

Inter-University Council for East Africa



A ROAD MAP TO QUALITY

Handbook for Quality Assurance in Higher Education

Volume 5: Principles, Practices and Management of
External Quality Assurance in East Africa

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Inter-University Council for East Africa

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Handbook for Quality Assurance in Higher
Education

Volume 5:

Principles, Practices and Management of
External Quality Assurance in East Africa

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FOREWORD

Higher education is considered to play a unique role in East African regional co-operation. This is because of the history of university education in the three pioneer universities of Makerere in Uganda, Nairobi in Kenya and Dar es Salaam in Tanzania. Following the collapse of the former East African Community in 1977, these three Universities continued to cooperate in a number of ways under the umbrella of the Inter-University Committee (IUC) which later led to the establishment of the Inter - University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) in 1980. Recognized as one of the surviving institutions of the East African Community, the IUCEA has assumed a broader role as a building block for sustainable regional integration.

Many more universities have now been established, and IUCEA has registered an upward trend in its membership to the current number of over 115. The number is expected to increase significantly with the admission of Rwanda and Burundi as Partner States in the East African Community. Based on this growth, the effort to harmonize Quality Assurance in Higher Education in the region is paramount. This effort is being pursued in response to the realization of the importance of higher education to the economies of the East African countries on one hand and the ever evolving multiple stakeholder community on the other. It is, therefore, of great importance that the development of competent and adequate human resources through Quality Assurance in higher education in East Africa is harmonized.

Realizing the importance of regionally harmonized Quality Assurance Systems, the IUCEA in collaboration with development partners particularly the German Academic Exchange Services (DAAD) and the Germany Rectors' Conference (HRK) in the frame of their joint Higher Education Management support programme referred to as "Dialogue on Innovative Higher Education Strategies (DIES)" started to work on this matter through a consensus process involving representatives of the higher education commissions and councils in the region, namely; the then Commission for Higher Education (CHE) now Commission for University Education (CUE), Kenya, Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU), Tanzania and National Council for Higher Education (NCHE), Uganda. Consequently, a number of Quality Assurance meetings and workshops took place at country and regional levels in a bid to map out a strategy on how to come up with a Quality Assurance Handbook that would be a guide towards developing quality assurance systems and culture in universities and commissions and councils for higher education in the East African Partner States. The joining of Burundi and Rwanda into the EAC in 2008 has enriched the development of this volume by incorporating guidelines and practices from the two countries, culminating into this final document. The aim is to ensure that all performance indicators and quality benchmarks are agreed upon and owned by all end-user institutions and stakeholders.

I would like to acknowledge the role played by Drs Ton Vroeijenstijn, a former quality expert of the Dutch Association of Universities, former steering group member of the European Network for Quality Assurance (ENQA), former Secretary of the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) and international consultant in more than 30 countries, for his leadership and guidance in the development of this handbook. I would like also to acknowledge the contribution of Prof. Michael Mawa, founding President of the East African Higher Education Quality Assurance Network (EAQAN), the President of the Ugandan University Quality Assurance Forum (UUQAF) and one of IUCEA's regional Quality Assurance experts in leading the process of the finalization of this Volume. I am also indebted to Dr. Pius Achanga of the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE), for his invaluable contribution in the finalization of this volume. The representatives of the Commissions and Councils for Higher Education are highly appreciated for their contributions. These are Dr. Rispa

Odongo of the Commission for University Education (CUE), Kenya, Prof. Frederic Bangirinama of the National Commission for Higher Education (NCHE), Burundi and Dr. Valeriana Damian of Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU), Tanzania. Prof. Mike Kuria is highly acknowledged for his Quality Assurance expertise inputs in finalization of this volume. I also acknowledge the enormous contribution of the IUCEA Quality Assurance staff, namely, Dr. Cosam Joseph and Ms. Juru Eglantine, who ably facilitated and supported the process of development of this volume.

In conclusion, I am gratified to note that this volume has been finalized at the beginning of my tenure as Executive Secretary and therefore I would like to express my firm support for this initiative, specially at this critical stage of the regional integration agenda with the view of consolidating all the achievements that IUCEA has recorded to spearhead the transformation and evolution of the EAC into a Common Higher Education Area. I wish to appeal to all higher education stakeholders, especially policy and decision makers in higher education to internalize the use of this volume in their various capacities in order to meet the aspiration of the Community to ensure that mutual recognition of qualifications and mobility of academic staff and students becomes a reality in the region. Moreover, it is my sincere hope that as cross border education providers in the region becomes the common trend and a necessity to enhance access of quality education, this Handbook should be used to provide for acceptable and harmonized practices and principles of accreditation of institutions and programmes for the benefits of all East Africans.

Prof. Alexandre Lyambabaje
IUCEA Executive Secretary

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SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE HANDBOOK

1.1 Overview on the Handbook

The Handbook “A Road Map to Quality”, is one of the outcomes of the Regional Quality Assurance Initiative in East Africa which began in June 2006 by the Inter-University University Council for East Africa (UCEA) in collaboration with the German Academic Exchange Programme (DAAD). This Quality Assurance Handbook has been developed to provide guidelines for the establishment of Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) and External Quality Assurance (EQA) systems in higher education institutions and Commissions/Councils for Higher Education in East Africa. The Handbook constitutes an important component of the East African Quality Assurance System.

In this framework of Regional Quality Assurance Initiative, IUCEA with the support of DAAD, organized a capacity building training programme on Internal Quality Assurance for Quality Assurance Coordinators (QAC) and Peers from higher education institutions and from National Commissions/Councils for Higher Education in East Africa. These trainings were followed by programme self-assessment and peer assessment exercises using the Handbook in selected universities in Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda.

The Handbook “A Road Map to Quality” was originally published in 4 volumes. Each of the volumes aimed at a specific topic and a specific target group although they all form an integral part of the Handbook. The current Volume concludes the original plan of developing a comprehensive handbook comprising both IQA and EQA guidelines. The following are volumes of the original Handbook:

- Volume 1:** Guidelines for Self- assessment at programme level, aims at the faculty/ department, to learn more about the quality of the programmes by means of an effective self-assessment.
- Volume 2:** Guidelines for external assessment, explains the procedures and processes for an external assessment at programme level. The specific target group is the external expert team, but also the faculty/ department to be assessed.
- Volume 3:** Guidelines for Self-assessment at institutional level, aims especially at the central management of an institution and offers an instrument to discover more about the quality of the institution

Volume 4: The implementation of a Quality Assurance system, aims at all levels of an institution, but is especially useful for the Quality Assurance coordinators for the development and installation of an Internal Quality Assurance system.

The Handbook aims at supporting universities, other higher education institutions and Commissions and Councils for higher education in East Africa in:

- Implementing good practices for quality assurance
- Applying the standards and criteria, as formulated by competent authorities
- Developing an adequate Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) system that fits international developments
- Discovering the quality of their own programmes by offering self-assessment instruments for IQA, the teaching/learning process, and for institutional aspects
- Developing and adequate External Quality Assurance (EQA) system that fits internal developments.

1.2 Scope of the Current Volume

This current volume 5 provides guidelines for External Quality Assurance and is structured into 6 major sections:

Section 1, gives an overview introduction of the Handbook, giving the genesis and processes of its development and the link to the East African Quality Assurance System

Section 2, gives historical perspective of higher education and development of Quality Assurance in East Africa

Section 3, provides theoretical context and international practices of Quality and Quality Assurance in Higher Education.

Section 4, provides documented External Quality Assurance Principles and Practices in East Africa.

Section 5, provides an overview of practices related to Quality Assurance of External Quality Assurance Agencies in order to provide and promote best of external Quality Assurance operations.

Section 6, provides benchmarking of key aspects of assuring quality of Higher Education Institutions by Commissions/Councils for Higher Education.

1.3 Justification for the development of Volume 5 of the Handbook

As stated earlier, the process of harmonization of quality assurance systems, was guided by instruments contained in the Handbook for Quality Assurance in Higher Education: “A Road Map to Quality” Volume 1: Guidelines for self-assessment at the program level; Volume 2: Guidelines for external evaluation; Volume 3: Guidelines for self-assessment at institutional level; Volume 4: Guidelines for the implementation

of total quality assurance system. The first three volumes, which are focusing on Internal Quality Assurance have been piloted extensively at national and regional levels capacity building initiatives and subsequently main streamed into national and institutional systems.

In view of the fact that the agenda of the East African Community is to develop a comprehensive harmonized quality assurance system, the harmonization process should therefore be holistic, to include both Internal and External Quality Assurance practices and management. Thus, it was deemed necessary to also develop this volume which was conceived in 2006 as part of the Quality Assurance tools to provide a common understanding on external quality assurance management, practices and approaches so as to facilitate the region to “talk the same language” in external quality assurance.

This volume therefore, provides a general understanding on the concept, principles practices and management of external quality assurance. The Volume opens up with a theoretical understanding of quality and quality assurance and maps out the international, regional and national practices of external quality assurance. Henceforth, is intended for use by wider stakeholders in higher education, specifically by the National Commissions and Councils for Higher Education in carrying out self assessment as they discharge their mandates in ensuring provision of quality of education offered by Higher Education Institutions. The volume is also intended for use by Higher Education Institutions in understanding the roles, functions and good practices of external quality assurance agencies for the purposes of reciprocal reorientation to meet the expectations of the external quality assurance agencies. Furthermore, it can be used by policy and decisions makers in higher education to understand the general scope of good practices in external quality assurance and appreciate the dynamics and demands of ensuring provision of quality education by key stakeholders, that is, the National Commissions/Councils for Higher Education and Higher Education Institutions. Other key stakeholders in higher education such as students, parents and others may also find the Volume very useful in the same line as stated above.

SECTION 2

HIGHER EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF QUALITY ASSURANCE IN EAST AFRICA: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

2.1 Historical background

The evolution and development of higher education in East Africa can be traced back to 1922 when a technical school was established at the Makerere hill, which was later renamed Uganda Technical College offering various courses in Medical Care, Agriculture, Veterinary Sciences and Teacher Training. It expanded over the years to become a Center for Higher Education in East Africa and beyond in 1935. The College received students from Kenya, the then Tanganyika, and Zanzibar, Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Mauritius. In 1937, the College started developing into an institution of higher education, offering post-school certificate courses. In 1949, it became a University College affiliated to the University College of London, offering courses leading to the general degrees of its then mother institution.

During the independence era of the four countries of East Africa namely, Uganda, Kenya, the then Tanganyika and Zanzibar, the University of East Africa was established on 29th June 29, 1963 and Makerere College, Dar es Salaam University College and Nairobi University College were also established as its constituent colleges in their respective countries.

In 1970, the University of East Africa was dissolved and University of Dar es Salaam, University of Nairobi and Makerere University were established as national universities. The three institutions felt the need to cooperate and therefore established the Inter-University Committee (IUC) to coordinate collaboration among them. This period witnessed vibrant mobility and exchange programmes for students and academic staff. This initial cooperation between the three universities in East Africa, was very instrumental in the genesis and rise of the current Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA).

2.2 Establishment of IUCEA

As stated in Section 1.1, the IUC was established under the first East African Community that collapsed in 1977. The IUC survived and continued its mandate to coordinate cooperation between the three universities despite the decline of the financial support from the Partner States. In 1980, the Vice Chancellors of the three universities signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to maintain cooperation between the universities. The MoU transformed the IUC into the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA). In 1999, the new East African Community was re-established and recognized IUCEA as one of the surviving institutions of the former

EAC and as an institution of the new East African Community. In 2002, a Protocol was signed by the Ministers in charge of education from the three Partner States of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda as a legal instrument that recognized IUCEA as a body corporate of EAC. In 2009, the East African Legislative Assembly enacted the IUCEA Act. IUCEA operates under the Act, 2009, which broadened its mandate as a strategic institution of the East African Community (EAC) responsible for coordinating the development of higher education and research for socio-economic development and regional integration. The objectives of IUCEA according to the Act are to:

- a. Facilitate networking among universities in East Africa, and with universities outside the region;
- b. Provide a forum for discussion on a wide range of academic and other matters relating to higher education in East Africa; and
- c. Facilitate maintenance of internationally comparable education standards in East Africa so as to promote the region's competitiveness in higher education.

The IUCEA Act 2009 therefore, mandates the institution to advise the EAC Partner States on higher education matters, and to contribute towards:

- a. Meeting national and regional developmental needs;
- b. Developing quality assurance processes in order to ensure that teaching; learning and research in the region achieve and maintain international standards;
- c. Assisting member universities and other higher education institutions to identify and implement good practices in institutional management and use of resources;
- d. Developing human resource capacity in all disciplines of higher education in the Community; and
- e. Promoting equal opportunities for all higher education students in East Africa, including those with special needs.

Since its revitalization in 2009, IUCEA has been focused on executing its mandate all geared towards achieving quality education for development of East Africa.

2.3 Establishment of National Quality Assurance Systems and Development of a Regional Framework

2.3.1 Genesis of Commissions/Councils for Higher Education

The establishment of the national higher education commissions/councils in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda in 1985, 1995 and 2001 respectively, offered a greater opportunity to establish national quality assurance systems and establishment of formalized cooperation among the three countries in matters including mutual

recognition of regulatory frameworks in higher education. The details on their establishment and mandates in their respective countries are provided in Chapter 3. Therefore, in 2006, the three bodies entered into a memorandum of understanding for mutual cooperation in quality assurance and accreditation matters.

2.3.2 Development of a Regional Quality Assurance Framework

Furthermore, in the same year, higher education stakeholders, policy and decision makers started to dialogue about the imminent disparity of the quality of education as a result of the rapid expansion of higher education in the region. The then IUCEA Governing Board saw the need for the establishment of a regional quality assurance system that would lead to harmonization of quality assurance systems in universities in East Africa. In 2006, IUCEA in collaboration with the higher education commissions/councils in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda embarked on the initiative to develop a harmonized framework for regional quality assurance system of higher education. The goal of the initiative was to promote comparability of the quality of higher education in East Africa, in order to enhance regional collaboration in higher education and to promote mobility of students across the region. When Rwanda and Burundi joined the East African Community in 2007, their universities became part of the regional quality assurance initiative including the Higher Education Council of Rwanda and the National Commission for Higher Education of Burundi that were established in 2007 and 2012, respectively.

The development of a regional quality assurance system for East Africa was driven by the following factors:

- a. Disparity in education systems among the Partner States and within the Partner States;
- b. Increased demand for higher education that resulted into expansion of higher education institutions both public and private, some of them without enough resources and infrastructures to offer quality education;
- c. Implementation of the Common Market Protocol 2010 on mutual recognition of academic and professional qualifications in order to facilitate free movement of learners and labour;
- d. Promotion and maintenance of internationally recognized education standards;
- e. Relevance of higher education to respond to the real needs of the Community; and
- f. Ultimately, the aspiration of the EAC Partner States to transform the region into a Common Higher Education Area.

The above reasons prompted IUCEA to develop a harmonized quality assurance system to promote comparability of education systems, enhance quality education

and maintain international standards that would render the system competitive internationally. The quality assurance system consists of standards, guidelines and procedures; benchmarks for programmes; and a policy framework. The standards, guidelines and procedures are contained in the quality assurance handbook entitled "Road map to quality" that was developed based on the existing national benchmarks, standards and systems and on international practices. The benchmarks for programmes are important tools to guide higher education institutions in curriculum design, promote harmonization of academic programme in the region, enhance staff and students mobility across the region, and guide the labour market in determining the quality of graduates among others. IUCEA has developed a policy framework under the title "Principles and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education in East Africa" to guide operationalization of the regional quality assurance system and promotion of a common quality assurance culture in universities in East Africa. To maintain the regional quality assurance system, IUCEA trained a critical mass of Quality Assurance Officers to support higher education institutions in the institutionalization of the quality assurance system.

2.3.3 Context of Harmonization of Higher Education in the East African Community

The gist for harmonization of education systems in East Africa is stemmed from the integration agenda of the Community, which is provided for in the Articles 5 and 102 of the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community. The Partner States commits to undertake concerted measures to foster co-operation in education and training. Among the areas for cooperation are those related the harmonization of curricula, examination, certification and accreditation of education and training institutions in the Partner States involving the joint action of their relevant national bodies charged with the preparation of such curricula.

Thus, harmonization of higher education in the EAC context refers to the establishment of a common frame of reference to facilitate comparability, compatibility and mutual recognition of higher education and training systems and the qualifications attained among the EAC Partner States, based on shared views on quality, criteria, standards and learning outcomes, for promoting students and labour mobility in EAC, and hence EAC operating as a common higher education area. Harmonization does not mean each higher education institution or country to operate a uniform system, as this would stifle competitiveness, uniqueness and innovativeness of the higher education institution and countries. Therefore, in harmonizing education system, the region is also promoting competitiveness, uniqueness and innovativeness among higher education institution and countries such that while higher education institution benchmark their systems and programmes to the basic regional standards and guidelines, they also uphold uniqueness in terms of programme specializations,

curriculum innovativeness, delivery approaches, etc.

2.3.4 Drive for Harmonization of Higher Education

Harmonization of higher education in East Africa has been prompted by, among others, the need to establish a framework to facilitate comparability of higher education quality standards in order to allow mobility of students and to promote regional and international competitiveness, and comparability and compatibility of the curriculum and qualifications attained for them to be mutually recognizable among the EAC Partner States and outside EAC, and hence promote labour mobility.

2.4 Development of Higher Education Qualifications Framework for East Africa

A regional qualifications framework, linked to the quality assurance system, was developed as an important tool for harmonization of higher education and training systems and the qualifications attained in the Community. It is a generic instrument on which national qualifications frameworks will be anchored for the purpose of harmonization and synchronization of education and training systems. It is also an instrument to guide human resource development in the region focusing on skills and competences and relevance of skills and competences to the region's socio-economic needs. It includes qualification descriptors, qualification levels and types, recognition of prior learning, learner's workload, and credit accumulation and transfer system.

The EAQFHE is aimed at aligning the National Qualifications Framework of the EAC Each Partner State in the EAC, which are not necessarily need to be identical to the regional one. The EAQFHE will only guide the alignment of the national qualifications frameworks to the regional set up for EAC to operate as a Common Higher Education Area. This will facilitate comparability of the education and training systems and the qualifications attained in the Partner States. It will also facilitate a more systematic approach to human resource development in the Community. The EAQFHE will also provide mechanisms for streamlining qualifications, thereby simplifying their comparability and mutual recognition nationally, regionally, and globally. The mutual recognition arrangement provided by the EAQFHE covers all types of qualifications, regardless of the mode of programme delivery or training system, so long as the minimum number of credits required for a particular award or qualification type has been attained.

As a human resources development instrument, the EAQFHE is very important for the users to apply it with an open mind in realizing the intended purpose of facilitating mutual recognition of qualifications among the Partner States. Henceforth, this would promote free movement of learners and labour for the eventual attainment of the Community's socio-economic development and regional integration.

2.5 Conclusion

IUCEA is developing instruments to support harmonization of higher education and transform the region into a higher education common area that will be characterized by comparable, compatible, coherent and harmonized systems. Those tools will enable mutual recognition of qualifications among the East African Community Partner States and facilitate free mobility of students, academic staff, programmes, and institutions in the region.

SECTION 3

THEORETICAL CONTEXT AND INTERNATIONAL PRACTICES OF QUALITY AND QUALITY ASSURANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

3.1 Introduction

The word quality is often used without explaining what it is. However, everybody who thinks about quality and quality assurance in higher education is faced with the question: “What is quality and quality assurance?” It is important to note that quality and quality assurance in higher education are elusive and complex concepts to define because of different interpretations by different stakeholders in the system. This Section therefore, provides a theoretical understanding of key concepts and terminologies used in Quality Assurance in higher education. The chapter also provides an overview of the international context and practice of quality assurance in higher education.

3.2 The Concept of Quality in Higher Education

The concept of quality is difficult to define because there is no consensus on the precise meaning of the term. Quality, like beauty, is in the eye of the beholder, and like truth, quality is in the mind of the believer. However, when the term quality is mentioned in ordinary talk, it is generally understood to mean a distinctive attribute or characteristic possessed by someone or something. Quality is a “grade of goodness” or “the degree of excellence”. The term quality has also been used to refer to the standard of something as measured against other things of a similar kind.

The origin of the concepts of quality and quality assurance has been in the industrial and business sphere. The philosophy of quality which dominated the business sphere was that of customer satisfaction with the industrial product and or business service. Thus, customer or client satisfaction was used to measure the grade of goodness.

While the general concept of quality is difficult to define, quality in higher education is much more complex, because it is not always clear what the “product” is and who the “client” is. Is the “graduate” the “product” that we offer society and the labour market? Or is the graduate-to-be, the student, our “client” and the programme that we offer the “product”? We can only say that a higher education institution has a multiple product system and a multi-client system. So there is quality of input, quality of process and quality of output of the core educational activities: teaching and learning, research and community engagement. All these dimensions have to be taken into account when discussing quality and judging quality of higher education.

It is also worth noting that higher education is a complex system based on the

interrelationship of various stakeholders including government, governing authorities and agencies, employers, professional bodies, higher education managers, academic staff and students. Each stakeholder may focus on specific aspect of quality. For instance, academic staff may focus on the quality of teaching and learning processes, research facilities and possibility of further training while the students may focus on the quality of teaching, learning experience and the environment, the usefulness of education on future employment and further studies. Professional bodies may focus on professional standards and the skills and attitude related to the profession for purposes of practice while employers may focus on competencies and attitude of graduates.

Considering the different perceptions of quality by different stakeholders, different quality assurance experts have identified about six approaches to defining quality (Harvey & Green (1993), Green (1994) & Phares (1998).

- Quality as “excellence”
- Quality as meeting “threshold”
- Quality as “fitness-for-purpose”
- Quality as “value for money”
- Quality is meeting “customer satisfaction”
- Quality as enhancement or improvement
- Quality as “zero” errors

Expanding on these approaches to understanding quality in higher education, UNESCO / IIEP (2006) has given the following definitions:

Quality as Excellence (Exceptionality)

This is the traditional and elitist academic view, in which the exceptionally high standards of excellence are understood as revealing true academic quality. Emphasis is placed on attaining high-level standards, being excellent, providing a service that is distinctive and special which confers status on the owner. Institutions demonstrating exceptionally high standards are seen as quality institutions. It may be used to identify very few high level institutions for excellent awards and commend them for it, but few institutions achieve this. However, a higher education institution cannot be condemned for not attaining excellence. The approach may be necessary for specific areas of HEIs, for example evaluating doctoral programmes or evaluating cutting-edge research.

