	UNIVERSITY OF ZULULAND **QUALITY PROMOTION AND ASSURANCE** **PROPOSAL FOR THE PROJECT MANAGEMENT** **PLAN** **HEQC INSTITUTIONAL AUDIT: 2008**

INTRODUCTION

The Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) institutional quality audit of Unizulu, scheduled for October 2008, will require a concentrated harnessing of the institutional intellectual resources, time and energy in the next 12-18 months. The institution is required to produce an honest, self-reflective portfolio, covering the strengths, weaknesses, achievements and improvements plans in the HEQC 19 criteria[1], which focus on teaching and learning, research and community engagement and all the support services that underpin those core activities.

Unizulu is expected to provide an account of the effectiveness of its quality assurance and management policies and systems, demonstrating with evidence how it assures itself that the quality of its offerings is sound. The self evaluation report (SER) will provide a composite picture of how the institution works, a picture informed by all its constituencies. Clearly, our strengths and weaknesses will be uncovered in the internal self-evaluation process. However, the institution has to develop improvement plans and demonstrate how it intends to address the deficiencies within a specified time frame. The SER will be followed by a site visit by a HEQC panel of peers.

The HEQC believes that the primary responsibility for the quality of the provision rests with the higher education institutions themselves. Thus the role of the HEQC is to provide external validation of the claims made by higher education institutions in their self-evaluation report. An external panel of peers will prepare an audit report on the effectiveness of the quality management systems after they have considered the self-evaluation report in light of the evidence gathered during the site visits. A panel of peers, as part of the audit exercise, will interrogate the claims made by the institution. The outcome of the audit process is important for developmental purposes, but will also be used as an indicator, along with success in the other external quality monitoring processes, such as programme approval and review, of the readiness of the institution to be granted self accreditation status.

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[1] HEQC Criteria for Institutional Audits. June 2004 and HEQC Framework for Institutional Audits. June 2004.

SCOPE OF THE HEQC AUDIT
The scope of the HEQC audit extends to institutional policies, systems, strategies and resources for managing quality in the core areas of teaching and learning, research and community engagement. General issues of institutional governance, management and financing will be considered only in relation to their impact on the quality objectives.

The audit covers two broad areas which will form the focus of the evaluation, namely:
> **Area 1** : Mission of the institution; links planning, resource allocation and quality management.

> **Area 2:** Teaching and learning, research and community engagement.
Benchmarking, user surveys and impact studies apply to both broad areas.

HEQC CRITERIA FOR INSTITUTIONAL AUDITS

The HEQC has developed specific criteria which will be used in the audit of institutions. The 19 criteria are evaluative tools that enable the institution, the audit panel and the HEQC to focus on important institutional signals and indicators of quality and quality management.

Quality management encompasses a number of elements of institutional planning and action to promote, assure and address quality. These include institutional arrangements for :
- **Quality assurance** : policies, systems, strategies and resources used by the institution to satisfy itself that its quality requirements and standards are being met,
- **Quality support**: the policies , systems, strategies and resources used by the institution to support and sustain existing levels of quality,
- **Quality development and enhancement**: the policies, systems, strategies and resources used by the institution to develop and enhance quality,
- **Quality monitoring** : the policies, systems, strategies and resources used by the institution to monitor, evaluate and act on quality issues.

The success of quality management at institutions is to a considerable extent dependent on the integration of mechanisms for quality assurance and quality development with planning and resource allocation.

The audit criteria do not fully account for institutional contributions (mission differentiation[2]) to the education sector and the broader society within which it operates in respect to innovation complexities and nuances, the thinking and approach within the institution regarding its core functions. Thus as a lead up to the criteria on institutional mission and planning, the audit panel will engage

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[2] Refer to National Plan for Higher Education. DOE.

members of relevant constituencies in discussion of the following four open ended questions:

- *"What are the unique and distinctive ways in which the institution enriches and adds excellence to the higher education sector and society, nationally, regionally and internationally ?*
- *What does the institution do to produce a vibrant intellectual culture within the institution and in society at large ?*
- *In what ways does the institution act as an incubator of new ideas and cutting edge knowledge and technologies within the national system of innovation?*
- *What are some of the notable examples in the last three (3) years of institutional success in promoting and enhancing quality ?*

PROJECT PLAN : INSTITUTIONAL AUDIT

Given the scale of the exercise in preparation for the HEQC audit in 2008, it is hereby suggested that a special Institutional Audit Task Team Committee (IATT) be established to oversee the preparation process, which includes:

