



Institutional Audits: Focus areas, Standards and Guidelines

MUT workshop

14 February 2022



Principles of a CHE Institutional Audit

- ❑ The primary responsibility for the internal quality assurance rests with the individual HEI. Each institution must establish, implement, maintain, improve and enhance its own QA systems
- ❑ The uniqueness of each institution's size, shape, location, context and mission is recognized.
- ❑ The value of each audit rests on the credibility of the information provided in the SER and PoE. The information must be contextually relevant and reliable
- ❑ Student experience, student engagement and participation, and the student voice are central to evaluating the institution's QA system



Principles of a CHE Institutional Audit

- ❑ The institutional audit is an informed, peer driven and evidence-based process. There is transparency and consistency at all levels of engagement, including the HEQC and audit panels
- ❑ Institutional audits are developmental and intent on supporting continuous quality improvement and enhancement
- ❑ Institutional audits should be seen as striking a balance between their developmental character and CHE's regulatory function
- ❑ Where institutions show no clear commitment, processes, practices or plans to improvise, CHE and HEQC will take action
- ❑ Institutional audits are an important component of the HEQC's board-based quality assurance mandate



Quality management in HEIs

Proceeding from the premise that HEIs are responsible for their own internal quality management systems, quality management comprises the following:

- A *quality assurance system* that includes planning, policies, systems, strategies and resources **used by the institution to satisfy itself** that its quality requirements and standards are being set, met and periodically reviewed;
- quality support, being the active, actioned support provided by the quality management system to **develop, sustain, and enhance existing levels of quality**; and
- quality monitoring, being that part of the system that records and reports back to the institution – and by extension, to the HEQC and CHE as the external quality assurer – on the critical aspects identified in the institutional QA policies and systems, and includes matters of sustainability, positive developments and use of resources.

Guiding questions (Manual, 2021: 35)

- a. What are the goals the institution / department / programme / module / we / I intend(s) to achieve?
- b. How are we working to achieve these goals?
- c. What plans, procedures and resources are in place to achieve these goals?
- d. How do we know when those goals have been achieved?
- e. What do we do when we are not achieving what we set out to achieve? (Patchy implementation; pockets of shining excellence vs dim corners)
- f. How has the reflection for this audit already helped us to identify areas in need of improvement

Focus Area 1 Governance, strategic planning, management and leadership

The four standards in Focus Area 1 concentrate on the role that an institution's governance, strategic planning (as contained in its vision, mission and strategic goals), management and academic leadership play in its quality management in order to enhance the likelihood of student success and to improve the quality of learning, teaching and research engagement, as well as accommodating the results of constructive, integrated community engagement.



Standard 1: Vision, Mission and Strategic goals SETTING FOR DIFFERENTIATION

- Clearly stated, well formulated
- Shared understanding and engagement with stakeholders
- Approved by Council
- Translated into an appropriate and aligned business model and value proposition
- Risk (academic and quality)
- Niche areas and context

Standard 2: Vision, Mission and Goals aligned to external context

- Alignment to local, regional, national, continental, and international imperatives
- Policy documents used for formulation

e.g. transformation, creating a skilled labour force, developing scarce skills areas and a critical citizenry, and contributing to the fulfilment of national goals as informed by the NDP and related national planning

e.g. Africa Vision 2063 or the Sustainable Development Goals

- Recent versions and relevance of policy documents
- Informed by institutional data and research
- Regular reviewing



Standard 3: Alignment of VMGs with internal...

Alignment of VMGs with governance and management, core academic activities, sites and modes and provision and IQMS

Measurable objectives timeframes and allocated resources

Aligned into planning documents that infuse the institution and are managed for performance

Planning documents are reviewed regularly

Roles and responsibilities for strategic direction, oversight, implementation and monitoring



Standard 4: Roles and responsibilities of governance, management and leadership

Governance structure and Delegation of Authority (DoA)

Roles, responsibilities, structure and membership

Recruitment and selection and terms of office

Members empowered and enabled to be effective

Effective reporting mechanisms

Meeting expectations, proceedings and protocols (ToR)



Focus Area 2: Design and implementation of the IQMS

The four standards in Focus Area 2 concentrate on how the design and implementation of an integrated quality management system in the institution enhances the likelihood of student success and improves the quality of learning, teaching and research engagement, as well as accommodating the results of constructive, integrated community engagement within the context of the institution's mission.





