



# **Quality Assurance Manual**

**For**

# **King Khalid University**

July 2015

## Table of Contents

Introduction .....	4
Defining Quality Assurance in Education.....	4
The significance of quality assurance .....	5
Relationship of quality assurance to accreditation .....	5
The quality assurance system at King Khalid University .....	5
The Deanship of Academic Development and Quality .....	9
Vice Dean for Development.....	10
Vice Dean for Quality .....	10
Vice Dean for Curriculum and Planning .....	11
Vice Dean for Women’s Colleges .....	12
Consultants.....	13
Committees associated with the quality assurance system .....	13
Quality Assurance Committees at the university level .....	14
Standing Committee for Quality Assurance .....	14
Steering Committee for Quality Assurance and Academic Accreditation ....	15
Awards Committee .....	16
Academic planning and curriculum committee .....	16
Quality Assurance Committees at the College Level .....	18
The Quality Assurance Unit (QA).....	18
The Quality Assurance Committee (QAC).....	19
Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) assessment at KKU .....	20

Quality Assurance in Non-Academic Departments and Deanships .....	21
The Quality Assurance (QA) Vice Deanship.....	22
Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) .....	22
Definitions in Quality Assurance .....	24
Related References.....	26

## Introduction

The rapid growth in numbers in the past decade in both public and private colleges and universities in Saudi Arabia has necessitated the need for an effective quality assurance system. Private sector expansion reinforced the need for a national mechanism to ensure consistency in educational standards aligned with international highly-regarded educational systems. In 2004 the government, in recognizing the need for a quality assurance and accreditation system, established the National Commission for Accreditation and Assessment (NCAAA). Its responsibilities include establishing standards, criteria, and procedures for accreditation, reviewing and evaluating performance of existing and new institutions, accrediting institutions and programs, and supporting quality enhancement.

Accordingly, a deanship of academic development and quality was established to implement quality assurance mechanisms in all academic and administrative units of the university, assess performance in all areas of institution activity, enforce regulations that determine how work is efficiently implemented, as well as measure and evaluate performance against proven standards. In addition, the deanship has been charged with reviews, providing technical support, and advising all quality units of the university. Finally, the deanship is leading an effort to instill a quality culture to ensure that systems, processes, and outcomes exceed quality standards.

## Defining Quality Assurance in Education

Quality is often described as the totality of features and characteristics of a service or product measured against standards -- the degree of excellence of something. In higher education, quality is evaluated based on the stated mission or purpose of the institution and how well goals and objectives are achieved. Quality in higher education is a multi-dimensional concept, which should embrace all its functions and activities: teaching and learning, learning resources, academic programs, research and scholarship, faculty and staff development, physical plant, equipment, and engagement with the community.

Quality assurance should take the form of internal self-evaluation and external review, conducted openly by independent specialists, if possible with international expertise, which are vital for enhancing quality.

## The significance of quality assurance

Quality assurance is both a process and a framework that leads to the achievement of excellence and transparency. The process will ensure quality in the attainment of the university's mission and vision leading to university performance aligned with its purpose. The goal is for all institutional functions to perform at an optimum level including academics (teaching, learning, curricula), student support services, physical plant (buildings, classroom environment), research, and service to community and region. With continuous evaluation for quality in all areas, the university will be well-positioned to adapt to changes and provide the highest quality education to students.

Based on its desire to ensure a distinguished status at regional, national and international levels, King Khalid University is striving to implement quality systems and processes in all of its units.

## Relationship of quality assurance to accreditation

Quality assurance is a continuous process of monitoring outcomes and ensuring quality in all university endeavors. If done properly, institutions will constantly evolve and adapt to changing environmental and societal needs. Accreditation is based on an evaluation done at a specific point in time, highlighting institutional quality and outcomes that demonstrate alignment of purpose with performance. As such quality assurance can be considered as a prerequisite for accreditation, it is an ongoing process whereas accreditation is a snapshot of this activity.

Accreditation, at the institutional or program level through NCAAA, or through a specialty accreditor such as ABET normally leads to the awarding of certificate or recognition that the institution or program meets certain standards. When accrediting, quality assurance should be the guarantee that the standard measured in the accreditation process can be upheld in the long term. Thus accreditation cannot be said to be complete unless steps are enacted to ensure that the process is continuous and ongoing.

## The quality assurance system at King Khalid University

With the active support and commitment of the rector of the university and vice rector for development and quality assurance, the deanship operates as the

center for quality assurance for the university. As such, the deanship is tasked with leading the institution in quality assurance activities and infusing a culture of quality in all practices based on the university mission of providing high quality learning environments, innovative research, and constructive community service.

