Lupane State University

Building Communities through Knowledge

QUALITY ASSURANCE DIRECTORATE

Quality Assurance Policy

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ABBREVIATIONS

1. **Quality Assurance (QA)**

2. **Quality Circle (QC)**

3. **Quality Assurance Directorate (QAD)**

4. **Internal Quality Assurance(IQA)**

5. **External Quality Assurance (EQA)**

6. **Quality Assurance Policy (QAP)**

7. **Total Quality Management(TQM)**

8. **Quality Assurance Committee (QAC)**

9. **Faculty Quality Assurance Committee (FQAC)**

10. **Departmental Quality Assurance Committee (DQAC)**

11. **Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education (ZIMCHE)**

12. **Lupane State University (LSU)**

13. **Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)**

14. **External Quality Assurance (EQA)**

1. POLICY STATEMENT

1.1   Preamble

Lupane State University (LSU) was established in 2005 in terms of Lupane State University Act [Chapter 25:25] of 2004. The University currently (2016) runs three faculties; Faculty of Agricultural Sciences, Faculty of Commerce and Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences.

The Vision of LSU is *"To be an international premier university in research based knowledge, teaching and learning"*.

The University Mission Statement is "*To contribute research-based knowledge and learning for the development of humanity by working closely with communities and attracting the best researchers and students from Zimbabwe and beyond. The University will be a one stop shop for knowledge based solutions for challenges faced by community groups and the private sector nationally and internationally."*

The Core Values guiding LSU are:
- ➢ *Professionalism,*
- ➢ *Accountability,*
- ➢ *Transparency,*
- ➢ *Innovativeness,*
- ➢ *Diversity,*
- ➢ *Social and Environmental Responsibility.*

Through its Strategic Plan, LSU has defined the direction that it should follow to serve and meet the changing needs of its target market and the society at large by providing quality higher education in Zimbabwe and beyond. Key to achieving this strategy is the development of an effective and efficient Quality Assurance (QA) system underpinned by quality teaching, learning, research, curriculum development, student progression and welfare, quality governance and administrative systems that support the teaching, learning and research processes. Through this Quality Assurance Policy and other supportive University Policies, a Quality Assurance system is now being instituted for the effective and efficient administration of University-wide quality assurance interventions.

1.2   Background & Rationale

Currently Quality Assurance at LSU takes a variety of methods both internal and external. Over the years Internal Quality Assurance within Lupane State University has taken the form of peer review of teaching, student evaluation of teaching and learning, moderation of examination papers by peers and vetting of new programmes by the Programmes Review Committee, before they go through the Academic Board and Senate. External Quality Assurance measures comprise a system of engaging external examiners to review examination papers, and carry out some post-marking moderation, and the engagement of other senior academics from other universities for vetting publications of academic staff that apply for promotion. Our procedures put emphasis on controlling inputs and little attention is given to the processes and outputs. These measures have largely been limited in their scope of effectiveness in coping with the rapid expansion of the University. There has been little capacity to monitor educational performance in a systematic manner and to implement quality related decisions by Senate or Council. To address these critical issues the University has established a Quality Assurance Directorate, which is mandated to develop a Quality Assurance Framework and a Quality Assurance Policy. The Quality Assurance Framework would clearly spell out the Principles, Guidelines and Procedures for implementing institutional quality assurance processes. It is therefore necessary that a Quality Assurance Management Structure be put in place to spearhead the formulation of the University's Quality Assurance Policy and co-ordinate the implementation of that Policy. The Management Structure would constitute of a Senate Quality Assurance Committee, Faculty and Departmental Quality Assurance Committees and the Quality Assurance Directorate. The non-teaching departments would coordinate the implementation of the Quality Assurance Policy through Quality Circles (Quality Team per section/unit). The implementation of the Quality Assurance Policy would be spearheaded by the University Top Management under the leadership of the Vice-Chancellor. The Policy would apply to all units of the University through internal quality assurance mechanisms on a continuous basis and external quality assurance strategies periodically. The Internal Quality Assurance mechanisms would focus on the quality of: programmes and courses; staff; teaching, learning and research experiences; staff/student performance assessment; governance and administration, support services; resources and facilities.

Guided by its vision, mission and core values, the University underscores its determination to assure quality in teaching, learning, research and community service through quality planning, quality assurance (QA), quality control and continuous quality improvement. This Policy

specifies the University's approach to quality assurance and enhancement. The University senior management is committed to the implementation of this Quality Assurance Policy (QAP).

