

CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF ZIMBABWE



For God and Wisdom

QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY

JUNE 2023

Table of Contents

QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY	1
ACRONYMS	3
PREAMBLE	4
1.0 CONTEXT	5
2.0 POLICY STATEMENT	5
2.1. Policy Declaration	5
2.2. Quality Assurance Mission	6
2.3. Objectives of the Policy	6
2.4. Intended Outcomes	6
3.0 POLICY IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURES	7
3.1. THE VICE CHANCELLOR	7
3.2. MANAGEMENT STRATUMS	7
3.3. INSTITUTIONAL QUALITY ASSURANCE DIRECTORATE	7
3.4. UNIVERSITY QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE	8
3.5. FACULTY QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE	10
3.6. DEPARTMENTAL QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE	11
3.7. SUPPORT SERVICES QUALITY ASSURANCE	11
4.0 QUALITY ASSURANCE MECHANISMS	12
4.1 INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE MECHANISMS	12
5.0 POLICY REVIEW	13
6.0 POLICY APPROVAL	13

ACRONYMS

CUZ	Catholic University of Zimbabwe
QA	Quality Assurance
UQAC	University Quality Assurance Committee
FIQAC	Faculty Internal Quality Assurance Committee
DIQAC	Department Internal Quality Assurance Committee
QC	Quality Circle
IQAD	Institutional Quality Assurance Directorate
DQA	Director Quality Assurance
ZIMCHE	Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education
DICUS	Director Information, Communication & University Services
IQA	Internal Quality Assurance
EQA	External Quality Assurance

PREAMBLE

On 20 August 1998, the Catholic University of Zimbabwe (CUZ) was established through Statutory Instrument 268 of 1998, Proclamation 49 of 1998, which granted it the operative Charter. The first Council or governing body of the University was established in October 1998. The University opened its doors for the first time on 25 February 1999 with an enrolment of 41 students, all reading for the four-year Bachelor of Business Management and Information Technology (BBM&IT) Honours Degree

CUZ's **vision** is *'To be the University of choice for holistic education in a christian setting'*

The University's **mission** is *'To provide holistic education in a christian environment in its teaching, research and service programs to all irrespective of religion, nationality or any other designation'*

The five core values guiding CUZ which are aligned to its **2013 – 2023 Strategic Plan** are:

- Ethical behavior
- Collegiality
- Commitment
- Service
- Excellence

The **2013 – 2023 Strategic Plan** is underpinned by the need to *'provide holistic education in a christian environment in its teaching, research and service programs to all irrespective of religion, nationality or any other designation'*. The University is growing its international reputation through its commitment to service and strategic partnerships with International bodies as well as engaging local industry, thereby ensuring a Catholic University qualification is accepted the world over. The University takes pride in associating with the International Council of Universities of St Thomas Aquinas (ICUSTA), the Association of African Universities (AAU), the International Federation of Catholic Universities (IFCU) and the Southern Africa Regional Universities Association (SARUA). The University established a **Quality Assurance Directorate** which was given the responsibility of developing a Quality Assurance Policy in line with best practices obtaining from associating with international bodies as outlined, in order to strengthen quality assurance systems with the university. This policy document lays out CUZ's quality assurance objectives, intended outcomes, the implementation structures, mechanisms for internal and external quality assurance and implementation strategies.

1.0 CONTEXT

The establishment of an internal quality assurance system in a higher education institution is often regarded as the most critical element in creating a sustainable framework for maintaining quality. Where as external evaluations and publishable outcomes mainly respond to accountability issues, the need for internal quality enhancement demands the establishment of a continuous and sustainable quality improvement scheme at the institutional level and at the level of academic disciplines.

The Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology Development's Strategic Plan 2019-2023 highlights the importance of quality higher education in delivering teaching, research, community service, innovation and industrialisation.¹ This is in line with the Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education Act (Chapter 25: 27) which obligates higher education institutions to have institutional quality assurance systems for the accreditation and evaluation of courses, programmes and degrees and standards of physical, financial and material resources as well as management and operational procedures supporting teaching, research and community service. It is within the above context that the CUZ Quality Assurance Policy was developed. The policy lays out internal and external quality assurance mechanisms that fit regional and global best practices.

2.0 POLICY STATEMENT

2.1. Policy Declaration

CUZ is committed to ensure high quality learning and teaching, research and engaged scholarship, supported by high quality staff, high quality service delivery by academic and administrative support services with quality infrastructure and physical facilities to ensure the realisation of the vision, and strategic priorities the CUZ commits itself to. More specifically the CUZ Quality Assurance Policy aims to provide a framework for an efficient quality management system steering quality enhancement with enforceable requirements and norms. CUZ is cognisant that quality assurance is a responsibility shared by all the stakeholders within the University and it includes

¹ Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology Development (2019) *Strategic Plan 2019-2023*

the participation of all stakeholders such as employers, alumni and parents in the quality assurance process.

2.2. Quality Assurance Mission

The Catholic University of Zimbabwe is committed to provide higher education through quality teaching and research that meet and exceed the expectations of all interested parties.

The University's quality assurance mission is to:

“Enhance student success through quality assured learning, teaching, research, innovation, industrialization as well as integrated community engagement within the framework of the institution's Vision, Mission and Strategic Goals”.

2.3. Objectives of the Policy

The objectives of the Quality Assurance Policy are to:

- i) To provide quality education that develops students holistically.
- ii) To continually improve quality management system.
- iii) To continuously optimize customer satisfaction.
- iv) Provide guidance in development and implementation of quality assurance and enhancement procedures and practices;
- vii) Facilitate the development of a culture of self-evaluation.

2.4. Intended Outcomes

Successful implementation and management of this Policy will result in outcomes that enhance:

- i) Harmonise various quality assurance aspects/activities within the Catholic University of Zimbabwe;
- ii) To ensure an effective performance of staff and students;
- iii) To continuously improve the QA system, through reviews, streamlining and modernizing of QA function, policies, procedures and their supporting protocols;
- iv) To provide leadership in the transformation of the Catholic University of Zimbabwe's core Quality Assurance business processes through the implementation of Quality assurance initiative

3.0 POLICY IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURES

The responsibility for quality management shall be at various levels which are detailed below.

3.1. THE VICE CHANCELLOR

The Vice Chancellor shall oversee the implementation of this Policy.

3.2. MANAGEMENT STRATUMS

Below, and supporting, the Vice Chancellor are the following management stratumS.

3.2.1. Institutional

There shall be an Institutional Quality Assurance Directorate (IQAD) in the University. The University shall have a University Quality Assurance Committee (UQAC). The UQAC shall be a delegate Committee of Senate.

3.2.2. Faculty

Each faculty shall have a Faculty Internal Quality Assurance Committee (FIQAC). The FIQAC shall be made up of chairpersons from each Department within the faculty. The FIQAC shall be chaired by the Dean.

3.2.3. Departmental

There shall be a Departmental Internal Quality Assurance Committee (DIQAC). The DIQAC shall be chaired by the chairperson. The Chairperson shall represent the Department in the FIQAC.

3.2.4. Support Services

Support services are provided by non-teaching departments and/or units. Each support Department/Unit shall have a Quality Circle (QC) made up of as many members as deemed fit by the Department/Unit. The QC shall be led by a member who shall represent the Department/Unit in the UQAC.

3.3. INSTITUTIONAL QUALITY ASSURANCE DIRECTORATE

3.3.1. Mandate of the Quality Assurance Directorate

The Institutional Quality Assurance Directorate (IQAD) shall function as the Vice Chancellor's advisor and secretariat on QA issues. The DQA is responsible for developing, implementing and managing a comprehensive quality assurance program that supports the University's strategic plan,

mission, and goals. The IQAD is responsible for liaising on quality assurance issues with external regulatory bodies such as the Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education (ZIMCHE) and other bodies relevant to QA-related activities of the University.

