

**Ministry of Manpower
Directorate of Technological Education &
Vocational Training
Nizwa College of Technology
www.nct.edu.om**

Academic Staff Manual

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION

1.1 Nizwa College of Technology (www.nct.edu.om) is located on the eastern outskirts of the oasis of Nizwa, about 12 km from the city centre. The college started in 1993 as “Nizwa Technical and Industrial College”. Before that its premises were built as a vocational training center, and since that time, the same infrastructure is now in use.

The college started with (102) students in its first academic year. The number of academic staff was (22) against (12) administrative staff. The implemented academic program was for two years and teaching was in Arabic. In 1995, the college produced its first batch of graduates.

In 1995, the college started to apply a three-year program called GNVQ. Teaching was in English and one year was added as a foundation year.

In 1999 the GNVQ program was replaced by an Omani National Diploma OND program. Back, teaching was in English with one year foundation.

In 2003, a new credit hour program is implemented till date. The program allows having four levels of graduates: certificate, diploma, higher diploma and B.Tech. (in the NCT it is run only up to the higher diploma). The program is run and regulated by a college Bylaws issued in 2004 by a Ministerial Decision (72/2004). Provisions were added in this program; in the foundation year, the student has to pass an in-house TOEFL so as to join specialization and he/she has to do and pass enhancement and on-the job training before graduation.

Currently the college has over 2500 students with 116 academic staff, 32 support staff and 54 administrative staff running the college. Admission to the College is open to all Omani graduates who have achieved a General Secondary School Certificate, with a minimum qualifying score set by the rules of the Unified Admissions Center. There are three academic departments in the College: Business Studies, Engineering and Information Technology. The specializations are offered after the certificate year: in Business Studies [Office Management, Human Resources, E-Commerce and CAT], in Engineering [Mechanical & Electrical Power, Telecommunication, Computer Engineering and Oil & Gas] while in Information Technology Dept, the study is general to the diploma level and specialization starts in the higher diploma level [Networking and Software Engineering] .

The college mission, goals, values and objectives are clearly stated in the Quality Assurance Manual QAM of colleges of technology (a copy needs to be asked from the HoD) .

The College policies are derived from the QAM. However, a lot of work is required to set well established policies for the NCT. The policies represent a general statement to set out the framework of different college activities. The main policies of the college are: Quality assurance policy, Human resources policy, Student services policy, Student admission policy, Health & safety policy, Examination and assessment policy, Teaching and learning policy, Research/consultancy policy, Community engagement policy.

The college organizational structure is well established in the college Bylaws (copy needs to be asked from the HoD). It clarifies the relationship among different authorities, the duties and responsibilities of each.

College regulations are also derived from the QAM and the college Bylaws. Some regulations are well established and it is hoped to elaborate others. Student regulations are given in details in the student prospectus, which is usually distributed to students on their first join to the college. A copy of this prospectus is now available to students in Arabic & English.

To facilitate the solution of different day to day problems and to reach the right decision, different committees are established. Some committees like the discipline, investigation, examination, specialization, etc. are permanent year wise, while others are formed temporary on

needs. Members of all councils and committees have the freedom to raise, discuss, reject or accept any issue related to the welfare of students, staff and the college.

The flow of problems solution and decision making starts from the ordinary staff to the concerned committee, if it is not solved or decided or it is beyond the authority of that committee, then it is raised to the departmental council, likewise to the college board and the ministry administration. By this way, any member in the college has the opportunity to participate strongly in solving problems and in making decisions. For more information, please, visit the college website: <http://www.nct.edu.om/nct/index1.php> .

1.2 PROGRAM STRUCTURE

Studying at the College consists of several stages. The first stage is the Foundation Program where students study English language, Keyboard skills and Pre-Algebra. After successful completion of the Foundation Program students can join one of the Academic Departments which offer the Certificate, Diploma and Higher Diploma Levels in various specializations where high achievers can proceed to the Bachelor of Technology (B. Tech) at the Higher College of Technology in Muscat. The level that a student can proceed to, depends on the specialization selected and the scores (GPA) achieved. The following chart (fig. 1 below) illustrates the Qualifications Program highlighting the GPA required in order to progress from one level to another. It also shows the type of training required in order to be graduated or to proceed to the next level.

The details of the foundation program and the specializations of different academic departments are as bellow:

- **Foundation program:**
 - Level I- Pre-elementary
 - Level II -Elementary
 - Level III – Intermediate
 - Level IV – Advanced, with keyboard skills, pre-algebra, ICDL-4 modules, in-house TOEFL preparation program and institutional TOEFL test.
- **Engineering Department:**
 - Common certificate
 - Diploma -Telecommunication
 - Diploma -Electrical power
 - Diploma- Mechanical Engineering
 - Diploma -Computer Engineering (to start on need)
 - Diploma -Oil and Gas
 - Diploma- Mechatronics (new)
 - Higher diploma –Telecommunication
 - Higher Diploma – Computer Engineering
 - Higher diploma -Mechanical (to start on need)
 - Higher diploma -Electrical Power (to start on need)
- **Information Technology Department:**
 - Common Certificate
 - Diploma -Information Technology
 - Higher Diploma- Networking
 - Higher Diploma -Software Engineering
 - Higher Diploma – Data Base
 - Higher Diploma- Internet & E-Security

- **Business Department:**
 - Common certificate
 - Diploma- Human Recourses
 - Diploma-Secretary ship (to start soon)
 - Diploma - E- Business
 - Diploma Marketing
 - Higher Diploma – Human Resources
 - Higher Diploma – E- Business
 - CAT sub-program (accredited by ACCA, UK)

