

## 5. QUALITY ASSURANCE GOVERNANCE

---

### 1. Purpose

The process of quality assurance at ADA University is comprehensive, and it includes several stakeholders. The purpose of this document is to delineate the University's quality assurance structure and the responsibilities of the actors involved in the process of quality assurance.

### 2. Scope and Recommendations

The regulations set forth in this document govern the entire process of quality assurance at the institutional and School level at ADA University.

This document should be read in conjunction with ADA University's general *Academic Quality Assurance Policy*.

### 3. Definitions

*Quality Assurance Governance* describes the structure of quality assurance, key actors involved in the process of quality assurance, as well as their respective responsibilities.

*Quality Assurance* describes the regular assessment / evaluation and enhancement / improvement of standards and guidelines, principles and propositions, rules, processes, structures and outcomes. *Quality Assessment* refers to the review of documents *and* of related outcomes. The *Enhancement of Quality* covers the development or modification of documents *as well as* their implementation and the corresponding achievement of intended outcomes.

### 4. General Provisions

- 4.1 All members of the University are expected to strive for academic quality and the achievement of excellence.
- 4.2 Primary responsibility for the process of quality assurance at ADA University rests with the University's Quality Assurance Committee, with its Subcommittees, and with the Office of Quality Assurance and Accreditation.
- 4.3 Amendments to this document may be proposed by any member of the Quality Assurance Committee, by any (academic or administrative) unit, by any group of faculty and / or staff, or by members of the senior management of ADA University. Any proposer or group of proposers must seek feedback from the Office of Quality Assurance and Accreditation before submitting their final proposal to the Quality Assurance Committee. Amendments need the approval of (1) the Quality Assurance Committee, (2) the Committee of Faculty Affairs, (3) the Deans' Council, and (4) the University Senate in order to become effective. If accepted by the Senate and approved by the Rector, the amendment comes into effect in the academic year following the Senate's approval.

## **5. Quality Assurance Structure**

### **5.1 Quality Assurance Committee**

- a. The Quality Assurance Committee shall consist of the following 14 members:
  - (1) Vice Rector for Institutional Effectiveness and Development;
  - (2) Vice Rector of Academic Affairs;
  - (3) Vice Rector for Government, External and Student Affairs;
  - (4) Director of Quality Assurance and Accreditation;
  - (5) Director of Admissions and Student Records;
  - (6) 5 faculty members (one from each of ADA University's Schools);
  - (7) 2 external members from ADA University's international partners;
  - (8) 1 undergraduate student representative and 1 graduate student representative.
- b. The members mentioned above in (1) to (5) shall be permanent members of the Quality Assurance Committee as long as they hold their respective administrative position.
- c. The 5 members mentioned above in (6) shall be elected by the Committee of Faculty Affairs for the duration of two academic years. They may be reelected twice.
- d. The 2 members mentioned above in (7) shall be appointed by the Vice Rector for Institutional Effectiveness and Development after consultation with the Quality Assurance Committee and with the respective international partner(s). They may come from the same or from different partner institutions and shall be appointed for the duration of two academic years. They may be reappointed twice.
- e. The 2 members mentioned above in (8) shall be elected by the ADA Student Government for the duration of 1 academic year. The ADA Student Government will elect 2 of its members prior or at the beginning of each academic year. Undergraduate students are only eligible if they are in their third or fourth year of study at ADA University. Graduate students are only eligible if they have studied for at least one academic year at ADA University (either at the undergraduate or the graduate level). Both the undergraduate and the graduate student representative may be elected for a maximum of 2 academic years.
- f. In case a member of the Quality Assurance Committee should withdraw from the Committee, or if a member should no longer be eligible for membership, he/she will be replaced in accordance with the regulations delineated in 5.1.b to 5.1.e.
- g. The Quality Assurance Committee is chaired by the Vice Rector for Institutional Effectiveness and Development. In the absence of the Vice Rector, meetings are chaired by one of the Committee members mentioned above in (2) to (5).
- h. Whenever appropriate, the Quality Assurance Committee may invite further members of ADA University to participate in its meetings and to offer feedback and suggestions on specific issues under discussion.

