

# WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY IN AFRICA



Addressing gender disparity and fostering equity in university education

## QUALITY ASSURANCE, TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY

## 1. INTERPRETATION (DEFINITION OF TERMS)

**Benchmarking** is a way of assessing the quality of a higher education institution's policies, practices, programmes, products, services and strategies against its external competitors for the purpose of reflection and continuous improvement (Midlands State University, 2018).

**Community service** is unpaid work performed by a person or group of people for the benefit and betterment of their community without any form of compensation. It may be performed for a variety of reasons including citizenship requirements of a course or university policy. Both students and staff are expected to participate in community service.

**Community engagement** is the collaboration of a higher education institution (HEI) with larger communities (local, provincial, national, regional, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity.

**Education 5.0** is a doctrine which views the purpose of a university as teaching, research community service, innovation, and industrialisation.

**External quality assurance** is the means by which an external quality assurance agency, i.e. Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education (ZIMCHE), ensures that a higher education institution has Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) systems in place to manage the quality of its activities and educational provision. ZIMCHE also ensures that the programmes and qualifications that the higher education institution offers have been peer-reviewed to ensure that the provisioning meets its quality standards and criteria.

**Higher education** means all learning programmes leading to a qualification that meets accreditation requirements of the ZIMCHE.

**Higher education institution** refers to any institution that provides higher education on a fulltime, part-time and/or distance basis and which is accredited by ZIMCHE and registered as a higher education institution with the rights to offer certificates, diplomas, and degrees.

**Internal Quality Assurance** is the integrated institutional system of people, policies, processes and practices used by an institution to manage and strengthen the quality of its delivery of the core academic and associated services, as determined by its vision, mission and strategic goals (Council on Higher Education, South Africa, 2021; ZIMCHE Manual on Institutional and Academic Audits, 2022).

**Internationalisation of higher education** means a well-planned, coordinated and intentionally steered process of integrating or infusing intercultural and international (global) dimensions into the agenda of a HEI to extend its influence beyond borders and push the frontiers of knowledge in advancing its vision, mission, strategic goals as aligned to Education 5.0 (Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technology Development, 2019).

**Innovation** is the use of new ideas and methods to solve a given problem or to meet given need(s) in a community (ZIMCHE Manual on Institutional and Academic Audits, 2022).

**Industrialisation** is a process by which an economy is transformed from a primarily agricultural and subsistence one to one based on the manufacturing of goods and provision of services. In this regard, a culture of innovation should lead to industrialisation in a country.

**Programme** refers to a purposeful and structured set of learning activities designed to enable a student to meet the intended learning outcomes necessary for the award of a qualification (Council on Higher Education, South Africa, 2021).

**Teaching and learning** is a process whereby a lecturer or teacher assesses the learning needs of students, establishes specific learning objectives and intended learning outcomes, develops teaching and learning strategies, implements the plan of work and evaluates the outcomes of the instruction. Teaching is imparting a particular subject matter to one or more learners and learning is gaining knowledge by being taught, studying, and experiencing (i.e. experiential learning). However, students can learn without teachers, but teaching cannot take place without students (ZIMCHE Manual on Institutional and Academic Audits, 2022).

**Qualification** refers to the formal recognition and certification of learning achievement awarded by a higher education institution as recognised in the Zimbabwe National Qualifications Framework.

**Quality** in higher education has multiple dimensions and it can be defined as:

- *Enhancement* i.e. continuous improvement;
- *Excellence* i.e. reaching high or exceptional standards;
- *Fitness for purpose* i.e. meeting stated purpose or mandate;
- *Fitness of purpose* i.e. adequacy of quality-related intentions of a higher education institution as they relate to the national goals of higher education;
- *Transformation* i.e. enhancing the performance of staff and students from their initial level of competence;
- *Value for money* i.e. return on investment in higher education (Harvey and Green, 1993; Midlands State University, 2018).

**Quality culture** is one in which everybody in the higher education institution, not just the quality controllers, is responsible for quality (Crosby, 1986). A quality culture involves a devolution of responsibility for quality. The institution ensures that everyone knows the quality standards to be achieved and willingly works towards their achievement (ZIMCHE Manual on Institutional and Academic Audits, 2022).

**Quality assurance** refers to an ongoing continuous process of monitoring, evaluating and providing evidence of the extent to which a higher education institution has put in place and implementing the measures needed to achieve the goals and purposes it has identified for itself and programmes that are able to deliver a set of learning experiences enabling students to attain the qualifications for which they enrol (Midlands State University, 2018; Council on Higher Education, South Africa, 2021).

**Quality enhancement** refers to initiatives developed and implemented to raise an institution's standards and the quality of its education provision and support services beyond that of the

threshold standards and benchmarks (Council on Higher Education, South Africa, 2021; ZIMCHE Manual on Institutional and Academic Audits, 2022).

**Quality management system** refers to the institutional arrangements that assure the quality of teaching and learning, assessment, research, and community engagement. Such an integrated, internal system supports, develops, enhances, and monitors the institution's delivery of the core functions of higher education (Council on Higher Education, South Africa, 2021).

**Research** is "creative and systematic work undertaken to increase the stock of knowledge" (<https://www.nsf.gov/statistics/randdef/rd-definitions.pdf>). Research involves the collection, organisation, and analysis of data to increase understanding of a topic or issue. Overall, good research should lead to innovation (ZIMCHE Manual on Institutional and Academic Audits, 2022).

**Standards** are codes of practice for quality assurance in higher education considered and adhered to by higher education institutions in all aspects of their activities and in all types of higher education provision (Council on Higher Education, South Africa, 2021).

