and process that first, provides the Higher

Education Quality Committee (HEQC)<sup>3</sup> of the Council on Higher Education (CHE) with reasonable assurance that the University complies with regulatory requirements. Second, to evidence that the institution-wide IQMF is ingrained in the core functions of the UFS, namely, student success; quality of teaching and research; and engaged scholarship. Third, that significant stakeholders (current and future students; academic, and support staff; potential employers; professional, statutory and regulatory bodies, clinical training, e.g. Department of Health and Non-governmental Organisations, and alumni) are assured of the quality of our academic offerings. Fourth, the framework is consistent with the Vision and Goals of the UFS and relates to all plans, frameworks, policies, procedures, processes and activities through which the quality assurance of the University is developed, supported, maintained, and measured.

The IQMF should be read in conjunction with the UFS' Strategic Plan, Integrated Transformation Plan, General Rules, Faculty Rule Books, Learning and Teaching Strategy, Research and Engaged Scholarship Strategic intent, regulations, guidelines, and all relevant policies.

## 4 GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE FRAMEWORK

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The guiding principles of this framework are:

- **Quality Culture** – a crucial part of the Framework is the creation of a culture of quality.
- **Enhancement** – is the continuous improvement through reflective practice to build on best practice and act on lessons learned. This is reached through benchmarking both internal and external, and engaging with students as quality agents.
- **Responsibility** – the quality assurance system aimed at enhancing the student experience and recognise the shared responsibility for the improvement and maintenance of academic standards in academic provision on all levels. This shared responsibility includes academic and support staff, students and all significant stakeholders listed.
- **Coherence** – the quality assurance system components are interrelated to achieve coherence across different processes that have been developed to improve and maintain quality.
- **Impact** – the success of the quality assurance system is linked to institutional strategy and measuring and monitoring its impact.
- **Institutional self-knowledge** – creating, reflecting on, and using institutional self-knowledge Including, but not limited to external reviews, benchmarking, module evaluations, student success, engagement, satisfaction, retention, progression, and employability data which act as prerequisites for effective strategic planning.
- **Ownership** – culture of ownership where all staff members are involved in and response to quality assurance initiatives.

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<sup>3</sup> The HEQC is a permanent committee of the CHE established through the Higher Education Act 1997. The Act define the committee's responsibilities: to promote quality assurance; to audit the quality assurance mechanisms of HEIs; to accredit higher education programmes; and to support quality assurance in collaboration with other Education and Training Quality Assurers.



## 5 QUALITY MANAGEMENT CONTEXT

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Quality management includes an integrated quality assurance system grounded in an integrated, deliberate, continuous, systematic and measurable improvement in student experience, leading to student success. The QMS for the purpose of the IQMF denote<sup>4</sup>:

**Fitness for Purpose**, which is how the University aligns its strategic intent, to student success, the quality of teaching and research, and integrated community engagement, including effective academic governance and risk management and control. Quality as meeting standards and minimum requirements, involving ongoing monitoring and improvement.

**Value for Money** is the quality of provision where the University programmes are labour market responsive, and the reflection on student success, retention, completion, and employment data is used to improve practices.

**Transformation** implies the contribution to social transformation in line with the intent and values of the Constitution but a deliberate attempt by the University to ensure a quality education that empowers and transforms its students.

**Fitness of Purpose** evaluates whether the quality-related intentions at programme level through to the vision and goals of the University are adequate where the QMS<sup>5</sup> i.e., the policies, processes, structures, standards and guidelines are consistent and coherent institution-wide.

The ensuing paragraphs provide the context of quality management, the components, and support structures of the IQMF.

## 6 QUALITY MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

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As a starting point, a definition of quality management is offered. 'Quality management' in the UFS' IQMF is based on the CHE's notion of what it comprises. The reason being that this framework is dependent and impossible to isolate from the Framework for Institutional Audits, March 2021 where quality management includes (directly quoted):

- i. *a quality assurance system (the policies, systems, strategies and resources used by the institution to satisfy itself that its quality requirements and standards are being met)*
- ii. *quality support (the policies, systems, strategies and resources used by the institution to support and sustain existing levels of quality)*
- iii. *quality development and enhancement (the policies, systems, strategies and resources used by the institution to develop and enhance quality); and*

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<sup>4</sup> Based on Harvey (Harvey 2006) perspectives on quality and the CHE's notion of quality which encompass fitness of purpose, fitness for purpose, value for money and transformation.

<sup>5</sup> Quality management system refers to the institutional arrangements that assure the quality of learning and teaching, assessment, research, and community engagement. Such an integrated, internal system supports, develops, enhances and monitors the institution's delivery of the core functions of higher education. CHE Framework for Institutional Audits March 2021.

- iv. *quality monitoring (the policies, systems, strategies and resources used by the institution to review, monitor and act on quality issues).*

There continues to be a linear conception of the QM process, in which there is an expectation that development, support and monitoring follow each other. It is however iterative that signify that the process is ongoing, requiring continuous reflection and improving to ensure an effective QMS. Linked to the IQMF components are that quality assurance is about:

- An ongoing continuous process and not a once-off event.
- All institutional processes to promote academic quality and standards of all qualifications, research, community engagement, and short learning programmes.
- Critical reflection for assuring that the quality of the learning opportunities and support provided to students promote a graduate that is fit for the world of work and the community they serve.
- The voices and contributions of all stakeholders including students. The evolution of this organisational thinking and application of 'quality' inform new practices in support of our values at the UFS.
- Integration of best practices, standards and criteria set at the national level, the requirements of professional bodies and international trends.
- Actively engaging students in the assurance and enhancement of academic quality.

The IQMF take into consideration all these distinct quality components (assurance, support, development and enhancement, and monitoring) integrated with a quality assurance cycle (plan, do, review, and improve) to establish and implement an ongoing closed-loop process to enhance and evaluate performance. The structures that support these IQMF components are legislation and regulations, institutional governance, strategic plans, frameworks, policies and procedures, and operational capacity (see Figure 1).



