



Quality Assurance in Higher Education Accreditation

By
Dr. Moktar A. Altaweal



Cardiff
Metropolitan
University

Prifysgol
Metropolitan
Caerdydd



SAPIENZA
UNIVERSITÀ DI ROMA



BUCUM
Building Capacity in University Management



Tempus

Course Contents

- **Introduction to QA and Higher Education**
- **Accreditation**
- **Self-Evaluation**



Cardiff
Metropolitan
University

Prifysgol
Metropolitan
Caerdydd



SAPIENZA
UNIVERSITÀ DI ROMA

Course agenda

Suggested (to be personalized for every edition)

- **4 modules of 4 hours**
- **Exercise with self assessment of 1 study program**
- **Module 1 to 3**
 - Dialogic teaching
 - Final test with multiple choices
- **Module 4**
 - Test corrections
 - Analysis of the self assessment of the study program
 - Final discussion about the module

Part 2 - Accreditation

Learning outcomes

On completion of this part of the course, attendants are expected to be able to:

1. Explain the purpose of accreditation of Higher Education Institution (HEI) how it relates to the quality assurance
2. Define and manage the implementation process to achieve accreditation
3. Identify strengths, opportunities, threads and costs of accreditation, even considering international reference models



Table of Contents

1. Introduction
2. Quality assurance through voluntary accreditation
3. Common barriers to accreditation
4. How is accreditation achieved
5. International practices in assessing quality





1. Introduction

- The British Higher Education Council admitted that quality is difficult to define but concluded that “quality is the central mystery of British higher education – a mystery in all the variants of meaning and nuance of which the word is capable.”



1. Introduction

- The United States Higher Education Council stated that no single workable definition of quality is possible and also concluded that the best approach is to look for characteristics or indicators which are valued by those whose needs the institution is seeking to meet.



SAPIENZA
UNIVERSITÀ DI ROMA



Cardiff
Metropolitan
University

Prifysgol
Metropolitan
Caerdydd



1. Introduction

“Quality is not perfection. It is improving your previous best and showing that you are at the leading edge in most aspects.”



1. Introduction



is degrees of excellence or relative goodness, and so quality is not excellence per se but it refers to an ascending degree of excellence – perhaps low quality, moderate quality and high quality.

1. Introduction

The concept of quality includes a set of



against which things, situations or institutions are evaluated in order to determine the degree of quality that they possess.



1. Introduction



is the declaration of a commitment aimed at giving confidence to one's intended clients, customers or public.



1. Introduction



is demonstrated by a system of principles and practices arranged logically to achieve certain predetermined quality goals or objectives.

2. Quality Assurance through voluntary accreditation

2.1. What is Voluntary Accreditation?

Voluntary accreditation is a concept of self-regulation which focuses on self-study and evaluation and on the continuing improvement of educational quality. It is both a process and a result.



2. Quality Assurance through voluntary accreditation

2. 2. Voluntary accreditation is Mission-Centric

In the absence of common standards of quality and excellence, accreditation has focused on the institutional vision-mission as the center of the accreditation process.

Accreditation requires the school to state its institutional vision-mission in its every department and program, and to define in concrete terms the indicators which would show that the vision-mission and goals are being achieved.





2. Quality Assurance through voluntary accreditation

2.3. Rationale for voluntary accreditation

Accreditation provides a public confirmation that what the educational institution is doing in its programs is of acceptable high quality.





2. Quality Assurance through voluntary accreditation

2.4. Basic Principles of Voluntary Accreditation

(1) Accreditation is based on accepted



(2) Accreditation is primarily concerned with the students' learning, welfare, growth and development.





2. Quality Assurance through voluntary accreditation

2.4. *Basic Principles of Voluntary Accreditation*

- (3) Accreditation provides opportunities for institutional growth through self-study and evaluation and self-regulation.
- (4) Accreditation admits periodic review, criticism, and readjustment of its criteria, policies and procedures in response to changes in education.



2. Quality Assurance through voluntary accreditation

2.5. Significant Practical Values of Accreditation

- (1) Improves the institution through self-study, self-evaluation and self-policing, regardless of its corporate nature, philosophy and objectives.
- (2) Guides the public, parents and students, in the choice of quality institutions that will meet their individual educational needs





2. Quality Assurance through voluntary accreditation

- (3) Simplifies transfer of academic credits; it also facilitates the transfer of students and faculty as well as faculty exchange and mutual cooperation.
- (4) Considered as a favorable factor in the grant of government assistance and other incentives.



