BOLGATANGA TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY

2022

Contents

Definition of Terms	
Term	**Definition**
Academic Units	Academic Units comprise the various schools, departments and other centres in the University offering programmes and courses leading to the award of certificates.
Council	Council refers to Bolgatanga Technical University Council as established by the Technical Universities Act, 2016 (Act 922) as amended.
Lecturer/Teaching Staff	Lecturer/Teaching Staff refer to Staff involved in the formal presentation of teaching material to students as well as the supervision of student project work, theses and dissertations.
Support Services	Support Services refer to non-academic or ancillary departments or units of the University.

1.0	**Introduction** Bolgatanga Technical University (BTU) is a public tertiary educational institution established by the Technical Universities Act, 2020 (Act 1016). The vision of the University is to be a leading technical university fostering teaching, learning, research and community service for sustainable development. To this end, the University is pursuing structured programmes and paying continuous attention to quality and its maintenance in order to improve standards in general. This Quality Assurance Policy is to guide the operations of the University. It provides a collective process by which the University as an academic institution ensures that the quality of the educational process is maintained to set standards. It covers the systems, procedures, resources and information for maintaining and improving standards and quality. It also covers teaching, learning, research opportunities and student support services. Through these quality assurance arrangements, the University is able to satisfy itself and other external and regulatory bodies that: i. the programmes and courses meet the appropriate academic and professional standards; ii. the objectives of the programmes and courses are appropriate; iii. the means chosen and the resources available for delivering the objectives are appropriate and adequate; iv. the University is striving for continues improvement in programmes, courses and services.
2.0	**Purpose of the Policy** The mission of the University is to become a center of academic and professional excellence for teaching, learning, and research and community service through the highest level of integrity, ethical standards and fairness. To this end, the overarching aim of this Policy is to guide the present and future developmental needs of the University/Schools/Departments/programs/courses, staff and students. This should lead to:

	i. internal benefits to the University/departments/schools/programs, staff and students; ii. external benefits to the students and improve the reputation of the University; iii. serve accountability and accreditation requirements.
3.0	**Scope of the Policy** This policy shall apply to all academic areas and the operations of the University/Schools/Departments/Units, and related organs of the University.
4.0	**Policy Principles** The following key principles shall apply: i. rigorous and comprehensive coverage in assessments and evaluations; ii. internal and external peer review; iii. staff and student involvement; iv. rapid and effective feedback; v. evidence based evaluations and assessments.
4.1	***Rigorous and Comprehensive Coverage in Assessment and Evaluations*** The strategies to address quality across the entire University are through the following mechanisms: i. course approval and validation; ii. course and departmental quarterly and annual assessment and monitoring; iii. partnership approval and review; iv. monitoring and review of all service areas including the learning environment monitoring and review of research output.
4.2	***Internal and External Peer Review*** Internal peer review is an important basis for assuring and enhancing quality. Elements of the University's internal peer review shall include: i. Course validation and review panels; ii. Departmental validation.

	Membership of review panels shall include staff from within and outside the host department. The number of panel members may vary , but should be in the range of three to five Senior Members.
	
	   i. Peer observation of teaching provides a unique opportunity for staff to observe the teaching of a colleague as the bases for dialogue about teaching and learning.
	   ii. External peer review shall provide an independent assessment of standards and quality.
	
	These shall be achieved in a number of ways including:
	   i. external examiners' reports which are critical to the annual monitoring process
	   ii. internal review reports
	   iii. validation and review of events involving internal and external subject expertise
	   iv. reports of professional bodies, industry and alumni
	   v. Visitation
	   vi. The requirements and regulations of Ghana Tertiary Education Commission (GTEC) and Commission for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (CTVET)

4.3	***Staff and student involvement***
	
	Staff and students have an obligation and responsibility to be fully involved in the quality assurance and the enhancement of their own work and that of the University.
	   i. The University shall involve all staff in quality assurance
	   ii. The University shall provide support and training for the professional and personal development of staff.

