



Quality Assurance Manual

UQU University

Saudi Arabia

Draft V1.0

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DOCUMENT TITLE AND REFERENCE	UQU QUALITY ASSURANCE MANUAL
PURPOSE	The source of reference for policies, procedures, principles, and practices based on which UQU University quality assurance mechanisms are set.
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I. Preface

The Dean's Address

This section should be rewritten once the Manual is complete and adopted by the UC.

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful,

Peace and blessings be upon the noble prophet and messenger of Allah, Muhammad and on his companions

With all due respect and affection, I put in your hands a quality system manual for Umm Al Qura University. The quality and academic accreditation staff in the colleges, deanships, institutes and departments at Umm Al Qura University need to know what needs to be done to reach the highest quality. The guide aims to define the role of everyone who is related to the quality of performance at the university and to know how to be an active member who contributes in building the quality system at the university. It presents an indispensable roadmap for all university employees who are keen to enhance the University's performance and its outcomes to achieve the University's vision of excellence at the national and regional levels.

In recognition of the shortcomings of the first edition of this manual, which is in your hands now, we are waiting, with an open heart, for your constructive criticism, in order to make the coming edition better and closer to live up to your high level of expectation.

This work, which I am proud of, is the result of a joint effort of the team at the Deanship of University Development and Quality, reviewed and revised by colleagues who are experts in quality and the pillars of academic accreditation. Advice and support from other faculties of the University has also been sought, without whose help and participation this could not have been accomplished.

I extend my thanks and appreciation to all of you and pray to Almighty God to make him in the balance of their work and to make this work useful and blissful for all who read it

Dean of University Development and Quality Assurance

Dr. Mohammed Jaafar Thabit



II. Introduction

III. Scope

IV. About UQU

V. Mission and vision

The mission:

Umm Al Qura University, blessed by the honor of the place and status, offers outstanding education and scientific research that serve the community, Hajj and Umrah and contributes to building the knowledge economy through a stimulating academic environment and effective partnerships and cooperation.

The Vision:

Umm Al-Qura University is one of the top 100 international universities in the production and investment of knowledge and pioneer in serving the issues of Hajj and Umrah and scientific reference in Islamic sciences

VI. UQU Values

UQU has identified its values at three levels, thus providing a holistic approach:

- Individual level:
 - o Responsibility for oneself and the others
 - o Ethics in performance
 - o Excellence
- Team level:
 - o Teamwork and cooperation
 - o Planning and future vision
 - o Efficiency and effectiveness
- Organizational level:
 - o Commitment to the Islamic values
 - o Continuous development and improvement
 - o Quality and proficiency.



VII. UQU Strategy

UQU long-term goal is by ٢٠٣٠ to be among the top ٢٠٠ universities globally through an improved ranking.

UQU Goals ٢٠٢٤:

- **Goal I: Developing and enhancing UQU's own resources: diversification of the university funding model by capitalizing on UQU's assets, scientific resources, and establishment of an endowment fund.**
 - o Strategic initiatives:
 ١. Capitalizing on the UQU assets;
 ٢. Capitalizing on income from research
 ٣. Income from UQU Museum;
 ٤. Income from UQU Printing and Publishing services
 ٥. Introduction of paid medical services
 ٦. UQU Endowment;
 ٧. Establishment of international consultancy services;
 ٨. Income from the partnership with the private sector;
 ٩. UQU Consulting Oasis (how is this different from above? Is this one local?)
 ١٠. Bold Investment in the valley of Mecca (this is not clear to me)
 ١١. Establishment of new tuition-fee based study programs and qualifications at undergraduate level;
 ١٢. Establishment of new tuition-fee based study programs and qualifications at postgraduate level.
- **Goal II: Strengthen the role of UQU in serving the community and the guests of Rahman, actively offer/participate volunteering services.**
 - o Strategic initiatives:
 ١٣. University without borders;
 ١٤. Center for Professional Development;
 ١٥. Alumni association
 ١٦. Department of volunteering work
 ١٧. Encyclopedia of UQU for voluntary work in Makkah Region
 ١٨. Establishment of the month of Hajj and Umrah;
 ١٩. International voluntary center to serve the guests of Rahman.
- **Goal III: Create an attractive student-centered learning environment while enhancing relevance to the labor market needs.**
 - o Strategic initiatives:
 ٢٠. Develop, motivate, attract and retain talents
 ٢١. Highly qualified faculty members
 ٢٢. 'Guide me' initiative for student counseling;
 ٢٣. 'Gifted' initiative for providing special treatment to gifted and talented;
 ٢٤. Curriculum management and study plans (please, specify)
 ٢٥. Alumni association
 ٢٦. Effective e-learning



- ٢٧. Labs, halls, smart electronic platforms
- ٢٨. Academic acceleration program to allow student pursue individual learning path (e.g. competency-based curricula);
- ٢٩. Learning outcomes assessment system
- ٣٠. Raise the completion rate
- ٣١. Alignment of admission to different programs with the needs of the labor market.
- **Goal IV: Developing scientific research and improving the outputs while expanding graduate programs.**
 - Strategic initiatives:
 - ٣٢. Identifying research areas and priorities;
 - ٣٣. Establishment of research chairs;
 - ٣٤. Prince Mohammed bin Salman Research Center
 - ٣٥. 'Warth', an initiative encouraging the Institute of Research to do more work related to heritage and manuscripts;
 - ٣٦. High quality research with high impact factor (please, confirm this is what it says)
 - ٣٧. 'Classified', an initiative to include UQU journals in the international search engines.
 - ٣٨. Scientific research forums
 - ٣٩. Visiting scholar program
 - ٤٠. Distinctive scholarship
 - ٤١. 'Vision', an initiative that aims to establish more postgraduate programs consistent with the UQU Vision.
- **Goal V: Improve internal processes (develop internal processes and standards of services such as policies, manuals, processes, procedures, structuring, which contributes to improved operations and guides good governance.**
 - Strategic initiatives:
 - ٤٢. Modernization of the organizational and functional structure, establishment of clear decision making lines for internal regulations;
 - ٤٣. Activating the King Salman Human Resources Development Program
 - ٤٤. 'I am responsible', an initiative about spreading work ethics;
 - ٤٥. Efficiency and rationalization in terms of resource management;
 - ٤٦. Establishment of a Strategy Management Office to oversee implementation of the plans;
- **Goal VI: Improve infrastructure and technology to serve the educational processes**
 - Strategic initiatives:
 - ٤٧. University City for females Abdiah
 - ٤٨. University hospital
 - ٤٩. Buildings of medical colleges
 - ٥٠. Custodian of Two Holy Mosques Institute for Hajj and Umrah Research
 - ٥١. Housing for faculty
 - ٥٢. Establishment of a new modernized and smart campus
 - ٥٣. Establishment of the Medical City



