UNIVERSITY OF VENDA

PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW POLICY

DRAFT POLICY

VERSION NUMBER	DATE	AUTHOR	DESCRIPTION	REVIEWED BY	REVIEW DATE
1.01	2012.11	IPQA	First draft	IPQA	7 November 2012
1.02	2013.05	IPQA	Second draft	School Boards and Policy Review Workshop	May 2013
1.03	2013.03	IPQA	Third Draft	School Boards	September 2013

Table of Contents

1. INTRODUCTION

The University of Venda has established this policy in order to govern the development and review of its academic programmes. This policy provides a transparent framework for the Senate to assure the University and its stakeholders that the University academic programmes:

- are aligned with the University's Mission and Strategic Plan and meet the needs of students, staff, workplace and society in general;
- incorporate a regular programme review to ensure the on-going relevance of academic programmes to its stakeholders.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of the *Programme Development and Review Policy* is to provide information and guidance on matters related to the development, review, and discontinuation of academic programmes. It provides a context for university curriculum development and renewal throughout the academic programme's life cycle; it provides a basis for curriculum decisions, including the development of programme procedures and processes.

The policy for programme development and review is designed to:

2.1 Ensure that the University of Venda complies with all relevant current legislation and other national standards which govern programme development and review.

2.2 Ensure that, in all Schools and academic departments, centres and institutes, the concerns and/or wishes of students, parents (where appropriate) and other interested parties are taken into account in the process of developing a suitable curriculum for particular programme.

2.3 Ensure that, in all Schools, academic departments, centres and institutes, account is taken of the prior learning and the divergent views that the stakeholders bring to the

university, and that their views on the nature and content of the curriculum are fully considered, where possible and appropriate.

2.4 Ensure that appropriate arrangements exist in all Schools and Departments for effectively planning, developing, maintaining and reviewing the programme.

2.5 Ensure that all documentation identified within this policy is systematically reviewed, and to ensure that such documentation is readily available for inspection by those authorised.

2.6 Ensure that the Quality Assurance Board takes ultimate responsibility for maintaining the quality of the programmes offered to students in all Schools and Departments.

2.7 facilitate the design and development of high quality programmes that meet recognised academic standards as measured by strategic module performance data;

2.8 allow the University to be responsive to market opportunities as measured by the ability to secure strategic outcomes;

2.9 facilitate strong links to the University's strategic planning and review systems and its programme development processes to support the University's strategic objectives;

2.10 Support the design, development, implementation and review of modules through efficient and effective consultation with relevant internal and external stakeholders.

3. DEFINITIONS

A *Programme* is a purposeful and structured set of learning experiences that leads to a qualification. Programmes may be discipline-based, professional, career-focused, trans-, inter- or multi-disciplinary in nature. A programme has recognized entry and exit points. All higher education programmes must have a core component. The internal organization of programmes is otherwise not prescribed by this document.

A *module* is a coherent collection of classes which together form a distinct segment of a programme of study. It is learning experience that is described by explicit learning outcomes assessed at a named level.

Module descriptor is an outline and summary of topics to be covered in an academic module or lecture. It describes the content and expectations of a module, the grading policy, test dates, a list of assignments and projects, due dates, and related information such as required textbooks and other module materials, the name of the facilitator, the facilitator's office hours, contact information, etc.

Assessment is a general term that embraces all methods used to judge the performance of learners. It is the process of collecting evidence of learners' work to measure and make judgments about the achievement or non-achievement of specified National Qualifications Framework standards or qualifications.

Delivery modes refer to a variety of methods used to interact with students. Examples include, but are not restricted to, traditional face-to-face formats, web delivery, hybrid modules and self-directed learning.

Learning outcomes are statements describing essential, complex performances. They indicate what a leaner is expected to know, understand or do as a result of a learning experience.

Programme life cycle refers to the development stages experienced by a programme from conception to closure.

Programme team includes individuals and academic staff with knowledge and expertise in the specific field, the dean, vice dean, and may include the technician/technologist.

Academic Staff includes all members of the University actively engaged in the teaching, assessment or evaluation of the specified learning programme.

Stakeholders include any individual, organization or statutory bodies that perform an active role within the specified academic programme.

Monitoring is the regular oversight of the implementation of a module or a programme to monitor change over time. It is usually undertaken by interested internal parties for developmental purposes. It may use formal or informal methods, make use of existing data or generate new data.

Evaluation is the systematic application of social science research procedures to assess the conceptualization, design, implementation or outcomes of programmes. Evaluation leads to evidence-based judgments about the quality, effectiveness, efficiency, relevance or impact of a programme, service or product. Evaluation can be used as a management tool to judge and improve organizational activities and processes.