1.3 Quality Assurance Mission Statement

The University's Quality Assurance Mission is:

> *To create consciousness of quality standards and best practices, and promote adherence (compliance) thereto for the efficient and effective delivery of teaching, learning and research, and overall governance of the University in order to safeguard and continuously enhance the quality and standards of Lupane State University awards.*

1.4 Objectives of the Policy

The objectives of the QAP are to:

i. Safeguard and ensure the integrity of academic awards of the University;
ii. Provide guidance in development and implementation of quality assurance and enhancement procedures and practices;
iii. Outline the internal and external quality assurance procedures and practices necessary to realize the vision and mission as well as uphold the core values of the University;
iv. Layout the structure to ensure that quality assurance systems are coordinated and managed with maximum effectiveness; and
v. Facilitate development of a culture of self- evaluation and continuous quality improvement in the University.

1.5 Intended outcomes of the Policy

Successful implementation and management of this Policy will result in outcomes that enhance:

i. Quality Academic provision leading to improved student educational experience;
ii. Continuous Personal Development by staff leading to improved performance in key functions of the University;
iii. Satisfaction and confidence of society and stakeholders in the awards of the university;
iv. Capacity to compete with other higher educational institutions globally; and
v. An ethos of continuous quality improvement in the University.

1.6 Quality Management Approach

The University shall embrace the provisions of Total Quality Management (TQM) in the implementation of this Policy. This entails a holistic approach that views continuous improvement in all aspects of the University operations underpinned by progressive changes in attitudes, practices, structures and systems. This therefore calls for commitment and diligence by every staff members to maintain high standards of work in every aspect of the University operations.

1.7 Responsibility for Policy Implementation

The Vice Chancellor shall oversee the implementation of this Policy.

2 QUALITY ASSURANCE PHILOSOPHIES

2.1 Policy Declaration

The implementation of this Policy shall be the responsibility of everyone in the University.

2.1.1 Shared responsibility

Quality assurance at LSU is a shared responsibility that cuts across all the structures of the University. LSU, as enshrined in its Vision, is committed to academic excellence. This shall be attained through a shared commitment to excellence by everyone in the University. Every staff member shall therefore be responsible and accountable for all quality interventions that fall within their sphere of influence.

2.1.2 Ethos of individual responsibility

Responsibility for delivery of quality service to the University in all its endeavors rests with individual members of staff. Heads of Units/Departments are responsible for ensuring that the provisions of this Policy are met within their Units/Departments.

2.1.3 Definition of Quality

The University embraces the 'fitness-for-purpose' paradigm in its understanding of quality. The University shall deem itself fit-for-purpose if:

a. There are processes and procedures in place that are appropriate for its vision and mission; and
b. There is evidence that these processes and procedures are achieving the specified vision and mission, within the context of the University's shared core values.

2.2   Principles Underpinning the Policy

There are seven principles underpinning this policy. These are:

i.   Developmental process   - QA is a developmental process which does not have an
                            end point.

ii. Continuous improvement - Continuous improvement is a top priority in all aspects of the
                            University functions.

iii. Self-assessment   - The University shall foster an ethos of critical self-assessment in
                            evaluation of its performance at individual, team and institutional
                            levels.

iv. Evidence-based   - Decisions must be based on systematically collected evidence.

v.   Standards   - Set standards shall guide performance of the University in all its
                            key functions.

vi. Benchmarking   - The university shall learn from good practices in other
                            institutions.

vii. Collegiality   - University procedures shall reflect the principles of peer review,
                            collaboration and collegial decision making.

3. QUALITY MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

3.1 Management Levels

The responsibility for quality management at the four levels in the University shall be as follows:

i.   Institutional Level

There shall be a Quality Assurance Directorate (QAD) in the University. The University shall have a Quality Assurance Committee (QAC). The QAC shall be a delegate Committee of Senate.

ii. Faculty Level

Each Faculty shall have a Faculty Quality Assurance Committee (FQAC). The FQAC shall be made up of representatives from each Department in the Faculty. The FQAC shall be chaired by the Deputy Dean.

iii. Department Level

There shall be a Departmental Quality Assurance Committee (DQAC). The Chairperson shall be a senior member of staff and shall represent the Department in the FQAC.

iv. Support Unit/Section Level

Each support Unit/Section shall have a Quality Circle (QC) made up of as many members as deemed fit by the Unit/Section. The QC shall be led by a member who shall represent the Unit in the QAC.

