



INTER-UNIVERSITY COUNCIL FOR EAST AFRICA

PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES

FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN EAST AFRICA

June 2014

**INTER-UNIVERSITY
COUNCIL FOR EAST AFRICA**

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Prof. Mayunga H.H. Nkunya,
IUCEA, Executive Secretary

Kampala, June 2014

FOREWORD

One of the aspirations of the Integration Agenda of the East African Community on higher education harmonization is to transform the region into a Common Higher Education Area by 2015. This will characterize the regional higher education system with comparable, compatible, coherent and harmonized systems of higher education, hence facilitating free mobility of student, staff, programmes, and institutions, and mutually recognizing qualifications among the Partner States. In order to achieve this, the Inter-University Council for East Africa, as an institution of the East African Community responsible for the development and coordination of higher education and research developed a Regional Quality Assurance System for higher education that has been operational since 2007. The Regional Quality Assurance Framework in higher education entails among others, harmonized guidelines, minimum standards, procedures, good practices and programme benchmarks that are progressively being developed.

To that effect, these Principles and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education have been developed to provide a regional policy framework and as a common frame of reference that will assist and guide universities and national commissions and councils for higher Education in developing and practicing a common quality assurance culture in line with the regional aspirations and international developments in quality assurance.

On behalf of the IUCEA secretariat, I wish to encourage all Higher Education Institutions, Commissions and Councils for Higher Education in the EAC Partner States and all higher stakeholders to adopt and operationalize these principles and guidelines to realize the East African Common Higher Education Area a reality. Finally, I wish you all the best in the use of these Principles and Guidelines.

Prof. Mayunga H.H. Nkunya,
IUCEA, Executive Secretary

Kampala, June 2014

CHAPTER

1

REGIONALIZATION OF QUALITY ASSURANCE

1.1 Global trends in regionalization of QA in Higher Education

Higher education has greatly evolved in the 21st century with global changes encompassing rapid expansion of higher education both in terms of institutions and student enrolment; diversification of the provision of higher education; and increased privatization of higher education, all of which have increased the demand for quality and relevance of higher education.

Globalization, in particular, has led to growth in internationalization and the need for internationalization strategies to be developed to ensure comparability of degrees and certificates, transferability of educational achievements and international competitiveness of both institutions and graduates of higher education institutions. Internationalization of higher education has created the need for countries and regions to demonstrate and assure the quality and standards of their higher education systems and programs.

One of the major global reforms in internationalization of quality assurance in higher education has been experienced through the International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE), which supports individual external quality assurance agencies to improve their performance on their mandates and encourages interaction between agencies for mutual learning, increased effectiveness and continual improvement, leading to mutual trust, which is necessary for mutual recognition. To this effect INQAAHE has developed the Guidelines of Good Practice in Quality Assurance (GGP) for benchmarking purposes.

Globally, regional higher education alliances have been formed in what is referred to as 'Regionalization of Higher Education'. One of the most prominent alliances is that of the European Higher Education Area, which, through the Bologna Process has promoted European cooperation in quality assurance. Another well-established alliance is that of the Asia-Pacific Region that developed the University Mobility in Asia and the Pacific. Regional higher education alliances have continued to be formed worldwide, in terms of agencies, associations, communities, cooperation and networks for purposes of standardization and efficiency of quality assurance systems and student-staff mobility.

1.2 Regionalization of Quality Assurance in Africa

The continent of Africa has gradually been embracing quality assurance endeavours in response to the global trends. Most countries in the continent have set up national agencies, as either semi-autonomous or departments of the Government with the mandate of regulating and assuring quality in higher education. The African Quality Assurance Network (AfriQAN) was also set up, through the Association of African Universities (AAU), to provide support to external quality assurance initiatives of national institutions of the continent through provision of a forum for information sharing, liaison activities, research and policy development and enhancement of quality of institutions. Other regional networks for quality assurance include the Conseil Africain et Malgache pour l'Enseignement Supérieur (CAMES) in Francophone Africa and the Southern African Regional Universities Association (SARUA) in the Southern Africa region.

