

QUALITY ASSURANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

1. Introduction

- Quality assurance is the process whereby customers are satisfied that standard will be consistently met.

2. Quality Assurance process guiding & policing

- Regulating bodies scrutinizing documentation
 - Ministry of Higher Education (MHE)
 - Lembaga Akreditasi Negara (LAN)
 - Malaysia Medical Council (MMC)
- Accreditation exercise
- Monitoring and visits for compliance
- External examiners
- Internal review
 - Faculty Council
 - Curriculum Committee
 - Examination Board
 - Department of Medical Education

3. Quality Assurance customer

- Students/parents
- Parliament and investors
- Ministry of Health and Defense
- Private health care industry
- Public/consumer organization
- Medical/Nursing Association

4. Quality Assurance and standard

- WFME (World Federation Medical Education)
 - Internal standards in basic medical education
- General Medical Council (GMC), UK
 - Tomorrow's Doctor
- Institute International Medical Education (IIME), America & China
 - Essential requirements for medical education
- Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME)
 - Accreditation standard for US & Canada

5. Standard from WFME

- **Areas**
 - Broad components of structure and process of Medical Education
- **Criteria**
 - Specific aspects of an area corresponding to performance indicators
- **Standards**
 - Specific for each criterion, using two levels of attainment i.e. *must have* and *should have*

6. Areas

- Mission and objectives
- Educational program and principles
- Assessment of educational outcomes
- Students
 - Criterion A: Recruitment & admission policy
 - Criterion B: Methods of selection
 - Criterion C: Student intake
 - Basic standard: must be defined and related to the capacity of the Medical School at all stages of education

- Quality development: should be reviewed in consultation with stakeholders and regulated periodically in line with the national need
- Criterion D: Student support & counseling
- Criterion E: Student representation & governance
 - Basic standard: must have a policy on student representation & leadership
 - Quality development: should encourage & facilitate student organizations, self-government, social-activities & ensure student representation on bodies relevant to education
- Academic staff and faculty
- Educational resources
- Monitoring and evaluation of programs
- Governance and administration
- Continuous renewal
 - PPSP curriculum review 2007 22-24 February, Kuala Terengganu
 - To present the final draft of the Cameroon review
 - To fine tune and add current needs to the final draft
 - To document the final draft of the curriculum review
 - This exercise satisfy the continuous renewal requirement and include 2 students to satisfy their representation in curriculum

7. Tools in Quality Assurance

- Benchmarking
- ISO – International Organization of Standardization
 - ISO is a network of the national standards institutes of 157 countries
 - ISO (9000) is the Generic Management Standards
 - ISO (14000) is the Environmental Management Standards

- Management Standards

8. ISO (9000)

- Quality management
 - Principle 1: Customer focus
 - Organizations depend on their customers and therefore should understand current and future customer needs, should meet customer requirements and strive to exceed customer expectation in curriculum. Key benefits:
 - Increased revenue and market share obtained through flexible and fast responses to market opportunities
 - Increased effectiveness in the use of the organization's resources to enhance customer satisfaction
 - Improved customer loyalty leading to repeat business
 - Applying to principle of customer focus typically leads to:
 - Researching and understanding customer needs and expectations
 - Ensuring that the objectives of the organization are linked to customer needs and expectations
 - Communicating customer needs and expectations throughout the organization
 - Measuring customer satisfaction and acting on the results
 - Systematically managing customer relationships
 - Ensuring a balanced approach between satisfying customers and other interested parties (such as owners employees, suppliers, financiers, local communities and society as a whole)
 - Principle 2: Leadership
 - Leaders establish unity of purpose and direction of the organization. They should create and maintain the internal

environment in which people can become fully involved in achieving the organization's objectives. Key benefits:

- People will understand and be motivated towards the organization's goals and objectives
 - Activities are evaluated, aligned and implemented in a unified way
 - Miscommunication between levels of an organization will be minimized
- Applying the principle of leadership typically lead to:
- Considering all needs of all interested parties including customers, owners, employees, suppliers, financiers, local communities and society as a whole
 - Establishing a clear vision of the organization's future
 - Setting the challenging goals and targets
 - Creating and sustaining shared values, fairness and ethical role models at all levels of the organization
 - Establishing trust and eliminating fear
 - Providing people with the required resources, training and freedom to act with responsibility and accountability, inspiring, encouraging and recognizing people's contributions
- Principle 3: Involvement of people
- Peoples at all levels are the essence of an organization and their full involvement enables their abilities to be used for the organization's benefit. Key benefits:
- Motivated, committed and involved people within the organization
 - Innovation and creativity in furthering the organization's objectives
 - People being accountable for their own performance

