

ALPHA UNIVERSITY BURAO



*Quality Assurance Policy*

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## **Definition of Terms**

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

**Audit:** Audit, in the context of quality in higher education, is a process for checking that procedures are in place to assure quality, integrity or standards of provision and outcomes.

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

**Effectiveness:** Effectiveness is the extent to which an activity fulfils its intended purpose or function.

**Efficiency:** Efficiency is the extent to which an activity achieves its goal whilst minimizing resource usage.

**Enhancement:** Enhancement is a process of augmentation or improvement

**Evaluation:** Evaluation (of quality or standards) is the process of examining and passing a judgment on the appropriateness or level of quality or standards.

**Excellence:** Excellence means exhibiting characteristics that are very good and, implicitly, not achievable by all.

**External evaluation:** External evaluation is:

- A generic term for most forms of quality review, enquiry or exploration
- A process that uses people external to the program or institution to evaluate quality or standards.

**Focus area:** thematic representations of related activities.

**Governance:** Governance in higher education refers to the way in which institutions are organized and operate internally and their relationships with external entities with a view to securing the objectives of higher education as a realm of enquiry and critique.

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**Grading:** Grading is the process of scoring or ranking student academic work as part of assessing student learning.

**Indicator:** an observable measure that clearly articulates one of the elements of the desired performance standard; one criterion that makes up a performance standard.

**Institutional audit:** An improvement orientated, external evaluation of institutional arrangements for quality in teaching and learning, research, community engagement and support services, based on a self-evaluation conducted by the institution. The external evaluation is conducted a by a panel of peers and experts against the quality assurance agency's pre-determined criteria and other quality requirements set by the institution itself. The audit panel's report forms the basis of the quality assurance agency's report to the audited institution with commendations on good practice and recommendations for improvement.

**Institutional quality management system:** Institutional policies, systems, strategies and resources for assuring, developing and monitoring and quality of teaching and learning, research, and community engagement.

**Internal evaluation:** Internal evaluation is a process of quality review undertaken within an institution for its own ends (with or without the involvement of external peers).

**Performance indicators:** Performance indicators are data, usually quantitative in form, that provide a measure of some aspect of an individual's or organization's performance against which changes in performance or the performance of others can be compared.

**Program:** A purposeful and structured set of learning experiences that leads to a qualification.

**Quality assessment/Quality review:** The actual process of external evaluation (reviewing, measuring, and judging) of the quality of higher education institutions and programs. It consists of those techniques, mechanisms, and activities that are carried out by an external body in order to evaluate the quality of the higher education processes, practices, programs, and services.

**Quality assurance (QA):** An all-embracing term referring to an ongoing, continuous process of evaluating (assessing, monitoring, guaranteeing, maintaining, and improving) the quality of a higher education system, institutions, or programs.

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**Quality assurance system:** Organizational structure, procedures, processes, and resources needed to implement quality management.

**Quality control:** is a process whereby conformity with standards is checked and steps are taken if conformity is not achieved.

**Quality Culture:** It refers to a set of shared, accepted, and integrated patterns of quality (often called principles of quality) to be found in the organizational cultures and the management systems of institutions.

**Quality improvement plan:** A plan developed by the audited institution specifying activities, designated responsibilities and time-frames in order to address the requirements and recommendations of the audit report.

**Quality management:** Institutional arrangements for assuring, supporting, developing and enhancing, and monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, research and community engagement.

**Quality:** A multi-dimensional, multilevel, and dynamic concept that relates to the contextual settings of an educational model, to the institutional mission and objectives, as well as to specific standards within a given system, institution, program, or discipline. Quality may thus take different, sometimes conflicting, meanings depending on (i) the understanding of various interests of different constituencies or stakeholders in higher education (e.g. students; universities; disciplines; the labour market; society; a government); (ii) its references: inputs, processes, outputs, missions, objectives, etc.; (iii) the attributes or characteristics of the academic world worth evaluating; and (iv) the historical period in the development of higher education.

**Self-assessment:** Self-assessment is the process of critically reviewing the quality of one's own performance and provision. **Standard:** a goal statement that identifies a desired performance; represents the essential knowledge, skills, behaviors, and attitudes that must be demonstrated in order to be successful with a particular performance.