In order to coordinate these processes in all university activities at multiple campuses across the southern Asir region, quality centers have been established in all college deanships and non-academic and student support service departments. This structure allows for all university units, whether large or small, to participate in the planning, assessment and review, and improvement process, and provide standard reports to the deanship. For the academic process, reporting is done through annual course reports and program reports, and for the non-academic units reports follow a format to include goals, objectives, measurements, and outcomes, and use of results for unit improvement. Academic colleges and programs utilize the National Qualifications Framework for identifying major learning outcomes by level and discipline. These are included in course and program specifications which are provided for the deanship. These become the basis for measuring learning outcomes and success of a course or program.

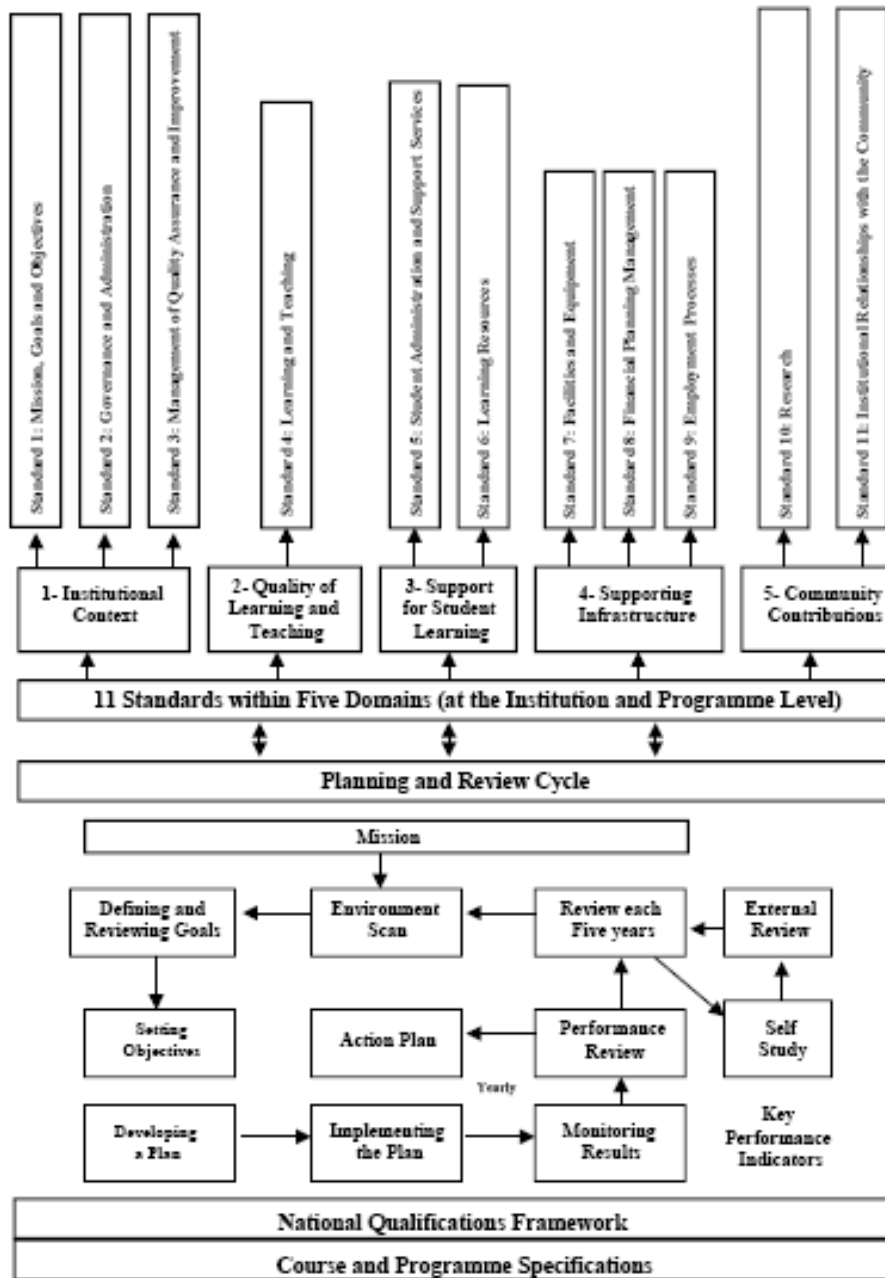
The quality assurance system at King Khalid University conforms to standards set out by NCAAA with the emphasis on a cycle of planning, review, and implementing changes for improvement as illustrated in the graphic below. The cycle begins with a periodic environmental scan to identify factors or conditions in the community, region, or internationally that can drive decisions for planning. These factors may affect academic program offerings or cancellations, campus expansions or closings, and accommodations of higher proportions of female students. With proper planning aligned with community needs or national strategic directions new undergraduate and post-graduate programs, research centers, and community partnerships may be developed or existing ones expanded.