**Figure 1: IQMF components and support structures**

## 6.1 LEGISLATION AND REGULATIONS

The legislative requirements of the HEQC of the CHE, functioning in higher education, and professional regulatory bodies on national level are followed. Furthermore, the CHE in its Strategic Plan for 2020 to 2025, also responsible for establishing and maintaining quality within higher education, states as its Strategic Outcome 2, the realisation of a comprehensive and coherent quality assurance system for the higher education sector<sup>6</sup> to improve student success<sup>7</sup>. Two of the outcome indicators are of utmost importance for this framework, where reference is made to HEIs quality assurance systems. First, that QA systems need to be effective, functional, and reliable and all programme offerings must meet set criteria and qualification standards. Second, that programmes include graduate attributes in line with the National Development Plan (NDP).

Regulation requirements on institutional level directing the IQMF include the UFS Statute, Institutional Rules, Faculty Rule Books, regulations, guidelines, and all relevant policies. The remits of Council and Senate committees also support the IQMF.

## 6.2 INSTITUTIONAL GOVERNANCE

The Council on Higher Education (CHE)<sub>2</sub> (2021) stated that, “Founded on legislative and regulatory frameworks, good governance is the cornerstone for the promotion of quality in higher education”.

Responsibility for quality assurance processes resides in specific post holders and committees. Executive responsibility for quality assurance is held by the Vice-Rector: Academic, who is a member of the Council and Senate, and Chair to the AC.

Responsibility for the academic regulations, is the Registrar, who is Secretary to Council and Senate.

The Directorate for Institutional Research and Academic Planning (DIRAP), the Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL), the Directorate Research Development, Faculty Boards, the Post Graduate School, the Directorate for Community Engagement, Unit for Institutional Change, Student Affairs, Student Academic Services, Communication and Marketing, and Student Recruitment Services play a key role in upholding the quality assurance, and where applicable, quality management processes across the University. The Institutional Student Representative Council Constitution, which imbeds academic student governance within the institutional governance model of the UFS is where students are seen as quality agents.

The governance structure that support the IQMF is the Senate which designated the AC of Senate to act on its behalf in matters relating to quality assurance. The AC of Senate guides Senate on the implementation of research-led, evidence-based, innovative and student-centred teaching and learning throughout the institution and is responsible for advising Senate on:

- a. Strategies for effective teaching and learning;
- b. Strategies for utilising different modes of delivery;

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<sup>6</sup> Urged by The National Plan for Post-School Education and Training (NPPSET): 2019 – 2030

<sup>7</sup> Enhanced student learning with the view to increasing the number of graduates who possess attributes that are personally, professionally and socially valuable (CHE November 2019)

- c. Quality assurance and promotion;
- d. Oversight of the development of the University's PQM;
- e. Enrolment plans and targets;
- f. Resource allocation to the academic project; and
- g. Changes to academic structure, curriculum and development.

As regards the IQMF, the AC is responsible to:

- a. Monitor the operating effectiveness and efficiency of the IQMF against national regulatory frameworks and quality indicators;
- b. Review and monitor progress in implementing improvement plans addressing the findings and recommendations made in external or internal reviews;
- c. Monitor the strategic and operational risks identified in quality assurance deliverables;
- d. Report to Senate on the implementation of the IQMF;
- e. Consider proposed amendments that would advance the conduct of an external institutional review; and
- f. Approve academic related policies (rules of progression and combination in programmes) and the quality assurance policy and all academic frameworks and guidelines.

The UFS has up to now three processes of internal quality assurance: departmental reviews, programme reviews, and module reviews. This committee has oversight of the outcomes of these reviews and is responsible for the analysis of the implications of the outcomes of these reviews for the academic standing of the University and its different academic units.

The UFS is subject to two sets of external quality assurance originated outside the University: reviews by statutory professional councils and reviews by the national agency for quality assurance, the HEQC of the CHE. These reviews take different forms but all of them share the same steps of self-evaluation, site visit and report with commendations and recommendations. It is the role of this committee to analyse the outcomes of these reviews, identify their implications for the academic standing of the institution, provide oversight to the implementation of changes of improvement in the faculties. In relation to external quality assurance this committee has oversight of the successful implementation of the CHE Audits reports, past and future.

Academic Planning in DIRAP facilitates the implementation of the UFS' QMS. This unit acts as mediator between internal and external stakeholders to ensure quality at institutional, departmental, programme, and module level.

### **6.3 STRATEGIC PLANS, FRAMEWORKS, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

The strategic plans, frameworks, policies and procedures supporting the Framework is considered strategic, functional, or operational.

A graphic representation of the UFS Strategic Plan, the Quality Assurance Policy and the IQMF informing the QMS pillars, namely quality assurance, quality support, quality development and enhancement, and quality monitoring is presented below and is integral to the IQMF components and support structures presented in Figure 1.



**Figure 2: Quality Management System**

### 6.3.1 Strategic plans

Quality assurance improvements, key performance indicators, and deliverables encompassing in Strategic Plans support and strengthen the IQMF. These plans collectively inform the strategic pillars of the academic project and is furthermore integrated with the Institutional and Academic Risk Register giving direction to the implementation of the IQMF in achieving student success, quality of teaching and research, and engaged scholarship. A brief synopsis, highlighting the quality focus of each is provided below.

#### **a. Integrated Transformation Plan**

The UFS Integrated Transformation Plan has ingrained in its key areas of transformation, relevant to the IQMF, curriculum review, methodologies to improve student success, advancing knowledge contribution, improving visibility and engagement, and strengthening administrative systems.