- ٥٤. Establishment of the Sports City
 - ٥٥. Establishment of the university city of Qunfudhah
 - ٥٦. Establishment of the university city Balith
 - ٥٧. Establishment of the university city Jamoum
 - ٥٨. Smart university
 - ٥٩. Sustainable and attractive university environment
 - ٦٠. 'Special needs' - an initiative to integrate those with special needs in the university community;
 - ٦١. 'I am healthy' - an initiative which promotes healthy practices
 - ٦٢. UQU environment security.
- **Goal VII: Establish an integrated system for professional development and management of quality**
 - Strategic initiatives:
 - ٦٣. National accreditation
 - ٦٤. International accreditation for programs
 - ٦٥. Adherence to ISO
 - ٦٦. Institutional excellence
 - ٦٧. UQU international center for training and qualifications
 - ٦٨. The legacy of Mecca
 - ٦٩. A training center for leaders.
- **Goal VIII: Expand partnerships between the university and three sectors and promote a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship**
 - Strategic initiatives:
 - ٧٠. Local partnerships
 - ٧١. Regional partnerships
 - ٧٢. International partnerships
 - ٧٣. Advanced world ranking
 - ٧٤. Innovation and entrepreneurship labs
 - ٧٥. Patents
 - ٧٦. Modeling and design
 - ٧٧. 'Made in the UQU' – an initiative to launch an UQU brand name for commercial products.
- **Goal IX: Communication, promotion and marketing of UQU**
 - Strategic initiatives:
 - ٧٨. Establishment of the UQU Communications Department
 - ٧٩. Media empowerment plan
 - ٨٠. 'He ordered me' – an initiative to enable an optimized, smoothed and simplified access to university services
 - ٨١. Belonging and loyalty initiative to enhance the loyalty to the university by the beneficiaries internally and externally such as discount cards, health insurance and creating a banquet hall for employees.



VIII. Quality Assurance Framework

The UQU Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) is specifically developed to ensure that QA is managed, implemented and reviewed effectively while bearing *efficiency, relevance and excellence* in provisions as the major principles to be abided by. Each element in the QAF is benchmarked against the relevant NCAAA standard and international best practice (e.g. *INQAAHE Guidelines of Good Practice*) and includes reference to those documents that informed its development. It evolves around the following:

- A description of processes and procedures;
- Roles and positions responsible for the implementation of QA policies and procedures that are designed to ensure clear decision-making and follow-up to ensure closure of the quality cycle;
- A description of how reports are validated to ensure they feed back into the overall quality improvement;
- The responsibilities for the overall management of QA.

The overall QAF further elaborates on the types of reviews, which could be grouped as internal to UQU, national (in line with the NCAAA), and international (e.g. in line with the QA standards of professional accreditors and the INQAAHE GGPs).

Table 1: UQU Quality Assurance Framework

	Institution	Program (macro-credential)	Course/Module (micro-credential)	Student
Entry point/initial assessment	Licensure	Initial accreditation	UQU	Admission tests
Monitoring/Enhancement	Audits (including financial)/inspections	Internal reviews done by UQU	Internal reviews done by UQU	Internal assessment done by HEI
Accountability/credibility	Accreditation or licensure NCAAA	Accreditation NCAAA/International Accrediting Body	Currently no QA function at this level	Assessment of learning outcomes Currently no QA tool covers this
Professional Certification	N/A	Professional associations/government authority	Currently no QA function at this level	Professional associations/government authority ????
Public Information	NCAAA UQU	NCAAA/International Accrediting Body UQU	Currently no QA function at this level	????

Table 1 outlines the assessment units, function of quality assurance, internal and external, including accountability mechanisms and the bodies responsible for each function.

UQU QAF policies, procedures and systems have been designed as a comprehensive system. QA spans both the corporate domain such as governance and data protection; the academic domain, including Program development, monitoring, admissions, teaching, learning, assessment and collaborative arrangements, resources, human resources, research and development and services to society.

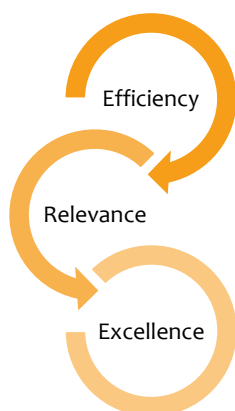
The policy and procedures are laid out simply, comprehensively and are translated into practice through a variety of internal QA processes, supported by guidelines, training and induction that allows engagement of all key stakeholders.

UQU is subject to and has developed appropriate policies and processes to meet the requirements of statutory legislation, including:

- NCAAA;
- Qualifications Authority;
- Other legislation????

IX. Key Principles

The key principles on which the UQU QAF rests are: *efficiency, relevance and excellence*, which are interlinked and one leads to the other.



Efficiency: efficiency as the extent to which objectives are achieved economically by the development intervention and how big is the efficiency or utilization ratio of the resources used

Relevance: the extent to which the aid activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipient and donor

Excellence: a quality that surpasses a defined threshold in a particular field

Figure 1: Key Principles that drive UQU QAF

X. Embedding a Quality Culture



A common approach to the establishment of *Quality Culture* necessitates a deeper engagement of key stakeholders in QA activities and processes. Thus, the UQU QAF policies and procedures have been developed through engagement with key internal and external stakeholders. As processes are developed, consultations are undertaken to ensure the key stakeholders have an opportunity to influence policy and process. Stakeholder engagement is ensured through a diversity of channels – involvement in the boards and committees, participation in the studies, consultation meetings, participation in developing and feedbacks on the developed draft policies, among the rest.

