

Core for Institutional Standards for Quality Assurance In the Arab Region 2012

The proposed core institutional standards for Quality Assurance in the Arab region is developed in 2012 to provides a common reference points for ANQAHE members and to support the newly developed Quality Assurance Agencies to develop their own standards.

Core Institutional Standards in the Arab States

Methodology

- 1- All standards were collected from 8 Arab states and the common ones were selected. It was found out that 8 Arab states have 10 common standards.
- 2- Each Standard was discussed separately and votes were taken regarding consideration of a Standard as common and basic for institutional criteria. The Standard was discussed in both Arabic and English.
- 3- Standard written in English should be sent to ANQAHE's management particularly in UAE, Sultanate of Oman and Kingdom of Bahrain to translate them into Arabic.
- 4- Taking votes on common Standard individually and agreeing on the Standard to be written in the document by a majority of the votes of members.
- 5- All standards were collected and disseminated over the Network website.
- 6- Common and non-common standards were discussed among quality assurance authorities and sent to all participants in the workshop for revision.

Common of Standards in 8 Arab states are:

- 1- VISION, MISSION & OBJECTIVES
- 2- GOVERNANCE & ADMINISTRATION
- 3- EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME
- 4- FACULTY MEMBERS
- 5- STUDENTS & STUDENTS SUPPORT SERVICES
- 6- FINANCIAL RESOURCES
- 7- PHYSICAL RESOURCES
- 8- RESEARCH
- 9- COMMUNITY SERVICE
- 10- QUALITY ASSURANCE MANAGEMENT
- 11- INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY

First Standard: VISION, MISSION & OBJECTIVES

The institution's vision, mission and objectives define its identity, including its educational activities, student structure and role in the context of high education institutions. Any evaluative process usually emerges from the institution definition of its mission, vision and objectives; and it reflects to what extent the institution realized its mission and vision.

Indicators referring to the achievement of this aspect of such standard are shown below:

- 1- The institution's vision, mission and objectives are clearly recognized by its employees, adopted by various boards within the institution and revised periodically.
- 2- Vision, mission and objectives adopted by the institution are explicit, including circulations issued by the institution including the defining guide of the institution.
- 3- Authenticating procedures related to university's achievement of vision, mission and objectives and the public can have access to them.
- 4- The institution's objectives are in line with its vision and mission and are based on its human, physical and financial resources.
- 5- The institution's vision, mission and objectives direct all its educational activities, including admission policy, selection of faculty members, planning and distribution of resources.

- 6- There is a clear definition of the process of planning and evaluation within the institution and appropriate procedures are developed and applied to determine to what extent such objectives were achieved.
- 7- Developing mechanisms and processes to verify the achievement of the institution's mission and objectives.
- 8- Developing mechanisms and processes to optimize the institution's mission and objectives in light of real variables.

Second Standard: GOVERNANCE & ADMINISTRATION

Governance & Administration system contributes to the achievement of the institution's mission and objectives where those involved in the educational institution's governance, management and their employees are provided with the institution's objectives and order of their priorities in addition to developmental and organizational plans, which leads to supporting educational and learning environment therein. Governance Council (Deans) is in charge of quality and integration of the institution, achievement of its mission and objectives, managing financial affairs and developing and implementing its general policies. The Council is also responsible for following-up the academic and administrative affairs in various administrative units and faculties within the institution.

Indicators referring to the achievement of this aspect of such Standard are shown below:

- 1- Governance system assures that powers and responsibilities of Governance Council and its relations with faculty members, students and administrative staff have been clearly defined in the system, documents, and managerial organizational structures of the institution.
- 2- Governance Councils (Deans/Trustees/Faculties/Departments), faculty members, students and administrative staff realize their roles set forth in the institution's rules and regulations.
- 3- Governance System takes precautions necessary to take into account the views of the faculty members, employees and students and their judgments regarding their direct and logical issues of concern.
- 4- Responsibilities, duties and behavioral practices of the Chairman of the institution, Deans, heads of departments and directors of various administrative units and councils (Trustees/Deans/Faculties/Departments) are well defined and

circulated and known to all relevant bodies. A mechanism should be developed to follow-up its implementation and adherence thereto.

