QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM AT UPSA

What Does Quality Assurance Mean at the University of Professional Studies, Accra (UPSA)

The aim of Quality Assurance (QA) in UPSA is to ensure that programs of study are relevant, fit to purpose (where an institution's product meet certain industry minimum requirements, fulfill the intended purpose and does not incur the displeasure of the end user) and comparable to national and global standards (UPSA, Quality Manual).

Quality Assurance at UPSA therefore implies the following:

- Meeting educational and regulatory requirements for accreditation, and also meeting realistic and industry standards
- Produce graduates that fulfill the country's manpower needs.

QA practices at UPSA rely on:
- External controls of Accreditation Board,
- Academic Audits
- Strong internal quality structure

The Role of the Quality Assurance Directorate (QAD)

The QAD was established with the objective to:

- Design, implement, maintain, monitor, review and improve quality assurance policies and practices within the University.
- Monitor compliance with procedures (UPSA, Quality Manual)
- Ensure Quality of Academic Programmes

- Ensure Quality of Teaching and Learning

ACTIVITIES OF THE QUALITY ASSURANCE DIRECTORATE AT UPSA

1. **Ensuring Quality of Academic Procedures/ Teaching and Learning**

   To ensure quality of teaching and learning, the University, has adopted the Teaching and Learning Outcome Deployment (TLOD) concept which uses the Learning Management System (LMS). The LMS ensures that course outlines, teaching plans and course material and assignments are available to students at the beginning of the course.

   To complement the use of the LMS, two new systems of class management namely, the Lecturer Class Management System (LCMS) and the Lecturer Electronic Attendance Sheet (LEAS) were introduced by the Quality Assurance Directorate at the beginning of the second semester of the 2015/2016 academic year. These two systems were piloted by the Faculty of Accounting and Finance and later adopted by management for all faculties at the January 2016 Management retreat.

   These new systems gather near real-time data on the following:

   - Lecturer attendance to class,
   - Handle students' complaints,
   - Monitor the availability and use of teaching and learning material,
   - Lecture delivery
   - Monitor compliance with the course outline schedules, course outcomes and learning objectives

   With the Lecturer Electronic Attendance Sheet system (LEAS), the directorate is able to verify the information obtained from feeder (students) on the LSM with respect to lecturer attendance to class as well as the extent to which course outlines items are followed.

   Information from the lecturer class management sheet helps the directorate to promptly respond to issues with respect to course outlines and lecturer regularity in class.

2. **SURVEYS**

So far, QAD surveys cover the semester by semester course lecturer evaluations and the graduates exit surveys. The directorate plans to undertake satisfaction surveys in other sections of the University as well as tracer studies in the future.

2.1 Evaluation of Teaching and Learning

An on-line evaluation of teaching and learning is done two weeks before examination. Students at the end of every semester evaluate both the lecturers and general aspects of their courses such as:

- The availability of learning and teaching aids
- Teaching and learning environment
- Areas of improvement etc.

2.1.1 Exit Survey

The directorate conducts exit surveys which provide information on students' opinions about their experiences during their stay at the University of Professional Studies. The result of the survey helps to improve on the services rendered by the University.

3.0 QUALITY OF ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES

To ensure that programme documents meet the NCTE/NAB standard, the QAD makes sure that all programme documents are reviewed by the Academic Audit and Review Committee before they are submitted.

4.0 MONITORING

The Quality Assurance Directorate also undertakes monitoring activities, areas often covered by the directorate include:

- Admission
- Registration
- Examination
- Lecturer workload
- Monitor programmes and notifying departments of expiry dates
- Conference marking
- Lecturer workload etc.

Other areas yet to be covered are:

- Orientation

- Matriculation
- Internship

5.0   ACADEMIC AUDIT

This is part of the QA provision at UPSA. The main aim of an Academic Audit process is to find out:

- Whether the quality systems that the University has put in place is working
- How applicable and effective these systems are in ensuring quality of teaching and learning

The QAD in UPSA is in the process of developing an academic audit manual that would further guide the effective monitoring of academic processes.

Introduction of Diary 2

The Director of Quality Assurance presented a proposal of two systems meant to monitor the effectiveness of administrators namely ADD.pmc and DD.sam also known as Diary 2 at the 2017 Management Retreat, the proposal was subsequently approved by Management of the University to be implemented at all levels for administrative staff within the University.

The operation of Diary 2 requires all administrators to fill online forms. **Mondays** would be called **Admin. Monday** and all administrators are supposed to enter their **Planned Activities** for the **week** (maximum of 100 words) and also provide summaries of their **Actual Work done** for the **past week (maximum 100 words);** The completed forms when submitted, will reach the portal of all Deans and Directors (DDs). This information on the forms would also be shared with Management, Quality Assurance Directorate (QAD), Information Systems and Technology Department (ISTD), Human Resource Directorate (HRD) and Documentation and Information Management Centre (DIMC).

Tuesdays would be **known as the DD's Tuesday** and Deans and Heads of Directorates/Units are expected to evaluate their staff performance for the week by also completing an online form to be provided. Management, DDs, HRD and QAD can use the inputs for decision making and analysis at any time.

Data obtained from the system would help in doing the following:

- Positional Analysis of Junior/Senior Assistant Registrars

- Time Period Analysis

- Day Analysis

- DDsam. Productivity Analysis among others.

It is believed that the implementation of the system will promote:

- "Force planning" and good working relationship between administrative staff and their supervisors.

- Improvement in work output capacity and efficiency

- Help in doing both online and offline Analysis

- Quality Shield: The software allows DDs to have access to performance data on all/any staff at the various departments at any time. QAD, HRD and Management can also have access to these data for analysis and decision making purposes when necessary.

Plans are underway to fully deploy the Diary 2 when all offices are connected to the fibre optic internet. Meanwhile, it is being piloted within the Quality Assurance Directorate.