Quality as Conformance to Standards /Meeting Thresholds

This definition has its origins from manufacturing industry. It focuses on meeting pre-determined specifications or expectations. Quality assurance agencies often invoke this view of quality to ensure that institutions or programmes meet certain threshold before accreditation, recognition for a particular status, or for funding

depending on the context. However, it is possible to comply with formal requirements without paying attention to substantive quality issues the requirements are meant to safeguard. Quality is assessed by meeting set quantitative threshold. For example, the number of full-time academic staff, number of academic staff with PhDs, full-time professors versus part-time professors, number of articles published per full-time staff, among others. However, threshold may be met without necessary being translated into quality teaching and learning. Many quality assurance agencies are moving away from use of thresholds to assessing institutions from the perspective of institutional stated mission and vision and objectives as well as institutional standards.

Quality as Fitness-for-Purpose (Q=FFP)

This is usually the view of quality assurance professionals. The focus is placed on efficiency of the processes at work in the institution or programme in fulfilling the stated or given objectives and mission. The approach is based on the view that quality is only meaningful in relation to the purpose of the product or service. It means a high quality institution is one that clearly states its mission (purpose) and is efficient in achieving it. However, the questions that arise are: “Who determines the purpose of the institution? What are appropriate purposes?” The government, or a group of stakeholders may determine the purposes. However, goals can be set too high or too low. The answers to these questions are dependent on the context in which quality is viewed, fiscal policy and constraints of a country. This approach also includes quality as value for money, that is, the value added and transformation of students after the learning experience. It is also related to Fitness-of-Purpose which addresses the issue of relevance of higher education.

Quality as Effectiveness in meeting Customer/Client Satisfaction

This is a variant of the Fitness-for-Purpose approach. It is based on customer needs and satisfaction, in which the purpose is customer satisfaction. Higher education, customers include students who invest active time in learning, parents who pay for the educational services for their children, government which sets national policies and invests public money for educational purposes and employers who recruit the graduates. However, the question that arises is, can customer satisfaction be equated to what is good for the customer? For example, what students want may not be the same as what is actually good for them in terms of employability.

Quality as Added Value – View of students / parents

This is the view of students and parents where quality is assessed in terms of changes obtained through various educational processes (teaching and learning process). The focus is on the value added to students during education and training, including nonacademic attributes. Institutions that enable students to enhance their knowledge, skills, competence and employability are seen as successful in providing quality

education. Attention must therefore be paid to what is expected (from formulating expected learning outcomes (ELOs) to realizing outcomes in graduates), otherwise the definition could be meaningless.

Quality as Value for Money / Added Value

This is the view of government, which focuses on efficiency and effectiveness, and measures output against inputs. Meeting expectations of customers in relation to money paid is interpreted as added value or having quality. The notion of cost / benefit analysis, in which the perceived or actual pay off must at least be commensurate with the cost and human effort invested at all levels, becomes the measure of quality.

Quality as Enhancement or Improvement

In this approach the emphasis is on quality improvement, which may be limited in duration or it may be continuous. Improvement is often associated with quality processes that focus on objectives and measurable outcomes. Once the outcomes are understood, improvement can proceed. Although quality improvement is the responsibility of the higher education institutions, quality assurance agencies play a crucial role in engaging academics and key stakeholders in the development and evaluation of standards / benchmarks. However, improvement may be difficult to measure and evidence of improvement may not be easily discernible to outsiders. Quality improvement could be measured if higher education institutions published their internal and external assessment reports. In some developing countries, reports arising from quality assessment are not made to the general public but have limited distribution because the impact of a less favorable assessment report may lead to negative image of the institution or at worse, drastic loss of student enrolment and possible closure of the institution, instead of corrective actions for improvement.

Quality as "Zero Errors"

The idea of zero errors relates to industry where detailed specifications are established and quantitative measurement of uniform processes and products can show conformity with a standard. The approach assumes steady control of key variables. Since higher education is subject to vagaries of human nature and students' performance can never be uniform and graduates are not identical, this view is not readily feasible in the context of higher education.

Quality is not always the same as Efficiency

Quality is not always saving money or making more rational use of public resources. For example, it may be very efficient to use multiple-choice questions during student assessment of a large class, but it may not enhance verbal and written communication skills.

The Fitness-for-Purpose approach is seen by many quality assurance experts as most meaningful because, in practice, it includes all other definitions of quality in higher education. Most quality assurance agencies employ all types of definitions depending on activity and context at hand.

With so many stakeholders and players in the higher education system, we may say “Quality is a matter of satisfying the stakeholders in an adequate way”. In this process, each stakeholder needs to formulate, as clearly as possible, his/her requirements. The institution, as the ultimate provider of the higher education output, must take a clear position as it tries to reconcile the different requirements of the stakeholders. As far as possible, the requirements of all stakeholders should be translated into the mission and goals of an institution and into the objectives of a faculty and of the educational and research programmes for the desired higher education outputs and outcomes.

The relationship between stakeholders’ requirements and achievement of quality in higher education can be represented in schematic diagram as shown in figure 1:



Figure 1: Quality as an object of negotiation between the relevant stakeholders in higher education.

Quality is achieving our goals and aims in an efficient and effective way, assuming that the goals and aims reflect the requirements of our stakeholders in an adequate way.

Therefore, for the sake of a common understanding, the following description of quality in higher education has been adopted in this Handbook:

3.3 The Concept of Quality Assurance in Higher Education

Quality assurance in higher education has become a major issue at the institutional,

national, regional and international levels. A lot of attention is being placed in developing and implementing quality assurance systems and mechanisms in order to ensure the quality of education being provided to students. In view of these developments, a lot of literature has been developed at national and international levels to define quality assurance in higher education. A variety of definitions of quality assurance can now be discerned.

Quality assurance in higher education has been defined by Grant Harman (2000) as “systematic management and assessment procedures adopted by higher education institutions and systems in order to monitor performance against objectives, and to ensure achievement of quality outputs and quality improvements. Essentially, quality assurance systems aim to provide appropriate evidence to substantiate claims made about quality and so to enable key stakeholders to have confidence about the management of quality and the level of outcomes achieved.”

Quality assurance is an all-embracing term referring to a systematic, ongoing and continuous process of evaluating (assessing, monitoring, guaranteeing, maintaining and improving) the quality of programmes, institutions, or a higher education system (Vlasceanu et al, 2004 and UNESCO, 2007). Quality assurance (or quality management) may be described as the systematic, structured and continuous attention to quality in terms of maintaining and improving quality. Continuous quality care is a sine qua non for quality assurance (Vroeijenstijn, 1995)¹.

The National Council for Higher Education of Uganda defines Quality Assurance as “the mechanism put in place to guarantee that the education is ‘fit for purpose,’ i.e., is good. Every higher education institution must have appropriate and effective internal structures and mechanisms for monitoring its quality control procedures to ensure quality” (NCHE, 2014)². The Commission for University Education of Kenya defines Quality Assurance as: “the means by which an institution can guarantee that the standards and quality of its educational provisions are being maintained and / or enhanced. It is the means through which an institution confirms that conditions are in place for students to achieve standards set by the institution” (CUE, 2009).³

In essence, quality assurance in higher education means a planned and systematic review of an institution or programme to determine maintenance and enhancement of acceptable benchmarks (IUCEA Act, 2015).

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1. Vroeijenstijn, A.I (1995), *Improvement and Accountability: Navigating between Scylla and Charybdis*, London, Jessica Kingsley Publishers
 2. National Council for Higher Education (2014) *Quality Assurance Framework for Universities and the Licensing Process for Higher Education Institutions*, Kampala, 2014
 3. Commission for University Education, *Handbook on Processes for Quality Assurance in Higher Education in Kenya*, Nairobi, 2009.

In a review of literature on quality assurance in higher education, Andrea Wilger (1997) noted that most definitions have several key dimensions of quality assurance in higher education. “First, quality assurance focuses on process; it seeks to convince both internal and external constituents that an institution has processes that produce high quality outcomes. Second, quality assurance makes explicit accountability for quality at various points within an institution. Quality is the responsibility of everyone in the organization. Third, quality assurance is a continuous, active, and responsive process, which includes strong evaluation and feedback loops. Effective communication is essential to a successful quality assurance system. At its core, quality assurance asks the question, “How does an institution know that it is achieving the desired results?”

3.4 The Quality Assurance System

The Quality Assurance system in Higher education has basically been characterised by both internal and external elements. It is now generally accepted that the primary responsibility for quality and quality assurance lies with the higher education institution. However, external quality assurance systems established at national, regional and international levels plays an integral part in ensuring quality higher education. Figure 2 below illustrates the internal and external elements of the higher education quality assurance system:

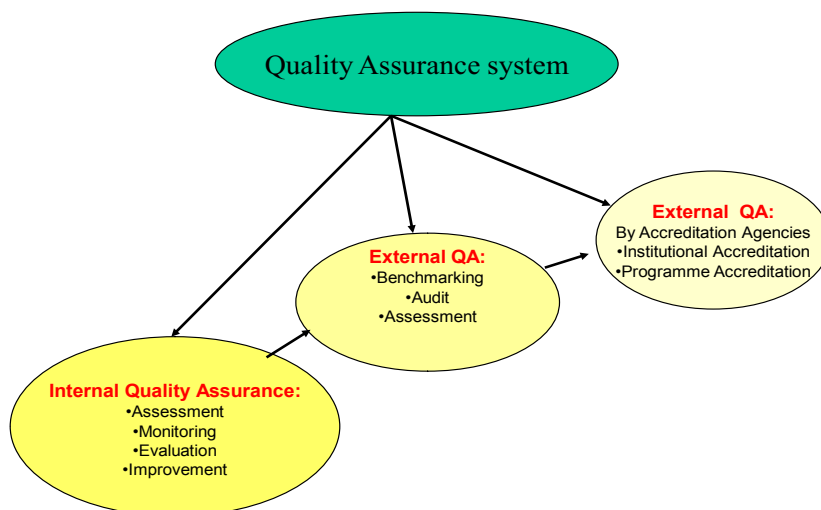


Figure 2: The Quality Assurance System in Higher Education

The evolution and impetus of quality assurance globally has evolved into three major models: Internal Quality Assurance (IQA), External Quality Assurance (EQA)

and Regional Quality Assurance (RQA) systems. The characteristic of each model is based on the policy framework, mandate and function bestowed upon it, and the socio-economic environment in which the quality assurance system operates.

1. Internal Quality Assurance

Internal quality assurance is the “intra-institutional practices in view of monitoring and improving the quality of higher education. The objectives are to meet the required institutional level or status; achieving set outputs; monitoring its own academic standards; and are designed to achieve the required national/regional/international standards. Internal quality assurance entails the development of policies, procedures, systems and practices by the higher education institution to achieve, maintain and enhance quality of higher education.

2. External Quality Assurance

External quality assurance systems are the “inter- or supra-institutional schemes of assuring the quality of higher education institutions and programmes. The driving authority for external quality assurance is national regulatory agencies as well as professional bodies. The external quality assurance system is more concerned with monitoring that universities or higher education institutions meet the standards. Thus, this system is made up of a quality assurance agency or regulatory body, a qualifications framework, an accreditation procedure, monitoring of outputs, and internal and external quality assurance processes.

Quality assurance functions at the national or country level consists of the nation’s education policy, systems and processes, collectively ensuring high quality learning. The main purposes is to maintain quality in higher education, thus meeting the public interest, allow for informed decision-making by students and parents through sharing information on the status of universities, and enhance assessment and assurance of standards. External quality assurance process may lead to accreditation of the institution and or its programmes. Strong national systems can also assist with connectivity between higher education institutions, by increasing mutual recognition and easing the credit transfer process.

A successful external quality assurance system is dependent on strong internal quality assurance system.

3. Regional Quality Assurance Frameworks

Regional quality assurance system functions above both institutional and national functions. Regional quality assurance system consists of a network of national higher education systems, individual institutions, quality assurance agencies and other stakeholders. Such collaborations aim to develop comparable criteria and

methodologies and build the quality assurance capacity of individual nations and institutions.

Regional quality assurance systems often promote and share good practices, collaborate on capacity building, share information to facilitate mutual recognition and move towards regional quality assurance frameworks. The IUCEA has gradually established a regional quality assurance system in the East African Region in fulfillment of its mandate. The IUCEA Act 2009, mandates the institution to advise the EAC Partner States on higher education matters, and to contribute towards “developing quality assurance processes in order to ensure that teaching; learning and research in the region achieve and maintain international standards;” The development of a Handbook for quality assurance in higher education, principles and guidelines for quality assurance, benchmarks for programmes and a regional qualifications framework, among other actions has indeed shaped an East African regional quality assurance system.

3.5 Quality Assurance Mechanisms and Practices

Quality assurance in higher education involves a variety of mechanisms and practices, among which are quality audit, quality assessment/review, accreditation and quality promotion. There is no general consensus on the exact meaning of each term. The terms relate to the responsibility of different actors in the higher education system, and to different foci of attention and purposes of quality assurance.

There are three (3) main purposes of quality assurance, namely, quality control, accreditation, and quality improvement. These purposes are not mutually exclusive, but their application depends on the national and institutional context where quality assurance is practiced.

Quality control: This is a mechanism of ensuring that higher education institutions or programmes meet set standards or benchmarks. A key mechanism to achieve quality control is quality assessment which is structured activity that leads to a verdict on the quality of the institution as a whole or one of the core activities: the teaching/learning process, research or community outreach. It might be based on self-assessment or based on the assessment by external experts. There is no real difference between assessment, evaluation and review; these terms are seen as interchangeable.

One of the objectives of quality assessment is licensing, which provides public recognition of credentials, consumer protection, and legitimizes new institutions. After an assessment or evaluation, a license may be definitive, or may be valid for a period of time, or may be conditional on the institution addressing some recommendations.

Accreditation: The main objective of accreditation is to provide stakeholders with sound, reliable information that the institution or programme is operating within predetermined quality criteria (fitness-for-purpose). Institutions or programmes must provide evidence that they are actually fulfilling the promises made to the students, employers and the public.

Accreditation assesses the institution or programme against a set of standards or criteria, and then provides public assurance of quality, creating transparency and public confidence. Accreditation is granted for a period of time, necessitating re-evaluation/assessment.

Quality Improvement: This approach assumes that the responsibility for quality lies within the institutions, therefore it focuses on the institution's ability to develop and implement effective policies and mechanisms for self-improvement.

One of the ways in which quality improvement could be achieved is through internal quality audit. The audit itself may or may not produce immediate improvement, but it will encourage voluntary response from students, academic and other staff of the institution.

Another way in which quality improvement could be achieved is through ISO. The ISO provides good practices in documentation and helps the institution identify strengths and weaknesses of its system and structures.

Quality Assurance Mechanisms / Models

Quality assessment, quality management, quality enhancement and quality control are the mechanisms through which quality assurance is ensured (UNESCO/IIEP, 2006). A brief discussion of each is provided below.

Quality Assessment (Evaluation)

This indicates the actual process of gathering information, reviewing, measuring and making judgment on the quality of higher education institution (HEIs) processes, practices, programmes and services based on some pre-determined benchmark. The important aspects of quality assessment which should be considered include:

- The context (national, institutional, programme).
- The methods (self-assessment, peer assessment, site inspection).
- The levels (system, institution, department, programme).
- The mechanisms (rewards, policies, structures, cultures).
- Quality values such as academic values (subject, field), managerial values (staff, their teaching skills, classroom practices), and employment values (graduate output characteristics and e-learning outputs) (Vlasceanu, et al. 2004:48).

Quality assessment asks “How good are your outputs?” The results of assessment is a grade, whether numeric (for example %, 1-4, literal (for example, A-F) or descriptive (for example, excellent, good, satisfactory, unsatisfactory). Quality assessment establishes confidence among stakeholders, but not as much as accreditation which provides a quality label, which quality assessment does not do. Some of the pitfalls of quality assessment are: some quality assurance agencies rely too much on selected historical data, without a lot of concern for an institution’s capacity for self-assessment, forward planning, and timely remedial action. Developmental plans

Quality Audit

This is the process of quality assessment by which an external body assures that the overall (internal and external) quality assurance procedures of the system are adequate and are being carried out effectively. Quality audit checks the extent to which the institution is achieving its own objectives. It looks to the system for achieving good quality and not the quality itself. It evaluates strengths and weaknesses of the quality assurance mechanisms adopted by the institution in order to monitor and improve the activities and services of a subject, programme, or a whole institution. Audits are undertaken by individuals not involved in the subject being examined. Quality audit asks “are processes effective in achieving objectives”

Accreditation

This is the process by which an external body evaluates the quality of a higher education institution as a whole or of a specific educational programme for formal recognition as having met predetermined minimum criteria or standards. It is the most widely used method of external quality assurance. It makes explicit judgment on whether a programme or an institution meets particular quality standards, which may be either a set of minimum standards, standards of high quality or excellence, or based on institution’s own purposes. Accreditation involves some kind of benchmarking of what is acceptable and what is not. It is the only method that makes an explicit judgment about the degree to which an institution or programme is actually meeting pre-determined standards or requirements. The result of accreditation is “yes, no or conditional decision”. Accreditation asks “is the institution good enough?”

It is difficult to define accreditation, because there are so many concepts and ideas on it. The Commission for University Education, Kenya defines Accreditation as “a process of quality control and assurance” whereby, as a result of inspection or assessment, an institution or its programmes are recognised as meeting minimum acceptable standards. In Kenya accreditation means public acceptance and confirmation as evidenced by award of a Charter, that a university meets and continues to meet standards of academic excellence set by the commission.”⁴The national Council for

4 CHE Kenya

Higher Education of Uganda describes Accreditation as “a process through which institutions are assessed at various stages before they are licensed. It covers all aspects of institutions, including land, staffing, educational facilities, governance, financial resources, and physical facilities.”⁵

According to Cap. 346 of the laws of Tanzania (United Republic of Tanzania, 2005) “accredititation is a process of recognizing and monitoring the functioning of the higher education institutions.”

Accreditation is generally defined as “a formal decision, based on evaluation of past performance, indicating that certain standards, certain minimum requirements are met.”⁶ In the Analytic Quality Glossary, published on the website of the INQAAHE, accreditation is defined as “the establishment of the status, legitimacy or appropriateness of an institution, programme or module of study”⁷

Although different definitions are used, there are some common characteristics of accreditation:

1. Accreditation is a formal decision.
2. Accreditation is based on an overall assessment of the higher education institution or its core activities.
3. Accreditation is based on the assessment of at least some minimum requirements (threshold quality).
4. Accreditation leads to a yes/no/conditional decision.
Accreditation might have consequences, for example, public recognition of an institution and or its programme and increased funding.

The object of accreditation may differ. In some cases, the accreditation relates to the institution as a whole, like the regional accrediting bodies in the United States. In other cases, the accreditation considers the programmes offered by the institution. Most accrediting bodies in Europe look at the quality of the programmes. Sometimes, this involves new programmes (ex-ante assessment), sometimes existing programmes (ex-post assessment). In East Africa, both institutional accreditation and programme accreditation is being practices.

3.6 Global Dynamics and Trends in Quality Assurance Practices

There are a number of common global trends in the practice of quality assurance. Some of these practices, such as accreditation, have remained historical to the evolution of quality assurance in higher education. Other practices, such as benchmarking, are

⁵ NCHE Uganda

⁶ Vroeijsenstijn, Similarities and differences in Accreditation, Looking for a common framework. The Netherlands Accreditation Organisation (NAO), June 2003

⁷ Harvey, L., 2004–6, Analytic Quality Glossary, Quality Research International, <http://www.qualityresearchinternational.com/glossary/> last updated December 2006.

today gaining significant attention in higher education quality assurance.

3.6.1 External Assessment and Accreditation

It is now observed globally that despite continuing cross-national variations in the practice of higher education quality assurance, there are apparent common trends in regulatory approaches to quality assurance. For sometime now, accreditation has been the common and central activity in quality assurance. This is often caused by the fact that accreditation has been seen as the prerogative of the government and is connected with state regulation occasioned by some degree of distrust towards the quality of higher education and the self-governance of the higher education system.

Like in Europe, America, Australia and Asia, accreditation in the East African region is a national activity. This phenomenon of national accreditation or accreditation by government-based agencies is, however, a recent one. Professional accreditation is much older and has a longer tradition. It is the professional body, e.g. in engineering or medicine that accredits the curriculum which delivers the right to work in the profession.

3.6.2 Convergence of Quality Assurance and Qualifications Framework

Quality Assurance and Qualifications Framework are considered to be principal instruments to support and effect a strong lifelong learning culture within education and training systems, that not only seeks to create rich, diverse and on-going learning opportunities for the individual citizen; but which does so in a way that prepares citizens for work in an increasingly knowledge-based and skills-dependent labour market, and that helps to deliver jobs and growth in the context of rapidly changing and highly competitive global economic environment.

The Architecture and common features of quality assurance and qualifications framework are anchored on the concept of learning outcomes. The architecture of qualification frameworks is based among others on level descriptors, individual qualifications descriptors, at the national and also invariably constructed as generic or specific statements of learning outcomes in terms of knowledge, skill and competence. Similarly, in quality assurance, when considering the relevance of education and quality of programme, what are considered here are also the learning outcomes in terms of knowledge, skills and competencies.

One of the most common features, which is expected to result from the two instruments working together is to promote shared commitment to transparency, and the building of mutual trust, between education and training systems. This is especially important in enhancing cooperation in quality assurance with a view to building 'mutual trust,

transparency and recognition of qualifications' for the purposes of 'increasing mobility of learners and facilitating access to lifelong learning.

Most interesting interaction to note is that both Quality Assurance and Qualifications Framework are committed to common agenda in areas such as lifelong learning, skills provision and employability of learners. Thus, quality assurance and qualifications frameworks are natural partners and that their deeper integration should be capable of delivering improvement throughout education and training systems. Consequently, it is hereby premised that quality assurance bodies and practitioners have an important role to play in the implementation of qualifications frameworks.

The notable global convergence on the use of learning outcomes to define the expectations of learners and workers is in the so called "Dublin Descriptors" which defines – generic learning outcomes descriptors for Bachelor, Masters and Doctoral Qualifications which is a centre-piece of the Qualifications Framework and European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

3.6.3 Quality Assurance and Benchmarking

One of the common trends in higher education quality assurance is development of subject or discipline benchmarks. Within the East African Quality Assurance model at programme level, the need to carry benchmarking when developing or reviewing curriculum has been emphasised. The benchmarks in this respect serve as good instrument for evaluating the quality of programmes by HEIs and as a frame of reference in assessing the quality of a programme by external assessment teams. The benchmarks also can play a significant role in harmonization of quality assessment and quality assurance at the region level. This is because the architecture of benchmarks is based on learning outcomes and therefore provide among others: Comparable quality levels of the graduates; Comparable chances for the graduates in the labour market; provide the Labour market with a clear understanding on the competencies that are possessed by graduates; increase national and international mobility of students and lecturers.