1.3 Harmonization of Quality Assurance in East Africa

Formal cooperation in higher education in East Africa can be traced back to the early 1960s, during the era of the University of East Africa and later under the Inter-University Committee/ Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA), through which the national universities in the then former East African Community Partner States, namely Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda had very close interaction. This period witnessed vibrant mobility and exchange programmes for students and academic staff, the cooperation, which was very instrumental in the genesis and rise of the current IUCEA. The establishment of the national higher education commissions/ councils in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda in 1985, 1995 and 2001 respectively, offered a greater opportunity to establish more formalized cooperation among the three countries in matters including mutual recognition of regulatory frameworks in higher education.

Therefore, in 2005, the three bodies entered into a memorandum of understanding for mutual cooperation in quality assurance and accreditation matters. Furthermore, in the same year, worried about the imminent disparity of the quality of education as a result of the rapid expansion of higher education in the region, the IUCEA Governing Board saw the need for the establishment of a regional quality assurance system that would lead to harmonization of quality assurance systems in universities in East Africa.

Therefore, in 2006 IUCEA in collaboration with the higher education commissions/councils in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda embarked on the initiative to develop a regional quality assurance system for higher education as a harmonized framework. The goal of the initiative was to promote comparability of the quality of higher education in East Africa, in order to enhance regional collaboration in higher education and to promote mobility of students across



the region. Almost simultaneously, in 2007 the national commissions/council for higher education in the three countries agreed to jointly develop a regional Credit Accumulation and Transfer Systems (CATS), on a pilot basis focused on programmes in human medicine, agriculture, engineering and natural sciences, as a foundation for ultimate expansion of the system to other academic disciplines.

The initiative to establish a regional quality assurance system started with the development of a handbook in 2007 that mainstreamed the systems used by the national commissions/councils for higher education in three countries into the regional handbook, referred to as “Roadmap to Quality”. It also involved human resource capacity building through training of quality assurance officers for universities and the national commissions and council for higher education in the three countries, focused on the common understanding of the regional quality assurance system and practical use of the quality assurance handbook for internal and external evaluation purposes. Regional peers were also trained for carrying out a peer reviews as part of the regional quality assurance system.

When Rwanda and Burundi joined the East African Community in 2007, their universities became part of the regional quality assurance initiative including the Higher Education Council of Rwanda and the National Commission for Higher Education of Burundi that were established in 2007 and 2012, respectively. In 2011, the East African Higher Education Quality Assurance Network (EAQAN) was created, with its aim being to foster collaboration and linkage of quality assurance practitioners in East Africa.

1.3.1 Coordination Role of IUCEA in harmonization of Quality Assurance in East Africa

In the EAC Treaty, Articles 5 and 102 *inter alia* provide that in order to promote the achievements of the objectives of the Community, Partner States agree to undertake concerted measures to foster cooperation in education and training within the Community. Particularly, the Partner States agreed to co-ordinate their human resources development policies and programmes and also to harmonize curricula, examination, certification and accreditation of education and training institutions through the joint action of their relevant national bodies. In the same vein, they also agreed to exchange information and experience on issues common to their educational systems, from which they would collaborate in establishing appropriate education and training programmes.

IUCEA being an institution of the EAC is mandated to play a coordinative and oversight role in the Community in the enhancement of quality and sustainable development of higher education systems and researches for purposes of supporting the region’s socio-economic development and regional integration. The coming into force of the East African Community (EAC) Market Protocol in 2010 expanded the mandate of IUCEA to further develop a common framework to promote equal access to education opportunities, harmonious quality assurance and accreditation systems or processes as well as developing credit transfer modalities and frameworks for students, labour mobility within the region and mutual recognition of academic qualifications.

