



University of Venda

GUIDELINES FOR PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT, MANAGEMENT AND REVIEW

Compiled by:
Vakele Nobongoza
Head: Quality Assurance
Institutional Planning and Quality Assurance Directorate
University of Venda
June 2013

Reviewed by:
Prof. TD Ngobeli
Director: Institutional Planning and Quality Assurance
May 2013

Reviewed and Approved by:
Quality Assurance Board
20 August 2013

Senate
19 March 2014

.....

The Guidelines provide an overview of the development of new programmes, management and review of existing programmes and is designed to guide users through the stages of the development and review process and how to prepare a Self-Evaluation Report.



Table of Contents

1. INTRODUCTION	4
2. UNIVERSITY POLICY ON PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW	5
2.1 Introduction.....	5
2.2 Principles.....	6
2.2 Policy Statements.....	6
3. TEACHING PHILOSOPHY OF THE UNIVERSITY.....	7
3.1 Introduction.....	7
3.2 Principles.....	8
3.3 Principal Elements of the Teaching Philosophy of the University	9
4. UNIVERSITY ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS PER PROGRAMME	11
4.1 Higher Certificate.....	11
4.2 Advanced Certificate.....	12
4.3 Diploma.....	12
4.4 Advanced Diploma	12
4.5 Bachelor’s Degree.....	12
4.6 Bachelor Honours Degree.....	12
4.7 Postgraduate Diploma.....	13
4.8 Master’s Degree	13
4.9 Doctoral Degree	13
5. ACADEMIC RESOURCES	13
5.1 Facilities and Equipment.....	13
5.2 Academic Staff.....	13
6. TEACHING AND LEARNING DEFINITIONS	13
7. THE TYPES, DURATION, LEVEL AND CREDIT VALUE OF THE UNIVERSITY’S PROGRAMMES.....	21
8. THE PROGRAMME DESIGN PROCESS	22
8.1 Exploratory Stage.....	22
8.2 Developmental Stage	24
8.3 Presentation.....	26
9. PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION	26
9.1 Title of the programme	26
9.2 Philosophy of the programme	26



9.3 Rationale of the Programme	26
9.4 Educational Aims of the Programme	26
9.5 Expected Learning Outcomes of the Programme	26
9.6 Delivery Mode	27
9.7 Programme Relevance	27
9.8 Programme Viability.....	27
9.9 Academic Regulations for the Proposed Programme	27
9.9.1 Admission Requirements	27
9.9.2 Programme Structure and Requirements.....	28
9.9.3 Student Assessment	28
9.9.4 Multidisciplinary Programmes	28
9.9.5 Guidelines for Module Design	29
10. MANAGEMENT OF A PROGRAMME OF STUDY.....	32
10.1 Introduction.....	32
10.2 Before the start of a Programme of Study.....	32
10.3 Preparing a Course Outline/Teaching Guide for a Module	32
10.4 Course Evaluation and Improvement of Quality	34
10.5 Management of Student Projects	35
11. PROGRAMME REVIEWS	36
11.1 Introduction.....	36
11.2 The Aims of the Programme Reviews	38
11.3 The outcomes of the internal review process.....	38
11.4 Frequency and Timing of Reviews	39
11.5 Format and Duration of the Review.....	39
11.7 Documentation for the Review	40
11.8 Review of Documentation	43
11.9 The Review Report	44
11.10 Process, purposes and objectives of internal programme reviews	45
11.11 Baseline data for programme reviews.....	47
11.12 Criteria for programme review	49
11.13 Preparation of the self-evaluation report.....	60
11.13.1 Introduction.....	60
11.13.2 Preparing the self-evaluation report.....	60



11.13.3 General Characteristics of the self-evaluation report.....	62
11.13.4 Organizing the self-evaluation report.....	64
11.13.5 Compiling the self-evaluation report	65
11.13.6 Guidelines for providing evidence in each criterion	68
References.....	80

DRAFT

1. INTRODUCTION

These guidelines are applicable to both the development of new programmes as well as review of existing ones in the University. The guidelines apply to undergraduate and postgraduate taught learning programmes, which include interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary programmes. The guidelines contain important information needed for preparing programme documents destined for evaluation by the Council on Higher Education (CHE) or by the panellists for internal academic programme reviews. Documents destined for both the CHE and for internal academic programme reviews should conform as far as possible to the format provided in the *CHE Programme Accreditation Criteria*.

These guidelines should be read and used in conjunction with the following national and institutional policy documents:

- Department of Education. 2008. *Minimum Admission Requirements for Higher Certificate, Diploma and Bachelor's Degree Programmes Requiring a National Senior Certificate, Government Gazette, Vol 751, No 32131 of 11 July 2008.*
- Department of Education. 2009. *Minimum Admission Requirements for Higher Certificate, Diploma and Bachelor's Degree Programmes requiring a National Certificate (Vocational), published in the Government Gazette, Vol. 533, No. 32743, November 2009.*
- Department of Education. 2007. *The Higher Education Qualifications Framework.* Pretoria: DOE.
- Department of Higher Education and Training. 2013. *The Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework.* Pretoria: DHET.
- Higher Education Quality Committee. 2004. *Criteria for institutional audits.* Pretoria: The Council on Higher Education.
- Higher Education Quality Committee. 2004. *Framework for institutional audits.* Pretoria: The Council on Higher Education
- Higher Education Quality Committee. 2004. *Criteria for programme accreditation.* Pretoria: The Council on Higher Education.
- Higher Education Quality Committee. 2004. *Framework for Programme Accreditation.* Pretoria: The Council on Higher Education



- University of Venda (2009), *Monitoring and Evaluation of Teaching and Learning Policy*.
- University of Venda (2009). *Teaching and Learning Policy*
- University of Venda (2012), *Quality Assurance Policy*.

2. UNIVERSITY POLICY ON PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The aim of the University is to offer excellent and lifelong learning opportunities to a wide spectrum of students. We will promote a learning culture that enables students to acquire integral education that encompasses a sound grasp of their chosen discipline and developing their intellectual capacities and transferable personal skills, in order that they may graduate as responsible and productive members of society.

The term *programme* is used here to refer to the list of subjects, topics, subject content and skills, and texts included in a course of study; the methods of teaching and assessment that are used; the philosophical outlook of the learning programme; and who the learners are. Programme is both the planned process, the actual implementation of the teaching and the students' experiences of the learning process.

The University recognises that it is accountable to the learners, parents and sponsors, government and industry, and the society at large. The objective is to produce graduates who apart from having broad and sound knowledge of content also possess the capability not only to provide human resources to satisfy the needs of the country, but also possess the passion and skills needed to create jobs and employment by engaging in entrepreneurial ventures. The University must produce graduates capable of leading change in the business and public sectors through the influence of their professional work and human qualities.

We are in the information age: the explosion of information through modern technology has brought about new challenges in the provision of higher education. The university is encouraging active adoption of innovative approaches of programme design that are aimed at equipping learners with the necessary skills to access and manage knowledge rather than just assimilate knowledge.



2.2 Principles

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

- a) Programme development is consistent with UNIVEN's vision, mission and values and supports the objectives outlined in the University's Teaching and Learning Policy.
- b) Programme development and review are an integral part of the University's annual strategic planning cycle.
- c) Approval processes provide the flexibility to be responsive to market demands and opportunities and incorporate strategic consideration of market issues, viability and resource implications.
- d) Widespread consultation with both internal and external stakeholders will occur during the programme development and review process.
- e) 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.
- f) Programme development processes ensure that curriculum is based on the principles for curriculum design.
- g) A learning programme is purposeful, intentional, current and relevant with labour market needs.
- h) A learning programme provides active learning opportunities to maximize student engagement.
- i) A learning programme recognises diversity within our communities and contributes to the development of a respectful learning environment.
- j) A learning programme aligns content, learning resources, and assessment with learning outcomes, regardless of delivery modes.

2.2 Policy Statements

- a) 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.



- b) 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.
- c) 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.
- d) The primary vehicle for communicating the learning programme to students, academic staff, administrators and other stakeholders is a module descriptor.
- e) 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.

3. TEACHING PHILOSOPHY OF THE UNIVERSITY

3.1 Introduction

The University of Venda has a Teaching and Learning policy which is intended to have a positive impact upon the teaching and learning process. The policy focuses upon those elements which will make the biggest difference to the quality of teaching and learning in the University. The purpose of the policy is to ensure that the manner in which teaching and learning are carried out at the University of Venda supports the vision and mission statement of the University.

The teaching philosophy guides the design of the course, selection of teaching methods and assignments, selection of teaching and learning materials, structure of the practical experience, assessment and feedback strategies. The University accords teaching equal importance as research and is constantly exploring ways to improve and reward it. Lecturers are held accountable to provide clear and concise evidence of the quality of their classroom teaching.



The University's promotion criteria lay emphasis on the importance of teaching in gaining promotion, and much more emphasis on the production of evidence about teaching performance, often referred to as the teaching profile or teaching portfolio. The teaching portfolio is meant to serve as a means of professional development. It is intended to assist staff to reflect, document, monitor and evaluate their teaching throughout their professional life as a university teacher.

3.2 Principles

- a) **University mission:** The teaching philosophy of the University reflects the mission statement of the University and is aimed at helping to fulfil the University's stated mission. The teaching philosophy of an individual lecturer must correspond to the overall University teaching philosophy.
- b) **Human formation:** The University's educational philosophy is centred on humanistic education whose aim is to:
 - i. Equip students with critical capacity that would enable them have the criteria to sift ideas, and to help the students have the independence of will not to be led against their informed judgment. This entails educating the students in human virtues: prudence, justice, fortitude, temperance, industriousness, loyalty, cheerfulness, sincerity, honesty, magnanimity, etc.
 - ii. Inculcate in the students a mentality of service to others as part of the human formation of students.

The expected learning outcome of this human formation is the acquisition of the objective moral criteria needed for making decisions in both professional work and personal lives.

- c) **Integral education:** Education has to promote the integral development of the student, to develop the intelligence and form the will and the heart so that they can love God and their fellow human beings. The goal of integral education is to help students to develop their character, that is, grow in human virtues.



- d) ***Education in Freedom:*** Education can be seen as learning how to legitimately use one's freedom. A genuine education consists in helping the student to be free and independent, able to stand on his or her own feet. Their formation consists in getting them ready to go through life alone.
- e) ***Love for Freedom:*** The University respects the freedom of the individual person provided that this freedom is accompanied with responsibility. The freedom of a rational being entails personal responsibility. A person who does not want to take responsibility for his or her actions does not deserve to be free.

3.3 Principal Elements of the Teaching Philosophy of the University

- a) ***Passion for truth and freedom:*** The University believes that the aim of true education should be to train the learners in personal freedom and in personal responsibility. The University has a very clear and strong understanding that education in all its manifestations is principally the development of the person to search for the tendency to the truth. This belief in the transcendental value of the search for the truth is what brings one to the responsible exercise of his/her freedom.
- b) ***Research lead teaching and learning:*** The University's strategy is to enhance research lead teaching and learning. The strategy promotes mutual reinforcement of teaching and research, where all teaching in the University has a base in the creative experience of scholarly and scientific inquiry. The University encourages empirical research in teaching and learning to promote innovation in teaching methodologies and learning styles.
- c) ***Learner centred approach:*** The University believes that all students admitted to study have a positive orientation to learning and have an inherent capacity to learn. The role of the lecturer is to facilitate learning. This involves creating the conditions necessary for deep learning to take place and creating a passion for the subject matter. The University believes that the role of the student's experience is vital to learning and that facilitating the integration of theory and practice enhances learning. The University also believes in student participation in their own learning and promotes teaching techniques which tap into the experience of the students. The lecturer's role



is to help students learn how to learn so that they can learn at their own pace, and match their learning style to their learning ability. Activity-based learning strategies like groups, syndicates, projects, simulations, and problem-based formats facilitate student participation.