#### **b. UFS Strategic Plan**

The UFS Strategic Plan reflects the University's commitment to distinguish itself as an institution that delivers high-quality graduates and consist of seven strategic goals, each circumscribed through one or more key performance areas. Strategic key performance indicators relevant to this Framework are to improve student success and well-being; renew and transform the curriculum; increase UFS contribution to local, regional and global knowledge; support development and social justice through engaged scholarship; and increase the efficiency and effectiveness of governance and support systems.

The vice-rectors responsible for the core business of the University – teaching and learning, research, and engaged scholarship – have developed strategic plans for these areas of work, based on the institutional strategy.

**c. *Learning and Teaching Strategy***

The Learning and Teaching Strategy supporting the IQMF is its emphasis on data and data analytics evidencing quality in learning, curriculum, and learning design. These enablers offer a quality, value for money, learning and transformative experience which embraces evidence, innovation, and excellence leading to student success.

**d. *Research Strategy***

The UFS Research Strategy seeks to promote the highest standards for undergraduate and postgraduate education, developing and improving international research excellence, impact and visibility through development of staff, and advancing excellence in the scholarship of research, teaching and public service.

**e. *Engaged Scholarship Strategy***

The Strategy of Engaged Scholarship aligns its strategic intent to the **goals** of the University's Strategic plan whilst building on creating, throughout, an enabling environment for engaged scholarship. This environment aims to improve student success and well-being and promote the incorporation of engaged teaching and learning strategies into the curricula which support the development of social justice. The strategy further affirms to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of governance and support systems through quality reviews, and design a dedicated, engaged scholarship database to capture, secure and maintain all relevant and evidentiary data.

**f. *Annual Performance Plan (APP)***

The Annual Performance Plan (APP) measure strategic direction and impact. The UFS strategic plan is unpacked annually, and an APP is produced with the relevant indicators to measure progress and success. The APP is presented and approved at various committee structures and forms the cornerstone of the budget process and the UFS risk philosophy.

**g. *Student Affairs Strategic Plan***

This strategic plan articulates the commitment of all Student Affairs divisions to the UFS Strategic Plan and the ITP. These goals, supported by key performance areas (KPA's), foster a positive culture that further creates conditions at the UFS that are conducive to student learning, development and success. The strategies are strengthened through SA's professionalisation, high-impact practices, student communities and structures, intersectionality, partnerships and collaboration.

**h. *Digitalization Implementation Plan***

This implementation plan addresses digitalisation, allowing student and staff access to digital technologies and supporting infrastructure that cuts across geographic location, and financial ability, to improve the quality of academic and operational processes that will increase the efficiency of digitally implemented systems

### 6.3.2 Frameworks

The UFS has started its quality journey with the institutional curriculum review, the external reviews of the 2014 Quality Enhancement Framework (QEF), and module evaluations. These projects act as institutional self-reflection processes regarding core activities such as learning and teaching and other quality issues the University face. The IQMF sees these as an integral part of total institutional quality management and planning. In addition, these projects create awareness that quality is an institution-wide endeavour. The unfolding of the curriculum review of the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF) provided the space to rethink QA processes and to design a meaningful way forward for quality enhancement<sup>8</sup> at the UFS, beyond the curriculum review. This led to the development of the UFS 2014 Quality Enhancement Framework.

#### **a. *Quality Enhancement Framework***

The external reviews change the quality approach of the University from being compliance driven to a more focused approach on quality assurance. The administrative and support functions provided by, and to the departments, schools, centres, and units under review and not only the three core functions of higher education are counted in. The external review process includes internally a reflective SER, and externally, an expert panel evaluation that constitutes the basis for a quality improvement plan. This process of self-evaluation added value to the internal quality assurance culture of the institution itself.

The external reviews of the QEF integrate institutional knowledge generated through existing quality assurance instruments and processes, management information systems, and institutional research into an analytical SERs reflecting on reasons for both success and failure in different areas of performance. The subsequent feedback reports from the external expert panels following the external review week are an important component of the QA framework informing risks and quality interventions at faculty and central management level.

The QEF states: “The main purpose of a new framework for quality assurance is for departments to examine their implicit or explicit understandings of teaching and learning and research in order to identify what works and what does not work and why” (Lange & Kriel 2017). The framework argues that the existence of QA systems is not a sufficient condition for the development of quality in the core functions of a university. Thus, the point of departure is that quality is an institutional responsibility that can only truly be addressed internally by academics. The QEF relies on the following six principles: (i) academic freedom; (ii) faculty leadership; (iii) accountability; (iv) student engagement; (v) evidence; and (vi) impact. This approach allows the UFS to analyse information originating within the QA process and uses it to establish benchmarks and trends that are directly useful for academics. The QEF requires a shift from merely reporting on data, to reflect on it, and to provide improvement plans. The deliberate and unintended outcomes of the external reviews are that it:

- Provide credibility and satisfy social accountability;
- Support internal quality assurance;
- Safeguard the quality of programme delivery;

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<sup>8</sup> Quality enhancement refers to initiatives developed and implemented to raise an institution's standards and the quality of its provisioning beyond that of the threshold standards and benchmarks. CHE Framework for Institutional Audits March 2021.

- Facilitates continuous quality improvement;
- Recognise good practices;
- Inculcate a quality culture institution wide; and
- Identify internal quality assurance processes working well and those that need to be strengthened further.

The 2018 revised Quality Enhancement Framework includes an assessment of the curricula relating to relevance and decolonisation. The quality matters forming part of the successful implementation of the IQMF are considering:

- A transformed and decolonised teaching and learning function;
- Curricula that reflect a variety of ways of knowing;
- Pedagogy that engages students in their own learning;
- Instruction that provides students with the necessary tools to access knowledge; and an
- Education that produces excellent graduates who can contribute to a sustainable, just society locally and globally.