3.6.4 Quality Assurance and ISO 9000 Certification

The ISO 9000 Series is the International standard for generic quality assurance systems, which deals with continuous improvement through preventative action, in particular industrial manufacturing process. The main elements of ISO 9000 are customer quality and regulatory requirements, and efforts made to enhance customer satisfaction and achieve continuous improvement. There is current emerging global school of thought to apply ISO 9000 series to quality management in higher education.

Conclusion

The practice of quality assurance can be said to be context based although there are recognizable common features in quality assurance practices across countries and regions. External quality assurance by regulatory agencies has now taken firm base in the East African Region as the next section of this volume of the Handbook demonstrates.

SECTION 4

EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES IN EAST AFRICA

4.1 Introduction

In order to succinctly accomplish the objectives of developing a harmonized quality assurance system for the EAC discussed in Section 2, it is imperative that a comprehensive documentation on the EQAA of the member states is conducted. This is because, within the existing EQAA in the member states, the practice and management of the external QA system tend to follow a certain norm. This Chapter therefore identifies documents and compares the QA principles, practices and management structures of the EQAA in the EAC. The Chapter is organized to present and discuss the background to the formation of each Commission/Council, the legal frameworks, the Governance models, the QA tools and instruments in use, the processes pursued and concludes with a comparative analysis of all the EQAA principles and practices documented.

4.2. National Commission for Higher Education-BURUNDI

4.2.1 Background

The NCHE-Burundi was established on 10th January 2008 by a Decree Numbered 100/12, while the appointment of members of the commission was effected on 5th January 2011 by a Decree Numbered 100/05. However, Since 11th November 2014, a new decree (N°100/258) which recognises the NCHE-Burundi has been put in place.

4.2.2. Structure of Burundi Education System

Education in Burundi was organized into five levels namely kindergarten (3 years), primary school (6 years), first level of secondary school (4 years), second level of secondary school (3 years for general fields and 4 years professional fields) and university studies (4 years for license degree except engineers (5 years) and medicine (7 years)).

In 2011, two reforms namely the Basic education, and the Bologna system (Bachelor, -Master-Doctorate: BMD) were established. Currently, Burundi's education system includes the following cycles: kindergarten cycle (3 years), Basic Education with four levels (1 and 2th years, 3 and 4th years, 5 and 6th years; 7, 8 and 9th years), the post-basic cycle (3 years for general fields and 4 years for professional fields), university studies including three cycles namely the Bachelor (3 years), Master (2 years) and PhD (3 years). The medicine studies are currently reduced to 6 years. (Table 1) illustrates the distinctions between the last and the new system.

Table 1: Illustration of Burundi education system

LAST SYSTEM			NEW SYSTEM			
4						
3	Doctorate		3	Doctorate		
2			2			
1			1			
2	Master		2	Master		
1			1			
7	Medicine					
6			6	First cycle of University studies	Medicine	
5	Engineer		5			
4			4			Bachelor
3			3			
2	License		2			
1			1			
4	Second level of secondary school	Professional fields	4	Post-basic cycle	Professional fields	
3		General fields	3		General fields	
2				2		
1			1			
4	First level of secondary school			Basic Education	Forth level	
3			9			
2			8			
1			7			
6	Primary school	Third level	6	Basic Education	Third level	
5			5			
4		Second level	4			
3			3			
2		First level	2		Second level	
1			1			
3	Kindergarten		3	Kindergarten	First level	
2			2			
1 Year			1 Year			

4.2.3 Legal framework

Before the implementation of the NCHE-Burundi, universities were still few in number and their management in terms of opening authorization, recognition/agreement, and implementation was done by the Director General under the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research.

(a) Mandate

Section 1, article 5 of the decree N° 100/258, indicates that the NCHE-Burundi’s general mission is the regulation, monitoring and evaluation of higher education. As such, it is responsible in particular for:-

- i. Providing guidance in the development of planning actions, implementation and control of higher education in accordance with the general policy of the Government;

- ii. Providing guidance and advice to the Minister supervising on any interesting project or subject of higher education;
- iii. Ensuring compliance with ethics as well as teaching staff recruitment standards within higher education institutions;
- iv. Proposing legal texts governing higher education;
- v. Analyzing compliance with national, regional and international standards, specific texts to educational institutions including academic regulations of the various public and private higher education institutions;
- vi. Ensuring a permanent monitoring compliance with the conditions for opening establishments and accreditation of educational programmes;
- vii. Managing the process of harmonization of higher education training;
- viii. Reviewing and approving the training offers submitted by higher education institutions;
- ix. Determining the criteria for passing classes and cycles in higher education institutions;
- x. Coordinating evaluation activities of higher education institutions and monitoring the implementation of the BMD reform including quality assurance and monitoring implementation of the accreditation system;
- xi. Examining the programme equivalence application files and notifying the appropriate Minister;
- xii. Establishing criteria for student mobility, capitalization and credit transfers;
- xiii. Ensuring harmonization of the Burundi higher education system with the education systems of other countries in general and those of the sub-region and the African Community in particular;
- xiv. Contributing to the promotion of higher education by encouraging publications, organization of training and seminars, etc.;
- xv. Formulating, for the Government, any suggestion to effectively support higher education in all its aspects.

(b) Governing Board

The NCHE-Burundi is under the direct authority of the Minister responsible for Higher Education. The administrative activities of the Commission are performed by the Permanent Executive Secretary.

The Commission meets every two months in regular sessions convened by its Chairperson. It may also, whenever appropriate, meet in extraordinary sessions at the request of the Minister responsible for Higher Education, but such a meeting would normally be convened by the Commission's Chairperson, or at a written request of one third of its members.

Members of the Commission make suggestions and decisions on all issues of Higher

Education. The Commission has Committees whose meetings may be held if the quorum of two thirds of its members is reached. The commission deliberates by absolute majority vote of the members present. In case of a tie in voting, the Chairperson has the decisive vote. The Executive Secretary is an ex-officio, therefore has no vote.

(c) The Secretariat

- i. Leadership
- ii. Structure (Directorates/Departments)
- iii. Staffing
- iv. Facilities (Soft and Hardware)
- v. Funding mechanisms

(d) Structure

With the former Decree (N°100/12), the NCHE is composed of 21 members including 3 from the Bureau (President, Vice President and Permanent Executive Secretary) and 18 from a college of members.

Members of the committee are appointed by decree, upon proposal of the Minister having Higher Education in its attributions for a term of 5 years renewable.

The Deputy Chairman of the Commission is also the Director General of Higher Education and then the Chairman and the Permanent Executive Secretary must have higher academic degrees and relevant experience in higher education management. On top of the Director General of higher education, other members of the commission are representative of public (5) and private (5) Higher education institutions, second vice-presidency (1), experts with a relevant experience in higher education management (2), public enterprises (1), private companies (1), civil society (1) and parents (1). The NCHE has staff and support material equipment.

This new Decree (N°100/258) indicates that the commission will be composed of the bureau, the college members and the Permanent Executive Secretariat. The members of the bureau (Chairman, Deputy Chairman and Permanent Executive Secretary) are chosen among experts of higher education with higher academic degree and experience.

The board members will be composed of representatives of public (7) and private (5) higher education institutions, second vice-presidency (1), public enterprises (1), private companies (1), civil society (1) and parents (1). With the former Decree (N°100/12), the commission has five sub-commissions respectively in charge of the programmes assessment and reform “BMD”, the inventory of current practices in

Burundi Higher Education Institutions, the inventory of current practices in neighboring countries higher education systems, the recognition of diplomas and university degrees and the equivalence of diplomas and academic qualifications.

This new Decree (N°100/258) indicates that the NCHE will thus have three sub committees respectively for programmes development, quality assurance assessment and registration, agreement and accreditation. It will also oversee the recognition committee and equivalencies of diplomas school and university titles. As permanent staff, the NCHE will recruit 8 experts respectively 2 in the exact sciences, two in the life sciences, two in languages and literature and two in social sciences.

4.2.4 Quality Assurance tools adopted by the NCHE-Burundi

The assessment tools were approved in 2011 and reviewed in 2012-2013. The NCHE has remained open for continuous improvement of its quality assurance tools listed below:

- a) Terms of reference (TORs) for evaluating an application for opening a new institution;
- b) Quality Assessment Tool in Higher education institutions adopted in 2012-2013 and revised in 2014 by the General Assembly of the NCHE (institutional assessment);
- c) Assessment Tool for tax exemption application on infrastructure building materials;
- d) Application Procedures for recognition, agreement or accreditation of educational programmes/institutions;
- e) TORs for complementary survey for recognition/agreement of the programmes;
- f) TORS of harmonization process adopted by IUCEA and used by NCHE-Burundi;
- g) QA Handbook, Volume 1 and Volume 2 of IUCEA translated in French for internal and external assessment of academic programmes;
- h) TORs of presenting the programme document;
- i) TORs of higher education institution annual report presentation;
- j) TORs of presenting an academic calendar;
- k) TORs of recognition of academic awards.

Others are decrees and ministerial orders that provide guidelines and procedures of academic subjects and administrative governance of a higher education institution.

4.2.5 QA Processes Followed by the NCHE-Burundi

While aiming to assure quality within the higher education institutions, the NCHE-Burundi follows a set of processes as illustrated in Table (2).

Table (2) illustrates the activity, process and decision followed by NCHE-Burundi

Activity	Process	Decision
Evaluation of applications for establishment of a new institution	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An application letter addressed to the Ministry with a copy to the President of the NCHE is made; 2. The Application that includes the statutes document, curriculum design, programmes processes, and the name of the intended institution is submitted to the Commission; 3. A Preliminary analysis by the legal advisers of the NCHE is conducted on the submitted application; 4. A site visit exercise is made by a team of experts who make a report; 5. The experts report is thereafter analyzed by the Assembly of the NCHE-Burundi; 6. A communication is made on the findings and recommendation to the Minister; and 7. and the institution is informed of the recommendations. 	<p>Ministerial order for authorization to open</p> <p>or Revocation for new application</p> <p>Directives for improvement based on recommendations of NCHE assembly</p>
Opening of new programs within existing higher education institution	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Application for other requests such as submission of documents including the training offer, 2. Visits of experts and report 3. Analysis of the report and file by the meeting of the 	<p>Ministerial Order of authorization to open or</p> <p>Revocation for a new application</p>
Applications for recognition/ agreement and accreditation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Application letter addressed to the Ministry of Higher Education 2. Application submission including programme document, academic timesheet, the Diploma specimen to deliver 3. Organization of a validation workshop 4. Transmission of the report to the NCHE 5. ° Further investigation by visiting the institution 6. Analysis of the two reports by the Assembly of the NCHE 7. Transmission of conclusions to the Ministry 	<p>Recognition/agreement or Accreditation Ministerial order</p> <p>Revocation for new application</p> <p>Directives for improvement based on recommendations of NCHE assembly</p>
Monitoring and evaluation/audits	<p>Impromptu visits of members of the NCHE</p> <p>External assessment of the programs</p> <p>Annual report of institutions</p>	<p>Universities Ranking Reports, sent recommendations, Letter sent to institutions decrees and ministerial orders for regulation</p>
Recognition of academic awards	<p>Application submission to the NCHE</p> <p>Analysis of the application by the National Committee</p>	<p>Recognition or not of the academic awards</p>
Equivalence of degrees and other qualifications	<p>Application submission to the NCHE</p> <p>Analysis of the application by the national commission of equivalence of degrees and other qualifications</p>	<p>Ministerial Order granting equivalence</p> <p>Revocation of the application</p>

4.2.6 Management of QA decisions

Requests for permission to open (a new higher education institution or a new program) as well as for the approval of programs are addressed to the Minister in charge of higher education and research.

The Minister sends the file for analysis and opinion to the CNES, which is the strategic body of the Ministry for higher education (cf. art. 16 of Decree No. 100/50 of 20 February 2013 on the organization of higher and / or private university institutions). The next phase is dictated by the results of the general meeting. The reports of the General Assembly of the CNES contain the decisions and recommendations, which are transmitted to the Minister having Higher Education and Scientific Research in its attributions for the comments and the implementation of the decision.

Indeed, reports of meetings of the General Assembly of the CNES highlight of the issued conclusions and recommendations to address to the higher educational institutions, or to carry out any improvements designed to help the development of the university.

- a) The recommendations are made in order to help universities to correct the deficiencies related to the quality and other requirements.
- b) Regarding the decisions, they are forwarded to the Minister in charge of higher education and scientific research, for approval. This allows transparency in management of decisions.
- c) It is rare that decisions proposals are refuted by the Minister. This has happened before, and the refusal concerned the name of the university and did not affect the content of the proposed programs.

The procedures are contained in Decree No. 100/50 of 20 February 2013 cited above, as well as in the procedures manual of the CNES.

Follow up on decisions that are taken on each request, are carried out by the CNES. To this end, the group of evaluators, who is part of the subcommittee of the evaluation of HEIs and -BMD- reform (Bachelor-Master-Doctorate), conduct field assessment. The evaluation focuses on both the status of the university or institute and its program, as well as the environmental report which support the training offer. In principle, the newly established HEIs are entitled to an assessment within three months after its creation.

- The evaluation for an open request is made by an ad hoc Sub-Committee; recommendations are made by the General Assembly of the CNES, forwarded by the Secretariat of the CNES to be approved at ministerial level. Monitoring the implementation of recommendations is again carried out by the CNES. If the recommendations were not followed, the file is returned for analysis at the next

session of the CNES, which is held every two (2) months.

Institutional evaluation has three (3) major objectives:

- 1) The recommendations provide guidance that enable the development of the institution,
- 2) The institution uses recommendations to advocate for funding of the institution and training
- 3) The institution makes updating the structures of the institution and staff recruitment, as well as materials to be filled.

- Regarding requests for approval of programs, there are two types of amendment:

1st Case: Minor amendments (concerning the form most commonly)

2nd Case: Substantive amendments (relating to the incomplete number of credits, in an overstatement / understatement of course, an inconsistent program etc.)

In the first case, corrections are made and sent to the secretariat to be approved in ordinary session of the General Assembly.

In the second case, the University is recommended to correct any deficiencies and report the different authorities of the institution. It is also recommended to inform students.

- The conformity assessment of academic qualifications is also under an ad hoc sub-committee, chaired by the Director General of Higher Education.

The reports are also forwarded to the Minister for decision through an order.

- It is the same for the sub-committee of the endorsement of degrees and other academic qualifications.

- On the issues of all procedures and all appeals, if there were appeals an order authorization / program accreditation is granted.

Programs need to be revisited every 5 years (after graduating from a promotion).

4.3 Commission for University Education – Kenya

4.3.1 Background

The education system in Kenya comprises of 8 years primary education, 4 years secondary education; and 4 years university education popularly known as the 8:4: system). Admission into university requires the attainment of Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education with an aggregate of C+ or equivalent, or Kenya National Examination Council Diploma with credit pass or equivalent. Currently there are a total of 67 university institutions (67), made up of 31 public universities (22)

chartered universities and (9) constituent colleges; and (36) private universities (17) chartered universities, (13) universities operating under Letter of Interim Authority, (1) institution operating with Certificate of Registration, and 5 constituent colleges. These are established under the Universities Act No. 42 of 2012. In all instances, the notion of Quality assurance is fulfilled by the Commission for University Education and other relevant Professional bodies.

In total, there are over 1,400 public institutions granting diploma and certificates, at both the public and private categories. The public institutions are established by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, under the Education (TVET) Act, and by other Government departments; while the private institutions are registered by the TVET Authority (TVET-A) and established under the Companies Act. The custody of assuring quality in the above context is bestowed on the TIVETA and Professional bodies.

4.3.2 The Legal Framework of the Commission for University Education (CUE) - Kenya

The Commission was established in 1985 as the Commission for Higher Education, under an Act of Parliament, Universities Act Cap 210 B as a body corporate, with legal mandate focusing on private universities, which were eleven (11) at the time. This was because public universities were deemed to be self-accrediting, and their governing Councils had representations from various government departments. However, due to rapid expansion of universities and other associated factors such as the cross border provision of higher education; and challenges in financing among others; it was deemed necessary to have a body that would be responsible for the conduct and quality of higher education, hence the creation of CUE. Subsequently, a new Act was enacted in December 2012. The Universities Act No. 42 of 2012 also expanded the functions of the Commission to include public universities. In order to operationalize the Universities Act, the Universities Regulations 2014 was gazetted by the Cabinet Secretary. These instruments stipulate the objects of university education; governance and management of universities; establishment of a University; establishment of a Technical University; establishment of a specialized university; establishment of a constituent colleges and a campus; accreditation and quality audit of academic programme and institutions; collaboration between foreign universities and local institutions; licensing of student recruitment agencies; recognition and equation of foreign qualifications; and management of data on university education. All these changes were brought into effect with a view to improve quality of university education in Kenya.

The Act also stipulates the mandate and functions of the Commission as enshrined under Section 5 (1) and they include: -

- a) Promoting the objectives of university education;
- b) Advising the Cabinet Secretary on policy relating to university education;
- c) setting standards and assuring relevance in the quality of university education;
- d) Monitoring and evaluating the state of university education systems in relation to the national development goals;
- e) Licensing any student recruitment agencies operating in Kenya and any other activities by foreign institutions;
- f) Developing policy for criteria and requirements for admission to universities;
- g) Recognising and equating degrees, diplomas and certificates conferred or awarded by foreign universities and institutions in accordance with the standards and guidelines set by the Commission from time to time;
- h) Undertaking or causing to be undertaken, regular inspections, monitoring and evaluation of universities to ensure compliance with set standards and guidelines;
- i) Collecting, disseminating and maintaining data on university education;
- j) Accrediting universities in Kenya;
- k) Regulating University education in Kenya;
- l) Accrediting and inspecting university programmes in Kenya;
- m) Promoting quality research and innovation ; and
- n) Performing such other functions and exercise such other powers as the Commission may deem necessary for the proper discharge of its mandate under the Act.

4.3.3. Governance

The governance structure of CUE is prescribed in the Universities Act, No. 42 of 2012, and comprises the Governing Board – (the Commission), which has an oversight on policy issues, and the Secretariat which deals with the Management aspects. The Commission has further clearly documented its vision statement, mission statement, mandate, quality policy statements, and corporate values

a) Governing Board

In the 1985 Act, the Governing Board of the Commission, was large and comprised of 28 members who were appointed by representation from various arms of the Government and the private sector. The Kenya Constitution of 2010, limits the number of board members in organizations to nine (9) for purposes of ensuring efficiency, effectiveness and accountability. To be consistent with the Constitution, the Universities Act No. 42 of 2012 has prescribed the procedure for appointment of members of the Commission, and has limited membership to eight (8), excluding the Commission Secretary / Chief Executive Officer of the Commission who is an ex-officio member.

The eight members of the Commission consists of the Chair and five (5) members

who are appointed by the Cabinet Secretary responsible for university education through an open process, for a period of three years as prescribed in the Universities Act, section 6(1). The Chairperson must hold a doctorate degree and have ten years' experience in leadership and management of a public or private institution. The other five (5) members each, must hold a Master's degree and five (5) years' experience in leadership, management or academia. The two members from government are the Principal Secretary in the Ministry responsible for university education, and the Principal Secretary in the Ministry responsible for Finance. It is expected that a member of the Commission shall have high moral character and integrity in accordance with the Constitution of Kenya.

The members of the governing organ of the Commission are responsible for the overall governance of the organization, and are accountable to the stakeholders for ensuring that the Commission complies with the requisite laws and best practice in corporate governance as promulgated by relevant authorities.

b) The Secretariat

There is a full-time Secretariat established under Section 12 (1) and (2) of the Act. It is headed by a Commission Secretary, who is also the Chief Executive Officer, and who must hold a doctorate degree with at least ten (10) years' experience in management of a university. The Secretariat is structured into four (4) Divisions, namely, Accreditation; Quality Audit Division and Standards; Planning, Research and Development; and Administration and Finance. Each Division is headed by a Deputy Commission Secretary with requisite qualifications, and they oversee Departments headed by Senior Assistant Commission Secretaries. The Senior staff are recruited on a competitive basis.

c) Management Structures

The Commission executes its functions and operations through the Secretariat and specialist Committees. The Committees examine and determine specific issues and advise the Commission on the appropriate course of action to be taken. The Secretariat and the Committees engage the services of resource persons to perform specialized tasks as provided for under Section 5 (2) of the Act. Additionally, the Commission operates on a Five (5) Year Strategic Plans, Annual Financial Plans, Risk Management Plans, Performance Contracts with the Government; and ISO Standards. The specialist Committees of the Commission are:

- a) Strategy, Resources and General Purposes Committee;
- b) Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee; and
- c) Quality Assurance Committee.

4.3.4. Quality Assurance Tools and Instruments

The CUE has designed and developed a number of quality assurance tools/instruments to enable it manage and control the quality of higher education provision in Kenya. These tools and instruments include:-

- a) Universities Act, No. 42 of 2012
- b) Universities Regulations, 2014
- c) Universities Standards and Guidelines, 2014 which include:
 - i. Institutional standards;
 - ii. Standards on physical resources;
 - iii. Standards and guidelines for academic programmes;
 - iv. Standards and guidelines for open, distance and e-learning;
 - v. Standards and guidelines for university libraries;
 - vi. Standards for technical universities;
 - vii. Standards for Specialized degree awarding institutions;
 - viii. Minimum Standards for academic programmes for credit transfer; and
 - ix. Guidelines for recognition and equation of foreign qualifications.
- d) A Road Map to Quality: Handbook for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (Volumes 1-4), under the auspices of the Inter-University Council for East Africa. The Commission has been central in the development of a Harmonized East African Quality Assurance Mechanism, and has incorporated the provisions of these Handbooks into its legal and management instruments.

4.3.5 Quality Assurance Principles

The Commission for University Education in Kenya applies a number of principles while undertaking quality assurance activities. These include:-

- a) Recognising that quality control and quality assurance are primarily the responsibility of the institutions of higher learning, but the Commission supports universities' efforts;
- b) Respecting the autonomy, identity and integrity of universities;
- c) Maintaining standards that have been subjected to consultation with the stakeholders;
- d) Benchmarking with international standards through attachment of staff to other Quality Assurance Agencies, attendance of international workshops, training, and networking;
- e) Contributing towards quality enhancement and accountability of higher education institutions;
- f) Sourcing resource persons and experts for universities, research institutions, professional bodies, and industry;
- g) Basing its quality assurance activities on Self-Assessment by institutions and External Peer review;
- h) Regularly training resource persons and experts for external review activities; and
- i) Using Specialist Committees and approval by the Governing Board.