Background data and information from the environmental scan permits the university and academic units to begin a planning cycle by defining and reviewing goals and objectives. This leads to development of an operational plan that conforms at the unit level with strategies identified in the university strategic plan. Next, the unit plan will be implemented and goals and objectives will be monitored based on agreed-upon metrics.

The deanship is actively involved in this stage of the cycle as it provides data and information for assessment based on stakeholder feedback in the form of surveys and evaluations. These results are summarized and provided for the university units for use in their plans. Academic units also rely on the deanship for student academic measures of quality to include student progress and success, time to degree, and student to faculty ratio. Both the direct and indirect measures of quality are incorporated into KPIs and delivered to clients via a BI interface through the university portal. Many KPIs are defined by NCAAA, whereas others are developed by colleges and programs.

In addition to internal use of KPIs for planning and outcomes measurement, they are also utilized by the deanship in providing data and information externally on university performance. Datasets are provided annually to a number of university ranking organizations, notably QS World University Rankings, U.S. News & World Report, Webometrics Rankings of World Universities, and Times Higher Education World University Rankings.

The cycle of planning, setting goals and objectives, defining measurements, analyzing the results, and making changes in the academic or non-academic unit follows an annual cycle. For NCAAA accreditation, once accredited institutions and programs are required to submit a self-study every five years based on this planning and analysis cycle. The university and programs engage external reviews during the accreditation process but more frequently through the external advisory boards for academic programs. As the center for quality assurance, the deanship actively guides the institutional and unit-level planning and assessment process leading to continuous improvement. Finally, the deanship adheres to NCAAA quality criteria including institutional commitment to quality improvement, institutional achievement of quality standards, effectiveness of services provided through the deanship, and consistency of best practices leading to attainment of all standards.





## The Deanship of Academic Development and Quality

The deanship is the central office coordinating quality assurance at KKU. It has as its aim to instill a culture of quality leading toward excellence, continuous improvement and sustainable quality processes in order to provide an optimal teaching and learning environment. It also aspires to surpass NCAA standards in accreditation process, and provide a model for other types of certifications and specialty accreditations for programs.

### **Vision**

Support innovations that bring excellence in academic quality and development practices at the university.

### **Mission**

To provide the guidance needed for the university to ensure continuous quality and development in its academic programs, and in scientific and administrative activities leading to excellence in education, scientific research, and service to the community, and to facilitate institutional and program accreditation. These endeavors will validate its competitive position in science among universities at the local, regional and international level, and thereby ensure the confidence of the community and peer institutions.

Additional duties in the deanship are coordinated through four vice deanships in these areas: quality, development, curriculum and planning, and women's colleges. In addition, consultants contribute to fulfilling the mission of the deanship.

### **Objectives**

- Promote the culture of academic quality and development in university
- Provide support and consultation to university units in academic quality and development
- Establish an integrated self-evaluation process for quality assurance at university level as well as for academic and administrative units
- Review procedures of quality assurance in colleges in instructional, research, and administrative areas

- Monitor outcomes, key performance indicators (KPIs), and progress reports; highlight performance gaps and areas of excellence
- Organize independent review of activities related to quality and reconcile differing opinions
- Encourage initiatives of colleges and supporting deanships to implement quality standards
- Host a faculty enhancement program in the area of quality and accreditation
- Automate the quality assessment processes at KKU
- Provide reports to appropriate committees, organizations, and government entities

### **Vice Dean for Development**

The vice dean for development coordinates the faculty and staff development program in order to improve the competence and skill of the employees, and to enhance the performance of operations and output. The vice dean has the following duties:

- Conduct needs assessments to establish relevant training seminars and workshops
- Design and implement a variety of programs to meet diverse needs
- Prepare and implement developmental programs for employees.
- Assist the colleges in preparing and implementing developmental programs for their employees.
- Contribute to the preparation and implementation of the university strategic plan
- Fulfill strategic objectives of the university relevant to academic development.
- Submit developmental proposals and initiatives to enhance university performance
- Build a culture of learning based on collaboration, teamwork, and shared vision.
- Chair the excellence awards committee to honor individuals who have brought excellence and innovation to their teaching, learning, research, and community service.