## 2. PURPOSE

The global and continental demand for knowledge and high-end skills is growing (African Union, 2017) and the Women's University in Africa (WUA), through quality research, innovation and training is well placed to play a central role in equipping graduates with internationally recognised requisite know-how and competences in line with its *Transformational Strategy 2023-2027*. At the national level, the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technology Development's Strategic Plan 2019-2023 highlights the centrality of quality higher education in delivering teaching, research, community service, innovation and industrialisation or Education 5.0 (Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology Development (2019) *Strategic Plan 2019-2023*). This is in sync 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 and more recently innovation and industrialisation. It is within this context that this policy document has been developed.

The main purpose of this Quality Assurance, Teaching and Learning Policy is to delineate a clear framework of structures, standards and procedures for quality assurance and management within the University. The policy covers teaching and non-teaching departments. The interpretation of this policy rests with the University Quality Assurance Committee as administered by the Quality Assurance, Teaching and Learning Directorate.

## 2.1. Policy Objectives

The WUA Quality Assurance, Teaching and Learning Policy seeks to:

- i) Assure internal and external stakeholders and ZIMCHE that the University's policies, systems and procedures for the development, maintenance, and enhancement of quality in its educational provisioning and support services are working efficiently and effectively;
- ii) Establish and develop an all-embracing and functional institutional quality assurance management system;
- iii) Establish and develop a quality assurance culture across all University operations;
- iv) Empower staff and students in the execution and implementation of quality assurance management mechanisms and processes;
- v) Coordinate and monitor quality assurance activities within various entities of WUA i.e. Faculties, Directorates, Centres, Schools, Departments, Units and support services;
- vi) Solicit and analyse feedback from stakeholders regarding academic and support service provisioning and quality experiences at WUA with a view to continuous improvement; and
- vii) Provide guidance in identifying internal and external standards and criteria that are regionally and globally recognised.

## 2.2. Relevant Statutes and Policies

In pursuing the foregoing objectives, the WUA quality assurance management system shall be informed by, *inter alia*, the following guidelines, statutes and frameworks:

- African Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education;
- Labour Relations Act (Chapter 28:01);
- University Charter – Statutory Instrument 130 of 2004;
- Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education Act (Chapter 25:27); and
- Zimbabwe National Qualifications Framework (2018).

WUA's policies, procedures and structural arrangements for quality assurance management are consistent with its fourteen (14) strategic objectives enunciated in the *2023-2027 Transformational Strategy*, namely gender equality promotion, teaching and learning, research, community engagement, innovation and industrialisation, internationalisation, institutional environment, human capital, resources and assets, business development, marketing and brand development, quality assurance, student welfare and development and risk management. Similarly, the Quality Assurance, Teaching and Learning Policy shall be underpinned by the following related policies and procedures:

- Accounting Policy and Procedures;
- Admissions Policy;
- Bring Your Own Devise Policy;

- Continuing Education Policy;
- Disability Policy;
- Fraud and Risk Policy;
- Gender and Diversity Policy;
- Human Resources Policy and Procedures;
- ICT Policy;
- Infrastructure Development and Management Policy;
- Institutional Repository Policy;
- Internal Audit Policies and Procedures;
- Internationalisation Policy;
- Library Stocktaking Policy;
- Motor Vehicle Policy;
- Partnership Policy;
- Policy on Engagement of Administrators as Part-time Lecturers;
- Policy on Intellectual Property, Consultancy and Other Income Generating Activities;
- Procurement Policy and Procedures;
- Remuneration Policy for Executive Staff;
- Remuneration Policy for General Staff;
- Risk Management Policy and Procedures; and
- Sexual Harassment Policy.

### **3. SCOPE**

This policy applies to:

- 3.1.** All faculties, schools, satellite campuses in and outside Zimbabwe, and support services departments;
- 3.2.** all permanent and part-time staff who are active in teaching, research and providing support services to the core functions of the University;
- 3.3.** All students registered with WUA; and
- 3.4.** All infrastructure, learning resources, institutional units, marketing and information dissemination structures and social amenities of the University.

## **4. PRINCIPLES GUIDING THE POLICY**

WUA's Quality Assurance and Teaching and Learning processes and activities shall be underpinned by a number of key principles which are as follows:

### **4.1. Systematic approach**

WUA approaches academic and support services provision quality assurance issues by applying policies, structures and procedures which are clearly formulated and documented, implemented, monitored, and reviewed.

### **4.2. Peer reviewed learning organisation**

WUA approaches quality assurance as a learning organisation in which internal and external peer reviews are upheld. Internal peer reviews are relevant to developing, enhancing and assuring a quality culture within the organisation. To this end, the University shall foster an ethos of critical self-assessment in the evaluation of its performance at individual, unit/departmental and institutional levels with a view to continuously improve its academic and support services provision.

External peer reviews provide an independent assessment of standards and quality and they are achieved in a number of ways through, among others: peer review of new programmes that require accreditation by ZIMCHE; institutional and academic audits conducted by ZIMCHE; peer review of journal articles submitted by academic staff; and external examiner reports which form a critical element of benchmarking academic performance with an eye on quality enhancement.

### **4.3. All staff are responsible for quality**

Quality is the responsibility of every member of staff, and everybody has a contribution to make. For this approach to be successful, the University shall delineate clear lines of responsibility and accountability for each area of operation and provide adequate support to enable staff to achieve their quality assurance objectives.

### **4.4. Student engagement**

WUA recognises that students make valuable contributions to the assurance and assessment of quality within the institution. The institution is therefore committed to seeking the views of its students and using the feedback to improve the quality of its academic and support services provision.