1. extensive and ongoing communication and marketing within the institution, explaining the process and to guide the self-evaluation progresses,
2. extensive data collection and organization in relation to the audit criteria,
3. compilation of descriptions of current quality management systems in Faculties, departments and support divisions, and verifying and obtaining feedback through the relevant committees,
4. self-evaluation processes will need to be undertaken in a variety of different areas and levels at the institution,
5. the preparation of draft self-evaluation reports of the Task Teams to inform the institutional portfolio in related to the 19 criteria,
6. the preparation of the draft portfolio and compilation of supplementary evidence,
7. devising of an institutional Improvement Plan based the recommendations of the final portfolio,
8. The final portfolio and plans required to be ratify by the appropriate structures, Senate, Council, etc,
9. the logistics for the HEQC five day site visit (venues, interview schedule, catering, facilities (photocopier, telephone, internet access, etc), accommodation, security, parking etc, and
10. responses to the draft HEQC audit report after the site visit and further development of an Institutional Improvement Plan.

Composition of the Institutional Audit Task Team Committee (IATT)
1. Vice Rector : AA & R (Chair)
2. Chief Financial Officer
3. Registrar

4. Assistant Vice Rector: Research and Community Outreach
5. Assistant Vice Rector : Academic Affairs
6. Executive Deans
7. Dean of Students
8. Director : QPA
9. Director : ICT
10. Director :AD

The Institutional Audit Task Team Committee would need to meet monthly to determine the agenda of preparatory activities and oversee the production of the various portfolio drafts, the feedback and revision processes. The IATT will be the oversight body of the entire exercise. The IA Task Teams will work closely with the four Faculties, Support Services and the existing approved committee structures.

One of first tasks of the IATT will be to develop a set of principles to guide the process. Principles may include:
- Executive responsibility and ownership of the entire process,
- Honesty and commitment
- Developmental –opportunity for critical reflection and identification of improvements
- Provision of space for different voices and constituencies
- Not too burdensome for academics
- Build on work/documentation already in place.

The second task of the IATT will be to endorse a project plan (Annexure A), with delegation of responsibilities for the audit preparation process. This task will also include the setting up of five Institutional Audit Task Teams which will prepare an institutional response to the 19 criteria of the HEQC. Each of the Task Teams should be chaired by an Executive Member. (refer to Annexure B)

The third task will be to determine a budget for the audit preparation, which covers additional temporary staff, data collection, information dissemination, workshops, printing, events management and logistics.

The Audit Preparation Plan (Annexure C) provides a detailed description of the criteria allocated to the various Task Teams, Executive responsibility and the high level documentation required.

In conclusion, the Self-Evaluation Report (SER) should be an honest descriptive analysis and evaluation (strengths, weaknesses, challenges and best practice) supported by evidence of our internal quality management systems, within the scope of the audit with due cognizance of the open-ended questions. It should also validate positive aspects of our quality management systems and identify areas for improvements.

Our theme for the institutional audit should be :

"Restructured for Relevance
 You make the difference"

in our quest to transform into a comprehensive university

Professor Chandru Kistan
Director : QPA
March 2007

ANNEXURE A

UNIVERSITY OF ZULULAND

QUALITY PROMOTION AND ASSURANCE

**PROPOSAL FOR THE PROJECT MANAGEMENT PLANNING
HEQC INSTITUTIONAL AUDIT : 2008**

OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT
This is a brief overview of the project plan. The project plan is not static but should be viewed as a living document that can change from time to time depending on the progress and circumstances.

Phase One : March 2007 : Early Preparation
1. Project Plan presented to the University Executive for approval and implementation.
2. The Institutional Audit Task Team (IATT) Committee meets to discuss project plan and its brief
3. Communique from Rector to campus community to start the process
4. Set up structural arrangements, project and communication plan, appoint IATask Teams
5. Schedule dates for monthly meetings (progress reports from Task Teams)
6. Design a logo and develop an Institutional Audit Newsletter.
7. Finalisation of Administrative support for IATask Teams.
8. Identify a suitable venue for the HEQC site visit

Phase Two : April/May 2007 : Information Campaign
1. HEQC : Audit Directorate invited to make presentation to Institutional Audit Committee and IA Task Teams.
2. IATask Teams commence with their deliberations on sub projects (criteria)
3. Briefing sessions about the institutional audit commences at Faculty/ Department level.
4. Set up IT communication structure (e.g. webpage and document management)
5. Briefing sessions to support structures on institutional audit
6. Briefing sessions to Students Body and Dean of Students
7. IATask Teams commence with work around the criteria.
8. Publication of first QA Audit Newsletter
9. Institutional Audit Committee : report to Council

Phase Three : end of July 2007 : Information Gathering
1. Collect and store relevant data and policies in relation to criteria : QPA
2. Audit of certain identified processes.