### **Vice Dean for Quality**

The vice dean for quality oversees and promotes the quality-integrated system in order to fulfill the university mission, vision, and objectives. This work entails adoption of quality principles, and coordinating with colleges, departments, and programs to ensure their understanding and adherence to the quality culture.

Typical duties include:

- Provide leadership for the quality assurance strategy in a manner that aligns with the university's mission and vision.
- Inspire a culture of quality throughout the university
- Contribute to the achievement of all university objectives relating to quality and academic accreditation.
- Work with teams to develop and refine KPIs at university and program level.
- Provide support to all units of the university towards achieving high quality in all of their activities.
- Review progress and evaluate performance of the quality and development units in academic and administrative units.
- Contribute toward strategies for evaluating performance and quality assurance
- Review quality standards in order to ensure continuous improvement at all levels of the university
- Present proposals and provide consultation regarding strategies and priorities of quality enhancement
- Form committees and working groups to manage quality assurance
- Compile a manual for the management of quality assurance and outcomes assessment

### **Vice Dean for Curriculum and Planning**

The vice dean for curriculum and planning assumes primary responsibility for curricular leadership of the institution. Reporting to the dean, he is responsible for coordination with the governance committees handling curricular matters, notably the planning and curriculum committee.

Typical duties include:

New Roles:

- Spreading the culture of program development and construction of plans at the university level.
- Evaluation of plans and programs in accordance with the standards and regulations and the mechanisms for supports at the university level in line with the National Commission for Academic Accreditation and Assessment Standards.
- Unify the plans and programs at King Khalid University.
- Encourage cooperation between the joint programs in the various branches of the university.
- Narrow the Gap between the male and female sections.
- Provide the technical support to the university colleges and university departments in the field of development and construction plans, programs and courses.
- Raise the staff efficiency at King Khalid University in the field of development and construction plans school programs.
- The supervision of execution and implementation plans and programs at the university level.
- Study the curriculum development initiatives provided by the programs.

### **Vice Dean for Women's Colleges**

The vice dean for women's colleges is committed to providing outstanding services to faculty, staff and community. Acting as an efficient mediator between the university's higher administration and the academic and administrative constituencies on women's campuses, the vice dean's office places primary emphasis on improving academic and administrative strategies to enhance the educational process. The vice dean maintains excellence in the formulation and dissemination of quality enhancement strategies that fulfill the university's mission.

Typical duties include:

- Fulfill training requirements of female employees of the university center for women
- Develop and implement developmental programs for the female employees of the university center for women.
- Participate in preparing and implementing the university strategic plan

- Work to fulfill the university's strategic objectives relevant to academic development, quality assurance, and adherence to accreditation standards.
- Develop developmental proposals and initiatives to enhance female student progress and success
- Review issues referred by the faculty with regard to academic development.
- Promote a culture of quality for female students and the women's colleges.
- Contribute to drafting strategies to evaluate performance and quality assurance and assist in applying them at the university center for women's colleges.
- Participation in the review of programs, plans, and curricula at the university center for female students in order to achieve high educational standards.
- Share in the review and adoption of the academic and administrative KPIs for the university and for programs.
- Oversee the implementation of the University strategic plan programs regarding different units of the University center for girl students and girl colleges.
- Serve on the excellence awards committee; prepare applications from the women's colleges.

## **Consultants**

Consultants are engaged in a number of subject areas to complement the staff in the deanship of academic quality and development. Experts may have experience in the field of design, implementation, and review of quality assurance systems. Others may have broad experience in learning outcomes assessment, KPIs, deployment and analysis of surveys and evaluations, strategic and operational planning, performance evaluations, environmental scanning and reporting, and assessment of non-academic units. Consultants are usually hired on an annual basis.

## **Committees associated with the quality assurance system**

## Quality Assurance Committees at the university level

### Standing Committee for Quality Assurance

**Membership:** The Standing Committee for Quality Assurance is chaired by the vice rector for development and quality. Additional members of the committee include other vice rectors, senior administrators and others as deemed appropriate. The secretary of the committee is the vice rector of development and quality. In cases of a members' absence, an official delegate is named as representative.