4.3.6. Processes and steps in Quality Assurance in Kenya

The summary of key processes of Quality Assurance in Kenya are given in Table 3

Table 3: Summary of quality assurance processes

Activity	Process	Decision
<p>Establishment of a private university</p>	<p>a) Application to establish a university can be made by a sponsor (person or body corporate) on prescribed format with appended Proposal indicating the need to set up such an institution and then include available resources;</p> <p>b) Assessment of Proposal based on a prescribed criteria, under the Universities Regulations 2014;</p> <p>c) Site visit for inspection of institution by Inspection Committee of CUE to verify availability of resources (human, financial, infrastructure, facilities, library, and other resources) ;</p> <p>d) Preparation of Inspection Report;</p> <p>e) Approval of academic programmes (See programme accreditation process);</p> <p>f) Approval of the Proposal by the Commission is communicated to institution by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of CUE;</p> <p>g) Award of LIA is done by the Cabinet Secretary; and</p> <p>h) Thereafter the University name and details is entered into the Directory of Approved Universities in Kenya and posted on CUE website: www.cue.or.ke.</p> <p>Institutions operating with LIA may be inspected every year by CUE to gauge status of progress.</p> <p>Powers of LIA, is set up by the Governing Council (Council, Senate, management Board) and continuous development of physical facilities, advertising academic programmes and admitting students.</p>	<p>Approval by the Commission</p> <p>At any stage of evaluation or assessment, if report is not satisfactory the university make necessary revisions</p> <p>If satisfactory LIA is granted and gazetted by Cabinet Secretary for a duration of 4 years.</p>
<p>Establishment of Constituent a College of a public University</p>	<p>a) Proposal by a chartered public university for a College to be a Constituent College (Consultation with Cabinet) (Include available resources) is submitted to CUE;</p> <p>b) Assessment of the Proposal by CUE based on prescribed criteria in the Universities Regulations 2014 is carried out;</p> <p>c) Inspection of the institution to verify availability of resources including human capital, financial, infrastructure, facilities, library, and other resources is done;</p> <p>d) Assessment of draft Legal Notice is made and if satisfactory;</p> <p>e) Approval by Commission for institution to be declared a Constituent College is effected;</p> <p>f) The Cabinet declares the College as a Constituent College through a legal Notice;</p> <p>g) The decision is communicated to sponsor done by the CEO of CUE; and</p> <p>h) The institution detail is entered into the Directory of recognised universities in Kenya and posted on CUE website: www.cue.or.ke.</p> <p>It should be noted that qualifications awarded under this arrangement is done through the Senate of the mentoring university. Institutions operating with Legal Notice may be inspected every year by CUE for status of progress.</p>	<p>Approval by CUE Governing Board</p> <p>At any stage of evaluation or assessment, if report is not satisfactory the university make revisions</p> <p>If satisfied Legal Notice granted by Cabinet Secretary for a duration of 3 years and gazetted</p>

Activity	Process	Decision
<p>Accreditation as a fully-fledged University by grant of Charter</p>	<p>a) The institution makes a formal application for grant of Charter during 4th year of LIA or 3rd year of Legal Notice; CUE institutes an Inspection Committee (Panel) to verify resources (human, financial, infrastructure, facilities, library, and other resources);</p> <p>b) The Inspection Committee prepares an Inspection Report for consideration by the Commission for the award of a Charter;</p> <p>c) Assessment of the draft Charter for sound academic and administrative organization of the University is undertaken;</p> <p>d) CUE prepares an Accreditation Report as stipulated in the Universities' Regulations 2014;</p> <p>e) If satisfactory, then recommendation is made to the Commission for Approval for grant of Charter;</p> <p>f) Recommendation on approval is communicated to the President through the Cabinet Secretary for the grant of a Charter;</p> <p>g) A Charter is granted by the President of Kenya;</p> <p>h) The University is entered into Directory of Chartered Universities and website www.cue.or.ke;</p> <p>i) If not satisfactory, but some progress in being made, LIA may be renewed for 4 years, and Legal Notice status renewed for 3 years; and</p> <p>j) If institution is not making progress or unlikely to make any progress, the LIA or Legal Notice may be revoked by the Cabinet Secretary through gazette notice.</p>	<p>Approval for award of Charter by Commission</p> <p>At any stage of evaluation or assessment, if report is not satisfactory the university makes necessary revisions</p> <p>If satisfied Charter is awarded by President and gazetted</p>
<p>Institutional Audit</p>	<p>a) Every 5 years and institution will prepare and submit to CUE a detailed Self-Assessment Report as per the prescribed guidelines in the Universities Act and Regulations;</p> <p>b) CUE constitutes quality Audit Panel;</p> <p>c) CUE organises training of peer reviewers (Panel);</p> <p>d) The Panel conducts a site visit of institution by based on Self-Assessment Report (SAR), inspect facilities, and interview various stakeholders;</p> <p>e) Panel prepares an Exit Report after site visit and presents to the University;</p> <p>f) The Panel prepares an Institutional Quality Audit Report with recommendations for quality improvement;</p> <p>g) If quality audit is satisfactory above scale 3 (on a scale of 1-7), the report is tabled to the Commission for adoption and approval;</p> <p>h) The Commission grants Institutional Quality Audit Certificate to the institution;</p> <p>i) If audit not satisfactory, the institution is given one year to address the shortcomings; and</p> <p>j) If within a year, the recommendations are not adequately addressed, and the university is unlikely to address the shortcomings, then the Charter may be revoked by the President and the university must transfer students to other universities in line with the Universities Act.</p>	<p>Approval is by the Commission</p> <p>If Charter is revoked, the institution is degazetted and removed from register of chartered universities</p>

Activity	Process	Decision
<p>Accreditation of academic programme (Proposed Universities and Universities with LIA)</p>	<p>a) The University submits a Curriculum/academic programme prepared in line with CUE guidelines (Universities Regulations, 2014), and approved by its Senate (LIA) or approved by the Senate of the mentoring University (Constituent College);</p> <p>b) An evaluation of the Curriculum by a Panel of experts is carried out with three main decisions, namely minor amendments; major amendments; and re-design;</p> <p>c) Recommendations are communicated to the sponsor or institution by the CEO of CUE for revision;</p> <p>d) The University resubmits the revised or redesigned Curriculum to CUE as follows;</p> <p>i. Revised Curriculum with minor amendments checked by Secretariat</p> <p>ii. Revised Curriculum with major amendments checked by one member of the Panel of peer reviewers</p> <p>iii. Redesigned Curriculum re-evaluated by the 3 members of the Panel;</p> <p>e) If Curriculum is satisfactory, a site visit by the Panel is conducted to verify academic resources;</p> <p>f) For professional programmes, approval is dependent on the basic requirements on which the programme depends, and is on offer at the University, and submission of Letter of Consent by a professional body in the case;</p> <p>g) If academic resources are adequate, the programme is tabled to the Quality Assurance Committee for adoption and recommendation to the Commission for Approval;</p> <p>h) Approval is granted by the Commission and stamped of approval appended and signed by CEO of CUE;</p> <p>i) Approved programme is forwarded to sponsor / institution for implementation; and</p> <p>j) The approved programme is entered into the CUE website: www.cue.or.ke</p>	<p>Approval for accreditation is granted by the Commission</p> <p>If programme is does not meet standards in spite of revisions or if the programme not resubmitted within 4 years the evaluation process will be suspended and a new resubmission required</p>
<p>Accreditation of academic programme (Chartered Universities)</p>	<p>a) The University submits to CUE the following within 6 months after launching the programme:</p> <p>i. Curriculum designed in line with CUE guidelines (signed by VC),</p> <p>ii. Report on needs assessment on the proposed programme (appended to Curriculum),</p> <p>iii. Minutes of approval of programme by Senate of the University,</p> <p>iv. Self-assessment report on available academic resources to support the proposed programme, including profile of academic leader, academic facilities and infrastructure, equipment and learning materials, core-texts and journal, academic and technical staff),</p> <p>v. Commitment Letter from Vice Chancellor (VC) indicating that all academic resources will be available at all times;</p> <p>vi. Evidence of existence of a functional Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) policy, structure and the official appointment of IQA Officer,</p> <p>vii. Evidence of institutionalization of regular review of academic programmes after every cycle (through self-assessment), and</p> <p>viii. A site visit report by Panel of experts to verify academic resources conducted within 6 months. Letter of Consent from relevant professional body where applicable;</p> <p>b) For professional programmes, the approval is dependent on requisite basic programmes on which the proposed programme is dependent is on offer at the university, and Letter of Consent from relevant professional body is submitted;</p> <p>c) If satisfactory, the programme is approved by Commission;</p> <p>d) If not satisfactory revisions are made accordingly as for LIA; and</p> <p>e) Programme is entered into the CUE website: www.cue.or.ke</p>	<p>Approval for accreditation is granted by the Commission</p>

Activity	Process	Decision
<p>Establishment of Campuses</p>	<p>a) Application to establish a campus is by a Chartered university only and must be accompanied with;</p> <p>b) Submission of the campus profile indicating;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Location, address, justification, ii. Resources available for exclusive use by campus (physical, human, library), iii. Academic and administrative staff dedicated to the campus, iv. Proposed quality assurance system, and v. Level of student enrolment; <p>c) The Programme to be offered at campus and mode of delivery;</p> <p>d) Documentary evidence on;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Senate and Council approval of the said Programme, and ii. Documentary evidence of policy on establishment of campuses; <p>e) There is a site visit to verify resources at campus (including environment - conducive to university education),</p> <p>f) The approval of campus by Commission is made; and</p> <p>g) The Campus will only offer and award qualifications through Senate of the University.</p>	<p>Approval for accreditation is granted by the Commission</p>
<p>Collaboration between foreign universities and local institution</p>	<p>a) Application is made by the foreign university seeking collaboration, indicating:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Accreditation status of foreign university, and the programme under collaboration, ii. Evidence that the programme is offered at the foreign university, iii. Evidence that the programme has graduated at a least a cohort of students, iv. The Programme is expected to make not more than 10% of programmes in the local institution; v. Evidence that the Programme is relevant to a specific market niche; vi. The admission criteria meets the Kenyan requirements, vii. Existence of an MoU; <p>b) Assessment of Application by Collaboration Committee is then carried out;</p> <p>c) Assessment of the MOU (institution awarding degree, rights and obligation of students, financial arrangements, variation and termination of MoU) is also done;</p> <p>d) A Site visit of local institution by a Collaboration Committee to verify resources is effected;</p> <p>e) Report on Collaboration is tabled to Quality Assurance Committee of the Commission;</p> <p>f) Commission approves and grants Authority to Collaborate and also grants Certificate of Authority to Collaborate; and</p> <p>g) Institutions under collaboration entered CUE Register and posted on CUE website: www.cue.or.ke</p> <p>Note: Programme under collaboration shall not make more than 10% of programmes in the local institution</p>	<p>Authority to Collaborate approved by the Commission</p> <p>Certificate of Authority to Collaborate is granted to the foreign university by Commission</p>

Activity	Process	Decision
<p>Licensing of Student Recruitment Agencies</p>	<p>a) Application is made by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. The Local agencies recruiting students for admission into foreign universities, Agencies for advertising, exhibiting, and marketing for foreign universities, and Foreign universities directly advertising, exhibiting or recruiting students; iii. Assessment of requirements of agency in done in terms of; <p>b)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Registration under the laws of Kenya, ii. Representation and recruiting of students into accredited foreign universities, iii. Having a physical address in Kenya, and iv. Existence of an MoU between the agency and the foreign university; <p>c) The agency should qualified students into specific accredited foreign universities, carry marketing and liaison activities for foreign universities, provide student services, advertise its services, and operate within the laws of Kenya;</p> <p>d) Commission then conduct site visit of the agency to inspect the suitability of their facilities;</p> <p>e) Report on the Recruitment Agency is tabled to Quality Assurance Committee;</p> <p>f) Approval of the Recruitment Agency by Commission is conducted and the grant of Licence to Operate is effected; and</p> <p>g) Details of the Agency is entered into CUE Register of Recruitment Agencies: www.cue.or.ke</p>	<p>Approval of Student Recruitment Agency by the Commission</p> <p>License to operate granted by the Commission</p>
<p>Recognition and equation of foreign qualification</p>	<p>a) Application by holders of foreign certificates or employers of such, together with payment of requisite fees is made to CUE;</p> <p>b) Assessment of Certificates is done based on: -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Accreditation status of university and programme of award of degree, ii. Membership of the country where the university is located in the regional or international conventions, and iii. Level of previous education; <p>c) Assessment of original copies of the certificates vis-à-vis the certified copies of awards to be recognized or equated; and</p> <p>d) Recognition or Equation Letter granted by the Commission I terms of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Institutional recognition, ii. Programme recognition. 	<p>Approval of recognition granted by the Commission Secretariat</p>
<p>Annual Reports</p>	<p>a) All universities shall submit to the Commission Annual Reports on each year of its operations highlighting achievements and challenges faced during the year, including Financial Reports;</p> <p>b) The annual reports feed into institutional accreditation and institutional audit activities.</p>	<p>For purposes of monitoring quality status</p>
<p>Impromptu Audits</p>	<p>a) The Commission may carry out an audit on any institution as and when it is deemed necessary; and</p> <p>b) Such reports feed into the periodic institutional quality audit.</p>	<p>For purposes of monitoring quality status of a university</p>

4.3.7. Management of QA Decisions

The Commission has specialised Committee for purposes of consideration of reports from the Secretariat. The Committee that deals with quality Assurance issues is the Quality Assurance Committee. The Commission and its Committee meet at least quarterly.

The evaluations process by the Commission addresses both the university's own self-assessment, and other available internal and external reports. Independent external peer reviewers and experts who have been trained by the CUE, and who declare "no conflict of interest" make judgements to the aid the decision-making of CUE. The CUE is independent in its decision-making process based on the provisions of the Universities Act No. 42 of 2012 and the Universities Regulations 2014, therefore third parties cannot influence its judgments. The CUE's decisions are impartial, rigorous, thorough, fair, and consistent, even if the different Panels make judgements, because they are guided by clear criteria, standards, and guidelines. When the CUE advises the government the decisions are made as independently as practicably and possible.

As a matter of principle, CUE uses experts in the relevant field to undertake quality assurance matters on its behalf. The reports from the experts are tabled at the Quality Assurance Committee whose membership is drawn from the Governing Board for recommendation for approval by the Full Commission. The Commission deliberates on the reports and give its final approval which is forwarded to the institution for action. The decisions on various activities are taken as exemplified below :-

a) Decisions on Accreditation

Accreditation usually asks questions such as, "is the institution or programme good enough?" The result is normally the award of a status, recognition, and sometimes of a license to operate within a time-limited validity (also called licensing).

b) Institutional accreditation

Leads to either a yes or no decision whether to grant a Letter of Interim Authority (LIA) or Legal Notice by the Cabinet Secretary responsible for university education, and the decisions are as follow ;

c) Withdrawal of LIA

A LIA is granted by the Cabinet Secretary responsible for university education for a validity period of four years, while the Legal Notice is valid for three years. Thereafter the institution is assessed for award of a Charter. If CUE is not satisfied that the institution should be granted a Charter, but that some progress is being

made, an extension will be given for another 4 years in the case of LIA or 3 years for Legal Notice. However, if the institution is not making progress or is unlikely to make any progress towards being a fully-fledged chartered university, then the LIA or Legal Notice will be revoked and gazetted for public knowledge, with clear procedure of protecting students and staff of the University.

d) Variation or Revocation of Charter

The Charter is awarded by the President is valid as long as the University continues to provide quality education. However, the Charter can be varied to ensure better management of the University, or it can be revoked, if after inspection or audit, it is apparent that the University is unable to contribute to the objectives of university education. The variation or revocation of the Charter by the President is done on recommendation of the Commission through the Cabinet Secretary.

e) Decisions on accreditation of academic programmes

The results of accreditation of academic programmes are basically two, either approved for implementation or not approved. The University is informed during evaluation process.

f) Decisions on quality Audit

Institutional quality audit is based on a scale of 1-7. An institution that scores a satisfactory scale of 4 and above, means that the Commission is satisfied that the University continues to maintain standards of university education, and it is issued with a Certificate of Audit. However, if an institution scores a scale of 3 and below, it means that the Commission is not satisfied with the quality of university education being provided, the institution shall be given one year to address the recommendations in the Quality Audit Report. If after one year, and consequent to an inspection by the Commission, it is evident that the University is unable to, or is unwilling to satisfactorily address the recommendations in the Audit Report, the Charter shall be revoked and the University will make arrangements for students to be admitted into other universities.

4.4. Higher Education Council- RWANDA

4.4.1. Background

In Rwanda the education system is composed of four main levels: Pre-primary, Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Education, with a significant TVET stream at both secondary and higher education levels. In addition there is non-formal education, or Adult Basic Education (ABE) as it is now more commonly referred to. Compulsory education spans the nine years from age 7 to age 15, covering primary and lower secondary education, and is commonly known as Nine Years Basic Education (9YBE). At tertiary level students can pursue their studies in a range of academic directions

or opt to enter an array of technical or vocational fields. For academic direction, it is under higher education. The higher education has the Undergraduate degrees currently require four years to complete, though some higher learning institutions have put in place programmes lasting three years. The programme is based on a credit accumulation and modular scheme (CAMS) system. The qualifications awarded at different tertiary education levels are set out in the Rwandan Higher Education Qualifications Framework.

The Framework has 7 Levels of exit awards: Level 1, Certificate of education; level 2, Diploma in higher education; level 3, Advanced Diploma in higher education; level 4, Ordinary Degree; level 5, Bachelor's Degree with Honours; level 6, Maters Degree and level 7 Doctorate.

The number of students in higher education is 77,512 (as of 2014) in 26 higher learning institutions. There are also five Schools of Nursing and Midwifery with 1,782 students.

4.4.2. Legal Framework

Higher Education Council is a semi-autonomous institution under the Ministry of Education established by Law N°72/03 of 10/09/2013 establishing Higher Education Council and determining its responsibilities, organisation and functioning⁸.

HEC is responsible for securing coherent provision of quality higher education in Rwanda in line with Government policies and priorities. It is also responsible for strategic planning for the higher education sector as a whole and ensuring that institutions are developing and implementing strategic plans in line with national goals and objectives.

The responsibilities of HEC are to:

1. Enhance education and research in the higher learning institutions;
2. Improve the organization and functioning of higher learning institutions;
3. Advise the Government in all matters related to higher education policy and strategies;
4. Set norms and standards for accrediting private higher learning institutions;
5. Monitor the adherence of norms and standards in higher learning institutions;
6. Compare, evaluate and give equivalence to degrees and certificates of higher education level delivered by foreign institutions and those delivered in Rwanda that need authentication including those awarded through distance learning;
7. Coordinate and follow up all activities concerning learning, teaching,

8. This Law repealed the Law Law No. 23/2006 of 28/04/2006 establishing National Council for Higher Education (NCHE).

- evaluation and performance appraisal in higher learning institutions; and
8. Cooperate and collaborate with other regional and international institutions having similar mission.

Mandate

The primary mandate of HEC shall be to enhance quality of education, the modes of providing it within Higher Learning Institutions and make sure that those graduating from such institutions are knowledgeable for the betterment of the Rwandan residents' welfare and development of Rwanda

Vision

The vision of HEC is to build a HE system underpinning Vision 2020 by supporting the development of a dynamic, entrepreneurial and internationally competitive Rwanda through the production of a skilled and educated graduate workforce and the carrying out of research, innovation and knowledge transfer to meet the needs of the economy and enhance the quality of life for all.

4.4.3 Governance

The Board of directors

The Board of Directors of the Higher Education Council has the following responsibilities:

- ✓ To design accreditation standards and norms applicable to different Higher Learning Institutions and to supervise their implementation. Among such standards and norms shall be those of teaching and research staff, those relating to financial management and organization structure cycles of teaching, types of academic awards in Higher Learning Institutions;
- ✓ To monitor the execution of the budget;
- ✓ To compare, evaluate and confirm academic awards that are delivered by foreign higher learning institutions and those delivered in Rwanda;
- ✓ To provide advice on main issues of education in higher learning institutions including those issues concerning creating, merging and closure of such institutions;
- ✓ To approve strategic plan and annual plan of action;
- ✓ To prepare the organization and functioning for the administration organs of the Higher Education Council;
- ✓ To draft the internal rules and regulations of the Higher Education Council;
- ✓ To approve annual budget proposal of the Higher Education Council;
- ✓ To approve grants and donations that are accorded to the Higher Education Council in accordance with the existing laws;
- ✓ To recruit the personnel in accordance with the law;
- ✓ To evaluate and approve activity reports of the Higher Education Council and
- ✓ To monitor the administration of the Higher Education Council

In terms of the organizational and reporting structure, HEC is supervised by the Ministry in charge of Education.

Senior Management:

The Senior Management of HEC is led by the Executive Director. The Executive Director shall direct and coordinate the daily activities of HEC and be responsible for the implementation of Board of Directors' decisions. The Executive Director reports to the Board of Directors of HEC. The Heads of Department of Academic Quality, and Policy, Research & Planning, and the Director of Administration and Finance report to the Executive Director.

In executing his/her duties, the Executive Director is supported by the Director of Departments and the staff of HEC.

4.4.4. Quality Assurance Tools and Instruments

The following policy and regulatory documents guide quality assurance in higher education:

- ✓ General Academic Regulations
- ✓ Academic Workload Planning National Policy and Practice
- ✓ Calculating Academic Staffing in Higher Education Institution
- ✓ Code of Practice Examinations
- ✓ Code of Practice Cross Boarder Trans National Provision.
- ✓ Code of Practice Distance Learning.
- ✓ Code of Practice for Operating Private Higher Education Institutions
- ✓ Forms For Research Student Management
- ✓ Framework And Regulations For Higher Degrees By Research
- ✓ Handbook of Quality
- ✓ Higher Education Institutional Infrastructure and Academics Standards
- ✓ Human Resources Policy & Guidance; Capability Procedure
- ✓ National Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy
- ✓ National Policy on Internal and External Moderation of Higher Education
- ✓ National Policy on Language Teaching In Higher Education
- ✓ National Staff Development Policy For Higher Education
- ✓ National Student Admission Policy
- ✓ Model Student Complaint Procedures
- ✓ National Equality and Diversity Policy For Higher Education
- ✓ National Student Support And Guidance Policy
- ✓ Notes of Guidance: Module Description Form
- ✓ Notes of Guidance: Programme Proposal Form
- ✓ Notes of Guidance: Programme Specification Form
- ✓ Personal Development Planning
- ✓ Procedure for The Validation of Modules and Programmes

- ✓ Public Interest and Disclosure Policy (Whistleblowing') and Procedures
- ✓ Recruitment, Selection and Appointment Policy and Procedures
- ✓ Resource for Personal Development Planning for Research Students
- ✓ Rwanda National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education
- ✓ Staff Development Policy for Public Sector Higher Education Institutions
- ✓ Calculating Academic Staffing In Higher Education Institution
- ✓ Human Resources Policy & Guidance; Disciplinary Procedures
- ✓ National Qualifications Framework
- ✓ Rwanda Degree Classification.