Review is a long-term formal procedure that includes both monitoring and evaluation and both formative and summative purposes. It usually includes an element of self-review by insiders followed by external validation and assessment by external parties.

4. POLICY STATEMENTS

4.1 The University of Venda is committed to programme development and review process which is inclusive and consultative, incorporating expertise from a range of stakeholders during the design phase and the preparation of documentation to support the approval decision by Senate.

4.2 Curriculum is the shared responsibility of programme team members, who collaboratively develop, review and revise the programme. Development and renewal of programme will be influenced by government guidelines, emerging workplace needs, stakeholder inputs, including requirements of the statutory bodies, university policies, technology and resources.

4.3 A learning programme is outcomes-based and learner-centred. Content, learning resources, learning activities, assessment and evaluation all derive from, and align with, learning outcomes.

4.4 The primary vehicle for communicating the learning programme to students, academic staff, administrators and other stakeholders is a module descriptor.

4.5 Pathways to approval, with varying requirements for consultation and documentation depending on the scale and scope of the proposed programme development and review, are informed by early assessment of the viability and risk associated with the programme development.

5. POLICY PRINCIPLES

The University of Venda's programme development and review policy is based on the following principles:

5.1 Programme development is consistent with UNIVEN's vision, mission and values and supports the objectives outlined in the University's Teaching and Learning Policy.

5.2 Programme development and review are an integral part of the University's annual strategic planning cycle.

5.3 Approval processes provide the flexibility to be responsive to market demands and opportunities and incorporate strategic consideration of market issues, viability and resource implications.

5.4 Widespread consultation with both internal and external stakeholders will occur during the programme development and review process.

5.5 The programme development process provides an opportunity for a thorough review of the risks and opportunities offered by new modules, including any financial and resourcing implications.

5.6 Programme development processes ensure that curriculum is based on the principles for curriculum design.

5.7 A learning programme is purposeful, intentional, current and relevant with labour market needs.

5.8 A learning Programme provides active learning opportunities to maximize student engagement.

5.9 A learning Programme recognises diversity within our communities and contributes to the development of a respectful learning environment.

5.10 A learning Programme aligns content, learning resources, and assessment with learning outcomes, regardless of delivery modes.

6. POLICY OBJECTIVES

Specifically the objectives of the University of Venda Programme Development and Review Policy are to:

6.1 Provide a framework for an efficient programme development and review system with enforceable requirements and norms.

6.2 Coordinate and monitor the programme development and review actions within sections of the university, that is, schools and academic departments, centres and institutes.

6.3 Describe the programme development and review system and strategies in place at the university in order to achieve the strategic objectives of the university.

6.4 Ensure that all members of the university community are aware of, and support the institution's approach to programme development and review.

6.5 Put structures in place in order to monitor, evaluate and review processes and procedures in programme development and review within the institution.

6.6 Ensure that there is institutional quality assurance accountability required of the university on a national and statutory level.

6.7 Ensure that the quality of the university's core business of teaching, learning, research, and community engagement, as well as that the supporting processes are maintained and improved through critical self-evaluation.

6.8 Ensure that academic departments adhere to the policies that they have developed.

7. REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The following documents form part of the regulatory framework of this policy:

7.1 The Higher Education Act 101 of 1997

7.2 The Higher Education Quality Committee (2004) Framework for Programme Accreditation

7.3 The Higher Education Quality Committee (2004) Criteria for Programme Accreditation

7.4 The Higher Education Quality Committee (2004) Improving Teaching and Learning Resources

7.5 Education White Paper 3: A programme for the transformation of Higher Education

7.6 The Council on Higher Education (2012) The Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework

7.7 The Department of Education (2009) Classification of Educational Subject Matter

7.8 South African Qualifications Authority (2012) Level Descriptors for the South African National Qualifications Framework.

7.9 Department of Education (2005) Minimum Admission Requirements for Higher Certificate, Diploma and Bachelor Degree Programmes Requiring a National Senior Certificate

7.10 Department of Education (2009) Minimum Admission Requirements for Higher Certificate, Diploma and Bachelor Degree Programmes Requiring a National Certificate (Vocational) at Level Four of the National Qualifications Framework

8. LINKS TO OTHER UNIVERSITY OF VENDA POLICIES AND RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

8.1 Teaching and Learning Policy

8.2 The Monitoring and Evaluation of Teaching and Learning Policy

8.3 The Assessment Policy

8.4 Termination of Academic Programme Policy

8.5 Research and Innovation Policy

8.6 Community Engagement Policy

8.7 Human Resources Policies

8.8 Finance Policies

8.9 Plagiarism Policy

8.10 The University of Venda Statute

8.11 UNIVEN Strategic Plan

8.12 Relevant UNIVEN Policies and documents approved by Council

9. SCOPE

The Programme Development and Review Policy is intended for use by all academic staff and academic administrators who are involved in the development, approval of new and revised programmes as well as the review of academic programmes at the University of Venda.