**Purpose:** This committee is the highest standing committee for quality at KKU and is responsible for governing, reviewing, and approving the processes related to quality assurance in alignment with the university mission of teaching and learning, research, and community engagement. The committee carries out its work following these objectives:

- Communicate with deans and directors about quality activities, provide feedback on results of annual reports, plans, and performance assessments
- Make recommendations for improvement activities, and other program activities to the appropriate committees
- Disseminate information on unit performance to promote stakeholder empowerment and a culture of excellence
- Ensure that quality is upheld in all areas of the university, that standards are met, and the deans and directors maintain continuous, appropriate, and effective quality improvement programs through ongoing oversight activities and regular performance assessments
- Comply with all regulatory requirements, and to achieve and maintain accreditation and necessary certifications
- Annually review university-wide performance metrics for use in submissions to national and international ranking organizations
- Ensure that the appropriate resources are available to support the QA process

**Other terms:** The Standing Committee for Quality Assurance meets on a quarterly basis unless otherwise called by the chairperson. When not available, the chairperson may delegate the responsibility of chairing the committee to one of the vice rectors. A quorum of two thirds of members is required to be present

for the committee meeting to be held. Resolutions are approved by a simple majority vote. The secretary of the committee is responsible for the preparation of meeting agenda, finalization of minutes, documenting resolutions and ensuring their implementation. The secretary is also responsible for preparing regular reports to the University Council. Committee members are required to declare any conflicts of interest on issues that may arise, and maintain confidentiality, security and integrity of all the materials and decisions during and after their terms.

### **Steering Committee for Quality Assurance and Academic Accreditation**

**Membership:** The committee is chaired by the dean of academic development and quality and reports to vice rector for development and quality. A vice dean will be the committee co-chairperson and secretary, who will also call the meeting in absence of the chairperson. Committee members should represent groups of colleges in similar fields rather than from each college with adequate representation from the women's colleges. The chairman may invite more members from additional colleges and departments when needed.

**Purpose:** The Steering Committee for Quality and Academic Accreditation is responsible for the university's quality assurance system and the processes of institutional and specialty accreditation. The Steering Committee acts also as a planning forum for quality assurance development and promotion for both internal and external driven purposes. Some of the major charges include:

- Build the quality assurance culture and provide the needed stakeholders' support.
- Conduct periodic reviews of the quality assurance system performance and make recommendations for improvement.
- Monitor, disseminate, and enforce standards and best practices to work towards continuous improvement.
- Expand the institution network with quality assurance expertise and liaise with quality assurance departments in other institutions.
- Develop practice guidelines and advisory statements when required.
- Enforce regularly all guidance and standards issued by the Council of Higher Education, NCAAA, and other accreditation bodies.
- Develop, unify and review report formats, benchmarks, KPIs, and processes to satisfy accreditation standards and other additional parameters as deemed necessary.

- Identify areas that require improvement and propose appropriate solutions.
- Oversee faculty and staff enhancement activities at the university level.
- Deal with additional matters related to quality and accreditation.

**Other terms:** The steering committee meets on a monthly basis unless otherwise called by the chairperson. The committee requires a fifty percent quorum and resolutions are reached by simple majority vote. The secretary of the committee is responsible for the preparation of its agendas, finalization of the minutes and resolutions, and ensures their implementation. The committee secretary will also prepare regular reports to be submitted to the Higher Committee for Quality Assurance. The committee has a renewable two-year term assuring that at least fifty percent of the members continue in any new formation. Members of the committee should report any conflict of interest and maintain confidentiality, security and integrity of all materials and decisions taken during and after their terms.

### **Awards Committee**

**Membership:** This committee is chaired by the vice rector of development and quality and the secretary is the dean of development and quality. Membership includes faculty representatives from each academic or non-academic departments or deanships submitting nominations to the faculty council. The committee liaises with the faculty deputy for development and quality.

**Purpose:** The committee reviews files of student, faculty, and staff nominees and evaluates their qualifications according to standards and provided rules. Members review nominee files confidentially, eliminate incomplete files, and create a short list of candidates in each of six categories: student, faculty, and staff duplicated by male and female. After initial selections are made in committee, final names are submitted to the dean of academic development and quality for final selection.

### **Academic planning and curriculum committee**

**Membership:** This committee is chaired by the vice dean for planning and curriculum within the deanship of quality and development. The secretary is appointed from a member of the deanship. Membership includes faculty representatives from each college including women's colleges and student



representatives. The committee reports to the deanship of academic development and quality, college councils, and the university council.

**Purpose:** This committee provides a mechanism for the systematic review, evaluation, and change of the curriculum at the program and university level, in compliance with Ministry of Education and NCAAA standards.