- 5- Administrators have administrative and scientific qualifications that enable them to act as effective educational and managerial leaders. Chairman of the institution is responsible for applying procedures appropriate to evaluate the performance of unit managers of which the institution is formed regularly.
- 6- Administrators seek to facilitate cooperative work and relations among various units within the institution and encourage dialogue and open communication and achievement of the objectives.
- 7- There are clear defined policies and procedures for selection of the institution's administrators and employees in addition to the policies of their evaluation, promotion, retirement or termination of their services. Such policies and procedures must be circulated and easy to access and revised periodically.
- 8- Salaries, allowances and incentives for administrators and employees in the institution are appropriate and sufficient to attract qualified employees to work therein and retain them and they must comply with the institution's mission and objectives.
- 9- Tasks and responsibilities as well as organizational structure and procedures are clearly defined and this information must be circulated and available for all employees in the institution.
- 10- There are clear and continuous processes and procedures of evaluation to assess policy and resolutions of the Board Council and performance of its Chairman.
- 11- The Council regularly checks mission of the institution and seeks to enhance it. It also approves the main academic and professional programs and the main IT software of the institution as well as academic degrees and certificates. The

Council is also responsible for approving any amendments to the institution's mission, policy and programs.

12-The Council reviews the administrative performance and management policies and applies appropriate amendments (if necessary) to ensure the implementation of policy and responsibilities of the institution in an active manner.

13-The Council approves the institution's annual budget and future financial plans and submits reports on financial status of the institution to relevant authorities.

Third Standard: EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME

Educational programmes are defined as a set of educational programmes that enable the educational institution to achieve its mission and translate its objectives taking the principles of quality into consideration.

Indicators referring to the achievement of this aspect of such Standard are shown below:

- 1- The institution shows its adherence to the global criteria of teaching and learning by providing active human, physical, financial and technological resources to support its educational programs and facilitate student's mission to achieve objectives of the program in which the students join.
- 2- Educational plans clearly include its objectives, teaching policies, methods of teaching and systems of transmitting knowledge in a manner that copes with mission of the institution, provided that they would be developed, improved and evaluated periodically based on the institution's clear policies and procedures and surrounding variables.
- 3- Each program includes a clear definition of the program objectives and the content it covers in addition to mental skills, creative abilities and vocational efficiencies that the program seeks to provide to students.
- 4- Reviewing of policies and instructions related to procedures of adding or deleting subjects from the program periodically and at certain times according to local and global variables related to specialty.
- 5- There should be a clear definition of procedures used by the institution to evaluate its programs, including all efforts it makes in this regard. Evaluation must

be carried out periodically and be a part of general assessment and planning practiced by the institution.

- 6- Level and nature of post-graduate studies must be in line with vision, mission and objectives of the institution.
- 7- Post-graduate programs provided by the institution must be based on well-defined and appropriate educational objectives. They must also be of a different level from those of graduate studies as they require higher depth and mental and creative abilities for both teachers and students.
- 8- In case the institution provides PhD-level programs, the institution must assure that the level of expectations for these programs and methodologies (academic subjects that form academic plans for the programs) are higher than those provided in academic programs at graduate first and second level. This in addition to providing educational, service resources and faculty members in a distinguished and different way in terms of quality from those provided in lower programs.

Fourth Standard: FACULTY MEMBERS

The institution must select, develop and retain qualified faculty members as they assume the responsibility of implementing and providing quality educational programs.

Indicators referring to the achievement of this aspect of such Standard are shown below:

- 1- Developing a clear vision of its needs of faculty members based on its vision, mission and objectives.
- 2- The institution appoints professionally-qualified faculty members with basic commitment to the institution and they must cover fields and programs provided by the institution.
- 3- Faculty members take part in the academic planning, and programs' development and revision as well as the students' academic guidance.
- 4- Teaching load of faculty members must reflect the institution's mission and objectives and must permit them to show their efficiency and creativity and they must have sufficient time and necessary support for their professional development.
- 5- Salaries and incentives for faculty members must be appropriate to attract them and their continuous work in the University and they must comply with mission and objectives of the institution. Procedures must be clear and circulated and must be applied in a fair and just manner.
- 6- The institution must conduct a formal and regular performance evaluation of the faculty members to ensure the effectiveness of education and realize their level