- d) ***Evaluation of learning*** should be an on-going process and the University encourages the use of both formative and summative forms of assessment. Student feedback is paramount to learning. The feedback should entail principles such as timeliness, time saving, emphasizing the formative, feed forward, guide the lecturer and lead to greater trust.
- e) ***Continual improvement***: From all lecturers, the University asks for a dedication to their work that implies continual professional development. The University lecturer has to continually conduct research in his/her field, advance knowledge and then share this knowledge with students. The University fosters continual improvement among lecturers by providing moral and material support for staff development courses, innovations in teaching and learning, embracing new technologies, empirical research in teaching and learning, and advanced research in their fields.
- f) ***Peer support Review***: The University's approach to peer review offers all University staff whose activities directly impact on the student learning experience the opportunity to reflect on their teaching/learning support practice. Peer Support Review should promote dialogue focused on professionalism in teaching. The University expects the process to enable the lecturer to have an understanding of how people learn, a concern for student development, a commitment to scholarship, professionalism and ethical practice, a commitment to working with and learning from colleagues, working effectively with diversity and inclusivity and a commitment to continuing reflection on professional practice.
- g) ***Lifelong learning***: The University encourages Schools and other academic units to develop courses and adopt teaching methods which foster life-long learning. For courses to enhance life-long learning, they should: provide a systematic introduction to the field of study; offer a comparative or contextual framework for viewing the field of study; seek to broaden the student's knowledge and provide generic skills;



offer some freedom of choice and flexibility in structure; and provide for the incremental development of self-directed learning.

To encourage our graduates to become life-long learners Schools and other academic units in the University should embrace teaching methods which make use of peer-assisted and self-directed learning; include experiential and real-world learning; make use of resource-based and problem-based teaching; encourage the development of reflective practice and critical self-awareness; and which as appropriate may make use of open learning and alternative delivery mechanisms.

- h) ***Teaching virtues in the classroom:*** The University sees the importance of the lecturer being a role model and a moral mentor for the students. It is essential for a lecturer to develop all the virtues but above all he/she should manifest loyalty, humility, good humour, affection, amiability and patience. Students should see that the lecturer loves them, that the lecturer has sufficient knowledge and that he/she knows how to communicate it to them with grace, with light, with the gift of tongues in such a way that they understand him/her. You cannot demand of them what you do not have yourself. The University needs teachers dedicated to the integral formation of their students - with a clear concept that education has to respond to the needs and demands of the human person - the intellectual, aesthetic, technical, moral and religious demands and needs.

4. UNIVERSITY ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS PER PROGRAMME

4.1 Higher Certificate

The minimum entry requirement is the National Senior Certificate or the National Certificate Vocational with appropriate subject combinations and levels of achievement as defined in the Minister's policies: *Minimum Admission Requirements for Higher Certificate, Diploma and Bachelor's Degree Programmes Requiring a National Senior Certificate, Government Gazette, Vol 751, No 32131 of 11 July 2008* and *Minimum Admission Requirements for Higher Certificate, Diploma and Bachelor's Degree Programmes requiring a National Certificate (Vocational), published in the Government Gazette, Vol. 533, No. 32743, November 2009.*



4.2 Advanced Certificate

The minimum entry requirement is a Higher Certificate in the appropriate field.

4.3 Diploma

The minimum entry requirement is the National Senior Certificate or the National Certificate Vocational with appropriate subject combinations and levels of achievement as defined in the Minister's policies: *Minimum Admission Requirements for Higher Certificate, Diploma and Bachelor's Degree Programmes Requiring a National Senior Certificate, Government Gazette, Vol 751, No 32131 of 11 July 2008* and *Minimum Admission Requirements for Higher Certificate, Diploma and Bachelor's Degree Programmes requiring a National Certificate (Vocational), published in the Government Gazette, Vol. 533, No. 32743, November 2009*. Alternatively a Higher Certificate or Advanced Certificate in a cognate field will satisfy the minimum admission requirements.

4.4 Advanced Diploma

An appropriate Diploma or Bachelor's Degree

4.5 Bachelor's Degree

The minimum entry requirement is the National Senior Certificate or the National Certificate Vocational with appropriate subject combinations and levels of achievement as defined in the Minister's policies: *Minimum Admission Requirements for Higher Certificate, Diploma and Bachelor's Degree Programmes Requiring a National Senior Certificate, Government Gazette, Vol 751, No 32131 of 11 July 2008* and *Minimum Admission Requirements for Higher Certificate, Diploma and Bachelor's Degree Programmes requiring a National Certificate (Vocational), published in the Government Gazette, Vol. 533, No. 32743, November 2009*. Alternatively, a Higher Certificate or an Advanced Certificate or Diploma in a cognate field may satisfy the minimum admission requirements.

4.6 Bachelor Honours Degree

The minimum admission requirement is an appropriate Bachelor's Degree or appropriate Advanced Diploma.



4.7 Postgraduate Diploma

The minimum admission requirement is an appropriate Bachelor's degree or an appropriate Advanced Diploma.

4.8 Master's Degree

The minimum admission requirement is a relevant Bachelor Honours Degree or a Postgraduate Diploma. A cognate Bachelor's Degree at Level 8 may also be recognised as meeting the minimum entry requirement to a cognate Master's Degree programme.

4.9 Doctoral Degree

The minimum admission requirement is an appropriate Master's degree.

5. ACADEMIC RESOURCES

5.1 Facilities and Equipment

The School proposing a new programme should demonstrate availability of facilities and equipment needed to support the proposed programme. These should include lecture rooms; library space and information resources; teaching and learning materials such as textbooks, case studies, journals, manuals, web resources, etc; computer laboratories, language laboratories; technological teaching facilities and teaching aids such as computing software, LCD projectors, e-resources etc.

5.2 Academic Staff

The School should also demonstrate availability of suitably qualified academic staff who will participate in teaching the new programme. A brief description of the academic staff giving their qualifications and where obtained, teaching experience and research experience should be provided.

6. TEACHING AND LEARNING DEFINITIONS

The following definitions relating to terms appearing in learning and teaching documentation should be adopted by the University:

Accreditation



The certification, usually for a particular period of time, of a person, a body, a programme or an institution as having the capacity to fulfill a particular function within the quality assurance system set up by the South African Qualifications Authority or the Higher Education Quality Committee.

Aim/Purpose

A term used in module and programme descriptions. It indicates the direction or orientation of a module or programme in terms of its content and sometimes its context. An aim is written in terms of level, teaching intentions and management of learning. It gives a general statement(s) about knowledge, skills, attitudes and values expected in graduates.

Achievement

Recognition granted to a learner when all required learning outcomes have been successfully demonstrated.

Applied Competence

The ability to put into practice in the relevant context the learning outcomes acquired in obtaining a qualification.

Assessment

A general term that embraces all methods used to judge the performance of an individual, group or organization. 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.

- *Formative Assessment* – Refers to assessment that takes place during the process of learning and teaching. It is evaluation of student learning that aids understanding and development of knowledge, skills and abilities without passing any final judgment (via recorded grade) on the level of learning.
- *Summative Assessment* – is assessment for making a judgement about achievement. This is carried out when a learner is ready to be assessed at the end of a programme of learning.
- *Norm-referenced assessment* - the process of evaluating (and grading) the learning of students by judging (and ranking) them against the performance of their peers.



- *Criteria-referenced assessment* - is the process of evaluating (and grading) the learning of students against a set of pre-specified criteria.
- *Continuous Assessment* - refers to assessment taken on an on-going basis as part of a module or course unit which contributes to the final mark.
- *Integrated assessment* – that form of assessment which permits the learner to demonstrate applied competence and which uses a range of formative and summative assessment methods).

Assessment Criteria

Descriptions of what the learner will have to demonstrate in order that learning outcomes specific to a module have been achieved. The purpose of assessment criteria is to establish clear and unambiguous standards of achievement in respect of each learning outcome. Level descriptors are used as a guide during this process.

Assessment of student learning

Assessment of student learning is the process of evaluating the extent to which participants in a learning activity have developed their knowledge, understanding and abilities.

Assessment of teaching and learning

Assessment of teaching and learning is the process of evaluating the quality and appropriateness of the learning process, including teacher performance and pedagogic approach.

Assurance of quality

Assurance of quality in higher education is a process of establishing stakeholder confidence that provision (input, process and outcomes) fulfils expectations or measures up to threshold minimum requirements.

Audit

The process undertaken to measure the quality of products or services that have already been made or delivered.



- *Internal institutional audit* - Internal institutional audit is a process that institutions undertake for themselves to check that they have procedures in place to assure quality, integrity or standards of provision and outcomes across the institution.

Benchmark

A benchmark is a point of reference against which something may be measured.

Best practice

Best practice refers to effective, ideal or paradigmatic practice within an organisation that others would benefit from adopting or adapting.

Class

Class refers to a discreet teaching and/or learning activity such as lecture, seminar, workshop, or laboratory class. It can also be a structured independent learning activity that does not involve direct teacher-student contact such as distance or resource-based learning.

Competence

Competence is the acquisition of knowledge skills and abilities at a level of expertise sufficient to be able to perform in an appropriate work setting (within or outside academia).

Compliance

Compliance is undertaking activities or establishing practices or policies in accordance with the requirements or expectations of an external regulatory authority.

Core learning

That compulsory learning required in situations contextually relevant to the particular qualifications.

Credit

Credit refers to a quantified means of expressing equivalence of learning. A credit is awarded to a learner in recognition of verified achievement of a unit of learning, usually measured in hours of study or achievement of threshold standard or both. One credit equates to 10 notional contact hours of learning successfully achieved.



Credit transfer

Credit transfer is the ability to transport credits (for learning) from one setting to another.

Criteria

Criteria are the specification of elements against which a judgment is made.

Critical Cross-Field Outcomes

Critical Cross-Field Outcomes (CCFOs) refer to those generic outcomes that inform all teaching and learning. For example CCFOs may include working effectively with others as a member of a team, and/or collecting, analysing, organizing and critically evaluating information.

Curriculum

Curriculum is the embodiment of a programme of learning and includes philosophy, purpose, learning outcomes, syllabus content, teaching approach and assessment.

Discipline

A discipline is a particular branch of learning or body of knowledge whose defining elements—i.e., phenomena, assumptions, epistemology, concepts, theories, and methods—distinguish it from other knowledge formations. Examples include mathematics, physics, philosophy, etc.

Exit Level Outcomes

The outcomes to be achieved by a qualifying learner at the point at which he or she leaves the programme leading to a qualification and achievement of which entitles the learner to a qualification.

Field of learning

A particular area of learning used as an organizing mechanism for the NQF.

Fundamental learning



That learning which forms the grounding or basis needed to undertake the education, training or further learning required in the obtaining of a qualification and ‘fundamental’ has a corresponding meaning.

Learning Programme (of Study)

The approved curriculum followed by a student that may be one of a number of established pathways available or may be unique to the student. It may comprise of a number of modules. A programme could be drawn from a single discipline or it could be derived from two or more disciplines.

- *Interdisciplinary Programme* - Interdisciplinary programme is derived or drawn from two or more disciplines and integrates their perspectives and insights to produce a new comprehensive curriculum.
- *Multidisciplinary Programme* - Multidisciplinary programme is derived or drawn from two or more disciplines by placing side by side courses from the disciplines but makes no attempt to integrate the insights produced by these courses into an interdisciplinary curriculum, such as a degree programme in philosophy and law or mathematics and accounting or statistics and economics etc.

Learning Outcome

A learning outcome is the specification of what a student should learn as the result of a period of specified and supported study. It expresses of what a student will demonstrate on the successful completion of a module. Learning outcomes:

- are clear concise statements that describe how students can demonstrate their mastery of programme goals.
- are related to the level of the learning;
- indicate the intended gain in knowledge and skills that a typical student will achieve;
- should be capable of being assessed.

Level

An indicator of the relative complexity and depth of learning, associated with a module or stages of a programme or of a qualification.

Level Descriptor



A generic statement describing the characteristics and contexts of learning expected at a particular level. That statement describing a particular level of the ten levels of the National Qualifications Framework.

Lifelong learning

Lifelong learning is all learning activity undertaken throughout life, whether formal or informal.

Module

A module is a coherent collection of classes which together form a discreet segment of a programme of study. It is a discrete learning experience that is described by explicit learning outcomes assessed at a named level. Modules may be subject to prerequisite or co-requisite conditions.

Mode of Study

Mode of study refers to whether the programme is taken on a part-time or full-time basis, or through some form of work-linked learning and may include whether taken on-campus or through distance learning.