3.2 Quality Assurance Directorate (QAD)

3.2.1 Mandate of the QAD

The QAD shall function as the Vice Chancellor's secretariat on QA issues. The DQA is responsible for ensuring that the awards of the University meet standards commensurate with national and international benchmarks. The QAD is responsible for promoting public confidence in all the awards of the University.

i. External regulatory bodies such as the Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education (ZIMCHE);

ii. Professional bodies; and

iii. Any other bodies relevant to QA- related activities of the University.

3.2.2 Structure of the QAD

The QAD shall be headed by the Director. The Director shall be assisted by the Deputy Director. The Director shall have a complement of staff which shall include an Senior Assistant Registrar, Administrative Assistant, Secretary, Research Assistant and Institutional Analysts.

3.2.3 Functions of the QAD

. The scope of QAD's work includes the following:

i. Developing quality assurance processes and procedures to ensure that the quality of provision and standards of University awards are maintained;

ii.   Setting clear and explicit performance standards in all aspects of University functions. These standards are points of reference which will guide quality reviews;

iii.   Monitoring the implementation of QA processes as per the set standards;

iv.   Spearheading and coordinating internal self-evaluation of both academic and support provision in the University.

v.   Analysis of self-evaluation reports and identification of issues arising therefrom that need attention for improvement;

vi.   Facilitation of external evaluation of the University and accreditation of academic programmes by statutory and professional bodies;

vii.   Monitoring implementation of recommendations arising from internal and external evaluation;

viii.   Monitoring trends in QA matters regionally and internationally and advising the University.

ix.   Synthesis of new approaches to QA matters informed by research in higher education matters.

3.2.4   Financing of the QAD

The QAD shall be funded as follows:

i.   The QAD shall be allocated voted funds;

ii.   The QAD shall mobilize additional resources from external sources to support its functions.

3.3 University Quality Assurance Committee

The QAC shall be a Senate Committee and shall be responsible for QA matters as they relate to all aspects of University functions.

3.3.1   Membership of the University Quality Assurance Committee

Membership of the QAC shall be as follows:

i. Pro-Vice Chancellor (Chairperson)

ii. Deputy Deans of all Faculties

iii. Director of Quality Assurance

iv. Directors of Centres

v. Director of Research and Innovation Services

vi. Deputy Librarian

vii. Director of Information Communication Technology Services

viii. Deputy Registrar Academic

ix. Deputy Registrar Human Resources

x. Dean of Students

xi. Deputy Bursar

xii. Director of Physical Planning, Works and Estates

xiii. Deputy Chief Security Officer

xiv. One representative from each Associate/Affiliate institution

xv. Two students representatives

3.3.2 Expectations for Committee Members

All members of the Quality Assurance Committee:

i. Are expected to be collegial and constructive in approach;

ii. Should attend and participate fully in the work of the committee and consult their constituencies in order to gather input which will inform the committee;

iii. Will need to take collective and individual ownership of issues under the committee's remit and execute the same on behalf of their constituencies;

iv. Are expected to be committed to communicating the work of the Committee to their respective constituencies within the University; and

v. Base their views, decision and actions on empirical evidence.

3.3.3 Terms of Reference

i. Development and implementation of the University's quality assurance and enhancement framework for internal academic reviews and reviews of support services;

ii. Monitory regularly all guidance and requirements issued by professional bodies and regulatory organisations like ZIMCHE, and initiating and coordinating action as appropriate;

iii. Monitoring and oversight of quality assurance and enhancement mechanisms implemented at Unit level including consideration of annual quality reports;

iv. Ensuring through annual quality reports that the QA procedures within Departments meet the standards of the University and the requirements of external bodies;

v. Monitoring and promoting innovation in systems used by Departments/Units for establishing that the standards of their provision are appropriate;

vi. Monitoring of all professional and academic accreditation activities and external assessment activities;

vii. Making use of internal and external assessment data and information in order to identify new strategic issues/areas requiring action and specific innovations in these areas;

viii. Identify and promote enhancement of academic provision and attended support services;

ix. Mobilize resources to support quality assurance and enhancement activities; and

x. Attend to specific recommendations as required by Senate from time to time on QA matters.

