



University of Venda

# Programme Accreditation and Review GUIDE

March 2013

This document should be used in conjunction with the HEQC Criteria for Programme Accreditation (minimum standards for each criterion).

# Contents

<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>General remarks on the Criteria for Programme Accreditation .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Criteria for programme input .....</b>	<b>7</b>
Programme design .....	7
Criterion 1 .....	7
Student recruitment, admission and selection .....	10
Criterion 2 .....	10
Staffing.....	12
Criterion 3 .....	12
Criterion 4 .....	15
Teaching and learning strategy .....	17
Criterion 5 .....	17
Student assessment policies and procedures .....	19
Criterion 6 .....	19
Infrastructure and library resources .....	21
Criterion 7 .....	21
Programme administrative services .....	23
Criterion 8 .....	23
Postgraduate policies, procedures and regulations.....	25
Criterion 9 .....	25
<b>Criteria for programme process.....</b>	<b>28</b>
Programme coordination.....	28
Criterion 10.....	28
Criterion 11 .....	30
Teaching and learning interactions .....	32
Criterion 12 .....	32
Student assessment practices .....	33
Criterion 13 .....	33
Criterion 14 .....	37
Coordination of work-based learning .....	38
Criterion 15 .....	38

Delivery of postgraduate programmes .....	40
Criterion 16.....	40
Questions .....	40
<b>Criteria for programme output and impact .....</b>	<b>42</b>
Student retention and throughput rates .....	42
Criterion 17 .....	42
<b>Criteria for programme review .....</b>	<b>43</b>
Programme impact .....	43
Criterion 18 .....	43
Programme review .....	44
Criterion 19 .....	44
<b>References .....</b>	<b>45</b>

## **Introduction**

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to University of Venda for applying for accreditation of its learning programmes with the HEQC. This document also serves as a guide for internal programme reviews. The document aims to support the Schools and Departments to plan and design programmes and to prepare documentation as evidence of their compliance with each of the criteria and minimum standards. The document aims to be as comprehensive as possible, covering a full range of possible questions and information sources that can be considered in the accreditation and review processes.

Under each criterion, a list of questions is provided. Please answer the questions as briefly as possible. The purpose of these questions is to guide the design, analysis and evaluation of the programme application, and guide interaction with the University during a possible site visit. The questions are followed by a list of information sources:

- Sources to be submitted online to substantiate an application and
- Sources which the HEQC/Internal Programme review panel may request should a site visit be conducted.

Information sources are used by the HEQC/Internal Programme Review panel for judgements on the submission and the self-evaluation report of the programme.

The following approach was used during the development of this document:

1. A list of questions was developed on the basis of the criteria and minimum standards. Care was taken to ensure that this list is comprehensive, i.e. that it covers all the criteria and all the minimum standards.
2. Lists of information sources were developed, based on the questions. To substantiate its responses to the questions, the University is required to provide evidence. Two categories of information sources are provided:
  - Evidence to be provided by the University when it submits an application onto the HEQC's online system
  - Evidence that the University need have ready should the HEQC decide to organise a site visit or in the process of internal programme reviews.

## **General remarks on the Criteria for Programme Accreditation**

The HEQC's criteria for programme accreditation should be used as the basis for an institution's self-evaluation of the programme(s) submitted for accreditation, along with additional benchmarks which the institution might set for itself. The HEQC will use the criteria, the self-evaluation report and supporting evidence provided by the institution, in the evaluation of applications for programme accreditation (new programmes) or reaccreditation (existing programmes).

The following should be noted:

- (i) The HEQC's criteria for programme accreditation are categorised using an input, process, output and impact, and review model. The different aspects of the model are to be viewed in terms of their internal relationships. A case in point is programme management, which has policy (input) aspects, but also entails a range of activities which have to do with the delivery (process) of the programme.
- (ii) The criteria apply to all programmes at main campuses, satellite campuses and tuition centres.

### **The accreditation process of a new programme:**

- **Candidacy Phase:** during this phase institutions submit evidence of their capacity and institutional support to start offering a programme. During this phase the HEQC will scrutinise the arrangements for the quality assurance of teaching and learning at the institution. If a programme satisfies the HEQC's requirements for the candidacy phase it will receive provisional accreditation.
- **Midterm-check:** constitutes a performance and compliance check midway through the programme to ensure that the institution has implemented the stated programme plan and has identified and addressed areas for urgent attention.
- **Accreditation Phase:** Within one year of the first cohort of students graduating from the new programme, the institution must demonstrate that it has met the conditions set by the HEQC during the candidacy phase, which include conditions relating to the evaluation of the mid-term report from the institution.

**The following steps lead to accreditation:**

- (i) Acceptable reasons and relevant evidence have to be provided in instances where the conditions have not been met.
- (ii) The institution is also required to conduct a self-evaluation of the programme, using the HEQC's criteria for the accreditation phase, which include those for programme input, process, output and impact, and review.
- (iii) The institution must submit a programme improvement plan to address areas in need of attention as identified in the self-evaluation.
- (iv) A site visit may be conducted, if necessary.

# Criteria for programme input

## Programme design

### Criterion 1

*The programme is consonant with the institution's mission, forms part of institutional 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.*

### Questions

1. What is the purpose of the proposed programme?
2. How does the programme serve the public good?
  - In what way does the proposed programme meet national/regional labour market, knowledge or other socio-cultural needs?
  - To what extent did the programme design process involve external input (e.g. industry experts, academic peers and professional expertise)?
  - If the programme is professional or vocational in nature, how are the characteristics of professional or vocational education catered for in its design and content?
3. How does the programme serve the personal good of learners? (in terms of the provision of opportunities for personal growth, enhancing life opportunities, etc.)
4. Are there other institutions in the region offering the same programme? If yes, what is the rationale for the University to offer the programme as well?
5. What is the link between the proposed programme and the University's mission, vision, goals and objectives?
  - If there is no link, what is the justification of the shift?
  - Has this shift been approved on all levels within the University?
6. How has the programme been provided for the terms of institutional planning and resource allocation?
7. How does the programme meet the requirements of the NQF with respect to the levels, qualification descriptors and qualifiers, general and specific qualification standards, credits etc.?