Moderation

The process which ensures that assessment of the outcomes described in the NQF standards and qualifications is fair, reliable and valid

Notional Hours of Learning

Means the learning time that it is conceived it would take an average learner to meet the outcomes defined, and includes concepts such as contact time, time spent in structured learning in the workplace and individual learning.

Peer Review

Peer review is the process of evaluating the provision, work process, or output of an individual or collective who are operating in the same milieu as the reviewer(s).

Programme Outcome



An expression contained within a programme specification of what a typical learner will have achieved at the end of the programme. Programme outcomes are related to the qualification level and will relate to the sum of the experience of learners on a particular programme.

Qualification

The formal recognition of the achievement of the required number and range of credits and other requirements at specific levels of the NQF determined by the relevant bodies registered by SAQA.

Quality Assurance

The process of ensuring that the degree of excellence specified is achieved.

Quality Audit

The process of examining the indicators which show the degree of excellence achieved.

Quality Management Systems

Means the combination of processes used to ensure that the degree of excellence specified is achieved.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

The comparison of the previous learning and experience of a learner, howsoever obtained, against the learning outcomes required for a specified qualification, and the acceptance for purposes of qualification of that which meets the requirements.

Semester

One semester corresponds to a period of study consisting of sixteen (16) weeks or its equivalent in contact hours or credits. Normally an academic year in the University has two semesters.

Specific Outcomes

Knowledge, skills and values (demonstrated in context) which support one or more critical outcomes



Thesis/dissertation

A thesis or dissertation is a structured synthesis of the outcome of a student's research at master's or doctoral level.

7. THE TYPES, DURATION, LEVEL AND CREDIT VALUE OF THE UNIVERSITY'S PROGRAMMES

Programme Type	NQF Level	Min credits	Min Years F/t	Min Years P/T	Min Research Credits	Designator/ Qualifier	Linking Words	Abbreviation
Higher Certificate	5	120	1	2	0	Qualifier (compulsory) Max two	in (compulsory)	HCert (Qualifier)
Advanced Certificate	6	120	1	2	0	Qualifier (compulsory) Max two	in (compulsory)	AdvCert (Qualifier)
Diploma 240-credit	6	240	2	3	0	Qualifier (compulsory) Max two	in (compulsory)	Dip (Qualifier)
Diploma 360-credit	6	360	3	4	0	Qualifier (compulsory) Max two	in (compulsory)	Dip (Qualifier)
Advanced Diploma	7	120	1	2	0	Qualifier (compulsory) Max two	in (compulsory)	AdvDip (Qualifier)
Bachelor's degree 360-credit	7	360	3	4	0	Designator (Compulsory) Qualifier (optional) Max two	of (compulsory) in (optional)	BA, BSc, BSocSci, BCom, LLB, BAgric, MBChB, BEd, BBusSci, BSc (Life Sciences), BA (Qualifier), BSc (Qualifier), BCom (Qualifier)
Bachelor's degree 480-credit	8	480	4	5	0	Designator (Compulsory) Qualifier (optional) Max two	of (compulsory) in (optional)	BSc (Engineering), BEng, Bed, BBusSci, BAgric (Animal Science), BBusSci (Actuarial Science)
Postgraduate Diploma	8	120	1	2	0	Qualifier (Compulsory)	in (compulsory)	PGDip (Qualifier)



						Max two		
Bachelor Honours Degree	8	120	1	2	30	Designator (Compulsory) Qualifier (optional) Max one	of (compulsory) in (optional)	BAHons, BScHons, BComHons, BScHons (Qualifier) etc.
Master's degree	9	180	1	2	60	Designator (Compulsory) Qualifier (optional) Maximum one	of (compulsory) in (optional)	MA, MCom, MSc (Qualifier) etc
Master's degree (Professional)	9	180	1	2	45	Designator (Compulsory) Qualifier (optional) Maximum one	of (compulsory) in (optional)	MAppCom (Taxation), MEd (School Leadership), MMed (Paediatric Surgery)
Doctoral degree	10	360	2	4	360	Designator (Compulsory) Qualifier (optional) Maximum one if required	of (compulsory) in (optional)	PhD, DPhil, DLitt
Doctoral degree (Professional)	10	360	2	4	At least 60% of the degree	Designator (Compulsory) Qualifier (optional) Maximum one if required	of (compulsory) in (optional)	DEd, DCom, DBA, LLD, DNursing, DSW, DPharm, DPsych.

8. THE PROGRAMME DESIGN PROCESS

8.1 Exploratory Stage

- a) Identify the certificate, diploma or degree programme the School/Department would like to offer.
- b) Demonstrate the need for the programme. (A broad consultation including the academic community, professionals, employers and other stakeholders has to be carried out).
- c) Link the study programme to the Mission of the University of Venda.
- d) Draw a profile which will define:
 - the overall Aim and Objectives (have to be formulated in form of learning outcomes that correspond with the acquired knowledge and skills),



- Curriculum (that is, academic content that will result in the achievement of the learning outcomes).
 - Learning outcomes should consider the needs of the labour market considering the aspirations of the students and the employability of graduates, the prerequisite knowledge and the target groups of the programme.
- e) A programme development team is formed with the chairperson being a senior member of academic staff in the School/Department.
 - f) One or more meetings are held with all contributing participants in the potential development of the programme.

Purpose of the Meeting

To determine specific answers to the following questions:

- a) What do we want the potential learners to know, to do and to feel during and after the instructions? (To be accomplished by true brainstorming, during which all ideas should be recorded without comment or criticism. Only after no further ideas are recorded should an evaluation be conducted of those ideas. Each should be evaluated using the criteria of the Know, Do and Feel questions discussed above. If they do not stand up to what was determined from asking those questions, the item should be eliminated from the list.)
- b) How much time should the learners be given to learn and internalize the material presented? (The programme has to be structured in such a way that students' mobility is guaranteed so that they can complete the programme within the given timeframe).
- c) What is our budget for creating of the curriculum item under discussion?
- d) What teaching/training methods shall we use? (Teaching & Learning methods should be varied and innovative).
- e) What will the major and supplementary materials consist of?
- f) Who will be responsible for the various phases of production and review?
- g) What is a reasonable time-line (production schedule and deadline)?



The learning programme is divided into specific areas of specializations. Contributing participants are given the specified areas to collect data for possible subjects, modules, courses.

8.2 Developmental Stage

a) Mock-up

Determine the nature and quantity of the developmental stages. The following stages should at least be considered in this discussion:

- Conceptualization
- Content and its division into phases (order)
- Coordination and reporting
- Drafting (initial writing)
- Graphic design and production
- Mock-up production
- Editing
- Production

b) Create a Mock-up

Depending on your work environment, this could take one or more of the following methods:

- Large sheets of paper taped to the wall around a large room, with each sheet representing one page in the document or presentation;
- A computer-assisted programme available to each participant in the creative process in which each screen represents one page in the documentation;
- Written notebooks, each page of which represents one page in the final document; etc.

The key to the success of the mock-up is to have the entire content readily available to each developmental participant, for reference and coordination.

c) Refine the mock-up

Examine each section and determine whether unnecessary duplications, needed transitions, appropriate alterations in text or visuals, etc., exist.

d) Drafting

This is a preliminary formulation of the content in actual paragraphs and sentences.



e) Preliminary Review

The written draft is distributed to all developmental personnel, allowing them enough time to go through their copy of the draft and make comments and suggestions.

(Jotted down on their own copies)

f) Review Meeting

A review meeting is conducted where all participants share with the others their suggestions and comments. The Chair of the developmental team should;

- Explain at the beginning of the meeting how the review will proceed.
- Take the participants through the draft page by page, asking for questions and comments.
- The resultant contributions will be recorded without discussion so that editors may take them into account before the final document or presentation is prepared.
- If discussion of any of the contributed items becomes necessary, it will be held between the contributor and the editor.

g) Writing

The writer(s) should produce the final version of each section of the curriculum item.

h) Final Review

The following should be checked for accuracy and quality:

- Spelling
- Punctuation
- Capitalization
- Grammar and Syntax
- Format (Consistency)
- Style (Consistency)
- Quotations (Attribution)
- Captions (Format)
- Table of Contents (Coordination with actual document)
- Index entries (if required)
- Appendix (if required)
- Correctness of data or statistics, etc.

i) Final Production



Each person responsible for this phase should then complete the task according to the deadline set at the beginning of the project.

8.3 Presentation

The final document is presented to the Dean's Committee.

9. PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

9.1 Title of the programme

State the title of the proposed programme to describe as concisely as possible the level and type qualification to be awarded at graduation (e.g. degree, diploma, and certificate).

9.2 Philosophy of the programme

Provide a concise description of the underlying philosophy of the programme. The philosophy of the programme should be consistent with the mission and educational philosophy of the University of Venda.

9.3 Rationale of the Programme

Provide justification of the need for the programme. This should be based on results obtained from analysis of the surrounding educational environment and educational market of the higher education landscape in South Africa and the region or internationally; as well as on feedback obtained from wide consultation with current students, alumni, academics, practitioners, professional bodies and potential employers.

9.4 Educational Aims of the Programme

State the general purpose or aims of the programme.

9.5 Expected Learning Outcomes of the Programme

State the specific knowledge, skills and attitudes that students are expected to have learned and acquired by the end of the programme. The learning outcomes should be at least 3-5 measurable and learner focused and aligned to assessment.



9.6 Delivery Mode

These could include on-campus face to face approach, e-learning, distance or resource based learning, blended learning, etc.

9.7 Programme Relevance

Please indicate your assessment of the relevance of the programme to the vision and mission of the university and to any other issues you believe to be important (for example, Limpopo development plans, national HR development priorities, needs of local industry, etc.). Briefly describe any important linkages that the programme will have with professional organisations, local industry, employer organisations etc. These linkages might include accreditation; advisory boards, work integrated learning arrangements. Please indicate, where applicable, how the programme will articulate with other programmes that provide access to it, or to which it will provide access.

9.8 Programme Viability

One of the key aspects of programme's viability is the ability to attract and retain sufficient numbers of qualified staff to offer a programme of quality. The School needs to indicate whether it has sufficient numbers of qualified and experienced staff and in which departments these staff are located: if not, give an indication of the number of staff needed and whether the department would be able to recruit these staff.

Another key aspect of a programme's viability is the ability to recruit sufficient numbers of qualified students for the programme. The department needs to indicate the target group of students for the programme, including the number of students the department hopes to enrol each year and why it is sure that it will be able to do so.

The department also needs to outline any major needs in terms of resources that will be essential for the viability and quality of the proposed programme.

9.9 Academic Regulations for the Proposed Programme

9.9.1 Admission Requirements

This should include:

- a) A concise description of the target group for the programme



b) A clear statement of the admission criteria for the programme

9.9.2 Programme Structure and Requirements

Provide a description of the structure and requirements of the programme.

9.9.3 Student Assessment

Student assessment should be according to the following policy guidelines and criteria:

- (a) Student assessment should consist of Continuous Assessments during the course of the semester and University Examinations offered at the end of the semester. Continuous assessment should take the form of both formative and summative assessment.
- (b) Continuous Assessments normally comprise practical exercises, group work, assignments and at least two sit-in tests. Continuous Assessments normally contribute **60%** of the total marks unless stated otherwise. Written end of semester University Examinations contribute **40%** of the total marks unless stated otherwise. A module that consists solely of practical work may be assessed out of 100% by continuous assessment.
- (c) Practical attachments are graded out of 100 marks.
- (d) Students who have not attended two thirds of classes should not be permitted to sit for end of semester University Examinations.
- (e) The end of semester examinations normally consist of written papers covering each unit completed. The time allowed for each written paper should be two hours for undergraduate courses and three hours for graduate courses, unless stated otherwise.
- (f) Each unit should be graded out of 100 marks and the pass mark should normally be 50% marks for both undergraduate courses graduate courses, unless stated otherwise.

9.9.4 Multidisciplinary Programmes

- a. Schools may design a *multidisciplinary* degree, diploma or certificate which has a broader perspective than similar existing programmes. Such programmes should enhance and not duplicate existing programmes in the University.