**Self-evaluation:** The process by which an institution or a department review the effectiveness of its quality management system for assuring, developing and monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, research, community engagement and support services against the pre-determined standards and criteria. The self-evaluation process may lead to the development of a quality improvement plan and/or audit portfolio as a baseline for external audit.

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**Summative assessment:** Summative assessment is the process of evaluating (and grading) the learning of students at a point in time.

**Total Quality Management (TQM):** A particularly influential comprehensive approach to quality management that places emphasis on factors such as continuous improvement, customer focus, strategic management, need for explicit systems to assure quality of higher education, and a view of leadership and supervision that stresses employee empowerment and delegation.

## List of Abbreviations

<b>AC</b>	Academic Commission
<b>AIDS</b>	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
<b>CQAH</b>	College Quality Assurance Head
<b>EQA</b>	External Quality Assessment
<b>HDP</b>	Higher Diploma program
<b>HIV</b>	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
<b>ICT</b>	Information Communication Technology
<b>IQA</b>	Institutional Quality Assurance
<b>IQA</b>	Internal Quality Assurance
<b>QA</b>	Quality Assurance
<b>QAC</b>	Quality Assurance Committee
<b>QAU</b>	Quality Assurance Head
<b>QIP</b>	Quality Improvement Plan
<b>SED</b>	Self Evaluation Document
<b>AUB</b>	Alpha University Burao

## 1.1. Vision and Mission and educational goals of AUB

### Vision

Alpha University Burao envision to be one of the leading and preferred Higher Institution in East Africa .

### Missions

The mission of Alpha University is to provide the best practices in health and technology business educational programs to produce committed, competent, ethical and entrepreneur graduates, providing need-based community service and producing problem-solving research out puts through providing relevance and quality education, research and consultancy to ensure the health care and economic development of the country.

### Values

- Quality Education
- Success Guaranteed
- Research Oriented
- Competency Based
- Accredited Education
- Problem Based
- Student Centered
- Team Work
- Academic Freedom
- Efficient And Organized
- Self initiative , Creativity & continuous improvement
- Integrity
- Social responsibility
- Accountability
- Good Governance



## Goals

**Goal one:** - Establishment of effective and efficient management system in all campuses

**Goal Two:** - Enhancement of quality in education in all departments

**Goal Three:** - Diversification of the income generation system in all fields of studies

**Goal Four:** - Increase students' services in all departments.

**Goal Five:** - Modernize financial and resource management systems in the Campus

**Goal Six:** - Increase the relevance of research and consulting policies in the Campus

## Objectives

### **General Objective**

- AUB aims at offering quality health and business higher education, training, community services and conducting research to produce competent, efficient and all rounded professionals that meets and exceeds the requirements of students, stakeholders and community by 2025.

### **Specific Objectives**

- To train the students that full fill the requirement of higher education criteria, at Diploma ,ndergraduate and post program in health and business departments.
- To produce qualified, problem solving and productive graduates that adds value to the society in their field of specialization.
- To train short course for different professionals.
- To train refreshment course for different professionals.
- To provide need based community service .
- To Enhancing sustained and mutually beneficial relationships and linkage with external stakeholders and the Business Community .

## **1.2. Quality Assurance**

As outlined in our mission statement, AUB considers quality assurance to be a core component of its teaching-learning model. From a quality perspective, the College management, especially the Executive Dean, takes responsibility for the overall delivery of a quality service to our stakeholders – students, staff and employers. Specific assurance procedures are implemented during the provision of our programmes to ensure the delivery of a superior and consistent service.

In addition to ensuring that policies and procedures are in place, the management of the College, the QAU and senior staff ensure that adequate arrangements and resources are available to support the academic quality assurance systems and support structures. Along with the recruitment and selection of highly-skilled and qualified staff, which is considered the best assurance of a quality delivery, the College Executive Dean has significant input into the creation and validation of all course offerings, and also ensures that all course Lecturers and Assessors are aware of and capable of carrying out the College's learning, teaching, training and assessment policies.

## **2. Aims and Objectives of the policy**

The aims of the Quality Assurance Policy is to support the College's efforts in achieving its vision and mission through the development and implementation of academic programs that meet national and international standards.