To this end, the institution shall work collaboratively with the Student Representative Council and student representatives operating in different quality assurance fora such as quality assurance committees and quality circles. During each semester, students shall be required to provide online feedback evaluating individual courses and lecturers as well as their levels of satisfaction with WUA support services.

## **4.5. Transparent and accountable stakeholder engagement**

The interest of society in the quality and standards of higher education at WUA need to be safeguarded. To this end, the University shall work and relate to internal and external stakeholders in a transparent and accountable manner.

## **4.6. Evidence-based approach**

An evidence-based approach to enhancement-led quality assurance shall inform all key processes drawing on an increasingly wide range of quantitative indicators and qualitative information to evaluate effectiveness, identify issues and inform planned action for improvement. In this regard, strategic decisions shall be based on systematically collected and analysed evidence.

# **5. POLICY PROVISIONS**

In line with its objectives which are informed by national and international best practice, this policy provides for standards and guidelines on quality assurance and management in teaching and non-teaching departments of the University. The standards and guidelines cover a whole range of areas that are essential for the attainment of the provision of quality higher education as highlighted by ZIMCHE. The standards and guidelines cover the following areas: institutional vision, mission, values and culture; governance, leadership and strategic management; human and financial resources management; infrastructure and physical facilities; Internationalisation and partnerships; internal quality assurance; student recruitment and admission; study programmes/curriculum design and review; teaching and learning, student assessment; research, innovation, industrialisation and intellectual property; student support services; community service and engagement; public communication; and management of information and data.

## **5.1. Vision, mission, values, and culture**

The University shall have published and publicly displayed vision, mission, values, and culture statements that provide direction for everything that happens in the institution and reflect its commitment to continuous quality enhancement in delivering its mandate. Whereas the vision provides the strategic direction of the University and what it intends to become in the future, the mission articulates its purpose and what it intends to achieve for its stakeholders. The University's core values inform how staff and students are supposed to behave. Culture encompasses the values, beliefs, norms and practices of quality and its enhancement that are aligned to the institution's vision and mission and which distinguish WUA from other institutions.

The University's vision and mission on quality assurance shall be translated into strategic plans which are operationalised into achievable goals and objectives.

## **5.2. Governance**

Consistent with its founding Charter – Statutory Instrument 130 of 20024, the University shall have relevant organs of governance that promote and uphold sound corporate governance by adhering to key tenets of good governance such as integrity, gender equity and social inclusion,

responsiveness, transparency, efficiency, and accountability. These organs of good corporate governance include the Board of Trustees, University Council, Senate, Management, Student Representative Council, and various committees and departments each with a clear mandate, duties, responsibilities, powers, and privileges. The organs shall be coordinated to ensure efficiency, effectiveness, and quality.

The University Council's self-assessment is one way of ensuring and enhancing quality in the application of principles of good governance. The Executive Committee of Council shall periodically evaluate practices and operations of the Council regarding the conduct of its business as the governing body of the University.

The University Senate, and its committees including the University Quality Assurance Committee, shall periodically conduct self-assessments of the conduct of its business as a principal academic body of the University. The results of the self-assessment, including recommendations will be presented to the same Senate for consideration. Recommendations for changes to the functions and practices of the Senate will be referred to the University Council for approval.

### **5.3. Leadership and strategic management**

The University shall have an effective system of leadership and management staffed by appropriately qualified, competent, and experienced leaders and managers with well-defined levels of responsibilities and accountability. The leadership has responsibilities for planning, budgeting, organising, staffing, directing, coordinating, decision-making, communicating and reporting on key result areas to achieve the vision, mission, the culture and goals of the institution in line with its strategic plan. Key performance indicators and targets shall be established to measure the performance of the key result areas and the strategic goals of the institution.

### **5.4. Human Resources Management**

The quality of staff is key to the quality of a higher education institution and therefore the University shall have inclusive policies on human resources that ensure recruitment and retention of adequate numbers of qualified and competent staff to achieve its mission and to carry out its mandate of addressing gender disparity and fostering equity in university education. The policies and procedures shall ensure that equal opportunities, and gender equality, in human resources recruitment, retention, and promotion of staff are based on qualifications, competences, and skills. Relevant training and development activities shall be organised to equip academic and support staff with relevant knowledge, skills, and attitudes to carry out their roles effectively.

### **5.5. Financial Resources Management**

The University shall provide adequate financial resources and prudent financial management to support the strategic goals of teaching and learning, research, community service and engagement, innovation, and industrialisation. The prudent financial management system shall include, but not limited to, strategies, policies and procedures for budgeting, resource allocation, establishment and maintenance infrastructure, asset management, debt management, financial reporting, monitoring and evaluation through financial audits, and benchmarking the financial management system using

international best practices. The financial management system shall also address risks, gaps and challenges identified by stakeholders for continuous quality improvement.

## **5.6. Infrastructure and physical facilities**

The University shall provide adequate and appropriate infrastructure, facilities and resources to support the strategic goals of the institution including teaching and learning and research. The institution shall ensure that the following infrastructure and physical facilities are also accessible to *persons with disabilities*:

- a) **Academic and administrative facilities** such as lecture theatres, lecture rooms, staff offices, and laboratories;
- b) **Health, spiritual, psychosocial, and recreational facilities** such as a clinic, spiritual and psychosocial support and sports venues;
- c) **Libraries** at all campuses and e-resources (physical and electronic) for the number of students and staff. The adequacy of the libraries shall be determined by criteria set out in ZIMCHE's Guidelines on Criteria for Institutional Accreditation and the Zimbabwe Universities Libraries Consortium (ZULC);
- d) **ICT infrastructure** facilities that support face to face and e-teaching and learning. The institution shall ensure adequate hardware, software and technical support to students as well as academic and administrative staff.