1.3.2 Role of National Councils/Commissions of Higher Education in QA in East Africa

All the EAC Partner States have national quality assurance agencies, namely, the Commission for University Education (CUE) in Kenya, National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) in Uganda, Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU) in Tanzania, Higher Education Council (HEC) in Rwanda and National Commission of Higher Education (NCHE) in Burundi.

They are all established by Acts of Parliament and are mandated by the respective governments to oversee the quality of higher education in both public and private institutions in the respective countries. They are either semi-autonomous or part of the Government's departments. They all engage in external quality assurance activities, which include accrediting universities based on pre-determined minimum standards, monitoring and evaluating quality assurance aspects in universities and auditing universities for continuous enhancement of quality. These activities entail assessing inputs, processes and outputs of universities through the use of external peer reviewers and making decisions with regard to quality aspects of the institutions.

CHAPTER

2

RATIONALE FOR DEVELOPING THE REGIONAL PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES IN QUALITY ASSURANCE

2.1 Introduction

The disparity of the quality of higher education in the region has been a long-standing outcry by stakeholders and the general public. The immediate response by IUCEA was to put greater emphasis on the development of a regional quality assurance system for harmonizing higher education quality aspects among higher education institutions in the EAC Partner States. Thus, since 2006 IUCEA in collaboration with national commissions and councils for higher education and higher education institutions in the EAC Partner States, the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) has been developing a regional quality assurance system for higher education in East Africa.

The initiative has led to the creation of new quality assurance structures in a number of higher education institutions in the region. The national commissions and councils for higher education in the EAC Partner States as well as most higher education institutions in the region are now using the regional quality assurance tools for education quality management. The tools as contained in the regional quality assurance handbook "Roadmap to Quality", were developed based on the national quality assurance instruments, by constituting the latter into the harmonized regional framework.

In order to guide the operationalization of the regional quality assurance system IUCEA considered it important to develop the Principles and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (PGQAHE). Among others, the Principles and Guidelines document provides

safeguards for consistency in carrying out quality assurance practices across the East African common higher education area using the regional system. The Principles and Guidelines have been developed as a regionally agreed point of reference for continuous quality enhancement in higher education, for developing shared understanding of higher education systems, and for promoting harmonized regional best practices in quality assurance.

The Principles and Guidelines are also intended to provide harmonious use of regional quality assurance guidelines and benchmarks for academic programmes. The regional guidelines include the Handbook for quality assurance in higher education: A Road Map to Quality.

2.2 Purpose

The purpose of the Principles and Guidelines is to provide a common frame of reference that will assist and guide universities and national commissions and councils for higher education in developing and practicing a common quality assurance culture in line with the regional aspirations and international developments in quality assurance.

2.3 Objectives

The objectives of the Principles and Guidelines are to:

- (a) Establish harmonized higher education quality assurance practices in the region
- (b) Enhance transparency, and mutual trust in higher education quality assurance systems in the region
- (c) Provide a common reference point for consistency and benchmarking in quality assurance
- (d) Enhance accountability and confidence of stakeholders about the processes and outcomes of higher education

2.4 Scope

The Principles and Guidelines shall be regarded as a common point of reference for quality enhancement in higher education in the region. They shall apply to higher education institutions and national commissions/councils for higher education. The Principles and Guidelines are not intended to be prescriptive, *supra* national nor *supra*-institution but rather to promote institutional and national diversities and innovation, while ensuring harmony in quality assurance practices in the region.



CHAPTER

3

THE PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES

3.1 Introduction

This chapter is organized in three parts. Part 1 is on principles and guidelines that apply to higher education institutions, Part 2 applies to national commissions/councils for higher education in the Partner States.

3.2 Higher Education Institutions

The Principles and Guidelines cover governance and management, institutionalization of quality assurance structures, policy and procedures for quality assurance, learning environment, student support services, students with special needs, programme development, implementation and review, criteria for admission of students, granting of qualifications awards, quality of staff, management of information, and research and innovation.

(a) Governance and Management

Principle

Higher Education Institutions shall be governed and managed through good governance practices, in line with the legal frameworks for their establishment.