The specific objectives of the Quality Assurance Policy include the following:

- 2.1. To provide guidance in the development and implementation of internal and external quality assurance procedures and practices.
- 2.2. To ensure that academic standards of AUB awards and qualifications are maintained and securely managed.
- 2.3. To enable students and other stakeholders to have confidence in the proper management of the quality of learning opportunities offered through the programs of study that lead to those awards.
- 2.4. To enhance the quality of its educational provision, particularly by building on information gained through monitoring, internal and external reviews and feedback from stakeholders.
- 2.5. To ensure that the quality of academic programs at AUB meet standards expected by stakeholders.

- 2.6. To ensure that graduates have attained skills and knowledge through AUB's academic programs those are valued by stakeholders.
- 2.7. To provide guidance in identifying internal and external standards and criteria consistent with internationally recognized standards.
- 2.8. To assist in maintaining and developing quality of academic programs through enhanced support processes.
- 2.9. To assure quality in appointment, development and performance of staff contributing to teaching and learning policy.

### **3. Guiding Principles of the Quality Assurance Policy**

AUB is committed to ensuring that appropriate standards are achieved and maintained in its educational programs and that it is offering a high quality education consistent with national standards. The standards (set in another document) and performance indicators described in the policy are based on a number of principles about quality assurance both internal and external to higher education.

These include:

- 3.1 AUB has in place a formal, approved, transparent policy committing it to ensuring the quality and continuous improvement of its academic programs.
- 3.2 The policy applies to current and planned programs, research and the support services given to the academic and research processes.
- 3.3 All academic programs are subject to internal and external review on a regular cycle, according to pre-set criteria.
- 3.4 There is a procedure for the regular review of the AUBs quality assurance policy and related processes.
- 3.5 The quality assessment process involves relevant internal and external stakeholders.
- 3.6 The quality assessment process is based on self-evaluation and independent external review.
- 3.7 The quality assurance policy assumes the active participation of all the members of the academic community and strategic social partners in the process of analysis.
- 3.8 The regular review and updating of the evaluation system of AUB in the light of the internationally recognized norms and criteria is an integral part of the quality assurance policy.

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- 3.9 The primary purpose of quality assurance is enhancement of the quality of the student learning experience and the maintenance of academic standards in the context of the student population that is increasingly diverse in background and in aspiration and the particular nature of AUB's academic portfolio.
- 3.10 AUB understands that high quality of academic provision is characterized by a good match to the needs and aspirations of students' attention to the requirements of stakeholders.
- 3.11 AUB understands that enhancement means the deliberate fostering of reflection by staff, with input from students and external advisors and bodies, on the effectiveness of teaching and learning and appropriateness of standards set and achieved.
- 3.12 Staff should be able to exercise their responsibility within a supportive environment where expectations and standards are defined, continuous improvement and innovation are encouraged, development and training opportunities are provided, and feedback is actively sought from students and other major stakeholders, while avoiding duplication of efforts.
- 3.13 The College's academic quality assurance framework:
- ✓ Seeks to promote consistency of good practice and enhancement of quality across the institution;
  - ✓ Incorporate feedback loops within departments and the College that provide comparative information and stimulate modification and improvement of AUB's educational provision.
  - ✓ Is underpinned by concepts of quality and fairness; and
  - ✓ Provides for explicit means to ensure that AC and management committee of the College receive robust accounts of the effectiveness of the policy and practice in relation to the management of academic quality.
- 3.14 All policies, codes of practice and procedures will be appropriately documented and readily accessible to staff, students and other stakeholders, primarily through the academic quality and standards manual.
- 3.15 The College will rigorously and continuously monitor the effectiveness of its quality assurance procedures to assure itself and others that they are operating in accordance with good practice, in the best interests of students and the maintenance of academic standards.
- 3.16 The College will work constructively with external agencies, including professional, statutory and regulatory bodies relevant to academic programs, Higher Education Relevance and Quality Agency (HERQA).

## 4. Quality Assurance Framework

UMBC aims to foster a quality culture whereby each and every member of staff assumes responsibility for the quality aspects of their work. In addition to individual responsibilities and accountabilities, UMBC has a comprehensive governance structure in place to take ultimate responsibility for the operation of quality assessment at the College and ensure that its mission is achieved.

