

**Establishing Criteria for Checking the Quality of Administration Units at Universities**

**S. Alyehya      M. A. Abdel-halim\***

*College of Engineering, Qassim University*

*\* masamie@qec.edu.sa*

**ABSTRACT.** 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 the university administration units has been developed in cooperation with these bodies. The developed criteria have been linked to both the ISO 9001 standards and the NCAAA standards for accrediting the institutions. The strong resulted linking proved that the suggested criteria will enable rigorous evaluation of the universities supporting 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 [1-3]. This technique contrasts with that of monitoring the process and checking the process outcomes in order to determine its shortcomings after the fact.

Quality Assurance System (QAS) for the academic programs at Qassim University (QU) has been established by a team headed by the Quality Assurance and Academic Accreditation Deanship. The system has been constructed guided by the National Commission for Academic Accreditation and Assessment in Saudi Arabia (NCAAA) [4]. 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 the university 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. Therefore, 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

### 2. Establishing the Criteria

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.

Finally, criteria have been suggested as given in Table (1).

Table (1). Criteria of evaluating the universities' administration units

Criterion	Sub-criterion
<b>1- Strategic Planning</b>	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
<b>2- Management and Authorities</b>	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
<b>3- Management of Quality Assurance</b>	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.
<b>4- Deanship/Directorate Outcomes</b>	4-1 Institutional oversight of deanship/directorate activities 4-2 Outcomes of deanship/directorate. 4-3 Deanship/directorate development processes. 4-4 Activities evaluation and review processes. 4-5. Existence of continuous improvement process. 4-6 Guidance and technical assistance for the beneficiaries. 4-7 Quality of serving the beneficiaries. 4-8 Support for improvements in quality of services. 4-9 Qualifications and experience of the staff. 4-10 Qualitative training of the staff. 4-11 Partnership arrangements with other supporting entities (units).

<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Sub-criterion</b>
<b>5- Beneficiaries' Support</b>	5-1 Beneficiaries' records 5-2 Beneficiaries' management 5-3planning and evaluation of beneficiaries' services 5-4 Counseling, orientation and general publicity services
<b>6- Resources, Infrastructure, Facilities and Equipment</b>	6-1 Policies, planning and evaluation 6-2 Quality and adequacy of facilities and equipment 6-3 Administration and implementation 6-4 Information technology and decisions support
<b>7- Financial Planning and Management</b>	7-1 - Financial Planning and preparation of the budget. 7-2 – Management of finance and resources. 7-3- Financial audit and Risk Management.
Table (1) Continued	
<b>8- Human Resources</b>	8-1 Policy and Administration 8-2 Recruitment 8-3 Personal and Career Development 8-4 Discipline, Complaints and Dispute Resolution
<b>9- Deanship/ Directorate Relation with the Community</b>	9-1 Institutional Policies on Community Relationships 9-2 Serving and interacting with the Community

### 3. Linking the Developed Criteria to ISO Standards

ISO 9001 specifies the requirements against which a quality management system can be certified by an external body [6]. 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 [6, 8]:

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

Comparing the suggested 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

		ISO 9001 Criteria										Notes
		١	٢	٣	٤	٥	٦	٧	٨	٩	١٠	
Deanship/Directorate Criteria	١	X	X	X								
	٢					X						
	٣				X					X	X	
	٤								X			
	٥								X			
	٦							X				
	٧						X					
	٨							X				
	٩								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 the education institutions.

#### 4. Linking the Developed Criteria to the NCAA Criteria

The developed criteria should improve the works and achievements of the SA universities, and aid them getting the institutional accreditation [9]. These criteria seem to be supporting to most of the criteria of the NCAAA institutional accreditation as shown in Table (3).

Table (3). Linking the Developed Criteria to the NCAAA Criteria

[illegible]

“Governance and Administration” is linked to “Strategic Planning” and Management and Authorities” as the deanships and directorates are parts of the university. The “Student Administration and Support Services”, “Learning Resources” and “Facilities and Equipment” are tied to the Deanship/Directorate Outcomes” and “Beneficiaries Support” as the outcomes and support of the concerned deanships and directorates will enrich the learning resources, and increase the facilities and equipment. “Financial Planning and Management” criteria of the institutional accreditation are tied to that of the developed criteria. “Human Resources” is directly linked to the “Employment Processes”. “Relationships with the Community” is directly related to “Deanship/Directorate Relationships with the Community”.

### **5. Evaluation**

To evaluate the developed criteria, focusing groups and surveys have been performed covering the different supporting deanships and directorates of Qassim University to check the effectiveness and suitability of these criteria. The results assured that these bodies are satisfied with these standards, and that they are comprehensive, clear and inspirational for enhancement. In a following paper, the criteria will be applied on the supporting deanships and administration units, and the results will be presented, analyzed and evaluated.

### **6. Conclusion**

Evaluation criteria have been developed for the supporting bodies and directorates of the universities. The criteria have been developed in cooperation with the targeted bodies during the early stages of establishing. Also, their suitability and effectiveness have been checked at the final stage.

The strong-linking map between the developed criteria and both the ISO standards and the NCAAA standards for accrediting the institutions proves that the suggested criteria will enable rigorous evaluation of the universities supporting deanships and directorates. The evaluation will help preparing these bodies to be qualified for the institution accreditation of universities according to the NCAAA standards.

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## إنشاء معايير لفحص جودة الوحدات الإدارية في الجامعات

سليمان آل يحيى      محمد عبد السميع عبد الحليم\*

كلية الهندسة - جامعة القصيم - المملكة العربية السعودية

\* masamie@qec.edu.sa

**ملخص البحث.** يتم في الجامعات دعم العمليات التعليمية من خلال الوحدات المساندة مثل وحدة تسجيل الطلاب وعمادة المكتبات وعمادة البحث العلمي ووحدة تقنية المعلومات وغيرها. ولقد تم وضع نظام يضمن جودة الوحدات الإدارية في الجامعة لتأكيد تحقق الجودة الشاملة، وذلك بالتعاون مع هذه الوحدات الإدارية. ولقد تم بيان العلاقة بين المعايير المقترحة ومعايير الاعتماد المؤسسي لهيئة تقويم التعليم والاعتماد الوطني، وكذلك تم ربطها ومقارنتها بمعايير الأيزو ٩٠٠١. ولقد بينت نتيجة الربط أن هناك ترابطاً قوياً بين المعايير المقترحة من جهة ومعايير هيئة التعليم والأيزو من جهة أخرى بما يؤكد كفاءة وفاعلية المعايير المقترحة وقدرتها على التقويم الدقيق للوحدات والعمادات المساندة.