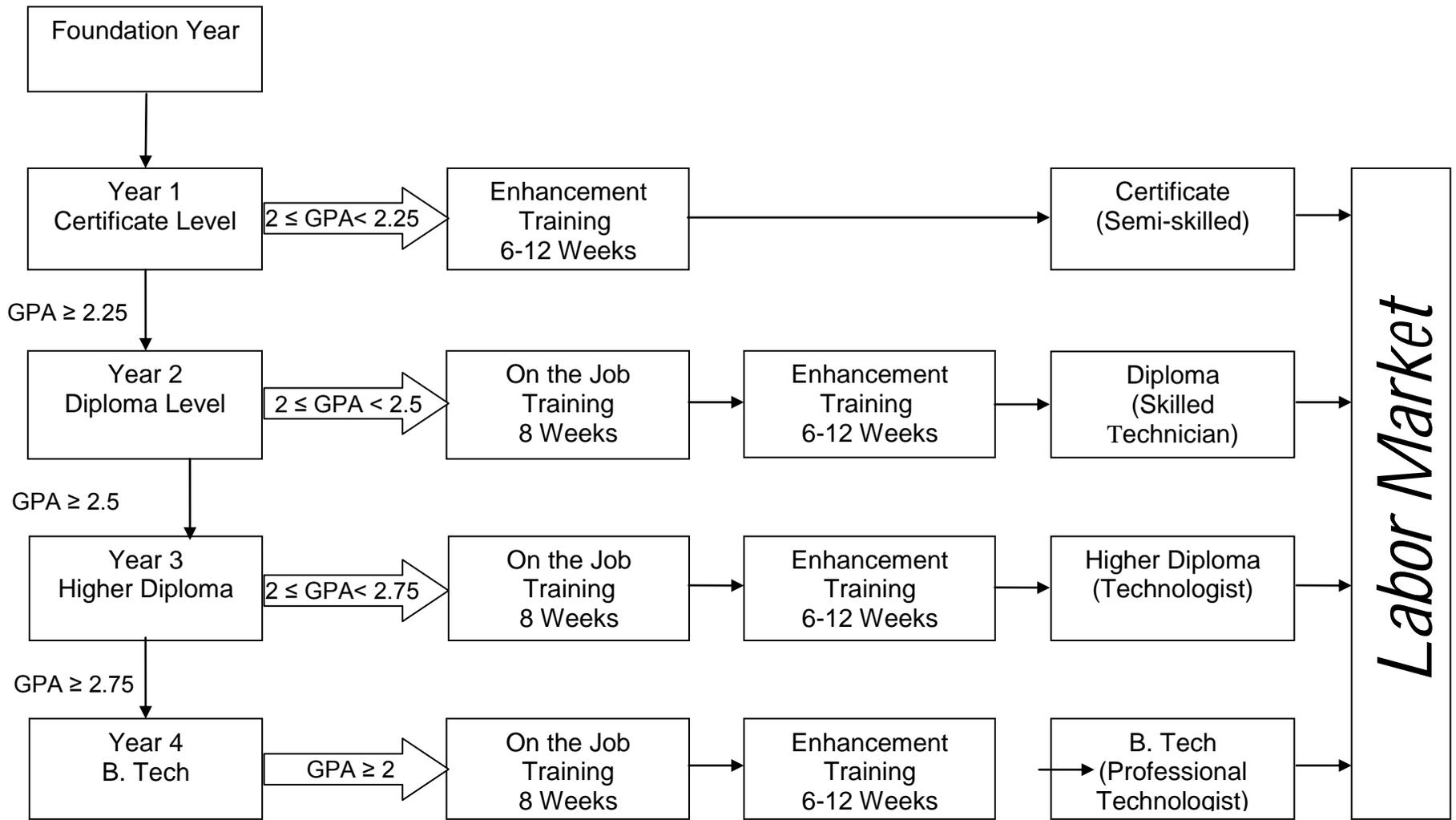
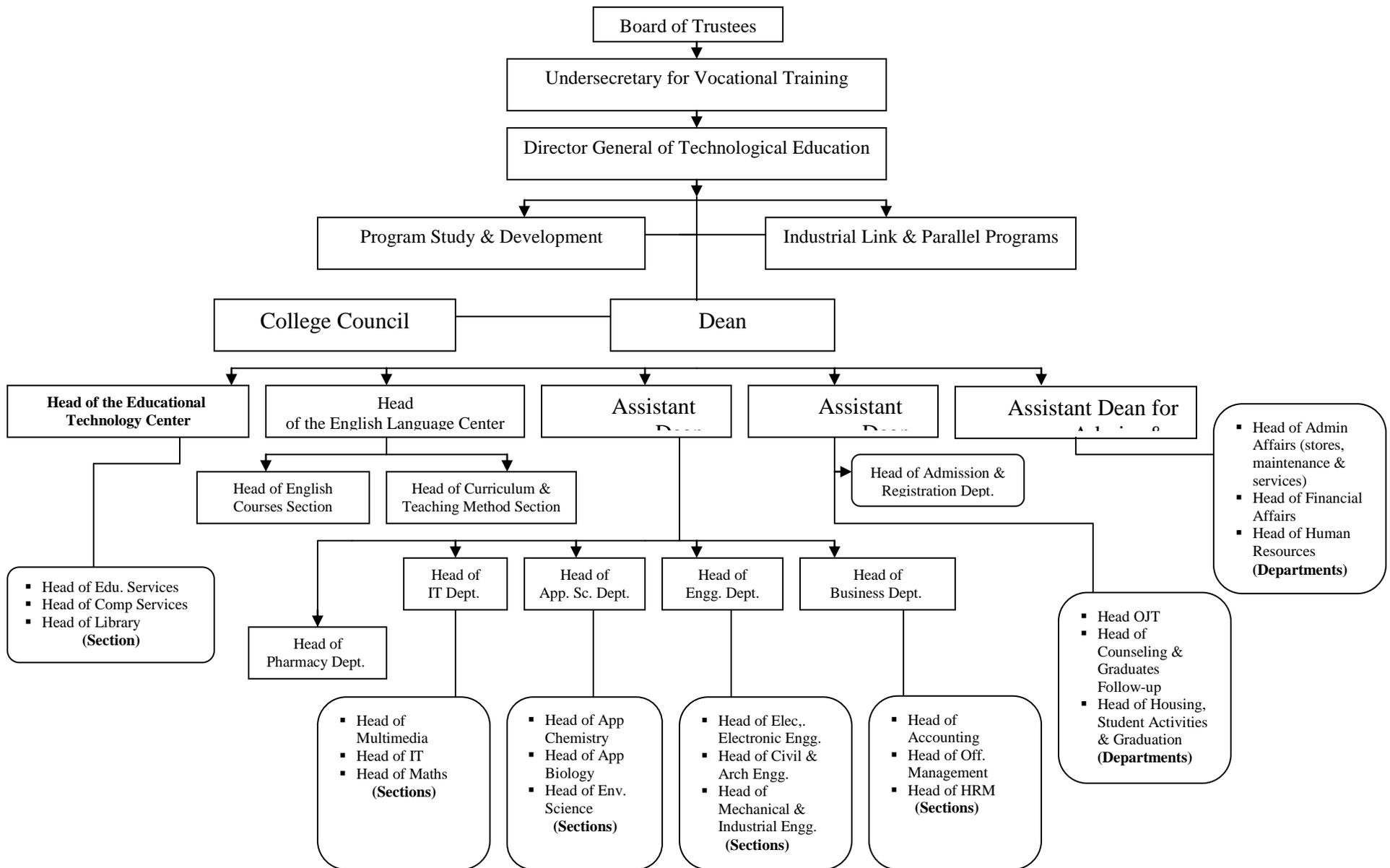


Fig.1 Program Structure and Admission Criteria

1.3 Organizational Structure of the College



Chapter 2

Responsibilities, Duties & Codes of Ethics

Chapter 2

Responsibilities, Duties & Codes of Ethics

2.1 Responsibilities and Duties of Academic Staff Members. (Article 92 of Bylaws)

In addition to their duties stipulated in the Civil Service Law, its executive regulations and the bylaws, the teaching and the technical support staff will conform to the following:

1. Respecting Islamic Laws regarding conduct inside and outside the colleges.
2. Carrying out the duties of teaching and student counseling to the best of their abilities.
3. Carrying out the tasks of the academic advisor, including assisting the student in specifying the objectives of his/her study program, and providing the information needed for various academic activities, as well as supervising student research and practical training.
4. Carrying out their duties regularly and meeting the deadlines in a way that facilitates interaction with students.
5. Contributing to college committees; academic and non-academic.
6. Contributing to the development of the community.
7. Working towards boosting academic spirit among students.
8. Conducting and publishing research and studies in scientific periodicals or journals.

2.2 Ethical Requirements for staff in the College

The college requires and expects the highest ethical standards from its entire staff especially from the teaching staff. The mission of the college relates strongly to the future of the country and to nurturing the country's young people. This is an important task and it must be carried out in the most efficient and committed way.

2.3 Treating Student Misconduct

Some students may show unacceptable behavior in the college or inside class rooms. The tutor has the discretion to deal with this type of disorder according to part eight and nine of the bylaws (articles 73 to 91). However, gentle and ethical way of treatment should be followed to avoid complications. For example, if a student makes trouble inside the class, the tutor, as a first warning can ask him to stop, if continues the tutor can then shift his/her place as a second warning. If still continues, the tutor can send him out of the class as a final decision (article 78 of bylaws). In case the student refuses to obey, the tutor may report him/her to the Head of the Department/Center.

2.4 Dress Code

Male Students: should wear white Omani Dishdasha and the head cap or turban.

Female Students & Female Staff Members: should wear any dress that does not violate the Islamic concepts and values.

Omani Male Staff: should wear the white Omani Dishdasha and the head cap or turban.