4.4	***Rapid and Effective Feedback*** Effective feedback from both students and staff is the basis for key information about quality. Staff and students feedback are critical to the University's quality assurance strategy and can be obtained at course and departmental levels through a variety of

	mechanisms including departmental meetings, committees, working groups, evaluations of staff development sessions, and questionnaires.
4.5	*Evidence Based Evaluations and Assessments* Procedures, processes and practices within the University shall be guided by objective criteria, verifiable data and other forms of evidence.
5.0	**The Main Quality Assurance Organs**
5.1	*Council* The Council is responsible for determining the strategic direction of the University, monitoring the implementation of decisions and ensuring the creation and maintenance of an environment that creates equal opportunity for members of the University regardless of age, disability, ethnicity, gender or race.
5.2	*Academic Board (AB), School Board (SB)* The Academic Board is vested with the authority and responsibility for taking decisions on matters that are brought before it in relation to guidelines that are contained in the University Statutes and other relevant documents.
5.3	*Quality Assurance and Academic Planning Directorate* The Quality Assurance and Academic Planning Directorate has direct responsibility for overseeing academic quality in all Academic Units, Departments, Schools, programmes; and is charged with the following duties: i. advise the Academic Board on the determination and maintenance of acceptable levels of academic standards with respect to teaching, learning and research; ii. conduct, in collaboration with other relevant departments, student assessment of courses and teaching in each semester; iii. conduct departmental reviews, at least, every two years, to be preceded by self-assessment exercises and quality audits; iv. facilitate and oversee the preparation of quality audits, self-studies quality assurance reviews, surveys, staff training and development initiatives; v. disseminate to the University community matters related to quality enhancement; vi. periodically undertake tracer and employer surveys;

	vii. perform any other functions relating to quality assurance as may be referred to it by the University Council or the Academic Board.
5.4	***The Appointments and Promotions Board*** Quality of Teaching Staff: Academic staff qualification is essential for the quality process. Academic staff should have the requisite academic credentials. i. The Appointments and Promotions Board, Heads of Department and the Human Resource Directorate are responsible for ensuring that the quality of staff employed is of the highest calibre; ii. The Appointments and Promotions Board, Heads of Department and the Human Resource Directorate are to assist/encourage staff continues professional development. iii. Quality assessment is central to the process of appointments and promotions;
5.5	***External/Internal Assessors*** There should be an independent assessment of standards and quality by external assessors. i. This should form a critical element of the appointments and promotions process; ii. All reviews should involve subject expertise.
5.6	***Directorate of Research and Innovation*** The University shall commit to promoting quality research, fund raising and innovation through the Directorate of Research and Innovation. The Directorate of Research and Innovation in collaboration with the Quality Assurance and Academic Planning Directorate shall be committed to maintaining and expanding research capacity and quality. Quality research shall be achieved through the following: i. Assessment of capacity to perform research at the individual and Faculty/School/University level;

	ii. Assessment of the research relevance to the University, both locally and globally;
	iii. Adherence to guidelines on research as contained in Research Policy document.
5.7	*Academic Affairs Directorate*
	The Academic Affairs Directorate includes the Admissions Unit. The Directorate shall among other functions be responsible for the operation of all admission procedures to all programmes of the University.
5.8	*The Admissions Board*
	The assessment of all potential students for admission to the University shall be governed by the Joint Admissions Board.
	i. The Admissions Board is responsible for matters of admissions of students to all programmes.
	ii. The Admissions Board shall ensure that key policies and procedures relating to the requirements and admissions of all students meet regulatory standards.
6.0	**Assessment and Evaluation of Courses**
6.1	*School Boards*
	The School Boards are responsible for developing and regulating internal guidelines related to academic programmes, including teaching, learning, research, and assessment.
	i. The Boards shall have oversight responsibility for all Committees established for these purposes.
	ii. The School Boards will receive advice and recommendations on issues pertaining to teaching, learning, research and assessment at the School level, and report to relevant University Committees.
6.2	*The Departments*
	Heads of Department shall be responsible for supervising teaching, learning, research and the provision of extension services in their respective departments.
6.3	*Programme/Course Review Committees*

	All Academic departments shall have in place Programmes/Course Review Committees for the purpose of conducting curriculum reviews in accordance with the University's guidelines and the requirements of Regulatory Bodies on curriculum review.

