

Quality System for Supporting Deanships and Administration Units in Qassim University

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Contents

1. Introduction

2. Establishing the Deanships/Directorates Quality Criteria

3- Quality Criteria

3. Linking the Deanships/Directorates Quality Criteria to ISO Standards

4. The Analogy between the Deanships/Directorates Quality Criteria and the NCAAA Criteria

5- Deanships and Administration Units Covered by the Quality System

6- KPIs for the Deanships and Directorates

1. Introduction

Quality assurance for a process is defined as a group of activities that must be performed in order to identify potential sources of problems and shortcomings in the process and dealing with them beforehand to avoid the occurrence of problems and drawbacks in the process, and to achieve continuous improvement. This technique contrasts with that of monitoring the process and checking the process outcomes in order to determine its shortcomings after the fact.

The educational processes in the universities are supported and facilitated through many supporting units in the universities such as the student registration unit, libraries, scientific research deanship, information technology unit, etc. To ensure the realization of a comprehensive quality a system ensuring the quality in Qassim University deanships and administration units should be developed. Quality assurance of the various deanships, directorates and units' activities requires studying all the aspects and activities of these entities.

2. Establishing the Deanships/Directorates Quality Criteria

To set up the QAS for the supporting bodies, the followings had to be realized [5]:

- i. Availability of clear and accurate information for internal and external stakeholders.
- ii. Setting clear and accurate mission and objectives for these bodies which must be consistent with the University's mission.
- iii. Ensuring that all conditions are prepared for effectively realizing the Deanships/Directorates objectives and continually maintaining them.
- iv. The commitment of all the deanship/directorate employers to the services and activities evaluation process and their active participation in all activities.
- v. Participation of the beneficiaries in the evaluation of the deanships/directorates

To establish the criteria different ideas have been investigated, and deep discussions involving deans, vice-deans, directors and higher representatives of the supporting deanships, units and different directorates have been performed. Many approaches and existing evaluation systems such as the ISO system [6, 7] have been reviewed and criticized. The discussions have been concentrated upon that the criteria should direct the supporting deanship/directorate to enforce and aid in the educational processes, research activities and community services to help the institutional institution achieving their goals. This will pour in the efforts of preparing the institutions for academic institutional accreditation, and support their educational programs in getting the academic accreditation.

It should be noted here that the Deanship of Development and Quality review the extent to which other deanships and administrative units comply with the standards/criteria demonstrated below, and according to the Quality policies and procedures explained in the “QU policies and system of Quality”.

3. Deanships/Directorates Quality Criteria

The following criteria have been established to be followed by the University Deanships and administration units:

- 1- Strategic Planning
- 2- Management and Authorities
- 3- Management of Quality Assurance and Improvement
- 4- Beneficiaries’ Support
- 5- Resources, Infrastructure, Facilities and Equipment
- 6- Partners
- 7- Financial Planning and Management
- 8- Human Resources
- 9- Deanship/ Directorate Relation with the Community
- 10- Deanship/Directorate Outcomes

These criteria have been separated into sub-criteria, which in turn have been divided into practices, which facilitates the accuracy of evaluation. The details of these sub-criteria and practices are given in the following table:

Criterion	Sub-criterion
1- Strategic Planning	1-1 Appropriateness of the mission, 1-2 Usefulness of the mission statement, 1-3 Development and review of the mission, 1-4 Use made of the mission statement, 1-5 Relationship between mission, goals and objectives. 1-6- Setting strategic planning
2- Management and Authorities	2-1 Governing body. 2-2 Leadership. 2-3 Planning processes. 2-4 Institutional integrity. 2-5 Internal policies, and regulations 2-6 Organizational climate 2-7 Supporting units and affiliated entities
3- Management of Quality Assurance and Improvement	3-1 The University's commitment to quality improvement. 3-2 The scope of quality improvement. 3-3 Management of Quality Assurance. 3-4 The use of indicators and benchmarks. 3-5 Ensuring the realization of the standards through an independent body.