Expatriate Male Staff Members: should wear shirt- trousers with tie. No jeans or sport dress/shoes are allowed. Safari dress (without tie) is also permitted.

Inside workshops: students and staff should wear safety overall dress and safety shoes. The type and color of the dress is left to the HoD and the departmental board.

Inside laboratories: it is left to the HoD and the departmental board to decide which lab necessitates safety dress and shoes (e.g a PC lab does not require safety dress).

Notes: 1. Students violating dress codes should not be allowed to enter the class room and in case they refuse to leave, the tutor has to report them to the HoD of the Department/Center.

2. In no case, a student without safety dress is allowed to join a workshop or lab.

2.5 Academic Integrity

All college staff should ensure the following:

1. Be aware of the five fundamental values of Academic Integrity:
 - Honesty
 - Trust
 - Fairness
 - Respect
 - ResponsibilityFor more details refer to (<http://www.oac.gov.om/>)
2. Be aware of the areas covered by academic integrity:
 - Plagiarism done by students, staff and institution (borrowing polices from other institutions)
 - Cheating
 - Fabrication and falsification
 - Aiding academic dishonesty.
 - Unfairness.
3. Make sure that Academic Integrity and its five fundamental values are embodied in your work.
4. Ensure Academic Integrity of student work. Treating any sort of academic non integrity, like plagiarism should first start with intention to educate students, because it is sometimes done unintentionally. So students should be first be aware and informed about academic integrity issues and the consequences that may follow. If academic non integrity is proved through a committee including the course tutor, HoS and HoD, then rules of discipline have to be implemented as per the bylaws.
5. Staff should explain to students how to make use of different sources of information in the correct way including:
 - Rephrasing
 - Summarizing
 - Acknowledgement (writing references).
6. College staff should be aware of the challenges related to Academic Integrity which could include:
 - Non existence of clear policies and procedures.
 - Lack of resources.
 - High staff workload and work pressure.
 - Lack of awareness among staff and students.
 - Lack of consistency.
 - Lack of commitment and accountability.
 - Lack of overall view.
 - Lack of support from senior managers.
7. Be aware that any indirect encouragement of plagiarism, cheating, etc will be treated strictly. e.g. ignorance, not implementing rules and regulations, giving marks to achieve high pass rate, satisfying student/community pressure, etc.-.

8. Every staff should create academic integrity by reviewing the current status, commencement of approach to staff and student, deployment and improvement.
9. Keeping records of cases of plagiarism/ cheating with investigation report of each case.
10. Keeping statistics with aim for improvement.
11. Each department/center to conduct workshops for students and staff so as to increase their awareness about academic integrity.
12. Making policies, rules, procedures and commencing it through manuals, posters, college website etc.
13. QA portfolio should reflect the institution academic integrity.

Chapter 3

Improvement & Assessment of Teaching & Learning

3.1 Excellent Teaching

Teaching is one of the important elements of the education process. Having excellent teaching will ensure excellent student's coursework and outcome. The following articles are thought to be the necessary factors through which the college can ensure excellent teaching:

3.2 Attributes of Excellent Tutor

- Take the responsibility seriously.
- Be committed to the excellence and quality of the students.
- Have patience.
- Be a good role model.
- Have confidence in one's self and teachings.
- Be a good motivator.
- Be enthusiastic and energetic.
- Possess extensive knowledge.
- Demonstrate great skill.
- Be good at challenging students and also guiding them to their goals.
- Be a good communicator.
- Possess a certain kind of humility -- the teacher should respect students also.
- Have the ability to adapt teaching style to accommodate individual student needs.
- Treats students equally, should be authentic and show no favoritism.
- Be a good counselor and guide.
- Be fair and just in discipline and punishment.
- Be good at organizing and planning.

(For more details see <http://home.att.net/~taekwondo.junkie/Attributes.html>)

3.3 Assessment of Teaching

The aim of the assessment is to gain insight on teaching. To find the teaching quality and effectiveness and to ensure the attributes mentioned above. This assessment is the responsibility of both the faculty and the tutor himself. Getting a read on which teaching methods are most successful becomes easier after many years in the classroom, but even novice instructors can begin to assess the effectiveness of their teaching with the use of some simple evaluation tools. Figure (2) shows the tools that are to be used in the assessment of teaching. The procedure is now under implementation by the academic departments and the ELC. Brief about the techniques is given below.

3.3.1 Conducting Classroom Research

Before a tutor can make any changes, he/she needs to gain insight on his/her teaching. Asking students to provide feedback and engaging them in the assessment process lets them know that the tutor respect their thoughts and value their contributions, and they may find it empowering and enjoyable. Students are able to see research in action and gain an appreciation for how it informs practice. Same means for the assessment of students' learning can be used to assess teaching, see articles 5.4 & 5.5 of the next chapter.