- b. *Organization*: Multidisciplinary programmes may be organized by individual departments, departments working in concert within the University, or by a department or departments of the University in concert with another institution.
- c. *Structure*: Multidisciplinary programmes may be either “side-by-side” or “integrated”. “Side-by-side” programmes are composed of existing elements of on-going programmes. “Integrated” programmes undertake to integrate the material of the constituent programmes throughout course offerings and required experience. The integration in this case does not produce a new product as in the case of interdisciplinary curriculum.
- d. *Student Support*: Students in multidisciplinary programmes often find themselves "between schools," not feeling a part of one school or another. Measures to ameliorate these difficulties should include, but are not limited to, a strong advisor system, a physical home base, staff dedicated to the programme, an easily accessible administrator, and an on-going system of regular contact between the mentors and students outside of class activities.
- e. *Resources*: If the multidisciplinary programme involves more than one school of the University then an agreement should be included in the programme proposal concerning the sharing of tuition revenue and the provision of teaching and learning resources between the sponsoring schools.
- f. *Subsequent Changes*: Changes in a multidisciplinary programme which are requested for a student and which solely affect one or the other school and do not substantially affect the joint or shared parts of the programme may be approved through petitions involving the affected school, alone. Both schools must approve petitions which substantially affect the joint parts of the programme.

9.9.5 Guidelines for Module Design

Module Code: The code should comprise the Course prefix followed by four digits, the first for module level and the remaining three for general identification purposes. Each code



should be unique and should not repeat a previously used one. A module may be offered at one level only. If the same module is offered at two levels, it will be seen as two different modules and will require two different codes. Each of these modules will have different learning outcomes that imply different assessment criteria, guided by the level description, even when the teaching content is the same.

Module Title: The title should be that adopted in official publications; the title will also appear on a student's transcript.

Credit Value/Contact hours: Please observe the University framework for credit/contact hour allocation (*A Brief Guide to Determining Workload in relation to Credits and Notional Hours*). Note in particular the convention that one credit is notionally equivalent to 10 contact hours of teaching/learning/assessment.

Level: Please observe the University framework for level allocation. Note that level should relate to learning outcomes appropriate to the stage of a student's programme (See *Level Descriptors for the South African National Qualifications Framework*).

Pre-requisites: Indicate any prior qualification or experience (e.g. previous modules, or equivalent) that is required.

Co-requisites: Indicate any co-requisites.

Aims: What are the aims/what is the rationale of the module?

Learning Outcomes: These should be written in the form of statements of what students should have achieved by the end of the module. They should refer to (a) subject-specific skills; (b) core academic skills; (c) personal and generic skills.

- *Subject-specific skills:* The skills and knowledge that students will have gained by the end of a module that are specific to that module or to that particular subject. For example, the ability to demonstrate facts and concepts achieved as a consequence of studying the module. Verbs that frequently characterise a subject-specific skill can



indicate an expected level of achievement, such as '*recognise*', '*demonstrate*', '*interpret*'.

- *Core Academic skills*: The skills that are central to the particular discipline, where students demonstrate the use and application of subject-specific skills. They may be the point at which subject-specific and generic skills are brought together. They are often more to do with the programme as a whole than with the module in particular. They will frequently be characterised by verbs that indicate the level of achievement that might be expected of a developing graduate, such as '*apply*', '*analyse*', '*synthesise*', '*judge*'.
- *Personal and Generic skills*: The skills that are not specific to the subject, that are generic and potentially transferable to any discipline or situation. They are more to do with processes than with outcomes. They may be practiced and developed in the context of subject-specific and core academic skills, and can support learning in the discipline. It is helpful to number the learning outcome statements so that they can be cross-referenced to other points in the module template, such as assignments or criteria of assessment.

Learning/Teaching Methods: Describe both the various learning processes *and* the teaching methods to be employed and how they are linked to the learning outcomes.

Syllabus Content: Please provide a summary of the syllabus content.

Instructional Materials and/or Equipment: Indicate material and equipment needed to support teaching the module e.g. computer software, course ware available on the web, audio-visuals, teaching manuals, and so on.

Assessment: Describe all assessment procedures, relating methods to learning outcome. Include reference to the weight that each component will contribute to the assessment outcome.

Indicative Basic Reading List: Indicate core texts selected to support the module and selected secondary/additional reading. The reading materials should include text books, journals, e-texts, e-journals, case studies.



10. MANAGEMENT OF A PROGRAMME OF STUDY

10.1 Introduction

This section sets out guidelines for good practice that should be addressed in the management of a teaching programme and in preparing course outlines or teaching guides for the modules or course units that comprise the programme. The guidelines extend to the processes of teaching and learning and to the methods of assessing the quality of both the modules and the students.

Teaching is only one aspect of academic life, and it is the input from the personal scholarship and research expertise of the staff that gives university teaching its special flavour. Teaching programmes must be allowed sufficient flexibility to accept injection of new information, opinion or analysis so that the excitement felt by the teacher for the subject can be brought to the students.

10.2 Before the start of a Programme of Study

- a) A clear written statement of the aims of the programme and a synopsis of the content of the programme must be available to all prospective participants, lecturers and students, before the start.
- b) Adequate time must be allowed before the start of a programme so that all lecturers contributing to the programme can prepare and co-ordinate the programme components for which they are responsible.
- c) Human and material resources should be properly used, bearing in mind the demands of the programme in relation to the research and scholarly activities of the school.
- d) The structure of the programme, including: prerequisites; required module components and other core elements; optional module components and opportunities for choice must be clearly set out so that students can make informed decisions. A standardized programme specification template will assist departments in compiling this information.

10.3 Preparing a Course Outline/Teaching Guide for a Module

- a) The educational aims and intended learning outcomes of a module should determine the choice of teaching processes through which the module is presented. The teaching



processes should be matched to the processes required of the student in attaining the intended learning outcomes of the module.

- b) Having selected teaching-learning processes appropriate to the intended learning outcomes, they must be supported by methods of assessment appropriate to those processes and to the academic level(s) of the module. The method by which performance in a module, or the component of a module, is assessed strongly influences the student's perception of the purpose of the education being provided, and must be regarded as an important part of the learning process.
- c) Different people have different skills of learning, and it is desirable to employ teaching processes that allow for some individual choice of learning style. Giving the student more responsibility for exploring effective personal approaches to learning will support the development of personal transferable skills that are valuable in their own right.
- d) As far as possible, modules should employ a variety of lecturer-student contacts, with formal lecturer-driven contacts balanced by informal student-driven contacts such as seminars, group discussions, workshops or tutorials. At the postgraduate level it may be expected that the emphasis will be on student-driven contacts.
- e) Before the start of any module a description of it must be made available to each participating student, in the form a course outline or teaching guide which should include:
 - the educational aims of the module, and its academic level(s)
 - the learning outcomes of the module, i.e. what the student will have achieved by the end of the module
 - the personal transferable skills which the module supports
 - academic or experiential prerequisites for starting the module
 - links between this module and earlier, parallel and later modules
 - indicative contents of the module
 - components of the module that are optional
 - an indication of the balance between the modes of delivery that the student will experience (including independent study)
 - a full bibliography, including preliminary reading that should be undertaken before the start of the module



- resources that the student should have available at the start of the module, e.g. module texts, instruments
- the modes of assessment of student's performance employed in the module, including deadlines and consequences of failure to meet them, criteria of assessment, weighting between components of assessment, contribution toward assessment in the programme overall, consequences for progress to later modules, possibility for recovery of unsatisfactory performance an indication of a student's time commitment for the module, distinguishing between directed time, including required independent study, and expectation of personal study time .

A standardised module description template will assist departments in compiling this information.

- If the module is presented by a team of lecturers it must be clear to the students to which teacher in particular they should turn for definitive guidance concerning the operation or assessment of the module.
- There must be a mechanism by which all students may regularly be made aware of their progress on the module and of any inadequacy in their academic performance that may put them at risk of failing the module. In particular, students must be able to receive comment on their written work within a reasonable (stated) time. Comments should be sufficient and of a kind that helps students to be aware of their strengths and weaknesses, and they should have the opportunity to discuss their work in more detail with the teacher if they so wish.

10.4 Course Evaluation and Improvement of Quality

- At the completion of a module there should be a method of seeking student opinion of the module, and of their experience of the module, so that this can feed back into a process of review and improvement. It should be made clear to students what mechanisms are in place for them to give their evaluation of the module. Instruments of evaluation must be designed with care in order to obtain meaningful information on the effectiveness of the module in meeting its objectives. They must be processed in a manner that supports constructive rather than destructive criticism.
- The quality and the popularity of a module are not necessarily simply connected, and the overall evaluation of the quality of a module must take account of student opinion



in the context of the content, skills, processes and relevance that the module provides, the level of educational challenge, and the efforts made by the students to engage actively in the teaching-learning process. Therefore, the outcomes of student evaluation of a module should be correlated with evaluation by the lecturer presenting the module and with evaluation by informed colleagues.

- c) Evaluation of the course will involve collecting evidence from various partners in teaching and learning for the purpose of improving the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process. The following will be evaluated: the quality of educational provision i.e. the course; the performance of the lecturers; and the experience of the students as participants in the process. Evaluation will be carried by both lecturers and students and should cover: course management; teaching and learning process; reflection; assessment and feedback.
- d) The methods that will be used in the evaluation will include: course evaluation questionnaire; student module leaders; peer observation/review; self-evaluation/personal journal/teaching portfolio.

10.5 Management of Student Projects

- a) A *project* is defined here as any substantial self-directed study involving the student in research, either as an individual or as a member of a small team. It is a teaching method that can provide a rich learning environment for the student, but requires careful and proper management for best effect.

A good project provides a platform for many kinds of experiential learning and can, for example:

- consolidate earlier learning
- develop research skills
- foster self-motivated study
- give practice in communication skills
- develop interpersonal skills, especially in group projects
- give greater awareness of personal skills

- b) *Student attachment* has many of the attributes of the project as defined here and requires the same high standards of preparation and management. Projects are generally popular



with students, and the students' perception of professionalism in the teaching programme is strongly influenced by the proper management of attachments and of project work.

- c) Proposals for project topics may be generated by lecturers or by students, but joint negotiation of the aims and scope of a project is a pre-requisite for a good project. The experience of the lecturer should be used to give guidance on the realistic formulation of the project, but must not excessively constrain the student to mere compliance with the supervisor's directives. Students should be properly prepared for project work, and must be made well aware of the support available to them.
- d) In taught postgraduate modules, whilst the student should have basic responsibility for the topic and scope of a project or dissertation, the supervisor must be satisfied that it involves an appropriate level of research activity and can realistically be completed in time.
- e) Guidelines for the presentation of the project must be clearly stated and must indicate the criteria of assessment. If presentation is in the form of a scientific or scholarly paper, dissertation or report, detailed instructions on format, style and acceptable length must be given. If presentation is by seminar then details of time, place and audiovisual resources must be given well in advance. If presentation is by a combination of methods then the apportioning of assessment between these methods must be clearly stated.
- f) A supervisor should discuss the progress of the project at regular, timetabled, intervals. The student(s) working on the project should be encouraged to generate draft reports for discussion with the supervisor before any final report is prepared.

11. PROGRAMME REVIEWS

11.1 Introduction

The University of Venda is embarking on a system of periodic review of programmes. This will operate on a 5 year cycle determined by Senate. The primary purposes of the five-year reviews are to determine programme quality, programme viability and future directions of the departments.



The five-year reviews will consist of an evaluation of factors that are currently influencing the department's outlook or are expected to do so in the future; an evaluation of outcomes measures (performance indicators) that have been developed to assess programme quality and viability and an evaluation of future directions of the department. Specifically, five-year reviews will document and showcase the department's accomplishments (past), serve as a basis for programme evaluation (present) and guide departmental planning (future).

The internal reviews are one of the main ways by which the University assures itself of the quality of the provision delivered by departments/schools in-order to meet the University's needs. The reviews will look at all departmental activities, that is, management, resources, research, teaching, learning and assessment and quality assurance matters.

The internal reviews will also be used as an aid to schools/departments preparing for external quality assurance assessment (Engineering Council of South Africa, Higher Education Quality Council, National Subject Reviews, and Health Professionals Council etc).

