

QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY (Summary)

Quality Assurance Policy Statement:

Frederick University is committed in providing high quality education and services relevant to its mission, to the business sector, the industry and the society. The University has developed and applies a quality assurance policy which addresses all three core pillars of its registered mission: education, research and contribution to society. Through this policy, the University strives in achieving a continuous improvement of the quality of (a) its programmes of study, including the curriculum, students and graduates, academic staff and infrastructure, (b) the research output of its academic staff and creation of new knowledge, (c) the administrative services and (d) the service to the business sector, the industry and the society.

The quality assurance policy of the University relies on self-assessment activities and promotes the development of quality culture among the academic and the administrative staff, through its implementation and the continuous training of the academic and administrative staff on issues related to quality.

The internal quality assurance process constitutes an academic process and it is not controlled or restricted by non-academic bodies. At the university level the internal quality assurance process is regulated and overseen by the Internal Quality Committee, while the academic staff, the administrative staff and the students are represented in the Committee.

Internal Quality Assurance Bodies:

The quality assurance process constitutes an academic process and it is not controlled or restricted by non-academic bodies. At the university level the internal quality assurance process is regulated and overseen by the Internal Quality Committee. This committee is headed by one of the vice-rectors, while its members are (a) one academic representative from each School, appointed by the Senate in consultation with the School Deans, (b) one representative of the administrative staff appointed by the Rector's Council, (c) up to two academic staff members with expertise in quality assurance appointed by the Rector's Council and (d) two student representatives appointed by the Student's Council. The authorities, responsibilities, constitution and operation of this committee are defined in the Internal Quality Committee Regulation.

At the department level, the internal quality assurance process is the responsibility of the academic staff of the Department. The internal quality assurance process within the Department is the responsibility of the Departmental Quality Committee. Members of this Committee are two members of the Teaching and Research Staff (TRS) of the Department, appointed by the Council of the Department and one student from the programmes of the Department appointed by the Student's Council. The Departmental Quality Committee has the responsibility for monitoring and analysing the quality indicators, as well as reporting to the Council of the Department on its findings.

Decision-making concerning the Programmes of Study and other quality issues is the responsibility of the academic staff through the Council of the Department. The details of the authorities, responsibilities, constitution and operation of this committee are defined in the Departmental Quality Committee Regulation ([Link](#)).

Internal Quality Assurance System:

The Internal Quality System refers to all pillars of the mission and strategic goals of the Department/University. The Internal Quality System concerns the following four broad areas:

(a) **Academic programmes and teaching.** This part of the internal quality system covers the skills and competencies developed by the students, as well as the employability of graduates. It is achieved by monitoring a number of quality indicators such as the performance of students, the average degree grades of graduates and the duration of studies.

(b) **Research and creation of new knowledge.** This part of the internal quality system covers the quality and quantity of research output, expressed by the amount of research funding, the publications, and the recognition of the research work of the academic staff. This part of the internal quality system also covers the synergies of research with teaching, as well as the exploitation of research results by the industry and society.

(c) **Connection with the society and social contribution.** This part of the internal quality system covers the links of the University and its contribution to the industry and business organizations, professional bodies, social organizations and bodies, as well as government bodies. At the department level this contribution is expressed through the agreements signed, the consultation services provided, the participation in advisory committees, the development of projects, the organization of related events, etc.

(d) **University management and services:** This part of the internal quality systems covers the operation of the various services, the adequacy of staff involved, the facilities and infrastructure, student satisfaction, etc.

Implementation of the Internal Quality System:

The Internal Quality System includes the processes and methodologies employed in order to define, monitor, analyse and evaluate the quality indicators, to identify weaknesses and opportunities for further improvement, as well as to decide and apply remedial measures for achieving higher performance. The above process involves all university parties, including the academic staff and bodies, the administrative staff and services, as well as the students. It also involves other interested parties, such as the graduates, the employers and professional bodies, participating in the process usually through focus groups.

The internal quality process is achieved through annual reporting from all parties involved in the operation of the University. The internal quality processes concerning the academic staff, the student performance and the programmes of study is achieved through student questionnaires and self-evaluation reports. The internal quality processes concerning the services of the University is achieved through open reports developed by each service. The Internal Quality Committee monitors the implementation of the internal quality process and reports to the Senate every two years.

The internal quality reporting process is obtained through a number of report templates and questionnaires developed by the Internal Quality Committee. These templates include the following:

IQC100 (Student Course Evaluation): This is questionnaire completed by the students for all courses at the end of each semester. This is an on-line questionnaire. It is made out of two parts: the course evaluation questionnaire and the instructor evaluation questionnaire. Through the course evaluation questionnaire, the students provide feedback to the department concerning the course such as the degree of difficulty, student workload, assessment, textbooks, infrastructure etc. This part of the questionnaire is utilised by the academic staff through the programme coordinator for improvements in the course and the programme. The second part of the questionnaire refers to the evaluation of the instructor on issues related to the organization of the course, the quality of the teaching material developed by the instructor, the availability of the instructor to help students, the feedback provided to the students etc. Through this part of the questionnaire, the students are required to give an overall grade to the instructor. The results of this part of the questionnaires are treated as confidential and are available only to the instructor for self-improvement. Only in cases where the overall grade of the instructor is below a threshold the results are also provided to the chairperson of the Department. In such a case, the instructor is requested to justify its low grading and suggest a remedial action plan.