Feedback on the adequacy and levels of satisfaction with infrastructure and physical facilities shall be collected, analysed and findings disseminated to inform decision-making on quality improvements.

## **5.7. Internationalisation and partnerships**

The University shall put in place mechanisms and strategies that promote collaboration with other higher educational institutions, professional bodies, research institutions and relevant partners at national, regional, continental, and international levels in order to facilitate the mobility of academic and administrative staff, researchers and students. In this regard, the University shall ensure that programmes under collaboration are of the required standard and rigour and are subject to periodic quality audits.

## **5.8. Internal quality assurance**

The University shall establish an internal quality assurance system with clear structures, roles and responsibilities that make it possible to monitor, evaluate and improve the quality of its academic and support services provisioning as embodied in the higher education standards articulated in this policy. The internal quality assurance system orchestrated by the Quality Assurance Directorate in the Vice Chancellor's Office shall complement the external quality assurance system provided by ZIMCHE as it occupies a pivotal position in the framework of institutional and programmes accreditation.

### **5.8.1. Quality management structures**

The responsibility for quality management shall be vested in various structures, namely, the University Senate, University Quality Assurance Committee, Faculty Quality Assurance Committee, and Quality Assurance Circles in non-teaching departments and satellite campuses.

#### **5.8.1.1. Senate**

Subject to the University Charter – Statutory Instrument 130 of 2004, the academic authority of the University is vested in the Senate whose functions include, *inter alia*, the following:

- a) Regulating the admission of students to the University and to programmes and courses of instruction held by the University;
- b) Promoting the advancement of knowledge through research;
- c) Regulating the programmes, modules of study and the examinations held by the University;
- d) Appointing examiners for examinations conducted by the University;
- e) Recommending to the Chancellor, through the Council, the conferment of degrees, diplomas, certificates, honorary degrees and other awards and distinctions of the University;
- f) Appointing Committees of Senate including the Quality Assurance Committee;
- g) Making periodic reports on its activities to Council and to report on any matter referred to it by Council.

#### **5.8.1.2. University Quality Assurance Committee**

The University Quality Assurance Committee (UQAC) is a Senate Committee which is responsible for quality assurance matters as they relate to all aspects of the University's functions.

##### **a) Membership**

The membership of the University Quality Assurance Committee shall be as follows:

- i) Vice Chancellor (Chair);
- ii) Pro Vice Chancellors;
- iii) Director Quality Assurance (Secretariat);
- iv) Deans of Faculties;
- v) Directors of Schools;
- vi) Registrar;
- vii) Deputy Registrar Academic Affairs;
- viii) Deputy Registrar Human Resources and Administration;
- ix) Librarian;
- x) Bursar;
- xi) Director Business and Enterprise Development;
- xii) Director Marketing, Public Relations and Communications;
- xiii) Director International Programmes and Global Initiatives;
- xiv) Director Works and Estates;
- xv) Director Research, Innovation and Postgraduate Centre;
- xvi) Director ICT;
- xvii) Dean of Students;

- xviii) Director Gender and Diversity Centre;
- xix) Acting Procurement Manager; and
- xx) Director Internal Audit and Risk Management

**b) Terms of Reference**

- i) Ensuring quality in all operations of the University; and
- ii) Making recommendations to Senate on areas which need attention.

**c) Operations**

- i) The UQAC shall meet at least four times a year; and
- ii) The Quality Assurance Directorate shall be the Secretariat to the Committee.

**5.8.1.3. Faculty Quality Assurance Committee**

The Faculty Quality Assurance Committee (FQAC) is responsible to the Faculty Board for quality assurance and enhancement in conformity with the University's quality assurance framework.

**a) Membership**

- i. Each Department to second a member to the FQAC. The seconded members will choose a Chairperson;
- ii. Two students from each Department to be seconded to the FQAC; and
- iii. Faculty Administrator.

**b) Terms of Reference**

- i. Promoting quality culture in the Faculty;
- ii. Drafting a Faculty Quality Assurance action plan for implementation of quality standards at the Faculty level,
- iii. Overseeing the delivery of the University's QA framework for academic programmes in the Faculty;
- iv. Monitoring teaching resources, facilities, infrastructure and support for students in the Faculty;
- v. Overseeing student assessment mechanisms in the Faculty;
- vi. Overseeing the submission of all new academic programmes for accreditation to the Dean's Committee on Academic Regulations;
- vii. Monitoring quality standards and practices for courses and degree programmes;
- viii. Monitoring annual reviews of undergraduate and graduate courses and programmes and managing the outcomes of the reviews;
- ix. Preparing the annual Faculty quality assurance report and submitting it to the Quality Assurance Directorate; and
- x. Attending to specific issues as recommended by the University Quality Assurance Committee from time to time.

**c) Operation**

- i. The Committee shall meet at least twice per semester; and
- ii. The Faculty Administrator shall provide secretariat support to the Committee.

#### **5.8.1.4. Quality Assurance Circles**

Non-teaching departments and satellite campuses shall have Quality Assurance Circles (QACs). The generic Terms of Reference for Quality Assurance Circles are as follows.