The decolonised curriculum flowing from the 2018 QEF draws on engaged scholarship and locally relevant research, include local and other voices that may have been excluded in the past, and reference more comprehensively transformation, global issues, developments, and scholarship.

The recommendations, improvement plans, and follow through on external reviews as part of the QEF inform strategic decision-making on both institutional and programme level. Additionally, for the purpose of the IQMF, the necessary improvements and monitoring mechanism to ensure that review recommendations are being implemented are critical.

### **6.3.3 Policies**

UFS considers quality assurance as a developmental process and uses critical self-evaluation as a basis for reviewing its policies, processes, procedures and strategies using the Policy Development Framework as guideline. Policies related to quality assurance are the:

- Quality assurance policy
- Teaching-learning policy - open, blended, and engaged learning
- Assessment policy
- Admission policy
- Recognition of prior learning policy
- Policy on engaged scholarship
- Policy on preventing and dealing with academic writing misconduct
- Appointment, promotion and performance management policy
- Performance management policy for support services
- Policy on short learning programmes
- Governance framework policy on the management of administrative data
- Risk management policy and guidelines
- Social justice policy and procedures
- Anti-discrimination, promotion of equality
- Faculty specific policies, implementation plans/guidelines related to teaching, learning and assessment, selection and QA



- General Rules
- Faculty Rule Books

These policies provide direction and aim to operationalise quality assurance matters on various levels supporting the distinct quality components (assurance, support, development and enhancement, and monitoring) of the IQMF.

#### **6.3.4 Procedures**

The procedures in the Framework support the identification of performance indicators and quality expectations and standards against which the effect of quality assurance processes is measured, evaluated and improved. Faculties and support units set their QA targets in their annual operational plans and departmental self-evaluation reports. These targets include, on student level, module evaluations via student surveys and student engagement surveys, and assessment of graduate attributes (student competencies), graduate exit surveys and employability rates.

On curriculum level, curriculum reviews, benchmarking and departmental external peer reviews, internal programme approval by Faculty Boards, AC approval, and external CHE programme accreditation, based on criteria that specify the minimum standards required, SAQA registration, and DHET PQM clearance. In addition to the external programme accreditation is professional board and council scrutiny and judgement, quality assuring but also confirming compliance with professional practice.

On staff level, service-level and personal performance target agreements, performance indicator monitoring, and academic staff development are quality assurance measures and procedures that oversees performance and measures performance of staff against predetermined standards. This is important for improvement of the quality of teaching and learning, research, and engaged scholarship.

The work of quality assurance at the University rely on specific procedures that monitor the effectiveness of the QMS. This section lays out feedback, improvement, data, and benchmarking procedures associated with the IQMF.

##### ***a. External review of academic departments***

The external review of academic departments and programmes is the basis of curriculum transformation at the UFS where a review is a process of self-reflection rather than compliance. The main purpose of the reviews is ‘for departments to examine their implicit or explicit understandings of teaching and learning and research in order to identify what works and what does not work, and why’. It takes as its point of departure that quality is the responsibility of the academics, and that peer evaluation is a tool for benchmarking and improvement.

##### ***b. Feedback, surveys and satisfaction indices***

Within the continuous improvement cycle the UFS pursues a system in which students are given a regular opportunity to give feedback on their experience of teaching, learning and assessment,

research and engaged scholarship as well as of the professional and administrative services. The UFS continuously poll students by means of surveys or focus group interviews to assess their levels of satisfaction. The results of these studies are used as part of a planning and improvement strategy.

**c. *Improvement plans***

The quality improvement plans subsequent to external programme-, department-, unit-, school- or centre- reviews, based on the recommendations arising from the self-evaluation report and the peer review report serve on the AC of Senate. These plans inform initiatives and actions to follow to improve quality and are monitored on a continuous basis by AC and FB.

**d. *Data analytics***

Data analytics collection, and integration procedures that analyse teaching, research and student success processes strengthen evidence-based decision-making and in so doing improve quality.

**e. *Benchmarking***

Benchmarking indicates how the UFS can improve its quality against best practices. This procedure involves an ongoing reflection and comparison of the University's programmes, policies, practices, and performance measures against other higher education institutions on national and international level.

**f. *Programmes Reviews***

Postgraduate and undergraduate programmes are evaluated using the HEQC's programme accreditation criteria on a 5-year cycle. External professional bodies evaluate professional programmes based on the standards and procedures of the bodies concerned. These programmes may be granted exemption from the UFS system of programme evaluation by the Academic Committee if all the requirements are met.

**g. *Module evaluations***

Module evaluations follow a four-pronged approach (see Module Evaluations and High-Risk Modules Guidelines). The first being the students themselves through module evaluations, the second by the academics responsible for teaching the module (self-reflection and peer evaluation). The third, the data that can result in data-driven decisions that promote student success, and the fourth the identification of high-risk modules. The key considerations of module evaluations are to evaluate the quality of the module, the quality of the teaching, the quality of the student, and the quality of the support.

For the purpose of the IQMF, the necessary improvements and monitoring mechanism to ensure that review recommendations are being implemented are critical (see the relevant Guideline Documents).

## **6.4 OPERATIONAL CAPACITY**

The operational capacity of the IQMF refers to the institutional arrangements that support the quality of learning and teaching, assessment, research, and engaged scholarship.

### **6.4.1 Governance Structures**

#### **a. *Academic Committee of Senate***

The Academic Committee (AC) of Senate for the implementation of this policy. The AC Remit refers to the university's approach to quality assurance as a driver and planning instrument requires Senate to take strategic responsibility for the quality of the university academic offerings and the development of a culture of quality at the institution.

#### **b. *Faculties and Faculty Boards***

In the case of the faculties, supporting the IQMF, is academic and support staff engagement steered primarily by Programme Directors and in some cases Teaching and Learning Managers (Faculty-specific quality assurance structures) with quality related strategies and policies to translate it into practices assuring student success, quality of teaching and research, and engaged scholarship.