By maintaining communication with stakeholders and ensuring that feedback and reports are analyzed and responded to, stakeholders are reassured that engagement is followed up with recommendations and then by action, which ultimately has an effect on the quality of the provision. This approach demonstrates to stakeholders the value of a quality culture and reflective practice. It is also policy and good practice to follow up all surveys and other consultation exercises by communicating the results, findings and impact of all such exercises to the relevant stakeholders.

The UQU key stakeholders are grouped as follows:

Internal stakeholders:

- Management;
- Faculty members;
- Students;
- Administrative staff;
- Alumni.

External stakeholders:

- Employers;
- International experts;
- Government;
- Religious organizations, especially the ones dealing with Hajj and Umrah;
- National, regional and international partners;
- Community representatives.

UQU makes sure that each representative of the key stakeholders has a say in molding the Quality Culture of UQU as well as continuously enhancing it in the pursuance of *efficiency, relevance and excellence* in all types of provisions.

XI. Governance and Structure

UQU governance infrastructure has been recently revised due to the major changes happening at both institutional and system levels. The key principles for revision were an attempt to make it effective, efficient with clear lines decision making and accountability lines for respective responsibilities. One of the key purposes is to ensure financial and operational sustainability and that clear relationships between the UQU strategies, operations, finances and quality assurance standards are established and successfully operationalized.



The UQU governance infrastructure evolves around the following:

- **The University Council:** the highest decision-making body within the university and the main capacities include strategic, regulatory and financial oversight under the powers delegated by the KSA Government. The UC is Chaired by the Minister of Education and the administrative powers to manage the Board of Directors is delegated to the University Rector.
- **The Academic Council:** a body taking decisions on academic matters – new Programs, research projects, academic directions???? It is the apex body for an academic governance architecture underpinned by sub-committees and units reporting to it. Academic matters such as QA policies and procedures needed to maintain and enhance academic standards in learning and teaching, new Program development, and Program monitoring, are within the remit of the AC. The AC should also bear a formal responsibility for summative assessment. (a body with a supreme academic authority is a lacking element in the structure). Interestingly, I could not find the AC in the official structure but it is on the website: <https://uqu.edu.sa/en/App/Browser/CatSite/٤٣>
- **A quality assurance and audit function is currently under the Deanship of Academic Development and Quality – a unit under the Vice-Rector for Development and Business Entrepreneurship. (the Function exists, the reporting lines are not adequate for an objective decision making). Ideally, this unit needs to provide an independent advisory services to University Council and have no remit to initiate or approve policies. The latter is the role of the Academic Council. The unit is located centrally at the institutional level and is the main body overseeing similar functions in all the ٢٢ colleges, centers and campuses.**

The two decision-making bodies – the UC and the AC – are designed in a way to ensure independent expertise in academic quality and its assurance. The bicameral approach ensures the academic decision-making processes are independent from the institutional, which mainly deals with the institutional level management, including the commercial aspects.

The senior executive is the President of the UQU and the executive committee (EC) is comprised of.... (Ideally, it should have at least the President, the main responsible for Academic Affairs and the head of Registrar). The EC has primary institutional responsibility for overseeing the day-to-day management and academic development, including:

- Driving the strategic direction within the framework set by the UC and AC;
- Advising the University President on matters for decision;
- Monitoring action plans - progress against the set goals;
- Managing resources to make sure that appropriate and effective facilities and services are available and scheduled to ensure the quality of delivery to learners;
- Reviewing the UQU’s policies, procedures and practices, and continuing to ensure their integration across all the colleges, centers and campuses;
- Managing and deploying staff, including recruitment, performance management and development of staff;
- Looking in the matters related to the quality assurance and audit findings and follow up on the flagged issues to ensure closure of the quality cycle.



To ensure a clear responsibilities framework and accountability lines each of the members of the EC are assigned their clear roles, responsibilities, and reporting lines as demonstrated in the tables below:

Table 7: Responsibilities and accountability lines: University President, Head of Academic Matters, Head of Registrar

UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT	
PURPOSE	
RESPONSIBILITIES	
REPORT TO	University Council

HEAD OF ACADEMIC MATTERS	
PURPOSE	
RESPONSIBILITIES	
REPORT TO	University President

HEAD OF REGISTRAR	
PURPOSE	
RESPONSIBILITIES	
REPORT TO	University President

The same should be developed for each college, center and campus.

All units within the structure have prescribed composition, scope of responsibilities and remits as well as meeting schedules. The interrelationships between all units, including committees and UQU personnel are explicitly set out in this document to ensure clarity and accuracy in operations. The set up and the arrangements with and between the different units are subject to an annual review to ensure efficiency. The modifications to the set up are made based on the annual reports from the Quality Assurance and Audit teams.

All council and committee meetings are minuted and the records are retained on the UQU’s server, easily accessible for all types of internal and external reviews. The schedules of meetings of the University Council, AC and key sub-committees are prepared at the beginning of the academic year and are included on the UQU Academic Calendar. The following tables outline the purpose, constitution, frequency of meetings and other pertinent information to illustrate the different governance units and how they co-relate to each other.

Table 8: Remits of the Councils and Committees

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	
PURPOSE	
COMPOSITION	



FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS	
REPORT TO	
RECEIVE REPORTS FROM	

ACADEMIC COUNCIL

PURPOSE	
COMPOSITION	
FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS	
REPORT TO	
RECEIVE REPORTS FROM	

All formal documents are subject to the approval or endorsement of the UC or AC as appropriate.

- The UQU Quality Assurance Manual is approved by the Academic Council and endorsed by the University Council – the body that delegated the responsibility for academic matters, including all QA policies and procedures necessary to maintain and enhance the academic standards and teaching quality of all Programs to the AC.
- Corporate policies, such as the risk policy and data protection policy, are subject to the approval of the UC;
- Academic policy and procedures, such as those contained in the UQU Quality Assurance Manual, are subject to the approval of the AC;
- Reports generated by individuals or sub-committees as part of academic review and monitoring are subject to the approval of the AC;
- Standard operating procedures and guidelines are subject to the approval of the appropriate sub-committee and endorsement by the AC or UC as appropriate;
- Policies and regulations on degrees offered and programs are endorsed by the AC;
- Reports generated by external bodies, which will be used to advise UQU activities, are endorsed by the AC, sub-committee or UC as appropriate;

As previously outlined the sub-committees of the UC and AC include:

- University Council:
 - o Audit Sub-Committee
- Academic Council
 - o Program Committees
 - o Examination Boards
 - Academic Misconduct Committee



- Admissions Committee
- Teaching and Learning Committee
- Program Development Committee
- Student Disciplinary Committee
- Appeals Committee

In addition, Advisory Committees composed of industry representatives work with the Program Development Committee, when developing or revising a Program.