3.3.4 Governance

The QAC shall:

i. Report directly to Senate;

ii. Act as delegated by Senate in order to carry out its quality assurance and enhancement interventions;

iii. Have standing sub-Committees, as deemed necessary;

iv. One of such sub-Committees shall have delegated authority for monitoring QA in student support services. This sub-Committee will set the Student Support Services Quality Assurance Framework. Another such sub-Committee shall have

delegated authority for monitoring the Credit Accumulation and Transfer System of the University.

v. Support diversity and variation amongst Faculties/Centres/Departments/Sections where this is beneficial, whilst seeking consistency and common approaches where these are in the best interest of staff and students; and

vi. Identify and agree the ways in which it will interact with other relevant Committees and Units in the University in matters relating to QA.

3.3.5   Operations

i. The QAC shall meet at least four times a year;

ii. The QAC shall develop a work plan at the beginning of each academic year;

iii. Meeting agendas, papers and minutes will be published and circulated in accordance with the University's publication policy; and

iv. The Quality Assurance Directorate will provide secretariat support to the QAC.

3.4   Faculty Quality Assurance Committee

The Faculty QA Committee is responsible to the Faculty Board for quality assurance and enhancement in the Faculty in conformity with the University's quality assurance framework.

3.4.1   Composition

i. The Deputy Dean of the Faculty shall chair the Committee;

ii. A representative of each Department in the Faculty;

iii. One professor in the Faculty;

iv. Two student representatives;

v. Representative of the Technical Staff; and

vi. Representative of Secretarial staff

3.4.2 Terms of Reference

  i. Promote a quality culture in the Faculty;

  ii. Oversee the delivery of the University's QA framework for academic programmes;

  iii. Oversight of accreditation of all academic programme in the Faculty by regulatory bodies such as ZIMCHE and professional bodies;

  iv. Monitor quality standards and practices for courses and degree programmes;

  v. Validating new courses and programmes and monitoring any changes to academic programmes;

  vi. Monitor annual reviews of undergraduate and graduate courses and programmes and manage the outcomes of the reviews;

  vii. Prepare the annual Faculty quality assurance report; and

  viii. Attend to specific issues as recommended by the University Quality Assurance Committee from time to time.

3.4.3 Operation

 i. The Committee shall meet at least six times per annum; and

 ii. The Senior Assistant Registrar of the Faculty shall provide secretariat support to the Committee.

3.5 Departmental Quality Assurance Committee

The DQAC is responsible to the Department Board for quality assurance and enhancement in the Department in conformity with the University's quality assurance framework.

3.5.1 Composition

 i. A senior academic in the Department shall chair the Committee;

 ii. Representative of each specialization area in the Department;

 iii. Two student representatives; and

 iv. Representatives of the Technical Staff.

3.5.2 Terms of Reference

 i. Promote a quality culture in the Department;

    ii.   Oversight of accreditation of all academic programmes in the Department by regulatory authorities such as ZIMCHE and professional bodies;

    iii.   Monitor quality standards and practices for courses and degree rpogrammes in the Department;

    iv.   Prepare the annual Department quality assurance report; and

    v.   Attend to specific issues in the Department as recommended by the FQAC and the QAC from time to time.

3.5.3 Operation

    i.   The DQAC shall meet at least six times per annum; and

    ii.   The Department Secretary shall provide secretariat support to the Committee.

3.6 Support Services Quality Assurance

3.6.1 Quality Circle

    i.   Each support services Unit/Section shall have a Quality Circle;

    ii.   The composition of the QC shall be as deemed fit by each Unit/Section;

    iii.   The QC shall be led by a member selected by the Unit/Section, and

    iv.   The leader of the QC shall represent the Unit in the QAC.

3.6.2 Terms of Reference

    i.   Promote an ethos of quality assurance and improvement in the Unit/Section;

    ii.   Oversight of all matters related to provision of quality services to students, staff and external stakeholders;

    iii.   Monitoring and enhancing standards of service provision;

    iv.   Prepare the annual quality assurance report for the Unit/Section; and

    v.   Attend to specific issues in the Unit/Section as recommended by the QAC from time to time.

3.6.3 Operation

    i.   The QC shall meet at least six times per annum ; and

    ii.   The Unit/Section Secretary shall provide secretariat support to the QC.