Guidelines

Higher Education Institutions shall:

- i. Carry out quality assurance processes based on good governance and well-articulated policies, structures and processes, which are disseminated to stakeholders.
- ii. Mobilise adequate resources from known sources and account for their utilization.

(b) Institutionalization of Quality Assurance

Principle

Institutionalized Quality assurance structures, systems and processes shall be established to support, monitor and evaluate quality enhancement in higher education institutions.

Guidelines

- i. Higher Education Institutions and stakeholders shall embrace institutional quality culture.
- ii. The institutional organogram shall provide for quality assurance structures that take cognizance of the inputs, processes and outputs of the entire learning process.
- iii. Higher Education Institutions will endeavor to ensure that the quality assurance structures have adequacy of physical, human and financial resources.
- iv. While institutionalizing quality assurance systems Higher Education Institutions shall use approved policies and associated procedures for quality assurance, which cover all operational areas of the institution for teaching, research and outreach services.
- v. Higher Education Institutions shall ensure that the policies and procedures are availed to both internal and external stakeholders.
- vi. Quality assurance structures, systems and processes shall be monitored and evaluated at the institutional, national and regional levels so as to ensure that they achieve the intended purpose.
- vii. Higher Education Institutions shall periodically carry out internal assessment at both programme and institutional levels aimed at discovering strengths for enhancement and weaknesses for improvement.

(c) Learning Environment

Principle

Higher Education Institutions shall provide an environment conducive to learning.

Guidelines

- i. Consideration shall be given to locate Higher Education Institutions within environments that are conducive to learning environments, which may include adequate space and facilities, students support and recreational facilities.

- ii Higher Education Institutions will endeavor to provide students with adequate resources including infrastructure, laboratory facilities, etc. that are relevant to the programmes on offer.

(d) Student Support Services

Principle

Higher Education Institutions shall provide adequate and appropriate resources to support student learning.

Guidelines

Higher Education Institutions will endeavor to:

- i. Avail student with accommodation, social security, health, cultural, and sport facilities.
- ii. Provide student advisory and counseling services.
- iii. Facilitate the establishment of student self-governance system through legally recognized student organizations.

(e) Students with Special Needs

Principle

Higher Education Institutions shall provide support mechanisms to students with special needs.

Guidelines

Higher Education Institutions shall provide:

- i. Policies that take cognizance of students with special needs with respect to admission, learning, and assessment/examinations.
- ii. Requisite physical infrastructure to facilitate students with special needs

(f) Programme Development, implementation and Review

Principle

Programme development, implementation and reviews shall be carried out using institutionally and nationally prescribed guidelines and procedures.

Guidelines

- i. Higher Education Institutions shall involve stakeholders in programme development and review, the processes that shall be informed by needs assessment and benchmarked with best practices in the region and internationally.
- ii. Higher Education Institutions shall monitor and periodically review programmes to ensure that they achieve the expected outcomes and respond to societal needs.

- iii. Programme reviews for quality enhancement shall be carried out at least at the end of every delivery cycle.
- iv. Programmes shall have well defined learning outcomes and clear implementation strategies.
- v. Higher Education Institutions shall determine their students' workload in terms of instructional hours, tutorials, seminars, assignment, independent studies, placement, fieldwork, community service, projects, and examinations, among others.
- vi. Higher Education Institutions shall encourage student centered and problem solving learning approaches in programme delivery.
- vii. Higher Education Institutions shall enhance the use of ICT in teaching and learning.
- viii. Higher Education Institutions will endeavor to ensure that academic staff are keep abreast with current pedagogical methods.
- ix. Programme management shall be supported by competent academic leaders and staff
- x. Higher Education Institutions shall regularize the practice of getting feedback from stakeholders on their satisfaction with programmes
- xi. Higher Education Institutions shall provide clear and transparent policies and mechanisms that govern students' assessments

(g) Criteria for Admission of Students and Granting of Awards of qualifications

Principle

Higher education institutions shall have clear and transparent mechanisms for admission into programmes and award of degrees.