The committee acts on curriculum matters involving:

- Changes in title, numbering, course content, and prerequisites for a course
- The designation of a sequence or group of courses as a minor or a program within the existing department(s) - whether by advisement or requirement
- The addition or deletion of a course in the offerings of a department
- The adoption of any policy regarding the acceptability or requirement of courses outside of a department for the completion of a program within a department
- Changes in requirements of a minor, a major, a degree, or a certification
- Development of new programs and/or degrees
- Ensuring that programs are updated so they are aligned with workforce needs

## Quality Assurance Committees at the College Level

Each college or deanship will have a quality assurance (QA) committee and unit. The deanship of Academic Quality and Development plays the pivotal role of ensuring the consistency of the system and processes in all university colleges. The deanship will receive from QA units a set of reports, requirements, KPIs and benchmarks for review by the concerned committees prior to submission to the university rector and vice rectors.

### The Quality Assurance Unit (QA)

**Purpose:** The QA unit aims to apply the principles and methods of continuous quality management and contributes to quality enhancement in a dynamic academic context in each college and deanship. All QA Units should follow the same guidelines and principles regardless of whether they deliver programs accredited by NCAAA or other accrediting bodies. The charges of QA Units include the following:

- Apply the principles of quality assurance based on the appropriate national accreditation bodies' standards (e.g., NCAAA) in different academic and non-academic units.
- Ensure that the requirements for program accreditation are met in a timely manner.
- Assure a systematic implementation of the curriculum or programs, best utilization of learning resources, optimal educational management, and monitor the outcomes of the academic programs.
- Ensure the implementation of a quality program against the appropriate national and international accreditation standards
- Submit applications for accreditation to be approved by the program Quality Assurance and Academic Accreditation Committee.
- Identify gaps in the program, curriculum, assessment and evaluation to suggest the necessary improvement plans to QA committee.
- Ensure and enforce the presence of quality culture.

**Administration:** A quality assurance officer will be appointed on a renewable two years' term from experienced faculty by the dean to lead the QA Unit. The selected officer should have a background in assessment, measurement, and quality assurance and they should be provided with adequate administrative

support and release time. The officer is responsible for implementing the quality assurance system and observing any deviations or variations. The officer will also be responsible for conducting related accreditation activities in the concerned area. They will submit reports, liaise with QA units, and sit in the QA committee to represent their respective areas. The dean will inform the Deanship of Academic Development and Quality about any changes in leadership of the QA unit. The officer will report to their respective dean and liaise with the Deanship of Academic Development and Quality.

### **The Quality Assurance Committee (QAC)**

**Membership** The committee is chaired by the vice dean for development and quality with membership of faculty and staff. The co-chairperson and secretary of the committee is the QA unit chairperson (or equivalent). The membership will also include quality assurance officers and student representatives. A representative from the Deanship of Academic Development and Quality may attend as *ex officio* member.

**Purpose:** This committee governs the quality assurance in the colleges, deanships, and other units. The reports of the QAC committee should be a standing item in the executives' regular meetings in colleges and deanships. The charges of the committee include but not limited to the following:

- Monitor and enforce standards to enhance the quality of practice and reduce incompetence.
- Prepare the program applications for national and international accreditation processes.
- Lead the process of accreditation within the unit.
- Review reports, KPIs, and benchmarks submitted by different units.
- Review course and program specifications and reports
- Coordinate student learning outcomes assessment and provide annual reports through course and program reports.
- Create different working groups to handle specific accreditation standards or problem and improvement issues.
- Develop constructive dialogue with offices and committees particularly those responsible for academic curricula or training programs.
- Identify areas needing improvement and propose the appropriate solutions.
- Identify faculty and staff development ideas and programs.