8. How do the programme learning outcomes, degree of curriculum choice, teaching and learning methods, modes of delivery, learning materials and expected completion time cater for the learning needs of its target student intake?
9. What are the specific and critical cross-field outcomes expected on the exit level and what are the competencies associated with this programme?
10. When and how will the University communicate the expected competencies to be achieved to students enrolled in the programme?
11. How does the programme design/architecture make provision for a reasonable balance between theoretical, practical and experiential components of learning? How does this balance ensure that the programme achieves its educational purposes?
12. What is the University's policy regarding the development and evaluation of learning materials. What procedures will be used to ensure the alignment of learning materials with the programme's goals and underpinning philosophy? Provide details on the policy and practices for the training of staff responsible for development of learning materials.
13. Where applicable, how does the programme design cater for the characteristics and needs of professional and vocational education? Where applicable, does the programme design meet the requirements of the relevant professional bodies?
14. If service learning is part of the University's mission, how is it integrated in the planning of the programme?
15. Is the programme full-time or part-time? What is the mode of delivery for the programme?
16. What is the minimum and maximum duration of the programme?

**Information to be supplied by the University as part of its application for the accreditation of a programme**

- a) Brief description of the purpose of the programme
- b) Link between the proposed programme and the University's mission, vision, goals and objectives.
- c) Summary of the business plan for the programme.
- d) Formal details of the programme (compliance with the HEQF)
- e) Outcomes and assessment (generic as well as specific outcomes) and how the outcomes are assessed
- f) List of courses/modules and rules of combination for the programme.



- g) Types of learning activities that will be used in the programme as a whole and the number of hours that the average learner is expected to spend on each.
- h) Mode of delivery (contact, distance, mixed)
- i) Duration
- j) Description of cooperation with other institutions, with copies of agreements (where applicable)
- k) Clearance from professional bodies (where applicable)
- l) Information on service learning (where applicable)

### **Documents to be submitted with the application for accreditation**

- a) Budget for the development of learning materials
- b) Examples of contract arrangements with workplaces for student placements
- c) Outline of all courses and modules (core, fundamental and optional) that constitute the programme
- d) SAQA submission
- e) List of prescribed and recommended readings
- f) Any other documentation which will indicate your compliance with this criterion

### **Institutional information sources for a site visit**

- i. The University'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
- iv. University Handbook with programme information and specifications
- v. Details of horizontal and vertical articulation, including articulation agreements with other institutions
- vi. Where applicable, clearance arrangements with relevant professional bodies
- vii. Policy on the development of learning materials

- viii. Information on the individual courses/modules on the programme, including: name of course; NQF level of course; credits; alignment of course/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.

## **Student recruitment, admission and selection**

### **Criterion 2**

*Recruitment documentation informs potential students of the programme accurately and sufficiently, 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 selected takes into account the programme's intended learning outcomes, its capacity to offer good quality education and the needs of the particular profession (in the case of professional and vocational programmes).*

### **Questions**

1. How are the advertising and promotional materials of the programme developed? How does it comply with the University's policies and procedures in this regard? Who is responsible for the approval of advertising and promotional materials?
2. What are the programme's admission criteria? How are they aligned with the University's admissions policy? Do they adhere to current legislation? In the case of professional programmes, do they meet the requirements of the relevant professional bodies?
3. Are there additional selection mechanisms for the programme – e.g. interviews, aptitude tests, etc? What systems are in place to administer and monitor the selection mechanisms?
4. How will the University ensure that there is alignment between its admission requirements, the intended learning outcomes of the proposed programme and the specific needs and characteristics of the learners targeted by the programme?
5. What monitoring mechanisms are in place at the programme level to test the validity of admission and selection criteria?

6. How will the University recruit student onto the proposed programme in such a way that it meets the equity targets as spelled out in the National Plan for Higher Education?
7. How will the University's RPL policy be used to admit students to the proposed programme? What percentage of students will be admitted to this programme via the RPL and other alternative routes? What systems are in place to keep record of the progress of the students admitted through an RPL route?
8. What support mechanisms are in place for students admitted via alternative routes (e.g. RPL)?
9. Has the enrolment planning been done in such a way that the University can ensure that the numbers of students are manageable within its capacity (over a number of years)?

**Information to be supplied by the University as part of its application for the accreditation of a programme**

- a) Admission requirements
- b) Selection criteria and procedures (if applicable)
- c) Expected enrolments(enrolment planning for each of the first five years of study)

**Documents to be submitted with the application for accreditation**

- a) Admission policy for the programme
- b) RPL Policy
- c) Any other documentation, including advertising of the programme, which will indicate your compliance with this criterion

**Institutional information sources for a site visit**

- i. Copy of University's 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. University's admission and student placement policies
- v. University'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.

## **Staffing**

### **Criterion 3**

*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 recognised agencies contracted by the institution provide opportunities for academic staff to enhance their competences and to support their professional growth and development.*

### **Questions**

1. With regard to qualifications: do academic staff have relevant academic qualifications higher than the exit level of the programme, at a minimum, a degree?
2. Were the qualifications of academic staff awarded by recognised higher education institutions?
3. With regard to experience and programme design:
  - Does the majority of full-time academic staff have two or more year's teaching experience in a recognised higher education institution, and in areas pertinent to the programme?
  - In the case of professional programme, does a sufficient number of the academic staff members have relevant professional experience?
  - Do the qualified and experienced staff design the programme?
4. With regard to assessment:
  - Are academic staff competent to apply the assessment policies of the University?
  - Do some of the academic staff have at least two years' experience of student assessment at the exit level of the programme?

- Are academic staff members participating in the assessor training opportunities offered by the University?
  - Are the assessor training opportunities in line with SAQA requirements?
5. With regard to staff support and development:
- Are orientation and induction opportunities provided by the University and/or other recognised agencies, in which new academic staff members participate?
  - Is provision made for regular staff development opportunities in which staff actively participate?