##### **a) Terms of Reference**

- i. Promoting an ethos of quality assurance and improvement in the Department or satellite campus;
- ii. Overseeing all matters related to the provision of quality services to students, staff and external stakeholders;
- iii. Monitoring and enhancing standards of service provision;
- iv. Preparing the annual quality assurance report for the Department or Satellite campus and submitting it to the Quality Assurance Directorate; and
- v. Attending to specific issues in the Department or Satellite campus as recommended by the University Quality Assurance Committee from time to time.

##### **b) Membership**

The membership of the QAC for each Department is as follows:

##### ***Bursars Department***

- Deputy Bursar who will chair the Quality Assurance Circle meetings;
- Heads of Units that deal with students; and
- Two students from the two Faculties at the Manresa campus.

##### ***Marketing, Public Relations and Communications***

- Marketing, Public Relations and Communications Manager;
- Marketing, Public Relations and Communications team;
- A lecturer from each of the two Faculties at the Manresa campus; and
- Two students from each of the two Faculties at the Manresa campus.

##### ***Business and Enterprise Development***

- Business and Enterprise Development Director;
- Business and Enterprise Development team;
- A lecturer from each of the two Faculties at the Manresa campus; and
- Two students from each of the two Faculties at the Manresa campus.

##### ***International Programmes and Global Initiatives***

- Director;
- International Programmes and Global Initiatives team;
- A lecturer from each of the two Faculties at Manresa campus; and
- Two students from each of the two Faculties at Manresa campus.

##### ***Gender and Diversity Centre***

- Programmes Officer;
- A lecturer from each of the two Faculties at Manresa campus; and

- Two differently abled students from the two Faculties represented at Manresa campus.

#### ***Academic Registry***

- Deputy Registrar Academic Affairs;
- Head of Admissions Unit;
- Head of Examinations Unit; and
- Two students from the two Faculties at the Manresa campus.

#### ***Student Affairs***

- Dean of Students; and
- SRC.

#### ***Research, Innovation and Postgraduate Centre***

- Staff in the Centre;
  - Two students from each Intake; and
- N.B.* The meetings can be virtual.

#### ***ICT***

- All Deputy Directors who will choose a Chairman;
- A lecturer from the two Faculties at the Manresa campus; and
- Two students from the two Faculties at the Manresa campus.

#### ***ECD Centre***

- ECD Centre Coordinator;
- ECD Teacher;
- Two parents; and
- A lecturer from the two Faculties at the Manresa campus.

#### ***Works and Estates***

- Deputy Director, Works and Estates;
- A lecturer from the two Faculties at the Manresa campus; and
- Two students from the two Faculties at the Manresa campus.

#### ***Satellite Campuses (Bulawayo, Kadoma, Marondera & Mutare)***

- Campus Administrator;
- Campus Coordinator (Secretariat);
- Two lecturers from each programme offered at the campus; and
- Two students from each programme offered.

#### **c) Operation**

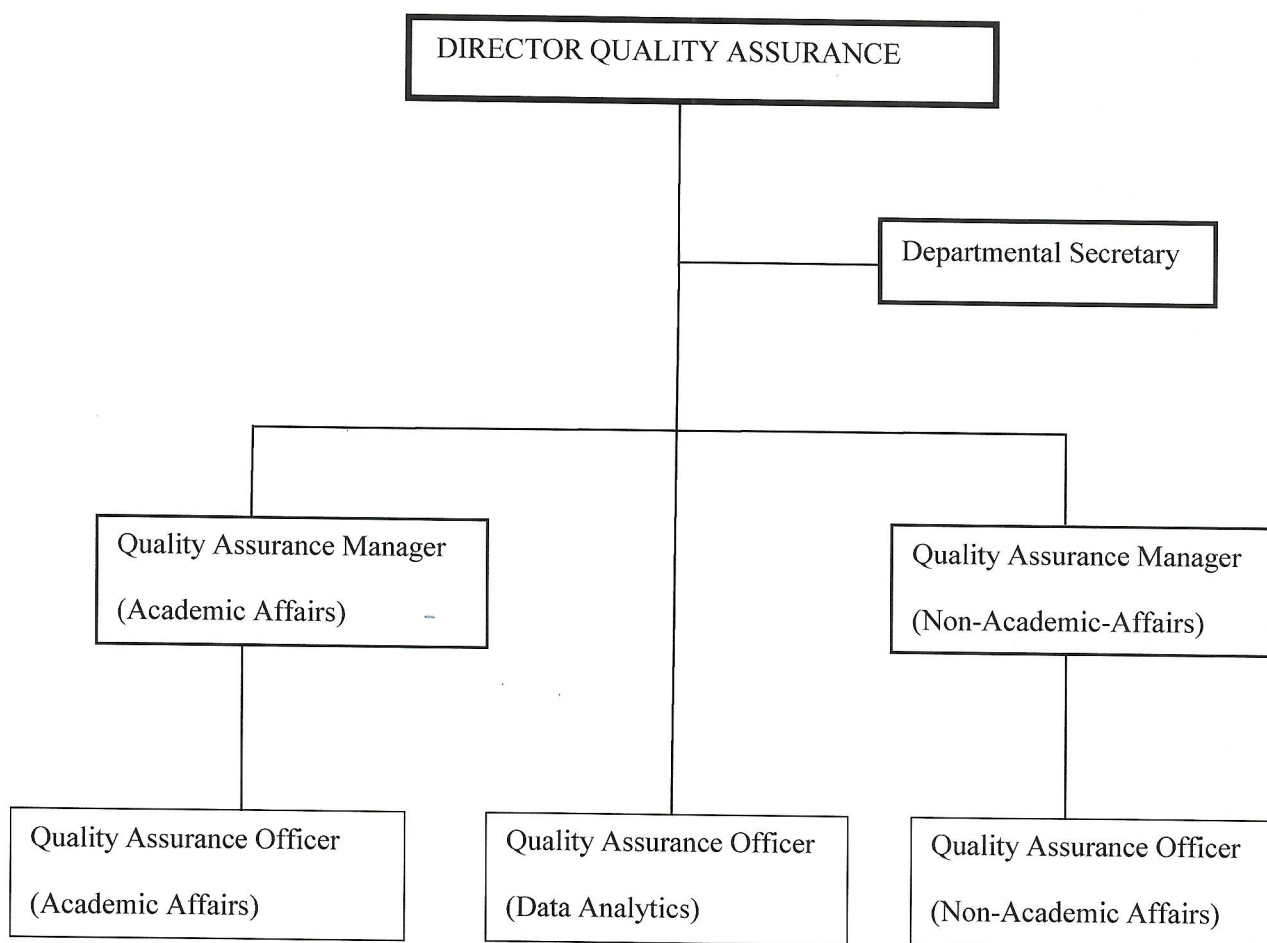
The Departmental or Satellite campus Quality Assurance Circle shall meet at least twice per semester or more as the need arises.

