

ACADEMIC QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE (AQAC)

Approval Authority: Senate

Reports To: Senate (Vice President Academic and Provost)

Established: October 5, 2023

The Academic Quality Assurance Committee (AQAC) is responsible for monitoring and overseeing all aspects of continuous quality improvement of all degree and non-degree programs at NOSM University that are quality assured through accreditation and/or through Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP).

1.0 Preamble and Mandate

The primary purpose of academic quality assurance is to ensure continuous improvement in all academic programs (degree and non-degree) and units, through a process of internal reflection and constructive, formative evaluations by qualified reviewers.

AQAC oversees, monitors, and reports to the Senate on all aspects of program reviews for new and existing degree and non-degree programs and assumes responsibility for ensuring programs are appropriately designed and structured to achieve their program learning objectives and outcomes. AQAC monitors progress on the steps taken to address deficiencies and to implement recommendations made by external reviewers and detailed in Accreditation Reports and Final Assessment Reports (IQAP). For the IQAP, AQAC is tasked to monitor the Implementation Plans linked to Final Assessment Reports.

AQAC is also responsible for all aspects of major modifications to existing programs for academic credit prior to their approval by the Senate.

2.0 Purpose and Goals

The primary purpose of a quality assurance review is to evaluate three overarching aspects of a program.

- 2.1 Quality of Education
- 2.2 Resource use
- 2.3 Contribution to the Mandate and Vision of the institution

The Academic Quality Assurance Committee's main goals are to:

- 2.4 Ensure high standards and continuous quality improvement of the academic programs of NOSM University.
- 2.5 Standardize and streamline the process of evaluating academic programs where possible.
- 2.6 Document, communicate and support University wide, the results of academic quality assurance processes.

- 2.7 Ensure strengths and areas for improvement of the academic programs are identified, recorded and that the information is maintained centrally by the Provost's Office.
- 2.8 Develop an action plan and an implementation plan that address the recommendations in the evaluation reports from external evaluators.
- 2.9 Ensure the action and implementation plans are executed by program leaders and that records of such are maintained centrally within the Provost's portfolio.

3.0 Committee Responsibilities

- 3.1 Establish and maintain an Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP) to promote high standards of the academic programs and to meet the requirements of the provincial Quality Council.
- 3.2 Monitor progress on the Implementation Plans arising out of the IQAP Final Assessment Reports.
- 3.3 Oversee, coordinate, and monitor IQAP cyclical reviews.
- 3.4 Establish protocols for monitoring academic programs and their compliance with external bodies' accreditation requirements.
- 3.5 Review new program submissions and major modifications to existing programs for approval by Senate (IQAP and PEQAB).
- 3.6 Establish subcommittees and *ad hoc* working groups when needed to develop, administer, and maintain assessments for the purposes of quality assurance.
- 3.7 Respect confidentiality when personnel or other issues requiring confidentiality arise at the Committee.
- 3.8 Members must declare a real or perceived conflict of interest at the beginning of (or any other time during) a meeting.

4.0 Membership

- 4.1 Vice President Academic and Provost (Chair) - 1 member
- 4.2 Senior faculty members with curriculum expertise from each academic portfolio (UME, PGME, CEPD, Graduate Studies, Health Sciences) - 5 members
- 4.3 One faculty member from each Division nominated by Senate - 3 members.
- 4.4 Two learner members elected from learners on Senate and from one of the following portfolios: UME, PGME, Health Sciences and Graduate Studies - 2 members.
- 4.5 One member from each of the Francophone and Indigenous reference groups (could be the Chairs of these reference groups) - 2 members.
- 4.6 Director UME Assessment and Program Evaluation - 1 member
- 4.7 Other non-voting members invited by the Provost as required (e.g. other expert on assessment and evaluation, expert in online learning)

Total: 14 members

Criteria: Members should have previous experience with developing academic programs as well as program evaluation.

Term: Membership will be for a term of 3 years. Learner members will serve for one year (with possibility of renewal). If a member misses two consecutive meetings without reasonable cause and/or prior notification to the chair, they will be asked to step down as a member of the AQAC.

Election Criteria:

The Faculty members from each Division (Medical, Human and Clinical) will be selected by following the election procedures as outlined in the NOSM U Senate Nominations and Elections policy.

Elections will be held for those positions where more than one nomination is received. Following the close of nominations, the names of the nominated candidates, along with their statements, will be collated by the Secretary of Senate

Elections shall take place for a specified period through an electronic confidential voting process. Provisions will be made for those who are unable to vote online. Only those members of the specified constituency may vote for the nominee of that constituency.

Quorum will be 50% plus one of the members present.

Working Groups: When needed AQAC will form independent working groups composed of individuals with specific expertise in order to address and complete specific tasks. Once the task is complete, these working groups will be dissolved.

5.0 Reporting

The AQAC will report to Senate. Minutes of the AQAC meetings will be kept centrally by the Office of the Provost and Vice President Academic. The Provost will provide briefing notes to Senate on a regular basis to keep Senate apprised of all matters related to academic program quality assurance at the university. In some instances, other members of AQAC or program leaders will be called upon to provide information at Senate and to answer program-specific questions.

6.0 Meetings

Meetings will be quarterly or more frequently at the call of the Chair.

Review Period: Annually or as required.

Next Review: 2024 10 01