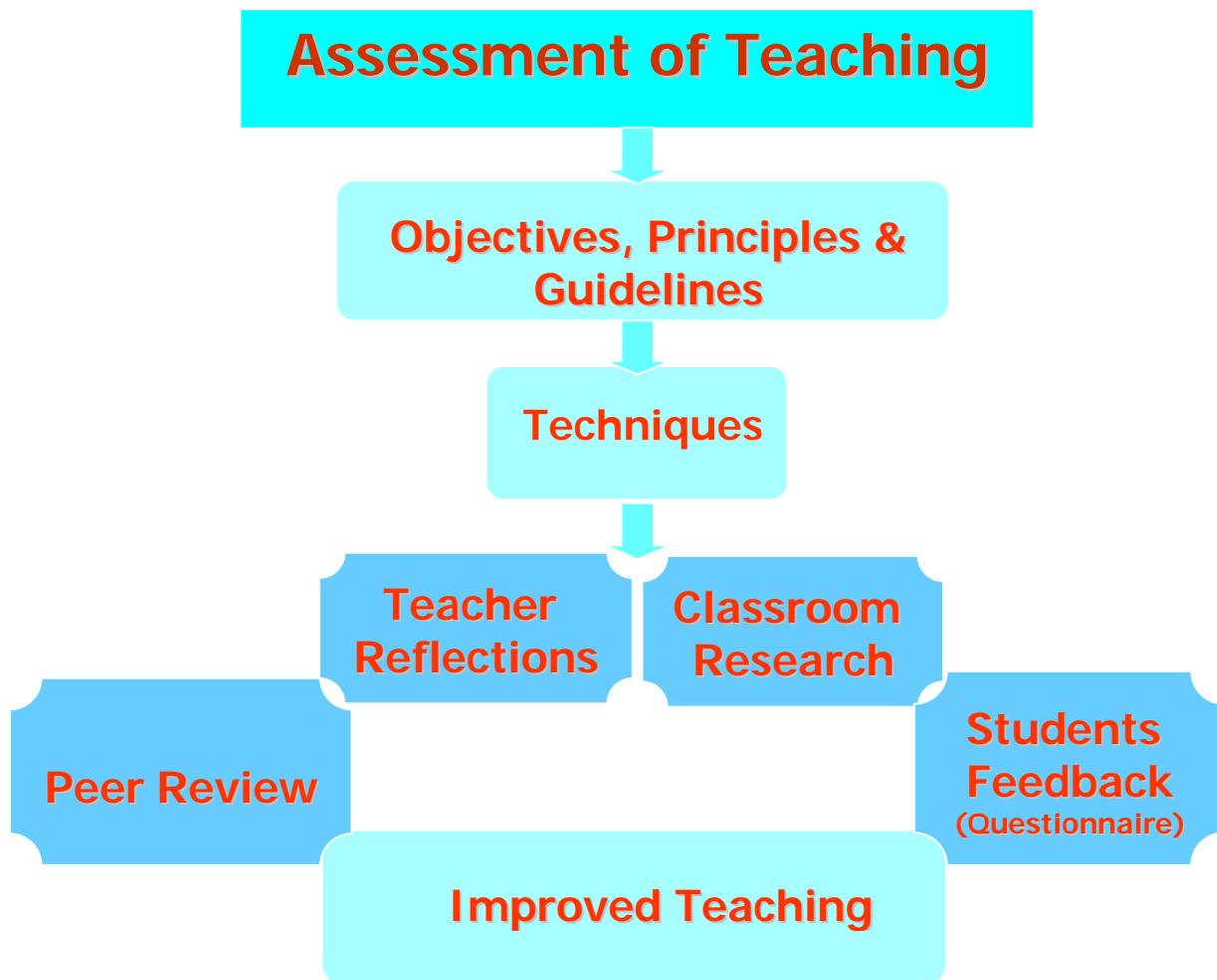


Fig. 2 Tools used for Assessment of Teaching

3.3.2 Peer Review

Another valuable way of receiving feedback on your teaching is through peer review. In their own classrooms, teachers/instructors are often so busy presenting information, facilitating discussions, monitoring student groups, answering questions, and keeping an eye on the time that they may not notice issues that can negatively impact learning. Having a peer in the classroom who is expressly dedicated to observation can be invaluable.

In peer review, a colleague sits in on a class and offers feedback from a different perspective. Peer review does not have to involve advice or judgment. Often just having more information on what is going on in class can make a big difference in how an instructor prepares and presents lessons. In the college, formal peer review program (to be set by HoD) will be applied for new staff as a requirement for new instructors and as a professional development option for tenured instructors. Generally, a team of more experienced instructors make observations and comments on the teaching dynamics they observe in a classroom. For experienced staff, informal peer review is an option. This can be as simple as asking a colleague to sit in on a class meeting and take notes on what she/he sees and experiences. It's best to ask a more experienced colleague, but even a novice can provide valuable feedback. Let that person know what specifically you would like feedback on—presenting information clearly, facilitating groups, or fostering a welcoming community.

3.3.3 Teacher Reflections

Another important source of information, of course, is yourself. Reflecting on your own teaching—shortcomings as well as successes—is a way to make sense of your own experiences and to gain perspective on the day-to-day workings of your own classroom. Writing down your thoughts and observations can also give you an outlet for the frustrations, disappointment, and conflict you will undoubtedly run into in the classroom. Reflection exercises can help you think through problems, find solutions, and come to closure on issues that affect your teaching. The simplest and easiest way to keep track of your thoughts is through keeping a journal. Try writing about only one class every week, or writing only when there is a problem that needs extra attention. No one else will be reading your journal, so write honestly. You may choose to write about your classroom environment, a new teaching technique, or strategies for reaching different learners. Look over the list of topics in the table of contents for this course if you are stuck for ideas to write on. Later, you will be able to look back and track your own progress as a teacher. Here are some questions to get you started:

1. What aspect of your teaching are you most satisfied with? Why?
2. What aspect of your teaching are you most dissatisfied with? Why? What can you do to change it?
3. What is the most surprising or unexpected thing that has happened in your classroom?
4. What has been most difficult?

3.4 Teaching Methods and Techniques

There are varieties of teaching methods which can be applied by the tutor. The methods depend on the learning goals the students are trying to achieve. In general three most common methods can be applied:

- Rote teaching
- Guided Problem Solving
- Diagnostic Teaching

Rote teaching is used to help students memorizing vocabulary, spelling lists, definitions, rules, formulae, etc.

Guided problem-solving is used to help students to become skilled at solving problems. In the guided approach, the teacher first explains the general concept, and then how to attack that specific type of problem. The teacher demonstrates each step of the solution, and then gives the students similar problems to try on their own. This allows the students to apply the concepts they were initially taught to similar as well as slightly different problems. Guided problem-solving is well suited for maths and sciences.

In diagnostic teaching students are asked first to present solution for a problem using any method they can. No lecture or explanation is given until after the students have been given adequate time to work on the problems. Once the problems have been solved, the teacher will ask the students to explain how they arrived at their answers. The teacher will then go through the steps required to solve the problem, showing the students which steps they did right and wrong, explaining how to correct any mistakes they may have made.

Different teaching techniques are also used. These techniques describe the ways in which the information to be learned is presented. The techniques vary in terms of the medium (textbook, video, computer, lab, workshop, etc), structure of the program, how the teacher operates, and how progress is monitored and tested.

The techniques cover the following:

- Lecture and Discussion Methods- it is one of the most common teaching techniques while discussion promotes positive attitude towards learning, and develops interpersonal students' skills.
- Grouping -Grouping is a common teaching technique. It places students of different abilities together, so that students within each group can help each other. These groupings are often effective in raising students' achievement while improving interpersonal skills. Grouping has been particularly successful with hard-to-teach and fast-learning students.
- Tutoring - It is used to help remedy academic deficiencies. It is applied when other teaching methods have failed, or students need extra instruction about a particular topic or subject with which they are having difficulty.
- Simulation (mocking) – the technique is used to teach principles of complex systems. It is so effective since it can create conditions nearly identical to the actual situation.
- Instructional media - Instructional media serves as a teaching aid. It helps promoting students' understanding and intellectual curiosity, and motivating and providing feedback to them. It involves:
 - Visual and Observational media- it includes, demonstrations, experiments, pictures, diagrams, charts, graphs, cartoons, posters, slides, and videos.
 - Computer Assisted Instruction
 - Speaking-Listening, Reading-Writing Media

The teaching methods and techniques mentioned above encourage students to become actively involved with the learning. They help students to attempt, practice, refine, reflect, recycle through, construct, examine, compare, induce, hypothesize and analyze.

3.5 Staff Motivation

Staff motivation is an important factor for ensuring excellent teaching and learning since it creates a competitive environment among staff and gives opportunity for self development. Staff motivation has different forms. One important form is the staff recognition based on the staff assessment and appraisal, Fig. (3). Other forms include the best project supervised by the staff, best academic advisor, best staff in research & consultancy, best staff in extracurricular activities, etc. The objectives and criteria of staff recognition are as follows:

Objectives of recognition of Staff

1. To have excellence in teaching and to maintain the attributes of an excellent academic staff.
2. To give greater motivation and recognition for teaching staff.
3. To reward excellent staff.

Criteria of Assessment

1. Ability to stimulate students to think creatively and critically.
2. Demonstrated caring for student learning.
3. Ability to present complex information clearly.
4. Demonstrated enthusiasm for and innovation in teaching.
5. Sustained record of excellent teaching.
6. Diversity of course level.

