Policy name	QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY		
Policy number	GV0002		
Contact Person	Director of Quality Assurance and Accreditation		
Approval Authority	Board of Trustees		
Date first approved	Submitted October 2015	Last substantive review	2021/22
Policy Review Cycle	3 years	Next review	2025/26

1. Definitions

Terms / Abbreviations	Definition
Stakeholders	any person who is involved in an activity or process of the University and has responsibilities towards it and an interest in its success
Benchmarking	act of comparison used to establish standards in order to assess performance. Benchmarking can be an internal comparison within the University, an external comparison against those of other Universities or a combination of internal and external.
OAAAQA	Oman Academic Accreditation Authority and Quality Assurance of Education (oaaa.gov.om Arabic oaaa.gov.om English)

2. Purpose

The purpose of the Quality Assurance Policy is to outline A'Sharqiyah's approach to safeguarding academic standards and preserving the University's integrity and reputation.

The Policy is designed to enhance the quality of our students' learning experience through a process of continuous improvement and self-review.

Academic excellence and quality are at the heart of A'Sharqiyah's values. ASU's quality assurance framework provides the vehicle for the University to realize its strategic vision by ensuring:
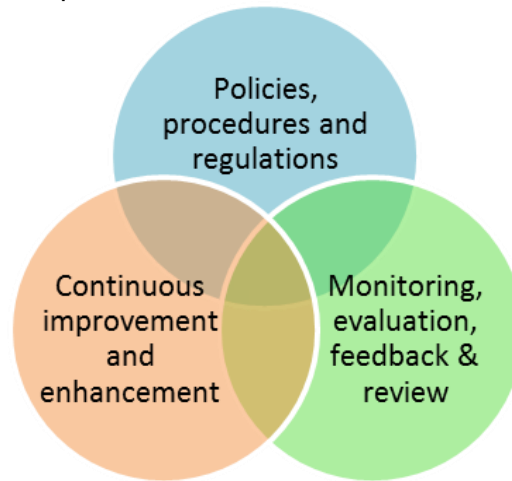
- a quality experience for ASU students;
- that academic standards are maintained, and

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- excellence is achieved in learning, teaching and all associated activity.

A'Sharqiyah's Quality Assurance Framework is supported by 3 key elements:

- ASU policies, procedures and regulations
- Monitoring, evaluation, feedback and review
- Continuous improvement and enhancement

3. Scope

3.1 All areas of activity across the University

4. Policy Statement

4.1   A'Sharqiyah University (ASU) is committed to providing a rich learning experience for students through the quality of our research and teaching, international links, support services and campus facilities.

4.2   ASU's quality strategies are aligned to the University's strategic vision and mission, and take into account the requirements of the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, the Oman Academic Accreditation Authority and Quality Assurance of Education and other national and international benchmarks and reference points.

4.3   ASU's quality assurance framework aims to foster a culture of proactive, reflexive self-review and continuous improvement, and to facilitate sharing and embedding of good practice across the University.

4.4   Stakeholder feedback and consultation are central to monitoring and review processes through which academic and support staff reflect and engage in

continuously improving curriculum delivery and assessment, and the student experience as a whole.

4.5   Periodic reviews are conducted to evaluate performance at course, program, and college level across all programs. These processes are designed to enable the University to identify and manage risks, and to develop strategies and action plans toward continuous improvement and enhancement.

4.6   Benchmarking is a standard and formal requirement within academic quality assurance processes (see ASU Quality Assurance Procedures Handbook). ASU has set a threshold for benchmarking academic programs against at least 5 HEIs each year (ASU Strategic Plan 2014-2020).

4.7   All areas of activity are included in institution-wide reviews which take place normally every 4 years.

5.   Key Stakeholders

5.1   The University Academic Board is the University's highest academic committee. It is chaired by the Vice Chancellor and has overall responsibility for the academic standards, quality and quality assurance of all University activities. Responsibilities are shared and delegated to the Standing Committees which report directly to the University Academic Board (see diagram in Section 6 below).

5.2   The Vice Chancellor has overall responsibility for ensuring that appropriate policies, procedures and regulations are in place and that this information is clear and accessible to all members of the University community. The Vice Chancellor is Chair of the Accreditation and Standards Committee which oversees activities for institutional self-review and internal and external accreditation.

