

Internal Quality Assurance Bodies:

The internal quality assurance process constitutes an academic process and it is not controlled or restricted by non-academic bodies. At the university level the internal quality assurance process is regulated and overseen by the Internal Quality Committee. This committee is headed by one of the vice-rectors, while its members are (a) one academic representative from each School, appointed by the Senate in consultation with the School Deans, (b) one representative of the administrative staff appointed by the Rector's Council, (c) up to two academic staff members with expertise in quality assurance appointed by the Rector's Council and (d) two student representatives appointed by the Student's Council. The authorities, responsibilities, constitution and operation of this committee are defined in the Internal Quality Committee Regulation.

At the department's level, the internal quality assurance process is the responsibility of the academic staff of the Department. The internal quality assurance process within the Department is the responsibility of the Departmental Quality Committee. Members of this Committee are two members of the Teaching and Research Staff (TRS) of the Department, appointed by the Council of the Department and one student from the programmes of the Department appointed by the Student's Council. The Departmental Quality Committee has the responsibility for monitoring and analysing the quality indicators, as well as reporting to the Council of the Department on its findings. Decision-making concerning the Programmes of Study and other quality issues is the responsibility of the academic staff through the Council of the Department. The details of the authorities, responsibilities, constitution and operation of this committee are defined in the Departmental Quality Committee Regulation.

Internal Quality Assurance System:

The Internal Quality System refers to all pillars of the mission and strategic goals of the Department/University. The Internal Quality System concerns the following four broad areas:

- a) **Academic programmes and teaching.** This part of the internal quality system covers the skills and competencies developed by the students, as well as the employability of graduates. It is achieved by monitoring a number of quality indicators such as the performance of students, the average degree grades of graduates, the duration of studies, etc.
- b) **Research and creation of new knowledge.** This part of the internal quality system covers the quality and quantity of research output, expressed by the amount of research funding, the publications, and the recognition of the research work of the

academic staff. This part of the internal quality system also covers the synergies of research with teaching, as well as the exploitation of research results by the industry and society.

- c) **Connection with the society and social contribution.** This part of the internal quality system covers the links of the University and its contribution to the industry and business organizations, professional bodies, social organizations and bodies, as well as government bodies. At the department level this contribution is expressed through the agreements signed, the consultation services provided, the participation in advisory committees, the development of projects, the organization of related events, etc.
- d) **University management and services:** This part of the internal quality systems covers the operation of the various services, the adequacy of staff involved, the facilities and infrastructure, student and academic staff satisfaction, etc.

Implementation of the Internal Quality System:

The Internal Quality System includes the processes and methodologies which (a) define, monitor, analyse and evaluate the quality indicators, (b) identify weaknesses and opportunities for further improvement and (c) apply remedial measures for achieving higher performance. The above process involves all university parties, including the academic staff and bodies, the administrative staff and services, as well as the students. It also involves other interested parties, such as the graduates, the employers and professional bodies, participating in the process usually through focus groups.

The internal quality process is achieved through annual reporting from all parties involved in the operation of the University. The internal quality processes concerning the academic staff, the student performance and the programmes of study is achieved through student questionnaires and self-evaluation reports. The internal quality processes concerning the services of the University is achieved primarily through open reports developed by each service. The Internal Quality Committee monitors the implementation of the internal quality process and reports to the Senate every two years.

The internal quality reporting process is obtained through a number of report templates and questionnaires developed by the Internal Quality Committee. These templates include the following:

IQC100 (Student Course Evaluation): This is questionnaire completed by the students for all courses at the end of each semester. This is an on-line questionnaire. It is made out of two parts: the course evaluation questionnaire and the instructor evaluation questionnaire. Through the course evaluation questionnaire, the students provide feedback to the department concerning the course such as the degree of difficulty, student workload, assessment, textbooks, infrastructure etc. This part of the questionnaire is utilised by the academic staff through the programme coordinator, for improvements in the course and the programme. The second part of the questionnaire refers to the evaluation of the instructor on issues related to the organization of the course, the quality of the teaching material developed by the instructor, the availability of the instructor to help students, the feedback provided to the students etc. Through this part of the questionnaire, the students are required to give an overall grade to the instructor. The results of this part of the questionnaires are treated as confidential and are available only to the instructor for self-improvement. Only in cases where the overall grade of the instructor is below a threshold, the results are also provided to the Chairperson of the Department. In such a case, the instructor is requested to justify its low grading and suggest a remedial action plan.

IQC101 (Faculty Course Evaluation): This report is completed by the instructors of all courses at the end of each semester. Through this report, the instructors provide information about the course such as the teaching methods used, the assessment methods and weights, teaching material, the results achieved, as well as suggestions for improvements. This report is used by the programme coordinator for improvements in the course and the programme. It is also used as a data source for the Program Self Evaluation report (IQC104).