**Information to be supplied by the University as part of its application for the accreditation of a programme**

- a) Academic staff involved in the programme:
- Please list each member of your academic staff that will be involved in the proposed programme using the heading below to make a table. Separate CVs have to be supplied for each academic staff member. Also provide separate tables for each site of delivery (if not one). Please note that this information is required in order to evaluate whether academic staff are appropriately qualified and experienced for their duties.

Name & title (Prof, Dr, Mr, Ms)	Highest qualification(s)	Years experience (teaching & research)	Research area / focus	Modules of the qualification to be taught

**Documents to be submitted as part of the application for accreditation**

For this Criterion, the HEQC-online institutional administrator for your institution is required to sign a declaration regarding the following:

In verifying compliance, the following minimum standards as they pertain to Criterion 3 should be addressed:

- All the academic staff (fulltime/part-time/contract) teaching on this programme hold the required minimum qualifications (one level above that of programme) and have appropriate experience to teach on the programme.
- The unit responsible for the programme has identified a programme coordinator.

- The programme coordinator is trained and informed on the roles and responsibilities of the programme coordinator and is able to provide academic leadership for the programme.
- The unit responsible for the programme makes provision for opportunities for academic staff to enhance their competences and to support their professional growth and development in the interest of programme quality.
- The unit (department/school/faculty) responsible for the programme makes adequate provision for the programme in the workload allocation model taking into account the number of academic staff attached to the programme and envisaged student enrolments.

### **Institutional information sources for a site visit**

- 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 University to assess the professional portfolios
- iii. Policy guidelines on staff development
- iv. Information on the opportunities for staff/career development provided by the University
- 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 University'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.

#### **Criterion 4**

*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.*

#### **Questions**

1. What is the expected staff: student ratio for this programme – demonstrate how you calculate this ratio)?
2. What do you expect the approximate size to be for the classes in each module/course in this learning programme?
3. In the case of programme involving laboratory work and or practical sessions, indicate the staff: learner ratio (demonstrate how you calculated this ratio)
4. Provide the qualifications of academic staff responsible for the design of the learning events. Indicate in the table below, details of academic staff responsible for the design of the learning events.
5. How many support staff does the University have to support this programme? Is it sufficient to meet the needs of this programme?
6. Describe the roles and responsibilities of support staff. Indicate in the table below, details of support staff (apart from academic staff) who provide academic and personal guidance and support for learners in this programme.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Post</b>	<b>Qualifications for post</b>	<b>Nature of appointment</b>	<b>Full-time</b>	<b>Part-time</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>	<b>Race and gender</b>

7. What are the procedures and policies regarding selection, appointment and induction of staff members?
8. With regard to the nature of the academic staff component:
  - Are students exposed to a variety of ideas, styles and approaches?
  - Does the composition of the academic staff complement take equity and gender considerations in account?

- What steps are the programme managers taking to ensure and promote diversity in the academic staff component?
9. Do the contractual arrangements relating to the time and work-load of staff ensure that the requirements to offer the programme will be met?
  10. What measures are in place to ensure that staff members are equipped to teach, assess and provide counselling and support to learners?
  11. How does the system work that will be used in the appraisal of the performance of staff members?

**Information to be supplied by the University as part of its application for the accreditation of a programme**

- a) The Business Plan for the programme with details of the budget for the staff component required to offer the programme, including an indication of planning to ensure the sustainability of the programme.

**Documents to be submitted as part of the application for accreditation**

For this Criterion, the HEQC-online institutional administrator for your institution is required to sign a declaration regarding the following:

The institutional quality assurance office must verify that:

- 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.

**Institutional information sources for a site visit**

- i. Statistics presentation on staff/student ratio
- ii. CVs of support staff
- iii. Employment contracts with indications of work loads
- iv. Performance appraisal instruments and procedures for evaluation of staff members



- v. Description of professional development initiatives and links with equity of opportunity regarding these

## **Teaching and learning strategy**

### **Criterion 5**

*The institution gives recognition to the importance of promoting student learning. The teaching and learning strategy is appropriate for the institutional 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.*

### **Questions**

1. How does the University promote the importance of student learning, and how will these measures impact on this programme?
2. Does the University have a strategy for teaching and learning?
3. How does the strategy for teaching and learning relate to the institutional type (as reflected in the mission)? How will these strategies materialise in the offering of the programme?
4. Does the strategy for teaching and learning include goals, plans, monitoring mechanisms and evaluation procedures related to the composition of the student body (ages, full-time/part-time, advantaged/disadvantaged, etc.)? How will these strategies materialise in the offering of the programme?
5. Does the strategy for teaching and learning include goals, plans, monitoring mechanisms and evaluation procedures related to the mode/s of delivery? How will these strategies materialise in the offering of the programme?
6. Does the strategy for teaching and learning include goals, plans, monitoring mechanisms and evaluation procedures related to the use of appropriate teaching and learning methods? How will these strategies materialise in the offering of the programme?
  - What specific measures are in place to ensure that the teaching and learning methods are appropriate for the design and use of learning materials?

- What specific measures are in place to ensure that the teaching and learning methods are appropriate for the design and use of learning technology?
7. Does the strategy for teaching and learning include goals, plans, monitoring mechanisms and evaluation procedures related to the upgrading of the teaching methods of staff? How will these strategies materialise in the offering of the programme?

