

**UNIVERSITY OF SAINT JOSEPH MBARARA
(USJM)**



QUALITY ASSURANCE HANDBOOK 2022

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Archdiocese of Mbarara (AoM) started a university as part of its mission and mandate to establish educational institutions of different levels to share in the salvific ministry of Christ by being the salt and light to the world. The founders coined the name: University of Saint Joseph Mbarara (USJM), for the university from St. Joseph, foster father to Jesus and the patron Saint of the pioneer St. Joseph Technical School, whose tradition of hard workmanship and community responsive education, USJM is to uphold.

The personal qualities and values of St. Joseph, the worker, such as integrity, hardworking, commitment, are behind this tradition, and the University will uphold them. USJM aims at total orientation and focus on tertiary education that meets community needs and engineers socioeconomic transformation. It delivers relevant, affordable, high quality, inclusive and community-responsive university education. The University of Saint Joseph Mbarara derives its vision and mission from the Christian understanding of the integral growth of a person.

- i. **Vision:** A leading center for integrated community responsive university education.
- ii. **Mission:** To provide holistic education for sustainable development.
- iii. **Motto:** Foster Excellence and Integrity (*Praestantia et Integritate Foveat*)
- iv. **Slogan:** For and With the Community
- v. **Philosophy:** Community-Responsive and Engaged university education
- vi. **Core Values**
 - a. God fearing,
 - b. Integrity,
 - c. Excellence,
 - d. Accountability,
 - e. Community responsiveness
- vii. **Objectives:**
 - a. To provide relevant university education.
 - b. To promote research and innovation among the students.
 - c. To nurture citizens of integrity and sense of common good.
 - d. To nurture students with demand-oriented skills.
 - e. To promote best practices in institutional governance.
 - f. To promote pastoral mission of the church

It is USJM commitment to encourage the development of each individual through education at all levels, stressing in particular the creation/promotion of an environment where intellectual and moral values are priorities. Since the person is at the centre of all growth and development, both at individual and societal levels, all members of the community respect each other in an attempt to create an environment of openness and trust. The University is committed to promoting justice, respect, solidarity, human rights, equality, and environmental protection, both in its own community and society in general.

1.1 Purpose of the Handbook

The Quality Assurance Handbook of the University of Saint Joseph Mbarara is designed to provide guidance and clarity on the processes, policies, and practices that ensure the quality of education and services at the university. It serves as a comprehensive resource for faculty, staff, and students to understand their roles in maintaining and enhancing quality standards.

1.2 Importance of Quality Assurance

Quality Assurance is vital for promoting academic excellence, fostering a culture of continuous improvement, and ensuring accountability. It enhances the credibility of the institution, assures stakeholders of the quality of education, and contributes to student success.

2.0 QUALITY ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK

2.1 Definition of Quality Assurance

Quality Assurance refers to systematic processes aimed at ensuring that educational programs, services, and operations meet established standards of quality.

2.3 Objectives of Quality Assurance

- i. To enhance the quality of academic programs and support services.
- ii. To ensure compliance with national and international accreditation standards.
- iii. To promote a culture of continuous improvement.
- iv. To facilitate stakeholder engagement and feedback.

2.4 Key Principles

- i. **Transparency:** Clear communication of policies and processes.
- ii. **Inclusivity:** Engagement of all stakeholders in quality assurance activities.
- iii. **Accountability:** Responsibility for outcomes at all levels.

3.0 QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICIES

3.1 Academic Quality Assurance

Policies aimed at maintaining and enhancing the quality of academic programs, including curriculum development, faculty qualifications, and assessment methods.

3.2 Administrative Quality Assurance

Procedures to evaluate and improve administrative processes, ensuring efficiency and effectiveness in university operations.

3.4 Student Support Services

Guidelines for evaluating student services, including counselling, career services, and academic advising.

