

Academic Quality Assurance

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Structure of Presentation

- Quality Assurance in Higher Education – why Quality Assurance
- Assuring Quality in Higher Education
- Academic Quality Assurance Activities

Quality Assurance in Higher Education – why Quality Assurance?

- Quality organs are described using different terms:
 - Quality Control,
 - Quality Assurance,
 - Most common in East Africa Higher Education Institutions
 - Quality Improvement,
 - Quality Enhancement
 - Used in many Higher Education institutions in Europe and North America and in South Africa
 - Quality Management
 - Also used by some institutions in Europe and N. America

Terminologies in vogue upto 1980s



- Quality Control

- Use inspection of output to achieve dependability by identifying outputs that do not conform to specifications.
- Based on methods in vogue from 1930s to 1950s.

- Quality Assurance

- Achieves output quality through adequacy and stabilization of associated processes to minimize causes of output problems
- External agencies/potential customer, including the industry or professional association, can assess the likelihood that the output will be dependable by assessing the adequacy and stability of these processes
- In vogue from 1960s to 1980s

Terminologies used from 1980s and beyond (1)



- With limited resources, need for maximization of returns on investments, and the growing economic sophistication, a paradigm shift during the 1980s in which:
 - We, as internal players in Higher Education should not teach what we like teaching and know how to teach but teach what the needs of the members of the multi-layered customer group require us to teach.
 - Quality Planning refer to a set of activities concerned with identifying customers, discovering their needs and developing academic programme features that can develop the needed attributes in the learners – “Quality Enhancement” is used when intention is to include this component.

Terminologies used from 1980s and beyond (2)



- The paradigm shift during the 1980s considers that what was satisfactory last year will not necessarily be so this year
 - Quality Improvement concerns identifying opportunities for doing things better and carrying out improvement action on how we do the work
 - Quality Enhancement or Quality Management as description of quality related structure signal intention to include this component and Quality Planning.

Terminologies used from 1980s and beyond (3)



- For those familiar with ISO 9000 Quality Standards,
 - Upto 1999, the standard was referred to as “**Quality Assurance** Standard”.
 - From about 1996, all Assurance Standards were restructured and became “Management Systems Standards” –
 - For Quality, a change from ISO 9000 Quality Assurance Standard to ISO 9001:20xx **Quality Management** System Standard.
 - The focus has changed to Quality Enhancement and Organizational Effectiveness in the 1980s and beyond era
 - Thus Quality Enhancement and Quality Management departments rather than Quality Assurance

Assuring Quality in Higher Education (1)



- There are four phases to produce Academic output
 - Design and development of programmes that meet requirements of the stakeholders.
 - Determination of capacity and admission of learners to the programmes.
 - Programme delivery phase at which the graduate attributes, as planned, are achieved.
 - Graduation of the learners at which failure to have identified the stakeholders and their requirements may make the output unsatisfactory. This is also the point at which an Education Institution will release a “Defective output” to other layers in the customer group

Assuring Quality in Higher Education: Stakeholders



		Level of Interest	
		Low	High
Power	High	<p><u>Keep satisfied</u></p> <p>Competition</p> <p>Donors</p>	<p><u>Key external stakeholders</u></p> <p>Students/Industry/society group;</p> <p>Government regulators group;</p> <p>Non-governmental regulators group including professional associations.</p>
	Low	<p>To be informed using general communication through web sites, newsletters and magazines</p>	<p><u>To be kept informed</u></p> <p>Suppliers group</p> <p>communities</p>

Assuring Quality in Higher Education: Roles



- Academic Integrity issues cause defective outputs to one or more of client/customers group.
 - A description of a student as capable of carrying out research at the previous level based on a copied work means defective output has been released. While the modern technology enables such copy and paste, the same technology provides a means to **assure** against it – stability of process directing this is the key.
- External Quality Assurance activities
 - Will focus on assessing the adequacy and stability of processes in place to determine stakeholder needs and prevent potential defective outputs – plagiarism aided output
- Internal Quality Assurance systems focus on definition of those processes their adequacy & stability

Academic Quality Assurance Activities – Student Needs



No	Client/ Customer	Needs	Actions	Quality Standards	Quality Assurance Activities
1	student	Satisfy career needs	Design appropriate programmes; Decision on capacity; Deliver as per specification	How do we know the programme is appropriate? How can we guarantee programme specifications were adhered to?	Determination of processes and process measures (use of appropriate tool to compute measures)

Academic Quality Assurance Activities – Society needs



No	Client/ Customer	Needs	Actions	Quality Standards	Quality Assurance Activities
2	Industry	skilled man-power	Design appropriate programmes; Decision on capacity; Deliver as per specification	How do we know the programme is appropriate? How do we prevent incorrect description – cheating in exams & plagiarized work?	Determination of processes and process measures (appropriate tool to compute measures)
3	Society/ government	value for every unit	Contribution to economic development	Have determined a measure for direct customer rating?	Determination of processes and process measures

Academic Quality Assurance Activities – Professional associations’ needs



No	Client/ Customer	Needs	Actions	Quality Standards	Quality Assurance Activities
4	Professional associations	competency and proficiency that covers the body of knowledge	Design appropriate programmes Deliver as per specification	Used discipline Subject Description Statements/ Developed Body of Knowledge to guide programme development?	Determine processes and process measures - appropriate tool to compute measures)

Academic Quality Assurance Activities – Other Higher Education Institutions' needs



No	Client/ Customer	Needs	Actions	Quality Standards	Quality Assurance Activities
5	Other Higher Education institutions	Academic foundation that is compatible with higher learning	Design appropriate programmes; Decision on capacity; Deliver as per specification.	Anchorage of programme to appropriate learning levels in Bloom's Taxonomy	Determine processes and process measures (use of appropriate tool to compute measures)

What Quality Assurance is not:

- Harmonization of curricula IS NOT Quality Assurance
 - It caps the quality level rather than set the minimum;
 - Imagine if restaurants licensing authorities demanded harmonization of restaurant menus; departments of industry demanded harmonization of motor-vehicle designs;
 - Where would the world be if the above became the norm?
- Control of curriculum development by external agencies
 - The environment is changing continuously, but institutions do not have the same agility – institutional cultures are different
 - Do we want to block opportunities to enhance quality by limiting ourselves to what only members of one agency can see?

Thank you for Listening