- of meeting educational and other responsibilities. Regulations, policies and rules of the University must clearly provide for the conduct of evaluation.
- 7- The institution's rules and regulations must provide for the retired faculty members' age and procedures of retirement and policies of benefits. Rules, regulations and policies related to faculty members must be circulated and the faculty members should have access to them.
 - 8- The University must encourage and highly support the academic freedom of the faculty members.
 - 9- Part-time faculty members sought by the institution must equally be of full-time qualified faculty members in terms of qualifications and experience in their specialty to implement teaching tasks assigned to them and assume the responsibilities set forth in the institutions' rules and regulations in a manner that copes with mission and objectives of the institution.
 - 10- The institution must continuously and periodically review its policies related to service benefits of part-time faculty members in light of mission and objectives of the institution.

Fifth Standard: STUDENTS & STUDENTS SUPPORT SERVICES

The institution must support students' programs and student's guidance services to achieve its mission and objectives through contribution to knowledge and educational development of its students, where these programs and services are expected to cope with the philosophy of the institution. Thus, each institution is expected to provide basic support services for students regardless of level of programs it provides.

Indicators referring to the achievement of this aspect of such Standard are shown below:

- 1- The institution must determine the students' basic needs and provide programs and services that suit such needs.
- 2- The institution must provide programs and students support services through a qualified staff that suit their level of professional and service roles, provided that such staff will have well-defined printed tasks and their performance must be evaluated periodically.
- 3- There must be stable and clear policies and procedures for programs of students' support and guidance services. Objectives of each component of the processes implemented by these programs and services must be suitable and supportive to purposes and objectives of students' guidance services.
- 4- Human, physical and financial resources allocated for students' support and students' support services must be distributed on the basis of their actual needs, sufficiency or suitability for the institution's programs.

- 5- The institution must have clear defined criteria in place upon which the process of student evaluation and granting marks or degrees referring to students' achievement of learning levels are based. In addition, the institution should retain accurate and comprehensive academic records and there must be procedures that ensure security of these records and protecting them against changes or falsification.
- 6- Criteria in which students are evaluated must suit scientific degrees that students seek and they must be clearly drafted and applied in a right fair way.
- 7- The institution must provide an active program for financial support and aid for students in a manner that copes with its mission and objectives and needs of its students.
- 8- The institution must provide career programs and assist the employment of students during their study and after graduation in a manner that copes with needs of students and mission of the institution.
- 9- The institution must provide health care services including psychological health care programs for its students.
- 10- The institution must provide suitable and sufficient opportunities for athletic activities that assist students to practice their athletic hobbies in addition to providing facilities of its own to support students in practicing their athletic and artistic hobbies in a manner that meets their recreational needs.

Sixth Standard: FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Financial planning and budget of the institution are among continuous activities that are realistic and must be based on the institution's mission and objectives.

Indicators referring to the achievement of this aspect of such Standard are shown below:

- 1- Establishing a Financial Resource Management Unit that is run by qualified specialized employees to implement the institution's financial plan.
- 2- The institution must disseminate its annual budget to relevant departments and faculties along with the policies, directions and developmental plans and the mechanism of expenditure in a clear way.
- 3- The institution must show the adequacy of its financial resources to support all educational and academic programs it provides.
- 4- The institution must define financial resources for financial aids for its registered students. It must also prove the financial planning to support students in light of its plans and policy towards future admission of the students. It must also control and monitor relations among poor students to receive financial aids and revenues realized from study fees.
- 5- The institution must maintain a sufficient financial reserve to meet any possible challenges in the processes of collecting academic fees, costs and loan service.
- 6- Governance Council Chairman in the institution must submit regular reports to the Governance Council on financial status of the institution and its stability.
- 7- Financial jobs in the institution must be centralized and under supervision of a financial manager who directly reports to the Governance Council Chairman or

the person in charge of financial matters, and shall be assisted by financial managers to implement financial functions of the institution. Degree of complexity of the institution's financial organization must reflect institution's size and significance of financial processes therein.

- 8- The institution must fully controls its expenditures, sources of income, scholarship management, aid and loan funds, student employment, savings and end of service allowance through procedures of continuous planning, budget, accountability and auditing.
- 9- The institution must appoint an accredited independent audit firm approved by the Governance Council which will submit an annual financial audit report.