**Information to be supplied by the University as part of its application for the accreditation of a programme**

- a) A programme implementation plan with details on how the strategy for teaching and learning will be implemented in this programme

**Documents to be submitted with the application for accreditation**

- a) The Teaching and Learning policy of the institution/faculty/school  
 b) Module outlines, student guides, and programme handbooks  
 c) Implementation of the teaching and learning policy  
 d) Policy for the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning or equivalent

**Institutional information sources for a site visit**

- 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. University incentive schemes to promote the importance of learning
- v. Regulations on the preparation and use of professional/teaching portfolios in the University
- vi. Documentation on the rewards for excellence in teaching and learning available at the University
- vii. The University teaching and learning strategy

## **Student assessment policies and procedures**

### **Criterion 6**

*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.*

### **Questions**

1. Does the University have an assessment policy and effective procedures for its implementation?
2. Does the assessment policy and its procedures ensure academic or professional standards in the design, approval, implementation and review of assessment strategies for modules and programmes?
3. Is responsibility allocated for the implementation of institutional assessment policy to departments?
4. Is the implementation of the assessment policy monitored at different institutional levels?
5. Are there effective policy and procedures for internal and external moderation (including clear guidelines for the appointment and responsibilities of internal and external moderators)?
6. Are there an effective policy and procedures for assessing current competence or for recognising prior learning?
7. Are the purposes for which assessment is used explicit and appropriate?
8. Are University rules and regulations governing assessment adhered to?
9. Is assessment conducted securely and with rigour and fairness?
10. To what extent are the principles, procedures and practices of assessment explicit, valid and reliable?
11. Are the assessment decisions recorded and documented securely, accurately and systematically over time?
12. Are there effective procedures for the settling of students disputes regarding assessment results, and how are these procedures communicated to students?
13. Are there policy and procedures with regard to plagiarism and other misdemeanours?

14. Does the University offer its teaching staff development opportunities in order to improve and professionalise its assessment practices (refer also to Criteria 3 and 4)
15. Are the academic staff responsible for official decisions on summative assessment competent to assess and appropriately trained and experienced?
16. Are these staff development opportunities widely implemented and with what effect?
17. Are these staff development opportunities regularly reviewed and improved on?
18. Are the policies, procedures and regulations appropriate and effective for work-based learning?
19. Are assessment data and results used for diagnostic purposes to adjust teaching and assessment practices and to improve the curriculum?
20. Is there an effective system in place for monitoring of assessment policies, practices, procedures and does it occur at management and other appropriate levels?

**Information to be supplied by the University as part of its application for the accreditation of a programme**

- a) The institutional assessment policy document.
- b) A programme implementation plan with details on how institutional assessment policy will be implemented in this programme.
- c) Confirmation of the HEQC's delegation decision relating to RPL.

**Documents to be submitted with the application for accreditation**

- a) Experiential learning assessment and monitoring policy
- b) The unit's policy on assessment and examinations as applicable per module or programme
- c) Documents describing the policy for student assessment, including internal assessment; external moderation/examination; student progress; validity and reliability of assessment; grievance procedures; supplementary examinations and recording of results and security
- d) External examiner systems; mark schedules; internal moderation systems: rules and regulations pertaining to the award of the qualification
- e) Any other documentation which will indicate compliance with this criterion

**Institutional information sources for a site visit**

- i. Institutional 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
- ii. Policies and procedures to quality assure assessment policies, procedures and regulations.
- iii. Staff development plan assessor training.
- iv. Examples of the format for student satisfaction surveys of the management of assessment.
- v. The University RPL policy
- vi. Evidence of the effective implementation of the RPL policy

## **Infrastructure and library resources**

### **Criterion 7**

*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.*

### **Questions**

1. Provide details of lecture rooms/theatres, laboratories (if relevant to the programme, science, computer, practical rooms).
2. If the programme has specific requirements in terms of facilities (e.g. soundproof rooms, studios), please provide details of these. If you have arrangements for the usage of other facilities, please provide the details of the arrangements.
3. Do the venue allocation and time-tabling provide for the needs of the students, and how?

4. Provide details of IT infrastructure available for both staff and students (hardware and software)
5. Provide details of the budget and annual budgeting process to provide for the IT needs of the programme.
6. What are the IT requirements specific to the programme?
7. What measures are in place to ensure that the students will have access to these facilities?
8. How are the IT facilities maintained and upgraded? Does it take place on a regular basis?
9. Provide details of the IT training opportunities to be provided to staff and students.
10. Provide the following details on the library:
  - Library budget and annual budgeting process
  - Acquisition policy and practices (including information on how this is geared to serve the needs of this programme.
  - Working days and hours
  - Inter-library loan facilities
  - Total holdings with split indicated between books and journals
  - Holdings relevant to the programme
  - Agreements with other libraries
  - Electronic libraries available and procedures for access to electronic information
  - Rules of library relating to usage

**Information sources to be included in the application for accreditation**

- a) List of venues available for the programme (or a development plan to secure venues if not already available)
- b) Details of IT provision available for the programme (or a development plan to secure IT hardware and software if not already available)
- c) Details of library provision available for the programme (or a development plan to secure access to the programmes' required academic information if not already available)

**Documents to be submitted with the application for accreditation**

For this criterion, the HEQC-online institutional administrator for your institution is required to sign a declaration regarding the following:

In verifying compliance, the following minimum standards as they pertain to Criterion 7 should be addressed:

- Adequacy of teaching and learning facilities in relation to this programme (classrooms, seminar rooms, work rooms, studios, etc.)
- Availability of laboratory or special equipment required for the programme.
- Compliance with health and occupational safety, and clinical regulations.
- Availability of adequate IT infrastructure (hardware and software) in relation to staff and students.
- Adequacy of library and other resources for this programme
- Sufficiency of training provided to both staff and students in IT and usage of the library and other resource facilities.