### **5.2 Quality Assurance Subcommittees**

- a. Each School of ADA University will have one Quality Assurance Subcommittee.
- b. Each Subcommittee will consist of 4 faculty members of the respective School. Subcommittee meetings will be chaired by the School's permanent member of the Quality Assurance Committee.
- c. Whenever appropriate, the Quality Assurance Subcommittees may invite further members of ADA University to participate in their meetings and to offer feedback and suggestions on specific issues under discussion.

### **5.3 Office of Quality Assurance and Accreditation**

- a. The Office of Quality Assurance and Accreditation is a permanent administrative unit of ADA University.
- b. The Office is led by the Director of Quality Assurance and Accreditation.
- c. The Office is independent of the Quality Assurance Committee and of its Subcommittees, but it will continuously and substantially support these committees in their activities.

## **6. Committee Proceedings**

### **6.1 Quality Assurance Committee**

- a. Meetings of the Quality Assurance Committee will be held at least once a month and as often as the fulfillment of its duties may require. The Committee's Chairperson may call extraordinary meetings whenever necessary. The Committee is in recess during August.
- b. Committee meetings shall be held in accordance with an agenda that is made available to each Committee member at least one week prior to a meeting. It is the Chairperson's responsibility to prepare the agenda, which will be discussed, potentially adjusted, and agreed on at the beginning of each meeting. Approval of an agenda requires the simple majority of the Committee members present.
- c. Decisions by the Quality Assurance Committee shall be taken by open voting and by a simple majority of those voting members present at a meeting.
- d. Decisions can be taken only if no less than two-thirds (2/3) of the Committee's voting members are present at a meeting (quorum).
- e. If the votes are evenly split, the Vice Rector for Institutional Effectiveness and Development has the casting vote. In case of the Vice Rector's absence, the final decision in such matters shall be deferred to the following meeting.
- f. The 2 external members of the Quality Assurance Committee have no vote, but they have the right to be heard at any time and/or to submit a written statement on any item on the Committee's agenda. The Committee must thoroughly consider any proposition made by any of the 2 external Committee members before taking a vote on the respective matter.
- g. The 2 student members of the Committee have the right to vote on matters concerning the learning experience of students at ADA University, including (but not limited to) the evaluation of teaching, learning and assessment; the assessment, development and modification of programs, curricula and courses; the review of credit and degree regulations and of issues related to student admission and retention. The undergraduate member of the Committee may only vote on matters related to the undergraduate student experience at ADA University; the graduate member of the Committee may only vote on matters related to the graduate student experience at the University.

### **6.2 Quality Assurance Subcommittees**

- a. All Quality Assurance Subcommittees will meet as often as the fulfillment of their duties may require. It is the Chairpersons' responsibility to call meetings whenever necessary. All Subcommittees are in recess during July and August.
- b. Subcommittee meetings shall be held in accordance with an agenda that is made available to each Subcommittee member at least one week prior to a meeting. It is the Chairperson's responsibility to prepare the agenda, which will be discussed, potentially adjusted, and agreed on at the beginning of each meeting. Approval of an agenda requires the simple majority of those Subcommittee members present.

- c. Decisions by the Subcommittees shall be taken by open voting and by a simple majority of those members present at a meeting.
- d. Decisions can be taken only if no less than two-thirds (2/3) of the Subcommittee's members are present at a meeting (quorum).
- e. If the votes are evenly split, the Chairperson has the casting vote. In case of the Chairperson's absence, the final decision in such matters shall be deferred to the following meeting.

