



The British University in Egypt

# Quality Assurance Policy

## Key Policy Information:

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## Purpose of this policy

The British University in Egypt's Quality Assurance Policy provides key information on:

- The accreditation, regulatory and validation authorities in Egypt and the UK.
- The University's Annual Quality Assurance and Enhancement Cycle.

The policy details the University's governance of quality and standards, and is designed to ensure formal, consistent and universal understanding of how the University operates, monitors and assures the quality and standards of its educational provision.

## Scope of this policy

- a. The policy applies to all undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.
- b. The policy outlines information that is already presented in detail elsewhere, including in the University's Quality Assurance Manual, as well as in the undergraduate and postgraduate academic regulations and approved policies and procedures, which are provided as appendices to the Quality Assurance Manual.
- c. The policy is effective immediately, its impact is informational only, and no unintended consequences are anticipated.

## Governance of this policy

- a. The University Council is ultimately responsible for institutional governance of quality and standards.
- b. In the governance of quality and standards, the University Council is reported to directly by the University Teaching and Learning Committee and the Postgraduate Studies Committee.
- c. These quality and standards governance work of these University-level committees is informed Faculty-level committees, including the Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee (FTLC) and Staff Student Liaison Committee (SSLC), both reporting to Faculty Council, which reports directly to the University Teaching and Learning Committee.
- d. Other Faculty-level committees provide assurance on quality and standards to the University Teaching and Learning Committee: the Student Experience Committee, Staff Academic Development Committee, Library Committee and Preparatory Year Committee.

## Responsibility for implementation of this policy

- d. Maintenance of the quality and standards of the undergraduate and postgraduate taught provision is the overall responsibility of the Provost and Senior Vice-President (Teaching and Learning) and the Deputy Vice Chancellor and Vice President for Research and Enterprise respectively.
- e. These two institutional-level leaders are supported by teams that comprise senior leadership, academic and administrative roles covering learning, teaching, supervision and assessment; academic, registry and student services; dual-degree (Egyptian and UK) quality and accreditation; and staff academic development.
- f. Each Faculty has a Vice-Dean for Teaching and Learning, Vice-Dean for Research and Postgraduate Studies, Head of Quality, and the support of a Senior Assistant Registrar. Each of these roles sustain aspects of quality assurance and enhancement and carry responsibility for ensuring the high standard of the University's provision.
- g. Faculties invite student representatives to attend Faculty-level committees (Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee and Staff Student Liaison Committee) to ensure the students' voice is part of quality assurance processes and that students are constantly engaged with decision making.

## Accreditation, regulation and validation

The University's quality and academic standards are scrutinised by, and comply with all legal obligations and regulatory requirements of, the following three bodies:

### **Egyptian Supreme Council of Universities**

- h. This is the designated official entity in Egypt for recognition and equivalence of academic qualifications and degrees awarded by universities and institutes that are not subject to Universities Organisation Law No.49 (1972) or foreign Higher Educational Institutes.
- i. The Supreme Council of Universities has accredited the University since its establishment in 2005, and approves external members of all Faculty Councils (Article 40 of the above law).
- j. Accreditation necessitates engagement with its discipline-specific Sectoral Committees, comprised of subject-discipline experts, and adherence to institutional, faculty and programme (for postgraduate programmes) by-laws that it approves.

### **Egyptian National Authority for Quality Assurance & Accreditation of Education (NAQAAE)**

- k. NAQAAE publishes the Egyptian National Academic Reference Standards (NARS) for all subjects and programmes, and the Egyptian National Qualifications Framework.
- l. While accreditation is optional, NAQAAE accredits a growing proportion of the University's faculties and programmes, with accreditation providing further external assurance of the quality of provision, maintenance of academic standards and enhancement planning.

### **UK validating partners**

- m. UK validating partners validate over 80% of the University's programmes, and require upholding the UK Quality Code, Condition of Registration from Office for Students (OfS), Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ), Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF), Higher Education Credit Framework, Subject Benchmarks and UG/PG Characteristics

Statements in the University's delivery of 'dual degree' awards.

- n. Through the quality assurance processes and procedures of the UK validating partners, including programme validation, periodic/annual review, engagement of link tutors and external examiners, co-chairing of Examination Boards, and curriculum reviews through annual programme and module changes, the expectations of the UK's Quality Assurance Agency and Office for Students are addressed.

## The Annual Quality Assurance and Enhancement Cycle

The University's Annual Quality Assurance and Enhancement Cycle is framed by the Academic Calendar, the annual flow of business through Faculty and University committees, and the following institutional processes and practices:

### Annual Programme Review (APR)

- o. The APR is a comprehensive, data-informed and mandatory process for all programmes, providing a cyclical method of quality assurance, improvement and enhancement, and enabling analysis, reflection, identification of trends, good practice and issues arising.
- p. The APR's scrutiny, report and response cycle relates to the following key programme areas:
  - student recruitment (including entry qualifications and English Language proficiency);
  - student achievement and progression (such as attendance and engagement, 'at risk' support and the efficacy of re-sit opportunities);
  - teaching, learning and assessment (including award classification distribution, feedback quality and physical/digital learning resources);
  - staffing (such as qualification and expertise, professional development and workload).
- q. Resultant APR action plans, actions taken and progress made is considered at both mid-year and at the end of the annual process, with actions noted as completed and/or outstanding issues continued over into the next cycle.