#### **c. *Institutional Risk Management Committee***

The institutional risk management committee supports the IQMF through identifying and assessing risks with a focus on continuous improvement. The focus of the supporting risk management committees is to increase performance by monitoring and evaluating the institution's risk profile, managing the electronic risk registers, and assessing the internal controls supporting the UFS strategic objectives.

### **6.4.2 Organisational Structures**

#### **Teaching and Learning**

#### **d. *Directorate for Institutional Research and Academic Planning***

The dedicated quality assurance unit in DIRAP supports the execution of the IQMF and for monitoring compliance and reporting to the AC on the results of the monitoring activities. The unit on programme development is responsible for streamlining and increasing the effectiveness of academic and administrative processes as well as the improvement of the quality of academic programmes. DIRAP supports the fulfilment of the objectives under the strategic goal of improving the UFS' academic reputation through strategic management of enrolments, data analytics supporting strategic decision-making, and institutional research informing and confirming strategic and quality assurance intent.

**e. Centre for Teaching and Learning**

CTL has four identified focus areas of work: research on teaching and learning; academic staff development; student learning and development; curriculum delivery and innovation, and access with success. The CTL is pivotal to the realisation of the UFS Strategy and academic portfolio, and quality support initiatives, with specific reference to improving the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning and the scholarship of teaching and learning. The CTL is responsible for learning and teaching innovation, infusing technology in the curriculums, and curriculum transformation and renewal.

The Postgraduate School, faculty management committees and Faculty Boards, Teaching and Learning Managers (TLMs), the Teaching and Learning Management Group (TLMG) all allow for a parallel process of operational capacity strengthening.

**f. Unit for Institutional Change and Social Justice**

The Unit for Institutional Change and Social Justice supports the IQMF through advancing social justice and cohesion, and to achieve the transformation objectives aligned with the UFS strategic plan and the goals of the ITP.

**g. Communication and Marketing**

The Department of Communication and Marketing (DCM) supports the IQMF through assuring the quality of content published on the UFS website. The quality imperatives are brand consistency and quality content creating a credible place to get information from inside and outside of the University.

**Research**

**h. Postgraduate School**

Being a research-led institution is a main part of the UFS vision. This requires supporting students to make a successful transition from undergraduate to postgraduate programme level. Student success at postgraduate level is key to the UFS Postgraduate School (PGS) supported by faculties. Proposal defence supports postgraduate student development and success and the quality of research outputs as assessed by external examiners and reviewers publications.

**i. Directorate for Research Development**

The Directorate for Research Development (DRD) supports the IQMF by setting the highest standards for postgraduate education, recruiting the best and most diverse students and professors into the University, advancing excellence in the scholarship of research, teaching and public service, promoting innovation, distinctiveness and leadership in both academic and human pursuits and establishing transparent opportunities in lifelong learning for academic and support staff.

Engaged Scholarship

## **Engaged Scholarship**

### ***j. Directorate of Community Engagement***

The Directorate of Community Engagement (DCE) supports the implementation of engaged scholarship at the UFS through academic scholarly work and develop mechanisms for quality management, including evaluating the impact of engaged scholarship.

## **Students**

### ***k. Student Academic Services***

Student Academic Services (SAS) supports the optimisation and quality assurance of student administration, progression, and graduation processes required by the UFS' Programme Qualification Mix (PQM), institutional General Rules, Faculty Rulebooks, and certification processes.

### ***l. Student Affairs***

The operational and quality systems and processes of student affairs with a focus on co-curricular programmes, responsive to needs, steered by the Centre for Universal Access and Disability Support (CUADS), and high-impact practices support the IQMF in assuring a quality experience of all students, whether on-campus or off-campus. Active involvement in co-curricular programmes and activities, and student communities, enhance the quality of the student experience and the likelihood of student success

## **Information**

### ***m. Information and Technology Services***

Information and Technology (ICT) Services is accountability and responsibility for institutional data (management of data on students, staff and finances) directed by the Governance Framework Policy on the Management of Administrative Data. Supporting the IQMF is embedded in ICT's operational capacity to assure quality through the referential integrity of data dependencies which is critically important in the process of data integration. It refers to the quality of the relationships between database tables, which influences the capability to provide accurate data.

## ***Financial resources and budget allocations***

### ***n. Financial***

Supporting the IQMF is UFS' financial information forming part of the quality management system to enhance decision-making and acting as an indicator of performance. The financial information for assuring the quality of decision-making in academic and non-academic functions is reliant on quality management principles such as reliability and retrievability, validity, and integrity.

The QMS of Teaching, Learning and Assessment, Research and Engaged Scholarship are presented in the ensuing paragraphs.

## **7 CORE FUNCTIONS: QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS**

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In striving for effectiveness and efficiency the implementation of a QMS in all the core functions of the University is prioritised. A critical element of the QMS is that it is participative where a quality culture is integral to all levels, national, institutional, programme and individual module. This approach requires that the management of quality is not centralised but devolved to various academic and administrative levels. The implementation of the IQMF is governed by the relevant Vice Rectors and finds expression on the agendas of the Academic Committee of Senate, the Faculty Research Committees and Research Ethics Committees, and the Senate Engaged Scholarship Committee, the Faculty Engaged Scholarship Portfolio Committee and Student Affairs structures.

### **7.1 TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS**

In keeping with the transformation agenda of the University, teaching, learning and assessment (TLA) have been pressurised to shift its focus to quality. To react to increasing pressures from national regulatory and emergency remote teaching demands a need arose to identify and apply the relevant concepts of quality to each and every aspect of academic life, that is, to the teaching, learning, assessment and administrative processes. The QMS is steered by internal and external processes to measure the quality of teaching and learning with the view of the enhancement thereof.