- People eager to participate in and contribute to continual improvement
- Applying the principle of involvement of people typically leads to:
 - People understanding the importance of their contribution and role in the organization
 - People identifying constraint to their performance
 - People accepting ownership of problems and their responsibility for solving them
 - People evaluating their performance against their personal goals and objectives
 - People actively seeking opportunities to enhance their competence, knowledge and experience
 - People freely sharing knowledge and experience
 - People openly discussing problems and issues
- Principle 4: Process approach
 - A desired result is achieved more efficiently when activities and related resources are managed as a process. Key points:
 - Lower cost and shorter cycle times through effective use of resources
 - Improved, consistent and predictable results
 - Focused and prioritized improvement opportunities
 - Applying the principle of process approach typically leads to:
 - Systematically defining the activities necessary to obtain a desired result
 - Establishing clear responsibility and accountability for managing key activities
 - Analyzing and measuring of the capability of key activities
 - Identifying and interfaces of key activities within and between the functions of the organization

- Focusing on the factors such as resources, methods and materials that will improve key activities of the organization
- Evaluating risks, consequences and impacts on customers, suppliers and other interested parties
- Principle 5: System approach to management
 - Identifying, understanding and managing interrelated processes as a system contributes to the organization's effectiveness and efficiency in achieving its objectives. Key benefits:
 - Integration and alignment of the processes that will best achieve the desired results
 - Ability to focus effort on the key processes
 - Providing confidence to interested parties as to consistency, effectiveness and efficiency of the organization
 - Applying the principle of system approach to management typically lead to:
 - Structuring a system to achieve the organization's objectives in the most effective and efficient way
 - Understanding the interdependencies between the process of the system
 - Structured approaches that harmonize and integrate processes
 - Providing better understanding of the roles and responsibilities necessary for achieving common objectives and thereby reducing cross-functional barriers
 - Understanding organizational capabilities and establishing resource constraints prior to action
 - Targeting and defining how specific activities within a system should operate

- Continually improving the system through measurement and evaluation
- Principle 6: Continual improvement
 - Continual improvement of the organization's overall performance should be a permanent objective of the organization. Key points:
 - Performance advantage through improved organizational capabilities
 - Alignment of improvement activities at all levels to an organization's strategic intent
 - Flexibility to react quickly to opportunities
 - Applying the principle of continual improvement typically lead to:
 - Employing a consistent organization-wide approach to continual improvement of the organization's performance
 - Providing people with training in the methods and tools of continual improvement
 - Making continual improvement of products, processes and systems an objective for every individual in the organization
 - Establishing goals to guide, and measures to track, continual improvement
 - Recognizing and acknowledging improvements
- Principle 7: Factual approach to decision making
 - Effective decisions are based on the analysis of data and information. Key points:
 - An increased ability to demonstrate the effectiveness of past decisions through reference to factual
 - Increased ability to review, challenge and change opinions and decisions

- Applying the principle of factual approach to decision making typically leads to:
 - Ensuring that data and information are sufficiently accurate and reliable
 - Making data accessible to those who need it
 - Analyzing data and information using valid methods
 - Making decisions and taking action based on factual analysis, balanced with experience and intuition
- Principle 8: Mutually beneficial supplier relationships
 - An organization and its suppliers are interdependent and a mutually beneficial relationship enhances the ability of both to create value. Key points:
 - Increased ability to create value for both parties
 - Flexibility and speed of joint response to changing market or customer need and expectations
 - Optimization of costs and resources
 - Applying the principles of mutually beneficial supplier relationship typically leads to:
 - Establishing relationships that balance short-term gains with long-term considerations
 - Pooling of expertise and resources with partners
 - Identifying and selecting key suppliers
 - Clear and open communication
 - Sharing information and future plans
 - Establishing joint development and improvement activities
 - Inspiring, encouraging and recognizing improvements and achievements by suppliers
- The next step:
 - Document what you do
 - So according what was documented

Further reading:

1. <http://www.iso.org/iso/en/iso9000-14000/understand/qmp.html>
2. WFME Task Force on Defining International Standards in Basic Medical Education. Report on the Working Party, Copenhagen, 14-16 Oktober 1999. Medical Education. 34(8):665-675, August 2000
3. www.IIME.org