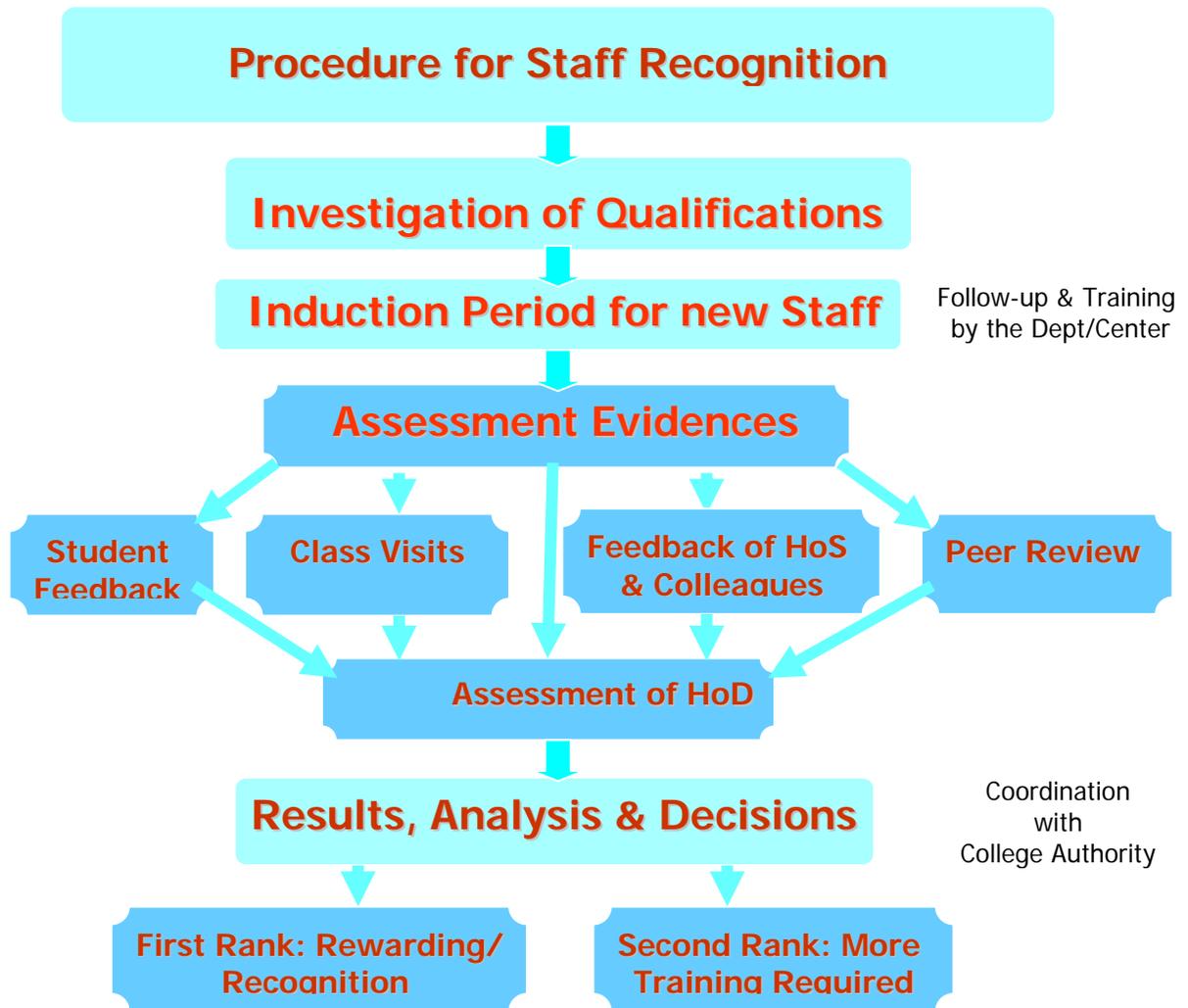


Figure 3 Procedure of staff recognition

3.6 The Learning Process

Learning represents the main element of the education process. It is tightly interrelated with the teaching process, both are complementary and one enhances and improves the other with the heavier side to the learning. In order to achieve the strategy of teaching & learning mentioned in chapter 4 of the college QAM, both processes should be centered to the students: teaching has to be student-centered teaching and learning has to be also student-centered learning, http://www.bath.ac.uk/e-learning/student_centredness.htm.

To achieve student-centered teaching, all of the following practices as described by Weimer* in her book "Learner-Centered Teaching", should be an integral part of the education:

- The *functions of the content* in learning-centered teaching include building a strong knowledge foundation and to develop learning skills and learner self-awareness.
- The *role of the teacher* should focus on student learning. The roles are more facilitative rather than prescriptive teaching.

*Weimer, M. G. (2002). Learner-centered teaching: Five key changes to practice. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

- The *responsibility for learning* shifts from the teacher to the students. Students take responsibility for their own learning. With students, the teacher creates learning environments that motivate students to accept responsibility for learning.
- The *processes and purposes of evaluation* shift from only assigning grades to also including constructive feedback and to assist with improvement. Learning-centered teaching uses assessment as a part of the learning process.
- The *balance of power* shifts so that the teacher shares some decisions about the course with the students such that the teacher and the students collaborate on course policies and procedures. Learning-centered teaching has an appropriate balance of power between the teacher and the students by giving students some control over the policies; the schedule including deadlines; methods of learning; and methods of assessment but not the content of the course.

Student -centered learning could be achieved through the following:

- Student's interdisciplinary information and knowledge.
- Higher order thinking skills, e.g. problem-solving.
- Information processing skills, e.g. access, organize, interpret, and communicate information.
- Students work with teachers to select learning goals and objectives based on authentic problems and students' prior knowledge, interests and experience.
- Teacher works with students to determine learning strategy.
- Self-paced, designed to meet needs of individual student.
- Student given direct access to multiple sources of information, e.g. books, online databases, community members.
- Student assessment is integral part of learning.
- Performance based, used to assess students' ability to apply knowledge.
- Students work with teachers to define performance criteria.
- Students develop self-assessment and peer assessment skills.
- Teacher provides multiple means of accessing information.
- Teacher acts as facilitator, helps students access and process information.
- Teacher facilitates learning.
- Students take responsibility for learning.
- Students work at stations with access to multiple resources.
- Students work individually at times but also need to collaborate in small groups.

By other words, the learning process has to active and effective:

Active Learning

The college aims to move learning from passive to active by involving students in the learning process and to find better ways of engaging them in it.

Active Learning involves activity-based learning experiences: input, process, and output. These activity-based experiences take many shapes: whole class involvement, teams, small groups, trios, pairs, individuals. They also take many forms like, talking, writing, reading, discussing, debating, acting, role-playing, journaling, conferring, interviewing, building, creating, and the list continues.

Effective Learning

For the learning process to be effective, both the student and the tutor have to be aware of the learning styles of learners. As students have different learning styles, fig. 4 the tutor should tailor the teaching to students' strengths.

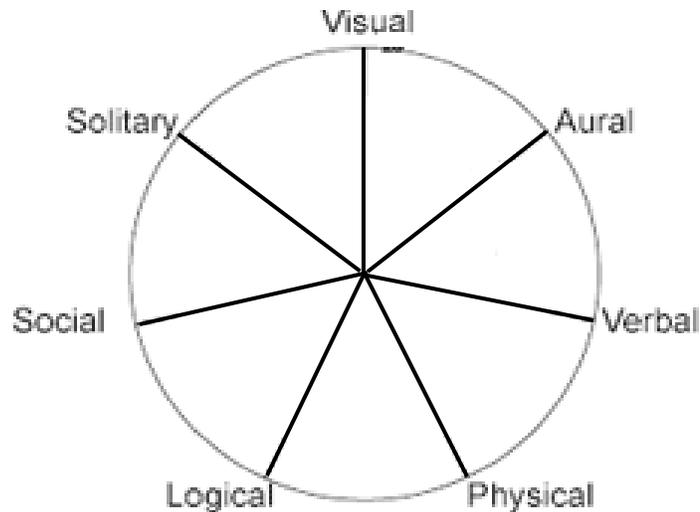


Fig. 4 Learning Styles

He/she has to appeal to this diversity by using a variety of presentation, activity and assignment formats. Some possibilities include:

- Enhance lectures and presentations with visual aids.
- Have students research and present material, in small groups or in plenary.
- Introduce content through discussion or problem-solving activities.
- Invite students to explore issues through role-play.
- Assign practical hands-on activities, where possible.
- Take students on field trips to experience things first-hand.

Students should also be aware of their learning styles (<http://www.learning-styles-online.com/inventory/>, <http://www.engr.ncsu.edu/learningstyles/ilsweb.html>) and how to expand it and become more flexible learners. Understanding of the learning style can help in the classroom and at home.