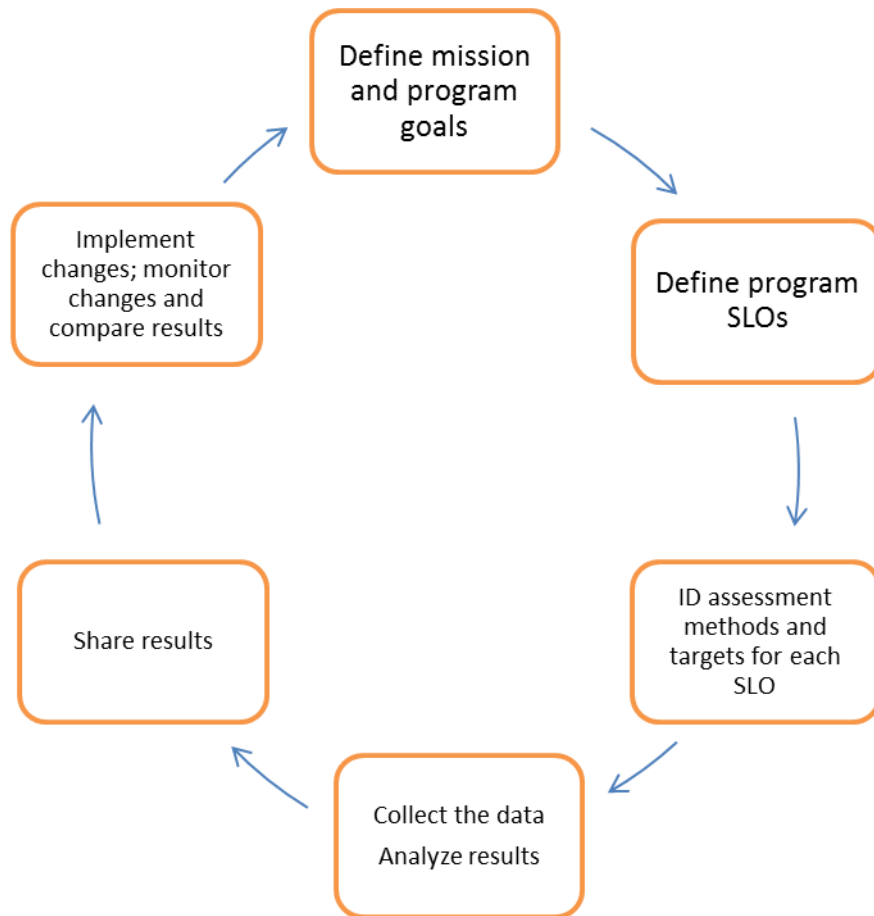
**Other terms:** This committee has a two year term and meets on a monthly basis unless otherwise called by the chairperson. In case of absence of the chairperson, the co-chairperson can call for regular meetings. A fifty percent quorum is required and resolutions are reached by simple majority vote. The secretary of the committee is responsible for the preparation of the agendas, finalization of minutes and resolutions, and ensures their implementation. The secretary will also prepare reports to be submitted to the college's council and program [or academic department] Quality Assurance and Academic Accreditation Committee. Members of the committee should report any conflict of interest and maintain confidentiality, security and integrity of all materials during and after their terms.

## **Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) assessment at KKU**

KKU faculty and staff work together to teach students how to think critically, communicate clearly and improve their lives and communities through the attainment of their educational goals.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) Assessment is a central element in the overall quality of teaching and learning at KKU and occurs at three levels: Institutional Learning Outcomes Assessment, Program Level Outcomes Assessment and Course Level Outcomes Assessment. It provides faculty the opportunities to monitor the attainment of learning outcomes and to receive feedback for ongoing improvement of academic programs. The goal of assessment is to improve student learning.

The following flowchart illustrates the process that each academic course and program follow in monitoring and improving student learning. It follows six steps in a logical sequence. Assessment results are including in the annual course reports and the program reports.



## Quality Assurance in Non-Academic Departments and Deanships

The deanship for Academic Development and Quality also manages the non-academic units at the university to ensure that they are effective and satisfy accreditation standards, especially those of NCAAA. To enhance the quality culture, the deanship emphasizes that the ownership of the process of quality is by each non-academic unit. Under the supervision of the dean or director of each unit, a quality assurance function and related committee will be established. These units are responsible for submitting regular reports and KPIs to the deanship for Academic Development and Quality. The role of the deanship is to ensure the consistency of the quality system and processes in each non-academic unit. It also ensures the timely submission of reports and completion of institution accreditation requirements.

## The Quality Assurance (QA) Vice Deanship

**Purpose:** The QA vice deanships aims to apply the principles and methods of continuous quality management and contribute to quality enhancement. The vice deanships are considered as a center for quality assurance in each non-academic.

The charges of the unit include but are not limited to:

- Apply principles of quality assurance based on pre-determined standards, including NCAAA and functional areas to include business, finance, information technology, student support services, and environmental health and safety
- Ensure the implementation of a quality program against pre-determined standards, especially NCAAA.
- Assure a systematic implementation of approved policies and procedures, best utilization of resources, and optimal administrative management
- Monitor outcomes of unit objectives for continuous improvement.
- Submit annual assessment reports for to be reviewed by the appropriate committee and the Deanship of Academic Development and Quality.
- Identify gaps and problems and implement the needed approved improvement plans.
- Ensure that a culture of quality is adhered to in all endeavors.

**Administration.** A quality assurance vice dean will be appointed by the dean in the appropriate areas. The QA vice dean is responsible for implementing the quality assurance system and monitoring compliance. The vice deans will also be responsible for conducting related accreditation activities in the concerned area. They will submit reports to their respective dean, liaise with QA vice deanships, and sit in the QA committee to represent the respective areas. The term of a vice deanship is a renewable two-year term. The QA vice deans should have a strong background in quality assurance issues related their specific functional area and engage in staff development activities.