Financial plan for the maintenance and upgrading of infrastructure/resources

#### **Information sources for the site visit**

- i. Code of conduct for laboratory conduct or other codes relevant to the facilities
- ii. Certificates in relation to various regulatory authorities (e.g. occupational health and safety certificate)
- iii. Contracts with other institutions/organisations pertaining to the use of facilities
- iv. Fixed Assets Register (including renewal and replacement statistics in relation to depreciation)
- v. Inventory of IT facilities (hardware and software)
- vi. Library holdings relevant to the programme

#### **Programme administrative services**

##### **Criterion 8**

*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.*

### **Questions**

1. What kind of information does the programme administrative service provide to learners enrolling for the first time in the programme?
  - Does it include information on venues, time-tables, access to the library and IT facilities, the staff available to provide academic support and student consultations?
  - Where applicable, does it include all relevant administrative information to cater for the needs of students in remote areas?
2. Does MIS provide for accurate recording and generating of information on student records, including admission, progression, grades/marks, fees and graduation?
3. What policies, systems and mechanisms are in place for:
  - Ensuring that non-active students are identified and assisted/supported?
  - Monitoring the performance of students?
  - Provision of information on the counselling and support services available to students
  - Dealing with the needs of diverse student population.
4. What are the systems and mechanisms for ensuring that the quality of processing and issuing certificates is not compromised?
5. What are the security measures in place to avoid fraud and illegal issuing of certificates?

### **Information sources to be included in the application for accreditation**

- a) Information on academic support and development available for students in the programme
- b) Confirmation of the HEQC's delegation decision relating to certification

### **Documents to be submitted with the application for accreditation**

For this criterion, the HEQC-online institutional administrator for your institution is required to sign a declaration regarding the following:

No information regarding this criterion needs to be provided, but the institutional quality assurance office must verify that 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.

### **Institutional information sources for site visit**

- (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

## **Postgraduate policies, procedures and regulations**

### **Criterion 9**

*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.*

### **Questions**

1. What are the policies, procedures and regulations in relation to student admission for programmes at postgraduate level at the institution?
2. Provide a description of how these will be applied in relation to this programme.
3. How are these policies communicated to prospective post-graduate students?
4. If alternative admission processes are to be applied to the programme, provide a description of these. Include a statement of the number of students to be accepted via this route and support mechanisms in place to assist students admitted via this route.
5. What are the criteria for the selection and appointment of postgraduate supervisors?
  - Does it specify that the supervisor must have a qualification in a relevant field of study higher than or at the same level as the programme in which she/he will be supervising?
  - Does it include staff development and support opportunities for inexperienced or new supervisors?

- Does it specify that the supervisor must have a relevant and appropriate research record and academic stature?
6. What mechanisms are in place to train new supervisors?
  7. Provide details of training provided to all supervisors.
  8. Provide details of the contractual relationship between supervisors and students.
    - Are these arrangements imbedded in the institutional regulations specifying the roles and responsibilities of supervisors and postgraduate students?
    - Does it specify the periodicity of contact between student and supervisor?
    - Does it include arrangements for timeous feedback from supervisors?
  9. What mechanisms are in place for monitoring the relationship between supervisors and students and progress of students?
  10. What mechanisms are in place (at various institutional levels) for the tracking of the progress of postgraduate students?
  11. Provide details of the kind of support provided to the student in terms of ethics, code of conduct, regulations on plagiarism and intellectual property rights.
  12. Provide details on the policy and practices regarding the assessment of the dissertation/thesis/research report. Does it specify:
    - Appointment procedures for examiners?
    - The arrangements for communication with examiners?
    - How the examinations processes will be conducted?
    - How and in what format the theses/dissertations/research reports are to be made available to examiners?
    - How the examiners' reports are handled?
    - Dispute procedures?
  13. What are the specifications regarding the award of the qualification?

**Information sources to be included in the application for accreditation**

- a) Institutional policy and procedures for postgraduate studies.
- b) Institutional regulations for the roles and responsibilities for supervisors and postgraduate students.
- c) Programme specific regulations for roles and responsibilities of supervisors and postgraduate students.
- d) Institutional policy and procedures for postgraduate examinations.

- e) Programme specific regulations for postgraduate examinations

**Documents to be submitted with the application for accreditation**

- a) Research Policy
- b) Policies/procedures for the appointment of supervisors
- c) Code of ethics
- d) Any other documentation which will indicate compliance with this criterion.

**Institutional information sources for site visit**

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) Institutional 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.

## Criteria for programme process

### Programme coordination

#### Criterion 10

*The programme is effectively coordinated in order to facilitate the attainment of its intended purposes and outcomes.*

#### Questions

1. Does the programme have a coordinator, duly appointed in accordance with the University's policy regulations for programme coordinators?
2. Is the programme coordinator a full time permanently appointed academic staff member? If not, provide details and substantiation.
3. What are the roles and responsibilities of the programme coordinator? Does your description include detail of
  - The mandate/authority, role and responsibilities of the programme coordinator, including all aspects of the programme quality management system as well as responsibility for programme review and feedback with a view to improvement?
  - The reporting lines of the programme coordinator?
  - The support system available to the programme coordinator?
  - Resource allocations to the programme to be managed by the programme coordinator?
4. Provide an overview of the programme's quality assurance mechanisms for the programme. How does it link with the overall University quality assurance policy and system? Does your description include:
  - An assessment of the efficacy of the system in use?
  - Any changes that can be made to improve areas in relation to the programme?
  - Details on the continuous programme review and improvement system?
5. Describe the input of students in:
  - The planning of modules and the programme as a whole
  - The overall management and administration of the programme

- Opportunities for feedback on modules, lecturers as well as on the programme as a whole
6. Does certification take place according to the information provided at the candidacy phase?
  7. Describe the security arrangements relating to the recording and documenting assessment decisions as well as procedures in place to ensure the integrity of the certification process.
  8. Describe the procedures for the backup and maintenance of student records.

### **Information sources for a site visit**

- a) University policies and regulations on the roles and responsibilities of Programme Coordinators
- b) Description of the role, responsibilities and authority of the programmes coordinator (in addition to the normal University policies and regulations applicable to all programme coordinators)
- c) Application of the University quality assurance policy and procedures to this programme.
- d) Role and responsibilities of the Programme Coordinator in relation to resource allocation for this programme.
- e) 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
- f) 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.
- g) Demonstration of the security and integrity of learner records and certification arrangements.
- h) Extent of implementation, monitoring and oversight arrangements as well as evaluations of certification arrangements and learner records needs to be described and demonstrated.