3.3.2. Structure of the Quality Assurance Directorate

The IQAD shall be headed by a Director. The Director shall be assisted by a Quality Assurance Officer. The Directorate shall add more expertise in line with the needs of a growing University.

3.3.3. Functions of the Quality Assurance Directorate

The scope of IQAD's work includes the following:

- i. Lead the day-to-day activities of the Directorate;
- ii. Develop quality assurance management systems to ensure constant and continuous improvement of the teaching, research, training and administrative activities in the University.
- iii. Develop and coordinate the implementation of quality standards by faculties, departments, centers and directorates.
- iv. Conduct capacity development workshops on IQA as well as communicating the IQA policy to both internal and external stakeholders.
- v. Perform other duties that may be assigned to him by the Vice Chancellor.
- vi. Monitoring the implementation of QA processes as per the ZIMCHE standards.
- vii. Spearheading and coordinating internal self-evaluation of both academic and support provision in the University.
- v. Facilitation of external evaluation of the University and accreditation of academic programmes by statutory and professional bodies;
- vi. Monitoring trends in QA matters regionally and internationally and advising the University;

3.4. UNIVERSITY QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

The UQAC shall be a Senate Committee and shall be responsible for QA matters as they relate to all aspects of university functions.

3.4.1. Membership

Membership of the UQAC shall be as follows:

- i) Vice Chancellor (Chair);
- ii) Director of Quality Assurance (Secretariat);
- iii) Deans of Faculties;
- iv) Departmental Chairpersons
- v) Registrar;
- vi) Librarian;
- vii) Bursar;
- viii) Director Information, Communication & University Services (DICUS).
- ix) Assistant Registrar Students Affairs
- x) Ancillary Services Supervisor
- xi) Student representative

3.4.2 Terms of Reference

- i) Ensure quality in all operations of the University.
- ii) Make recommendations to the Senate on areas which need attention.
- iii) Oversee Quality Assurance processes in faculties, departments and support service units.
- iv) Assess Quality Assurance reports from FIQACs ,DIQACs & Quality Circles.
- v) Make recommendations to Senate on all quality related issues.
- vi) Ensure compliance with external regulatory bodies.

3.4.3 Governance

The UQAC shall:

- i. Report directly to Senate;
- ii. Act as delegated by Senate to carry out its quality assurance and enhancement interventions;
- v. Identify and agree ways in which UQAC will interact with other relevant Committees and Units in the University in matters relating to QA;

- vi. And any other functions as delegated by Senate.

3.4.4. Operations

- i. The UQAC shall meet four times a year (at the beginning and at the end of every semester).
- ii. The UQAC shall develop a work plan at the beginning of each academic year;
- iii. The Institutional Quality Assurance Directorate (IQAD) will provide secretariat support to the UQAC.

3.5. FACULTY INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

The Faculty Internal QA Committee is responsible to the Faculty Board for quality assurance and enhancement in the Faculty in conformity with the University's quality assurance framework.

3.5.1 Membership

- i. Dean
- ii. Chairperson of each Department in the Faculty;
- iii. Student representative
- iv. Representative of the part-time lecturers; and
- v. Faculty Administrator.

3.5.2 Terms of Reference

- i. Promoting a quality culture in the faculty;
- ii. Overseeing the delivery of the University's QA framework for academic programmes;
- iii. Overseeing accreditation of all academic programmes in the faculty by regulatory bodies such as ZIMCHE and professional bodies;
- iv. Monitoring quality standards and practices degree programmes, diplomas, certificates and short courses.
- v. Preparing the annual faculty quality assurance report.
- i. Attending to specific issues in the faculty as recommended by the UQAC from time to time.