The University Council approves and reviews:

- Risk policy
- Data protection policy
- UQU strategy
- UQU Finances
- Commencement of new Programs
- Appointments on the recommendation of the University President.

THE UC endorses the UQU Quality Assurance Manual and oversees collaborative agreements.

The Academic Council approves and reviews:

- Academic policies and procedures
- Research policies and procedures
- Appointment of examination boards and committees
- Appointment of a defense committee for doctoral programs
- New Program documentation for submission to relevant bodies for approval
- Research projects and strategies as proposed by relevant research units
- Annual Program reports as proposed by Program Boards
- Admissions reports as proposed by Admissions Committee
- Teaching, learning and assessment strategies, guidelines etc. as proposed by the Teaching and Learning committee.

The Academic Council notes examination results and awards approved by the Examination Board and forwarded to the qualifications awards unit. The Academic Council endorses all NCAAA policy, procedure and guidelines and projects their inclusion in the UQU QA Manual. The Academic Council is responsible for academic quality assurance. It is responsible for the establishment, promotion, implementation, maintenance and review of UQU quality assurance system.

XII. Program Development, Approval, Monitoring and Review

One of the key elements of the QA system at UQU is assuring quality of the degrees offered. Therefore, a robust process for Program development, approval, validation, monitoring and review is established to ensure relevance, alignment with best internal practice in terms of quality of standards, and the throughout time they continue to uphold and enhance the expected quality of provisions. In this section, a set of policies and procedures supporting development of all types of Programs is established.



The overall purpose of these procedures and guidelines for quality assurance of Programs is to ensure the offered Programs:

- are in line with the strategic objectives of UQU and contribute to the fulfilment of the mission and achievement of the vision of the UQU;
- offer a constructive and valuable educational experience to learners;
- is in line with the UQU resource planning;
- is developed to meet the requirements set by NCAAA and respective internationally accrediting bodies;
- is in line with the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education;
- is formally approved and validated prior to the delivery;
- has access, transfer and progression arrangements for each program and qualification offered at UQU;
- is subject to continuous monitoring and formal annual review;
- is subject to periodic revalidation in advance to expiry of the duration of enrolment on the certificate of validation, which is usually done thorough the NCAAA accreditation.

The policies and procedures for Program development, approval, validation, monitoring and review are based on such key documents as:

- NCAAA Standards for Program Accreditation, ٢٠١٨^١;
- KSA National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education, ٢٠١٥^٢;
- Procedural Guide of Preparing and Developing Academic Programs at Umm Al Qura University;
- Best practices globally.

Quality assurance at the program level evolves around the following stages: development, approval, monitoring and review.

١. Stage ١: development and approval

A new program development evolves around the following process: initial Program Outline, full Program Outline, and Program Design, External review.

A new program may be initiated by an individual faculty member, program coordinator, dean, or stakeholders of the UQU. Upon receiving the initial proposal, a 'program leader' is assigned. It could be an individual faculty member, head of a chair or a dean. The program leader prepares a brief proposal for the new program to the Vice President for Educational Affairs. The proposal should include the following:

- Rationale for the program
- Feasibility, sustainability and value added of the program;
- Program level as per the NQF;
- Program learning outcomes in line with the NQF;

^١<https://www.ncaaa.org.sa/Portal/Accreditation/Institutional/Documents/standards/StandardsforProgramAccreditation.pdf>

^٢<https://www.ncaaa.org.sa/en/Releases/NationalQualifFrameworkDocuments/National%20Qualification%20Framework.pdf>



- Program aims and objectives;
- Outline of the program.

Once the initial proposal is received by the VP for Education Affairs, it is submitted to the head of operations who will investigate the following:

- Financial implications for the UQU;
- Market research;
- Consultation with other providers of similar programs.

Following the investigation, a short report on the initial findings is submitted to the VP for Education Affairs with recommendations on the program development.

Based on the decision of the VP for Education Affairs related to the development of the program, an Outline Proposal is developed. The VP for Education Affairs assigns the new program to the relevant department/chair for the follow up.

The VP for Education Affairs forms a Program Development Committee (PDC), which is composed of at least the following members:

- The assigned Program Coordinator (individual or unit);
- The Program Leader;
- A subject matter expert;
- An industry representative.

The PDC develops a Program Outline subject to the VP for Education Affairs review. It should consist of at least the following:

- Program Title;
- Demand from industry;
- Demand from prospective learners;
- Institute and Department Strategy;
- Aims and Learning Outcomes - general details;
- Admission requirements and prerequisites (if any);
- Course Design – workload in terms of credit hours, subjects, learning outcomes, teaching methodologies and assessment methodologies;
- Course Schedule - examination subjects, component subjects, contact hours, credit rating and level, marks per subject;
- Resources - accommodation implications, staffing implications;
- Similar Programs at other Institutions;
- Results of the meetings with stakeholders and professional bodies;
- Progression routes and transfer options;
- Compatibility with the UQU's mission statement;
- Learner protection;
- Time line for commencement of new program and respective accreditation arrangements.

The Program Outline does not include detailed syllabi; readings lists, equipment lists etc. The VP for Education affairs reviews the Outline and makes recommendations for improvement. Once the VP



for Education Affairs approves of the Outline, the latter is submitted to the Higher Standing Committee for Curricula and Academic Plans at Umm Al Qura University for the Outline approval.

The approval procedure for the Outline can have three outcomes:

- **Approved:** the program is brought to the Academic Council's approval subject to recommendation to the University Council;
- **Revise and resubmit:** in order to progress to full development further information is required. The Program Outline D must be re-submitted giving details in the areas sought by the Higher Standing Committee.
- **Outright rejection:** the proposal is not suitable for progression to full development at this time.