3.7 Tenure of Committee Membership

i. All elected members of staff in QA related Committees shall serve for a period of two years and shall be eligible for re-appointment; and

ii. Tenure for student representatives shall be one year.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN QUALITY ASSURANCE

Responsibility for quality assurance and enhancement lies with all members of staff in the various academic and support Departments in the University. The entirety of the University is expected to contribute to the quality of academic provision. The major drivers of this Policy are staff and students.

4.1 Roles of Students

To enhance the quality of student learning, students have the following responsibilities:

i. Embrace a culture of deep and holistic learning;

ii. Attend regularly scheduled learning and teaching activities;

iii. Adequately prepare for all learning and teaching activities such as tutorials, seminars, and assessment;

iv. Spend the recommended time on student independent learning for all course units;

v. Accept and learn from academic advice that arises from assessment of their work;

vi. Objectively evaluate teaching staff, courses and support services; and

vii. Use effectively the committee system representation to contribute to improvements of academic provision.

4.2 Roles of Staff

To enhance the quality of academic provision and support services, University staff shall have the following responsibilities:

i. Should be professional in the conduct of their duties. Adequately prepare for academic undertakings and execute the same with utmost professionalism;

ii.   Provide students with appropriate development in competence areas that underpin teaching, research, community service and student support;

iii.   Dutifully adhere to provisions of University's policies such as: Teaching and Learning Policy, Research Policy; and Student Assessment Processes and procedures;

iv.   Diligently align all work done in the University to the core mission of the University in teaching, learning, research and community service; and

v.   Reflect on their performance and seek to continuously improve their performance.

5.   QUALITY ASSURANCE MECHANISMS

This policy shall apply to all academic and support Units in the University.   The University shall ensure that at all times it has well defined criteria for measuring and judging performance standards in all its core activities.   Quality assurance processes shall include mechanisms for the following:

a)   Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)

b)   External Quality Assurance (EQA)

5.1   Internal Quality Assurance Mechanisms

In fulfilling the obligation to ensure high quality in undertakings carried out in its constituent Units, the University will consistently and continuously implement IQA mechanisms.

5.1.1   Internal Quality Assurance Mechanisms

Internal QA shall include mechanisms to assess and improve the following:

i.   Students enrolled

ii.   Programme design

iii.   Program review

iv.   Teaching and learning

v.   Student assessment

vi.   Academic and support services staff

vii.   Research

viii. Community service

ix.   Support services

x.   Student welfare

xi.   Resources and facilities

5.1.1.1   Quality of Students Enrolled

The University shall strive to attract and recruit talented students for all its programmes. In pursuit of this objective, the University shall assess the following:

i.   Entering grades of students; and

ii.   Award of entrance and exit scholarship to students.

5.1.1.2   Quality of Programme Design

Assessment of quality in programme design shall consider the following:

i.   The University shall have guidelines for development of new programmes and their approval by Senate;

ii.   Ensure that each programme is designed by well-qualified staff and the design process is based on guidelines and procedures approved by Senate;

iii. Each programme should be consistent with the University's vision and mission (mandate fit) and address critical national human resource requirements;

iv.   The curriculum must at least meet the minimum body of knowledge for the discipline as stipulated by ZIMCHE and professional bodies ; and

v.   A programme should be coherently structured; learning outcomes clearly stated and available physical and human resource should meet the requirements of the programme.

5.1.1.3   Quality of Programme Review

The University shall undertake periodic reviews of its academic programmes. The programme review cycle shall normally be four years (for eight-semester programmes) and five years (for ten-semester programmes). There shall be mandatory annual reviews, which shall cumulatively inform the end of cycle review. The DQA shall manage the programme review cycle.

The purpose of programme review is to evaluate three aspects of each academic programme:

     i.   Quality of programme inputs;

    ii.   Quality of programme processes; and

   iii.   Quality of programme outputs and impact.

The mechanisms of programme review shall be specified in a document on Guidelines for Academic Programme Review.