### 4.1 Governance Structure

#### 4.1.1 College Quality Assurance Committee (CQAC)

- ✓ Oversees quality assurance operations in the College;
- ✓ Oversees the internal monitoring, evaluation and review of all courses in the College;
- ✓ Reports to the **president** on the above activities including identification of issues which require a management response;
- ✓ Receives the outcomes of external reviews of quality and standards, and monitors action plans to address any matters raised;
- ✓ Co-operates with other College' Quality Assurance Head in the development and dissemination of effective practice in relation to quality assurance processes;
- ✓ The quality assurance Head is accountable **president** ;

#### 4.1.2 Quality Assurance Committee (QAC)

- ✓ Consists of the quality assurance Head , four department heads, Vice president, postgraduate dean(secretary) ,academic dean and head main registrar of the College;
- ✓ Chaired by the quality assurance Head ;
- ✓ It is established to liaise the efforts of QAC with the management;
- ✓ It oversees matters related to quality assurance across the various departments and offices of the College;

#### 4.1.3 Responsibilities of QAU Head

Quality Assurance Head has the following responsibilities:

- ✓ Develops policies and instruments for quality assurance and auditing.

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- ✓ Coordinates total quality management system and oversees the implementation of the different Heads of quality assurance activities.
- ✓ Report the audit outcomes to the **president** and the management at large.
- ✓ Accountable for assuring the quality of all processes of the College.
- ✓ Initiates and supports program and institutional self-assessment, peer review, external review.
- ✓ Work in consultation with the College's community to establish, coordinate, and monitor the College's assessment programs.
- ✓ Provide assistance for assessment conducted by academic departments as part of Academic program Review.
- ✓ Provide assistance for assessment conducted by administrative Heads as part of the Support Head Review Processes.
- ✓ Establish and maintain a set of procedures which allow the College to respond in a systemic and transparent manner to the external requirements of External Audit Agencies, HERQA.
- ✓ Ensuring compliance with the College's quality framework to meet required standards.
- ✓ Work with College s/ Departments to provide professional advice and guidance on quality assurance and enhancement matters.
- ✓ Responsible for any other activities related to institutional quality assurance.

### **4.1.4 The Role of the QAC secretary**

- ✓ Coordinate physical arrangements and facilities during internal audit.
- ✓ Make arrangements for the meeting with students, staff and other concerned groups or individuals.
- ✓ Make written record of the meeting with students, and discussions of the Audit Team, and of the Audit event.
- ✓ Collect, integrate and edit the contributions from the individual auditors into the draft report.
- ✓ Write the summary of the report
- ✓ Tally the raw data collected during audit.

- ✓ Is accountable to the Quality Assurance Head

## 4.2 Quality Model Employed

The quality model employed at UMBC consists of four major components: context, input, process and output. These are the major foci of the quality assurance process.

### 4.2.1 Context

- ✓ Vision, Mission, Strategic plan
- ✓ Administrative Atmosphere
- ✓ Environment

### 4.2.2 Input

- ✓ Departments & Staff
- ✓ Students
- ✓ Administrators
- ✓ Finance and Budgeting
- ✓ Facilities

### 4.2.3 Process

- ✓ Teaching and Learning Process
- ✓ Quality Assurance Process
- ✓ Research Process
- ✓ Administrative Process
- ✓ Finance and Budgeting Process
- ✓ Academic Services Process

### 4.2.4 Output

- ✓ Quality and Quantity of Academic Services
- ✓ Quality and Quantity of Graduates
- ✓ Quality and Quantity of Research and Community Services
- ✓ Quality and Quantity of Administrative Services

## **5. Quality Assurance Mechanisms**

The policy shall be applied to all departments, support Heads and programs (regular and night) of the College and shall include internal quality assurance (continuous) and external quality assurance (periodic).