4.4.5 Quality Assurance Processes

Audit Method

The Council has laid down a set of criteria for the conduct of audit. The criteria will serve as guidelines when doing their self-evaluation reports. Audit panels will interpret and apply the criteria to the designated audit areas, with due consideration of the institution's mission, context, goals and level of development of the institution being audited.

The Council employs an audit method consisting of institutional self-evaluation followed by external validation by peers and experts. Self-evaluation requires institutions to develop an audit portfolio, with supporting information and evidence, in which the effectiveness and efficiency of the institution's management of the quality of core academic activities are evaluated against the Council's audit criteria and any other relevant quality criteria the institution has set for itself.

It should be noted that the criteria cover two broad areas which will form the focus of evaluation during the audit:

1. Mission of the institution; links between planning, resource allocation and quality management;
2. Teaching, learning, research, consultancy, knowledge transfer and community engagement.

Table 4 gives the summary of key Quality Assurance processes.

Table 4: Summary of Quality Assurance processes in Rwanda

Activity	Process	Decision
Establishment of a Public higher learning institution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) A public institution of higher learning shall be established by a law. b) A public institution of higher learning shall have a supervising public authority specified by the law establishing it 	Public higher learning institution established by the law
Government subsidized institution of higher learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Government subsidized institution of higher learning shall be established in accordance with the agreement between the Government and its private partner and shall be given legal personality by an Order of the Minister in charge of higher education. • Government subsidized institutions of higher learning shall be managed in accordance with the agreement between the Government and its private partners. 	Legal personality by an Order of the Minister in charge of higher education
Establishment of a private university	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Any individual or legal person, wishing to establish a private higher learning institution, addresses a written application thereof to the Minister in charge of Higher Education for consideration j) The Minister in charge of Higher Education, after examining the provisions of Article 12 of this law makes a decision on the basis of the report made by the National Council for Higher Education. The decision is notified to the applicant within six (6) months from the date the application is received. k) Where the application is accepted, the Minister in charge of Higher Education signs an operating agreement with the applicant. The institution's operating agreement is valid for at least three (3) years with effect from the date of the signature of the agreement mentioned in Article 14 of the law. This deadline is renewable only once (1) l) The higher learning institution that has obtained operating permit submits a written application for an indefinite approval to the Ministry in charge of Higher Education. m) The definitive operating agreement of a private higher learning institution is granted by a Ministerial Order of the Minister in charge of Higher Education on the basis of the report made by the National Council for Higher Education, within three (3) months from the date of the receipt of the application. The agreement indicates the category of the institution, its educational levels, its faculties, its research centres and its schools as well as academic awards it is allowed to provide. 	<p>Approval by the Ministry of Education</p> <p>If satisfactory an operating agreement is granted by the Minister in charge of Higher Education for a duration of 3years.</p> <p>Definitive operating agreement granted by a Ministerial Order</p>

Activity	Process	Decision
Cross boarder provisions	All foreign institutions which offer higher education programmes in Rwanda, including those higher education institutions subject to the accreditation requirements of other national, regional or international agencies, are subject to meeting the requirements of the Higher Education Council	Meet the requirements of the Higher Education Council
Closure of a higher learning institution	A public, a Government subsidized or a private institution of higher learning may be definitively closed for one of the following reasons: a) failure to conform to the provisions of this Law as well as other laws and regulations in force in Rwanda governing the organization and the functioning of higher education; b) insecurity; c) poor capacity of the institution of higher learning; d) re-organization of higher education; e) failure for the institution of higher learning to address the causes of its temporary closure; f) by common agreement of the parties for a Government subsidized institution of higher learning or on request by the owner for a private institution of higher learning.	The definitive closure of a public institution of higher learning shall be done by a law while the definitive closure of a Government subsidized or a private institution of higher learning shall be done by an Order of the Minister in charge of higher education.
Accreditation of new programs	a) For any new program to start in an accredited higher learning institution, the purpose of the program should be stated and how it is aligned with the mission, goals, and initiatives of the institution. b) The design of the program, Academic quality and integrity, Resources sufficiency should explicitly be provided and meet the minimum quality standards.	

4.4.6 Management of Quality Assurance Decisions

All recommendations on accreditation and quality audit processes are tabled to the Senior Management of HEC after which reports and recommendations are submitted to the Board of Directors for a decision on applications.

The Committee of the Board makes with the technical support of the Executive Director presents the institutional audit reports and applications for accreditation to the Board of Directors. Basing on its wisdom, and the various considerations including:

- Higher Education Policy.
- Higher Education Law.
- Presidential Order on quality academic standards.
- National Qualifications Framework for higher education
- Policy and regulatory guidelines.

If a HLI does not deliver to its mandate in the prescribed ways, it may be suspended temporary and if it fails to correct the issues highlighted, it may be definitely closed

(see above). The same applies to academic programmes.

HEC PARTNERSHIPS

Internationally, HEC has created strong relations with many overseas agencies including the following:

1. Universities Scotland, Edinburgh, Scotland
2. IUCEA: Inter university Council for East Africa
3. DAAD, German Academic Service Exchange
4. INQAHE, International Quality Assurance in Higher Education, Melbourne, Australia
5. CHE, South African Higher Education Accreditation Agency

The Higher Education Council has signed MOUs with these agencies to fulfil its mandate of ensuring that qualifications awarded by Rwanda's institutions are internationally credible.

HEC is currently a member of INQAHE and IUCEA and consistently consults with these agencies in regard to quality assurance

The Higher Education Council receives a great deal of advice on auditing and training through its international engagement. HEC pays particular attention to transnational education in its audits. The aim is to accelerate the government's policy of ensuring provision of quality education that is internationally credible.

4.5 Tanzanian Commission for Universities (TCU)

4.5.1 Background

The education system in Tanzania is based on the 7-4-2-3 system: 7 years of primary school, followed by four years of secondary school leading to Ordinary Level (O-level), followed by two more years leading to the Advanced Level (A-level) On average, a student can complete the Bachelor's degree in three years, although some programmes require more time.

4.5.2 Legal Framework

The Tanzania Commission for Universities (formerly Higher Education Accreditation Council) was established in 1995 and changed its name in 2005 as per Article 4 (1) of Chapter 346 of the laws of Tanzania. According to Article 5 (1a-r) of Cap. 346, TCU is body corporate mandated to accredit and audit quality of universities and their activities on regular basis; recognise awards conferred by foreign HEIs; and monitor to ensure that universities operate according to their approved legal frameworks i.e. their Charters. The TCU is responsible to the Minister of Education & Vocational Training.

(a) Mandate

In addition to the aforementioned functions, TCU also carries out facilitation roles that in one way promote quality assurance practices in HEIs. This includes development of minimum standards and guidelines that aid universities while they carry out self-

assessment at the programmes and institution levels; and training programmes on QA activities as per their Master Plans or as requested by a university.

(b) Governance

As a corporate body TCU has clear vision and mission statements that are realized through its 5-year strategic Master Plan. Working under the auspices of the MoEVT, TCU is made up of Commissioners who are appointed by the Minister to serve in the Commission for the duration of three years. The Commission members are drawn from both public and private organizations that represent various stakeholders of higher education including students. Their backgrounds and required number can be summarized as follows:-

- i. Four Vice Chancellors from accredited universities, two of whom should come from public and private institutions,
- ii. One member from the private sector foundation
- iii. Representative from the Attorney General's Chambers
- iv. Director of HE Tanzania
- v. Representative from the National Assembly
- vi. Representative from the Tanzania Association of Employers
- vii. Representative from the Association of Employers Zanzibar
- viii. Executive Secretary, NACTE
- ix. One member nominated by the MoEVT
- x. Two from the ministry of education, Zanzibar
- xi. Two students
- xii. Representative from Research Academic and Allied Workers union
- xiii. Representative from the NGOs that deal with education activities.

The Commission members are led by a Chairperson and execute their duties through the various established committees that are coordinated by TCU Secretariat.

Currently there are four Committees namely the Accreditation Committee, Admissions Committee, Grants Committee and Staff Appointment & Development Committee. Membership to serve in each committee is as indicated in Article 9 (1-5) of the Universities Act. Likewise, functions of each Committee are documented in Articles 10, 11 and 12 of the Universities Act.

(c) Secretariat

The TCU Secretariat is led by the Executive Secretary. The Executive Secretary is the CEO of the Commission responsible to the Commission for the management of the day-to-day activities of the Commission. The Commission is also mandated to appoint a Deputy Executive Secretary with requisite qualifications, experience, skills and competences. The Deputy Executive Secretary deputizes the Executive Secretary and performs the functions of the Executive Secretary and any other duties that would be directed by the Executive Secretary or the Commission. The Commission further have power to employ other employees of the Secretariat as per needs so as to assist the Executive Secretary for effective operationalization of

the Commission's tasks.

Currently, the Commission has three operational directorates: The Directorate of Finance and Administration, the Directorate of Accreditation & Quality Assurance, and the Directorate of Admissions & Documentation.

4.5.3 Quality Assurance Tools and Instruments

For effective monitoring of universities' activities, TCU has developed tools which form the basis for the accreditation process. Tools that guide audits and accreditation tasks include:-

- a) Universities Act No. 7 or Cap. 346 (URT, 2005)
- b) Universities (Chartering, Registration and Accreditation Procedures) Regulations (URT, 2006)
- c) Roadmap to Quality: Handbook for QA in HE, Vols. 1-3 (IUCEA, 2010)
- d) Quality Assurance Guidelines & Minimum Standards (TCU, 2014)
- e) University Qualifications Framework (TCU, 2012)
- f) Institutional Regular/Impromptu Audit Checklist (TCU, 2015)
- g) HE Students' Admission Guide Book 2015/2016 (TCU, 2015)

4.5.4 Quality Assurance Processes

The TCU conducts four types of accreditation. These are:-

- a) institutional accreditation for purposes of registration, up-grading and re-accreditation;
- b) programme accreditation;
- c) Students' admission audit; and
- d) academic awards accreditation for the purpose of comparability and recognition as per Tanzanian minimum standards.

The institutional accreditation involves two staggered steps – Provisional License (PL) and Certificate of Accreditation (CoA). It is worth mentioning that sometimes evaluation and quality activities are conducted based on a combined effort of the commission and relevant recognized professional bodies. Activities implemented and processes involved in accreditation processes are summarized in Table 5.

Table 5: Summary of Quality Assurance processes in Tanzania

No.	Activity	Processes	Decision
1	Establishment of a new institution	Submission of an application to TCU for a provisional license	
	i) Provisional License	<p>a) Application is done by filling the TCU Form No. 1 the prescribed documentation. The application is submitted with:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Project write-up for the proposed university, ii. Master plan for both short & long term development of the proposed university, iii. Implementation plan for the master plan, iv. Evidence of basic resources for development of the proposed university, v. Title deed or offer in the name of the proposed university, vi. Draft curricular for initial programmes, student admission requirements & proposed fee, vii. Draft charter as per universities Act or in case of a university with a foreign charter, the approved charter of the university together with a supporting letter from the foreign body that accredited the university, and viii. The details about the applicant showing clearly the proposed location of the proposed institution as well as other details as shall be determined by the commission; <p>b) The Commission considers the application through physical visit to the proposed university by technical evaluation committee (TEC) of 3 – 5 external experts in the relevant fields;</p> <p>c) The TEC evaluates the proposed institution resources based on the TCU form No. 2 which take note of 1-5 levels of compliance;</p> <p>d) If the report bears positives scores of 3 and above, the ACM discusses it and recommends to the Commission for approval; and</p> <p>e) If the TEC report reflect scores under 3, the Secretariat advices the management of the proposed institution to re-address given shortfalls before the TEC would re-evaluate the university.</p>	<p>Approved for Provisional License using TCU F. No. 3A</p> <p>The report is forwarded to the university for addressing shortfalls</p>
	ii) Certificate of Accreditation (CoA)	<p>a) Conditions for the university with PL to be considered for the CoA:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. self-assessment report, ii. a resolution of the Council or governing board of the university indicating its intent to apply for the CoA using TCU Form No. 5, iii. list and qualification s of the academic and senior administrative staff of the university using TCU Form No. 6, iv. information on pedagogical facilities using TCU Forms 7 & 8, v. Approved programmes & related tools; & vi. Fill in the TCU F. No. 9 to confirm application for the CoA; <p>b) The Commission appoints a TEC to evaluate submitted documentation and fills the TCU Form No. 10; and</p> <p>c) If TEC report has scored of 3 and above is tabled in ACM and forwarded to the Commission’s meeting.</p>	<p>Approved for the CoA through TCU Form No 3B</p>

	iii) Re-Accreditation of Accredited Universities	<p>a) Institution prepares & submits to TCU a self-assessment report,</p> <p>b) TCU constitutes TEC to assess adherence of quality practice of the university applied; and</p> <p>c) The evaluation report is tabled in ACM & Commission.</p>	Decision depends on the scores given in the report
	iv) Impromptu Visits/Audits	<p>a) conducted as the need arises, normally after complaint from the public on malpractices in a given university;</p> <p>b) constituted TEC is given the ToRs; and</p> <p>c) The report is tabled in either regular or special ACM & Commission.</p>	Decision is communicated to the university management for addressing the complaints
2	Accreditation of Programmes	<p>a) Institution submits the proposed programme based on the TCU template through programme management system (PMS);</p> <p>b) Upon receipt the proposed programme is forwarded to 3 external peer reviewers for evaluation process; and</p> <p>c) The peer report is tabled in the ACM & Commission.</p>	<p>If the results are positive the programme is approved by the Commission.</p> <p>If the programme scores below 3 the shortfalls are communicated to host University for revising</p>
3.	Accreditation of Student Admitted to HEIs	<p>a) Admission to the HEIs is done through Central Admission System (CAS);</p> <p>b) Potential students apply online to five institutions of one's choices with two programmes from each university;</p> <p>c) The Secretariat assesses the qualities of all applicants and the system allocates students to institutions based on the institution's capacity, minimum cutoff points and priority; and</p> <p>d) List of successful applicants in the Admission Committee is forwarded to the Commission for approval.</p> <p>N.B. There is room for appeals and reallocation.</p>	List of successful applicants is posted in the TCU website: www.tcu.go.tz
4	Recognition of Academic Awards	<p>a) People with awards conferred by foreign universities outside Tanzania, submit to TCU documentation that indicate their academic profile at and prior to the attainment of the current award; and</p> <p>b) The Secretariat verifies the documentation & registration status of the conferring university prior to making a decision.</p>	Depends on the registration status of the awarding institution

4.5.5 Management of Quality Assurance Decisions

As pointed out in section 4.5.1 all decisions on accreditation and quality audit processes are channeled to the Commission meetings for approval through the Accreditation Committee Meetings (URT, 2005; 2006). Decisions reached by the Commission are documented and communicated to the host universities for implementation and records. The decision of the Commission to grant the PL enables the proposed university to:-

- a) Develop physical infrastructure and facilities for academic and administrative functions of the university,
- b) Finalise the draft charter or approval of a charter (in case of a foreign university),
- c) Advertise for and appoint initial academic, administrative, technical and support staff,
- d) Finalise the government structure and units such as schools, faculties, departments and other units required for the operation of the proposed university,
- e) Finalise the curricula for the proposed programmes, mode of delivery and fee structure,
- f) Prepare administrative and academic policies including the prospectus as well as by-laws and other relevant regulations,
- g) Submit documentation to the Commission for validation and approval,
- h) Invite the Commission for technical evaluation of the progress made,
- i) The Commission is expected to annually publish in newspapers, the list of universities with PLs. The PL granted by the Commission will be valid for 3 years and the university is required to complete the TCU Form No. 4; however, it may be renewed for a period of another 3 years. The Commission further insists that PL should never be transferrable. It may as well be revoked by the Commission for a good evidence-based reason(s). Likewise, the decision of the Commission to approve the issuance of the CoA enables the accredited university to:
 - i. appear in the list of registered universities in Tanzania,
 - ii. be granted a charter,
 - iii. be permitted to admit students and pay the prescribed Commission fee for every student in the university's nominal role,
 - iv. submit student nominal role not later than one month after the commencement of each academic year using TCU Form No. 11A and TCU Form No.11F,
 - v. be responsible for proper administration of its academic and governance issues,
 - vi. ensure that the minimum standards and procedures prescribed by the Commission are at all times maintained and improved,
 - vii. ensure that no new procedures or programmes of instructions are mounted and regulations in respect thereof are made without the approval of the Commission,
 - viii. submit to the Commission its annual progress reports using TCU Form No. 12,
 - ix. submit to the Commission its audited accounts using TCU Form No. 13,
 - x. conduct programme review after the completion of the programme cycle, depending on the duration of the programme,

- xi. conduct self-assessment for the purpose of re-accreditation after five year,
 - xii. comply with any other requirements as may be issued by the Commission from time to time, and
 - xiii. be subjected to periodic external quality audits and technical evaluation after every five years.
- j) In case the accredited university does not live up to its Master Plan thus failing to make any measurable progress that capture public expectations and internationally accepted standards, the Commission may give such an institution a three months written notice requiring it to remedy the shortcomings identified by the Commission. When the accredited university makes no effort to address the raised shortfalls within the notice period, the Commission shall give the university a one month written notice of its intention to cancel its CoA. An accredited university whose CoA has been cancelled shall be published in the Gazette and any other widely circulated newspapers for public consumption. The accredited university whose CoA has been cancelled shall;
- i. have its charter suspended,
 - ii. not continue with offering of programmes and conferment of academic and other awards and any other academic activities, and
 - iii. the Commission shall direct the institution to make arrangements for transferring its existing students in some other universities within the time prescribed by the Commission.

The cancellation of CoA, however, shall not affect the validity of the awards previously granted or conferred by the university in question when it was still an accredited institution.

4.6. National Council for Higher Education-UGANDA

4.6.1 Background

The Uganda's education system is believed to have evolved from its former colonial masters, the British and it is designed along a 3,7,4,2 and 2 to5 i.e. nursery,/ kindergarten, primary, lower secondary, upper secondary and tertiary levels which ranges from 2 to 5 years depending on the t programme of study. The Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Sports in conjunction with its sister agencies like the Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB), National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) and National Council for Higher Education, plan, implement, assess, regulate, and control the conduct of education in Uganda. There are currently 240,000 students enrolled in the Uganda's higher education institutions. The available statistics indicate that out of the 37 accredited universities, 9 are public and the remainder is private.

As highlighted in Chapter 3, the forces of globalization and internationalization in

the late 1980s is viewed as some of the major factors that led to the new dynamics within the landscape of higher education in Uganda. First, there was reduced funding in the national budget to support higher education provision since government focus shifted to increasing enrolment in both primary and post-secondary levels. Consequently, there emerged an insurmountable demand for those seeking to access higher education training leading to the concept of government liberalizing the higher education sub sector, hence the emergence of the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE).

4.6.2 Legal framework

The NCHE is the higher education regulatory agency mandated by the Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act (UOTIA) of 2001, as amended to control the conduct and provision of higher education training in Uganda. The Vision of NCHE stated as,

“The provision of relevant, broad based, technology driven, dynamic, sustainable and quality higher education accessible to all qualified Ugandans”, and its Mission is to, “to set standards and regulations to ensure that all public and private tertiary education institutions in Uganda create, sustain and provide relevant and quality higher education for all qualified Ugandans to meet the local, national and global higher education challenges of the future”.

a) Mandate

The NCHE’s main functions are derived from Section 5 of the UOTIA as outlined below:-

- i. Implementing the objects of this UOTIA;
- ii. Promoting and developing the processing and dissemination of information
- iii. Advising the Minister on the establishment and accreditation of public and private institutions of Higher Education;
- iv. Receiving, considering and processing applications for :
 - a. the establishment and accreditation of public and private Tertiary Institutions, private Other Degree Awarding Institutions and private Universities; and
 - b. the accreditation of the academic and professional programmes of those institutions in consultation with Professional Associations and Regulatory Bodies;
- v. Registering all institutions of Higher Education established under this Act;
- vi. Receiving and investigating complaints relating to institutions of Higher Education and take appropriate action;
- vii. Monitoring, evaluating and regulating institutions of Higher Learning;
- viii. In co-operation with the relevant government departments, private sector, or

- the different institutions of Higher Education, to evaluate the overall national manpower requirement and recommend solutions to the requirements;
- ix. Ensuring minimum standards for courses of study and equating of degrees, diplomas and certificates awarded by the different public and private institutions of higher learning
 - x. Requiring and ensuring that all universities, whether private or public, adhere to minimum criteria set by the National Council for admission to under-graduate and higher degree programmes;
 - xi. Determining the equivalence of all types of academic and professional those awarded by Uganda institutions of Higher Education for recognition in Uganda;
 - xii. Certifying that an institution of Higher Education has adequate and accessible physical structures and staff for the courses to be offered by it;
 - xiii. Among the different types of institutions of Higher Education;
 - xiv. Ensuring the institutions of Higher Education provide that adequate facilities and opportunities for career guidance and counselling;
 - xv. Collecting, examining and publishing information relating to the different institutions of Higher Education.
 - xvi. Generally advising the Government on policy and other matters relating to institutions of Higher Education;
 - xvii. Performing any other function incidental to the objects of this Act or relating to Higher Education in Uganda or that may be conferred upon it by the

b) The NCHE Governance Structure

Managed by a Secretariat who is headed by an Executive Director, the NCHE is governed by a number of members whose composition and tenure of office is enshrined under Section 7 of the UOTIA. Headed by a Chairperson and deputized by a Vice Chairperson, the NCHE has 18 persons membership derived from the different constituencies as outlined below:-

- a) A representative of the Vice Chancellors of public universities elected from among themselves;
- b) A representative of the Vice Chancellors of private universities elected from among themselves;
- c) One representative of public universities Senate elected from among themselves
- d) One representative of private universities Senate elected from among themselves
- e) Two students one representing universities and one representing tertiary institutions and one of whom shall be a female;
- f) Four members of religious non degree awarding institutions appointed by

- the Minister;
- g) Three representatives one each from commerce, industry and agriculture;
- h) Four persons representing other sectors of higher education, at least one of whom shall be a woman, and one person with disability appointed by the Minister;
- i) The Officer in charge of higher education or his/her representative, from the Ministry responsible for education;
- j) The Executive Director of NCHE; and
- k) One person from the public appointed by the NCHE.