5.1.1.4   Quality of Teaching and Learning

Assessment of quality in teaching and learning shall be guided by the following:

    i.   The Teaching and Learning Committee has the responsibility to promote effective teaching and learning;

    ii.   The Teaching and Learning Policy shall specify practices and standards in teaching and learning;

   iii.   Due regard shall be given to new innovative approaches to delivery and learning which transcend the:

    (a) Traditional concept of the lecturer/student interaction;

    (b) Lecturer – tutorial model as the *de facto* teaching approaches;

    iv. Well established tools shall be used to assess teaching through peer and student evaluations. These Tools shall be specified in the Teaching and Learning Policy;

v. Appointment and promotion procedures that pertain to teaching shall be regularly reviewed to promote recruitment of competent staff;

vi. The University shall have a Student Admission Policy. Admission of students into programmes shall be on the basis of established and regularly updated criteria that allows fair and transparent recruitment;

vii. In order to facilitate teaching and learning the University shall ensure that:

(a) Programmes are effectively delivered through use of appropriate technologies and pedagogic skills;

(b) Delivery of programmes which emphasizes attainment of learning outcomes that encompass the competence domains of knowledge, skills and values;

(c) There is a student assessment and peer review of lecturers

viii. The University shall strive to provide necessary resources and infrastructure for effective delivery of programmes; and

ix. The University shall have a continuous professional development programme to improve pedagogical skills of academic staff.

5.1.1.5   Quality of Student Assessment

The University's main goal in teaching and learning is to produce well-groomed graduates who are knowledgeable, skilled, and of sound professional, social and civic ethos. Assessment for attainment of these attributes shall be guided by the following:

i. The University shall have a Student Assessment Policy;

ii. The Student Assessment Policy shall specify the mechanisms for both formative and summative assessment;

iii. The Student Assessment Policy shall also specify the modalities for external and internal moderation of students' work that ensure validity and reliability of assessment procedures; and

iv.   Departments shall ensure at all times that student assessment is constructively aligned to learning outcomes.

5.1.1.6   Quality of Academic and Support Services Staff

The University's appointment, grading and promotion policies shall guide the recruitment process of academic and support services staff. Assessment of quality in academic and professional staff shall include:

i.   Adequacy of qualifications for the discipline taught or services rendered;

ii.   Student and peer evaluations of teaching and scholarly works or customer satisfaction surveys;

iii.   Performance management by the Head of Department or Unit;

iv.   Involvement in continuing professional development as determined by the Head of Department or Unit;

v.   The DQA shall analyze data from evaluations by peers, students and customers, and recommend appropriate actions for each member of academic staff for the purpose of continuous improvement.

vi.   Promotions shall be guided by the Academic Staff Grading and Promotions Ordinance and relevant promotions protocols for support services staff;

vii.   The Staff Development Committee shall regularly review the Staff Development Policy which shall guide staff development initiatives in the University;

viii.   The Staff Development Policy shall ensure that staff continue to meet high academic and profession standards; and

ix.   All members of staff, irrespective of their designation (full-time, part-time, etc) shall be subject to this QA Policy.

5.1.1.7   Quality of Research

The University is committed to achieving the highest quality in its research processes. The University values research as one of its core deliverables. To ensure quality in research the University shall ensure that:

- i.   The Research Policy encompasses a Research Quality Framework;

- ii.   The Research Quality Framework enables the Senate Research Committee to ensure that:

    - (a)   All research undertaken in the University is properly approved, conducted, managed and evaluated;

    - (b)   All research takes into account ethical and environmental considerations;

    - (c)   Research results are integrated into teaching and learning and evaluated for their commercial value;

    - (d)   There are clear mechanisms for dissemination of research results for the benefit of society and industry.

- iii.   At all times the Research Policy is adequately and successfully implemented;

- iv.   Researchers collaborate with internal and external partners; and

- v.   Research papers are published in reputable journals that guarantee a high citation impact.

5.1.1.8   Quality of Community Service

The University has an obligation to provide expert services to the community and influence industry through its research and intellectual outputs. To this end, the University shall:

- i.   Establish a strategy to enhance provision of its services to society;

ii. Have a mechanism for planning, executing and assessing community service activities of its staff; and

iii. Ensure that community engagement contributes to the development of society.

5.1.1.9   Quality of Support Services

Efficient and effective support services are needed to enhance the quality of academic provision. The University shall continually strive to provide properly aligned support services to academic staff and students. In this regard, the University shall ensure that:

i.   All support services are adequately aligned to attainment of the University's mission of teaching, learning, research and community service;

ii. All undertakings of support Units are carried out efficiently and in the most cost effective manner;

iii. All support Units have well-defined mechanisms of collecting feedback from staff and students in terms of their satisfaction with service provision;

iv. Such feedback shall be used to continuously improve service delivery, and

v.   There is a functional and appropriate records management system.