In the classroom:

If you have difficulty following a teacher's presentation of new material, ask if it can be presented in a way that appeals to your style. For example, if you are a visual learner, you may find it difficult to absorb content if the teacher just speaks. Approach your teacher and ask him/her to write key points on the board while they are talking.

At home:

When working independently to study for tests or complete assignments, you will find that you use your time more effectively if you use the strategies recommended for your style. For example, if you are an auditory learner, try recording summaries of notes you have taken from readings. To study, just sit back and listen.

More information about Teaching & Learning can be found in the following interesting site:

<http://honolulu.hawaii.edu/intranet/committees/FacDevCom/guidebk/teachtip/teachtip.htm#assessment>.

The other important factor that ensures effective learning is to have effective assessment methods and techniques for evaluating the learning process. The following articles explain in details the assessment needed for effective learning.

3.7 Assessment of Learning

Objectives

The objective of the assessment of learning is to measure the outcomes students have achieved. To discover what a student really knows. It should measure not just the amount of content students know, but the extent of their understanding, their ability to make connections, and their ease in transferring knowledge to new situations.

The assessment gives students useful feedback on what they know and how they can learn better, and lets the instructor see in what areas students are struggling.

Learning assessment is a mutual process interrelated with the assessment of teaching. It is not just offering grades to students based on tests, papers, and other assignments, but it is a continuous process that provides insight into student learning and gives teachers a basis for making instructional decision and modifying teaching methods.

Guiding Principles

- The assessment should measure students' attainment of learning outcomes
- It should measure the level of student success.
- It should be designed to facilitate learning- for teacher and students; what help students might need, what areas to cover in greater depth and possible adjustment in the teaching style.
- It should be on-going endeavor – something teacher can and should do, in various forms, for the duration of the course.
- The assessment should be linked to the course goals.
- Ensuring connection between the method of assessment and the way students learn the material.
- Students should know the assessment plan at the beginning of a course.
- Sharing with students what the teacher have discovered after each assessment. Students struggles, misunderstandings, common questions and what he will be doing differently to facilitate student learning.

3.8 Methods of Assessing Student Learning

Generally, learning assessment includes two parts, see fig. (5). The first is continuous formative assessment without grading which gives a feedback on the nature and progress of student learning and at the same time on the teaching process. The second part is summative assessment (with grading) which is usually done after and in coordination with the formative one.

3.8.1 Formative Assessment

This method gives both teachers and students feedback on the nature and progress of student learning. It involves everything from pre-assessment to the many ways of collecting data about student understanding. This type of assessment technique is not used to assign grades, but rather a sense of what students have mastered and where they are struggling.

The aims of this assessment can be summarized in the following:

- To allow students to revisit or revise their work before moving on to a new topic
- To make student thinking visible both to teacher and other students
- It can be used to inform instructional practices- to give student advice without their worrying about grades.
- It helps to assess both the students and the instructor.
- It allows students to monitor their own progress throughout the course.
- It allows the teacher to review or teach from another perspective.
- To monitor the student understanding before any grades are assigned.

3.8.2 Summative Assessment

Commonly used in the form of tests, papers, and other assignments (Paper -pencil assessment). This method should be used after and in coordination with the formative one. It is used as the basis for grades assigned to students over the length of the course.

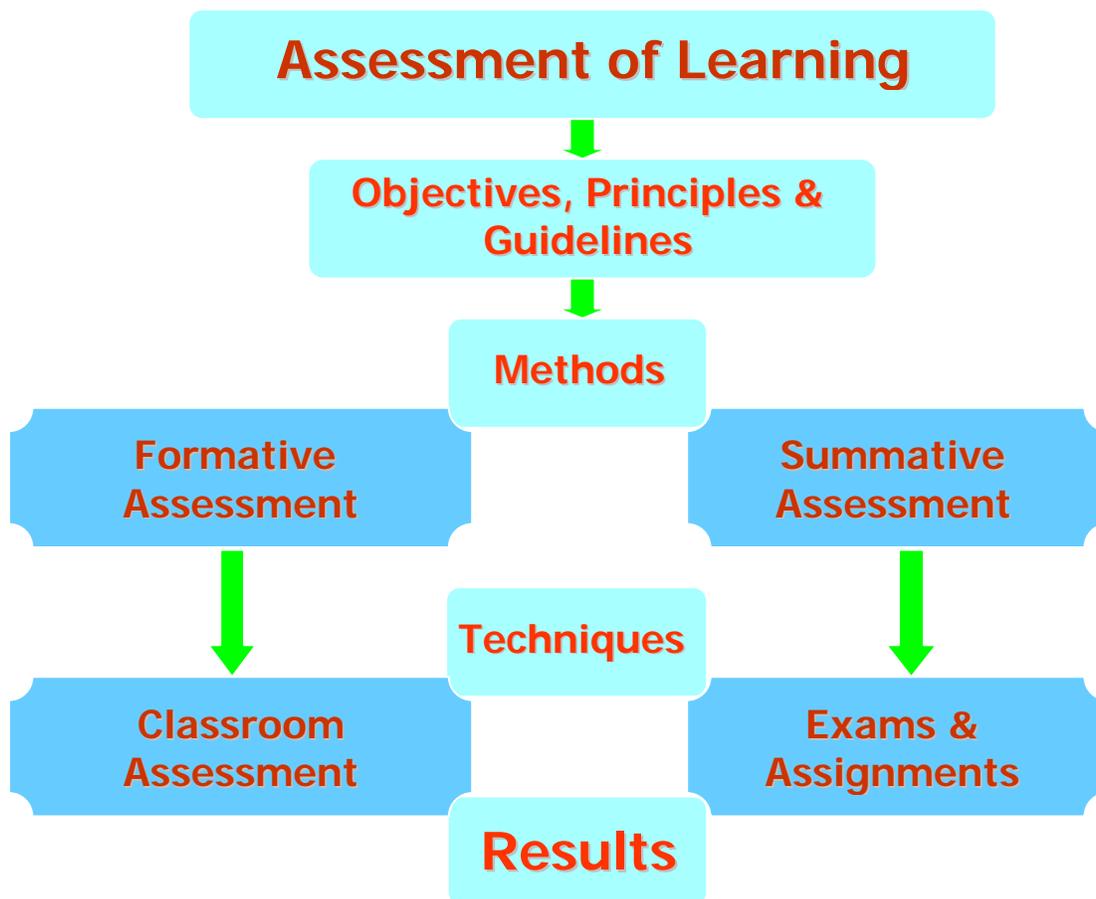


Fig. 5 The procedure of assessment of students' learning

3.9 Formative Assessment Techniques

Formative assessment techniques are quick and easy ways for a teacher to gain a sense of how and what students are learning; students are able to reflect on their learning and he will be able to make adjustments in the delivery to meet the learning goals.

These techniques might be applied at regular intervals throughout the course – weekly, after each class or each unit, etc. – perhaps in coordination with summative techniques. Since the teacher will not be grading responses, and because anonymous feedback is often more candid, allowing for anonymity can be useful. Finally, the questions you ask should be focused on student learning (“What have you learned?”) rather than on your teaching (“What do you like best about my teaching?”).