IQC104 (Programme Self Evaluation): This report is completed by the program coordinator at the end of each academic year, and is submitted to the Departmental Quality Committee for analysis and evaluation. It is also used as a data source for the Department Self Evaluation Report (IQC107). It provides information on the programme structure and regulations, the focus groups involved in the evaluation of the program, the degree of implementation of previous action plans, as well as data and quality indicators related to the students' retention and performance, the graduates' degree grades and duration of studies, the destination of graduates, etc.

IQC105 (Faculty Activity Report): This report is completed by all academic staff members at the end of each academic year, and is submitted to the Departmental Quality Committee for analysis and evaluation. It is also used as a data source for the Department Self Evaluation Report (IQC107). It is also the basic information source for the faculty appraisal process (IQC106). It provides information on the teaching activity, research activity, professional contribution and social contribution of the faculty member.

IQC106 (Faculty Appraisal Report): Faculty Appraisal is an on-going annual process that aims in the improvement of academic staff in all aspects related to their academic activity. This includes teaching, research and publications, administrative duties, as well as social contribution. Faculty Appraisal is conducted by the Chairperson of the Department based on the data provided by each academic staff member in the Faculty Activity Report (IQC105). During the Faculty Appraisal process the performance indicators for the staff member are analysed and an action plan is decided between the appraiser and the appraisee. The Faculty Appraisal Report (IQC106) records the degree of implementation of the action plan of the previous year, the findings for the current year and the action plan for the following year.

IQC107 (Department Self Evaluation): This report concerns all aspects of the operation of the Department. It is based on data collected from all other questionnaires and reports of the Internal Quality system, while quality performance indicators are analysed and evaluated by the Departmental Quality Committee. The Department's Self Evaluation report is submitted annually to the Internal Evaluation Committee of the University, where an action plan is decided.

Internal Quality Control for the Distance Learning Programmes:

Within the Internal Quality Assurance System, an additional internal quality evaluation procedure is developed and implemented for the Distance Learning Programmes of Study. The Internal Quality Committee in collaboration with the Distance Learning Committee (DLC) developed an evaluation quality process to ensure that specific standards are met regarding the operation of the DL programmes of study. The evaluation takes place based on quality indicators derived from the Pedagogical Framework that underpins the design, development and delivery of the Distance Learning Programs of Study. The procedure identifies gaps and good practices in order for suggestions for improvements and requested actions to be communicated via personalized reports to the DL instructors and DL coordinators. The

Distance Learning Committee (DLC) and the Open and Distance Learning Center (ODCL) oversee and monitor the additional quality evaluation process for the DL programmes of study. The additional internal quality reporting process is obtained through the following data collection instruments:

- Evaluation rubric – courses observation
- Learning Management System Data analytics

Quality indicators for Programmes of Studies and their monitoring:

A variety of quality indicators are taken into account for the internal evaluation of the Programmes of Study offered by the Department. These indicators are related to:

- Programme structure:** This includes the structure and content of the Programme and its ability to achieve the specified programme learning outcomes. It includes the characteristics of the Programme related to the ratio between compulsory and elective courses, the ratio between the general foundation, discipline specific foundation and the specialization courses, the teaching and assessment methods, the ability of the Programme to strengthen the employability of its graduates through courses that enable students develop practical and transferable skills and competencies, etc. These features of the Programme are analysed by the Programme Coordinator in the Programme Self Evaluation report (IQC104) and evaluated by the Departmental Quality Committee. The findings of this committee are included in the Department Self Evaluation report (IQC107).
- Programme Students:** This includes indicators related to the student intake, transfer students, dropouts, students' retention and student profile (gender, country of origin). These indicators are analysed by the Programme Coordinator in the Programme Self Evaluation report (IQC104) and evaluated by the Departmental Quality Committee. The findings of this committee are included in the Department Self Evaluation report (IQC107).
- Student Performance:** This includes indicators related to the student participation in the exams, the student failure rates and the student performance. These indicators are monitored and reported by the Student's Performance Committee of the Department and analysed at the end of each semester. These indicators are also analysed by the Programme Coordinator in the Programme Self Evaluation report

(IQC104) and evaluated by the Departmental Quality Committee. The findings of this committee are included in the Department Self Evaluation report (IQC107).

- d) **Programme Graduates:** This includes indicators related to the degree grades, the duration of studies and the destination of graduates (continue for further studies or employed in a discipline related field). These indicators are analysed by the Programme Coordinator in the Programme Self Evaluation report (IQC104) and evaluated by the Departmental Quality Committee. The findings of this committee are included in the Department Self Evaluation report (IQC107).