The University Senate places greater reliance and emphasis on internal programme review processes to safeguard quality and standards, and to promote enhancement. The focus of the review is on teaching, learning, assessment, research, and community engagement.

The internal programme reviews provide a formal opportunity for a department to reflect on and critically evaluate its provision and to benefit from a constructive dialogue with senior academics and external subject specialists. The review process is intended to be positive and constructive, supporting departments in the enhancement of their provision. It is not a witch hunt exercise.

This section provides additional guidance for departments on Programme Review procedures as outlined in the Monitoring and Evaluation of Teaching and Learning Policy, and to be read alongside the Criteria for Programme Accreditation. This guidance clarifies the documentation required for the review panel, and poses some questions that departments might like to consider when they are reflecting on their current provision.



11.2 The Aims of the Programme Reviews

- To evaluate the relevance of programme aims to the overall aims of the Department's provision and the relevance of the intended learning outcomes for each programme to its aims;
- To evaluate the continuing effectiveness of teaching, learning and assessment in meeting the intended learning outcomes for each programme;
- To ensure that intended learning outcomes and curricula remain current and valid in the light of developing knowledge within the discipline, and the application of that knowledge in practice;
- To obtain feedback from staff, students and other stakeholders through meetings and documentation on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, the student learning experience and learning resources;
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the measures taken to assure and enhance the quality of provision and maintain standards;
- To explore with the Department its approach to and plans for the enhancement of provision; and
- To provide support to the Department for its teaching provision and explore ways of promoting effective learning.

11.3 The outcomes of the internal review process

- Evaluation of the quality of the provision under review and of quality enhancement strategies;



- Evaluation of the Department's procedures for assuring the standards of awards and the quality of provision;
- Identification of good practices for dissemination across the University, as appropriate; and
- A written report with recommendations for action to address any identified weaknesses and to further strengthen provision and thereby further enhance the provision of teaching, learning and assessment.

11.4 Frequency and Timing of Reviews

The Institutional Planning and Quality Assurance Directorate (IPQA) will draw up a five-year rolling programme of internal reviews in consultation with the DVC Academic, Deans and Heads of Department as appropriate and table the report at the Senate. The programme aims to distribute the reviewing load in any one year across schools and takes account, where possible, of issues such as joint degrees, inter-disciplinarity and articulation with external accreditation timetables. The programme also seeks to distribute the reviewing load evenly across each year of the five-year cycle. In certain instances a review may cover two or more departments following consultation with the relevant Deans and Heads of Departments.

Reviews won't be held at the beginning or end of the academic session or during examination periods. The internal reviews will be held in the period February to mid April and August to mid-October and when students are available to meet with the Quality Assurance Task Team. The IPQAD will consult and liaise with departments before review dates are finalized.

11.5 Format and Duration of the Review

The format of the review can be summarized as follows:

- Submission of documentation (Self-evaluation report) by the Department;



- Review of the self-evaluation report (SER) by the Quality Assurance Task Team;
- The Quality Assurance Task Team visit (site visit) to the Department/School to meet with staff and students;
- Production of a report by the Quality Assurance Task Team which is submitted to Quality Assurance Board then the Senate;
- Action on the recommendations by the Department/School and others named within the report;
- Provision of a progress report by the Department and others to Quality Assurance Board eight months from the implementation of the recommendations;
- Two and half-year interim visit by the Convenor of the Quality Assurance Task Team and two Quality Assurance Board representatives to review further progress on recommendations, new developments and new initiatives.

The duration of the review visit is generally determined by the size of the Department (minimum of 2 days). At least 3 months in advance of the date of the internal review, a meeting is held with Institutional Planning & Quality Assurance staff and the Head of Department and other relevant staff from the Department to be reviewed to discuss the Programme Review Guidelines, documentation and programme.

11.7 Documentation for the Review

Prior to the visit members of the Quality Assurance Task Team are provided with a self-evaluation report (SER) and supporting background documentation. The self-evaluation report is normally prepared by the Head of Department in conjunction with other staff. It is also suggested that the Head of Department must consult with students on the self-evaluation report, perhaps at a staff/student committee meeting; with a view to seeking feedback on whether or not it reflects the department they know.



The format of the Portfolio should follow the guidance *on the Preparation of the Portfolio* in Section 11.15. The Institutional Planning & Quality Assurance Directorate office will liaise with the department over documentation that may be available from other offices either within the Central Administration or the School Office.

Departments should supply a full set of documentation covering all programmes and courses under review. The IPQA will consult with the Department to determine the most suitable format for the documentation e.g. paper copy, electronic copy or web pages. The Quality Assurance Task Team members may request to see any documents not selected. Requests for other documentation may be made in advance of or on the day of the review or post-review.

The IPQA will liaise with the Department over the number of copies of documentation to be provided (normally seven). The IPQA requires the documentation at least six weeks in advance of the internal review date. The IPQA will order the documentation and compile a contents list. The Portfolio will be circulated four weeks in advance of the review date to the QATT members.

The following categories of documentation are required:

A. Teaching, Learning and Assessment

- Subject information provided for students (e.g. Course Handbooks for modules and programmes, Departmental Handbooks, etc).
- Programme specifications for all taught programmes (undergraduate and postgraduate) for which the department is responsible.
- Relevant subject benchmark statements.

B. Core Information

The following data (to be supplied by the HEMIS Office), for the previous three years, which has been used to inform the self-evaluation of the provision:

- Entry qualifications and entry routes by programme, if available;
- Student numbers in the current session (headcount and FTEs) for:



Undergraduates on each module and in each Honours year (separately for single and joint Honours), taught postgraduates on each programme, ethnicity, disabilities;

- Progression and completion data (by programme, if available);
- Student Success Performance Indicators and degree classification results;
- First employment destinations;
- Any other data collected routinely by the department in regard to teaching and learning activities which have been referred to in the Portfolio.
- Details of departmental management, administration and organization and staff responsibilities including the composition and remits of any departmental committees concerned with teaching, learning and assessment activities.
- A list of all current departmental staff including: academic staff together with junior lecturers; research staff if involved in teaching; hourly paid teaching staff (e.g. postgraduate students who act as tutors or demonstrators); support staff; etc, showing the grade, full-time equivalent and any vacancies.
- Academic staff age profile (10 year intervals i.e. 20-30; 31-40, etc) and gender balance.
- Details of the departmental workload model and current workload details for academic staff and hourly paid teaching staff.

C. Quality Assurance Information

- Details of departmental quality assurance procedures.
- External examiners' reports and related correspondence including the department's response to any issues arising from the reports of the previous three years.
- Annual course monitoring reports for the previous three years for all taught courses (undergraduate and postgraduate) offered by the department.
- Analyses of student feedback questionnaires for all taught courses and laboratories (if appropriate) offered by the department for the previous and current year.
- Previous external quality assessment report along with an update on action taken in response (if appropriate).



- Previous internal departmental review report together with the response of the department and others mentioned in the recommendations.
- The most recent reports of accrediting bodies (if appropriate).

D. Committee Minutes

- Minutes of all staff/student committee meetings for the current and previous two sessions.
- Minutes of the main departmental committee(s) dealing with teaching, learning and assessment for the current and previous two sessions.
- Minutes of School/Departmental Quality Assurance Committee (or equivalent), where appropriate.
- Other minutes or other reports relating to operation or review of courses and programmes (e.g. reports of any course reviews).

11.8 Review of Documentation

Each panel member (Quality Assurance Task Team member) will scrutinize the documentation provided to him/her prior to the visit. The panel will agree on the areas and issues to be covered in the visit, and will identify the individuals/groups who it wishes to meet.

The Panel members should focus on the robustness of the Department's procedures and mechanisms for assuring quality and its plans for enhancement. The external subject specialists will have a key role in programme review aspects, in particular:

- Reviewing the programmes in the light of relevant national subject benchmark statements and other external reference points, including the requirements of any relevant Professional and Statutory Bodies where relevant;
- The appropriateness of the Department's mechanisms for assuring the standards of awards.



The Quality Assurance Task Team will consider the extent to which the self-evaluation report is constructively self-critical and discusses departmental strengths and weaknesses. Each Panel member will provide the IPQA office administrator with a report on any topics or areas of concern in advance of the review date for consideration at a pre-review meeting which is normally held one week in advance of the review.

Following the pre-review meeting, the Head of Department will receive a note of the main areas the Panel wishes to explore during the visit. The Panel may explore some topics in more than one meeting and will not be restricted from exploring others as they arise on the day, likewise they may not raise all the topics listed on the day. The Department should not respond in advance of the visit to the items identified; the note is for information only. However, where the panel wishes some clarification on minor points, it may make an explicit request for a response prior to the visit.

11.9 The Review Report

Following the visit, the Quality Assurance Task Team will produce a full report identifying the key strengths along with conclusions and recommendations for improvement or change. The recommendations contained within the report will indicate who is to take action: this may be targeted at the Department, the School, a University Service, etc. The recommendations will be ranked in order of priority.

The Report should include an assessment of the information about the department's/programme's objectives, activities, and achievements within the context of the department's /programme's potential and of the University's overall objectives and responsibilities. (Specific topics to be addressed might include: the quality of entering students, the quality of the course of study, the quality of programme graduates, the quality of the school, and the productivity of the school).

The Quality Assurance Task Team Report should include recommendations concerning:



- The future of the department's/programme's structure and activities. (These could range from a recommendation to expand the scope of the programme to emphasis on a specific aspect of the programme to discontinue a programme.
- The identification of faculty members who will continue to be associated with the graduate degree programme.
- Possible change(s) in the direction, structure, or activities of the department/programme in order to improve its quality, increase its effectiveness or to utilize the University's resources more efficiently.

The administrator will draft the report, which will be circulated initially to the Convenor and afterwards to other members for comment or amendment. The final draft report will be made available to the Head of Department for the correction of factual inaccuracies or misunderstandings within eight weeks of the review visit. The Department will have two weeks to provide comments on factual accuracy.

The draft will be sent to the Head of Department and can be discussed with colleagues in the Department but should not be widely circulated. Any changes to the report suggested by panel members or by the Head of Department will be subject to the approval of the Convenor of the Quality Assurance Task Team. The report is then submitted to the Quality Assurance Board which endorses or amends the report and the recommendations and forwards them to the Department and others named in the recommendations for action. The Executive Management and the Senate will be advised of recommendations that have more serious academic or resource implications.

A report on the progress made in addressing the recommendations of the review will be submitted by the Department to Quality Assurance Board within six months of the date that the Panel's Report was received by that Committee. It is the responsibility of the Convenor of the Quality Assurance Task Team to ensure that the recommendations are acted upon and reported back to Quality Assurance Board. The Chair of Quality Assurance Board will be responsible for maintaining an overview of the internal programme reviews.

11.10 Process, purposes and objectives of internal programme reviews



The Review Process

The review process is an evidence-based process where the quality of provision of the programme is evaluated against the HEQC Programme Accreditation Criteria. The review exercise is based on the principle of self-evaluation report (SER) on the programme prepared by the department. This is followed by a site visit during which the review panel carries out observations and interviews as well as a study of relevant documents on display.

The self-evaluation of a programme against the accreditation criteria forms the core of the review process, and it is significant in enhancing the quality of the programme. The self-evaluation report (SER) records the departmental judgements on whether the programme meets the minimum standards in each of the criteria.

The results of this evaluation process are used to inform strategic planning and budgeting processes at programme, department, school, and department levels.

Programme Reviews

Programme review is a cyclical process for evaluating and continuously enhancing the quality and currency of academic programmes offered by the departments. It is a comprehensive analysis of programme quality, utilizing a wide variety of data about the programme.