Guidelines

- i. Higher Education Institutions shall develop and maintain clearly articulated criteria and procedures for admission of students, mobility and awards of qualifications, which shall be documented and disseminated.
- ii. Progression of students through the learning levels and granting of academic awards shall be guided by qualifications pathways linked to the East African qualifications framework for higher education.

(h) Quality of Staff

Principle

Higher Education Institutions shall provide adequate number and qualified staff for the support of teaching, research and community service.



Guidelines

- i. Higher Education Institutions shall employ adequate and competent human resources to carry out the institutions' mission and functions.
- ii. Academic staff in Higher Education Institutions shall have the requisite knowledge, competences and experience to facilitate learning.
- iii. Higher Education Institutions will endeavour to keep academic staff abreast with current pedagogical skills and shall facilitate them to enhance their competences.

(i) Management of Information

Principle

Higher education institutions shall put in place up to date and retrievable information management systems which facilitates data collection, storage and access

Guidelines

Higher Education Institutions shall:

- i. Develop information management systems that will capture important institutional data, such as profile of student population, student progression and success rates, available learning resources, availability and profile of the teaching staff, among others.
- ii. Regularly disseminate information on their activities.
- iii. Strive to have up to date and interactive websites.
- iv. Device strategies to disseminate research findings and strengthen linkages with industries, the private sector and the general public.

(i) Research and innovation

Principle

Research and innovation shall be considered as important factors in the development and enhancement of institution's quality assurance activities.

Guidelines

Higher Education Institutions shall:

- i. Strive to enrich academic programmes with new and cutting edge knowledge that is generated through quality research and innovation.
- ii. Encourage research findings and innovative ideas to be disseminated and used to influence institutional, national, regional and international directions in socio-economic and decision-making.

3.3 National Commissions and Councils for Higher Education

The principles and guidelines focused on the national commissions/councils are intended to harmonize external quality assurance practices in the Community. They cover standards, guidelines and processes for external quality assurance, quality assurance activities, documentation and dissemination of information, monitoring and evaluation, and coherence of national and regional policies and practices.

(a) Standards, Guidelines and Processes for external quality assurance

Principle

National commissions and councils for higher education shall develop standards, guidelines and procedures for external quality assurance in line with their mandates.

Guidelines

- i. National councils and commissions for higher education will endeavour to develop and regularly update standards, guidelines, and procedures for quality assurance in higher education, taking cognizance of inputs by stakeholders and regional and global trends.
- ii. Validated standards shall be documented, disseminated to the public, and used in determining the quality of higher education in each Partner State.
- iii. Guidelines and processes for quality assurance in higher education shall be clearly articulated and disseminated to the public.
- iv. National commissions and councils shall periodically induct members of their Boards as well as peers, technical staff, and boards of professional practices, on the standards, guidelines and processes of quality assurance at the regional and national levels.

(b) Quality Assurance Activities

Principle

National commissions and councils for higher education shall regularly undertake external quality assurance evaluations of Higher Education Institutions geared towards promoting public confidence in the institutions and the quality of education provided.

Guidelines

- (1) The National commissions and councils for higher education shall:
 - i. Safeguarded and enhanced the quality of higher education provision and standards of awards of qualifications by Higher Education Institutions.
 - ii. Undertake external quality assurance activities in the respective Partner States in line with their mandates.
 - iii. Ensure that Higher Education Institutions have effective internal quality assurance systems.