## **Academic development for student success**

### **Criterion 11**

*Academic development initiatives promote student, staff and curriculum development and offer academic support for students, where necessary.*

#### **Questions**

1. What are the general features of the University's Academic Development Policy?  
How does it relate specifically to this programme?
2. Does the University have an Academic Development and/or Teaching and Learning Centre?
3. Are the staff responsible academic development adequately qualified? Are the knowledge and skills regularly updated?
4. Does the University have a Foundation Year or Bridging Programmes available for students in this programme? Provide the details.
5. Are extended programmes available to students in this programme. Provide details.
6. Are there mentors or other forms of support available to students in this programme? Provide details.
7. Does the University admit students via Discretion route? If so, provide details on how this process is managed, how records are kept and how these students' progress is tracked.
8. How are students admitted via alternative routes routed to benefit from academic development? Do the academic development programmes make specific provision for these students?
9. How is the integration between academic development and mainstream programmes managed by the University?
10. Does the University programme design and planning process make provision for strategies for language skills development? If so, how does it relate specifically to this programme? Provide details.
11. Does the University programme design and planning process make provision for strategies for numeracy skills development? If so, how does it relate specifically to this programme? Provide details.
12. What is the link between academic development and staff development?

13. Are there any other student development mechanisms at the University? Please provide details.
14. How is the effectiveness of academic development initiatives in the University and in this programme monitored? How feedback is used for improvement of the academic development initiatives?

**Information sources for a site visit**

- a) The University's Academic Development Policy
- b) Academic Development Diary of activities for the year, with an indication of activities of particular relevance to this programme
- c) List of the staff members of the Academic Development Unit, including details on their qualifications and experience
- d) Indication of the capacity of the Academic Development Unit and the availability of its services to students in this programme
- e) List of academic staff in this programme attending staff development workshops under the auspices of the AD unit.
- f) Information on the impact staff development workshops have had.
- g) Documentation on Foundation Programmes, extended programmes, programmes for students admitted via Discretion procedures and the numbers of students involved in these.
- h) Criteria and processes involved in moving students from foundation programmes to mainstream programmes, vice-versa.
- i) Student academic development workshops held.
- j) 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)
- k) Portfolios of staff with information on participation in Academic Development coordinated staff development activities
- l) Evaluation reports on the effectiveness of the University's academic development as well as reports on the effectiveness of the academic development initiatives related to this programme.

## Teaching and learning interactions

### Criterion 12

*Effective teaching and learning methods and suitable learning materials and learning opportunities facilitate the achievement of the purposes and outcomes of the programme.*

### Questions

1. What information are learners provided with in relation to the coherence of the programme? Is the “big picture” explained to them?
2. Does this information include an explanation of the way in which assessments are planned to serve as learning opportunities contributing to the outcomes of the programme?
3. How does the design of the programme take into account the coherence between (a) the aims and intended outcomes of the programme, (b) the scope of the learning programme, (c) the design and production of learning materials and (d) the strategies and mode/s of delivery?
  - Is there an appropriate balance and mix between different teaching and learning methods?
  - Are the teaching and learning opportunities explicitly and in a planned manner linked to the module outcomes and the programme outcomes?
  - Are the teaching and learning methods appropriate to the design and use of instructional and learning technology?
  - Is up-to-date instructional and learning technology used optimally?
4. Are the teaching and learning interactions planned to enhance learner-centeredness?
5. Describe the curriculum planning process:
  - Are students involved in the process of programme development, design and review?
  - Do students participate in the advisory board for programme planning and, if so, in what manner?
6. Whose views are solicited to monitor the effectiveness of teaching and learning interactions?
  - How are the views of the lecturers involved in the teaching of the programme systematically solicited and used for improvement? Do students get feedback



on their feedback? How do they know that their feedback is actually taken into account?

- How is student feedback obtained and used for improvement?
  - Are the views of any other parties solicited for this purpose? If so, describe how does it work?
  - Is there a process of triangulation between views of the different groups, and if so, describe how it works?
7. Do academic staff members participate in staff development opportunities specifically aimed at the enhancement of learning facilitation skills, and if so, what is the impact of these events on the programme? (see also Criterion 3)

### **Institutional information sources for a site visit**

- a) 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.)
- b) Syllabi
- c) 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.
- d) 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)
- e) Reports of participation in staff development opportunities and its impact (e.g. included in the professional portfolios of staff members)

## **Student assessment practices**

### **Criterion 13**

*The programme has effective assessment practices which include internal (or external) assessment, as well as internal and external moderation.*

## Questions

1. Describe the implementation of **internal assessment** verification and moderation system followed in this programme.
  - Who is responsible for the designing, running and marking of assessments, the recording of results and the provision of feedback to learners?
  - Are assistants used for any of these purposes, if so; give details on the procedures in place to ensure reliability and fairness to learners?
  - Are internal moderation checks conducted in the case of summative assessments, especially where more than one marker is involved?
  - What procedures are in place to ensure timeous feedback to learners?
  - How is feedback used to ensure that assessment serve as learning experiences for the learners?
  - How is feedback on assessment used to improve the curriculum?
2. Describe the implementation of the **external moderation** system followed in this programme?
3. What criteria are used for the appointment of external moderators for this programme?
  - Who recommends the external moderators?
  - Who appoints the external moderators?
  - Who is responsible to ensure that the external moderators have qualifications at least on the same level as the programme being examined? If external moderators do not meet this requirement, how does the programme manager substantiate their appointment?
  - Who is responsible to monitor that external moderators are changed every three years and what monitoring procedures are in place for this purpose?
  - Who is responsible to monitor that external moderators are, where possible, not appointed as reciprocal agreements and what monitoring procedures are in place for this purpose?