The Chairperson of NCHE is elected by the appointed members who in turn reports to the Minister for approval. The NCHE runs its business through five committees namely Accreditation and Quality Assurance Committee (AQAC) which handles the core business of NCHE i.e. licensing, accreditation and quality assurance matters. Additionally, there are other committees such as the Research, Development and Documentation (RDD), Finance, Management and Administration, and Risk and Audit Management Committees. The NCHE and its committee are required to sit four times a year or as and when there is business to consider. The tenure of office and qualification for a member of NCHE governing council is enshrined in the UOTIA. Members of the governing council serve a five year term which may be renewable once.

c) The Secretariat

The Secretariat of the NCHE is headed by an Executive Director who is the accounting officer and chief executive officer. The day-to-day operations of the secretariat are vested in the Executive Director who reports to the Chairperson. In the execution of the policies of the NCHE, the Deputy Executive Director and Heads of Department, who constitute the Management Team, assist the Executive Director in the day-to-day running of the NCHE affairs. The minimum qualification of the Executive Director is a PhD and at least 10 years of experience heading a University institution.

4.6.3. The Quality Assurance Tools and Instruments

Under sections 5,6,119,123 and 128 of the UOTIA, NCHE is required to make standards and regulations to guide its operations. Since then, the NCHE has operationalized the formulated standards and regulations have into instruments and tools as exemplified below:-

- a) Statutory Instrument Number 63 of 2007 deals with minimum entry requirements into institutions of higher learning;
- b) Statutory Instrument Number 34 of 2008 deals with Quality Assurance matters which include approval of programmes and courses, exam

- regulations, duration of courses, grading and classification of final awards, assessment of academic staff by students and affiliation of institutions.
- c) Statutory Instrument Number 85 of 2005 deals with infrastructure, facilities, and resources.
 - d) minimum standards for courses of study - necessary for transparency in what is taught in institutions and sets the foundation for Credit Accumulation and Transfer Systems (CATS)
 - e) The Higher Education Qualifications Framework
 - f) NCHE has developed Benchmarks for postgraduate studies, recognition of local and foreign qualifications.
 - g) Quality Assurance Framework for Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions is the pillar and guiding principles of quality in higher education provision.
 - h) The licensing process handbook
 - i) The State of Higher Education
 - j) The IUCEA Handbooks, practices and frameworks

4.6.4. Principles of Quality Assurance

The principles of quality assurance within the ambit of NCHE Uganda are derived from the point of view that there is generally no consensus on the definition of the term quality in higher education. The NCHE's perspective holds that quality in education is the "fitness of purpose" of such an educational provision, thereby precipitating the embracement of how the fitness of purpose is guaranteed (assurance), controlled (compliance), audited and assessed. The notion of quality assurance therefore is viewed at two levels namely, the regulatory component i.e. NCHE and at the level of the training institutions. The principles of quality assurance will require training institutions of higher learning to ensure:-

- a) Good governance and management structures of the institutions including separation of powers from the varying organs i.e. owners, trustees, governing council, management and senate;
- b) Strategic planning with clear vision, mission, core values and philosophy of an institutional existence;
- c) Existence of acceptable learning environments i.e. infrastructure and facilities;
- d) Standardized and transparent mechanisms of admission and assessment; and
- e) Observance of the institutional autonomy and academic freedom, while adhering to the rule, regulations and laws in accordance with the Act;

4.6.5. The Quality Assurance Processes

The NCHE follows a number of processes while carrying out its regulator obligations.

These include but not limited to licensing and deregistering of institutions of higher learning, monitoring and evaluation, and assessment audits among others as demonstrated in Table 5

Table 6: Summary of Quality Assurance process in Uganda

No.	Activity	Process followed	Decision/Outcome
1.	Establishment of a new public institution i.e. Universities, Other Degree Awarding Institutions and Other Tertiary Institutions	Establishment of public institutions follows a different process unlike in the private category. First, a decision to establish any public higher education training institution originates from the Cabinet Resolution which is communicated to the Minister of Education, Science, Technology and Sports.	The Minister eventually writes to the NCHE communicating the Cabinet Resolution and directs the NCHE to embark on the process of ensuring that the proposed institution has what it takes to be accredited i.e. existence of land, infrastructure, facilities, staff, curriculum, governance structures among others. Evidence of funding is not a requirement in a public institution since Government provides funds directly to the institution once ready.
2.	Establishment of a new private	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Applicant seeks guidance from NCHE b) Completion and submission of a standard form (requirements are proposal outlining the philosophy, vision and mission, strategic objective, infrastructure, finance, policy documents, desired enrolment, academics etc.) c) internal processing by NCHE to verify statements in the application d) visitation to the premises of the applicant to crosscheck, e) assessment of the programme by external experts f) completion of the visitation report by the NCHE internal organs, g) - informing the applicant of the outcome 	If application is successful, then a license is issued after gazetting. However, if the application is not successful, then it is deferred or rejected.

3.	Monitoring & Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) An institution may be notified prior to a monitoring visit or not, b) Composition of the monitoring team (experts from the relevant specialties), c) visitation to the premises of the institution being monitored (conduct monitoring by talking to people, perusing through documents, observing and making a report), d) submission of the monitoring report to NCHE for internal review and decision making, e) informing the institution of the outcome 	Provide feedback to the institution highlight the key recommendations. If the report is positive commend the institution and encourage continuous improvement, but if it's weak, inform the institution and set timeline for corrective measures.
4.	Section 99 of the UOTIA requires all licensed institutions to carryout institutional self-assessment/ peer assessment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Submission of annual reports to NCHE for review b) training provision to the institution by NCHE on how to carryout self-/ peer assessment, c) NCHE writes to the institution informing them of the timeline to complete its assessment/audit, d) Institution completes its assessment/audit and submits a report to NCHE, e) NCHE reviews the assessment report and informs the institution thereafter 	If the review report is satisfactory, NCHE informs the institution to begin the process of upgrading i.e. for a university, an application for a charter commences and for the other tertiary institutions, an application for a certificate of classification and registration commences. Unsatisfactory reports will require actionable points by the institution on an agreed timeline.
5.	Application for a Charter or Certificate of Classification and Registration	This follows the process in (1) above	
6.	Verification and equating of qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Submission of an application for the activity, b) internal processing e.g. determining that the completeness of the application, c) Crosschecking with the training institutions to confirm the applicant's statements, d) Informing the applicant 	If the application is successful, then a committee in charge of verification meets to endorse and a certificate is issued for the signature of the Executive Director.

4.6.6. Management of QA Decisions

The management of the quality assurance decisions is bestowed on the human resources and the governing council of NCHE. For example, when a prospective applicant seeks for a license, there are requirements that ought to be met by the applicant such as payment of fee, provision of information on a number of areas such as the contact details, physical location, ownership and governance, financial status, infrastructure, facilities, policy documents, academic programmes, staffing and the desired enrolment among others. The required information in the

application forms are guided by the Capacity Indicators in Schedules 4 and 5 of the Quality Assurance Framework for Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions, 2014. The Capacity Indicators is intended to provide a measure of worthiness in each required area of application i.e. any component is excellent if rated as ideal and unacceptable if it is poor.

a) Accreditation

Review of an application by a desk officer responsible for the particular category of the application e.g. university, other degree awarding institution or other tertiary institution. If the application meets the NCHE requirements, the desk officer advises the officer in charge of the category of that application, to proceed with the application process. The said guidance or advice is usually done through a meeting between the officers in order for them to make clarifications. Thereafter, the officer in charge makes a circular to all the technical officers in the department (accreditation and quality assurance) with a desire to ensure transparency so that the subject of the application is known to everyone concerned.

The officer in charge will always request comments on the application with set deadlines. If no comments or objections are raised, the officer in charge contacts the applicants inviting them to attend to NCHE to meet a panel of officers and defend their application. One of the objectives of such a meeting is to enable the applicants to acquaint themselves with the NCHE proceedings, processes and to provide a medium of professional relations between the two institutions. If the meeting which is formal, with recorded minutes, is conducted successfully, the panel is required to make recommendations which may include a visitation to the applicants' premises to verify information contained in the application, or request for further information, or seek for action to be carried out within a specified timeline, by the applicant prior to commencement of a visit.

The chairperson of the panel is required to sign the minutes of the meeting together with secretary, and pass the minutes to officer in charge who would ultimately action the recommendations in consultation with the head of the department. For example, if the panel recommends a visitation, the officer in charge proposes a list of names sought from the pool of experts (trained assessors) in the NCHE database and request for approval from the Executive Director through the head of department and the officer in charge of finance. Prior to the aforementioned process, the applicants would have been informed of the impending visit and requested to make a payment to facilitate the activity. Once the verification team is composed, they are appointed and required to make the necessary declarations in accordance with the ethical standards so as to eliminate the notion of conflict of interest.

The verification team thereafter attends to the applicants' premises for a given period, usually not less than two days, makes the required verification and prepares and submits a report to the Executive Director. The report is always referred to the head of the department who looks at it and refers it to the officer in charge of the application category who eventually, studies and summarizes the report for the attention of the department. The verification report is judged on three outcomes i.e. recommended for a license, deferred for further improvements or rejected. In each outcome, the information is progress to the department for discussion and later to top management of NCHE.

If the top management concurs with the departmental decision, the positive reports are progress to the committee of accreditation and quality assurance which considers and request council of NCHE to either grant or not grant a license. After the top management meeting, a letter is sent to the applicants informing them of circumstance. For example, if the recommendation of top management to the committee is positive, the letter to the applicant would be general informing them that top management had progressed their application to the committee level and possible dates for the committees sitting would also be stated. However, if the recommendation is not favorable, the institution is informed of the areas of improvement right away and the committee would later be informed for noting the failed application.

b) Academic Programmes

The application for a license to establish and run a private institution is made concurrently with the desired academic programmes to be mounted such an institution. Therefore, as the verification process of the institution is carried out, the assessment of the academic programmes also gets underway. Activities involving academic programmes at the NCHE fall under the remit of university unit in the department of accreditation and quality assurance. There is a desk officer responsible for the receipt, review to ensure compliance and organization of the assessment in consultation with the university head and the head of department. If a programme is submitted, an acknowledgement is made on the spot. The applicant is informed of the duration it takes for a feedback to be availed.

The academic programmes can be assessed either individually, where an assessor is picked from the pool of the NCHE database of assessors to do the assignment, or the NCHE can organize group assessment where a number of assessors are invited under one roof, to assess academic programmes of their specialties. In any given assessment excursive of this nature, the assessors are routinely taken through the NCHE's Guidelines on programmes assessment that look at the programme name, structure, courses, weighting, preamble, rationale, admission, delivery, resources and assessment among others.

An assessor will normally come out with four verdicts on each programme namely pass as-is, pass with minor corrections, pass with major corrections and request for re-submission. The assessment reports are submitted to the NCHE through the respective desk officers and the reports are discussed in the department for onward progression to top management and eventually the committee of council. The applicant like in the case of the institutional application is informed of the progress either way i.e. whether positive or not. The academic programmes and the institutional application for the establishment of an institution is presented to the council of NCHE through the accreditation and quality assurance committee for it to make the appropriate decision. If the application is successful, the NCHE Secretariat writes to the applicant informing them of the verdict and requests them to make the appropriate payments in accordance with the existing statutory instrument. The next stage is for the NCHE to gazette the institution and eventually issue a license. However, if the application is for a Letter of interim Authority, no gazetting is done, but a license is issued. All licenses issued by NCHE has conditions laid out at the back where the applicants are requested to read and countersign as proof of having read, understood and agree to abide by.

c) Monitoring & Evaluation

The NCHE monitors and evaluates all the license institutions in order to ensure quality provision. All institutions that hold a license from NCHE are required to submit annual reports which contain information such as the enrolment, staff establishment, infrastructural, resources and other critical areas of their operations. The notion of monitoring institutions of higher learning is to enable the NCHE to determine the progress being made by the institution and to agree on areas of improvement if any.

Monitoring evaluations encompasses various categories of people such as the staff, members of NCHE and other external persons commonly referred to as the expert. Depending on the purpose of the monitoring exercise, an institution may visit with or without notice. Where notice is given, the monitoring team may ill always follow NCHE guidelines on monitoring and evaluation. This will embody the perusal of source documents such the strategic plan, financial records, enrolment and facilities among others.

The monitoring and evaluation team is required on top of the physical viewing of the entire institutional environment, to meet with all the categories of the workforce of the institution i.e. governance, management, academic and support staff, students and members of the local community where applicable. A monitoring report is always made by the team for the attention of the Executive Director where it is studied, discussed and feedback made to the institution concerned.

d) Revocation

The NCHE also engages in ensuring that institutions of higher learning do evaluate the effectiveness of their performance in all areas of responsibility and determine what improvements are required through an activity commonly referred to as the institutional assessment. However, institutions who persistently fail to live up to the agreed performance levels get a number of warnings where they are urged to improve

Failure to do so leads to NCHE making a notice of revocation in the Uganda Gazette which lasts for a period of six months. If no improvement is witnessed at that point, revocation is commenced, but the continuing students may be allowed to complete depending on the circumstance. If it is deemed that the situation is not favorable for students to continue, the NCHE enforces a closure and arranges to transfer students to a willing institution. Continuing students in an institution issued a notice of revocation will have their qualifications recognized thereafter.

4.7. Mainstreaming of the Regional Quality Assurance Strategies

In an effort to extend the ambit of quality practices in within the higher education institutions in East Africa, the National Commissions/Councils for Higher education in East Africa have well-structured linkages with the region's lead player in quality assurance in higher education i.e. the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA). From 2006, the Commissions/ Councils for Higher Education have benefited from the IUCEA capacity building initiatives where a number of technical quality assurance officers were trained both in East Africa and Germany on the key principles of quality assurance. The IUCEA has continued to supply the quality assurance handbooks that is volumes 1 to 4 for usage within higher education institutions and the Commissions/Councils for Higher Education constantly require all institutions to embrace and implement the quality assurance practices within their operations. Institutions that are developing new academic programmes which have already developed benchmarks are requested to follow them as a reference. Furthermore, the Commissions/Councils leadership works closely with IUCEA in developing and implementing quality assurance guidelines, standards within the region.

4.7.1 Standards and guidelines for programme quality audit

The Commissions/ Councils have adopted and are using the criteria for programme quality audit as agreed regionally under the auspices of the Inter University Council for East Africa. The quality criteria cover among others the following aspects: requirements of stakeholders; expected learning outcomes; the process (programme specification, organization and content, didactic concept, student assessment); the programme input (quality of academic and support staff, student

profile, student advise/support, facilities and infrastructure); quality assurance (student evaluation, curriculum design, staff development activities, benchmarking, feedback of stakeholders); achievement and graduates (graduate profile, pass rate and dropout rate, average time to graduation) – outcome; stakeholders satisfaction (opinion of students, alumni, labour market, society); and strengths and weaknesses of the programme.

4.7.2 Standards and guidelines for institutional quality audit

The Commissions/ Councils have adopted and are using the criteria for institutional quality audit as agreed with the Inter University Council for East Africa (IUCEA, A Road Map to Quality), but customized to address quality issues specific to each Partner State. The quality criteria cover among others the following aspects: stakeholder's requirements (Government, Academia, students, alumni, industry, etc.); mission, vision, goals, aims and objectives; policy plan; governance; human resource management; funding & financial management; educational activities (programs, student assessment, quality of staff, student admission, facilities and infrastructure); research (research policy, IPR policy); community outreach; quality assurance (IQA, Benchmarking); and stakeholders' satisfaction.

4.8 Comparative analysis of Councils and Commissions for Higher Education

Having documented the country specific quality assurance principles, tools/ instruments, practices and processes, a comparative analysis of the five East African Community Partner States is presented in **Tables 7** below which compares the legal framework work and the processes respectively.

Table 7: Legal Frameworks and Key Mandates of Commissions and Councils

	Burundi	Kenya	Rwanda	Tanzania	Uganda
Legal establishment	Decree No100/12 of January 2008 as amended in 2014	Act of Parliament of 1985 which was abrogated and a new one enacted in 2012	Law N°72/03 of 10/09/2013	Universities Act, 1995	UOTIA Act 2001, as amended
Scope	Covers both public and private universities	University education i.e. - Technical - Specialized	Covers both public and private universities	Covers universities only (both public and private)	Universities & Other Tertiary Institutions both public and private
Mandate	Regulate, monitor and evaluate Higher education	- Promote higher education - Regulate and control the provision of higher education - Quality assure provision of higher education	to enhance quality of education, the modes of providing it within Higher Learning Institutions and make sure that those graduating from such institutions are knowledgeable for the betterment of the Rwandan residents' welfare and development of Rwanda	-development of minimum standards and guidelines that aid universities while they carry out self-assessment at the programmes and institution levels; and training programmes on GA activities as per their Master Plans or as requested by a university.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing objects of UOTIA Act. • Advising the Government on policy and other matters relating HEIs • Advisory role to the Minister for Education on establishment and accreditation of HEIS Control the conduct and provision of HE training in Uganda

Key Functions		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Set standards e.g. admissions -Accredit institutions and programmes -Quality assure educational trainings - Monitor and evaluate institutions of higher learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Enhance education and research in the higher learning institutions; -Improve the organization and functioning of higher learning institutions; -Advise the Government in all matters related to higher education policy and strategies; -Set norms and standards for accrediting private higher learning institutions; -Monitor the adherence of norms and standards in higher learning institutions; -Compare, evaluate and give equivalence to degrees and certificates of higher education level delivered by foreign institutions and those delivered in Rwanda that need authentication including those awarded through distance learning; -Coordinate and follow up all activities concerning learning, teaching, evaluation and performance appraisal in higher learning institutions; and Cooperate and collaborate with other regional and international institutions having similar mission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accredit universities - Audit quality of universities - Recognise awards & foreign qualifications Monitor universities Development of minimum standards - Organise QA trainings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receiving, considering and processing applications for establishment and accreditation of public and private HEIs • Accreditation of academic and professional programmes • M&E and regulating HEIs • Development of minimum standards for courses and ensuring compliance by HEIs. • Determining the equivalence of all types of academic and professional qualifications awarded in Uganda Equation and recognition of foreign HE qualifications.
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<p>Governance Composition</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chairperson - Deputy Chair person - Permanent Executive Secretary - 7 representatives of public HEIs, - 5 representative of private HEIs education institutions, - Second Vice-president, - 3 Director Generals - 1 representative of public enterprises, - 1 of private companies, - 1 of civil society and - 1 parent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chairperson and 5 members appointed by the Cabinet Secretary responsible for university education - 2 members appointed from government ministries of education and finance 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - VCs, Private Sector, Attorney General, Director HE, National Assembly, - Employers - Students - Research org, NGOs - MoEVT Rep. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One VC representing public universities • One VC representing private universities • One Senate representative of public universities • One Senate representative of private universities • Two students, one rep for universities and one rep for tertiary institutions. One of whom must be a female • Four members reps of religious non degree awarding institutions appointed by the Minister • Three reps for commerce, industry and agriculture. • Four reps of higher education, at one a woman and one PWDs, appointed by the Minister. • Officer in charge of HE at the Ministry • NCHE Executive Director • One person from the public appointed by NCHE <p>NB: Chairperson recommended from among the members and approved by the President.</p> <p>Deputy Chairperson elected by members</p>
<p>Number of members</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>- 8 members in all</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>18</p>
<p>Tenure of members</p>	<p>5 years renewable</p>	<p>- 3 years</p>		<p>3 years</p>	<p>Five years, renewable once</p>

Qualifications	Chairperson and the Permanent Executive Secretary must have high academic degree	- Chairperson should be a holder of a doctorate degree Members should have Masters degrees			
Experience	Chairperson and the Permanent Executive Secretary must have relevant experience in Higher education management	- Chairperson should have minimum of 10 years' experience in leadership and management of an academic institution - Members should have 5 years' experience of leadership and management			
Appointing Authority	Ministry of Education	Cabinet Secretary responsible for university education after an open selection process		By Ministry of Education and Vocational Training	Minister for Education
Committees	2 committees : -programmes development, -quality assurance assessment and registration, -agreement and accreditation.	3 Committees i.e. - Strategy, Resources and General Purposes - Audit, Risk and Compliance - Quality Assurance		4 Committees: Accreditation & QA Admissions Grants Staff Appointment & Development	4 committees: Accreditation & QA Research Development and Documentation Finance, Management and Administration Risk and Audit Management

Structure of the secretariat	Secretariat headed by the Permanent Executive Secretary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Headed by an Executive Secretary who is the accounting officer - Deputized by four officials who head one division each <p>Has 4 divisions namely Accreditation, Quality Audit and Standards, Planning, Resources and Development, Administration & Finance</p>	Headed by an Executive Director. There are 3 Departments: i. Academic Quality, and Policy, ii. Research & Planning, iii. Administration and Finance	Secretariat headed by Executive Secretary; There are 3 Directorates: i. Finance & Admin. ii. Accreditation and QA Admissions & Documentation	<p>Leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Director • Deputy Executive Director • Director of Quality Assurance & Accreditation <p>Director of Research, Development and Documentation</p>
Funding mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government subvention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government subvention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government subvention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government subvention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government subvention • Students contribution

Table 8: Comparison of key processes of establishment and accreditation of institutions

Process	Burundi	Kenya	Rwanda	Tanzania	Uganda
Types of Establishment	Public and private universities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Private universities - Public universities - Constituent colleges & Campuses i.e. when a university has a Charter 	Public and private universities	Public & Private universities only	Public and private universities and tertiary institutions
Establishment requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resource - Staffing - Funding - Infrastructure - Curriculum - Enrollment projections - Other supporting documents (eg:Master plan, strategic plan, other policy documents) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resource - Staffing - Funding - Infrastructure - Curriculum - Enrollment projections - Other supporting documents (eg:Master plan, strategic plan, other policy documents) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resource - Staffing - Funding - Infrastructure - Curriculum - Enrollment projections - Other supporting documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resource - Staffing - Funding - Infrastructure - Curriculum - Enrollment projections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resource - Staffing - Funding - Infrastructure - Curriculum - Enrollment projections
Levels of Progression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ministerial order to open a university - Recognition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Letter of Interim Authority (LIA) which permits a university to teach - 3rd year of LIA a legal notice is issued for a Charter, - Charter granted at 4th year for a fully-fledged university status 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Operating agreement - Definitive operating agreement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provisional License; - Certificate of Accreditation; - Grant of Charter 	<p>Public Universities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -None <p>Private Universities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Letter of Interim authority - Provisional License; -Grant of Charter <p>Other Degree Awarding Institutions(Public)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -None <p>Other Degree Awarding Institutions(Private)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provisional License; -Grant of Charter <p>Other tertiary institutions (Public)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - None <p>Other tertiary institutions (Private)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Provisional license - Certificate of Classification and Registration

M&E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Impromptu visits of members of the NCHE -External assessment of the programs -Annual report of institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Every 5 years, a self-assessment report (SAR) s expected from a university - Peer assessment done thereafter - Grant of Institutional Quality Audit Certificate by CUE to institutions after the study of SAR 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continuous monitoring Evaluation by a Technical Committee at every stage of progression 	
Revocation	<p>If the institution does not fill the requirements to be a ministerial order can be revoked</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If SAR is not satisfactory, 1 year is given for improvement If no satisfactory improvement is made after 1 year, a Charter may be revoked 	<p>The definitive closure of a public institution of higher learning shall be done by a law while the definitive closure of a Government subsidized or a private institution of higher learning shall be done by an Order of the Minister in charge of higher education</p>	<p>Provision for cancellation of Certificate of Accreditation exist</p>	
Recognition of qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Application are submitted to the NCHE -Analysis of the application by the national commission of equivalence of degrees and other qualifications 	<p>This is done</p>		<p>Yes, procedure for this is provided</p>	

SECTION 5

QUALITY ASSURANCE OF EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCIES

5.1. Introduction

As demonstrated in the previous Section, External Quality Assurance Agencies play a pivotal role in ensuring the provision of quality higher education within the EAC member states. Hence, in order to provide an acceptable practice of assuring quality in higher education, it is imperative that the mandated External Quality Assurance Agencies remain agile to the dynamisms of the higher education terrain, thereby observing and promoting best practices of quality assurance operations. This Section thus aims to document and present some of the best practices that ought to be evident in any External Quality Assurance Agency involved in the assessment of quality assurance matters in higher education institutions. The Section therefore focuses on key indicators that can demonstrate the performance an EQAA in accordance with the best practice observance from recognized bodies such as the INQAAHE. The target audience of this Section is anyone interested in knowing the credibility of an EQAA, the higher education institutions regulated by the EQAA and the EQAAs themselves since the illustrated diagnostics can be an evaluative yardstick.