2. Quality Assurance through voluntary accreditation

2.5. Significant Practical Values of Accreditation

- (5) Helps assure the public of better qualified practitioners in the different professions.
- (6) Lends prestige to member institutions, justified by the possession of quality standards and unremitting effort to maintain and sustain them at a high level.





2. Quality Assurance through voluntary accreditation

2.5. Significant Practical Values of Accreditation

- (7) Helps identify institutions whose competence and performance in a particular field warrant public and professional recognition.





2. Quality Assurance through voluntary accreditation

2.6. Voluntary Accreditation Develops the Culture of Evidence Among Higher Education Institutions

- The accreditation relies on facts, results, measures, and not on perceiving and sayings.
- Every HEI has to provide evidences of the implemented processes and achieved results.





2. Quality Assurance through voluntary accreditation

2.7. Evaluation Scale

Numerical Evaluation	Descriptive Evaluation	Interpretation
5	Excellent	Provision is very extensive and functioning excellently.
4	Very Good	Provision is moderately extensive and functioning very well.
3	Good	Provision is adequately and functioning well.
2	Fair	Provision is limited but functioning well.
1	Poor	Provision is very limited and functioning poorly.
0	Missing	Provision is missing but necessary.
	N.A.	Not applicable





2. Quality Assurance through voluntary accreditation

2.8. Best Practices Benchmarking

Benchmarking is defined as “a continuous systematic process for evaluating products, services and work processes of organizations that are recognized as representing the best practices for the purpose of organizational improvements”

Benchmarking has four main activities:

- Comparing one thing with the other
- Creating and using criteria to evaluate differences - between two things and recognizing which is better
- Use the experience to identify the direction for change
- Implement the required change to improve



2. Quality Assurance through voluntary accreditation

2.9. Benchmarking in education

- New concept
- Can bring benefits in terms of continuous improvement of quality.
- Based on identification of the best practices,
- Instills competition and constant comparison.





2. Quality Assurance through voluntary accreditation

2.9. Benchmarking in education

Criticized for being

- A system of imitation.
- Something that has produced satisfactory results in one organization, if replicated, may not produce the same results.

Nevertheless, as we compare with the best, and follow the best university or college, it becomes a tool for motivation to change. By following the best model, other institutions can improve their own quality.





2. Quality Assurance through voluntary accreditation

2.10. Market-driven Approach

The issue of quality in education has become so important these days that rankings of educational institutions have become a huge business. Universities around the world are being assessed and ranked by media such as the *Times Higher Education Supplement* and *US News*.

While these rankings are helpful to the student community to choose the institutions of their choice, the process of arriving at the ranks is quite often criticized and institutions accept the ranks as long as they are at the top. Most of these rankings are perception based. The criteria and the weight given to the criteria are never transparent.





BUCUM
Building Capacity in University Management



Tempus

COMMON BARRIERS TO ACCREDITATION



Cardiff
Metropolitan
University

Prifysgol
Metropolitan
Caerdydd



SAPIENZA
UNIVERSITÀ DI ROMA



3. Common Barriers to Accreditation

3.1. Unclear and/or irrelevant Institutional Vision-Mission.

3.2. Failure to establish articulation between the institutional vision-mission and the goals and objectives of the different programs of the institution.





3. Common Barriers to Accreditation

3.3. Inability to comply with the minimum requirements of the regulatory agencies.

3.4. Poor performance of graduates.





3. Common Barriers to Accreditation

3.5. Failure to meet the required library collections and services.

3.6. Deficient supporting documents and evidences exhibited for the self-survey areas during the visit and/or disorganized exhibits.



3. Common Barriers to Accreditation

3.7. Documents not supportive of the self-survey.

3.8. Deficient academic qualifications of the academic administrators, dean, head, chairmen, faculty members.





3. Common Barriers to Accreditation

3.9. Non-compliance with the recommendations of the previous accrediting team.

3.10. Absence of the professional license, or ID not renewed, where required.





4. How is accreditation achieved?

The evaluation process for both initial and continued accreditation status of a program involves the following steps:





4. How is accreditation achieved?

- 4.1. First, the institution undertakes a self-study which examines the practices and activities of the program in relation to its avowed and stated objectives in the context of the institution's vision, mission and environment.
- 4.2. Second, the institution is visited for an on-site verification and evaluation done by a selected group of peers as consultant/ evaluators that report to the accrediting body.





4. How is accreditation achieved?

- 4.3. The Self-Study Report and the Accrediting Team Report and all recommendations and institutional responses are reviewed by the Board of Commissioners which takes official action on the accreditation of an educational program.
- 4.4. The institution's/program's level of quality is judged not by comparison with other schools/programs but primarily by the degree to which its avowed objectives are achieved by actual practices and accomplishments in the various areas being evaluated.