- (2) External quality assurance processes shall include:
 - i. Self-assessment by Higher Education Institutions
 - ii. External assessment of Higher Education Institutions including a site visit
 - iii. Report from the experts/peers resulting from external assessment of Higher Education Institutions
 - iv. Provision of feedback to Higher Education Institutions on decision on the assessed quality aspect
 - v. Monitoring of the progress in the quality aspect
- (3) Quality assurance activities in assessing Higher Education Institutions shall take cognizance of conformity to prescribed standards and the context of fitness-for-purpose.
- (4) National commissions and councils for higher education should endeavor to:
 - i. Be independent and act autonomously, without external influence on decisions that are made with respect to quality of higher education.
 - ii. Have an evidence-based, professional system of assessment or peer review.
- (5) The assessment or peer review system shall be carried out by groups of experts or peers who have requisite qualifications to function as expected and have no conflict of interest with the Higher Education Institutions being assessed.
- (6) Each national commissions or council for higher education will endeavor to develop a complaints and appeals system on their quality assurance decisions, and disseminated the system to the public.

(c) Documentation and dissemination of information

Principle

National commissions and councils for higher education shall regularly document and disseminate information on the public aspects of quality assurance in higher education in the respective Partner States.

Guidelines

- (1) National commissions and councils for higher education:
 - i. Shall keep a register of accredited institutions and programmes
 - ii. Will endeavor to develop comprehensive databases of quality aspects of Higher Education Institutions including inputs and outputs.
- (2) National commissions and councils for higher education shall regularly disseminate information on:

- i. Standards, guidelines and processes of quality assurance.
- ii. Ongoing quality assurance activities.
- iii. Accredited institutions and programmes.
- iv. Status of quality in higher education in the respective Partner States.

(d) Monitoring and evaluation

Principle

National commissions and councils for higher education shall regularly monitor and evaluate progress in meeting their mandate as external quality assurance agencies.

Guidelines

National commissions and councils for higher education will endeavor to:

- i. Establish processes for internal quality assurance related to defining, assuring and enhancing the quality and integrity of their activities.
- ii. Benchmark and cooperate with other external quality assurance agencies for purposes of enhancing their quality through sharing experiences, best practices and resources.
- iii. Undergo external review at least once every five years for public accountability and in order to raise stakeholders' confidence.

(e) Coherence of National and Regional Policies and Practices

Principle

National commissions and councils for higher education shall ensure that there is coherence between national and institutional policies and practices with those of other EAC Partner States.

Guideline

The commissions and councils for higher education shall regularly update IUCEA on the progress of regional quality assurance endeavours.



CHAPTER

4

QUALITY ASSURANCE DECISIONS

4.1 Introduction

Quality assurance decisions shall be made at the institutional, national and regional levels and shall take cognizance of the provisions of the national and regional qualifications frameworks.

4.2 Higher Education Institution Level

Higher Education Institutions shall establish mechanisms for making quality assurance decisions in accordance with the institutional hierarchy on decision-making in academic matters.

4.3 National Level

The national commissions/councils for higher education are responsible for making quality decisions with respect to:

- (a) Validation and approval of programmes
- (b) Accreditation of institutions
- (c) Recognition of foreign qualifications
- (d) Programmes audits and
- (e) Institutional audits

Decisions made by the national commissions/councils for higher education shall be based on their mandate as stipulated in their respective Acts. These decisions are to be communicated to Higher Education Institutions and other stakeholders.

4.4 Regional Level

- i. The IUCEA Governing Board shall make decisions on quality assurance matters after being advised by the Quality Assurance Committee.
- ii. The decisions made by the IUCEA Governing Board shall be communicated to EAC Council of Ministers through the Sectoral Council responsible for Education for noting, and to the national commissions/councils for higher education for implementation.

CHAPTER

5

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES

5.1 Introduction

The implementation of the Principles and Guidelines is the responsibility of IUCEA, the national commissions and councils for higher education and Higher Education Institutions. IUCEA, the national commissions and councils for higher education and Higher Education Institutions shall be responsible for monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of these principles and guidelines at their respective levels.

5.2 Role of IUCEA

(a) Coordination

IUCEA shall provide:

- i. Overall coordination of the process of implementation of the Principles and Guidelines.
- ii. And facilitate regional mechanisms for coordination of implementation of the Principles and Guidelines in collaboration with the national commissions/councils and HEIs for follow-up and feedback.

