

APPENDIX III GUIDELINES FOR THE PREPARATION OF THE INSTITUTIONAL QUALITY ASSURANCE REPORT

I PURPOSE AND FOCUS OF THE MONITORING PROCESS

The specific objective of the monitoring function is to review the policy, processes and procedures used by institutions to assess the quality of existing programs and other functions as appropriate, to ensure they are performing adequately as quality control and quality improvement mechanisms.

The process is intended to be formative; institutional policies and practices will be reviewed with a view to provide assistance and advice to institutions.

The overall monitoring process aims to provide answers to the following two questions:

1. Is the institution following its own quality assurance policy?
2. Could the institution's quality assurance policy be modified to better ensure the quality of its academic programs and services or is it satisfactory as is?

The monitoring function focuses on three elements:

- The institutional quality assurance policy;
- The institution's quality assessment practices; and
- Follow-up mechanisms.

II FOCUS OF THE INSTITUTIONAL QUALITY ASSURANCE REPORT

The institutional quality assurance report is both descriptive and analytical. It must include clear statements as to how well the quality assessment and quality improvement processes are performing, and whether these processes are adequate for the task.

The institutional quality assurance report should engage as many individuals involved in quality assurance within the institution as possible, in a frank, objective and balanced appraisal of strengths and areas for improvement. The institutional quality assurance report is the primary document on which the monitoring process is based and it is therefore important that it be well organized, clearly written and concise.

In answering the above, the institutional quality assurance report should provide the following:

- a. What is the factual situation?
- b. What is the institution's assessment of the situation?
- c. How are the results addressed?

The institutional quality assurance report should only rarely exceed 30 pages, excluding appendices.

III SUGGESTED STRUCTURE AND CONTENT OF THE INSTITUTIONAL QUALITY ASSURANCE REPORT

1. Description of the University's Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures
 - 1.1 Brief history of the policy.
 - 1.2 Scope and objectives of the policy.
 - 1.3 Mechanism(s) in place to assess interdisciplinary programs.
 - 1.4 Established assessment cycle schedule.

- 1.5 Linkage between the policy's objectives:
 - a. program quality improvement;
 - b. the decision-making process within the institution;
 - c. the realization of stated student outcomes; and
 - d. the economic, cultural and social development of the institution's communities.
 - 1.6 Link between the program/unit assessment process and accreditation requirements.
 - 1.7 Assessment criteria.
 - 1.8 Guidelines for the preparation of the program/unit self-study.
 - 1.9 Terms of reference and selection process of external reviewers.
 - 1.10 Procedures to allow for the participation of students, faculty members, staff, graduates, and the community-at-large.
 - 1.11 Procedures/timelines to review the policy itself; including procedures to seek/include stakeholder input on the policy as a whole.
 - 1.12 Any other element the institution believes the Committee must be aware of to proceed with the assessment of the policy.
2. Assessment of the University's Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures
- 2.1 Policy Objectives
 - a. Extent to which the policy is consistent with the institution's mission and values.
 - b. Extent to which the scope is appropriate.
 - c. Extent to which policy promotes *continuous* quality improvement.
 - d. Appropriateness of assessment criteria.
 - e. Adaptability of self-study guidelines to the varying needs and contexts of individual programs.
 - f. Extent to which established guidelines ensure the external review process remains objective.
 - 2.2 Policy implementation
 - a. Extent to which the program/unit self-studies address the institution's assessment criteria.
 - b. Extent to which the program/unit self-studies are student-centered.
 - c. Extent to which the program/unit self-studies aim to assess the quality of learning.
 - d. Extent to which the policy and procedures monitor the continuing relevance of the program/unit.
 - e. Extent to which the process assesses of the adequacy of human, physical and financial resources.
 - f. Appropriateness and effectiveness of the link between the program/unit assessment process and accreditation requirements.
 - g. Extent to which students, graduates, faculty members, staff and the community-at-large participate in the review process.
 - h. Extent to which the external assessment process has been carried out in an objective fashion.
 - i. Extent to which experts selected during the peer review process have the appropriate expertise.
 - j. Extent to which the required follow-up action has generally been undertaken.
 - k. Extent to which the policy has been reviewed (to include a description of the process, timeframe, extent to which stakeholder input was sought and included).

2.3 Policy Administration

- a. Appropriateness and effectiveness of the lead coordinating or administrative unit.
- b. Effectiveness of support offered to programs and units being assessed.
- c. Appropriateness and effectiveness of the follow-up mechanisms in place.
- d. Extent to which the assessment results have been appropriately disseminated.
- e. Extent to which the process has informed the decision-making process within the institution.
- f. Extent to which the schedule of assessments has been followed.
- g. Appropriateness of assessment schedule.
- h. Appropriateness of procedures/timelines to review the policy itself (including appropriateness of procedures to seek stakeholder input).

3. Conclusion

- 3.1 Is the university doing what it should be doing in the area of quality assurance?
- 3.2 Solutions to address any shortcomings.

Appendices (to institutional report)

- I. Institutional policy.
- II. List of all program or unit assessments conducted in the last seven years (The institution may indicate which units or programs in that list reflect particularly well the institution's mission and values).
- III. Schedule of forthcoming assessments.