Recommendations may be made by both the Higher Standing Committee, Academic Council and University Council, subject to follow up by the VP for Education Affairs, after which a Program Design stage launches.

The Program Development Committee will prepare a fully comprehensive Program Design Document. The Program Document will outline the following in line with current UQU policies and procedures as far as is practicable and be structured under the following headings:

- Program title
- Entry requirements
- Non standard applicants
- Arrangements for recognized prior learning
- Policy on intake, including Recognized Prior Learning
- Curriculum structure (i.e. time-based vs. competency based vs. program based)
- Module, unit or subject breakdown and type i.e. mandatory / elective;
- Curriculum hours;
- Individual module or subject size and content;
- Program learning outcomes in line with the NQF;
- Assessment Strategy;
- Learning outcomes for individual modules or units;
- Teaching methodology / delivery modes;
- Overall learner assessment philosophy for the program and approach for each module;
- Basic and recommended texts;
- Relationship to other Programs being provided;
- Resources required i.e. lecturing staff, support staff, library facilities, laboratories, IT facilities and accommodation;
- Transfer and Progression opportunities;
- Assessment Schedule;
- Defense criteria and requirements (if any).

The PDC, with the approval of the VP for Education Affairs, will normally consult with the Registrar as required or any other stakeholders for verification and validation.



Once cleared with the internal stakeholders, the new Program Design is sent for an external review. The VP for Education Affairs sets up an External Review Panel, which has the following composition:

- A senior academic familiar with the relevant external program validation process;
- An academic in the relevant field. A good practice is to have involve both a local and an international expert in the field;
- An Industry representative.

The External Review Panel examines the proposal in terms of:

- The respective external accreditation body requirements;
- The National Framework of Qualifications;
- Program Aims and Objectives;
- Program Title;
- Entry requirements;
- Nonstandard applicants;
- Arrangements for recognized prior learning;
- Policy on intake, including Recognized Prior Learning;
- Curriculum structure (i.e. time-based vs. competency based vs. program based);
- Module, unit or subject breakdown and type i.e. mandatory / elective;
- Curriculum hours;
- Individual module or subject size and content;
- Program learning outcomes in line with the NQF;
- Assessment Strategy;
- Learning outcomes for individual modules or units;
- Teaching methodology / delivery modes;
- Overall learner assessment philosophy for the program and approach for each module;
- Basic and recommended texts;
- Relationship to other Program being provided;
- Resources required i.e. lecturing staff, support staff, library facilities, laboratories, IT facilities and accommodation;
- Transfer and Progression opportunities;
- Assessment Schedule;
- Defense criteria and requirements (if any).

The External Review Panel will submit a report on their findings within an agreed timeframe to the VP on Education Affairs after which the Program Design will undergo a validation.

Once the consultation process is complete, the Program Design Package is sent to the NCAAA for approval for validation. It is only after the validation of the NCAAA that the new program is included in the UQU Prospectus and is announced for enrolment.

٢. Stage ٢: monitoring

Once the new Program is launched it becomes subject to quarterly and annual monitoring to ensure:

- The quality standards are being met and the program remains relevant to the market needs and reflects developing knowledge, professional standards and institutional strategies;



- The intended learning outcomes are achieved by the students and graduates and the extent is measured accordingly;
- The Program related data, including objectives and relevant learning outcomes are available to the faculty members as well as the measures for evaluating the success rate of the program;
- The curriculum and associated assessments for the learner and the program objectives maintain a high standard of professionalism.

The Program Coordinator, under the lead of the Quality Assurance Unit is responsible for the annual monitoring, which predominantly evolves around feedback from the learners and the faculty members and the available statistics, generic and assessment related. Reporting at the Program level is the responsibility of the Program Coordinator who submits the report to the VP on Education Affairs. Reporting at the level of modules and subjects is the responsibility of respective faculty members, who report to the Program Coordinator.

Based on the outcomes of the monitoring report, the responsibilities of the respective faculty members are reviewed annually to ensure that each module, unit or subject is assigned to relevant and competent staff, and that the Program Coordinator is aware of the responsibilities of each faculty member throughout the forthcoming term. In advance of the academic year commencing, the VP for Education Affairs and the Program Coordinator review each module, unit or subject and appoint the appropriate faculty members. The appointed faculty member will sign a Faculty Appointment Form, which outlines the content and duration of the module, unit or subject assigned.

Program monitoring takes place on quarterly and annual basis.

- Quarterly monitoring: it contains an overview of program committee reports, operating procedures, and any pertinent Internal verification data received from the Registrar for the same quarter. Any areas of concern or points of note that need to be addressed may include:
 - o Data from Registrar:
 ١. The results of the assessment of learners
 ٢. Analysis of learners' achievements of learning outcomes
 ٣. Retention of for current learners
 - o Review of learning material
 - o Applications of new candidates
 - o Interviews for new candidates
 - o Proposed evaluation or training of faculty members
 - o Progression of current learners
 - o Support Services for current learners
 - o Meetings with learner representatives; agenda / minutes
 - o Learner feed back.
- Annual monitoring: it takes place at the end of each academic year and the Program Coordinator prepares a summary report detailing areas raised during the academic year. This report details:
 - o Pass rates and retention;
 - o Learner feed back;
 - o Faculty member reports



- Suggested actions where appropriate
- This report is presented to the Academic Council. On receipt of the Program Monitoring Report the Academic Council reviews the recommendations and actions accordingly. Minor actions can be implemented in time for the new academic year while material changes e.g. the introduction of a new module, unit or subject or amending an assessment procedure requires the approval of the relevant external accreditation bodies and is only implemented when:
 - The proposed new material is reviewed by the relevant external accreditation bodies;
 - The reviewed material is considered along with comments by the Academic Council
 - The revised material is then submitted to relevant external accreditation bodies for approval.

For the quarterly and annual monitoring purposes the UQU has developed a robust learner feedback system to provide an opportunity to evaluate their learning experience in a variety of ways through end-of-term surveys/interviews, specific feedback forms on various aspects of the program such as teaching inputs, tutorials and other elements of the program.