Standard 5: An IQA system is in place

Requirements:

(i)governance arrangements

(ii)policies

(iii)processes, procedures and plans

(iv)instructional products

(v)measurement of impact

(vi)data management and utilisation



Standard 6: Resources to support the academic project

HR (academic staff qualifications, staff well-being and CPD)

Funding

ICT (access and devices for staff and students)

Library

Laboratories

WIL

Articulation and CAT

Residences (if applicable); student wellness and safety, GBV

Academic spaces





Electronic, protected and legally compliant data-management and retrieval system



Variety and different types/sources of data are used by the institution, e.g. quantitative and qualitative data, input and output data




Capacity to interpret the data and to act on the results



Evidence- and data-led approach to improve teaching, student success, the student experience, differential success rates

Standard 7: Data management to support decision making



Appropriate and protected, access to sufficient, reliable and current electronic evidence (data, information and institutional knowledge) that allows them to make informed decisions

Regular, substantive and documented engagements

Systems and processes for quality management during times of disruption are continuously and effectively monitored (cf. Guideline 13.4)

Standard 8: Systems, processes and data to support the IQMS

Focus Area 3: Coherence and integration of the IQMS

The four standards in Focus Area 3 concentrate on the coherence and integration of the various components comprising the institutional quality management system and on how these work in concert to support the likelihood of student success and improve the quality of learning, teaching and research engagement, as well as accommodating the results of constructive integrated community engagement in accordance with the institution's mission



Standard 9:

Structured relationship between the components of the IQMS

- Alignment between the IQMS and staff performance management
- Support for IQMS
- Integration vs contradictions



Regular accountability, at all levels (right up to Management, Senate and Council)

Clear lines of authority

Good practice is celebrated

Non-compliance is dealt with in all corners

**Standard 10:
Governance
and
management
oversight of
IQMS**



Standard 11: Planning and processes to allocate resources to the IQMS

- Annual budgeting allocations for IQMS
- Workload allocation
- Academic workload and staff : student ratios





Standard 12: IQA system achieves its purpose efficiently and effectively

- Performance management system
- Stakeholder engagements on the IQA (staff and students)





Focus Area 4:



The four standards in Focus Area 4 concentrate on how effectively the institutional quality management system enhances the likelihood of student success, improves learning and teaching and supports the scholarship of learning and teaching.



These standards drill down in greater detail than in Focus Area 2 for teaching, learning and student success