The purpose of Programme Review is to:

- a) Ensure that academic programmes are maintained at the highest possible level of quality
- b) Provide a basis for continuous quality improvement of academic programmes
- c) Help ensure the viability of academic programmes
- d) Guide strategic planning and decision-making regarding academic programmes.
- e) Ensure that academic programmes serve the mission and vision of the Department

While the primary emphasis is on programme improvement, the review process should also lead to identification of those academic programmes that are most central to strategic



priorities of the department and therefore are most appropriate targets for growth and increased investment

Departmental Reviews

The purpose of departmental review is:

- a) to assure the University that the department is working well across all of its activities, that it is well positioned to meet its own goals, those of the school and the Department, and that its direction is aligned with the best developments in its discipline or disciplines.
- b) to assess and improve departmental performance through evaluation of activities, processes and outcomes as they relate to objectives.
- c) to assure the University that its departments deliver high quality teaching and research, and that they are working effectively in terms of staffing and financial matters.
- d) to assist the departments in identifying and evaluating strengths or weaknesses.
- e) to improve departmental effectiveness and efficiency in relation to academic performance.
- f) to identify examples of good practice, areas for improvement and, where necessary, to recommend that departments are given appropriate support to make changes

11.11 Baseline data for programme reviews

The review of programmes is an evidence-based process. The baseline data provided by each department includes details on the background and history of the programme, budget information, research, staffing etc. The baseline data and the data required to complete the SER are complementary and provide an overview of the programme.

Providing baseline data for the review of programme offered by the department

Below are the examples of baseline data that departments are expected to provide for the review. Departments are allowed to provide additional data deemed relevant.

Profile of the programme under review

- a) Profile of the programme and contact details of Head of Programme



- b) Contact person
- c) Location of the programme

Background of the programme

A brief history of the programme at the institution should be provided. This should include the establishment and development of the programme, and how it became to be constituted in its present form.

Qualifications offered in the programme

Please indicate the qualifications currently available to those who successfully complete your programme. Please include all levels of qualifications.

Budget for the programme

Indicate the budget of the programme according to the following categories:

- Income
- Expenses
- Research expenditure

Academic Staff

Please provide the qualifications of academic staff by category of employment.

Please indicate the demographic profile of the programme's full-time, part-time and temporary staff by rank.

Provide academic staff research output.

Accreditation status of the academic programme

Please provide information for each of the programmes

Enrolments and graduations

Please provide details regarding the nationality of students currently enrolled for the programme.



11.12 Criteria for programme review

The criteria used in the review of programmes are drawn from the *Criteria for Programme Accreditation* and cover areas ranging from programme input, process and output and impact. The 19 criteria are listed below and demonstrate the review scope of a programme. This section should be read in conjunction with the CHE *Criteria for Programme Accreditation*, and the minimum standards as outlined in each criterion (see pg. 7-24 of the CHE Criteria for Programme Accreditation).

Accreditation Criteria adapted for the Review of Programmes

Area	Criterion Statements	Purpose	Criteria
<p>Programme Design</p>	<p><i>Criterion statement</i></p> <p>The programme is consonant with the institution’s mission, forms part of departmental planning and resource allocation, meets national requirements, the needs of students and other stakeholders, and is intellectually credible. It is designed coherently and articulates well with other relevant programmes, where possible.</p>	<p>Input</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the relation of the programme to departmental mission and planning; and to the national context • Allow department to reflect on the programme’s fitness for purpose and its ability to meet the needs of students and relevant stakeholders, as well as on its intellectual credibility and its coherence and articulation with other programmes. 	<p>1</p>



<p style="text-align: center;">and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Programme Coordination</p>	<p><i>Criterion statement</i></p> <p>The programme is effectively coordinated in order to facilitate the attainment of its intended purposes and outcomes.</p>	<p>Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme coordination facilitates the achievement of its intended purposes and outcomes. • Opportunities exist for student input and participation in relevant aspects of programme coordination. • Policies to ensure integrity of certification for the qualification obtained through the programme are effectively implemented. 	<p style="text-align: center;">and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">10</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Student recruitment, admission and selection</p>	<p><i>Criterion statement</i></p> <p>Recruitment documentation informs potential students of the programme accurately and admission adheres to current legislation. Admission and selection of students are commensurate with the programme's academic requirements, within a framework of widened access and equity. The number of students takes into account the programme's intended learning outcomes, its capacity to offer good quality education and in the case of professional and vocational programmes, the needs of the particular profession.</p>	<p>Input</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide insights into the selection procedures in admitting students to the programme. • Examine attentiveness to diversity and national needs. 	<p style="text-align: center;">2</p>



<p style="text-align: center;">and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Student retention and throughput rates</p>	<p><i>Criterion statement</i></p> <p>Student retention and throughput rates in the programme are monitored, especially in terms of race and gender equity, and remedial measures are taken, where necessary.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Output and Impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on retention and throughput rates for the programme is monitored. • Appropriate remedial action is implemented where necessary. 	<p style="text-align: center;">and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">17</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Staffing</p>	<p><i>Criterion statement</i></p> <p>Academic staff responsible for the programme, are suitably qualified and have sufficient relevant experience and teaching competence, and their assessment competence and research profile are adequate for the nature and level of the programme. The institution and/or other recognized agencies contracted by the institution provide opportunities for academic staff to enhance their competences and to support their professional growth and development.</p> <p><i>Criterion statement</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Input</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic staff for undergraduate/postgraduate programmes is suitably qualified. • Provide details on staff recruitment and retention policies. • Consider roles of academic and technical staff in relation to programme design. 	<p style="text-align: center;">3 & 4</p>



	<p>The academic and support staff complement is of sufficient size and seniority for the nature and field of the programme and the size of the student body to ensure that all activities related to the programme can be carried out effectively. The ratio of full-time to part-time staff is appropriate. The recruitment and employment of staff follows relevant legislation and appropriate administrative procedures, including redress and equity considerations. Support staff are adequately qualified and their knowledge and skills are regularly updated.</p>		
<p>and</p> <p>Academic Development for students success</p>	<p><i>Criterion statement</i></p> <p>Academic development initiatives promote student, staff and curriculum development and offer academic support for students, where necessary.</p>	<p>Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic development of student staff is promoted. • Academic support for students is provided 	<p>and</p> <p>11</p>
<p>Teaching and</p>	<p><i>Criterion statement</i></p>	<p>Input</p>	<p>5</p>



<p>learning strategy</p>	<p>The department gives recognition to the importance of promoting student learning. The teaching and learning strategy is appropriate for the departmental type (as reflected in its mission), mode(s) of delivery and student composition, contains mechanisms to ensure the appropriateness of teaching and learning methods, and makes provision for staff to upgrade their teaching methods. The strategy sets targets, plans for implementation, and mechanisms to monitor progress, evaluate impact and effect improvement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching and learning philosophies. • Provide insights into the teaching and learning methods used in the department. • Promotion of student learning. 	<p style="text-align: center;">and</p>
<p>Teaching and learning interactions</p>	<p><i>Criterion statement</i></p> <p>Effective teaching and learning methods and suitable learning materials and learning opportunities facilitate the achievement of the purposes and outcomes of the programme.</p>	<p>Process and review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide guidance to students on programme integration and outcomes. • Teaching and learning methods promote student participation. • Teaching and learning methods are regularly reviewed and updated. 	



Student assessment policies and practices	<p><i>Criterion statement</i></p> <p>The different modes of delivery of the programme have appropriate policies and procedures for internal assessment; internal and external moderation; monitoring of student progress; explicitness, validity and reliability of assessment practices; recording of assessment results; settling of disputes; the rigour and security of the assessment system; RPL; and for the development of staff competence in assessment.</p>	<p>Input</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are assessment policies and procedures commensurate with the programme design? • Validity and reliability of assessment. • Integral part of teaching and learning. 	6
and	<p><i>Criterion statement</i></p> <p>The programme has effective assessment practices which include internal (or external) assessment, as well as internal and external moderation.</p>	<p>Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Types of assessment (can include internal/external; summative/formative etc.). • Internal and external moderation. • Assessment system is reliable, rigorous and secure • Assessment system is transparent and accessible to students. 	and
Student assessment policies and procedures	<p><i>Criterion statement</i></p>		13 & 14



	The programme has taken measures to ensure the reliability, rigour and security of the assessment system.		
Infrastructure and library resources	<p><i>Criterion statement</i></p> <p>Suitable and sufficient venues, IT infrastructure and library resources are available for students and staff in the programme. Policies ensure the proper management and maintenance of library resources, including support and access for students and staff. Staff development for library personnel takes place on a regular basis.</p>	<p>Input</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The programme has the facilities and resources to support the desired outcomes. • Policies are in place to support the diverse infrastructural needs of the programme. 	7
Programme administrative services	<p><i>Criterion statement</i></p> <p>The programme has effective administrative services for providing information, managing the programme information system, dealing with a diverse student population, and ensuring the integrity of processes leading to certification of the qualification obtained through the programme.</p>	<p>Input</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are needs of a diverse student population addressed? • Identifying at-risk and non-active students. • Integrity of certification. 	8



<p>Postgraduate policies, procedures and regulations</p> <p>and</p>	<p><i>Criterion statement</i></p> <p>Postgraduate programmes have appropriate policies, procedures and regulations for the admission and selection of students; the selection and appointment of supervisors; and the definition of the roles and responsibilities of supervisors and students, etc.</p>	<p>Input</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies, procedures and regulations in relation to student admission for programmes at postgraduate level in the department • Criteria for the selection and appointment of postgraduate supervisors • Details of the contractual relationship between supervisors and students. 	<p>9</p> <p>and</p>
<p>Delivery of postgraduate programmes</p>	<p><i>Criterion statement</i></p> <p>The postgraduate programme is managed properly, offers opportunities for students to develop research competence, and ensures that research is properly assessed. Policies for student admission and selection, criteria for the selection and appointment of supervisors, and guidelines on the roles and responsibilities of supervisors and students are effectively implemented.</p>	<p>Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A description of how the programme enables students to undertake independent research and other scholarly activities. • Information on: the postgraduate supervisory practices and other forms of support extended to the learners; the systems in place to monitor the students' progress with their research; the preparatory programmes in place to support students in the research phase; the opportunities available to students to improve their writing, 	<p>16</p>



		<p>language and numeracy skills; and the processes, structures and systems in place for the approval of research proposals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of training provided for all supervisors, contractual relationship between supervisors and students. • Mechanisms are in place for monitoring the relationship between supervisors and students and progress of students 	
<p>Coordination of work-integrated learning</p>	<p><i>Criterion statement</i></p> <p>The coordination of work-based learning is done effectively in all components of applicable programmes. This includes an adequate infrastructure, effective communication, recording of progress made, monitoring and mentoring.</p>	<p>Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The design, duration and learning outcomes of Work-integrated learning (WIL) are aligned with the programme requirements and outcomes. • WIL meets the requirements of the professional body. 	<p>15</p>



<p>and</p> <p>Programme impact</p>	<p><i>Criterion statement</i></p> <p>The programme has taken steps to enhance the employability of students and to alleviate shortages of expertise in relevant fields, in cases where these are the desired outcomes of the programme.</p>	<p>Output and Impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department can provide evidence that programme is effectively coordinated and facilitates the employability of students. 	<p>and</p> <p>18</p>
<p>Programme Reviews</p>	<p><i>Criterion statement</i></p> <p>User surveys, reviews and impact studies on the effectiveness of the programme are undertaken at regular intervals. Results are used to improve the programme's design, delivery and resourcing, and for staff development and student support, where necessary.</p>	<p>Programme review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular feedback in the form of user surveys for example from academics involved in the programme as well as graduates, peers, external moderators, professional bodies and employers to ascertain if programme is attaining its intended outcomes. • Use of impact studies to ascertain impact of the programme and the employability of students and in alleviating the shortages of expertise in relevant fields/community/workplace where these are the desired outcomes of the programme. 	<p>19</p>



DRAFT



11.13 Preparation of the self-evaluation report

11.13.1 Introduction

This section is intended to assist departments to complete the self-evaluation report (SER). The production of the SER is core to the review process and provides the department with the opportunity to address quality issues in the programme. A fundamental characteristic of the SER is that it engages analytically with the identified criteria and minimum standards. Departments are encouraged to highlight areas of strengths and weaknesses and provide reasons for these. A self-evaluation report should not only be descriptive but should engage with the criteria in order to achieve the purpose of strengthening the programme.

11.13.2 Preparing the self-evaluation report

The SER is an opportunity for departments to analyze the programme with view to improve it. In completing the SER, departments are encouraged to adopt an approach that looks at each criterion as an opportunity to evaluate the programme in a holistic manner. Departments should guard against formulaic approach that translates the SER into a checklist-type approach.