### 5.8.1.5. Quality Assurance, Teaching and Learning Directorate (QATLD)

The Quality Assurance, Teaching and Learning Directorate shall have an oversight role on all quality assurance issues in the University and serve as the link between the University and relevant regulatory authorities such as the ZIMCHE and professional bodies such as the Nurses Council of Zimbabwe, Council for Social Workers and Allied Health Professions Council of Zimbabwe and any other bodies relevant to quality assurance activities of the University.

#### 5.8.1.5.1. Structure of the QATLD

The QATLD shall be headed by a Director. The Director shall be assisted by a Quality Assurance Departmental Secretary. The establishment shall include two Quality Assurance Managers, one for Academic Affairs and the second for Non-Academic Affairs. Below the Managers are three Officers responsible for, respectively, Academic Affairs, Non-Academic Affairs and Data Analytics. The Directorate may add more expertise in line with the needs of a growing University.



#### **5.8.1.5.2. Mandate**

The Directorate shall be responsible to the Vice Chancellor on quality assurance, teaching and learning issues by:

- a) fostering a culture of quality in the University through ensuring that staff, students and management actively participate and own quality assurance activities;
- b) facilitating the design and implementation of monitoring and evaluation of structures and processes in the University for quality enhancement;
- c) ensuring that each department in the University has set standards, procedures and benchmarks that must be maintained and enhanced;
- d) ensuring compliance with institutional and academic programme standards and benchmarks set by ZIMCHE;
- e) coordinating the induction of new members of teaching staff;
- f) empowering teaching staff with the most effective methods of teaching and learning through regular engagements;
- g) participating in the quality assurance communities of practice through associations, networks, conferences and exhibitions;
- h) carrying out monitoring and evaluative internal audits in respect of teaching and learning, programmes, facilities, staff and non-teaching units and informing strategic decisions;
- i) evaluating stakeholder (i.e. students, community, industry, staff, and alumni) satisfaction with University products and services and using the information for continuous improvement;
- j) editing the University's public communication documents;
- k) preparing reports on the implementation of the quality assurance policy and procedures; and
- l) producing and updating a University Quality Assurance Manual.

#### **5.9. Student recruitment and admission**

The Academic Registry Office shall have pre-defined, published and consistently applied policies and procedures that ensure fair and equitable recruitment and admission, progression, certification and support services through all phases of the student's life cycle, and in issues concerning student's future employability. The University shall have an online application system in addition to the manual system to ensure ease of access. Furthermore, the University shall have policies and strategies that promote diversity and inclusivity in admission including gender mainstreaming and consideration of disadvantaged groups. In other words, the student admission policies shall not discriminate on grounds of sex, nationality, race, ethnicity, religion, or disability.

#### **5.10. Study programmes/curriculum design and review**

The University shall have policies and systems that ensure the design and development of quality, relevant study programmes that are learning outcomes-based and aligned with the needs of stakeholders and that contribute to the achievement of its mission and which are commensurate with ZIMCHE as well as regional and international standards. In the case of Open Distance Learning, the University shall have in place mechanisms for pre-testing or piloting the learning materials to ensure that they are at the learners' level and that the learners will use them without difficulty.

The University shall ensure that there are appropriate formal agreements for all programmes offered in partnership with other institutions, specifying in detail roles and responsibilities of the partners including teaching commitments and quality assurance arrangements. Programme design shall be initiated by Faculties with inputs from their respective departments.

#### **5.10.1. Faculties**

Programme design within Faculties and Schools shall reflect the ZIMCHE guidelines for programme accreditation. Faculties are expected to:

- a) ensure that their responsibilities for standards and quality are discharged effectively in respect of the design of programmes, their approval and the monitoring and review of programmes;
- b) ensure that academic programmes are in line with the mission and objectives of the University and address the needs of stakeholders;
- c) consult widely the following stakeholders among others: peers, industry, professional associations, academics, alumni and government departments;
- d) ensure that the expected learning outcomes of programmes and their courses/modules are aligned to stakeholder needs;
- e) ensure that all programmes include the ZIMCHE Minimum Bodies of Knowledge and Skills (MBKS);
- f) ensure that there are adequate physical and human resources for the programmes;
- g) ensure that entry level requirements and other special requirements for specific programmes are clearly defined;
- h) ensure that University procedures for introducing new programmes, amending or phasing out standing programmes are complied with;
- i) ensure that the structure of programmes and credit hours are in accord with international norms for the amount of study required for each degree or diploma offered by the University;
- j) promote Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and ensure that all programmes have mainstreamed ESD;
- k) ensure that the overriding responsibility of the academic authority of the Academic Board and Senate to set, maintain and assure standards is respected and upheld; and
- l) ensure that all programmes are accredited by ZIMCHE.