Continuous assurance and improvement of the quality of teaching and learning in and of programmes at the UFS take place on a cyclic basis through the application of self-evaluation mechanisms and procedures, benchmarking and external peer reviews. The internal development, approval and modification/termination of formal and non-formal academic programmes occur according to the prescribed policy (Quality Assurance Policy), and procedures (Guidelines for the Approval, Registration, Accreditation, and Recording of Academic Programmes). External approval, accreditation, registration, recording and termination of formal programmes of the UFS take place in accordance with the national policy requirements (CHE, DHET, and SAQA). The execution of and arrangements for the aforementioned processes take place in accordance with the institutional guidelines for teaching/learning, assessment, postgraduate education and supervision and are directed by the strategic goals of the UFS LTS.

Integral to the QMS of TLA are departmental, programme and module reviews.

#### **7.1.1 Department reviews**

The evaluation of academic departmental activities conducted on a five-year cycle focuses on the following aspects:

- a. The department's infrastructure and facilities to support the departmental activities, that is, the functioning as an organisational unit (i.e. composition, capacity, and resourcing).
- b. Teaching and learning including instructional material, measurement of impact, and data management and utilisation.
- c. Research, internationalisation and innovation.
- d. Curriculum renewal and transformation.

- e. Quality maintenance and enhancement.
- f. The management of undergraduate modules presented by the department.
- g. The management of postgraduate teaching and learning programmes within the department.
- h. Research activities of the department.
- i. Community engagement/service learning by the department (Engaged Scholarship).
- j. How the department links to other departments and how this interfacing impacts upon the system of integration and on the work of the department.

### 7.1.2 Programme reviews

Professional programmes (undergraduate and postgraduate) are evaluated by external professional bodies on the basis of the criteria and procedures of the bodies concerned. As previously mentioned, these programmes may be granted exemption from the UFS system of programme evaluation by the Academic Committee. This is only granted if all the requirements are covered by the external accreditation process. Postgraduate and undergraduate programmes that are not evaluated by an HEQC-approved professional body are evaluated on the basis of the HEQC's programme accreditation criteria.

### 7.1.3 Module evaluations

Module evaluations feed into programme reviews and is an important part of the comprehensive review process. Internal by means of module reviews by students and external, benchmarking and peer review, including an entire academic programme (degree, diploma or certificate) in the context of its content, overall structure and management, units, clinical experiences, practicums, projects and work-integrated learning experience that make up the module.

### 7.1.4 External moderation and examination

The external moderation of all examination papers on an exit level as well as the external examination of master's theses and doctoral dissertations is a standard practice at UFS.

### 7.1.5 Emergency Remote Teaching and Learning

The UFS is confronted with the reality that not only blended learning but also emergency remote teaching and learning<sup>9</sup> need to be considered in the UFS' QA arrangements. Particularly to safeguard academic standards and quality assurance procedures and to measure the impact on students' academic success.

**National quality assurance measures:** The CHE published a guideline document to assist with a set of criteria for emergency remote teaching and learning and assessment, during the COVID-19 Pandemic. These Quality Assurance Guidelines for Teaching and Learning and Assessment during

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<sup>9</sup> *Emergency remote teaching and learning* refers to a mode of delivery through which contact and face-to-face delivery has been transferred to usually digital, remote platforms under emergency conditions. Emergency remote teaching and learning is not online learning which is meant to be deliberately and thoroughly planned, designed and developed based on specific pedagogies appropriate for online learning. "Remoteness" in teaching is not an appropriate pedagogy even under emergency circumstances and academics should take care to create as much presence as possible for their students, be it synchronous or asynchronous. Academic Standards and Quality Assurance: The Impact of COVID-19 on University Degree Programs <https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/12/23/10032>

the COVID-19 Pandemic<sup>10</sup> (QA Guidelines) and, a shorter version of the document, QA Guidelines during the COVID-19 Pandemic: An Abbreviated Resource (Abbreviated Resource) for use by the sector.

These guidelines are critical to remote emergency teaching and therefore also to the UFS' IQMF. Clear and regular communication with students is paramount and the evaluation of programmes and modules according to specified criteria when considering adjustments to the curriculum and mode of offering. Adjustments can be made to the undergraduate curriculum in the following ways:

- a. Reducing content to focus on outcomes and competencies, especially bearing in mind that online activities typically take longer to develop and to complete than, for example, in a face-to-face (f2f) tutorial.
- b. Re-ordering content, outcomes and competencies (e.g. to start the emergency remote teaching and learning journey with students with simpler online material and to move to more complex material requiring higher digital literacy).
- c. Replacing existing content with similar content that is more accessible online or more conducive to online teaching and learning, e.g. using OERs and MOOCs but bearing in mind that such resources may be using video and may be heavy on data use and do not fall within the zero-rating for data cost as negotiated which may exclude some students; alternatives should always be available.
- d. Adjusting emergency remote assessment strategies (e.g. using continuous assessment with promotion to the next level either being ratified with pre-assessment in the following year or a capstone assessment in the final year with external moderation).
- e. Creating Recognition of Prior learning (RPL) and service-learning opportunities for students.

Important conditions include:

- a. The exit-level programme outcomes and competencies of the programme as accredited should not be changed.
- b. The content of the programme curriculum should not be changed by more than 50% as accredited.
- c. The credit value of the overall programme should remain the same.
- d. Students doing a full-time 360-credit degree should still be able to complete the programme in 3 years, except in exceptional cases.
- e. Programme design changes should be recorded with motivation for the changes.
- f. Regular formative assessment in the emergency remote teaching and learning environment is an essential component to keep students engaged as active learners.
- g. Personalised individual feedback to students is important to create a sense of engagement in students and should be returned as soon as possible.
- h. Student support (psycho-social as well as academic) and peer learning are more important than ever to keep students engaged and motivated.
- i. Academics should be trained to teach remotely and provided with adequate access and data.
- j. Academic support and administration staff support to transform services and systems towards supporting emergency remote learning and teaching and to ensure that academic

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<sup>10</sup> <https://heltasa.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/CHE-quality-assurance-guide.pdf>



administration is geared towards effective and efficient support to emergency remote teaching and learning.