4. List names , qualifications, experience and places of employment of the external moderators and examiners for this programme using the heading below:

Name	Qualifications	Place of employment	Expertise in the area of the programme	(Calendar) years involved as external moderator for this programme

5. What information is provided to external moderators? Does it include information on the curriculum and on continuous assessment?
6. What is expected from external moderators, and is this clearly communicated to them? Does it include:
- A judgement (prior to the assessment event) of the validity of the assessment instruments in relation to the specified outcomes?
  - A judgement of the quality of student’s performance and the standard of student achievements in relation to the specified outcomes and the expected standards?
  - A judgement of the reliability of the marking process?
  - Any concerns or notification of any irregularities with respect to the observation of the University’s/professional regulations?
7. What is the mandate of external moderators, and is this clearly communicated to them?
8. What are the processes when the University receive the reports of external moderators? Does it include a discussion of possible problems and improvements? Does the University keep records of the reports and subsequent actions of the programme coordinator and lecturers?
9. Are the purposes for which assessment is used explicit and appropriate?
- Are the assessment criteria commensurate with the level of the qualification and aligned with the requirements of the Higher Education Qualifications Framework and SAQA, and where appropriate, professional bodies?
  - Are the outcomes and assessments aligned on module/course level as well as on programme level?

- Are the links between assessment and outcomes communicated to students?
- Is a range of appropriate assessment procedures used?
- Does the programme include at least one integrated assessment procedure?

Provide details.

10. Are the University's/professional rules and regulations governing assessment adhered to?
11. Is assessment conducted securely and with rigour and fairness?
12. Is assessment data available to programme coordinators, administrators, teaching staff and students (as appropriate), and if so, how do they get access to it?
13. Is RPL done in an effective and reliable (consistent) manner? (See also criterion 2 and 6).

### **Institutional information sources for a site visit**

- a) Student assignments, examination papers, answering book/sheets
- b) The University's assessment policy, as well as specific assessment policies on programmes
- c) Documentation of internal moderation (procedures and how it was actually done in this programme)
- d) The University's policy and procedure on external moderation
- e) Minutes of Academic Board (or equivalent structure at which the appointment of external moderators and examiners was approved)
- f) Reports of external moderators, and minutes of meetings at which these were discussed and information on how it was acted upon.
- g) Grievance procedures for students with respect to assessment dissatisfaction.
- h) Records of students admitted via RPL route and information on their progress/success.

## **Criterion 14**

*The programme has taken measures to ensure the reliability, rigour and security of the assessment system.*

### **Questions**

1. Are the University or (where relevant) professional rules governing assessment published, if so, where? Is it clearly communicated to students and relevant stakeholders where this information can be accessed?
2. Are the publications (e.g. the Websites) of the University rules governing assessment regularly updated?
3. Do the regulations/guidelines include information on
  - The marking and grading of results?
  - The aggregation of marks and grades?
  - Progression and final awards?
  - Credit allocation and articulation?
4. How is adherence to University or (where relevant) professional rules governing assessment in this programme ensured? What evidence is there that these regulations are indeed adhered to?
5. If there were breaches of assessment regulations, how were they handled/
6. How are the students provided information and guidance on their rights and responsibilities regarding assessment processes?
  - Are there regulations to combat plagiarism, and if so, are students aware of them? Are they applied effectively?
  - Are there regulations on penalties and if so, are students aware of them? Are they applied effectively?
  - Are there regulations on terms of appeal and if so, are students aware of them? Are they applied effectively?
  - Are there regulations on supplementary exams and if so, are they known to the students? Are they applied effectively?
7. Are there student appeals procedures and if so, are they known to students? Were students consulted in the development of the appeals procedures and do they consider the regulations as fair?
8. What evidence is there that the students' appeals procedures are effective?

### **Institutional information sources for a site visit**

- a) Institutional assessment policy
- b) Institutional catalogues/year books/websites containing the rules governing assessment.
- c) Documentation on disciplinary and appeals procedures (if it can be made available, if not, excerpts or authorised summaries)

## **Coordination of work-based learning**

### **Criterion 15**

*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.*

### **Questions**

1. Specify the nature of relationship/s between the University and employers involved in work-based learning.
  - Are the learning contracts and agreements between the University, employers and students documented? Are these documents properly stored and accessible if necessary?
  - Do the agreements make provision for supervision/mentoring/guidance while work-based learning takes place?
  - Do the agreements make provision for the assessment of the objectives and outcomes of the learning process?
2. What are the arrangements and the nature of communication of the University with employers?
3. How regular does the University communicate with employers in relation to work-based learning? What evidence is there that this communication is effective?
4. Is there evidence that good working relations are maintained between the University and the various employers involved?
5. How do employers participate in the process of curriculum development and review of the programme?

6. How does the University and employers place/allocate learners for the purpose of work-based learning?
  - Are all students treated fairly in terms of the identification and allocation of work-based learning opportunities? Are the allocation procedures transparent?
  - If work-based learning is compulsory, are the students themselves responsible to find employers to host them or is this done by the University?
7. How does the University and employers keep records of learners on work-based learning?
8. How does the University and employers monitor the progress of students placed in work-place?
9. How frequent does work-based learning take place and what is the duration of the work-based learning programme?
10. How does the University ensure the integration of the curriculum and work-based learning programme?
11. What is the process and procedure for the review of the work-based elements of the programme?
12. Does the University receive feedback from learners and employers in relation to work-based learning and how these feed into the review and improvement of the programme?
13. Describe the type/s of mentoring systems the University has regarding work-based learning?
14. How does the system ensure that learners' abilities, strength, weaknesses and development trajectories are identified and new practices developed?
15. Is the system of work-based learning fair to all students in the programme?

**Institutional information sources for a site visit**

- a) University policy on work-based learning
- b) Policies on placement, record-keeping, and monitoring of work-based learning
- c) Agreements with employers
- d) Minutes of meetings with employers
- e) Agreements with students (including, for example, study/work guides, information on supervision/monitoring and assessment)
- f) Samples of log books and reports of students.