The following techniques are drawn from a book on classroom assessment by Thomas Angelo and K. Patricia Cross, **Classroom Assessment Techniques** (1993).

i) Background knowledge probe:

Use multiple choice or short-answer questions to assess the level of students' prior knowledge on the subject matter of the course. Doing this at the start of the course will help you gain a sense of misconceptions and the degree of relevant knowledge.

ii) One-minute paper:

Allow for two or three minutes before the end of class and ask students to respond, on a half-sheet of paper, to the following question: What was the most important thing you learned in this class today? You may also ask: What question remains unanswered (or is unclear) from class today? This gives you a sense of how students' understanding of the class is similar to, or different from, your goals.

iii) The Muddiest Point

This assessment method is similar to the minute paper. Students write a one-minute essay on the muddiest point that remains in their minds after a lecture, demonstration, or presentation.

iv) One-sentence summary:

Ask students to summarize the "how, what, where, when and why" of something (an event, a chemical process, a story plot, etc.) in one, clear grammatical sentence. This gives you a sense of their ability to analyze and synthesize information in a concise format.

v) Directed Paraphrasing

In directed paraphrasing, students summarize a concept or procedure in two or three sentences.

vi) Application cards:

Here, the instructor asks students to think of real-world applications of topics discussed in class. When using these strategies in class, make sure you tell your students that you are not grading the responses, but trying to get a feel for their understanding. Asking students to reply anonymously may help dispel any anxiety. After you have collected the responses, read them carefully. If you don't have time to closely analyze responses, at least do a quick tally to see if the same muddy points or questions keep coming up. Or sort responses into piles that represent students who seem to get it and those who don't. Share what you've learned with students, and change what you do in class accordingly.

vii) Student-generated test questions:

Have students prepare two or three test questions with model correct answers. You will be able to see what students believe the main ideas of the course are, what they believe are fair test questions, and what is their ability to answer the questions.

viii) Pro-con grid:

Have students create two columns and generate a list of pros and cons on a particular topic. This process helps students see multiple sides of contentious issues and gives you a sense of their depth of understanding.

3.10 Proposal for improving formative assessment techniques of learning

The techniques mentioned above are mostly paper based thus require more time and effort by the teacher/instructor to check and analyze. It may be applicable for classes of small size. A proposal which is applied by the author* is suggested to widen the assessment techniques. It is based on raising a variety of oral questions in the class after every point or a topic. That is to hold a dialog and discussion in the class through questioning to get the feedback on the students' understanding and the method of teaching. Even if no or only few students participate in answering, for others it will be very much helpful to learn and understand more. *The important thing is that the teacher/instructor should not give answers; he/she has to wait a while to allow students to think, link and answer, also to avoid using only classical questions like, did you understand?, or is it clear?, or do you have any question? Better the teacher/instructor has to start probe questioning.* He/she should be able and has the skills to raise unlimited type and number of questions.

Types of questions with examples can include a combination of the following: (some types are derived from Ref [3]):

i) Informative Questions

These questions allow the students to get useful information about the topic.

“Questions about the meaning of new terminology”

“What are the keywords of ...?”

“What is the important point of ...?”

“How to remember?: rule, formula, unit, etc. “

ii) Application Questions

These questions require the students to engage in a discussion of the relationship of facts to their application in some suitable environment.

"How does.....apply to?"

“Can you give an example/s on ...?”

“What is the use of?”

iii) Reasoning Questions

Such questions let the students understand some logics and reasons behind main elements of the topic.

“Can you find why ?”

“What is the reason for ...?”

iv) Comparative Questions

Comparative questions require comparison between items such as cases, theories, opinions, methods, etc.

“What is the difference between.....?”

"What do these have in common....and how do they differ?"

“Which is better?”

v) Connective Questions

These questions allow the student to make a connection between matters not obviously related.

“Can you relate?” or "How does.....relate to?"

vi) Critical Questions

Critical questions present the students with an alternative interpretation or point of view, and require the student to demonstrate familiarity with the original material.

"How can one justify.....?"

vii) Evaluative Questions

These questions are a combination of fact and assessment. In addition to the factual response, the student is asked to present an opinion or assess the response in terms of some value.

"Which point of view is more relevant to the discussion of.....?"

viii) Factual Questions

These are sometimes needed to set a base line for discussion. One way to avoid competitiveness and a 'I am smarter than you' attitude is to use brainstorming techniques.

"What are some of the conditions that led to.....?"

ix) Interpretation Questions

These questions allow the student to interpret information while maintaining credibility.

"How can one decide that.....is the best way to?"

x) Problem Questions

Problem questions can be limited to a very simple issue, or can be complex in nature. It is important to state the problem clearly, even when complex, so that students can focus attention on the desired elements.

“How to find ?”

"If the conditions are.....what would be some of the possible outcomes...?"

“What happens if.....?”

* This work is presented by Dr. Bader Ahmed at the ITL-CT symposium in Nizwa College of Technology -9-10th April 2007 as a part of the requirement for improving and enhancing teaching & learning process in colleges of technology.

3.11 Methods of Students' Assessment- Summative Assessment

As per the Quality Assurance Manual- QAM and the Bylaws of the college, the methods of assessment could be a combination of the following:

Theoretical Courses

- a) Course Work (30%)
 - i) Class work, attendance & class participation- continuous assessment
 - ii) Home works- minimum number should not be less than 3
 - iii) Quizzes- minimum number should not be less than 3
 - iv) Oral test – to check authenticity of the assignment (very important)
 - v) Case study
 - vi) Debates
 - vii) Presentations
 - viii) Team work
- b) Mid semester examination (20%)
- c) Final examination (50%)

Practical Courses & Labs

- a) Course Work (60%)
 - i) Class exercises, attendance & lab/workshop participation
 - ii) Reports- min of three reports submitted individually.
 - iii) Home works if possible- minimum three
 - iv) Oral test
 - v) Practical test
 - vi) Presentations
 - vii) Team work
- b) Final examination (40%)

Mixed Courses; Theoretical & Practical

Each part is to be treated separately as mentioned above and then the total mark is to be distributed based on the percentage of the theoretical and the practical parts of the course. For example, if the theoretical part represents 70% of the course, then its mark out of 100 should be reduced to 70 (multiply the mark by 0.70), while the practical mark out of 100 is to be reduced to 30 (multiply the practical mark out of 100 by 0.30). Add the new marks to get the total of the course.

3.12 Test Specifications

Quizzes

By definition, a quiz is a short and usually abrupt test to check the knowledge, understanding and the attentiveness of students during the class and usually done at the end of the lecture/lab/workshop or to check the students' revision and understanding of previous delivered material which is usually done at the beginning of the class. Thus it should be as short as possible (not more than 10mins) and students should keep in mind that there may be a quiz at the beginning or the end of any lecture so as to motivate them to be attentive and following the staff during the class and revise an already given material. On the contrary, if the quiz is made like an official exam announced to students in a particular date, it will disturb them totally and they will lose concentration following other classes beside the pressure created on students during the whole semester. As a summary:

- The quiz period should not exceed 10 minutes.
- Number of quizzes per semester should not be less than three
- Quizzes need not to be announced to students because it is designed to check the students' follow up of the lecture during class and the past delivered material.

Examination Papers:

- i) The period of the mid-term exam paper should not exceed one hour and that of the final exam- two hours.
- ii) A question paper should be set to test student's thinking and not student's memorization.
- iii) Any paper should be consistent with three parts; easy part (could be 35-40% of the paper) so that any student who attends classes and follows up lectures can answer, moderate part (could be 35-40% of the paper) so that any student who prepare well can answer, the third (could be 10-20% of the paper) is a challenging part for intelligent and hardworking students.
- iv) The question paper has to be shown to the HoD of the Dept./Center for approval before it is being copied.
- v) HoD of the Dept./Center has to check the paper in regards with the following:
 - a. Authenticity of the question paper- not repeated from previous exams.
 - b. Consistency of the questions as describes in (iii).
 - c. Length and time sufficiency of the question paper.
 - d. Coverage of the course material and outcomes.
 - e. Scheme of mark distribution- large scale to be used.
 - f. Format of the paper.
 - g. Spell checking.
- vi) A soft copy of the final exam question paper has to be sent to the library, thus in no case a previous question paper is to be used or repeated for next exams.
- vii) The checked answer sheets of final exams should be submitted to the HoD so as to be kept in a safe & secured place for at least one year, while the checked answer sheets of the mid-term exam can be distributed to the students.

