

QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND ASSURANCE POLICY

1. PREAMBLE

- 1.1 Unisa's commitment to quality finds expression in its strategic plan – UNISA 2015 Revisited. The university strives to be a comprehensive, open distance learning (ODL) institution characterised by excellent scholarship and research, quality tuition, active community engagement, and responsiveness to Africa's changing human resource development needs in order to ensure a quality learning experience for the student.
- 1.2 At a practical level it encompasses a cyclical approach to planning, implementation, monitoring, reviewing and improvement that will establish a culture of continuous quality improvement, accountability, efficiency and professionalism.
- 1.3 Unisa consciously seeks to promote the principles and objectives of the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) in accordance with the Framework for Institutional Audits and the Framework for Programme Accreditation. Therefore, Unisa will design and develop relevant ODL criteria, standards and quality evaluation instruments, systems and tools in line with the aforementioned frameworks.

2. VALUES

The policy affirms the institutional values of social justice and fairness, and excellence with integrity. It furthermore fosters the facilitation of constructive dialogue through critical self-evaluation and reflection on performance against agreed criteria and standards.

3. PURPOSE

The primary purpose of the policy is to provide a conceptual platform that underpins Unisa's quality regime and provides for the implementation of Unisa's Integrated Quality Management and Assurance Framework (IQMAF).

4. APPLICATION

The policy addresses all institutional policies, procedures, processes and systems in an integrated manner and ensures focused alignment of the management and assurance of quality.

5. DEFINITIONS

Quality assurance	is the process designed to ensure that the implementation and application of institutional policies, procedures, processes and systems meet predetermined and agreed standards
Quality improvement	refers to the responses to evaluative outcomes and recommendations flowing from quality assurance and management interventions
Quality management	refers to institutional arrangements for implementing, applying, supporting, developing, enhancing and monitoring quality standards
Quality standard	is a predetermined and agreed-on measure of performance for assuring the effective management of quality

6. POLICY STATEMENTS

In pursuit of excellence, Unisa will

- 6.1 place quality at the centre of the student's learning experience
- 6.2 be responsive to and promote the criteria and standards of the HEQC
- 6.3 ensure, by means of an IQMAF, the development and implementation of relevant quality instruments, tools and systems
- 6.4 ensure that the self-evaluation and assurance processes are measured against appropriate national and international criteria, standards and benchmarks that reflect Unisa's distinctive nature as an ODL institution
- 6.5 ensure that quality assurance instruments, tools and systems are based on research, reflection and international best practices
- 6.6 define and develop data-collection systems to ensure that evidence needed for internal and external quality audits and reviews is easily available, reliable and accessible
- 6.8 pursue quality operational performance goals based on reliable information, data and analysis, and which involve the development and use of performance measures or indicators
- 6.9 promote unity of purpose by establishing a culture of continuous quality improvement
- 6.10 invest in human capital through capacity development and training in quality management and assurance

7. QUALITY OVERSIGHT STRUCTURES

The Professional, Academic and Administrative Quality Assurance Committee (PAAQAC), a subcommittee of the Management Committee, is mandated to oversee and monitor the implementation of the Quality Assurance Policy, supported by the extended quality management and assurance structures at all institutional levels, and the Department: Strategy, Planning and Quality Assurance.

8. IMPLEMENTATION

The IQMAF, and its supporting guidelines and instruments, provides for the implementation of this policy.

9. POLICY REVIEW AND REVISION CYCLES

The PAAQAC will review the policy annually, or as directed by UNISA's Management Committee to accommodate any changes from the higher education policy and regulatory framework.

10. IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS POLICY

The current policy is replaced with effect from the date on which Council approves this revised policy.