#### **5.10.2. Programme monitoring and review**

Faculties shall routinely monitor, in an agreed cycle, the effectiveness of their programmes in order to:

- a) evaluate the continuing effectiveness of the curriculum and assessment in relation to intended learning outcomes;
- b) ensure that appropriate actions are taken to remedy any identified shortcomings; and
- c) periodically undertake a broader review of the continuing validity and relevance of programmes offered.

#### **5.10.3. Programme amendment or withdrawal**

In the event of a decision to amend or discontinue a programme, appropriate procedures shall be followed including completion of a Programme Amendment or Withdrawal Form for consideration by the Deans' Committee on Academic Regulations and final approval by Senate and taking measures to notify and protect the interests of students registered for, or accepted for admission, to the programme.

## **5.11. Teaching and learning**

The University shall put in place, in a manner that is consistent with its vision and mission, policies and procedures that promote learning and the acquisition of appropriate knowledge, competences and skills.

### **5.11.1. The institution**

The institution shall ensure that:

- a) teaching and learning strategies are student-centred and flexible, motivate students' self-reflection and engagement in the learning process;
- b) the environment and resources are appropriate and adequate to support each student;
- c) there are systems in place for periodic monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning approaches for quality improvement; and
- d) there are mechanisms in place for students and lecturers to provide feedback on their learning and teaching experience.

### **5.11.2. Faculties, schools and departments**

- a) Faculties and schools shall routinely monitor the effectiveness of their programmes in order to:
  - i) ensure that programmes remain current and valid in the light of developing knowledge in the disciplines and practice in its application;
  - ii) evaluate the continuing effectiveness of the curriculum and of assessment in relation to intended learning outcomes;
  - iii) ensure that appropriate action is taken to remedy any shortcomings identified;
  - iv) put in place effective arrangements to maintain appropriate academic standards and enhance the quality of postgraduate research programmes;
  - v) ensure that pedagogical approaches cater for students with disabilities;
- b) Faculties and departments shall have responsibility to promote effective teaching and learning by having a Faculty Quality Assurance system;
- c) Faculties and departments shall ensure that lecturers use progressive methods of teaching that promote the acquisition of appropriate knowledge, skills and values;
- d) Faculties shall utilise well established tools to assess teaching and learning through peer and student evaluations;
- e) Faculties shall ensure that students are appropriately placed and supervised during the Work-Related Learning period in accordance with work-related learning guidelines;

- f) Faculties and departments shall ensure that appropriately qualified and competent teaching and support services staff are recruited in accordance with the institution's Human Resources Policy and Procedures;
- g) Faculties and departments shall ensure that the promotion of teaching staff is in accordance with relevant Ordinances;
- h) All faculties shall be guided by their Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs);
- i) Faculties and departments shall ensure that teaching timetables are pedagogically sound;
- j) Faculties and departments shall ensure that different modes of learning i.e. conventional, block release, evening, and weekend classes are provided with comparable learning opportunities and that students have acquired comparable knowledge, skills and values at the point of exit;
- k) Lecturer – student ratios in Faculties shall be guided by best practice and ZIMCHE guidelines;
- l) Teaching loads shall be guided by Senate in consultation with faculties and departments;
- m) Students' evaluation of their learning shall be done once per semester; and
- n) Peer evaluation of teaching shall be done every semester.

## **5.12. Student assessment**

Student assessment shall be informed by the University's General Academic and Faculty Regulations. Student assessment is expected to measure the achievement of learning outcomes, to be fit for purpose, i.e. formative and summative assessments of learning outcomes and to be guided by published marking and grading criteria.

### **5.12.1. Faculties**

Faculties shall ensure that:

- a) Assessment is conducted with rigour, probity and fairness and with due regard to security;
- b) The amount and timing of assessment enables effective measurement of students' achievement of intended learning outcomes;
- c) The setting of examinations is prescribed in Standard Operating Procedures;
- d) Faculties have clear procedures for marking and moderation;
- e) Assessment decisions are recorded and documented accurately and systematically, and that decisions of relevant assessment panels and examination boards are communicated as quickly as possible;
- f) Assessment and examination policies, procedures and practices shall provide students with disabilities with the same opportunities as their peers;
- g) Faculties shall be given at least two weeks from the date of examination to process results.

### **5.12.2. External examiners**

- a) The process of nominating external examiners shall set out in the Guidelines for Appointing External Examiners;
- b) Faculties shall ensure that Examiners Reports are sent to the Deans of Faculties and the Director of Quality Assurance, Teaching and Learning.

### **5.13. Research, innovation, industrialisation and intellectual property**

Innovative research is an important key result area for the University as it is closely linked to the institution's contributions towards the industrialisation and modernisation of the economy. Research provides for the advancement of knowledge and the discovery of new knowledge. Related to research, innovation and industrialisation is intellectual property which through the application of relevant legislation seeks to protect rights to creative work and includes copyrights, patents, designs, trademarks, inventions and research data, records and results. To this end, the University shall:

- a) Have a functional Research Board which coordinates research activities;
- b) The Research Board shall have clear guidelines on its operations and management of research funds;
- c) Put in place key performance indicators to evaluate the quantity and quality of research outputs and impact;
- d) Ensure that there are standards, procedures and processes for the approval of research proposals, dissertations and theses and the conduct and supervision of research studies;
- e) Ensure that there are structures and procedures for ethics clearance of research conducted by staff and students in the University;
- f) Promote consultancy and extension services in a conducive environment with various partners for the development of applied knowledge;
- g) Encourage collaborative research with internal and external partners;
- h) Ensure that research and innovation results are integrated into teaching and learning;
- i) Ensure that innovative research outputs are commercialised and bring benefits to the researchers, the institution and society.