10. REVIEW DATE

The policy will be reviewed after every five years or as and when the need arises.

11. APPROVAL

This policy must be approved by University Council on recommendation from:

- The Senate

12. THE APPROACH OF THE UNIVERSITY TO PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW

12.1 Roles and responsibilities

a) Departments

Departments are responsible for the following: developing the programme and associated approval documentation; notifying relevant stakeholders of proposed programme

developments in a timely manner, preferably during the annual planning process; ensuring appropriate consultation with stakeholders; providing assurance to School Boards and Senate that the proposed curriculum development is aligned to University strategy and complies with relevant University policies. The departments are also responsible for implementing the learning programmes when they are approved. They are also responsible for reviewing the content of the programme on an annual basis.

The academic Department must seek input from IPQA, HEMIS and CHETL when developing and reviewing programmes. The programme should also be sent to external experts for review before being sent to School Board.

b) *School Boards*

The School Boards are responsible for approving the following programme developments:

- Changes to an existing module which involves: contextualization of an existing approved module for customized delivery to new students; module changes which do not alter the credit point values of any structural elements of the module or the learning outcomes of the module; module delivery changes which are of such a limited nature that they do not impact the whole learning programme

- A new or revised study area based on an existing discipline

- Discontinued modules, study areas and units;

- New or revised modules and module outlines including offering of a new module, changes to approved delivery options including mode and location, and new or changed module outlines (School Boards may choose to delegate this approval to a departmental committee or authorized officer).The School Boards are responsible for recommending to Senate the programme developments.

c) *Academic Planning Committee*

The Academic Planning Committee will be responsible for making recommendations for approval by Senate of the University programmes in consultation with the relevant Schools. The Academic Planning Committee is a subcommittee of Senate. Programmes that need accreditation by professional bodies must be sent at an appropriate time depending on the requirements of the professional body.

d) Senate

The University Senate is responsible for approving a new module; changes to an existing module which involves changes to the learning outcomes of the module, the module structure including changes to the credit point values of the structural elements of the module, or changes to total credit points for the module; module delivery changes of sufficient magnitude that they require updating; and a new study area which is a new discipline for the University.

The Senate is responsible for reporting to Council on approved programme developments.

e) Council

The University Council is responsible for ratifying programme developments approved by Senate.

f) Institutional Planning and Quality Assurance and Centre for Higher Education Teaching and Learning

The Centre for Higher Education Teaching and Learning (CHETL) and Institutional Planning and Quality Assurance (IPQA) are responsible for providing appropriate support and advice during programme development and curriculum design; assuring that any issues are satisfactorily resolved by the relevant department. These two divisions are responsible for supporting and facilitating the development and approval of new programmes and the

review of existing programmes. They play a major role in the development, approval and review processes.

12.2 Programme planning, development, approval and review

The development and review of the learning programme will be coordinated centrally using a consultative processes and external expertise as required. University academics will provide expertise to define context and content for the curriculum. External stakeholders will provide additional input to ensure the broader context relating to future workplace requirements, technologies, policy and strategic directions are considered to be valid and place the curriculum appropriately in relation to demand and to ensure the University assumes appropriate accountability to students. The goals of the programmes will be clearly articulated to provide the framework for developing competencies and output objectives. In turn these will guide the selection of content and the design and development of teaching strategies to construct and deliver student learning. The curriculum will be documented using the structure to be determined by Centre for Higher Education Teaching and Learning (CHETL) and Institutional Planning and Quality Assurance (IPQA), and the documentation will be sufficient to enable academic staff to create and customize curriculum for delivery. CHETL will support academic staff in the delivery of the curriculum. It will advise on the appropriateness of curriculum design, teaching methods and teaching resources and student progress. It will monitor the curriculum and its delivery. University academic staff will deliver the curriculum and be involved in its review.