5.2. The Theoretical Perspectives on the Best Practices in EQAA

As long as accreditation is primarily a national activity, it is up to the country to decide if it trusts the accrediting body. This is because, with the growing importance of the international role of accreditation, the basic question becomes more and more whether the agency can be trusted. The rhetorical question that may be asked is as to whether the EQAA is indeed a reliable agency, and how the international community perceives the performance and decisions of such an EQAA.

The International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies (INQAAHE) has discussed the necessity to formulate criteria for good practice for a quality assurance agency since 1999. At the same time, the European Association for Quality Assurance (ENQA) discussed the criteria for a reliable agency and published the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area in 2005, and a revised version was published in 2014. The European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA) also formulated Principles of Good Practice, covering the ideas of INQAAHE and ENQA. There are more organizations that have formulated or have encouraged the formulation of standards for a reliable agency, such as the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) in the United States, the International Association of University Presidents (IAUP), and UNESCO (Global Forum on International Quality Assurance, Accreditation and the Recognition of

Qualifications)⁹

ENQA: Standards and Guidelines for External Quality Assurance¹⁰

While INQAAHE discussed the Code of Good Practice, the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) discussed the development of standards and guidelines for External Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area. The European standards for external quality assurance agencies have been developed with the conscious ambition for the standards to be neither too detailed nor too prescriptive. They should not reduce the freedom of European quality assurance agencies to reflect within their organizations and processes the experiences and expectations of their nation or region. The standards should ensure that the professionalism, credibility and integrity of the agencies are visible and transparent to their stakeholders and must permit comparability to be observable between the agencies and give space to the necessary European dimension.

Several “guidelines” have been added to provide additional information on good practice and in some cases to explain in more detail the meaning and importance of the standards. Although the guidelines are not part of the standards themselves, the standards should be considered in conjunction with them.

The standards for quality assurance have been divided into three parts namely:

- a) Internal quality assurance
- b) External quality assurance
- c) Quality assurance agencies

Consideration of internal quality assurance

Quality assurance in higher education is based on the institutions’ responsibility for the quality of their programmes and other provision; therefore it is important that external quality assurance recognizes and supports institutional responsibility for quality assurance. To ensure the link between internal and external quality assurance, external quality assurance includes consideration of the standards for IQA. These may be addressed differently, depending on the type of external quality assurance.

External quality assurance should address the effectiveness of the internal quality assurance processes at the training institutions.

Designing methodologies fit for purpose

In order to ensure effectiveness and objectivity, it is vital for external quality

9. For more information on CHEA <http://www.chea.org/>; on the IAUP: <http://www.ia-up.org/>; on the UNESCO Global Forum: <http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/>

10. Standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area (DRAFT endorsed by the Bologna Follow-Up Group on 19 September 2014. Subject to approval by the Ministerial Conference in Yerevan, 14-15 May 2015), September 2014

assurance to have clear aims agreed by stakeholders. The aims, objectives and implementation of the processes will

- a) bear in mind the level of workload and cost that they will place on institutions;
- b) take into account the need to support institutions to improve quality;
- c) allow institutions to demonstrate this improvement;
- d) result in clear information on the outcomes and the follow-up.

External quality assurance should be defined and designed specifically to ensure its fitness to achieve the aims and objectives set for it, while taking into account relevant regulations. Stakeholders should be involved in its design and continuous improvement.

Implementing processes

External quality assurance carried out professionally, consistently and transparently ensures its acceptance and impact. Depending on the design of the external quality assurance system, the institution provides the basis for the external quality assurance through a self-assessment or by collecting other material including supporting evidence. The written documentation is normally complemented by interviews with stakeholders during a site visit. The findings of the assessment are summarized in a report (cf. Standard 2.5) written by a group of external experts (cf. Standard 2.4). External quality assurance does not end with the report by the experts. The report provides clear guidance for institutional action. Agencies have a consistent follow-up process for considering the action taken by the institution. The nature of the follow-up will depend on the design of the external quality assurance.

External quality assurance processes should be reliable, useful, pre-defined, implemented consistently and published. They include:

- a) a self-assessment or equivalent;
- b) an external assessment normally including a site visit;
- c) a report resulting from the external assessment;
- d) a consistent follow-up.

Experts Peer-review

At the core of external quality assurance is the wide range of expertise provided by peer experts, who contribute to the work of the agency through input from various perspectives, including those of institutions, academics, students and employers/professional practitioners. In order to ensure the value and consistency of the work of the experts, they:

- a) are carefully selected;
- b) have appropriate skills and are competent to perform their task; and
- c) are supported by appropriate training and/or briefing.

The agency ensures the independence of the experts by implementing a mechanism of no-conflict- of-interest.

The involvement of international experts in external quality assurance, for example as members of peer panels, is desirable as it adds a further dimension to the development and implementation of processes

External quality assurance should be carried out by groups of external experts that may include student member(s).

Criteria for outcomes

External quality assurance and in particular its outcomes have a significant impact on institutions and programmes that are evaluated and judged. In the interests of equity and reliability, outcomes of external quality assurance are based on predefined and published criteria, which are interpreted consistently and are evidence-based. Depending on the external quality assurance system, outcomes may take different forms, for example, recommendations, judgments or formal decisions.

Any outcomes or judgments made as the result of external quality assurance should be based on explicit and published criteria that are applied consistently, irrespective of whether the process leads to a formal decision.

Reporting

The report by the experts is the basis for the institution's follow-up action of the external evaluation and it provides information to society regarding the activities of an institution. In order for the report to be used as the basis for action to be taken, it needs to be clear and concise in its structure and language and to cover

- a) context description (to help locate the higher education institution in its specific context);
- b) description of the individual procedure, including experts involved;
- c) evidence, analysis and findings;
- d) conclusions;
- e) features of good practice, demonstrated by the institution;
- f) recommendations for follow-up action.

The preparation of a summary report may be useful. The factual accuracy of a report is improved if the institution is given the opportunity to point out errors of fact before the report is finalized.

Full reports by the experts should be published, clear and accessible to the academic community, external partners and other interested individuals. If the agency takes any formal decision based on the reports, the decision should be published together with the report.

Complaints and appeals

In order to safeguard the rights of the institutions and ensure fair decision-making, external quality assurance is operated in an open and accountable way. Nevertheless, there may be mis-apprehensions or instances of dissatisfaction about the process or formal outcomes.

Institutions need to have access to processes that allow them to raise issues of concern with the agency; the agencies, need to handle such issues in a professional way by means of a clearly defined process that is consistently applied. A complaints procedure allows an institution to state its dissatisfaction about the conduct of the process or those carrying it out. In an appeals procedure, the institution questions the formal outcomes of the process, where it can demonstrate that the outcome is not based on sound evidence, that criteria have not been correctly applied or that the processes have not been consistently implemented.

Complaints and appeals processes should be clearly defined as part of the design of external quality assurance processes and communicated to the institutions.

5.3 The European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA)

Code of Good Practice

With the aim of reaching mutual recognition of each other's accreditation decisions, the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA) also developed a Code of Good Practice ¹¹as a basis for recognition.

The Code of Good Practice guarantees the comparability of accreditation procedures throughout Europe. The 17 standards are binding for ECA members and should all be met. Specifically, the Code fulfills the following purposes:

- It provides transparency for politicians, the governments and other stakeholder groups in higher education.
- It guarantees reliability of the accreditation procedure for higher education institutions.
- It defines necessary requirements for accreditation organisations. All members of the ECA must fulfill these requirements and should review their procedures regularly against this code.
- It serves as a yardstick for external evaluations of all members of the consortium.
- It serves to support the internal quality assurance policies of an accreditation organisation and provides suggestions for the continuous improvement of its quality.

¹¹ ECA, Code of good practice, Zürich 2004. Can be download from <http://ecahe.eu/home/about/eca-documents/main-documents-for-mutual-recognition/>

- It will not lead to a predominance of any single point of view, but should instead promote good practices and prevent bad quality.
- It should be updated when necessary to conform to the international state of the art of good practices.

The ECA has formulated the following standards

The accreditation organisation

1. Has an explicit mission statement.
2. Is recognised as a national accreditation body by the competent public authorities.
3. Must be sufficiently independent of government, higher education institutions or business, industry and professional associations.
4. Must be rigorous, fair and consistent in its decision-making.
5. Has adequate and credible resources, both human and financial.
6. Has its own internal quality assurance system that emphasises its quality improvement.
7. Has to be evaluated externally on a cyclical basis.
8. Can demonstrate public accountability, has public and officially available policies, procedures, guidelines and criteria.
9. Informs the public in an appropriate way about its accreditation decisions.
10. Has a method for appeal against its decisions.
11. Collaborates with other national, international and/or professional accreditation organisations.
12. Must define its accreditation procedures and methods itself.
13. Must undertake accreditation procedures and methods at institutional and/or programme level on a regular basis.
14. Must include self-documentation/-evaluation by the higher education institution and external review (as a rule on site) in its accreditation procedures and methods.
15. Must guarantee the independence and competence of the external panels or teams performing its accreditation procedures and methods.
16. Must have geared its accreditation procedures and methods to enhance quality.
17. Must make its accreditation standards public and be compatible with European practices taking into account the development of agreed sets of quality standards.

5.4 Comparative Analysis between the guidelines of INQAAHE, ENQA and ECA

INQAAHE, ENQA and ECA have put a lot of effort in formulating standards for a trustworthy agency. These have already been discussed by many external quality assessment/accreditation agencies all over the world. An analysis of the three Codes of Good Practice shows that they have a lot in common. The topics discussed are

more or less similar. At the moment, the standards are called Code of Good Practice or Guidelines. This means that the list of criteria can be used as a benchmark to determine how far an agency fits into international developments. If an agency strives for international recognition as an accrediting body that can be trusted, it is important to show that it meets at least these minimum requirements. Table 9 gives a summary of the requirements for a reliable agency, as formulated by INQAAHE, ENQA and ECA. Distinction is made between organisation aspects and process aspects.

Table 9: Benchmark standards for an accreditation agency

Organisation	Process
1. The agency is recognised by the competent authorities.	1. The accreditation process is based on self-assessment and external review, unless circumstances require another approach.
2. The agency acts independently of government, higher education, business, industry, or professional associations. Third parties cannot influence verdicts or decisions.	2. The process and procedures of the accreditation are well known and made public.
3. The agency has a clear mission and clearly formulated objectives. The mission statement is translated into a clear policy and strategic plan, expressing that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accreditation is its main activity • Quality improvement and accountability are also a goal • The agency takes into account the cultural and social context • It respects the autonomy, identity and integrity of the HEIs. 	3. The process respects the internal quality assurance activities of an HEI; the requirements for self-assessment are in line with it.
4. The agency has adequate human and financial resources, making it possible to run the activities. A staff development policy is in place.	4. External assessment is done by a group of experts. Such a committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is nominated according to clear rules • Acts independently within the given accreditation framework • Has no conflicts of interest • Is well trained.
5. The agency has an internal quality assurance system and is externally evaluated on a cyclical basis.	6. The decision making process is rigorous, fair and consistent: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rules leading to accreditation decisions are transparent • The rules guarantee equal treatment.
6. The agency is accountable to the public by means of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public documents on its mission and strategy • Accreditation processes and procedures • Standards and criteria • Evaluation outcomes. 	5. The accreditation standards and criteria are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Predefined by the agency after consultation of all stakeholders • Are made public.
7. The agency cooperates as far as possible with other agencies in exchanging experience, examples of good practice, joint assessments, etc.	7. Appropriate methods for appeals against accreditation decisions exist

5.5 Standards and guidelines for quality assurance agencies

To ensure the meaningfulness of external quality assurance, it is important that institutions and the public trust agencies. Therefore, the goals and objectives of the quality assurance activities are described and published along with the nature of

interaction between the agencies and relevant stakeholders in higher education, especially the higher education institutions, and the scope of the agencies' work. The expertise in the agency may be increased by including international members in agency committees.

A variety of external quality assurance activities are carried out by agencies to achieve different objectives. Among them are evaluations, reviews, audits, assessments, accreditation or other similar activities at the programme or institutional level that may be carried out differently. When the agencies also carry out other activities, a clear distinction between external quality assurance and their other fields of work is needed.

Activities, policy and processes for quality assurance

Agencies should undertake external quality assurance activities as defined in Part 2 of the ESG on a regular basis. They should have clear and explicit goals and objectives that are part of their publicly available mission statement. These should translate into the daily work of the agency. Agencies should ensure the involvement of stakeholders in their governance and work.

Official status

In particular when external quality assurance is carried out for regulatory purposes, institutions need to have the security that the outcomes of this process are accepted within their higher education system, by the state, the stakeholders and the public.

Agencies should have an established legal basis and should be formally recognised as quality assurance agencies by competent public authorities.

Independence

Autonomous institutions need independent agencies as counterparts. In considering the independence of an agency the following are important:

- Organizational independence, demonstrated by official documentation (e.g. instruments of government, legislative acts or statutes of the organisation) that stipulates the independence of the agency's work from third parties, such as higher education institutions, governments and other stakeholder organisations;
- Operational independence: the definition and operation of the agency's procedures and methods as well as the nomination and appointment of external experts are undertaken independently from third parties such as higher education institutions, governments and other stakeholders;
- Independence of formal outcomes: while experts from relevant stakeholder backgrounds, particularly students, take part in quality assurance processes, the final outcomes of the quality assurance processes remain the responsibility of the agency.

Anyone contributing to external quality assurance activities of an agency (e.g. as expert) is informed that while they may be nominated by a third party, they are acting in a personal capacity and not representing their constituent organisations when working for the agency. Independence is important to ensure that any procedures and decisions are solely based on expertise.

Agencies should be independent and act autonomously. They should have full responsibility for their operations and the outcomes of those operations without third party influence.

Thematic analysis

In the course of their work, agencies gain information on programmes and institutions that can be useful beyond the scope of a single process, providing material for structured analyses across the higher education system. These findings can contribute to the reflection on and the improvement of quality assurance policies and processes in institutional, national and international contexts.

A thorough and careful analysis of this information will show developments, trends and areas of good practice or persistent difficulty.

Agencies should regularly publish reports that describe and analyse the general findings of their external quality assurance activities.

Resources

It is in the public interest that agencies are adequately and appropriately funded, given higher education's important impact on the development of societies and individuals. The resources of the agencies enable them to organise and run their external quality assurance activities in an effective and efficient manner. Furthermore, the resources enable the agencies to improve, to reflect on their practice and to inform the public about their activities.

Agencies should have adequate and appropriate resources, both human and financial, to carry out their work.

Internal quality assurance and professional conduct

Agencies need to be accountable to their stakeholders. Therefore, high professional standards and integrity in the agency's work are indispensable. The review and improvement of their activities are on-going so as to ensure that their services to institutions and society are optimal.

Agencies apply an internal quality assurance policy which is available on its website. This policy

- Ensures that all persons involved in its activities are competent and act professionally and ethically;

- Includes internal and external feedback mechanisms that lead to a continuous improvement within the agency;
- Guards against intolerance of any kind or discrimination;
- Outlines the appropriate communication with the relevant authorities of those jurisdictions where they operate;
- Ensures that any activities carried out and material produced by subcontractors are in line with the ESG, if some or all of the elements in its quality assurance activities are subcontracted to other parties;
- Allows the agency to establish the status and recognition of the institutions with which it conducts external quality assurance.

Agencies should have in place processes for internal quality assurance related to defining, assuring and enhancing the quality and integrity of their activities.

Cyclical external review of agencies

Agencies should undergo an external review at least once every five years in order to demonstrate their compliance with the ESG.

A periodic external review will help the agency to reflect on its policies and activities. It provides a means for assuring the agency and its stakeholders that it continues to adhere to the principles enshrined in the ESG.

Demonstrable Indicators for an Effective EQAA Activities and Processes

Hence, in order for one to determine as to whether an EQAA has an agile and effective quality assurance systems, a number of factors should be evident. They include the existence of a continuous quality assurance system that emphasizes flexibility in response to the changing nature of higher education, the effectiveness of its operations, and its contribution towards the achievement of its objectives. Moreover, such an EQAA should be seen to conduct internal self-review of its own activities, including consideration of its own effects and value. The review should include data analysis and evaluation. Additionally, an EQAA should be subject to external reviews at regular intervals. Thus, to determine the aforementioned parameters, there should be evidences available to support that any required actions have been implemented and disclosed.

Where can I find evidence?

- a) Existence of quality assurance policy documents such as the Master Plan, Strategic Plan, Financial Manuals, etc.
- b) Internal feedback (e.g. by staff supervisors or decision-making bodies)
- c) External reports from Ombudsman such as the Auditor General

- d) Self-reviews feedback by the EQAA
- e) External feedback from peer EQAA /institutions or other stakeholders
- f) Examples of ongoing internal processes for continuous quality assurance
- g) Reports from external reviews
- h) Use of feedback from reviews for improvement

Reporting Public Information

The EQAA should inform and respond to the public in accordance with applicable legislation and the cultural context of the EQAA. This includes full and clear disclosures of its relevant documentation such as policies, procedures and criteria. The EQAA also demonstrates public accountability by reporting its decisions about higher education institutions and programs. The content and extent of reporting may vary with cultural context and applicable legal and other requirements. If the external evaluation leads to a decision about the higher education institution or program, the procedures applied and the criteria for decision-making are public, and the criteria for review are transparent, public, and ensure equality of treatment. The EQAA also discloses to the public the decisions about the EQAA resulting from any external review of its own performance.

Where can I find evidence?

- a) URL of EQAA website and short summary of the types of information provided here
- b) List of publications
- c) Press releases
- d) Other ways and means of informing the public, such as email or newsletter
- e) Public disclosure of external evaluations of the EQAA's performance

5.6 The Relationship between the EQAA and Higher Education Institutions

The EQAA recognizes that institutional and programmatic quality and quality assurance are primarily the responsibility of the higher education institutions themselves. It also respects the academic autonomy, identity and integrity of the institutions or programs. The EQAA applies standards or criteria that have been subject to reasonable consultation with stakeholders, and aims to contribute to both quality improvement and accountability of the institution.

Where can I find evidence?

- a) Policies/manuals
- b) Feedback from institutions and other stakeholders
- c) Reports from external reviews of the EQAA
- d) EQAA internal reviews

5.6.1. The EQAA's Requirements for Institutional/Program Performance

The EQAA should have documents that indicate clearly what the EQAA expects of the institution. Those expectations (which may for example be called standards or

factors or precepts) should be appropriate for the core activities of an institution of higher education or program. The standards should explicitly address all areas of institutional activity that fall within the EQAA's scope, such as teaching, learning, research, community work, etc. and necessary resources such as finances, staff/faculty, and learning resources. Standards may refer to specific areas, levels of achievement, relative benchmarking and types of measures, and may provide general guidelines. They may also include specific learning goals.

Where can I find evidence?

- a) Standards or factors considered by the EQAA
- b) Types and levels of institutional and programmatic goals, including learning, public service, research, etc.
- c) Examples of measures
- d) Results of programmatic or institutional reviews
- e) Types of required institutional and programmatic resources
- f) Institutional strategic plans

5.6.2 The EQAA's Requirements for Institutional Self-Evaluation and Reporting to the EQAA

The documentation concerning self-evaluation explains to the institutions of higher education the purposes, procedures, process and expectations in the self-evaluation process. The documents also include the standards used, the decision criteria, the reporting format, and other information needed by the higher education institution. Typically, an EQAA review process includes a self-evaluation through self-study by the institution or program, external peer review, and a follow-up procedure. As necessary and appropriate, the EQAA should guide the institution or program in the application of the procedures of the quality assurance process, such as self-evaluation, external review, or solicitation of assessment/feedback from the public, students, and other constituents.

Where can I find evidence?

- a) Handbooks and other publications explaining processes and timelines for organizing the process, identifying issues, gathering evidence, analyzing performance, and reporting results
- b) List of training materials for institutions
- c) Past institutional or programmatic reports or self-studies
- d) Results of institutional or programmatic reviews
- e) Types of internal and external institutional assessment processes and results
- f) EQAA training or advisory materials for institutions and programs

5.6.3 The EQAA's Evaluation of the Institution and/or Program

The EQAA should have clear documentation concerning the external evaluation that states the standards used, assessment methods and processes, decision criteria, and other information necessary for external review. The EQAA also has specifications on

the characteristics, selection and training of reviewers. The EQAA's system must ensure that each institution or program will be evaluated in an equivalent way, even if the external panels, teams, or committees (together, the "external panels") are different. The system ensures that the external reviewers meet the EQAA specifications, and the external reviewers are adequate to the tasks to be accomplished. Furthermore, the external reviewers have no conflicts of interest, have the necessary training, and provide reports which are evidence-based and clear, with precisely stated conclusions.

When practicable, the EQAA should include at least one external reviewer from another country or jurisdiction in the external panel.

Where can I find evidence?

- a) Evaluation/assessment frameworks and criteria
- b) Proof of adherence to internationally accepted guidelines and conventions
- c) Legal frameworks, procedures, forms, or documents (e.g. codes of ethics used to avoid conflicts of interest)
- d) Criteria for the selection, appointment, and training of experts
- e) Procedures for nomination and appointment of experts
- f) Manuals or guidelines including instructions for experts and/or institutions
- g) Protocols
- h) Description of division of responsibility between the EQAA staff and the external panel

5.6.4 Decisions

The EQAA evaluations should both the higher education institution's own self-assessment and external reference points, such as judgments by knowledgeable peers or relevant legislation. An EQAA must be independent, i.e. it has autonomous responsibility for its operations, and third parties cannot influence its judgments. The EQAA's decisions must be impartial, rigorous, thorough, fair, and consistent, even if the judgments are made by different panels. Consistency in decision-making includes consistency and transparency in processes and actions for imposing recommendations for follow-up action. The EQAA's reported decisions are clear and precise.