### **5.14. Student support services**

Student support services refer to the following units: Student Affairs, Registry, Information and Communication Technology, Bursary, Marketing and Public Relations, Works and Estates, and Security Services. The University shall ensure that:

- a) All the activities of support services are guided by Standard Operating Procedures which shall be informed by best practice, client service charters and statutory regulations; and
- b) Support services units continuously conduct stakeholder satisfaction audits and related surveys on the quality of their services.

### **5.15. Community service and engagement**

The University shall provide community service and engagement that is consistent with its vision and mission and brings benefits to the institution and society at large. The University shall ensure that community service and engagements activities are conducted within its institutional policies and strategies that promote collaboration between the institution and larger communities at local, national, regional, and global levels.

All community service and engagement activities shall be carried out in accordance with the University's Community Service and Engagement Policy.

### 5.16. Public communication

The University shall publish information about its activities, including programmes, in a clear, accurate and objective manner, and ensure that the information is up-to-date and readily accessible. The promotion of its programmes shall be done in a fair and ethical manner following best practices and shall comply with all relevant legislation.

That information includes programmes offered, levels of the programmes in line with the Zimbabwe National Qualification Framework, fees involved, selection criteria, language of communication, timeframes in which programmes are offered, expected learning outcomes, qualifications awarded, teaching and learning procedures, required access to technologies for both conventional and Open Distance Learning, graduation rates, career paths and employability of graduates. Such information is important to prospective and current students, alumni and other stakeholders and the public at large.

### 5.17. Management of information and data

The University shall ensure that it collects, analyses, and utilises the data for informed decision making in the management of its programmes and support services through knowing what is working well and what needs attention. Major information and data of interest includes performance as measured against key performance indicators, profile of the student population, student progression, success and drop-out rates, students' satisfaction with their programmes and courses as well as satisfaction with support services, learning resources and support available, career paths of graduates including employability rates.

## 6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

ROLE	RESPONSIBILITY
Quality Assurance Directorate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide an oversight role on all quality assurance issues in the University;</li> <li>• Serve as the link between the University and relevant stakeholders such as ZIMCHE;</li> <li>• Collect, analyse and disseminate findings on student experiences and levels of satisfaction with support services, staff experiences, industry experiences, community satisfaction levels, and alumni experiences. institutional and academic programmes quality assurance for decision-making; and</li> <li>• Report to the Vice Chancellor on Quality Assurance, Teaching and Learning in the University.</li> </ul>

Registry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support sound governance, leadership and strategic management;</li> <li>• Ensure recruitment of qualified and competent human resources, staff retention, development, and advancement;</li> <li>• Facilitate student recruitment, admission, examination, graduation and certification.</li> </ul>
Bursar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure prudent financial resources management</li> </ul>
Faculties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish Faculty Quality Assurance Committees;</li> <li>• Continuously assess, monitor, guarantee and improve the quality of teaching and learning, research, innovation and industrialisation, community service and Internationalisation of programmes at Faculty level; and</li> <li>• Ensure robust and continuously peer reviewed curriculum design and review as well as student assessment procedures and practices.</li> </ul>
Research, Innovation and Postgraduate Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure quality assurance in respect to research activities in the University;</li> <li>• Ensure compliance to the University Research and Innovation Policy; and</li> <li>• Put in place mechanisms for protecting the intellectual property of staff and students.</li> </ul>
Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that the University has adequate and modern physical library facilities and e-resources as guided by best practice and criteria set out by ZIMCHE and ZULC.</li> </ul>
Works and Estates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Endeavour to meet minimum criteria for physical structures and facilities as prescribed by ZIMCHE, disability, i.e. for classrooms, office space, toilets, library, laboratories, clinic, student accommodation, Disability Resource Centres, and sporting facilities.</li> </ul>
ICT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Endeavour to meet minimum criteria for ICT facilities as prescribed by ZIMCHE i.e. computer to student ratio, computer to staff ratio, internet infrastructure, access and connectivity.</li> </ul>
Student Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide adequate student services support i.e. student accommodation on campus, sporting facilities and spiritual and psychosocial services; and</li> </ul>

International Programmes and Global Initiatives

- Promote collaboration with higher education institutions in the region and globally; and
- Facilitate mobility of staff and students.

Marketing, Public Relations and Communications

- Ensure that the University publishes information about its activities in a clear, accurate and objective manner;
- Ensure that the information is up-to-date.

Audit and Risk Management

- Ensure soundness of financial and related systems; and
- Advise on management of institutional risk, gaps and challenges.


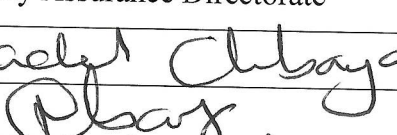
Procurement

- Ensure procurement of quality products and services that meet stakeholder needs.

Security

- Provide a safe and secure environment for students and staff.

## 7. DOCUMENT VERSION MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL

Document Name	Women's University Quality Assurance, Teaching and Learning Policy	 <b>WUA</b>
Version Reference	1.0	
Document Owner	Quality Assurance Directorate	
Council Chairperson's name	Rachel Chibaya	
Signature		
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