The development of the SER is an opportunity for a department to identify areas of good practice, improvement areas and other interventions to enhance the quality of the programme. This process should culminate in the preparation of a self-evaluation document that addresses the criteria and the minimum standards.

Each criterion has a section in the SER. The narrative account must be led by self-assessment in relation to each criterion statement and thus consist of the following key areas:



- A descriptive account of the department’s performance around the criterion statement. Ensure that all minimum standards are covered.
- An analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.
- An overall assessment of the performance in relation to the minimum standards and the criterion.
- An improvement plan, where necessary.

The key to preparing a good SER is to provide accurate, complete and well thought out responses. Responses should be clear, succinct and address the relevant topics. The quality of the content in the submission will depend largely on the process followed in compiling the self-evaluation report. All academic staff teaching on the programme should be involved in the self-evaluation process, even if only as ‘critical readers’ of the final draft report. All portfolios must be signed off by the Dean of the School concerned.

The list of expected documentation at the end of each section is to afford departments the flexibility to provide information in appropriate formats. Please note that for the purposes of the review, documentation should be provided as per Section 4.6 below. This specifies the kinds of documentation to be made available on site.

The last section in each criterion allows the department to assess its level of compliance with the criteria and standards in each area. The department will first evaluate the programme against each individual criterion as set out in Section 3 above. The following categories are used to classify judgments in each instance:

- Commend: all the minimum standards specified in the criterion were fully met and, in addition, good practices and innovation were identified in relation to the the criterion.
- Meets minimum standards: Minimum standards as specified in the criterion were met.
- Needs improvement: Did not comply with all the minimum standards specified in the criterion. Problems/weaknesses could be addressed in a short period of time.



- *Does not comply*: did not comply with the majority of the minimum standards specified in the criterion.

The classification depends on whether minimum standards are met or exceeded or, whether the criterion needs minor improvement that can be done within six month period or longer.

11.13.3 General Characteristics of the self-evaluation report

The following are general characteristics of a report as a whole and are a guide to assist departments in completing the SER.

Introduction

The SER should provide an overview of the department and the programmes/qualifications offered. It should include staff and student statistics per programme and cohort if applicable, for the period under review. The introduction should also set out the context of the department in relation to the institution providing details on issues like mergers, academic restructuring, etc as relevant.

The Self-Evaluation Process

The SER should provide details of the review process, conduct of the review, participants in the review, evidence utilized and reflections on the value of the review process.

Interpretation of the Criteria

The criteria should be interpreted in ways that suggest a clear and professional understanding of the issues as well as reflecting the context and nature of the department. The review process is an opportunity for the department to enhance the quality of its programme.

Innovations and Best Practices



The department should provide details of examples of innovation and best practice that have been identified.

Presentation of the Self-Evaluation Report

The SER should be systematically presented, with cross-referencing within the report where necessary and in a way that results in an easy-flowing and coherent document. Relevant documentation should be easily accessible to the reader (contents pages, numbering of pages and appendices, labeling of sections, cross-referencing across report and appendices, etc.)

Criterion-Specific Aspects

The inclusion of the aspects below as part of the SER will assist the department to systematically address each of the criteria as well as determine whether they are adequately addressed.

Description

- Details of the systems and arrangements in place in relation to a particular criterion (or group of criteria) should be provided and
- The description should indicate how these systems and arrangement are intended to ensure quality.

Analysis/Evaluation

- What conclusions have been reached about the effectiveness of the systems and arrangements for managing quality? Which are working well, and which are not working effectively? There should be an analysis of areas of strengths and weakness and possible strategies for improvement.
- The self-evaluation report should present an appropriate level of critical self-reflection and self-disclosure.

Evidence



- Evidence should be provided to support conclusions about the effectiveness of systems and arrangements.
- Where necessary, the evidence and tables (e.g. quantitative data) should be interpreted for the reader.
- There should be an explicit account which links the evidence to the conclusions.

Overall Analysis

- Reasons should be provided for problems experienced in some areas. There should be explanation, for example, of the failure or difficulty in some policies or measures to achieve their intended outcomes. The self-knowledge gained from completing the review exercise should be reflected in the SER
- Understanding the nature of problem areas is the first step in formulating appropriate interventions.

11.13.4 Organizing the self-evaluation report

The SER should be organized as a narrative self-study document with appropriate inclusion of references to supporting information, documents, survey results, and tabular data. Documents such as manuals, course syllabi, departmental rules and regulations, promotion policies, and survey documents may be provided on site. These must be clearly referenced in the report submitted. It is recommended that a list of documents available on site be included in the SER. Please note that all appendices must be clearly marked and appropriately cross-referenced.

It is recommended that departments make use of footnotes to refer to evidence in specific files and that a document (evidence) map be compiled listing the files.

To limit the duplication of evidence contained in the files, departments should not arrange evidence according to the criteria. If, for example, reference is made to the school/department calendar in more



than one criterion, it is expedient to have the school/department calendar available in the governance file and to refer to this file whenever the calendar has a reference.

If footnotes are used, each footnote must be clearly explained in the SER to refer the review panel to the correct section, file and sub section. Page numbers are also important. When referring to the minutes of a specific school board or departmental meeting in the narrative of a section of the portfolio, for example, the SER must direct the panel to the exact page of these minutes. (Such evidence might refer to a specific decision that was made and panel members should be directed to the decision in question without having to search through the minutes of entire meetings)

11.13.5 Compiling the self-evaluation report

There is no specified format for the SER, but some guidance is offered in terms of expectations. In all, the self-evaluation report should be about 40 pages, depending on the size of the department and the number of programmes and research units to be included.

The self-evaluation report should be accompanied by extensive Appendices (that may be provided on the review site). It is important that any claims made in the report be backed up by evidence in the Appendices (specific documents should be referred to by page number). (See Section 4.6 for lists of suggested sources of evidence to be provided for review panels).

The report should include an **Executive Summary** of about 5 pages in which the Terms of Reference developed for the review and the key findings are presented.

The report should begin with an **Introduction** that gives an overview of the department, its history and development, its present reputation and distinctiveness, its vision and goals and where it would like to see itself in 5 years' time. The introduction should also indicate what the department currently considers to be its strengths and weaknesses and the environmental opportunities and threats that it faces. Where appropriate, this should take into account



comparative benchmarking data. The introduction should also outline key contextual factors impacting on the work of the department.

The report should then include a Section on each of the core functions of a department: teaching, learning, research, community engagement and leadership & management. Each section should consist of a narrative that includes the following elements:

- a) the vision and goals of the department for this function
- b) the key evaluation questions the department set itself for this function and the reasons for their selection
- c) the findings of the evaluation for each of the core functions (these must be backed up by supporting evidence provided in the Appendices)
- d) an analysis of the findings
- e) a draft improvement plan for each core function drawn up on the basis of any weaknesses and negative findings identified (to be finalised after receipt of the review report).

In preparing the section of the self-evaluation report on **teaching and learning** Heads of Departments are required to select at least one undergraduate and one postgraduate programme for in-depth review, using the accreditation criteria in Section 11.14.

In preparing the section of the self-evaluation report on **community engagement**, Heads of Departments are encouraged to reflect on the following sources of information to guide the preparation of documentation:

1. Information on socially engaged research (this refers to the interconnectedness between research and society in the context of responding to development challenges facing our society)
2. Information on socially engaged teaching (this can include examples of the development of new forms of pedagogy and the generation of new knowledge predicated on linking the interests of scholarly enquiry with interests and needs of external constituencies)



3. Information on socially engaged service and learning (this takes place under the supervision of academic staff and/or is a credit-bearing component of the formal curriculum; and community-based education)
4. Information on socially engaged leadership, management and administration (this can include examples of staff holding positions or assuming leading role(s) in external structures or processes such as commissions, professional bodies, reference groups, government bodies, development agencies, community organisations and non-governmental organisations).

In preparing the section of the self-evaluation report on the **leadership and management** of the Department, Heads of Departments are encouraged to use the points below to guide the preparation of documentation:

1. An organogram of the department's structure and commentary on reporting lines and decision-making processes in the department
2. An account of systems for setting and reviewing departmental goals and priorities on a regular basis, including allocation of responsibilities for developmental issues
3. An account of systems for budgeting, financial management and resource allocation
4. A staffing profile with commentary on how redress and equity issues receive attention in the recruitment, selection, appointment and the development of academic and support staff
5. An account of systems for the administration and monitoring of programmes and courses, including a system for gathering and responding to feedback from students on their learning experience
6. An account of a system for monitoring quality in the core activities of teaching and learning, research and community engagement, including resource allocation for development and improvement
7. A process for benchmarking the department and assessing implications for the positioning of the department at UNIVEN



In preparing the section of the self-evaluation report on **research**, Heads of Departments are encouraged to use the points below to guide the preparation of documentation:

1. Information on the nature of the research activities and key focus areas in the department under review plus a statement about the main objectives and future plans for research over the next five years
2. A list of related research outputs (quantified)
3. An account of the structures that exist to manage research activities in the department or unit
4. Information on the mechanisms and practices for promoting research and developing and sustaining an active research culture in the department, including an account of how young/ new researchers are integrated into a supportive research culture
5. Information on the nature and quality of the research infrastructure, including facilities for research students
6. Information on any arrangements which are in place for supporting interdisciplinary or collaborative research
7. Information on relationships with industry and commerce or other research users and where appropriate the account taken of Government policy initiatives and objectives

A **conclusion** that highlights the key findings of the self-review and future plans. The conclusion should also explain how each of the four core functions relate to each other in the department and what plans exist to strengthen these synergies.

11.13.6 Guidelines for providing evidence in each criterion

It is the department's responsibility to ensure that all documentation and sufficient information regarding the programme is provided for each criterion. This includes the different modes of delivery as well as the different sites of delivery, if applicable.



Below is the list of departmental information sources for a site visit, arranged by criterion. If necessary, additional information beyond the guidelines provided may be requested.

Criterion 1 & 10: Programme Design and Coordination

Supporting documentation demonstrating the process that was followed in developing and coordinating the programme. These can include:

- i. The Department's mission, goals and objectives
- ii. Minutes of the School Board and meetings at which the programme was approved
- iii. Business Plan for offering the programme covering the following areas:
 - Motivation/Rationale for offering the programme
 - Market research done to establish the need for the programme
 - Details on how the programme was benchmarked
 - Details on budget allocation and costing for the programme (costing of staff, facilities, etc.) including information on the measures that will be taken to ensure the sustainability of the programme
 - Departmental Handbook with programme information and specifications
 - Details of horizontal and vertical articulation, including articulation agreements with other institutions
 - Where applicable, clearance arrangements with relevant professional bodies
- iv. Policy on the development of learning materials
- v. Information on the individual modules on the programme, including: name of module; NQF level of module; credits; alignment of module outcomes with programme outcomes; assessment criteria, assessment instruments; contents; list of core reading; pre-requisites, planning of time allocation of learning activities; generic skills.
- vi. Department policies and regulations on the roles and responsibilities of Programme Coordinators



- vii. Description of the role, responsibilities and authority of the programmes coordinator (in addition to the normal Department policies and regulations applicable to all programme coordinators)
- viii. Application of the Department quality assurance policy and procedures to this programme.
- ix. Role and responsibilities of the Programme Coordinator in relation to resource allocation for this programme.
- x. Instruments used to obtain student feedback on modules, lecturers and the programme as a whole (including its overall management and administration) and summarised results of feedback
- xi. Instruments used for the continuous review of modules, the programme as a whole, lecturers, overall management and administration of the programme, and summarised results of reviews.
- xii. Demonstration of the security and integrity of learner records and certification arrangements.
- xiii. Extent of implementation, monitoring and oversight arrangements as well as evaluations of certification arrangements and learner records needs to be described and demonstrated.