When the EQAA advises the government or other public bodies, the decisions made by each agency should be made as independently as practicable.

Where can I find evidence?

- a) Representative samples of decisions for similar higher education institutions
- b) Relevant portions of internal and external reviews of the EQAA
- c) Description of number and types of appeals filed
- d) Minutes from Council/Board/Committee meetings where the reports were discussed

5.6.5 Appeals

The EQAA has appropriate methods and policies for appeals. Appeals should be conducted by reviewers who were not responsible for the original decision and who have no conflict of interest, but appeals need not necessarily be conducted outside the EQAA.

Where can I find evidence?

- a) Policy and procedures of appeal
- b) Conflict of interest policy
- c) Statistics over a multi-year period, e.g. the number of appeals, number granted, number denied

5.6.6 Collaboration

The EQAA should collaborate with other EQAAs, if possible, in areas such as exchange of good practices, capacity building, review of decisions, provision of transnational education, joint projects, and staff exchanges.

Where can I find evidence?

- a) Descriptions of meetings and visits to and from other EQAAs
- b) Statistics on volume and frequency of contacts in either form
- c) Record of participation in regional networks
- d) Staff exchanges
- e) Written agreements between agencies resolving specific issues
- f) Participation in projects, conferences, and workshops
- g) Membership in networks/organizations

5.6.7 Transnational/Cross-Border Higher Education

The EQAA should have policies relating to both imported and exported higher education. These policies may be the same as those for domestic providers and domestic provision. In formulating its policies and practices, the EQAA should consider relevant guidelines issued by international agencies and other associations. All EQAAs should consult with appropriate local agencies in the exporting or importing countries, although this might not be possible or appropriate in situations such as those involving distance learning or small enrollment.

Where can I find evidence?

- a) Statements of policies and procedures
- b) Documents relating to quality assurance review of exported and imported education
- c) Description of meetings and visits to and from other agencies
- d) Minutes of meetings of policy-making bodies reflecting consideration of relevant international guidelines

SECTION 6

BENCHMARKING: ASSURING QUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS BY COMMISSIONS/COUNCILS

6.1 Introduction

In light of the points, discussions and facts presented within Sections one to four of this book, it is worth noting that the concept of higher education raises a number of philosophical and fundamentals discourse, hence the need to mitigate and embrace new ways of managing the emerging issues. Currently, there appears to be national and international best practices that could be observed and adopted within the higher education quality assurance systems in the EAC member states. In quest of doing so, this Section aims to document some of the global best practices which may be emulated by the regional EQAA. The Section is organized in 5 sub-sections as follows. Sub-section two presents views on what is envisaged as principles and practices of good governance in the higher education fraternity. Sub-section four documents the envisaged leadership styles practices, while sub-section five presents the notion of Research and Scholarships. The practice of embracing a Higher Education Management Information System is stated in sub-section six, whereas sub-section seven highlights the practice of Stakeholders Involvement. Sub-section eight discusses the External stakeholders' involvement and sub-section nine provides the views on the Students and staff Affairs. In Sub-section ten key observations from the main section is presented with a concluding remark.

6.2 Governance of Higher education institution

The practice of good Governance has become a crucial issue in higher education because of the enormous changes in the past few decades. These include expansion of tertiary education systems; diversification of provisions; new modes of deliver; more heterogeneous student bodies; growing internationalization of higher education; and research and innovation leveraging knowledge production. Additionally, demand for greater transparency and public accountability is developing parallel to the move towards greater autonomy (www.oecd.org).

Governance may be treated as encompassing the structures, relationships and processes through which, both national and institutional levels, policies for tertiary education are developed, implemented and reviewed. According to OECD, the Governance comprises a complex web, including the legislative framework, the characteristics of the institutions and how they relate to the whole system, including how resources are allocated to institutions and how they are accountable, is critical for the survivability of any institution (OECD, 2008, p. 68). University governance refers to the structure and process of authoritative decision making across issues

that are significant for external as well as internal stakeholders within a university (INQAAHE).

Each higher education institution should be established through a transparent legal system, and have a governance structure with clear separation of powers between the governing bodies capable of delivering the aims, objects and functions of the institution. The institution should have the following instruments of governance (or equivalent), University Council, the Senate, the Management Board, and Student Organization. Students should be represented at various levels of University decision-making process. The Chair of a University Council should have experience in the university education.

Therefore, any effective EQAAs is envisaged to have structural systems of governance in each respective East African state. While no one system may be adequate for all the states, it is expected that EQAAs should embrace systems of governance that allows for systematic transparent operations. This is because principles of good governance call for equitable and accountable governance practices in what entities do. It therefore means that EQAAs ought to perform to the highest level of requirements in how it does business. The evaluation of the EQAAs by other statutory bodies and against independent benchmarks is one of the needed practices in the higher education fraternity. Evaluations should thus be periodic with clear objectives and expected outcomes for future improvements. Additionally, EQAAs should not impede or influence the outcome of its evaluation process. Moreover, the production of activity-based reports to desirable audiences can also be perceived as good practice since it may enable the public to make its independent opinion on the EQAA concerned. However, some EQAAs are governed semi-autonomously whereas are run autonomously. As a regulatory agency, it is imperative that EQAAs should have the mantle to make uninterrupted decisions. A major challenge with the semi-autonomous EQAAs is such that external influence tends to impinge the independence of how it operates. EQAAs should therefore be run clear and non-conflicting laws, standards and guidelines for them to realistically adjudicate over matters of higher education. It means that the type and level of the leadership credentials expected at a governance board of the EQAA should be agreed on set parameters that resonate with international standards. It is unethical for an EQAA to bring on board incompetent and unqualified board members yet expect comparability of practices among its peers. Table 10 below exemplifies some of the governance structure in the OECD.

Table 10: Comparative examples of Governance Structures in HEI from Different Countries (OECD)

Country Examples	Attributes of Good University Governance
United Kingdom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Governing boards should be responsible for a strategic plan for supervision of university governance, self-monitoring and an estate plan. b) They should set up a sound risk management system and not interfere with day-to-day management, which is the responsibility of VC. c) Members of the board should work on the principles of: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, and leadership. d) There are guidelines showing relationship between institution and governing board. e) Involvement of board members with other institutions is publically made available in a Register f) Responsible for democratic and financial functioning of the student body. (Members of Higher Education Governing Bodies in the UK)
Denmark	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Membership not more than eleven (11), and age limit of 70 years. b) At least two (2) students and one (1) academician representatives to the board c) Governing board is the strategic planner, while the Rector is responsible for implementation and day-today management. d) Members of the board should work on the principles of: independence, openness, efficiency, quality e) Recommended that there be camera recording of all board meetings and detailed information about board members (e, age, other board membership) in the annual report placed on website f) Governance processes are dictated by a range of guidelines, plans, statutes g) Committees recommended h) Members paid on the basis of workload. (University Boards in Denmark Committee)
Netherlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Board consists of up to three (3) Executives appointed by the Ministry. b) Members combine legislative role with its responsibility for formulation of a coherent strategy and an executive role in implementation. c) Board is responsible for sound risk management and supervision d) Major decisions of the governing board are must be approved by the Supervisory board. e) Committees culture recommended f) Tenure is three terms of a maximum of four years (HBO-raad 2006 I)
United States	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Board is supervisory, and absent from day-today management b) Non-voting participation of internal stakeholders is favoured. c) Alumni sit on the governing boards of some institutions. d) Decision-making processes, which is consensus in approach, include faculty and students. (Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, USA).
Israel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Governing board members representatives of the public. b) Internal stakeholders consists of only 25% of members (20% faculty and 5% administrative staff) and simultaneous membership in faculty, administrative or technical unions is not permitted. c) The President (VC) of the University has to be of Israeli nationality. d) Committee Culture recommended, including a search committee for appointment of board members. e) Board members must carry out their functions faithfully, with integrity and dedication f) (Council of Higher Education, Israel)
Canada (Quebec)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Universities are free to structure their own governance mechanisms. b) Recommended membership is between 12 and 20 but fifteen (15) is preferred, with external representation forming 60-66%, and limiting their term to nine (9) years. c) Governing principle are transparency, independence, loyalty to the institution. d) Committee culture is advocated. (Report on Working Group on University Governance)

Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Governing board has supervisory role b) Membership to the board should not exceed 22 persons, with majority being external members, and member with financial and one with commercial experience. c) Members should have skills, knowledge and experience and appreciation of a higher education provider and its activities of teaching and research, independence and academic freedom. (The national Governance Protocols)
Kenya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Governance board (University Council) membership comprise nine (9), made up of 5 members appointed through an open process by the Cabinet Secretary responsible for university education, and who must hold at least a Master's degree, with 5 years' experience in leadership, management or academia; and two members, namely, Permanent Secretary Ministry responsible for Finance and Permanent Secretary Ministry responsible for university education. b) Members are appointed on three (3) year terms c) Committee culture is the practice. d) Uphold the principles of ethics and integrity

6.3. Higher Education leadership

The University leadership is critical in steering the university in its academic pursuit, and therefore the leadership must have requisite qualifications and respect from the academic community of professors and researchers to carry out that responsibility effectively. In some countries the minimum qualification to teach at a university is a PhD. The Vice-Chancellor, being the academic and administrative head of a university, should therefore have comparable qualification and requisite leadership and management skills to be effective. The leadership should take a leading role in building consensus within the University for the successful development of a quality culture by creating favourable learning environment for academic and students to be actively involved in quality culture implementation activities via their own initiative and responsibilities; and research and scholarships (Loukkola & Zhang, 2010).

6.4. Research and Scholarships

The role of higher education institutions have always been regarded as knowledge generation, conducting research and publications, and community engagements. The structure of the EQAA should entail a dedicated department for Research, Development and Documentation. It therefore translates that all institutions of higher learning are required to provide information on their research plans with details on the budget, staff establishment and the agenda among others. What is evident among most institutions of higher learning in the East African partner states is that they are heavily bent on teaching (undergraduate provision), as opposed to research based.

With the exception of a few institutions such as Dar es Salaam, Nairobi and Makerere University among others which attract huge funding from external sources like the Carnegie Corporation of New York, Ford Foundation and SIDA, most institutions of higher learning still lag behind in research agenda. Aware of this gap, the EQAA

should seek for some external donor funds with a view of enlightening the leadership credentials of the higher education institutions so as to kick start and stimulate a discourse on scholarship, research and innovation (Cloette, 2012).

As the custodians of Higher Education provision, it is desirable that the EQAAs should be at the pinnacle of research, innovation and development of institutions of higher learning. To do this, the EQAAs should first and foremost, work collaboratively with their Governments to make consensus about the role of higher education institutions vis-a-vis the national development agenda. In the UK for instance, research intensive universities tailor their academic programmes on solving real-world problems through cutting-edge research studies. Most times, corporations and nationally owned subsidiaries invest in university research programs. According to Cloete et al (2011), there ought to be a role for knowledge production universities in the national development plans, and the national higher education institutions and national authorities should conceptualize the role of universities for desirable research contributions. EQAAs should conceptualize their national development plans, visions, goals and agree modalities with their authorities on the exactness of the research agenda to pursue within a given timeline, the approximate cost of doing so and the anticipated manpower required to that. In essence, EQAAs may thus consolidate through formalized policies, niche research areas to respective institutions depending on their competencies.

Moving forward, the following key strategies should be initiated:-

- a) Higher Education Councils/Commissions ought to be at the pinnacle of aiding its accredited institutions of higher learning to expand their research capacity first by availing scholarships to train future academics to terminal degrees.
- b) Guidelines for aiding intended reach intensive institution should be documented and availed
- c) Second, the Councils/Commissions should encourage postdoctoral training in the emerging research intended institutions.
- d) The Councils/Commissions should embrace and expand the opportunities for academic attachments through avenues such as the Inter-University Council for East Africa.
- e) There should be a reward system where academics are encouraged to publish and disseminate their research findings in reputable journal databases and internationally recognized conference proceedings.
- f) Academic breakthroughs ought to be recognized by allocating some shares of the patent to a researcher.
- g) The recent initiative by World Bank to set up centers of academic excellence in desired areas for socio-economic transformation should be highly supported

by all Councils/Commissions as a mechanism for expanding the talent pool of researchers in the higher education institutions.

6.5 Higher Education Management Information System

In the past two decades there have been various public concerns over the HEIs quality of service delivery and associated outputs. In some countries HEIs have addressed such public outcry by establishing internal quality control and improvement devices including but not limited to, performance indicators, accreditation, programme and institutional assessment and quality audits. Nonetheless, European Network for QA (2007) reports that results from such activities has been rarely featured for public use. Loukkola & Zhang (2010) attribute this gap to lack of robust information and communication management frameworks at the institutional level.

Based on the fore-mentioned public concerns, it becomes crucial for Governments of the Partners States to collect, examine, store in data-base or data-bank and publish information relating to higher education institutions. A key benefit to embracing an information management system by the EQAA is the ability to coordinate admissions for undergraduate students within and without the partner states.

According to Loukkola & Zhang (2010), HEIs with quality information management systems may as well have valid and accurate data on:

- The number of academic staff in each programme offered,
- Research or publication outputs,
- The Lecturer- student ratio in the respective schools, faculty and department,
- The qualifications granted by the programme,
- Accessibility offered to students with special needs,
- The teaching, learning and assessment procedures used within the given programme,
- Learning and employment opportunities,
- Tracking payment of loan from the Higher Education Student Loan Board, and
- The results of the external quality assurance reports through their websites or other sources of information among others.

Moreover, global perspectives reflect that many HEIs have information management systems that collect, store and/or publish information about their profiles and what they offer, but such systems bear limited information on pedagogical resources available to students with diverse needs to learn effectively and how such systems are applied for monitoring the university's activities. Based on this weakness, Loukkola & Zhang (2010) advance that in order to uphold culture of quality records, the starting

point of an effective information management system is to ensure an existence of quality information and communication framework that would guide the HEIs on the implementation and management of quality information that would be useful to the HEIs and the public at large. With quality information and communication framework, the HEIs should be able to collect, analyse and use relevant information for the effective management of their activities. Equally, the institutions should regularly publish valid and up to date information both qualitative and quantitative, about the programmes and awards they are offering.

The foregoing statement is considered a vital process of enhancing institutional efficiency since, the phenomenon is taking a global center stage in most areas such as business, civil society organizations, governments, and higher education institutions around the world. Obtaining, storing, analyzing and providing accurate information for decision-making is one of the most challenging issues in institutions of higher learning the world over. Conversely, the challenge appears to be more prominent in most African institutions largely due to the fact that perfect adoption of information management systems i.e. the technology and manpower to harness it, is just beginning to unfold to an acceptable level. Most partner states highly appreciate the above stated concern and have therefore formulated policies for redress.

Hence, the partner states should device Information Communications Technology (ICT) policy which can provide an integrated Management Information System to enhance and streamline regulatory, administrative and managerial processes and improve reporting facilities at both central and departmental level". Producing information that benefits people implies that an EQAA should produce information that is quantifiable, accurate, consistent, reliable and above all timely. Conversely, research has shown that some EQAA have published a number of reports in the past, through a typical manual system. The challenges associated with running manual systems are abound, since storage and data retrieval become cumbersome. In essence, the EQAA should embark on a deliberate strategy to acquire a dedicated Management Information System (MIS) to improve accessibility to higher education information by different stakeholders. The EQAA should also be able to keep pace with the global developments and cover the growing demand for higher education information. However, it should be observed that the main objective of embracing an MIS at the EQAA is to establish an integrated management information system which enables everyone to automate processes in at institution while;

- a) Making decision through routine report retrieval,
- b) Improving the services provided to the institutions and other stakeholders
- c) Improving the accuracy of the follow up and management of institutions data
- d) Achieving work flexibility within the different departments of the NCHE

- e) Building strong and continuous relationships inside and outside the NCHE
- f) Reducing the costs of manual information data processing and the associated risks such as the loss of data

6.6. Stakeholders Involvement

The legitimacy of a stakeholder category can be understood as widely-shared expectations to be represented in various governance bodies or programme committees. Urgency of a stakeholder means his/her presence and participation in meetings, putting forward proposals and comments and following up on action results, such as programme improvements (Leisyte and al., 2013). Due to the growing importance of stakeholders, universities are expected to engage in continual dialogue with relevant groups, while providing accountability, quality, effectiveness and efficiency (Jongbloed and al., 2008).

The biggest challenge for quality culture implementation is to combine the top-down leadership and managerial approach with the bottom-up approach, while creating favourable learning environments for academic staff and students to be actively involved in quality culture implementation activities via their own initiatives and responsibilities.” - Respondent to the survey (Loukkola & Zhang, 2010).

6.6.1 Students and staff Affairs

One of the key principles in developing both quality culture (EUA: 2006, Harvey & Stensaker 2008) and quality assurance processes is the participation of staff and students. According to Jongbloed and al. (2008) today higher education institutions must respond to a number of communities and groups, with students being the most important stakeholder group. In terms of having a say in programme development, a powerful stakeholder is not only present in programme committees, but has a strong say in programme development and influences changes made (Leisyte and al. 2013).

The involvement of stakeholders in the governance of higher education institutions helps to ensure more democracy and academic freedom in academic bodies. A study conducted in seven European countries shows that students are an important partner in the legitimacy of the process of teaching and learning quality assurance (Leisyte and al., 2013). Indeed, in 28 higher education institutions sampled, students are represented at all levels from the board until the daily management consultancy programs in institutions. The lessons evaluation process by students helps not only to ensure the quality of teaching/learning process but also guarantee the credibility of the external community.

Students are supposed to be involved in evaluation of courses and to participate in

internal quality assurance via decision-making and quality management processes at higher education institutions as equal partners. They can emphasize the role of stakeholders in internal quality assurance in terms of representation as well as participation in study programme development. Students should be involved in evaluations and in revisions of programme learning outcomes.

Furthermore, as students are costumers, they provide essential feedback on teaching. Setting up committee(s) for quality assurance might seem a logical way of ensuring the participation of staff and students.

6.6.2 External stakeholders

External stakeholders (e.g. employers, experts) have been involved in QA processes from the beginning. They are more likely involved in preparing a curriculum for instance as members of working groups. The professionals' bodies have a say. Indeed, especially in professional domains such as medicine, health sciences, engineering, ICTs. Professionals' bodies even in some cases play the role of graduate skills recognition agency. It is essential to involve them from the implementation of the programme to decision making. Their involvement would ensure compliance of graduate skills especially with their professional expectations.

Employers should also participate in this process. They should play a major role in the teaching-learning process, because they are not clients of higher education institutions by hiring their products (graduates), but, they also participate in the teaching/learning process especially during internships. Permanent consultation between higher education institutions and employers is necessary to ensure trust and credibility of the teaching-learning process.

Religious congregations, non-governmental organizations whether local or international, often participate in the development of the education sector. These partners build schools, develop educational tools but are closer to the population. Their involvement in the implementation of programmes, in the teaching / learning process, in decision-making bodies, can increase the credibility of our education systems. Furthermore, Parents/guardians are also partners in education; they pay school fees for their children and expect in return a quality of training provided to these learners. Currently, there are even parents' associations that seek to increase the space of expression of these key partners. Several decision-making or management boards of higher education institutions include representatives of parents. This practice requires a generalization in the arsenal of management and development of the education system.

In conclusion, within EAC partner's states, Stakeholders i.e. the students, staff, parents,

employers, professional bodies should be regarded as a major component of quality education delivery. This is because, stakeholder involvement is one of the key components in the ecology of higher education practices. According to Jongbloed et al (2008), the interconnectedness and interdependence between higher education institutions, society and economies cannot be underestimated. The OECD (2007) in its publication infers that social expectations placed on higher education institutions is a reflection of the centrality of educational credentials, opportunities and other demands by the society. The EQAAs should therefore embrace the notion of stakeholders' involvement in formulating the higher education provision. For example, it should be a requirement that all academic programmes being proposed by the higher education institutions should have an evidence of stakeholder input in the process of its design. Additionally, EQAAs should work closely with professional bodies to guide the curriculum development and design. Besides, students are required to get the necessary working experiences through internship in industry and other setting which normally are independent entities. Therefore, the notion of collaborative work in harnessing provision of quality higher education becomes pertinent. However, for the stakeholders strategies to work efficiently, EQAAs should tailor out clear cut policies.

Key Observations

- Encourage higher education institutions to seem a logical way of ensuring the participation of staff, students, employers, professional bodies, parents, alumni and other representative external stakeholders in committee(s) for quality.
- Ensure if the external quality assurance is carried out by groups of external experts that include student, academics, and employers/professional practitioners
- Encourage higher education institutions to involve all Stakeholders programme design and continuous improvement.
- Ensure if the periodic reviews of programmes and awards include external panel members, feedback from employers, labour market, alumni, representatives and other relevant organizations.

6.7 Conclusion

The evolution of the higher education concept in the 21st Century is bringing in new dynamics on how higher educations should be run. In essence, the notion of quality education becomes paramount among most nations. Within the East African Community, the process of ensuring quality higher education has been the epicenter of its higher education reforms, and the strategic frameworks. This is because, as early as 2006, the East African Community through one of its strategic institution the IUCEA realized the need to harmonize the higher education provision within

the Region so as to enable comparability and acceptability of the products of the higher education institutions. Consequently, three Handbooks for Quality Assurance in Higher Education were developed namely “A Road Map to Quality” Volume 1 which provided guidelines for self-assessment at the programme level; Volume 2 which presented guidelines for external evaluation; and Volume 3 which dealt with the guidelines for self-assessment at institutional levels. This Volume (4) is aimed at providing an understanding in the use of external quality assurance management, practices and approaches so as to facilitate a common regional language in the context of external quality assurance. The Handbook has documented the historical background of higher education and the development of QA systems in East Africa and the establishment of the National and Regional agencies as a mechanism of ensuring provision of quality higher education. However, in order to advance the notion of comparability, the Volume of the Handbook also outlines the theoretical context and international practices of QA in higher education. A major contribution of Volume (4) Handbook is the documentation in Chapter (3), of the external QA principles, practices and management within the EQAA in East Africa. This is followed by a comparative analysis of the practices and processes being pursued by the respective EQAA in the Region. The concept of harmonization of QA in East Africa is treated in Chapter (4), meanwhile Chapter (5) of Volume (4) concludes the Handbook by presenting and discussing QA best practices that should be emulated and adopted by the respective EQAA.

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