



PHOENICIA UNIVERSITY

Quality Assurance Manual

The Quality Assurance and Accreditation (QAA) Office at Phoenicia University (PU) is in charge of enhancing the quality of education, academic accomplishments, and institutional performance. In addition, the QAA Office aims to establish reputable institutional and programmatic accreditations.

I. Vision

The QAA Office ensures that PU excels in the areas of learning and teaching, training, and research at both local and international levels.

II. Mission

The mission of the Office of the QAA is to track, review and follow up on learning and teaching, training and research, and to benchmark such operations to international academic standards.

III. Purpose

The Quality Assurance framework is designed to meet the University's legislative and regulatory requirements and to promote the achievement of high standards reflecting a strong commitment to evidence-based, decision-making and continuous improvement.

IV. Strategic Goals for Quality Management

1. Conducting data analysis and proposing innovative solutions to inform policymakers, academic staff, and the University.
2. Upholding and refining standards in teaching, learning, student experiences, research, and community service.
3. Monitoring and evaluating instruments and activities aimed at improving quality at the University level.
4. Providing technical guidance and support to colleges as they implement and achieve their quality assurance objectives for teaching, resources, services, and program accreditation.
5. Responsively managing feedback from internal and external stakeholders.

V. Strategic Goals for Quality Enhancement/Improvement

1. Enhancing curricula and programs based on insights from stakeholders.
2. Strengthening student competencies and outcomes to foster successful learning, living, and career readiness.
3. Improving the existing quality assurance system by identifying strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities to meet international standards in higher education.
4. Enhancing quality management through comprehensive reporting on significant risk and control issues, as well as matters requiring attention from senior management and decision-makers.

VI. Scope

This policy applies to:

1. Governance Bodies and Committees within the University.
2. University staff, particularly members of the executive group, responsible for leading quality improvement initiatives.
3. All students and stakeholders affiliated with the University are subject to the provisions outlined in this manual.

VII. Components of Quality Assurance

PU, as a not-for-profit higher educational institution, is responsible for all the required internal quality assurance. Quality assurance is maintained in the following:

1. Academic criteria and standards: student learning outcomes, suggested degree plans, student assessments, development, and accomplishments.
2. Quality of learning and teaching: learning and teaching approaches and methods adopted by faculty, learning resources, service satisfaction, instructor evaluation, course evaluation, and support to students.
3. Research and professional development: publications, presentations, seminars, and conferences.
4. Community and social engagement and other extra-curricular activities.
5. Efficiency of quality management: management of feedback, self-evaluation, and leadership.
6. PU's internal quality assurance system and study programs are assessed and

monitored through external quality assurance. Institutional associations and agencies carry out the assessment and evaluation at PU in several fields such as University management and networks, learning and teaching, research, and professional development.

VIII. Types of Quality Assurance at PU

1. Internal quality assurance system: monitoring and evaluating facilities and activities aiming to achieve continuous improvement.
2. External quality assurance system: benchmark activities, external audit, and/or external quality assessment and international accreditations.

IX. Process for Internal Quality Assurance

1. Implementing and evolving the fundamentals of internal quality assurance sequence: planning, achieving, monitoring, and implementing.
2. Checking and reporting on whether or not if each element of the internal quality assurance sequence is being properly executed.
3. Setting out key features for the University quality assurance system based on the University's strategy.
4. Establishing standards and criteria for staff and academics.
5. Assessing the quality of learning and teaching practices, research, professional development, etc.
6. Monitoring educational resources, teaching methods, course evaluation per semester and student's assessment.
7. Conducting continuous quality improvement activities.
8. Assessing parameters to measure the level of agreement with predefined standards. The parameters for improvement are: conducting surveys and collecting data (students' feedback), setting educational policies and procedures, establishing student-centered learning approaches, assessing the achievement of learning outcomes, measuring the graduate employment outcomes, improving resources, working on improving staff skills, and ensuring stakeholders' satisfaction.

Four areas are covered and considered in internal quality assurance:

Area 1: Academic Quality Assurance

Standard 1: Academic Standards

Academic standards refer to the benchmark of academic quality, integrity, and rigor expected from academic programs and students within a University. In order to uphold academic standards, PU has developed policies that:

- Focus on the outcome of learning.
- Align teaching, learning and student assessment.
- Grasp knowledge and advance skills after the completion of teaching units that shall be included at the program level, course/module level.
- Engage in initiatives for national, international and local recognitions.
- Implement specific, measurable, appropriate, and realistic and time bound parameters.
- Represent the minimally acceptable level of student performance, knowledge, skills and attitudes.
- Set classifications based on professional and practical skills, intellectual skills, knowledge and understanding, and general and transferable skills.
- Map student outcomes in tables/diagrams.

Standard 2: Curriculum and Program Design

Curriculum and program design refer to the process of creating and developing academic programs and courses that align with the University's mission, vision, and academic standard. PU policies and procedures ensure that curriculums and programs:

- Are planned and continuously reviewed to reflect, stress, and meet the intended learning results/outcomes.
- State the program qualifications clearly and must refer to national and international qualifications.
- Stress the foundational knowledge, skills, and qualifications required by alumni.
- Ensure that instructing strategies are constructively aligned with the proposed learning result.
- Enable academic chairs coordinators to either develop an alternative educational plan or to modify the current one after consulting the advisory committee, partners, or colleagues.

In designing curricula, PU ensures that the curricula:

- Meet the program education objectives which contribute to the institution's mission.
- Meet the needs of the job market.
- Ensure that the content of the curriculum is suitable.
- Is developed to enhance students' critical thinking skills and a range of transferable skills (e.g. leadership skills, problem-solving, time management, communication, and interpersonal skills).