5.1.1.10   Quality of Student Welfare

The University shall strive to provide a conducive environment for students' learning that nurtures holistic development. In creating and continuously improving such an environment, the University shall ensure that:

i.   There is a student Welfare Quality Assurance Framework;

ii. The Student Welfare Quality Assurance Framework shall specify quality dimensions and assessment procedures for aspects of student support that include academic, social, civic and professional services;

iii.   Student support is continuously enhanced through adoption of innovations and updates in provision of such services; and

iv.   The Division of Student Affairs and the Students Executive Council shall work hand in hand in administering the Student Welfare Quality Assurance Framework.

5.1.1.11   Quality of Resources and Facilities

The University shall have mechanisms to design, procure, manage and improve its physical resources and facilities in order to support student learning. Assessment of quality of resource shall include assessing:

i.   Availability and appropriateness of learning infrastructure, which shall include;

(a)   Facilities for practical learning such as laboratories, workshops and equipment;

(b)   Teaching and learning space and facilities

(c)   Library and information facilities

ii.   Availability and accessibility of IT resources such as internet, computer software and hardware and

iii.   Adequacy of educational technologies.

5.1.2   External Quality Assurance Mechanisms

To facilitate external assessment of its performance, the University shall enlist the following practices:

i.   Engagement of external stakeholders in programme design;

ii.   External review of all academic programmes by regulatory and professional bodies;

iii.   Use External Examiners in all its undergraduate and graduate programmes; and

iv.   Use External benchmarks for support services.

5.1.2.1   External Stakeholders in Programme Design

The University shall at all times ensure that all new programmes meet standard requirements in terms of market legitimacy and academic merit.   In pursuit of this objective the University shall ensure that:

i.   Set guidelines that promulgate processes and procedures for introduction of new programmes include consultation of external stakeholder; and

ii.   Evidence is provided of the contributions of stakeholders to new programmes.

5.1.2.2   External Programme Review

Other than statutory and professional bodies, the University shall, after every five years, appoint a Panel of external experts to carry out institutional audits and programme reviews.

External review of academic programmes shall be done by statutory bodies and professional bodies such as ZIMCHE where applicable. The mechanisms for such reviews shall be as per the mandatory requirements of each body.

5.1.2.3   External Examining

The University embraces external examining as a tool to enhance the quality of its programmes and assessment of students.   The University shall engage External Examiners to evaluate academic provision. The University shall have:

i.   Guidelines for external examination;

ii.   The Guidelines shall specify procedures for undergraduate programmes and graduate programmes (both coursework and research graduate programmes); and

iii.   The procedure shall be reviewed periodically but not less than once every four years.

5.1.3   Quality Assurance Mechanisms for Affiliate/Associate Institutions

The University has Affiliate/Associate institutions which award qualifications under the seal of the University. In pursuit of promoting high standards in its Affiliate/ Associate institutions the University shall ensure that:

    i.   Each Affiliate/Associate institution has its own quality assurance framework;

    ii.   The Quality Assurance framework meets set standards for operations in the Associate/Affiliate institution;

    iii.   The Quality Assurance framework shall be part of the agreement between the University and the Affiliate/Associate institution;

    iv.   A representative of the Affiliate/Associate institution shall sit in the QAC; and

    v.   The representative shall bring matters of quality assurance in the Affiliate/Associate institution to the attention of the QAC.

5.1.4   Performance Indicators

The University shall use well-defined performance indicators to indicate and monitor performance in all its key functions. The University shall develop relevant and appropriate performance indicators for each function.

6   IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

The University shall use multiple strategies to ensure that the objectives of this Policy are achieved.

6.1   Frequent Communication

The University shall keep staff and students fully informed of all QA initiatives and developments through publications, newsletters and University websites, and reports to Faculties and Senate. In addition the following strategies shall be employed:

    i.   Associate/Affiliate institutions and Faculties may invite staff from the QAD to their meetings dealing with quality assurance matters when   necessary;

    ii.   The Vice Chancellor shall meet periodically with Deans, Deputy Deans and Heads of Departments/ Units/Sections for the purpose of brainstorming, consideration of new ideas and sharing information related to quality assurance;

iii. The University shall encourage Discussion Forums which provide informal opportunities to discuss quality assurance issues, and information arising thereof may feed into formal committee structures; and

iv. At least one workshop shall be held each year for Deans, Deputy Deans, Directors and Heads of Departments/Units/Section for the purpose of sharing information and formulation of strategies to meet future challenges.