The feedback is collected at the following points:

- End of term feedback;
- End of course/module feedback;
- Exit feedback, if a student decides to withdraw from a program. Administration requests each learner who formally withdraws from a program to complete a learner Exit Feedback Form. This provides the Institute with valuable information on possible reasons why learners are leaving prematurely.
- Program completion/graduation feedback. The students completing the program the Program Completion Feedback Form.
- Follow up feedback during the first 3 years of employment.

At the end of every term the administration team issue a form to all learners so that programs are evaluated by learners in the form of a questionnaire, an interview or a focus group. Once the feedback forms are returned to the administration team, the data is collated in the form of a Learner Feedback Report. Learner feedback is included in the Program Monitoring Report.

The results of all the surveys and inquiries are analyzed and submitted to the Academic Council for consideration. The action may be immediate depending on the severity of the circumstances; however, typically the information is reviewed in a similar fashion by the VP for Education Affairs quarterly and in more detail at the end of each academic year.

3. Stage 3: review

Program review usually takes place once per 3 years for Bachelor programs and once per 5 years for Master level programs. One of its main aims is to provide an opportunity for the UQU to assess progress and evaluate educational activity comprehensively over the previous years and to set down proposals and plans for future enhancement. The Program Review is a self-evaluation quality-assurance activity carried out by a Peer Review Group at the institutional level, in consultation with



external accreditation bodies. The review process includes production of documentation by UQU and a formal evaluation typically by an external review panel, national and, if available, international.

The Program Review is carried out by a Peer Review Panel (PRP) appointed by the UQU VP for Education Affairs and its members will typically comprise of:

- Relevant expertise from similar HEIs in KSA;
- Relevant expertise from international HEIs;
- Members of the business community and respective industry;
- An UQU alumni in the respective field;
- A current student from UQU;
- UQU Program Coordinator.

The specific objectives of the cyclical review are to:

- Improve the quality of the program;
- Ensure program remain relevant to the market needs and continue to offer a valuable educational experience to the learner;
- Ensure that both academic and personal needs of the learner are satisfied;
- Ensure alignment with the NQF and implementation of the procedures related to access, transfer and progression;
- Complies with all the requirements of external accreditation bodies.

The Program Review is cyclical and comprises of:

- A self-evaluation of all program(s) run within the period;
- A plan for the subsequent five years;
- Revised program documentation.

One of the key focuses of the program review is to ensure it is effective, efficient and meets all the stated aims as well as achievement of the intended learning outcomes by the learners. The reports accumulated from the annual monitoring reports, including all the evidences, should feed into the self-evaluation report.

To analyze the effectiveness and the efficiency of each of the Program it is crucial to take due consideration of the following:

- Education interests of the industry representatives and professional associations;
- Evaluation of the physical facilities provided by the UQU for the provision of the Program
- Review of the UQU's research activities and projections in the area of study under review;
- Evaluation of the UQU's projections and plan for the succeeding five years in specific areas;
- Detailing how the deficiencies and gaps identified will be addressed in the revised version;
- Development of a revised program document that takes into account the views of the relevant stakeholders.

The content of the Self-Evaluation Report (SER) evolves around the following:

- The UQU's academic processes around which the self-evaluation is performed;
- Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures relating especially to teaching and learning;



- Learner enrolment and assessment statistics for the previous five years per each program;
- A brief description of the development of each program, highlighting any changes implemented or proposed;
- The report of the previous and the current Peer Reviewer Committee;
- The policies and procedures for the assessment of learners. The latter will be assessed in terms:
 - o Objectivity, consistency and compliance with predetermined standards;
 - o Effectiveness in measuring the learner's attainment of the intended learning outcomes;
 - o Contribution to the overall learning experience;
 - o The extent to which assessment promotes creativity and originality in demonstrating achievement of the intended learning outcomes.
- Employment rate and further studies of the graduates for each program;
- Institutional, national and international transfers;
- Review of teaching facilities;
- A description of the most significant changes since the last evaluation;
- Deployment and development of academic staff: details of staff appointments over the previous five years, projections for the next five years, and staff deployment within the UQU. Curricula vitae of staff appointed since the previous program review in addition to significant changes to existing staff CVs. Include details of training and development undertaken by staff.
- Links with relevant employers and the wider community: the aim is to establish the extent to which UQU is actively engaged in monitoring developments in the world of work and the wider community in order to maintain a high degree of relevance in its programs and research
- Research projects carried out by Learners in the previous five years together with the plans for the next five years where applicable.
- Program delivery methodologies, including information in relation to teaching, such as plans to consider new types of educational technology, teaching strategies and methodologies.
- Adult and continuous education: should include information in relation to the provision, which has evolved in UQU over the previous five years.
- Development Plan: Include plans for the new programs in prospect for the succeeding five years.
- Program submissions: Incorporate revised aims and learning outcomes, revised program schedule, revised syllabi, and an updated assessment plan presented in the prescribed format for each program.

The stages of self-evaluation evolve around the following:

- Under the lead of the Deanship for Quality and Development (DQD) the Registrar undertakes self-evaluation of the programs including an appropriate time-frame;
- Overall, there are ??? undergraduate, ??? master and ??? doctoral programs at UQU. Due to the scope, the programs are grouped as per area and level of qualification and each group is assigned a timeframe for self-evaluation;
- The self-evaluation should normally begin by the start of year   (of the five year cycle).

- The basis for the review is the NCAAA standards for program accreditation. However, in case the program is subject for international accreditation, the standards of respective accrediting bodies should be taken into account.
- The draft self-evaluation report must be submitted to the Higher Standing Committee for review and initial approval.
- Once approved the SER is submitted to the Peer Review Panel PRP. The nominations of the PRP are approved by the Academic Council in advance together with a draft agenda and a date to carry out the Program Evaluation.