## **6. Areas of Quality Assurance Policy**

Quality Assurance shall include all the following focus areas:

- ✓ Quality of Programs and Courses
- ✓ Quality of Academic Staff
- ✓ Quality of Teaching and Learning Experience
- ✓ Quality of Learning Resources and Facilities
- ✓ Scholarship, Research, and Community Service
- ✓ Quality of Administration and Support Staff
- ✓ Quality of Student Admission and Support Services
- ✓ Student Complaints and Appeals
- ✓ Student Progression and Outcomes
- ✓ Internal Quality assurance
- ✓ Institutional Assessment/Audit

## **7. AUB Quality Assurance Policy's expectations for self-evaluation**

While this Quality Assurance Policy does not prescribe the details of an individual department's self-evaluation process, it requires that every self-evaluation process be guided by several general principles:

- It must be an on ongoing cyclic process;
- It must begin with a plan;
- It must be evaluative rather than descriptive;
- It must clearly identify the departmental strengths that must be maintained and areas in need of improvement; and



- It must produce a report showing that the department satisfies the appropriate criteria.

### 8. Guiding principles of effective self-assessment

In organizing an effective self-assessment, one has to take into account some basic principles:

- Primarily, a self-assessment should never be felt as threatening.
- A self-assessment should not be used to assess an individual, used for punishment or to blame someone.
- A self assessment aims at improvement and enhancement of quality.
- It is necessary to create a broad basis for the self-assessment and to sensitize staff and students. The whole organization has to prepare itself for it.
- Looking at quality is more than testing the performance. It also means organizational development and shaping the institution. Everybody has to be responsible and involved for real self-assessment.
- The management of the institution must fully support the self-assessment. Relevant information is needed for an effective policy and good management; the self-assessment serves to acquire structural insights into the performance of the College.

Carrying out a critical self-evaluation demands a good organization. Primarily someone has to coordinate the self-assessment process. It would be good to charge someone specifically with the self-evaluation project. The coordinator has to meet some requirements. In order to obtain the required information, it is important that the coordinator has good rapport at all levels of the institution. Therefore, it is very important that the coordinator has good contacts within the institution, with the central management as well as with the faculties and the staff members.

- The coordinator must have the authority to make appointments.
- It is desirable to constitute a substantive team of staff in-charge of the self-assessment.
- It is important that the team is structured in such a way that the involvement of all sections is assured. The working group is in charge of the self-assessment, gathering data, analyzing material and drawing conclusions.
- It is assumed that self-assessment is an analysis supported by the whole department. Therefore, it is important that everyone should be at least acquainted with the contents of the self-assessment report and should recognize it as a document from his or her own institution. The working group may organize a workshop or seminar to discuss the draft Self-Assessment Report.

- Not everyone has to agree with all the points in the Self-Assessment Report. There may be disagreement as to what are seen as weaknesses and strengths and what is considered as the cause of the weaknesses. Should there be very big differences of opinion between certain groups or bodies, then the Self-Assessment Report should report on it.

### 9. **The organization of the self-assessment**

The College or department determines how self-assessment is carried out in consultation with QAU. However, the following suggestions are made that can facilitate the process:

- Self-assessment should never be the work of one person.
- Make a group responsible for the self-assessment.
- This group should consist of some three to five people, chaired by a coordinator appointed by the faculty or department in consultation with the QAU. Students should be involved in the self-assessment.
- A clear timetable should be set up.
- The topics that have to be considered in the self-evaluation should be distributed among the committee members and each member made responsible for collecting information, and for analyzing and evaluating the data from the self assessment.
- The draft results should be discussed on the largest scale possible. It is not necessary to have consensus concerning the report; it is, however, necessary for as many people as possible to be aware of its contents.

### 10. **Quality Improvement Plans (QIP)**

A Quality Improvement Plan (also called Self Improvement Plan) is a plan developed by the Institution or Department specifying activities, designated responsibilities and time frames in order to address the requirements and recommendations of the Self-review and/or Audit Reports for the purpose of follow-up, validation and closing the quality loop by the Institution or Department.

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The Department should submit the Quality Improvement Plan to Quality assurance Head within a reasonable time after the Self-review Report has been completed. The Department will be required to forward a progress report on the implementation of the improvement plan.

### **11. Amendments**

This policy is subject to internal discussion and debate. In the quality assurance process, it is AUB's fundamental belief that the Quality Assurance Head should continuously review and enhance the policies and procedures that support this process in order to improve the quality of the programs and services.

**12. Effective Date** This policy shall enter into force since May 2021 after being approved by the AC.