IQC101 (Faculty Course Evaluation): This report is completed by the instructors of all courses at the end of each semester. Through this report, the instructors provide information about the course such as the teaching methods used, the assessment methods, teaching material, the results achieved, as well as suggestions for improvements. This report is used by the programme coordinator for improvements in the course and the programme. It is also used as a data source for the Program Self Evaluation report (IQC104).

IQC104 (Programme Self Evaluation): This report is completed by the program coordinator at the end of each academic year, and is submitted to the Departmental Quality Committee for analysis and evaluation. It is also used as a data source for the Department Self Evaluation Report (IQC107). It provides information on the programme structure and regulations, the focus groups involved in the evaluation of the program, the degree of implementation of previous action plans, as well as data and quality indicators related to the students' retention and performance, the graduates' degree grades and duration of studies, the destination of graduates, etc.

IQC105 (Faculty Activity Report): This report is completed by all academic staff members at the end of each academic year, and is submitted to the Departmental Quality Committee for analysis and evaluation. It is also used as a data source for the Department Self Evaluation Report (IQC107). It is also the basic information source for the faculty appraisal process (QC106). It provides information on the teaching activity, research activity, professional contribution and social contribution of the faculty member.

IQC106 (Faculty Appraisal Report): Faculty Appraisal is an on-going annual process that aims in the improvement of academic staff in all aspects related to their academic activity. This includes teaching, research and publications, administrative duties, as well as social contribution. Faculty Appraisal is conducted by the Chairperson of the Department based on the data provided by

each academic staff member in the Faculty Activity Report (IQC105). During the Faculty Appraisal process the performance indicators for the staff member are analysed and an action plan is decided between the appraiser and the appraisee. The Faculty Appraisal Report (IQC106) records the degree of implementation of the action plan of the previous year, the findings for the current year and the action plan for the following year.

IQC107 (Department Self Evaluation): This report concerns all aspects of the operation of the Department. It is based on data collected from all other questionnaires and reports of the Internal Quality system, while quality performance indicators are analysed and evaluated by the Departmental Quality Committee. The Department's Self Evaluation report is submitted annually to the Internal Evaluation Committee of the University, where an action plan is decided.

Quality indicators for Programmes of Studies:

A variety of quality indicators are taken into account for the internal evaluation of the Programmes of Study offered by the Department. These indicators are related to:

(a) Programme structure: This includes the structure and content of the Programme and its ability to achieve the specified program learning outcomes. It includes the characteristics of the Programme related to the ratio between compulsory and elective courses, the ratio between the general foundation, discipline specific foundation and the specialization courses, the teaching and assessment methods, the ability of the Programme to strengthen the employability of its graduates through courses that enable students develop practical skills and competencies, etc. These features of the Programme are analysed by the Programme Coordinator in the Programme Self Evaluation report (IQC104) and evaluated by the Departmental Quality Committee. The findings of this committee are included in the Department Self Evaluation report (IQC107).

(b) Programme Students: This includes indicators related to the student intake, transfer student, dropouts, student retention and student profile (gender, country of origin). These indicators are analysed by the Programme Coordinator in the Programme Self Evaluation report (IQC104) and evaluated by the Departmental Quality Committee. The findings of this committee are included in the Department Self Evaluation report (IQC107).

(c) Student Performance: This includes indicators related to the student participation in the exams, the student failure rates and the student performance. These indicators are monitor by the Student's Performance Committee of the Department and analysed at the end of each semester. These indicators are also analysed by the Programme Coordinator in the Programme Self Evaluation report (IQC104) and evaluated by the Departmental Quality Committee. The findings of this committee are included in the Department Self Evaluation report (IQC107).

(d) Programme Graduates: This includes indicators related to the degree grades, the duration of studies and the destination of graduates (continue for further studies or employed in a discipline related field). These indicators are analysed by the Programme Coordinator in the Programme Self Evaluation report (IQC104) and evaluated by the Departmental Quality Committee. The findings of this committee are included in the Department Self Evaluation report (IQC107).

Other quality indicators related to the Programmes offered by the Department are indicators related to the academic staff teaching in the Programme (qualifications, specialization, experience and staff/student ratios), as well as the infrastructure needed for the delivery of the Programmes. These indicators are analysed by the Departmental Quality Committee. The findings of this committee are included in the Department Self Evaluation report (IQC107).