Programme development and approval process incorporates the following activities: planning, consultation and implementation. The specific requirements for consultation, documentation and approval are determined by the Schools, in consultation with CHETL and IPQA through the development and consideration of a concept plan.

a) Planning

Programme development requirements and opportunities should be identified by academic department and Schools Boards as part of the annual strategic planning and review cycle to enable University-wide consideration for strategic matters relating to modules and to provide an opportunity for relevant stakeholder input.

b) Consultation

Academic departments and Schools are expected to ensure that appropriate consultation has occurred before approval. The Deans should ensure consultation with management for resource implications. Academic Departments and Schools should make use of the following opportunities for consultation and advice when developing modules, study areas and learning programmes:

- consideration of strategic changes to department's suite of modules as part of the annual planning and review process;
- consultation with CHETL and IPQA to finalize the approval pathway, required documentation, and extent and form of consultation;
- advice from Academic Planning Committee on significant changes to the department's module profile or module provision strategy;
- expert advice from internal and external stakeholders, including convening Programme Development Teams;
- consideration of the programme or module proposal by the School Board.

c) Documentation

The following documentation will be required for the development of new programme:

- Concept plan or change statement (providing the basis for the initial consultation)
- Business plan (developed from the concept plan)
- Budget

- Academic plan (provides information on how the curriculum has been designed and developed)

- Implementation plan (provides information on how the programme will be implemented and reviewed, including any necessary transitional arrangements for students)

- Outline of the module, study area or the learning programme;

- Contract, memorandum of understanding (where relevant for joint modules or learning programmes)

d) *Approval and accreditation*

Prior to implementation, all programmes will be approved by Senate on the recommendation by the relevant School Board. After ratification by Council, the programme will be submitted to the Department of Higher Education and Training for funding and Programme Qualification Mix (PQM) clearance. The programme will then be submitted to the Council on Higher Education (CHE) for accreditation. The programme will be submitted to the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) for registration only after it has been accredited by the CHE.

For professional programmes, accreditation from the relevant professional body should be sought.

e) *Implementation and monitoring*

Following approval and accreditation, ongoing module or programme performance will be monitored and evaluated against both internal University performance indicators and external measures of student satisfaction and professional requirements through module or programme quality assurance process.

Delivery of a new programme can commence when resources have been allocated and approved for delivery. Such approval will normally be given by Executive Management. The Senate will approve implementation arrangements for all programmes and will take advice from Academic Planning Committee. On all occasions of programme development and review it is important to consider the costs and process of implementation: identification and procurement of non-human resources, the training of human resources to support the delivery, the development of curriculum administrative processes, the communication platforms of the curriculum, and the possible institution of a pilot programme.

f) Programme evaluation and review

All programmes will be internally reviewed at least two, three, and four years. The Institutional Planning & Quality Assurance Directorate will facilitate the review process on behalf of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic. The review of academic programmes will accommodate new ideas and knowledge as well as to avoid rigidity. Programme reviews will examine programme standards, the appropriateness and quality of the courses of which programmes are comprised, and the overall quality and soundness of programmes. The changes should be informed by the evaluated needs of the students, academic staff, workplace and the specialty. The process of evaluation will involve students, academic staff, workplace supervisors, external stakeholders and the University. The evaluation of the programme will be performed systematically throughout its delivery, looking at it from a global, modular and educational tool level, with the results incorporated into the review of the curriculum format, delivery and support.

g) Standards

IPQA will facilitate the programme development process that is collaborative and consultative involving Deans, Vice Deans, Heads of Departments, Students, Academic Staff, specialist colleagues and relevant stakeholders, where appropriate. This will ensure the

production of a curriculum that reflects the rich complexity of the specialty and the evolving environment in which it is executed. The curriculum must be sensitive to the needs of its students and their diverse cultural, social, and experiential backgrounds. Each student enrolled in a programme may have a slightly different experience from another; however all must have acquired a fundamental suite of knowledge, skills and attitudes that they can apply to reflect the professional standards of the learning programme and the University. The university curriculum must address all institutional, local, provincial and national performance standards.

13. IMPLEMENTATION

13.1 This policy will be implemented in accordance with the **Guidelines for Programme Development, Management and Review** which will be developed by Institutional Planning and Quality Assurance Directorate (IPQA) in consultation with Centre for Higher Education Teaching and Learning (CHETL).

13.2 **Academic Planning Committee** and the **Quality Assurance Board** consisting of representatives from academic and support divisions will monitor the programme development and review measures of the university and the implementation thereof, and report such measures to Senate.

13.3 **Capacity development.** Workshops will be run by CHETL and IPQA to develop the capacity of staff members in curriculum and programme development and review measures and rules and regulations governing this area.

14. REFERENCES

Douglas College. (2002). *Curriculum Development and Approval.*

Higher Education Quality Committee.(2004). *Improving Teaching and Learning Resource.* Pretoria: Council on Higher Education.

Higher Education Quality Committee.(2004). *Criteria for Programme Accreditation.* Pretoria: Council on Higher Education.

Higher Education Quality Committee.(2004). *Framework for Programme Accreditation.* Pretoria: Council on Higher Education.

Rhodes University.(1998). *Policy on Curriculum Development and Review.*

Queensland University of Technology.(2008). *Curriculum Development and Approval.*