<p>4- Beneficiaries' Support</p>	<p>4-1 Beneficiaries' records 4-2 Beneficiaries' management 4-3 Planning and evaluation of beneficiaries' services 4-4 Counseling, orientation and general publicity services</p>
<p>5- Resources, Infrastructure, Facilities and Equipment</p>	<p>5-1 Policies, planning and evaluation 5-2 Quality and adequacy of facilities and equipment 5-3 Administration and implementation 5-4 Information technology and decisions support</p>
<p>6- Partners</p>	<p>6-1 Existence of partners and their participation in the Deanship/Directorate Administration Council and its committees. 6.2 Cooperation of the Deanship with other deanships and the Directorate with other directorates from inside the Deanship or others.</p>
<p>7- Financial Planning and Management</p>	<p>7-1 – Financial Planning and preparation of the budget. 7-2 – Management of finance and resources. 7-3- Financial audit and Risk Management.</p>
<p>8- Human Resources</p>	<p>8-1 Policy and Administration 8-2 Recruitment 8-3 Personal and Career Development 8-4 Discipline, Complaints and Dispute Resolution</p>
<p>9- Deanship/Directorate Relation with the Community</p>	<p>9-1 Institutional Policies on Community Relationships 9-2 Serving and interacting with the Community</p>

10- Deanship/Directorate Outcomes

- 10-1 Institutional oversight of deanship/directorate activities
- 10-2 Outcomes of deanship/directorate.
- 10-3 Deanship/directorate development processes.
- 10-4 Activities evaluation and review processes.
- 10-5. Existence of continuous improvement process.
- 10-6 Guidance and technical assistance for the beneficiaries.
- 10-7 Quality of serving the beneficiaries.
- 10-8 Support for improvements in quality of services.
- 10-9 Qualifications and experience of the staff.
- 10-10 Qualitative training of the staff.
- 10-11 Partnership arrangements with other supporting entities

3. Linking the Deanships/Directorates Quality Criteria to ISO Standards

ISO 9001 specifies the requirements against which a quality management system can be certified by an external body. The standard recognizes that the term “products and services” applies to services, processed material, hardware and software intended for the customer. Apart from the scope, reference and definitions, there are seven clauses in the standard specifying activities that need to be considered when the system is implemented:

1. Scope
2. Reference
3. Definitions
4. Context of the organization
5. Leadership
6. Planning
7. Support
8. Operation
9. Performance evaluation
10. Improvement

Comparing the Deanships/Directorates criteria with the ISO 9001 criteria, they can be related to the ISO criteria as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: relation of Deanships/Directorates developed criteria to ISO 2009 criteria

1	ISO 9001 Criteria										Notes	
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10			
Deanship/Directorate Criteria	1	X	X				X					
	2					X						
	3									X	X	
	4							X	X			
	5							X				
	6							X				
	7						X					
	8							X				
	9							X	X			
	10									X		

The main differences between the developed criteria and those of the ISO 9001 are that the developed criteria are designed such that they are oriented towards supporting the education, research and community services processes to suit Qassim University and, in general, other higher educational institutions.

4. The Analogy between the Deanships/ Directorates Quality Criteria and the NCAAA Criteria

The Deanships/Directorates quality criteria, when followed, should improve the works and achievements of Qassim University and other Saudi Arabia Universities if they are adopted there. Also, they help the University to get the institutional accreditation. These criteria are supporting to most of the criteria of the NCAAA institutional accreditation as shown in the following table:

NCAAA Institutional Accreditation Standards	Supporting Deanships/Directorates Criteria									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Standard 1. Mission, Vision and Strategic Planning	X									
Standard 2: Governance, Leadership and Administration		X	X							
Standard 3: Learning and Teaching			X	X		X				
Standard 4: Students				X						
Standard 5: Faculty and Staff								X		
Standard 6: Institutional Resources					X		X			
Standard 7: Research and Innovation				X						X
Standard 8: Community Partnership									X	