4.0 QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESSES

4.1 Program Review and Assessment

Regular assessment of academic programs to ensure they meet educational standards and respond to the needs of the community.

4.2 Course Evaluation

Mechanisms for evaluating courses, including student surveys and peer reviews, to gather feedback for continuous improvement.

4.3 Faculty Evaluation

Assessment of faculty performance through self-evaluations, peer evaluations, and student feedback.

4.4 Student Feedback Mechanisms

Establishing channels for students to provide feedback on their educational experiences, contributing to program enhancement.

5.0 QUALITY ASSURANCE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 University Administration

Responsible for establishing quality assurance policies, providing resources, and ensuring compliance with standards.

5.2 Academic Departments

Tasked with implementing quality assurance processes within their programs and contributing to program evaluations.

5.3 Faculty Members

Engaged in self-assessment, peer review, and implementation of feedback to enhance teaching quality.

5.4 Students

Encouraged to participate in evaluations and provide constructive feedback on courses and services.

6.0 QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEES

6.1 Structure of Quality Assurance Committees

Committees formed at various levels, including departmental, faculty, and university-wide committees, to oversee quality assurance activities.

6.2 Roles and Functions

- i. Conduct regular reviews of programs and services.
- ii. Facilitate the implementation of quality assurance policies.
- iii. Analyze feedback and make recommendations for improvement.

6.3 Reporting Mechanisms

Establishing clear channels for reporting findings and recommendations to the university administration and stakeholders.

7.0 CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

7.1 Strategies for Continuous Improvement

- i. Regular training and development for faculty and staff.
- ii. Implementation of feedback from evaluations and assessments.
- iii. Benchmarking against best practices in higher education.

7.2 Monitoring and Evaluation

Establishing key performance indicators to assess the effectiveness of quality assurance processes and outcomes.

7.3 Best Practices

Sharing successful quality assurance practices across departments and fostering collaboration.

8.0 RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

8.1 Training and Development

Opportunities for professional development related to quality assurance practices, assessment methods, and teaching strategies.

8.2 Access to Quality Assurance Resources

Providing access to literature, tools, and frameworks that support quality assurance initiatives.

8.3 External Accreditation

Guidelines for preparing for and maintaining external accreditation, including standards and documentation requirements.

9.0 Approval and Amendments

The Manual is subject to amendment from time to time by relevant authority. The Manual was approved by University of Saint Joseph Mbarara Governing Council on this 18th day of May, 2022

Signed by:

Rev Fr Gervase Nsekanimanya Diido
CHAIRMAN

Rev Fr Dr Deus M Karemire (PhD)
VICE CAHANCELLOR

APPENDICES

Appendix I: Sample Evaluation Forms

A: Course Evaluation Template

Course Title:

Instructor Name:

Semester/Year:

Date:

1. Please rate the following aspects of the course on a scale of 1 to 5: (1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree)

1. The course objectives were clearly stated.
[1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
2. The course materials were relevant and helpful.
[1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
3. The instructor was knowledgeable about the subject.
[1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
4. The instructor communicated effectively.
[1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
5. Assignments and assessments were fair and appropriate.
[1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
6. I learned a lot from this course.
[1] [2] [3] [4] [5]

2. Open-Ended Questions:

1. What did you like most about the course?

○ _____

2. What improvements would you suggest for the course?

○ _____

3. Any additional comments:

○ _____

B: Faculty Assessment Template

Faculty Name:

Department:

Course(s) Taught:

Semester/Year:

Evaluator's Name:

1. Please rate the following aspects of the faculty member's performance on a scale of 1 to 5: (1 = Poor, 2 = Fair, 3 = Satisfactory, 4 = Good, 5 = Excellent)

1. Preparation for classes:
[1] [2] [3] [4] [5]

2. Delivery of course material:
[1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
3. Engagement with students:
[1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
4. Availability for consultation:
[1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
5. Timeliness in grading and feedback:
[1] [2] [3] [4] [5]
6. Use of varied teaching methods:
[1] [2] [3] [4] [5]

