

Quality Assurance and Quality Policy:

A Quality Assurance System is composed of multiple elements such as Analysis & Assessment Planning, Assessment Policies & Procedures, and Data Tools & Human Resources. The purpose of a quality assurance system is to demonstrate alignment to overarching standards or learning outcomes and develop an efficient, sustainable process for systematic review of assessment instruments and data for continuous improvement of program.



Quality, whether it is in business or education, remains the most important attribute that creates value about the product/service for the receiver. It is also the means by which business/educational providers differentiate themselves from their competitors. Adapting relevant strategies would help educational institutions in creating higher standards of quality in education.

What is quality in education mean whether it is general education or tertiary or vocational education or higher university education? How we measure and assure the quality of education offered by an institution to say the institution is offering quality education?

The concept of “quality” is elusive, because it expresses a relative, though, noticeable difference between one thing and another.

Quality in education is an ongoing process ensuring the delivery of agreed standards to achieve agreed learning outcomes as a result.

First and the foremost, quality is the responsibility of educational institution itself. They need to ensure quality of education delivered. Government bodies often play an important role in the quality assurance of education. Usually government is either directly involved in controlling quality of education through various mechanism or approves external agencies to manage the quality of educational institutions, educational standards and provision.

There are different approaches to ensure the quality. In a recent approach, especially in public sector, quality assurance is being used as watchdog approach, relying on government controls, professional credentials, internal audits, and external inspections to maintain standards, weed out poor performers, and solve problems.

Key methods/approaches to ensure the quality of education are:

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE

Quality assurance is a process by which an institution can guarantee with confidence and certainty, that the standards and quality of its educational provision are being maintained and enhanced. Quality Assurance is a condition that leads to the achievement of transparency.

QUALITY CONTROL

Quality control refers to the internal verification procedures (both formal and informal) used by educational institutions in order to monitor quality and standards of education delivery to a satisfactory standard and as intended.

QUALITY ASSESSMENT

Quality Assessment is the process of external evaluation undertaken by an external body of the quality of educational provisions in institutions, in particular the quality of the student experience.

QUALITY AUDIT

Quality Audit is the process of examining institutional procedures for assuring quality and standards to check if the arrangements are implemented effectively and achieve stated objectives. Quality audit also checks if the quality of education (teaching/training) provided enables students to attain standards and the assessments are conducted at the right level of the standards. It further checks if the institutions are effectively discharging their responsibilities for the standards of awards granted in their name or in the name of their certification body.

STANDARDS

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

QUALITY CULTURE

Quality Culture is the adoption of quality as an overarching principle in every operation of educational institution to ensure quality education is delivered. Quality Culture marks a move away from periodic assessment to ingrained quality assurance.

QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

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

ACCREDITATION

Accreditation is the result of a review of an education program or institution following certain quality standards agreed on beforehand. It's a kind of recognition that a program or institution fulfils certain standards. Accreditation could be in the form of approval from government authority to deliver certain programs.

There is a wide variety of Quality Assurance Agencies (QAA) worldwide involved with quality of education. There is currently little uniformity or harmonization of quality assurance agencies and their procedures. Indeed many countries, regions and cultures are developing their own approaches to quality assurance in education. Some agencies are state-driven; others are private, with many intermediate forms.