5.3   The Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Research, through the College Deans and CLFS Director, is responsible for the academic standards and quality in the delivery of the general foundation program and all academic programs.

5.4   The Director of Quality Assurance and Accreditation, as Chair of the Quality Assurance Committee, works closely with the Vice Chancellor and Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Research to develop and implement policies aimed at safeguarding academic standards and fostering a culture of continuous self-evaluation and improvement, and to maintain a central oversight of academic performance and quality-related activities through the deployment of robust monitoring and review systems and contributing to ASU's central oversight of. In addition, the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Department is the first point of contact on specific quality-related matters relating to external bodies such as the

Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation (MoHERI) and the Oman Academic Accreditation Authority and Quality Assurance of Education (OAAAQA).

5.5   Quality assurance activities fall under the remit of the University's Quality Assurance Committee, a sub-committee of the University Academic Board.

5.6   All academic staff and heads of administrative departments have a responsibility to uphold and implement the University's quality assurance system. Students also have responsibilities within the processes.

5.7   Academic Heads of Department within each college are responsible for the quality and academic standards of courses and programs within their particular specialisms.

5.8   Quality Assurance Coordinators, nominated by their respective Deans/ CLFS Director fulfill a role on the Quality Assurance Committee and are responsible for consulting and liaising with their Deans / Director on all committee business.

5.9   The Director of Student Affairs is responsible for ensuring students' issues are addressed and managed appropriately and that feedback is communicated to the appropriate departments/ committees, particularly when actions or improvements are needed.

5.10   Students are responsible for providing feedback on their experience which may lead to improvement and enhancement of future delivery of the program.

5.11   Responsibilities of the University's Committees

5.11.1 Terms of Reference for the Standing Committees (Academic) of the University's Quality Management system are contained in ASU Quality Assurance Procedures Handbook. These include:
GOVERNANCE:
- Board of Directors
- Board of Trustees

ACADEMIC BOARDS AND COMMITTEES OF THE UNIVERSITY:

- University Academic Board
- College Academic Boards
- CLFS Academic Board
- University Learning and Teaching Committee
- Quality Assurance Committee
- University Research and Enterprise Committee

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- o   Academic Promotions Committee
- o   Accreditation and Standards Committee

6.   Procedures and Guidance

Procedures and guidance on quality assurance processes are provided in ASU's Quality Assurance Procedures Handbook available on Shared drive.

7.   References

Allan, C.F. (1993), ``Benchmarking practical aspects for information professionals'', Special Libraries, Vol. 84 No. 3, pp. 123-30.

Camp, R. 1989. Benchmarking - The Search for Industry Best Practices That Lead to Superior Performance. Milwaukee, WI: ASQC Quality Press

Elmuti, D. and Kathawala, Y. 1997. An overview of benchmarking process: a tool for continuous improvement and competitive advantage in *Benchmarking for Quality Management & Technolog*y, Vol. 4 No. 4, 1997, pp. 229-243 MCB University Press, 1351-3036

Jackson, N. 2001. Benchmarking in UK HE: An Overview' in Quality Assurance *in Education vol 9 2001* (pp. 218 – 235)

Oman Academic Accreditation Authority and Quality Assurance of Education (OAAAQA) Institutional Standards Assessment Manual: Institutional Accreditation: Stage 2. January 2016 Version 1

https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/compare

United Nations Practitioners´ Guide to Benchmarking
http://www.un.org/en/peacebuilding/pbso/pdf/monitoring_peace_consolidation.pdf

QA department (2018/19) Quality Assurance Procedure Handbook. A'Sharqiyah University: Ibra

8.   Revision History

Version	Author/ Reviewer	Revision(s) made and justification	Date
1	Quality Assurance Office	Annual review – No changes.	9 October 2016
2	Quality Assurance Committee	A minor amendment. addition of the Quality Assurance Framework outlining the 3 key elements	3 October 2017
3	Director of Quality Assurance	Amendment into Policy Statement and renaming of committees.	25 March 2018
4	Director of	Minor changes amended as follow:	23 June 2019

	Quality Assurance	• Using the ASU approved template; • Adding Section 1 Definition • Section 7 adding one more reference	
5	Director of Quality Assurance & Accreditation	Minor changes to units title.	9 May 2021