2. Open-Ended Questions:

1. What are the faculty member's strengths?
○ _____
 2. What areas could the faculty member improve upon?
○ _____
 3. Any additional comments:
○ _____
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C: Program Review Template

Program Name:
Review Period:
Date of Review:

1. Program Goals and Objectives:

- Are the program’s goals and objectives clearly defined?
 ○ Yes / No
 ○ Comments: _____

2. Curriculum Assessment:

- Is the curriculum aligned with the program goals?
 ○ Yes / No
 ○ Comments: _____
- Are the course offerings sufficient and appropriate?
 ○ Yes / No
 ○ Comments: _____

3. Faculty Qualifications:

- Are the faculty members qualified to teach in the program?
 ○ Yes / No
 ○ Comments: _____

4. Student Outcomes:

- Are students achieving the desired learning outcomes?
 - Yes / No
 - Comments: _____

5. Resources and Support:

- Are the necessary resources (e.g., facilities, technology, support services) available for the program?
 - Yes / No
 - Comments: _____

6. Recommendations for Improvement:

- List recommendations for enhancing the program:
 - _____

Appendix II: Glossary of Terms

1. Key Terms Related to Quality Assurance

- i. **Quality Assurance (QA):** A systematic process designed to determine whether educational activities meet established standards of quality. QA involves regular monitoring, evaluation, and improvement of programs and services.
- ii. **Accreditation:** The formal recognition by an authoritative body that an institution or program meets specific quality standards. In Uganda, the NCHE is responsible for accrediting higher education institutions.
- iii. **Quality Enhancement:** Activities aimed at improving the quality of education and learning outcomes. This may include curriculum development, teaching methods, and student support services.
- iv. **Program Review:** A comprehensive evaluation of an academic program's effectiveness, relevance, and alignment with institutional goals. It often includes assessments of curriculum, faculty, and student outcomes.
- v. **Benchmarking:** The process of comparing educational practices, outcomes, and quality indicators with other institutions or recognized standards to identify areas for improvement.
- vi. **Stakeholder Engagement:** Involvement of all relevant parties (students, faculty, employers, and the community) in the quality assurance process to ensure that diverse perspectives are considered.
- vii. **Continuous Improvement:** An ongoing effort to enhance services, processes, and outcomes based on regular feedback and evaluations, fostering a culture of quality within the institution.
- viii. **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):** Specific metrics used to measure the effectiveness and quality of programs and services. KPIs help institutions track progress towards achieving their quality goals.

2. Key Terms Related to the National Council of Higher Education (NCHE) in Uganda

- i. **National Council for Higher Education (NCHE):** The regulatory body in Uganda responsible for overseeing and ensuring the quality of higher education institutions. It sets standards for accreditation, program approval, and monitoring of higher education.
- ii. **Higher Education Institution (HEI):** Any accredited institution offering degree programs or higher education courses. This includes universities, colleges, and specialized training institutions.
- iii. **Quality Assurance Framework:** A structured approach established by the NCHE that outlines the principles, policies, and procedures for ensuring quality in higher education across institutions in Uganda.
- iv. **Program Accreditation:** The process through which the NCHE evaluates and certifies that a specific academic program meets the established quality standards for higher education.
- v. **Institutional Review:** An evaluation conducted by the NCHE to assess the overall quality and effectiveness of a higher education institution, including governance, resources, and academic programs.

- vi. **Quality Assurance Guidelines:** Documents issued by the NCHE that provide institutions with criteria and procedures for implementing quality assurance practices effectively.
- vii. **Compliance:** Adherence to the standards and regulations set by the NCHE regarding educational quality, program structure, and institutional governance.
- viii. **Strategic Plan:** A document outlining the NCHE's goals and objectives for enhancing higher education quality in Uganda, including specific initiatives and measures for assessment.