3.5.3 Operation

- i. The Committee shall meet at least four times per year in preparation for UQAC meetings;
and
- ii. The Faculty Administrator shall provide secretariat support to the Committee.

3.6. DEPARTMENTAL INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

The DIQAC is responsible to the Department Board for quality assurance and enhancement in the Department in conformity with the University's quality assurance framework.

3.6.1 Membership

- i. Departmental Chairperson;
- ii. Representative of each programme in the Department;
- iii. Student representative and
- iv. Representative of the part-time lecturers.

3.6.2 Terms of Reference

- i. Promoting a quality culture in the Department;
- ii. Overseeing accreditation of all academic programmes in the Department by regulatory authorities.
- iii. Monitoring quality standards and practices degree programmes, diplomas, certificates and short courses.
- iv. Implementing student and peer evaluation of teaching;
- v. Preparing the annual Department quality assurance report.
- vi. Attending to specific issues in the Department as recommended by the UQAC from time to time.

3.6.3 Operation

- i. The DIQAC shall meet at least four times per year in preparation for FIQAC.

3.7 SUPPORT SERVICES QUALITY ASSURANCE

3.7.1 Quality Circle

- i. Each support services Department/Unit shall have a Quality Circle;

- ii. The composition of the QC shall be as deemed fit by each Department but should include a student representative from the Students Representative Council;
- iii. The QC shall be led by the head of the Department/Unit; and
- iv. The head of the QC shall represent the Department/Unit in the UQAC.

3.7.2 Terms of Reference

- ii. Promoting an ethos of quality assurance and improvement in the Department/Unit;
- iii. Overseeing of all matters related to provision of quality services to students, staff and external stakeholders;
- iv. Monitoring and enhancing standards of service provision;
- v. Receive and act on feedback from the student representative;
- vi. Preparing the annual quality assurance report for the Department/Unit; and
- vii. Attending to specific issues in the Department/Unit as recommended by the UQAC from time to time.

3.7.3 Operation

The QC shall meet at least four times per year in preparation for UQAC.

4.0 QUALITY ASSURANCE MECHANISMS

This policy shall apply to all Academic and Support Departments/Units in the University. The University shall ensure always that it has well defined criteria for measuring and judging performance standards in all its core activities. Quality assurance processes shall include mechanisms for the following:

- i) Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) Mechanisms – Continuous;
- ii) External Quality Assurance (EQA) Mechanisms – Periodic.

4.1 INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE MECHANISMS

In fulfilling the obligation to ensure high quality in undertakings carried out in its constituent Departments/Units, the University will consistently and continuously implement IQA mechanisms. Faculty and departmental/support service unit quality assurance practice documents and policies shall be read in conjunction with this Quality Assurance Policy. IQA shall include mechanisms to

assess and improve the following standards:

- 1: Vision, Mission, Values and Culture;
- 2: Governance;
- 3: Leadership and Strategic Management;
- 4: Human Resources Management;
- 5: Physical Facilities and Infrastructure;
- 6: Financial Resource Management;
- 7: External Relations, Partnerships, Networks and Internationalisation;
- 8: Internal Quality Assurance;
- 9: Student Recruitment and Admission;
- 10: Curriculum Design, Monitoring and Evaluation
- 11: Teaching and Learning;
- 12: Student Assessment;
- 13: Research, Innovation, Industrialisation and Intellectual Property;
- 14: Student Services and Support;
- 15: Community Service, Outreach and Engagement
- 16: Public Communication;
- 17: Management of Information and Data;

5.0 POLICY REVIEW

This Quality Assurance Policy shall be reviewed periodically to ensure adequacy and relevance to all University quality assurance interventions in academic and support services provision. The Policy shall be reviewed at least every five years or more frequently as the need arises.

6.0 POLICY APPROVAL

The Policy shall come into effect after approval by Senate.

Policy effective after approval by Senate.

Senate Approval


30 June 2023
Date.....