6.2 Client Experience Surveys

Client satisfaction is a dimension of quality embedded in the fitness-for-purpose model. The University shall regularly and systematically organize client satisfaction surveys. Clients shall include students, staff, employers and the community. The aim of the surveys is to gather feedback on experiences with University services and provisions. In order to ensure systematic collection of information, the QAD shall:

i. Develop appropriate tools for data collection;

ii. Coordinate data collection activities and analysis of the results; and

iii. Disseminate results to units, and ensure that all Units will formulate and implement strategies to improve areas needing attention.

6.2.1 Student Experience Surveys

The surveys will provide students the opportunity to provide feedback on their experiences with the following:

i. Individual courses and programmes as a whole;

ii. Teaching and learning;

iii. Industrial attachment; and

iv. Provisions and services of all support Units.

6.2.2 Alumni Experience Surveys

Alumni surveys shall ordinarily focus on students within two or three years of graduation. The purpose of alumni experience surveys shall be to collect information on:

i. Extent to which their studies at the University met their post-qualification needs,; and

ii.   Ways in which programme can be made more relevant and responsive to dynamic markets.

6.2.3   Industry Experience Surveys

Industry experience surveys are ordinarily part of academic programme reviews held once every four years. Departments shall be expected to carry out employer experience surveys more frequently. Industry experience surveys shall provide feedback on the relevance of academic programmes, their ability to meet market needs and ways in which they can be improved.

6.2.4   Staff Experience Surveys

The University shall regularly conduct staff experience surveys for both academic and support staff. For academic staff, the general aim of these surveys shall be to collect information on:

i.   Satisfaction with quality of teaching and learning;
ii.   Satisfaction with support services; and
iii. Proposals for required interventions and improvement.

6.2.5   Satisfaction of the Community

The QAD, in conjunction with relevant Units shall periodically conduct surveys of various stakeholders in the community in order to measure their attitudes towards the University. The surveys shall aim to find out the following:

i.   Perceptions of the community about the relevance of the University;
ii.   General social acceptance of the University; and
iii. Extent to which the University is meeting or addressing community needs and challenges.

6.3   Audits, Reviews and Accreditation

The QAD shall regularly arrange and coordinate academic audits, institutional audits, programme reviews and facilitate programme accreditation by ZIMCHE and professional bodies.

6.3.1   Academic Audits

The Quality Assurance Committee shall have oversight of academic audits. The QAC shall set up a Committee of auditors who will carry out academic audits. The Committee of auditors shall be made up of senior academics. Academic audits shall evaluate the following:

     i.   Articulation of intended learning outcomes;

    ii.   Design of programme curriculum;

   iii.   Design of teaching and learning;

   iv.   Student assessment

    v.   Benchmarking with good practice, and

   vi.   Implementation of quality education.

6.3.2   External Institutional Audits and Programme Reviews

Institutional audits shall focus on the structure and functioning of the University's administrative and governance organs. External academic review shall include evaluation of programme inputs, processes and programme outputs and impact. These processes shall be guided by the following:

     i.   Senate shall approve the processes and procedures for external institutional audits and academic reviews;

    ii.   External institutional audits and programme reviews shall be done by a Panel of experts appointed by the University.

   iii.   The Panel shall act on the basis of specific terms of reference prepared by the QAD;

   iv.   Procedures for External Academic Review will include but not limited to; review of documents, observations, and interviews with staff, students and management, and site visits; and

    v.   The QAD shall coordinate external institutional audits and programme reviews.

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6.3.4   Programme Accreditation

It is mandatory in Zimbabwe for all academic programmes in higher Education to be accredited by ZIMCHE and professional bodies where applicable. To this end, the University shall ensure that all its academic programmes are accredited by qualified, legal and competent agencies. The QAD shall:

i.   Cause all academic units to prepare an application portfolio based on the requirements of the accrediting agency;

ii.   Supervise the application process; and

iii. Receive results of the application and pass them to the concerned Units.

7.   POLICY REVIEW

This Quality Assurance Policy shall be reviewed periodically to ensure adequacy and relevancy to all University quality assurance interventions in academic provision. The Policy shall be reviewed at least every five years or more frequently if the need arises.

Policy effective after approval by Senate and University Council.

Senate Approval:………………………………….   **Date…………………**

Council Approval:……………………………   **Date…………………**