6.4	***External Examiners***
	
	External examiners have an important role in assuring standards and the quality of courses.
	
	   i. They should be nominated by School Boards upon recommendations from Departments.
	
	  ii. The University shall appoint external examiners for moderation and arbitration purposes.
	
	 iii. They are required to submit annual examiners' reports to the Vice-Chancellor.

7.0	**Student Assessment of Teaching and Learning**
	
	The following strategies and methods may be deployed for student assessment of teaching :-
	
	   i. Paper questionnaires
	  ii. Electronic questionnaires
	 iii. Informal feedback
	 iv. Open meetings with the student body
	  v. Focus group discussions
	
	The choice of method will depend on the specific circumstances for a particular course.
	
	Feedback
	
	  a) Students may call at a lecturer's office, Academic Advisor, Head of Department or the Departmental Office, Guidance and Counselling to discuss problems in person, or drop their written comments in a suggestion box provided by the Department.
	
	  b) Departments should ensure that students have the opportunity to provide feedback on the teaching of a course.

8.0	**Student Evaluation of Courses and Programmes**
	Process of evaluation
	The University should ensure that all Departments have a procedure in place for dealing with student evaluation of courses clearly communicated to students.
	All students taking a course should complete a questionnaire that will be prepared by the Quality Assurance and Academic Planning Directorate and administered by the Department.
	i. The questionnaire will be analysed by the Quality Assurance and Academic Planning Directorate;
	ii. The findings should be communicated in a report to Heads of Department for appropriate action;
	iii. Feedback to students and/or lecturers from Heads of Department should be immediate in order to address complaints/concerns that are contained in the report.
9.0	**Review of Courses and Programmes**
	i. Each course should be reviewed, at least, once every other year, although some departments may be obliged by professional or accrediting bodies to obtain feedback from students on a more regular basis;
	ii. All new courses should be reviewed at the end of their second year of operation;
	iii. Departments should evaluate their programmes every year. This should be carefully co-ordinated with the other evaluations to avoid questionnaire fatigue.
10.0	**Assessment/Evaluation of Teaching**
	A summary of the analysed data and a copy of the *unedited* subjective/written portion of the assessment should be given to the Lecturer concerned, with copies to the relevant Heads of Department and Deans.

	i. The Director of the Quality Assurance and Academic Planning is required to send comments on the analyzed data to Deans/ Head of Departments concerned; ii. Heads of the Departments are required to discuss the reports with teaching staff; iii. Deans are required to discuss the findings with teaching staff whose teaching is found to be below expectation; iv. The Deans could delegate; i.e., making use of experienced and respected senior members to talk to the staff concerned.
12.0	**Assessment of Support Services** Assessment of quality in the academic support services provided to Faculties/Schools/Institutes and departments including record keeping and attention to process as it relates to academic excellence; shall be included in the framework for quality assurance.
13.0	**Assessment of Academic Resources and Facilities** Assessment of quality of resources and facilities shall include the availability and appropriateness of lecture rooms, library, book banks, ICTs, Internet Facilities, laboratory or practical facilities and equipment.
14.0	**Examinations** Examinations are essential for quality assurance and every effort should be made to guarantee the credibility and integrity of examinations. i. Regulations and rules governing examinations as contained in the Statutes, the Examinations Policy and the Student Handbook must be enforced. ii. Schools and Departmental Examinations Committees must be established.
15.0	**Policy Implementation and Review** The Directorate of Quality Assurance and Academic Planning shall be responsible for the implementation of this policy. For the purposes of quality, there shall be training provided to faculty and staff on this policy to ensure effective implementation. This policy may be reviewed from time to time as determined by the Academic Board or Council.