“Mission, Vision and Strategic Planning” resembles “Strategic Planning” criterion of the Deanships/Directorates. “Governance, Leadership and Administration” resembles “Management and Authorities” and “Management of Quality Assurance and Improvement” criteria of the Deanships/Directorates. “Learning and Teaching” contains the outcomes of the education process and how to improve it, and it is analogous to “Management of Quality Assurance and Improvement”, “Beneficiaries’ Support”, “Partners” and “Deanship/Directorate Outcomes” as these are outcomes of the deanships/directorates. The “Students” resembles the “Beneficiaries Support” as the students are the education process target and the beneficiaries are the target of the deanships/directorates. “Faculty and Staff” are the human resources of the university as a whole, and resembles “Human Resources” of deanships/directorates. “Institutional Resources” criterion of the institutional accreditation is analogous to “Resources, Infrastructure, Facilities and Equipment” and “Financial Planning and Management” as all these are resources of the deanships/directorates. “Research and Innovation” is analogous to the “Beneficiaries Support” and “Deanship/Directorate Outcomes” criteria as the first is outcome of the university and the other two are outcomes of the deanships and directorates. “Community Partnership” resembles “Deanship/ Directorate Relation with the Community” are similar.

5- Deanships and Administration Units Covered by the System

The following Deanships are covered by the quality criteria

- Deanship of Admission and Registration
- Deanship of Student Affairs
- Deanship of Scientific Research
- Deanship of Library Affairs
- Deanship of Graduate Studies
- Deanship of Community Service
- Deanship of Educational Service
- Deanship of Information Technology
- Deanship of Development and Quality
- Deanship of Faculty and Personnel Affairs
- Deanship of E-Learning and Distance Learning
- Deanship of Studies and Advisory Services

The Directorates covered by the quality criteria are as follows:

- Legal Affairs Administration
- Financial Administration
- General Administration for Projects and Maintenance
- Motion and Transportation Administration
- Contracts and Procurement Administration
- Centre of Development of Leaders and Abilities
- Public Relations and University Media
- Campus Safety and Security Administration

6- KPIs for the Deanships and Directorates

Concept of Performance Indicators

The performance indicators are considered the most important tools for evaluating the quality of the academic and administrative performance, and it is one of the major practices which support making decisions and processes of following up, development and continuous improvement. To complete the efforts of evaluation and continuous improvement of supporting deanships and directorates of the University some KPIs have been suggested.

A detailed explanation will be presented for these suggested indicators which are used in the system of internal audit in Qassim University, according to time schedule for the measuring periods, in addition to a unified mechanism for determining the target values in accordance with the objectives of the University strategic plan.

There is a wide range of usable various indicators, but to be able to use most of these indicators, decisions should be taken regarding many items of information which should be quantitatively expressed, and used as performance indicators. The indicators should be identified in advance as a part of planning process. For example when basic objectives are established, certain indicators should be determined so that these objectives can be continuously monitored. Also, it is essential for the deanships to identify performance indicators to be applied in its different departments and directorates to follow up their performance and practices. This allows comparison between different deanships and directorates, thus permitting the University to steadily control and evaluate the performance of its different units. The information related to these indicators should be collected in a standard formatted form, and saved in a central data base.

To use and rely upon these indicators, continuous evaluation of these indicators should be performed to determine their suitability, and the appropriateness and effectiveness of the method of collecting and saving the data used for calculating these indicators, and consequently utilizing these indicators to judge the quality of the institution and future planning.

Suggested Key Performance Indicators

There are some suggested indicators, which are recommended to be applied periodically to assess and evaluate the performance of the supporting deanships and directorates in Qassim University. These are as follows:

- 1- Existence of a clear mission of the deanship/directorate which is suitable to its nature of work.
- 2- The extent of consistency of the deanship/directorate mission with the University mission
- 3- The extent of satisfaction of the deanship/directorate dealers with its dealings.
- 4- The extent of satisfaction of the employees with the deanship/directorate work conditions and environment.
- 5- Rate of executing the dealings (transactions) of the deanship/directorate.
- 6- The quality of archiving system of the deanship/directorate dealings and documents.
- 7- Ratio of the number of dealer with the deanship/directorate to the man power of it.

The timing and period of application of the KPIs depend on the nature of work of the deanship/directorate

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