- k. The final summative assessment strategies for modules should be evaluated by academics for suitability under emergency remote teaching and learning conditions, and changes to assessment strategies and plans should be recorded on a module-by-module basis.
- l. ICT services and learning management support (LMS) become a crucial priority.

**Institutional quality assurance measures:** The UFS has to reach its transformation targets as set out in the ITP. This is to, likewise improve the success and well-being of our students. The following principles guide a UFS response to the teaching and learning arrangements.

- a. Faculties need to develop differentiated “assessment free” periods at the beginning of the second semester to allow students some time to adapt to possible changes in learning and teaching approaches.
- b. Faculties, supported by CTL, need to re-emphasise guidelines for effective assessment and the need for consistent implementation of assessment procedures.
- c. Flexible and supportive approaches are followed to ensure the well-being of staff and students.
- d. Student Academic Services and Internal Audit carefully consider the implications of the delay in assessments/exams.
- e. Access to infrastructure such as technological devices, Internet connection and data is assured.
- f. Academic development initiatives to empower lecturers to adapt face-to-face to emergency remote teaching is presented.
- g. Teaching materials in the form of interactive multimedia to engage and maintain students’ motivation are developed.
- h. Faculty, discipline (e.g. Interprofessional education) and programme specific guidelines and requirements are met adhering to government restrictions.

### 7.1.6 Blended Learning

Quality assurance in blended learning (BL) at the UFS, where blended learning denotes a module that integrates online with traditional face-to-face class activities in a deliberate planned, educationally sound manner, requires creating high-quality BL environments. The LTS supports this in allowing instructional designers to work with faculties to find innovative ways of using technology in teaching and learning. The quality assurance components in BL that constitute quality blended teaching and learning relevant to the IQMF include the quality of:

- a. Institutional support through its vision, strategic intent and planning, and infrastructure.
- b. Module development and structure using a learner-centred approach.
- c. Tracking progress and achievement, marking and returning assessments, and providing feedback to students.
- d. Teaching and learning and assessment student and staff support.
- e. Existence of reliable and accessible computer hardware and software applications are required for designing, developing and delivering online learning
- f. Security during student assessment

In addition to the abovementioned, the Commonwealth of Learning (COL), published a guideline in this regard. The Quality Assurance Rubric for Blended Learning has been developed to guide an

institution, faculty, or individual lecturer in developing quality blended learning modules to enhance the student learning experience. This is an open educational resource carrying a Creative Commons (CC) license, and hence the rubric may be modified for the UFS context. The intent is for the Rubric to be used iteratively, that is, as a formative and summative quality assurance tool. This rubric serves as a QMS for blended learning and focus on:

- a. Navigation (e.g. it is easy to navigate from the module home page to learning units, links, forums, etc.).
- b. Content (e.g., learners can engage with content and peers; expectations are clear)
- c. Instructional design (e.g., the content is pedagogically sound).
- d. Module structure (e.g., the course has been properly conceptualised to reflect good practices in organisation, presentation and aesthetics).
- e. Student support (e.g., students have timely and sufficient access to support in face-to-face and online modes).
- f. Technology / Media (e.g., appropriate technology has been selected, references are available for students to retrieve resources).
- g. Assessment (e.g., assessment procedures are clear and accessible, regularly conducted, and in various formats).
- h. Quality assurance and evaluation (e.g., quality assurance has been implemented thoroughly in design, and plans are in place for continuous quality assurance).

## **7.2 RESEARCH QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS**

The QMS of research is directed by the four research goals of the Research Strategy to ensure research excellence and impact, as well as visibility in the communities it serves. The Strategy thus responds to the institutional goal of increasing the UFS' contribution to local, regional, and global knowledge, and aims to address fundamental and strategically important questions and making an economic, social, and cultural impact at regional, national, and international levels. Criteria for the quality assurance and evaluation of research at the UFS are developed and implemented in cooperation with the Directorate Research Development, as described in the Research Policy of the UFS. The assurance of the quality of postgraduate research (mini-dissertations, dissertations and theses) is the responsibility of the faculties as stipulated in the institutional guidelines for: postgraduate education and supervision, assessment, as well as the General Regulations for Postgraduate Qualifications. Research outputs are, according to existing practice formally or non-formally, subjected to external and/or peer evaluation.

At institutional level, the Vice-Rector Research is responsible for the promotion and management of research, supported by the Directorate of Research, which take the important regulation frameworks into account (whether they are statutory, or in terms of the nature of scientific practice).

- The Senate has a permanent Research Subcommittee.
- At Faculty level, the Dean is responsible for the promotion and management of research.

### **7.3 ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS**

The quality assurance (management, monitoring and evaluation for impact) of engaged scholarship is an important constituent of the IQMF. Community-engaged scholarship includes engaged teaching and learning, engaged research, and engaged citizenship. The Engaged Scholarship Strategy is a commitment by the UFS to create and coordinate supportive, enabling environments for engaged scholarship in the context of community engagement through glocal (local to global) knowledge for change and the common good.

The quality management of engaged scholarship takes into account the contributions of the communities and partners, as well as their assessment and evaluation of the impact of engaged scholarship. The QMS include:

1. The training of staff members in order to understand the content of the quality management requirements of engaged scholarship as far as good practice indicators for self-evaluation, recording of evidence and documentation management are concerned.
2. Programme evaluation and impact studies pertaining to the ongoing implementation of engaged scholarship.
3. Benchmarking, not only as a tool for self- evaluation and quality assessment, but also as an instrument of motivation, learning and information exchange.

