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Quality assurance collaboration and benchmarking at the regional level

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Why Quality assurance(QA)

❑ Quality is essential for Higher Education Institutions.

❑ Improvement through quality management.

❑ Most universities are working hard for meeting international standards of HE. and are increasingly eager to establish a more comprehensive type of dynamic systematic quality enhancement(QE) in which evaluation reliably triggers improvement.

❑ The Quality Assurance Units developed at universities are required to put a focused attention on QA aspect of HE and required to develop & implement the measures of QA with promise of Quality Enhancement to meet international standards of HE.

Accreditation is the key benchmarks for measuring the quality of educational institutions

- Accreditation is a quality assurance process that colleges, universities and educational institutions or their academic programs undergo to confirm that they meet a set of recognized service and operational quality standards

- Accreditation is a form of certification in which an independent body (Accrediting agencies) will verify that a university or academic program meets minimum academic standards.

- Accreditation is a process of review that allows higher education institutions to demonstrate their ability to meet the requirement criteria and standards established by a recognized accreditation organization such as ASIC. In UK and (CHEA) (USDE) in USA , which hold quality standards of their own. The Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council of Association of Arab Universities in Arab region

- Accreditation is usually assessed by external private, nongovernmental accrediting agencies that have been created specifically to review higher education institutions and their programs

Quality assurance collaboration and benchmarking at the regional level

- Regional and International universities associations such as AArU , offers an opportunities for bi- and multilateral exchanges and collaboration especially on quality assurance and benchmarking policy issues and higher education development.

- The association of Arab universities (AArU) is a nonprofit association consists of a network of around 400 Arab universities in 22 Arab countries.

- AArU aims at assisting and coordinating the efforts of Arab Universities to prepare them to serve their communities and seek to enhancing cooperation among Arab universities and other universities as well as universities associations worldwide in structuring an effective quality assurance and benchmarking standards

Quality assurance collaboration and benchmarking at the regional level

- In the Association of Arab Universities we stress in the important of the global higher education community in maintaining contact with academia in different regions. We collaborates with universities in many countries involved in structuring an effective quality assurance and benchmarking indicators through organizing training workshops and conferences by the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council of the AArU

The Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council of AArU

The Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council of the AArU uses ten quality criteria for program accreditation to obtain a quality assurance and accreditation certificate for face to face learning program and five criteria for distance learning program.

AArU Academic Program Quality Criteria for face to face Learning

- One: Program Objectives and Learning Outputs
- Two: Curriculum
- Three: Teaching and Learning
- Four: Faculty Members
- Five: Library and Learning Resources
- Six: Students' Progress and Evaluating their Performance
- Seven: Facilities and Support Services
- Eight: Academic Program Management
- Nine: Scientific Research and External Communication
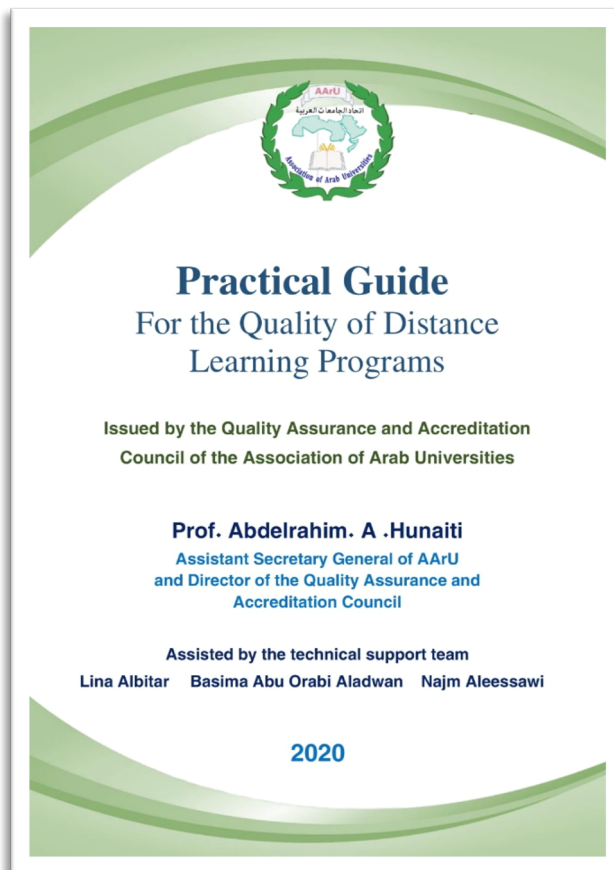- Ten: Quality Management and Improvement

AArU Academic Program Quality Criteria for Distance Learning

- Indicators for the approved quality in the design and development of study materials for distance learning programs (8)

- Indicators for providing the appropriate technological infrastructure to deliver the study materials for distance learning programs (7)

- Indicators for student services and support (5)

- Indicators for the quality of faculty members (7)

- Indicators for evaluating the effectiveness of the learning and teaching processes (9)

Example of Quality Indicators and benchmarking Guidelines books issued in Arabic and English language are available

Conclusion

Quality assurance will be achieved efficiently only if we work together. Quality assurance collaboration and benchmarking at the regional level will be facilitated by common approaches to implement the various elements of quality assurance and benchmarking by regional universities associations and quality assurance and accreditation agencies have a unique capacity to build bridges between universities.

In this contest the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council of the AArU   leads to develop a sustainable quality assurance system within Arab universities through the implementation of capacity building and the development of quality strategic plans for the enhancement of quality assurance methodologies and analysis & Benchmarking mechanisms.

Conclusion

Among several improvement strategies and techniques such as Total Quality Management (TQM) or Continuous Quality Improvement, Benchmarking has emerged as a useful, easily understood, and effective tool for ensuring the quality of higher education at the regional level

Through:

Identifying gaps in performance between the institutions and others.

Identifying opportunities & threats for future expansion or improvement

Identifying strengths & weaknesses

Obtaining objective quality assessment .

THANKS