5. International practices in assessing quality

5.1. UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

- Quality assurance is done through the accreditation process, which ensures that education providers meet, and maintain, minimum standards of quality and integrity regarding academics, administration, and related services.
- The accreditation is carried out by private, non-profit organizations designed and recognized for this specific purpose. Thus, external quality monitoring (EQM) is the method of quality assurance in the USA.



5. International practices in assessing quality

5.1. UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

- The Commission on Accreditation (COA) founded in 1949 was the first national organization in the USA to develop criteria and recognize accrediting bodies.
- In 1974, the COA and the Federation of Regional Accrediting Commission of Higher Education (FRACHE) merged to form the Council on Post-secondary Accreditation (COPA), which served until December 1993 to promote and ensure quality of American post-secondary education



5. International practices in assessing quality

- January 1994, the Commission on Recognition of Post-secondary Accreditation (CORPA) was established to continue the task performed by COPA.
- COPA was dissolved in April 1997 after the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) was created, which is now the agency to carry out the recognition function.
- Regional, national and specialized accreditation agencies apply for recognition to CHEA or the US Department of Education (USDE).



5. International practices in assessing quality

The USDE recognition is required for accreditors whose institutions or programs seek federal grants and students aid fund. The CHEA recognition confers an academic legitimacy on accrediting organizations. The CHEA recognition of accrediting organizations is valid for 10 years with five-year interim report, while the USDE recognition review takes place every five years.



5. International practices in assessing quality

The accreditation in the US is an on-going process.

There are five key features of the accreditation process:

- 1. *Self-study*:** Institutions prepare a written summary of performance based on the standards criteria of the accrediting body.
- 2. *Peer review*:** It is conducted on the self-study report by a group of peers in the profession.



5. International practices in assessing quality

3. **Site visit** : It is organized by the peer team to review the claims made in the self- study report. All team members are volunteers and are generally not compensated.
4. **Action by accrediting organization**: The accrediting agency either confers or denies accreditation.
5. **Ongoing external review**: Institutions and programs continue to be reviewed over time for re-accreditation.



5. International practices in assessing quality

5.2. UNITED KINGDOM •

- Established in 1997, the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) for Higher Education is the centralized independent body funded by subscription from universities and colleges of higher education in the United Kingdom. The QAA's role is to provide public assurance that standards and quality with higher education are being safeguarded and enhanced.

5. International practices in assessing quality

5.2. UNITED KINGDOM •

Quality assurance is done primarily through institutional audit. The process of institutional audit is a detailed and comprehensive scrutiny of the internal quality assurance systems of the institution, study of the self-evaluation documents prepared by the institutions, and audit visits. The audit team expresses its judgment as “**broad confidence**”, “**limited confidence**”, or “**no confidence**”. The whole exercise is based on the code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education.



5. International practices in assessing quality

UK Code for QA •

1. postgraduate research programs
 2. collaborative provisions
 3. students with disabilities
 4. external examining
 5. academic appeals and student complaints on academic matters
 6. assessment of students
 7. program approval, monitoring and review
 8. career education, information and guidance
 9. placement learning
 10. recruitment and admissions
- The code of practices sets out guidelines on good practice, and each section has principles that institutions should satisfy, with guidance on how to meet these principles.



5. International practices in assessing quality

5.3. AUSTRALIA •

- Universities and higher education institutions in Australia are self-accrediting bodies. They typically have in place a system of formal, cyclical reviews involving external assessors, for evaluation of programs and organizational units. The quality assurance process in Australian universities includes:
 - Graduate destination surveys and student evaluation surveys
 - Accreditation/approvals from professional associations for courses such as health, medicine, law, etc.
 - Use of external examiners for higher degrees



5. International practices in assessing quality

- In March 2000, the Ministerial Council on Education, Training and Youth Affairs (MCETYA) formally established the Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) as an independent, not-for-profit national agency to promote, audit, and report on quality assurance in Australian higher education. The objectives of AUQA are to:
 - Arrange and manage a system of periodic audits of quality assurance relating to the activities of Australian Universities and State and territory higher education bodies
 - Monitor, review, analyze and provide public reports on quality arrangements in higher education institutions in Australia
 - Report on the criteria for the accreditation of new universities and non-university higher education courses
 - Report on the relative standards of the Australian higher education system





BUCUM
Building Capacity in University Management



Tempus

Congratulations on completing the 2nd Part of the Quality Assurance Course



Cardiff
Metropolitan
University

Prifysgol
Metropolitan
Caerdydd



SAPIENZA
UNIVERSITÀ DI ROMA