## Quality Assurance Committee (QAC)

**Membership** The committee is chaired by the quality assurance vice dean with the membership of managers, directors and other staff in the deanship. A representative from the deanship for Academic Development and Quality may attend as ex officio member.

**Purpose:** This committee governs the quality assurance in non-academic departments and student support deanships. The reports of the QAC should be a standing item in the executive regular meeting of each department or deanship. The charges of the QAC includes but not limited to the following:

- Monitor and enforce standards of practice to enhance the quality of practice and reduce incompetence.
- Review reports, benchmarks and KPIs submitted by different units.
- Lead the process of accreditation in its respective areas.
- Ensure that adequate documentation of processes and procedures are available
- Review informational materials for users especially to include handbooks and guides; ensuring written material in print and online are consistent
- Create working groups to handle specific non-academic accreditation standards or issues.
- Submit regular reports to the Steering Committee.
- Identify areas that need improvement and propose the appropriate solutions.

**Other terms:** The committee meets on a monthly basis unless otherwise called by the chairperson. In the case of absence of the chairperson, the co-chairperson can call for the regular meetings. The committee needs a fifty percent quorum and resolutions are reached by a simple majority vote. The secretary of the committee is responsible for the preparation of agendas, finalization of minutes and resolutions, and ensuring the completion of resolutions. The secretary will submit regular reports, KPIs and benchmarks to the quality assurance officer and to the Deanship of Academic Development and Quality when required. The committee has a two-year term. Members of the committee should report any conflict of interest and maintain confidentiality, security and integrity of all materials during and after their term.

## Definitions in Quality Assurance

In any discussion about quality assurance in higher education it is useful to define the terms and phrases that will be used. The following definitions are the commonly accepted ones and should be a useful point of reference for the manual.

**Accreditation.** Accreditation in higher education is defined as a collegial process based on self- and peer assessment for public accountability and improvement of academic quality. Peers assess the quality of an institution or academic program and assist the faculty and staff leading to quality enhancement.

**Key Performance Indicator (KPI).** A key performance indicator (KPI) is a type of metric used to evaluate the success of an institution or one of its units in a particular activity in which it engages.

**Quality.** 'Fitness for purpose' – Juran 'Conformance to requirements' – Crosby In higher education this is an ongoing process ensuring the delivery of agreed standards. These agreed standards should ensure that every educational institution where quality is assured has the potential to achieve a high level of quality.

**Quality Assessment.** The process of evaluating the quality of educational experience in institutions, in particular the quality of the student learning.

**Quality Assurance.** The means by which an institution can guarantee with confidence and certainty that the standards and quality of its educational mission and vision are being achieved and enhanced.

**Quality Audit.** The process of examining institutional procedures for assuring quality and standards and whether the arrangements are implemented effectively and achieve stated objectives.

**Quality Control.** The verification procedures (both formal and informal) used by institutions in order to monitor quality and standards to a satisfactory standard and as intended.

**Quality Culture.** The creation of a high level of internal institutional quality assessment mechanisms and the ongoing implementation of the results. Quality



culture can be seen as the ability of the institution and program to develop quality assurance implicitly in the day to day work and marks a shift from periodic assessment to embedded quality assurance.

**Quality Enhancement.** The process of positively changing activities in order to provide for a continuous improvement in the quality of institutional provision.

**Standards.** These describe levels of attainment against which performance may be measured. Attainment of a standard usually implies a measure of fitness for a defined purpose.

## Related References

As the NCAAA is the national accreditation body, quality assurance processes are based on their criteria. The list below includes references that are utilized in ensuring compliance with high standards.

Quality assurance centers in post-secondary institutions

National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education in Saudi Arabia, November 2009

Self Evaluation Scales for Higher Education Institutions

Self Evaluation Scales for Higher Education Programs

Eligibility requirements for an application for institutional accreditation, Form 3a

Eligibility requirements for an application for program accreditation, Form 3b

Standards for quality assurance and accreditation of higher education programs

Standards for quality assurance and accreditation of higher education

institutions, March 2012. (Especially Standard 3: Management of Quality Assurance and Improvement

The following are documents produced by King Khalid University for the quality assurance process.

System for Analysis and Response to Course and Program Data and Program Related KPIs, King Khalid University. 2015

A guidebook for preparing and developing academic plans and programs, King Khalid University, 2014.

KPIs for BI system at King Khalid University, 2015 (spreadsheet)