Through the function of Engaged Scholarship, the Directorate of Community Engagement is committed to support excellence, diversity and inclusivity of staff and students, through inspiring innovative and transformative thought, to pursue the delivery of excellent quality graduates and knowledge for the region, the continent and the globe.

## **8 SUPPORT SERVICES QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS**

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UFS supports the implementation of a formal evaluation system for support departments, integrated into their normal activities. This entails a self-evaluation as well as a peer evaluation of the support and service departments.

This evaluation system demands that all support departments are subject to a review within a five-year time frame, followed by an external peer review (which includes an on-site/virtual visit by a panel of external experts). After this, an improvement plan is developed and monitored towards implementation, paying attention to issues that are identified during the evaluation processes.

The evaluation of support departments takes place in terms of an approach and model relevant to their environments. The approach and model adhere to the following minimum requirements:

- a. Adherence of the entities objectives and activities to the objectives and strategic priorities of the UFS, as well as the national objectives for higher education and related regulations;
- b. Provisioning of a meaningful balance between university-wide standards that must be met by all support departments and environment-specific standards.

- c. During the process of self-evaluation, the support departments are required to develop performance indicators and service level agreements that are validated during the process of peer review and refined during the continuous follow-up reviews.
- d. The first cycle of support departments evaluation (self-evaluation followed by an internal peer review) forms part of the comprehensive institutional evaluation.
- e. All support departments at UFS are subjected to an internal and external evaluation process at least once every five years.

## **9 IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS**

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The IQMF considers several components that form the foundation for integrating key institutional processes. This results-oriented framework that creates the foothold for implementation is important where all academic and support units indicate their quality assurance mechanism in place, how they report on these, the integration of quality in their strategic goals and risk plans, and progress of improvement plans (see Annexure 1 for a summary). The external reviews of programmes, departments, schools, centres, and units capture this QA information in their SERs, articulated concerns, feedback reports and proposed improvement plans. Each component is reviewed to point out what might be evident when the element is effective, as opposed to what might be evident when there is little or no indication of its presence in the QMS.

## **10 CONCLUDING CONSIDERATIONS**

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The principles of quality related to the UFS Strategic Plan used in this IQMF, that is *fitness for purpose*, *value for money*, *transformation*, and *fitness of purpose* reassure a culture of quality at the university. The successful implementation of the IQMF hinges on all relevant stakeholders who embrace the work of quality assurance and enhancement.

## 11 ANNEXURE 1 INTEGRATION OF QUALITY

Level and Standard	Relevant teaching, research and engaged scholarship quality typology confirming Assurance, Support, Development and Enhancement, and Monitoring	Organisational structure
<b>Institutional</b>		
<p>Strategic planning, Vision, Goals and academic leadership to improve the quality of teaching enabling student success:</p> <p><i>The institution and faculty have a vision and goals.</i></p> <p><i>The vision and goals are aligned to national policy on quality</i></p> <p><i>Actions taken by universities to safeguard high academic standards and quality assurance procedures institution-wide strategies (Learning and Teaching, Research, and Engaged Scholarship)</i></p>	<p><b>Assurance</b> National policies standards, and regulations (audits, programme accreditation, and institutional evaluations) Vision, Goals, and Strategic Plans Policies that improves and have impact on quality Policies synergies institution-wide Staff Workload Student to staff ratio</p> <p><b>Support</b> Institutional commitment Dissemination of quality teaching</p> <p><b>Development and Enhancement</b> Self-Evaluation Reports Data analytics External review, improvement plan and monitoring and evaluation</p> <p><b>Surveys</b> Culture and climate survey Student satisfaction survey Graduate exit surveys</p> <p><b>Support</b> <b>Teaching and learning support</b> Continuing staff development IT policies</p> <p><b>Learning facilities</b> participation of students in academic affairs</p> <p><b>Monitoring</b> Institution-wide evaluations of the relevance and effectiveness of quality initiatives</p>	<p>Senate Academic and Research Committees CTL DRD DCE APP</p>
<b>Faculty</b>		
Faculty vision and goals aligned	Survey data/dashboards Data analytics	Faculty Boards AC
<b>Department</b>		
	<p>Frequency and impact of cyclical external reviews of programme content, structure and teaching delivery in Departments, Schools, Centres and Programmes</p> <p>Peer reviews outcomes, improvement plans, monitoring and evaluation</p> <p>Module evaluations - content, structure and teaching delivery</p>	Faculty Boards AC

	Portfolio of Evidence (PoE) supporting QA Data analytics Instruments and policies that foster quality teaching HoDs operational implementation <i>Balancing the teaching-research nexus</i>	
<b>Programme</b>		
Processes exist to monitor and measure the quality of programmes – External and internal self and peer review processes to promote the quality of programmes, i.e. the design, content and delivery of the programmes	Accreditation Data analytics (graduation rates and completion rates) Surveys PQM viability Endorsed programme evaluation included in external departmental peer reviews Benchmarking Self-generated dashboard Accreditation by professional bodies PQM clearance, accreditation and registration audit Evaluation of quality teaching (reviews, self-assessments) Coherence and equity of the teaching process (part-time vs fulltime staff and student diversity) <b>Continuing education for teachers</b> Student-centred approach Satisfaction surveys	Faculty Boards AC HEQC
<b>Module</b>		
Quality of module provision content - Mechanisms for evaluating student satisfaction and the student experience	Cyclical module evaluations, improvement plans, monitoring and evaluation High-risk module, improvement plans, monitoring and evaluation student tracking In class, students' experience, the quality of the relationships between students and lecturers Ad hoc quality assurance audits based on module reviews and the identification of high-risk areas Data analytics Performance indicators <b>Student support</b> Initiatives improving the learning process of the students (e.g. IT and tutors). Student progress and tracking	Faculty Boards AC

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