(b) Capacity development

IUCEA shall:

- i. Mobilize resources to ensure consistent and sustainable mainstreaming of quality assurance matters into HEIs in the Partner States.

- ii. Carry out capacity development to staff of universities and commissions/councils for higher education on emerging aspects in quality assurance in order to keep the region abreast with new developments in quality assurance.
- (c) **Advocacy and Networking**
IUCEA shall:
 - i. Carry out regional advocacy activities in various forums on quality assurance matters to all higher education stakeholders, including policy and decision making.
 - ii. Support and facilitate development of national and regional quality assurance networks for sharing of good practices and new trends in quality assurance.
- (d) **Documentation and Dissemination of Quality Assurance Practices**
IUCEA shall regularly document and disseminate information on regional endeavors and current trends in quality assurance.
- (e) **Development of Regional Benchmarks**
IUCEA shall:
 - i. Coordinate the development of regional guidelines for programme benchmarking.
 - ii. Continuously develop benchmarks on various aspects of quality in order to provide a yardstick for improvement of quality of higher education in the region.

5.3 National level

- (a) **Alignment of quality assurance systems**
The national commissions and councils for higher education shall endeavor to align their quality assurance systems to the Principles and Guidelines.
- (b) **Dissemination**
The national commissions and councils for higher education shall endeavor to disseminate the Principles and Guidelines and induct their staff, institutional managers and quality assurance officers on the implementation of the Principles and Guidelines.
- (c) **Capacity building**
The national commissions/councils for higher education shall conduct regular trainings and hold forums for sharing of experiences on quality assurance endeavors in the Community.

5.4 Institutional Level

- (a) **Mainstreaming into institutional quality assurance plans**
Higher Education Institutions shall mainstream the implementation of the Principles and Guidelines in their institutional quality assurance plans.
- (b) **Sensitization of staff and students**
Higher Education Institutions shall sensitize their staff and students on institutional frameworks including the Principles and Guidelines.