Seventh Standard: PHYSICAL RESOURCES

Physical resources must be effectively designed, particularly in relation to teaching facilities and they must be retained and managed to facilitate the process of achievement of mission and objectives of the institution.

Indicators referring to the achievement of this aspect of such Standard are shown below:

- 1- Teaching or educational facilities (buildings/laboratories/workshops ... etc) provided by the institution must be effective to achieve its mission and objectives and must be sufficient to carry on such functions effectively.
- 2- Teaching facilities must be appropriately furnished to suit requirements of work, study and research conducted by students, faculty members and institution employees.
- 3- Teaching facilities management, operation and maintenance must be appropriate to ensure their quality and safe usage to support the educational programs and teaching services.
- 4- Facilities must be designed and maintained to ensure their safe and scientific usage and allow individuals with special needs to access them.
- 5- The institution must provide appropriate devices (including computers and lab equipment) that students and faculty members can use to achieve all the educational and managerial requirements.
- 6- Equipment must be maintained periodically so that they could be fully used in their assigned functions. They must be replaced and modernized or developed when necessary.

- 7- Usage, storage and destruction of items must be carried out in accordance with the institution's rules.

Eighth Standard: RESEARCH

Research is the scientific activity directed towards developing and/or modifying theories and developing applied knowledge.

Indicators referring to the achievement of this aspect of such Standard are shown below:

- 1- Faculty members must take part in planning their missions, research and artistic creativity in a manner that copes with the institution's mission and objectives.
- 2- The institution must show clear adherence to policies and procedures related to scholarships, research and support artistic creativity.
- 3- Faculty members must have a basic role in developing and managing research policies and practice them in a manner that copes with the institution's mission and objectives.
- 4- The institution must provide appropriate financial, physical and administrative support and information resources necessary to maintain faculty members, scholarships and artistic creativity in a manner that copes with mission and objectives of the institution.
- 5- Mission and objectives of the institution concerning of the faculty members and research and support of artistic creativity must be proven upon defining responsibilities assigned to faculty members and their performance expectations, procedures of their movement, promotion and renewal of their contracts.

- 6- Institution budget must provide for the support of scientific research, scholarships and artistic creativity in a manner that copes with mission and objectives of the institution

Ninth Standard: COMMUNITY SERVICE

Indicators referring to the achievement of this aspect of such Standard are shown below:

- 1- The institution must develop a community service plan and seek to provide suitable conditions to implement it.
- 2- The institution must contribute to holding fairs, scientific, cultural, developmental, training seminars; issue cultural magazines; submit studies and consultancies to public and private community institutions.
- 3- The institution must assist the community institutions in implementing developmental, economic and social projects.
- 4- The institution must make scientific and research agreements with educational institutions.
- 5- The institution must contribute to organizing fairs and scientific, cultural and training seminars.
- 6- The institution must establish centres specialized in community service.
- 7- The institution must modernize new specialties and centres for community service.

Tenth Standard: QUALITY ASSURANCE MANAGEMENT

The institution must develop a documentation system that contributes to implementing the principles of Total Quality management and seeking to improve the effectiveness of quality management system.

Indicators referring to the achievement of this aspect of such Standard are shown below:

- 1- The institution must define processes and procedures necessary to implement quality management system.
- 2- The institution must define methods of assurance of process control and assuring its effectiveness.
- 3- The institution must provide information and suitable methods of measurement and analysis.
- 4- The institution must authenticate information and define the realized and planned results to continue improving its operations.

Eleventh Standard: INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY

The institution must show a high degree of integrity and adherence to professional behavioural practices and transparency when submitting various reports whether they are presented to internal councils or the public concerning teaching status, scholarships, services, students, faculty members, employees and relationships with various stakeholders especially quality assurance authorities and higher education councils.

Indicators referring to the achievement of this aspect of such Standard are shown below:

- 1- The institution must show its adherence to the professional and behavioural criteria in its management, procedures, processes and dealing with the students and domestic community.
- 2- The institution must evaluate its policies, procedures and publications in an organized and continuous manner to ensure its continuous integrity.
- 3- The institution must provide councils, community and students with accurate and true information whether in its guides, publications or statements issued by its employees.
- 4- The institution must show its free adherence towards gaining knowledge through its policies and practices in a manner that copes with the institution's mission and objectives.