The key targeted Educational proficiencies in developing curricula are:

- Critical and Logical Reasoning and Thinking
- Problem-Solving
- Collaboration and Teamwork Skills
- Creativity
- Innovation
- Communication skills
- Management skills

In designing curricula and programs the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) must be specified:

- SLOs must be related to the program and institution's mission.
- SLOs must be specific, appropriate, and realistic.
- SLOs must contain an action verb at the beginning.
- SLOs must be measured by a matrix to see the correspondence between SLOs, the program educational objectives (PEOs), and the course learning outcomes (CLOs).

Standard 3: Student-Centered Learning and Teaching Approach

- Prompts student-centeredness, where students exercise their ownership in the learning and teaching process.
- Develops students' skills in an effective, efficient, and sustainable manner.
- Urges faculty members to advice, guide, and encourage students for the purpose of developing a sense of autonomy.

Recommended Teaching Methods include:

- Project-based learning
- Problem-based learning
- Inquiry/Research-based learning
- Team-based learning
- Cooperative-based learning
- Practice-based learning

Standard 4: Student Assessment

- Assessors must be acquainted with the University's assessment strategies.
- Faculty members need to abide by the college's guidelines and strategies of assessment.
- Students must be able to assess the extent to which the learning outcomes have been accomplished.

Standard 5: Student Progression and Achievement

- Chairs/ Coordinators in each college shall gather and follow up on students' progression.
- Students shall develop portfolios which portray accomplished outcomes, including third-party documentation/reports (e.g., accreditation agencies).
- The program shall be designed to facilitate and support smooth progression of students.

Area 2: Quality of Learning Opportunities

Standard 1: Teaching faculty members

All faculty members must:

- Be knowledgeable and acquainted with the courses they are teaching.
- Have the necessary skills and expertise to deliver the information and knowledge to students.
- Strive for continuous professional development by attending conferences, workshops, and seminars and conducting research.

Standard 2: Learning Resources and Student Support

All faculty members must:

- Provide students with the support needed to overcome academic challenges and ensure that they can make progress in their respective programs.
- Ensure that the resources available to achieve the learning outcomes are aligned with the program offered.
- Ensure that the facilities for learning are used effectively.
- Ensure that the academic staff are competent to effectively teach, facilitate learning, and maintain a scholarly approach to teaching.
- Ensure that students are satisfied with the facilities to improve student life on campus.

Area 3: Research and Other Academic Activities

Standard 1: Research and Other Scholarly Activities

- Faculty shall be responsible for assuring that the system, which organizes scientific research and other academic activities, reflects the mission of the University.
- Faculty have to focus on research and other academic activities.

Area 4: Community Involvement

Standard 1: Community Involvement

- Faculty shall adopt the concept of integrated community participation in the whole process of learning and teaching to achieve the desired level of quality assurance.
- The system of quality assurance shall ensure that the faculty, informed by the University mission, make contributions to their local community and society at large.

X. External Quality Assurance and Accreditation

PU shall establish an external quality assurance system to ensure that its academic programs are of high quality and meet the standards set by relevant accrediting bodies.

Two areas are considered to carry external quality assurance:

Area 1: External Experts

- The external quality assurance system includes regular reviews of academic programs by external experts, in accordance with the requirements of each College.
- The University shall ensure that the external experts who review academic programs have the necessary expertise and experience in the relevant subject areas.
- The University shall ensure that any recommendations made by external experts are taken into account, and if necessary implemented in a timely manner, and that any required changes are communicated to relevant stakeholders.
- The responsibility of appointing external experts for each college would lie with the University's QAA Office with the approval of the respective College.

Area 2: International Accreditations

The aim of PU is to be recognized internationally. Therefore, the University invests its efforts to receive international institutional accreditations in addition to program accreditation for its various colleges.

1. Program Accreditation

Program accreditation provides the University with a scheme to assess, evaluate, and improve the quality of its education and services. Program accreditation helps in:

- Assuring that specific programs meet high-quality standards set by profession.
- Enabling employers to recruit well-educated graduates.
- Increasing competition of accredited programs.
- Enabling graduates to be accepted in postgraduate positions.
- Facilitating the acceptance of transfer students from other programs.
- Supporting student mobility.

- Improving the employability of alumni.

2. Institutional Accreditation

PU constantly develop policies and procedures that aims to enhance and boost the reputation of the institution, and to ensure the quality education offered is aligned with international accreditation standards. Institutional accreditation typically involves a comprehensive review of the University's policies, procedures, and practices, as well as an evaluation of the quality and effectiveness of its academic programs and support services. Thus, PU monitors, assesses, and evaluates the standards and quality of education against international standards.

Institutional Accreditation helps in:

- Ensuring quality and promoting continuous improvement.
- Enhancing credibility and reputation.
- Facilitating transferability of credits and degrees.
- Increasing student enrollment.
- Promoting student learning and success.
- Fostering public trust and confidence.

XI. Conclusion

In conclusion, this quality assurance manual serves as a comprehensive guide to PU's commitment to excellence in all aspects of academic programs and support services. The policies and procedures outlined in this manual provide a framework for ensuring that the University meets the highest standards of quality and effectiveness.

We recognize that quality assurance is an ongoing process that requires regular review, assessment, and refinement. We are committed to ensuring that all programs and services are continually evaluated to identify areas for improvement and opportunities for innovation.

Thank You