The phases of self-evaluation are expressed in the figure below:

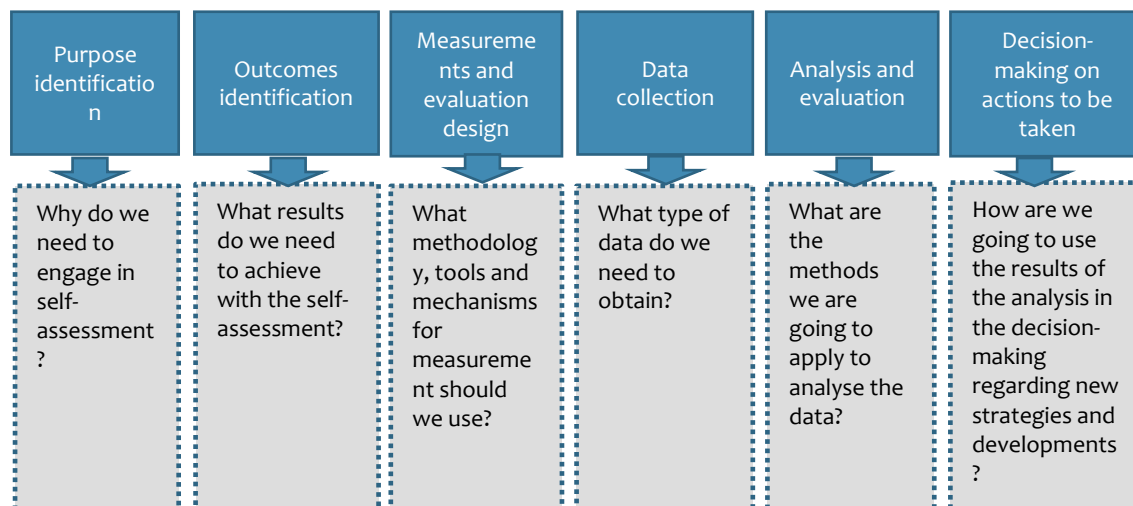


Figure 1: Major phases in self-evaluation

In order to put together a valid self-evaluation report the following questions need to be addressed:

- Which indicators are necessary to do the work?
- Which indicators are necessary to control a process?
- Which indicators do we have and which are out of our control?
- Which indicators are necessary for improvement and enhancement?
- What is the cost-benefit ratio of collecting specific indicators?

Major sources of data include but are not limited to the following:

- Performance outcomes: performance outcomes (samples) and other evidences (thesis papers, exam questions and respective answers, samples of publications, observations of classes and the like);
- Stakeholder feedback: Feedback mechanisms, evaluation groups, which provide for qualitative information; e.g. questionnaires, which are a powerful element if devised the right way; discussion-oriented team work – “quality circles”, peer-reviewers (external and internal); focus groups, individual interviews and the like
- Statistical data: Available at the university units and/or statistical office, that is key performance indicators (KPIs) (data like student success rate, drop-out rate, in-coming outgoing students, number of teaching staff, budget allocations and the like)
- Benchmarking: Provides a firm background for justification of current approaches and aspirations for the future.

Each process subject to external review needs to be mapped to establish clarity at the stages of implementation and the points of implementation where the data needs to be collected:

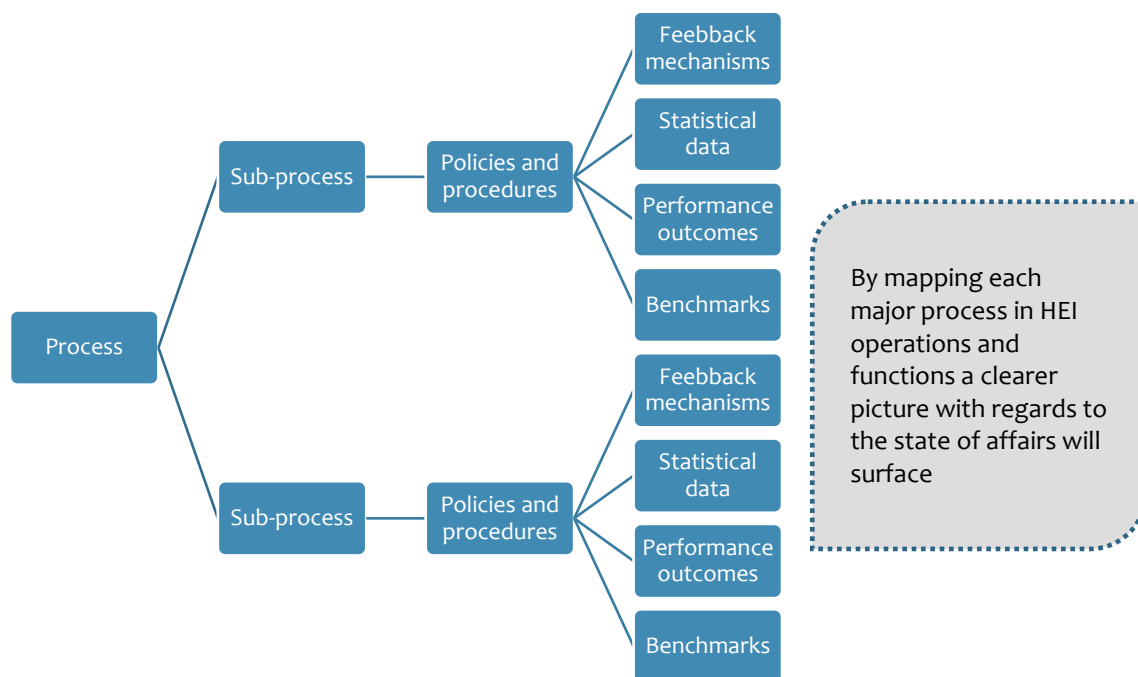


Figure 1: Mapping a process

Below are sample indicators for teaching and learning

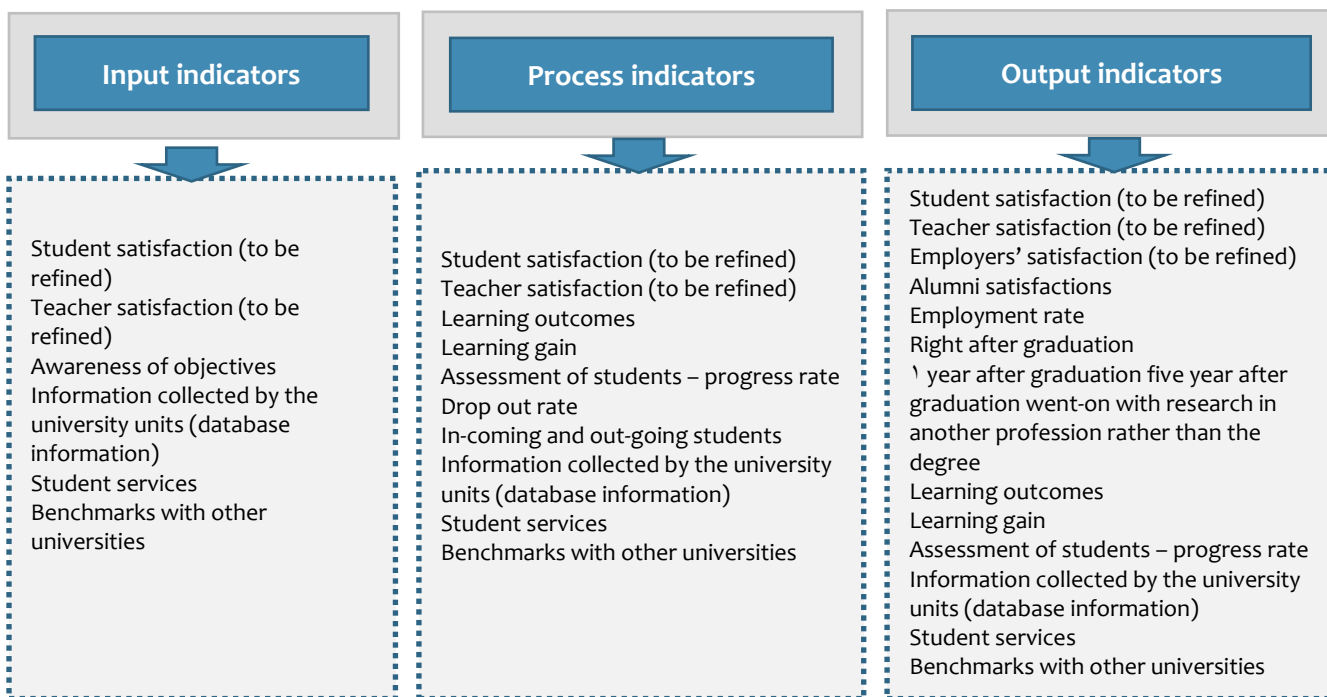


Figure 4: Sample indicators

Once all the data is collected, an in-depth analysis is due. Some methods are outlined below:

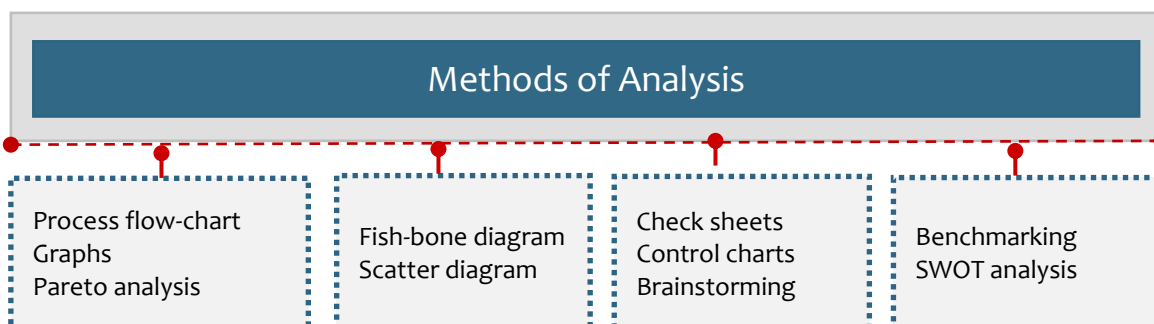


Figure 5: Some methods for analysis of the data

The SER should be analytical in nature, demonstrating an in-depth understanding on the process, the needs, challenges and opportunities.

The Peer Review Panel

- At least two weeks in advance of a meeting of the PRP with the staff of the UQU, the Vice President for Education Affairs will send each member of the PRP a copy of the self-evaluation report and the accompanying documentation for their consideration.
- The PRP will examine the self-evaluation report in the context of a detailed agenda agreed with the UQU prior to the meeting.
- Following the meeting, the PRP will compile an agreed interim report and will forward it to the University President and Registrar. The report should contain the observations, judgements, commendations and recommendations for each of the criterion. Where necessary, the recommendations should be split into matters for consideration at program level and matters for consideration at institutional level.
- The Vice President for Education Affairs will bring the interim report of the PRP to the notice of the members of staff. The Vice President for Education Affairs in conjunction with the relevant Program Committee(s) will address the PRP's recommendations on program issues.
- The Higher Standing Committee will consider any recommendations from the PRP in terms of relevance to the needs, applicability to the context and urgency of the matter. Responses to the interim report from the PRP will be submitted to the Academic Council. The Vice President for Education Affairs will liaise with the PRP on behalf of the Academic Council, to ensure that the issues raised by the panel have been addressed.
- A final report will be prepared by the PRP taking due account of the responses of the Vice President for Education Affairs, the Academic Council and the respective faculty members.



- Once the final report is ready, it is submitted to the Academic Council for final approval. The full package for submission should include the self-evaluation report, the interim report of the PRP, the UQU's responses, and the final report of the PRP.
- The revised submission will be put on the agenda of the Academic Council for approval.
- After the approval, the final package is submitted to the relevant accrediting body for external review. Following approval by the relevant external accreditation bodies, the submission is prepared for the University Council to implement the agreed changes.
- The Vice President for Education Affairs will review adherence to conditions of approval until the first cohort of learners have completed the amended programs. On an annual basis and independently, an external professional academic will verify that all the conditions and recommendations made by the PRP have been implemented. As a result, a report will be submitted to the President on the status of the follow up and enhancement, thus closing the feedback loop.

XIII. Admission and Recruitment

XIV. Teaching and Learning

XV. Student Assessment

XVI. Research and Development

XVII. Support for Learners

XVIII. Services to Society

XIX. External Relations and Internationalization

XX. Staffing, Professional Development and Incentives

XXI. Information, Data Management and Public Information

XXII. Appendices

XXIII. Forms and Templates