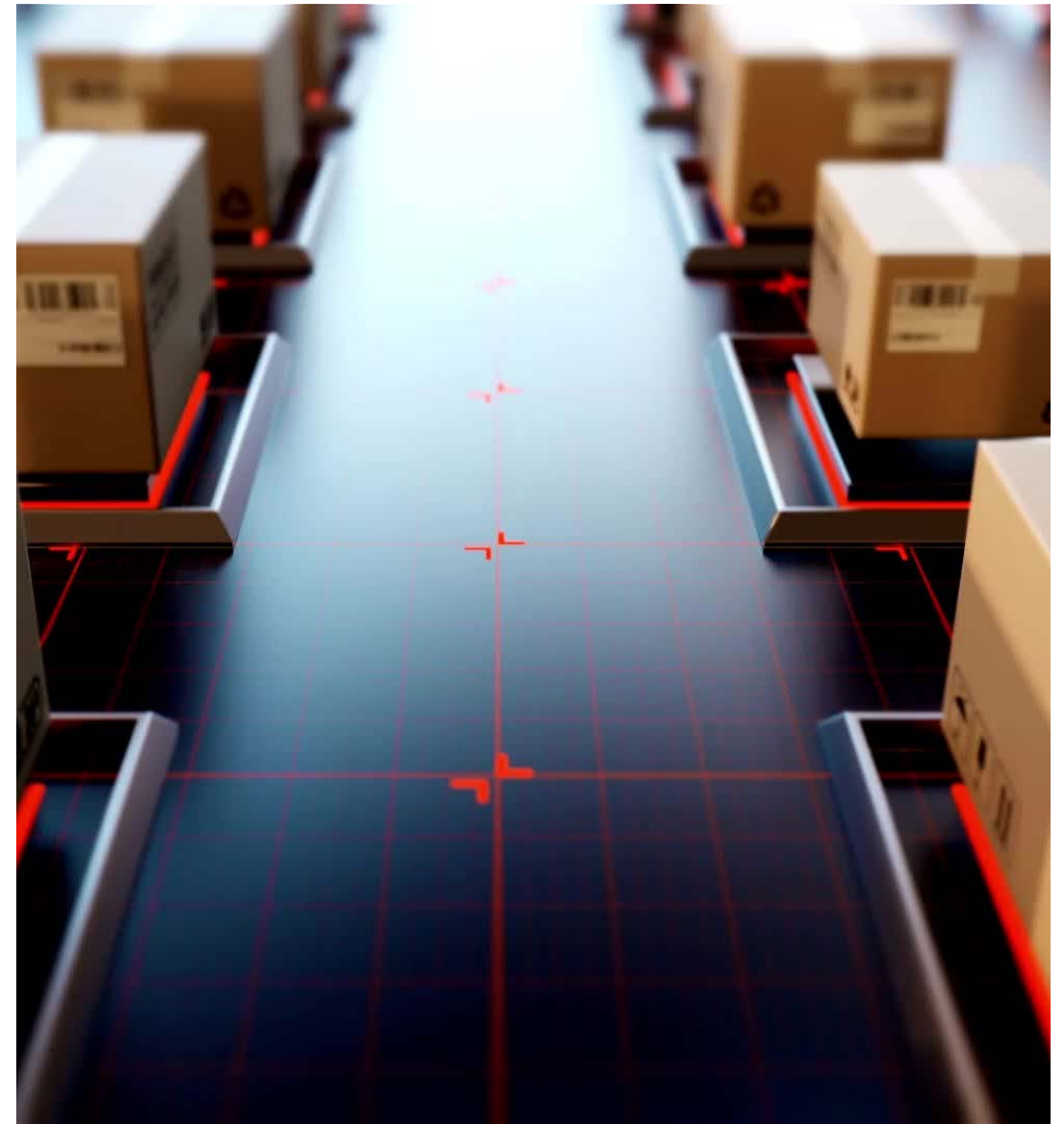
Standard 13: Programmes Institutional processes


*An effective institutional system for **programme design, approval, delivery, management and review** is in place.*

- Design of a system
- Implementation of the system
- Monitoring of the system
- Continuous review and improvement

Guideline 13.4: Your response to the pandemic in 2020 and 2021

The only Guidelines that is compulsory!





Standard 14: Curriculum transformation, pedagogical renewal and technology INPUT

There is **evidence-based engagement** at various institutional levels, among staff, and among **staff and students**, with:

- a. curriculum transformation, curriculum reform and renewal;
 - b. learning and teaching innovation; and
 - c. the role of technology (1) in the curriculum, (2) in the world of work, and (3) in society in general.
- The institutional conversation; **hearing the students' voices**
 - The role of **research and the scholarship** of learning and teaching (continuous reflection)
 - The role and place of **language**




Standard 15: Student experience for success

ENACTMENT

The students' exposure to learning and teaching at the institution, across all sites and modes of provision, is experienced as positive and enabling of their success.

- Student feedback... and what happens to it
- Student belonging (support, language and discourse)
- Consultation
- Complaints mechanisms
- Include staff in the student experience (CPD, reflection, staff belonging and wellness)
- ***Design, implement, monitor, continuous improvement***





Standard 16: Graduate outcomes OUTPUT

*Institutions engage with and reflect on the **employability** of their graduates in a changing world.*

- How to 'read' the term *employability*
- Reflect and act on findings... continuous improvement
- Alumni