## 7. Responsibilities

### 7.1 Quality Assurance Committee

- a. The main responsibilities of the Quality Assurance Committee are outlined in chapters 4 and 5 of the University's general *Academic Quality Assurance Policy*.
- b. The Quality Assurance Committee will perform its obligations according to the procedures and based on the criteria delineated in chapter 6 of the University's general *Academic Quality Assurance Policy*. This includes the quality indicators defined in the quality assurance policies that are part of each area covered by the *Academic Quality Assurance Standards and Guidelines*. The latter policies may also outline further procedures pertaining to the respective area.
- c. It is the responsibility of the Vice Rector for Institutional Effectiveness and Development to coordinate the workings of the Quality Assurance Committee and to ensure that the Committee successfully fulfills all the responsibilities outlined in this document and in chapters 4 and 5 of the University's general *Academic Quality Assurance Policy*.
- d. The Director of Quality Assurance and Accreditation will supervise the continuous implementation of the University's entire *Academic Quality Assurance Standards and Guidelines*. He/she will coordinate this responsibility with the other members of the Committee and regularly report to the latter. The Director will also support the 2 student representatives to ensure that student interests and concerns are adequately represented on the Committee. He/she will furthermore take the Committee's minutes.
- e. The 5 faculty members will represent the perspective and interests of faculty and introduce concerns and propositions made by faculty and by the Committee of Faculty Affairs. They must ensure that faculty concerns and interests are continuously heard by the Quality Assurance Committee.
- f. The 2 members from ADA University's international partners will provide an external perspective and informed advice on the entire process of quality assurance at the University.
- g. The 2 student members will represent the perspective and interests of students and introduce concerns and propositions made by students and by the ADA Student Government. They must closely cooperate with the ADA Student Government to ensure that student concerns and interests are continuously heard by the Quality Assurance Committee.
- h. Any Committee member (or group of Committee members) may propose measures to improve the quality of the University's academic quality and quality assurance documents and/or their outcomes.
- i. The Quality Assurance Committee will annually report to the University Senate.

### 7.2 Quality Assurance Subcommittees

- a. All Quality Assurance Subcommittees will support the main Committee in its responsibility to assess and enhance academic quality at the University.
- b. The Subcommittees' Chairpersons must ensure that the work of the Subcommittees is coordinated with the Quality Assurance Committee.

- c. The major responsibility of the Subcommittees is to monitor student success, program effectiveness and the implementation of learning outcomes in their respective Schools. They will prepare reports and recommendations to the Quality Assurance Committee.
- d. Chairpersons will report to the Quality Assurance Committee and ensure that it is provided with all the information required to assess and enhance student success, program effectiveness and the implementation of learning outcomes in all of the University's Schools.

### **7.3 Office of Quality Assurance and Accreditation**

- a. The Office of Quality Assurance and Accreditation provides continuous and substantial support to the Quality Assurance Committee and its Subcommittees. The Quality Assurance Committee may request the assistance of the Office whenever necessary in order to fulfill its obligations comprehensively and efficiently.
- b. The Office of Quality Assurance and Accreditation, in conjunction with the Office of IT and Information Services, organizes and maintains the University's *Academic Performance and Quality Assurance Database* and supports the process of quality assurance by preparing relevant reports (for details, see the University's *Data Management and Reporting Regulations*).
- c. The Office works towards the development of new and the improvement of existing academic quality and quality assurance documents. It supports the Quality Assurance Committee in the identification of potential deficits and gaps in the University's *Academic Quality Assurance Standards and Guidelines*.
- d. The Office offers support to all members of the University that are working on the development of new or the modification of existing academic quality and quality assurance documents.
- e. The Office is available to students who may submit feedback and suggestions for the improvement of educational structures and processes at the University.
- f. The Office ensures that the entire process of quality assurance is coordinated with the University's accreditation projects.
- g. The Office plans, coordinates and supervises all (national and international) accreditation projects at the institutional and School level.
- h. The Office works towards the completion of the University's national and international accreditation projects unless they are assigned to other academic or administrative units. In the latter case, the Office actively supports these units in the successful completion of the respective project.
- i. The Director of Quality Assurance and Accreditation regularly reports to the Vice Rector for Institutional Effectiveness and Development and to the Quality Assurance Committee.