Criterion 2 & 17: Student Recruitment, Admission and Selection, and Student Retention and throughput rates

Supporting documentation demonstrating the process that is followed in accepting students into the programme as well as information on retention and throughput rates. This can include:

- i. Copy of Departmental policies and procedures for the approval of advertising and promotional material for the programme, including approval procedures and responsibilities.
- ii. The recruitment plan for the programme, with details on strategies to recruit a diversity of students (in terms of gender and race)
- iii. The programme's advertising and promotional materials



- iv. Department/Department's admission and student placement policies
- v. Department/Department's RPL and Access policies
- vi. Examples of tests, if used as selection instruments (with scoring system)
- vii. Interview procedures and selection of panels for interviews (if applicable)
- viii. Provide details of professional/vocational specifications in relation to student recruitment, if applicable.
- ix. Copy of the relevant regulations to be provided or any other vocational specifications, if applicable.
- x. Reports on student retention and throughput rates generated by the Department and disseminated to the various responsible people within the Department.
- xi. Minutes of Senate/Council or any committee meetings at which reports on retention or throughput rates were tabled.
- xii. Examples of remedial actions implemented to minimise drop-out rates, in cases where they are high

Criterion 3, 4 and 11: Staffing and Academic development for student success

Supporting documentation that demonstrates staffing criteria, and development of student success include:

- i. Professional portfolios of academic staff that will be involved in the programme (including details on their teaching and , where relevant, research activities and performance
- ii. Criteria used by the Department to assess the professional portfolios
- iii. Policy guidelines on staff development
- iv. Information on the opportunities for staff/career development provided by the Department
- v. Planning documents and reports on the implementation of the Skills Development Act, Employment Equity Act, and other relevant labour legislation



- vi. Information on recruitment, selection, appointment and promotion procedures for academic staff
- vii. Academic staff teaching loads
- viii. Documentation on the Department's performance appraisal and management system for its staff, including information obtained from student feedback questionnaires/guides/manuals on staff appraisals by peers, line managers etc. Policies governing these
- ix. Workplace skills plan and reports
- x. Information on the professional development of staff, and how the impact of staff development will be determined
- xi. Current human resource data on trends in staff profile- i.e. the number, composition, skills, qualifications, distribution and levels of staff.
- xii. Statistics presentation on staff/student ratio
- xiii. CVs of support staff
- xiv. Employment contracts with indications of work loads
- xv. Performance appraisal instruments and procedures for evaluation of staff members
- xvi. Description of professional development initiatives and links with equity of opportunity regarding these
- xvii. The Department's Academic Development Policy
- xviii. Academic Development Diary of activities for the year, with an indication of activities of particular relevance to this programme
- xix. List of the staff members of the Academic Development Unit, including details on their qualifications and experience
- xx. Indication of the capacity of the Academic Development Unit and the availability of its services to students in this programme
- xxi. List of academic staff in this programme attending staff development workshops under the auspices of the AD unit.
- xxii. Information on the impact staff development workshops have had.



- xxiii. Documentation on Foundation Programmes, extended programmes, programmes for students admitted via Discretion procedures and the numbers of students involved in these.
- xxiv. Criteria and processes involved in moving students from foundation programmes to mainstream programmes, vice-versa.
- xxv. Student academic development workshops held.
- xxvi. Information on the provision for the enhancement of language and numeracy skills in the programme (activities integrated with the curriculum as well as special additional extra-curricula opportunities)
- xxvii. Portfolios of staff with information on participation in Academic Development coordinated staff development activities
- xxviii. Evaluation reports on the effectiveness of the Department's academic development as well as reports on the effectiveness of the academic development initiatives related to this programme.

Criterion 5 & 12: Teaching and learning and teaching and learning interactions

Supporting documentation that demonstrates the department's policy on teaching and learning include:

- i. Documentation on the appointment procedures which indicates how teaching and learning are taken into account in decisions on appointments
- ii. Documentation on the promotion procedures which indicates how teaching and learning are taken into account in decisions on promotions.
- iii. Documentation on the staff appraisal system which indicates how performance in learning and teaching are taken into account in performance appraisals of staff.
- iv. Department's incentive schemes to promote the importance of learning
- v. Regulations on the preparation and use of professional/teaching portfolios in the Department



- vi. Documentation on the rewards for excellence in teaching and learning available at the Department
- vii. The Department/Department teaching and learning strategy
- viii. Study guides (including information on the “big picture” of the programme, the purpose and rationale of the module/course in the context of the programme as a whole, the outcomes of the module/course, study material and sources and guidance on how to find and use it, learning and teaching opportunities and events, time tables and guidance to students on time management, methods and scheduling of student assessments, how the student assessments are used to aggregate grades, etc.)
- ix. Syllabi
- x. Names of structure (s) (e.g. committee/s) mandated to plan the teaching and learning interactions, to oversee delivery and to monitor the effectiveness of learning and teaching methods and the use of instructional and learning technology.
- xi. Minutes of committee meetings (which include information on programme changes and improvements subsequent to the feedback of students and lecturers and, where relevant, other sources)
- xii. Reports of participation in staff development opportunities and its impact (e.g. included in the professional portfolios of staff members)

Criterion 6, 13 and 14: Student Assessment

Supporting documentation that demonstrates the assessment policy/strategies of the department/programme. These can include:

- i. Departmental/departmental assessment policies, procedures and regulations regarding the following:
 - Assessment procedures
 - Provision of timeous feedback to students, weighting of class marks and examinations
 - Security procedures



- Disciplinary and appeals procedures
 - Regulations for marking, grading
 - Supplementary examinations
- i. Policies and procedures to quality assure assessment policies, procedures and regulations.
 - ii. Staff development plan assessor training.
 - iii. Examples of the format for student satisfaction surveys of the management of assessment.
 - iv. The Department/departmental RPL policy
 - v. Evidence of the effective implementation of the RPL policy
 - vi. Student assignments, examination papers, answering book/sheets
 - vii. The Department's assessment policy, as well as specific assessment policies on programmes
 - viii. Documentation of internal moderation (procedures and how it was actually done in this programme)
 - ix. The Department's policy and procedure on external moderation
 - x. Minutes of School Board (or equivalent structure at which the appointment of external moderators and examiners was approved)
 - xi. Reports of external moderators, and minutes of meetings at which these were discussed and information on how it was acted upon.
 - xii. Grievance procedures for students with respect to assessment dissatisfaction.
 - xiii. Records of students admitted via RPL route and information on their progress/success.
 - xiv. Departmental assessment policy
 - xv. Departmental catalogues/year books/websites containing the rules governing assessment.
 - xvi. Documentation on disciplinary and appeals procedures (if it can be made available, if not, excerpts or authorised summaries)



Criterion 7: Infrastructure and Library resources

Supporting documentation that demonstrates the department's policy on support to students

- i. Departmental policy on library support to faculties
- ii. Departmental policy on computers/computer supply to faculties
- iii. Detail on venues, timetable and computer facilities
- iv. Detail on offices and other resources available to staff members in the programme
- v. Library support specific to the programme
- vi. Computer training (where applicable)
- vii. Code of conduct for laboratory conduct or other codes relevant to the facilities
- viii. Certificates in relation to various regulatory authorities (e.g. occupational health and safety certificate)
- ix. Contracts with other institutions/organisations pertaining to the use of facilities
- x. Fixed Assets Register (including renewal and replacement statistics in relation to depreciation)
- xi. Inventory of IT facilities (hardware and software)
- xii. Library holdings relevant to the programme

Criterion 8: Programme Administrative Services

- i. Class time tables with indication of venues
- ii. Test and examination time-tables with indication of venues
- iii. Student hand-outs and guides
- iv. Policies and any document on the programme administrative systems
- v. Policy or documents on administrative arrangements for certification



Criterion 9 & 16: Postgraduate policies, procedures and regulations and Delivery of postgraduate programmes

In addition to information sources for criterion 5, the following information will be required for postgraduate programmes:

- i. Plans to provide support for students admitted to postgraduate programmes via alternative routes (including support on research and methodology)
- ii. Profile of proposed supervisors (CVs, details of supervision experience, academic/research standing/stature)
- iii. Plans in place for the training of inexperienced supervisors.
- iv. Training completed/proposed by supervisors.
- v. Departmental regulations on supervisor/student contracts.
- vi. Examples of contract between supervisors and students.
- vii. Plans for monitoring student progress and relationship between supervisors and students (e.g. kinds of progress reports required, frequency, complaints procedure)
- viii. Communication strategy for the programme including turn-around time and feedback to students
- ix. Policies on Ethics, Code of Conduct, Plagiarism, Intellectual Property Rights and Confidentiality, where appropriate.
- x. Description of monitoring mechanisms for supervisors and student progress.
- xi. Copies of Postgraduate Handbooks.
- xii. Stated requirements in relation to the award of the qualification.
- xiii. Departmental research policy, with additional policies on faculty/school or programme level, if applicable
- xiv. Departmental policy on the roles and responsibilities of supervisors and postgraduate students, with (where applicable) additional policies on faculty/school or programme level



- xv. Departmental assessment policy with details on student assessment in postgraduate programmes, with (where applicable) additional policies on faculty/school or programme level
- xvi. CV of programme coordinator
- xvii. Terms of reference and minutes of Research Committee, Higher Degrees Committee or equivalent structures responsible for oversight and decision making on research
- xviii. Materials provided to students in relation to research requirements, code of conduct, ethics, plagiarism, intellectual property rights and rules and regulations of the institution regarding postgraduate programmes
- xix. Details of training programmes in place for students and staff in research practice, information literacy and the enhancement of writing, language and numeracy skills
- xx. Examples of research proposals
- xxi. Contractual agreements between supervisors and students
- xxii. Report on students' progress in programme
- xxiii. Improvement plans in relation to the supervision practices in this programme
- xxiv. Improvement plans in relation to postgraduate research

Criterion 15 & 18: Coordination of Work-integrated learning and Programme impact

Supporting documentation demonstrating WIL and programme impact include:

- i. Department policy on work-based learning
- ii. Policies on placement, record-keeping, and monitoring of work-based learning
- iii. Agreements with employers
- iv. Minutes of meetings with employers
- v. Agreements with students (including, for example, study/work guides, information on supervision/monitoring and assessment)
- vi. Samples of log books and reports of students.
- vii. Partnership agreements between the Department and relevant industries



- viii. Partnership agreements between the Department and other institutions offering a similar programme (nationally and internationally)
- ix. Reports of the Department's career advice office, which includes information on the success of final year students to find employment
- x. Records of discussions between the Department and employer organisations
- xi. Feedback from alumni

Criterion 19: Programme reviews

Supporting documentation on self-evaluation of the department and the programme. These can include:

- i. Tracer studies
- ii. User surveys
- iii. Reports of previous programme/departmental self-evaluations and/or reviews
- iv. Impact studies
- v. Data on national and international benchmarks.
- vi. Samples of throughput and retention reviews.
- vii. Minutes of programme review meetings.
- viii. Reports from industry and other stakeholders.
- ix. Compositions of relevant committees and minutes of their activities.
- x. Data on implementation of changes/improvements following user surveys, reviews and impact studies.
- xi. Student feedback on programme



References

1. Department of Education. 2008. *Minimum Admission Requirements for Higher Certificate, Diploma and Bachelor's Degree Programmes Requiring a National Senior Certificate*, Government Gazette, Vol 751, No 32131 of 11 July 2008.
2. Department of Education. 2009. *Minimum Admission Requirements for Higher Certificate, Diploma and Bachelor's Degree Programmes requiring a National Certificate (Vocational)*, published in the Government Gazette, Vol. 533, No. 32743, November 2009.



3. Department of Education. 2007. *The Higher Education Qualifications Framework*. Pretoria: DOE.
4. Department of Higher Education and Training. 2013. *The Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework*. Pretoria: DHET.
5. Higher Education Quality Committee. 2001. *Criteria for programme accreditation*. Pretoria: The Council on Higher Education.
6. Higher Education Quality Committee. 2004a. *Criteria for institutional audits*. Pretoria: The Council on Higher Education.
7. Higher Education Quality Committee. 2004b. *Criteria for programme accreditation*. Pretoria: The Council on Higher Education.
8. Higher Education Quality Committee. 2004c. *Framework for institutional audits*. Pretoria: The Council on Higher Education.
9. Council on Higher Education (2012), *National Review Manual for the Re-Accreditation of Programmes*.
10. University of Venda (2009), *Monitoring and Evaluation of Teaching and Learning Policy*.
11. University of Venda (2009). *Teaching and Learning Policy*
12. University of Venda (2012), *Quality Assurance Policy*.



DRAFT