Other quality indicators related to the Programmes offered by the Department are indicators related to the academic staff teaching in the Programme (qualifications, specialization, experience and staff/student ratios), as well as the infrastructure needed for the delivery of the Programmes. These indicators are analysed by the Departmental Quality Committee. The findings of this committee are included in the Department Self Evaluation report (IQC107).

Details on the above quality indicators are provided in the Programme Self Evaluation reports (IQC104) and in the Department Self Evaluation reports (IQC107).

Quality assurance and quality control of the learning process:

Quality control of the learning process is placed at the top of the priorities of the Departments. This process includes all aspects of the operations of the Department, including the academic programmes, academic staff, infrastructure and research. This section concentrates only on the quality control of the teaching/learning process, while the policies concerning other aspects such as research are presented elsewhere in this report, even though the synergies between research and teaching are crucial in the learning process.

A measure of the quality of the outcome of the teaching and learning process is the students' academic performance. The Departments, through the departmental Students' Performance Committee, systematically collect data in relation to the academic performance of its students. This committee collects and evaluates data related to students' continuous assessment, students' attendance and final exam results. The Students' Performance Committee reports to the Council of the Department on its findings for further actions, at least twice per semester. The data collected and findings of this committee are used as input for the various reports related to the internal quality process of the University.

Quality control and decision-making on the implementation of the curriculum and the delivery of the programmes of study offered by the Department is the responsibility of the academic staff. The quality control of the learning process concerns the following:

- a) Student-Centric Education:** The Departments are committed to student centric education. To this end, all programmes are developed using the learning outcomes to define their expected outcome. Furthermore, credit allocation to courses is done based on student's workload. This is achieved using the Tuning methodology, a periodic process for developing programmes of study based on learning outcomes and student workload. It is noted that Frederick University has been awarded the Diploma Supplement Label in 2011 and the ECTS Label in 2012. Both, the programme development based on learning outcomes and the credit allocation to courses based on student workload are essential aspects of the quality of a programme of study and they are among the parameters examined through the internal quality process through the Programme Self Evaluation reports (IQC104).
- b) Curriculum:** The curriculum of each programme of study is evaluated with respect to its suitability in achieving the stated programme's learning outcomes, as well as the employability of its graduates. The Departments consider the employability of their graduates at the highest importance. To this end, it is ensured that the curriculum includes actions that strengthen graduates' employability such as work practice, practical skill development activities used in the field, and the integration of preparative material for registering into the appropriate bodies for obtaining professional license. The curriculum is evaluated during the internal quality process through the Student Course Evaluation questionnaires (IQC100), the Faculty Course Evaluation reports (IQC101), the Programme Self Evaluation report (IQC104), as well as relevant suggestions by focus groups (graduates, employers and professional bodies) and the current developments in the discipline related to the programme. Changes to the curriculum of a programme of study are regulated by the relevant University regulation.
- c) Academic Staff:** A significant factor that affects the overall quality of the learning process is the academic staff. Important quality indicators relating the academic staff with the programmes of study are their teaching domains and experience, their research activity, as well as the number of academic staff members in relation to the number of students. The evaluation of the academic staff is one of the main pillars of the internal quality assurance process. This is examined during the internal quality process through the Student Course Evaluation questionnaires (IQC100 – part related to the instructor), the Programme Self Evaluation report (IQC104), and the Faculty Self Evaluation report (IQC105), the Faculty Appraisal report (IQC106) and the Departmental Self Evaluation report (IQC107).

- d) Teaching and Assessment Methods:** Two of the most important aspects of the quality of the learning process are the teaching methods and the assessment methods employed. Both aspects are among the parameters examined during the internal quality process through the Student Course Evaluation questionnaires (IQC100), the Faculty Course Evaluation reports (IQC101), the Programme Self Evaluation report (IQC104). The University places a significant emphasis on both aspects. To this end, it organizes seminars and workshops to train the academic staff.
- e) Technology Exploitation:** The Departments takes advantage of the potentials provided by the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in education, ranging from teaching material and lecture delivery, the e-learning facilities and e-administration. The degree of utilization of the ICT technologies in each course and by each academic staff member is examined during the internal quality process through the Student Course Evaluation questionnaires (IQC100), the Faculty Course Evaluation reports (IQC101), the Programme Self Evaluation report (IQC104), and the Faculty Self Evaluation report (IQC105).
- f) Infrastructure:** Teaching and learning process is greatly assisted by the use of suitable and sufficient infrastructure and learning resources, such as laboratory and special teaching settings, laboratory equipment and facilities, as well as access to library holdings and electronic subscriptions.