### Periodic review of UK validated programmes

- r. The periodic review process applies to programmes validated by one of our UK validating partners, and is designed to assure quality and standards, and enhance provision.
- s. The periodic review cycle of our UK validating partners is usually five years and aligned with the Egyptian Supreme Council of Universities approval cycle.
- t. Programme data and documents for periodic review include:
  - information on the academic rationale;
  - alignment with institutional strategic direction;
  - market appeal and recruitment;
  - engagement with regulatory bodies and external expertise;
  - programme structure and management;
  - teaching, learning and assessment strategies;
  - career preparation and graduate opportunities;
  - student support and guidance;
  - learning resources;

- student engagement.
- u. At the end of a satisfactory periodic review cycle, with iteration as necessary, the UK validating partner provides the University with a revalidation certificate, thus closing the cycle and confirming that the academic standards of the programme is consistent with the FHEQ or SCQF (for the University's Faculty of Nursing) and that the learning and teaching experience of students aligns with the UK's OfS Conditions of Registration.

### **Supreme Council of Universities' accreditation cycle**

- v. The Supreme Council of Universities' re-accreditation and major change interval is typically four to five years (according to the sectoral guidelines), following the first graduating cohort.
- w. Major change proposals include:
- revisions to programme or module Learning Outcomes;
  - changes to programme structure through creation of new modules or amendments to existing modules;
  - changes to sequencing of module delivery either within a study year or between levels;
  - introduction of a different type of assessment or assessment strategy;
  - changes to the faculty or programme by-laws;
- x. Proposed major changes need to be scheduled with regard for the UK validating partner's revalidation cycle, framework and requirements.
- y. Proposed major changes must correlate with permissible recommendations from, for example, Link Tutor action plans, External Examiner reports, student feedback via the Staff Student Liaison Committee, and APR action plans.
- z. Minor changes, permissible annually on approval by the University Teaching and Learning Committee, include:
- additions to indicative module content;
  - additions to a module's reference/reading list.

### **Quality assurance of new programme proposals**

- a. Proposals for new programmes are subject to rigorous evaluation, bench-marking, alignment with national and international standards, including compliance with the legal and regulatory requirements of the Supreme Council of Universities, NAQAAE and the UK validating partner's requirements as appropriate.
- b. New programme proposals are expected to demonstrate academic rigour, relevance to industry and/or professional need, potential for student success, and market share in relation to competitors.

### **External Examiners**

- c. The core role of External Examiners is to ensure that academic standards set for programmes are appropriate for the awards, or award elements, and are comparable to UK standards.
- d. External Examiners are appointed with an appropriate level of experience, expertise in the subject area, developed knowledge of UK quality assurance and standards, and understanding of approvals and validation processes, and therefore add considerable externalised value to the Universities quality assurance and enhancement cycle.
- e. For Egyptian track programmes, they are appointed by the Office of the Provost, and by UK validating partners for validated programmes.

- f. External Examiners review and approve all draft examination papers and assignment briefs, model answers and marking schemes.
- g. They are provided with an agreed sample of assessed student work across a range of results, reaching a judgement on the standards and consistency of internal marking, and providing general advice on programme content, academic standards, balance and structure, degree schemes and assessment processes.
- h. Programme teams respond to External Examiners' reports on issues identified as requiring improvement or enhancement through ongoing dialogue, written responses to annual reports, and in the relevant section of the Annual Programme Review documents.
- i. As full members of Programme Examination Boards, External Examiners are actively involved in consideration of module marks and the award of credit and/or awards.

## Quality and standards-related policies and processes

- a. The suite of approved quality and standards-related policies and processes, and those that ensure students are prepared and supported to gain optimum benefit from their educational experience from enrolment to graduation, is as follows.
  - Academic Regulations
  - Faculty by-laws
  - Fitness to Study Policy
  - Fitness to Practice Policy
  - Recognition of Prior Learning
  - Impaired Performance Procedure
  - Student Attendance Policy and Procedure
  - Personal Academic Tutor Policy
  - Early Identification of At-Risk Students and Support of Weak Students protocol
  - Reasonable Adjustments Procedure
  - Student Charter
  - Student Representation Policy
  - Online Events Code of Conduct
  - Assessment Regulations
  - Examination Protocol
  - Design and Review of Examinations
  - Students' Code Conduct in Examination Halls
  - Academic Misconduct Procedure
  - Academic Appeal procedure
  - Student Complaints Summary and Procedure
  - Bullying and Harassment Summary and Policy
- b. Full documents are contained as appendices in the University's Quality Assurance Manual.