## **Delivery of postgraduate programmes**

### **Criterion 16**

*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.*

### **Questions**

1. Provide a description of how the programme enables students to undertake independent research and other scholarly activities.
2. The description should include 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, language and numeracy skills; and the processes, structures and systems in place for the approval of research proposals.
3. Are the policies for the assessment of postgraduate programmes effectively applied in this programme?
4. Provide details on the policy and practices regarding assessment of the dissertation/thesis/research report. Does it specify appointment procedures for examiners, the arrangements for communication with examiners, how the examination process will be conducted, how and in what format the thesis/dissertations are to be made available to examiners, and how the examiners reports are handled as well as dispute procedures?
5. Describe the processes, structures and systems in place for external examinations.
6. Is at least one examiner appointed per dissertation/thesis external to the institution? Do students have access to external examiners' reports, and if not, under what circumstances is this access denied to them? Are the opportunities for students to defend their thesis? How are external examiners reports processed, interpreted and used in the examination process? What is the role/involvement of supervisors in the receipt, dissemination and interpretation of external examiners reports? Does a Higher



Degrees Board/Committee or similar structure exist for this programme and what are its responsibilities?

7. Are the policies for student for student admission and selection properly applied in this programme?
8. Are policies for selection and appointment of postgraduate supervisors effectively applied and what are the criteria for the selection and appointment thereof?
9. Are the policies on the roles and responsibilities of supervisors and postgraduate students effectively applied?
10. Provide details of training provided for all supervisors, contractual relationship between supervisors and students. What mechanisms are in place for monitoring the relationship between supervisors and students and progress of students?

#### **Institutional information sources for site visit**

- Institutional research policy, with additional policies on faculty/school or programme level, if applicable
- Institutional policy on the roles and responsibilities of supervisors and postgraduate students, with (where applicable) additional policies on faculty/school or programme level
- Institutional assessment policy with details on student assessment in postgraduate programmes, with (where applicable) additional policies on faculty/school or programme level
- CV of programme coordinator
- Terms of reference and minutes of Research Committee, Higher Degrees Committee or equivalent structures responsible for oversight and decision making on research
- 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
- Details of training programmes in place for students and staff in research practice, information literacy and the enhancement of writing, language and numeracy skills
- Examples of research proposals
- Contractual agreements between supervisors and students
- Report on students progress in programme

- Improvement plans in relation to the supervision practices in this programme
- Improvement plans in relation to postgraduate research

## **Criteria for programme output and impact**

### **Student retention and throughput rates**

#### **Criterion 17**

*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.*

#### **Questions**

1. How regularly does the University internally analyse information on retention and throughput rates?
2. Whose responsibility is it to generate and disseminate this information?
3. Whose responsibility is it to check and interpret this information?
4. What does the interpretation entail?
  - Does it include taking cognisance of the Department of Education's national benchmarks?
  - Does it include a check that the profile of the qualifying class increasingly resembles the entering class in terms of race and gender?
5. Whose responsibility is it to initiate remedial action where necessary?
6. Which internal structures receive reports on retention and throughput rates (e.g. Faculty Boards, Senate/Academic Board, Council etc.?)

#### **Institutional information sources for a site visit**

- a) Reports on student retention and throughput rates generated by the University and disseminated to the various responsible people within the University.
- b) Minutes of Senate/Council or any committee meetings at which reports on retention or throughput rates were tabled.
- c) Examples of remedial actions implemented to minimise drop-out rates, in cases where they are high

## **Criteria for programme review**

### **Programme impact**

#### **Criterion 18**

*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.*

#### **Questions**

1. How has the programme performed in relation to the employability of graduates (in cases where this is included in the desired outcomes of the programme)?
2. How do the programme coordinator and programme committee go about to identify shortages of expertise in relevant fields?
3. Does the University assist students in identifying or facilitating employment opportunities?
4. What degree of interaction is there between the University, prospective employers and other institutions offering this programme (in the case of programmes where such interactions are relevant and possible)?

#### **Information sources for a site visit**

- a) Partnership agreements between the University and relevant industries
- b) Partnership agreements between the University and other institutions offering a similar programme (nationally and internationally)
- c) Reports of the University's career advice office, which includes information on the success of final year students to find employment
- d) Records of discussions between the University and employer organisations

## **Programme review**

### **Criterion 19**

*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.*

### **Questions**

1. How frequently are user surveys conducted to obtain feedback from academics involved in the programme graduates, peers, external moderators, professional bodies and employers in order to ascertain whether the programme is attaining its intended outcomes and impact?
2. What is the nature and frequency of benchmarking activities of the programme against other equivalent reference points to ensure the continuous self-improvement of the programme?
3. What are the processes and procedures for the review of student throughput and retention rates? Does it take national requirements into account? How frequently are these reviews done?
4. How is the University making use of impact studies for measuring and evaluating the impact of the programme on the employability of students and in alleviating shortages of expertise in relevant fields, where these are desired outcomes of the programme?
5. Who participates in the development, implementation and review of impact studies?
6. How are these impact studies used to ascertain the degree of acknowledgement of the programme in the community by other institutions and, where applicable, in the workplace?
7. How are the results of user surveys, reviews and impact studies used to develop improvement plans, for example with regard to programme design, delivery and resourcing, staff development, student support etc.?

### **Information sources for site visit**

- a) Tracer studies
- b) User surveys
- c) Review reports

- d) Impact studies
- e) Data on national and international benchmarks.
- f) Samples of throughput and retention reviews.
- g) Minutes of programme review meetings.
- h) Reports from industry and other stakeholders.
- i) Compositions of relevant committees and minutes of their activities.
- j) Data on implementation of changes/improvements following user surveys, reviews and impact studies.

## References

1. Higher Education Quality Committee (2004c), *Framework for Programme Accreditation*, Pretoria.
2. Higher Education Quality Committee (2004d) *Criteria for Programme Accreditation*, Pretoria.

Vakele Nobongoza  
Head: Quality Assurance  
Institutional Planning and Quality Assurance Directorate  
University of Venda  
[vakele.nobongoza@univen.ac.za](mailto:vakele.nobongoza@univen.ac.za)  
015 962 8750