3. Invite persons from other HE institutions who went through the Audit process. (DUT, WITS, TUT)
4. Programme and modules templates : systems development : Registrar/ Assistant Registrar: Collect data
5. Minutes of Senate and Council Meetings (2005,2006, 2007)

Phase Four : August 2007 : Preparation of 1st Draft Report
1. IATask Teams present draft reports to the IATT Committee.
2. IATT Committee to integrate IATT drafts into 1st Draft of SER
3. Continue to gather strategic evidence and other documents
4. First Draft of SER to be presented to the IATT Committee.
5. Distribute 1st Draft to University Community for feedback
6. Publication of second QA Audit Newsletter
7. Request response from Campus community on 1st Draft : Faculty Boards, Senate, and other committees

Phase Five : September /October 2007 : Preparation of 2nd Draft Report
1. Institutional Audit TT Committee to write 2nd Draft of SER, incorporating comments from feedback.
2. Second Draft circulated to key structures and committees
3. Second Draft report placed on the institutional audit webpage.
4. Institutional Audit TT Committee to report to Council on audit preparation.
5. Plan pilot audit with three external persons (dry-run)
6. Formal discussions with the HEQC on audit and self-evaluation report.
7. Send invitation via email to university community to be part of the interview team for the HEQC panel.
8. Set up team for HEQC panel : site visit (Public Relations Department)
9. Label and organize all files and documentation (Assistance from Library)

Phase Six : November/December 2007 : Finalisation of SER (Portfolio)
1. Final copy of SER by Institutional Audit TT Committee
2. Make hard copies of SER for distribution.
3. Submit final SER to Senate and Council for approval.
4. Setting up Logistics Committee to plan Site Visit : HEQC Panel

Phase Seven : January/February 2008 : Final Preparation Site Visit
1. Submission of Institutional Portfolio to the HEQC.
2. Finalisation of the interviewees and planning interview schedule for the site visit.
3. Documentation management : filing of evidence
4. Meetings with all interviewees : briefing and guidance
5. Designing of programme: Site Visit.
6. Logistics Committee to meet : plan Site Visit by HEQC.
7. Copies and distribution of final SER to University Community.
8. Distributed of final SER to Council members.

9. Examples of outstanding Projects/work of students and staff collected for display.
10. Publication of QA Audit Newsletter

ANNEXURE B

UNIVERSITY OF ZULULAND

QUALITY PROMOTION AND ASSURANCE

**PROPOSAL FOR THE PROJECT MANAGEMENT PLANNING
HEQC INSTITUTIONAL AUDIT : 2008**

STRUCTURAL ARRANGMENTS

A. INSTITUTIONAL AUDIT TASK TEAM COMMITTEE (IATT)
1. Vice Rector (AAR)
2. Chief Financial Officer
3. Registrar
4. Assistant Vice Rector: Research and Community Outreach
5. Assistant Vice Rector : Academic Affairs
6. Executive Deans
7. Dean of Students
8. Director : QPA
9. Director : ICT
10. Director : AD

B. IA TASK TEAM (CORE) [Executive responsibility–chairing of Task Teams]
1. DVC: AAR (Chair)
2. Registrar
3. Assistant Vice Rector: Research and Community Outreach
4. Assistant Vice Rector : Academic Affairs
5. Director : QPA
6. QA Officer (Scribe)

C. ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT
Administrative support in respect of personnel, space and equipment should be provided to the IA Task Team Committee and Task Teams. Persons should either be appointed or seconded from current structures for this purpose.

ANNEXURE C

UNIVERSITY OF ZULULAND

QUALITY PROMOTION AND ASSURANCE

PREPARATION FOR THE PROJECT MANAGEMENT PLANNING
HEQC INSTITUTIONAL AUDIT : 2008

CO-ORDINATION AND FLOW OF RESPONSIBILTIES

RECTOR'S QA COMMITTEE (RQAC)
17 Members
Liaise with HEQC
Oversight body
Manage project
Appoint Task Teams
Monitor tasks
Check reports
Compile Draft SER
Communicate with University Community
Follow internal approval process.

Engage with
Council
Senate
Staff
Students
SRC,
Unions,
Employers,
Alumni

Inputs from
Faculties
Departments,
Service Units
University
Structures,e.g
Faculty QAC,
Students,alumni,
employers.

INSTITUTIONAL AUDIT TASK TEAM COMMITTEE
Engage with audit criteria
Form sub groups
Write reports
Conduct workshops
Collect evidence
Make presentation to RQAC
Submit reports to RQAC

Submit SER to HEQC

Engage with Panel members

Logistics for 5 days Site Visit

Study HEQC Audit report

Engage with HEQC audit report and develop an Improvement Plan