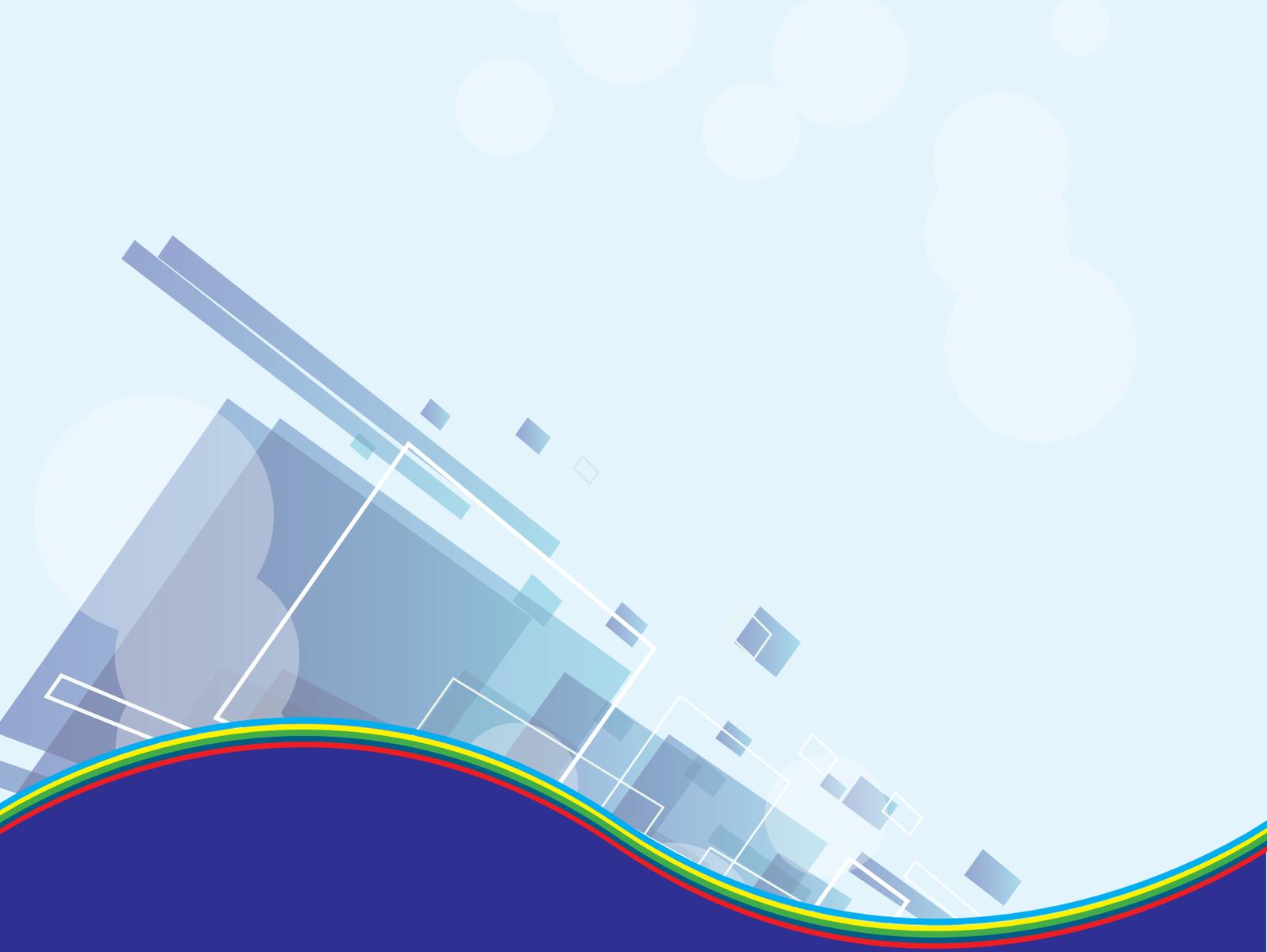


Glossary

Accreditation	Establishment of the status, legitimacy or appropriateness of an institution, program or module of study.
Academic Audit	Systematic and scientific process of reviewing the academic system for improvement of quality
Benchmark	Point of reference against which something may be measured.
“Community”	The East African Community established under Article 2 of the Treaty.
Curriculum	Embodiment of a program of learning and includes philosophy, content, approach and assessment.
Guidelines	Statements that provide direction with respect to specific principles in Quality Assurance.
Harmonization of education	Synchronization and coordination of education provided based on agreed benchmarks.
Higher Education Institutions	Institutions providing all types of studies, training or training for research at the post-secondary level, provided by universities or other educational establishments approved as institutions.
Higher education	All types of studies, training or training for research at the post-secondary level, provided by universities or other educational establishments approved as institutions of higher education by the competent Partner State authority.
National Commissions/ Councils for higher education	A competent authority designated by a Partner State to regulate higher education functions

Partner States	The Republic of Burundi, the Republic of Kenya, the Republic of Rwanda, the United Republic of Tanzania, the Republic of Uganda and any other country granted membership to the Community under Article 3 of the Treaty.
Peer review	Process of evaluating the provision, work, process, or output of an individual or collective who is operating in the same milieu as the reviewer(s).
Principles	Underlying general rule of action or practice in Quality Assurance.
Programme	Set of coherent educational components, based on learning outcomes, that are recognized for the award of a specific qualification through the accumulation of a specified number of credits and the development of specified competences.
Qualifications framework	Instrument for the development and classification of qualifications according to a set of criteria for levels of learning and skills and competences achieved.
Quality assurance	Planned and systematic review of an institution or programme to determine maintenance and enhancement of acceptable benchmarks.
Stakeholders in higher education	Groups that have <i>inter alia</i> an interest in the quality of provision and standard of outcomes. These include government, employers, students, academic and administrative staff, institutional managers, prospective students and their parents, taxpayers.
Treaty	The Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community, 1999 and amendments thereof





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