3.13 General Guidelines for Summative Assessment & Test Specifications

- i) An assessment plan should be prepared by each course tutor base on the above with a copy submitted to the HoD and students at the beginning of each semester.
- ii) Students should be clearly informed about test specifications and methods of assessments and their weightage in a written form (point 1) and orally.
- iii) Students should know that in case of any authenticity problems like copying of assignments among students, it will be treated strictly; both parties, the student who copied and the one who gave copy will be given zero.
- iv) Direct plagiarism of topics from the internet will also be treated strictly. The student will be given zero. Students should be encouraged to use their own words, expressions and methods of solution in doing the assignments.
- v) Quizzes, home works, reports and mid-term answer papers should be checked in time and returned to students with lecturer's comments.
- vi) Checking of answer papers is preferable to be done on a large scale mark so as to reduce discrimination in giving marks, e.g. if the test is out of 20, it is better to check it out of 100, then to reduce it to 20.
- vii) The lecturer should prepare a model answer for any assessment especially for mid-term and final exam papers. The model answer of mid-term is necessary for persuasion purposes of students while that of the final exam- necessary for checking students' appeals.
- viii) The tutor has to inform all students about their learning progress, to inform them about their general conduct in the course and about the marks of the quizzes, HWs,

assignments, mid term and other class activities. Students should also know their total mark of the course work at least one week before the final examinations.

- ix) Students do not have the right to see the marking of the final exam papers. However, they can appeal against the results where specialized appeal committees will check the papers according to article (68) of the Bylaws.

3.14 Specifications of Final Year Project

- It is preferable to propose projects with new ideas.
- Projects should serve the process of college development.
- It is necessary that some projects are to be linked to industry needs.
- The report after finishing the project should be written in a standard form including:
 - Acknowledgement
 - Abstract (summary)
 - List of contents
 - Chapters of main work
 - Results and discussion
 - Conclusions
 - Recommendations for future work
 - References
- Two copies of the report are to be sent to the library.

3.15 Assessment of Final Year Project

- Nomination of a Reviewer for each project report is a must. The reviewer is supposed to receive the report at least one week before the project presentation. The reviewer duty is to check the language, structure and the content of the report if it is within his specialization.
- An examination board of at least three members with the Supervisor and Reviewer should be formed for the projects of each specialization.
- The project Supervisor has the right of 60% of the total mark. Distribution of this mark is to be agreed within the department.
- 40% of the mark is to be given for the exam board which has to assess the report, the presentation and the oral test of each student. The scheme of mark distribution is to be agreed within the department (e.g. 10 for report and 30 for the presentation).

3.16 Procedure for Checking the Consistency of Examinations.

The quality of the summative assessment methods of student learning is checked by the head of each department/center as shown in fig. (6). Each course coordinator/tutor is usually asked to submit the question paper with a model answer to the HoD for checking and approval. The HoD verifies the format, clarity, outcomes coverage, time period, mark distribution, genuineness and balance of exam papers, etc. The course tutor is also asked to keep an assessment record in the course file. Checking of answer sheets is usually done by the course tutor and a reviewer based on the model answer. Copying and plagiarism cases are usually treated by the invigilator/course tutor who has the full discretions to check the authenticity of the students' answers through oral test and investigation. Any case of this kind is usually treated strictly as per the college bylaws. Cases of cheating during examinations are usually raised to the investigation committee and if proved to the discipline committee to take action according to article (80) of bylaws. To check the standards of the examination papers, the HoDs are used to send sample copies of the papers to relevant institutions. An evaluation questionnaire designed for this purpose is also sent with the papers as a sort for the feedback.

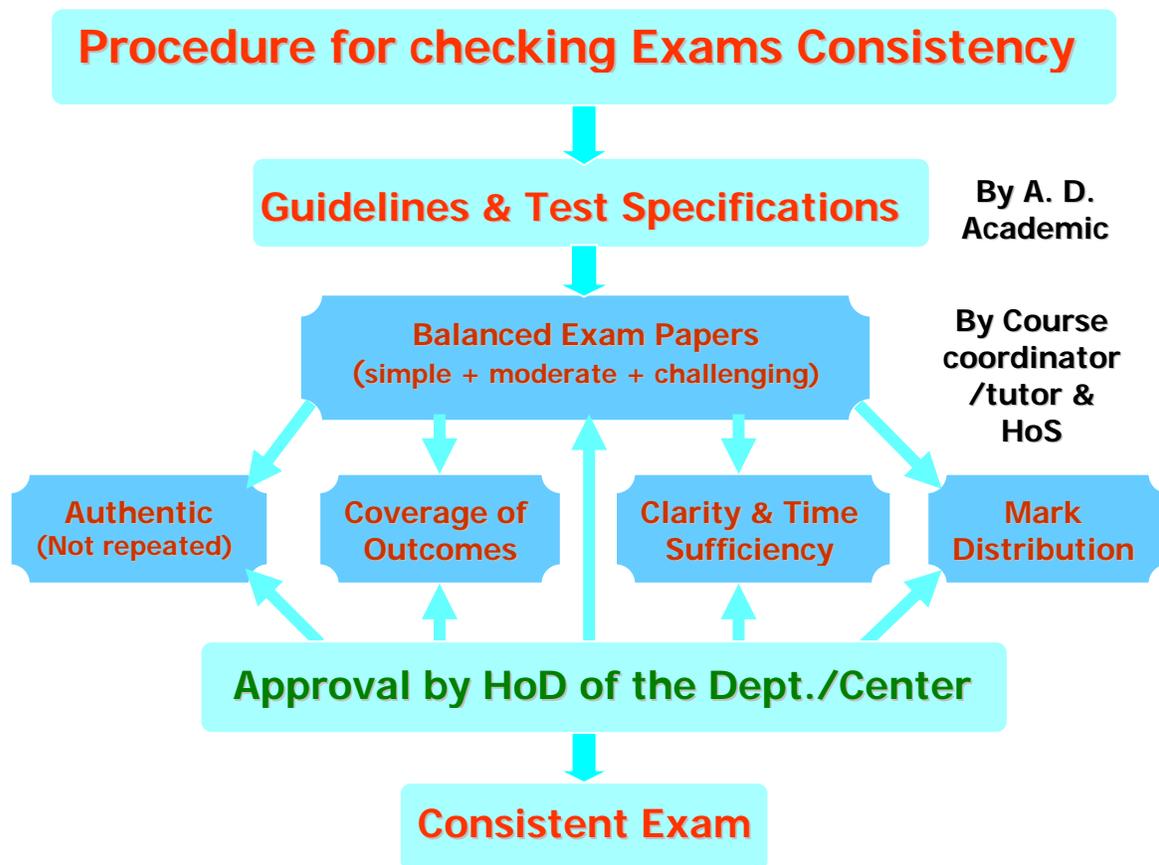


Fig. 6 The procedure for ensuring examinations consistency

3.17 Checking of Students' Results & Results Justification

Checking of Students' Results

The procedure for checking results is illustrated in fig. (7). The aim of this procedure is to verify that tutors are following the right procedure of assessment of students described in the chapter 3 and the above articles. To check that rational and realistic assessment was deployed based on the summative assessment methods & test specifications.

At the end of the semester the results of the students are discussed in a college council, the histogram of results of each course is checked; extreme cases with abnormal distribution are investigated and minted. The outcomes of the council meeting are then discussed in each dept/center so as to improve the assessment methods of those abnormal cases. Students' appeals sometimes provide a mean to verify the sincerity of the staff. The appeal committee in each dept/center has to comprise members other than the course tutor.

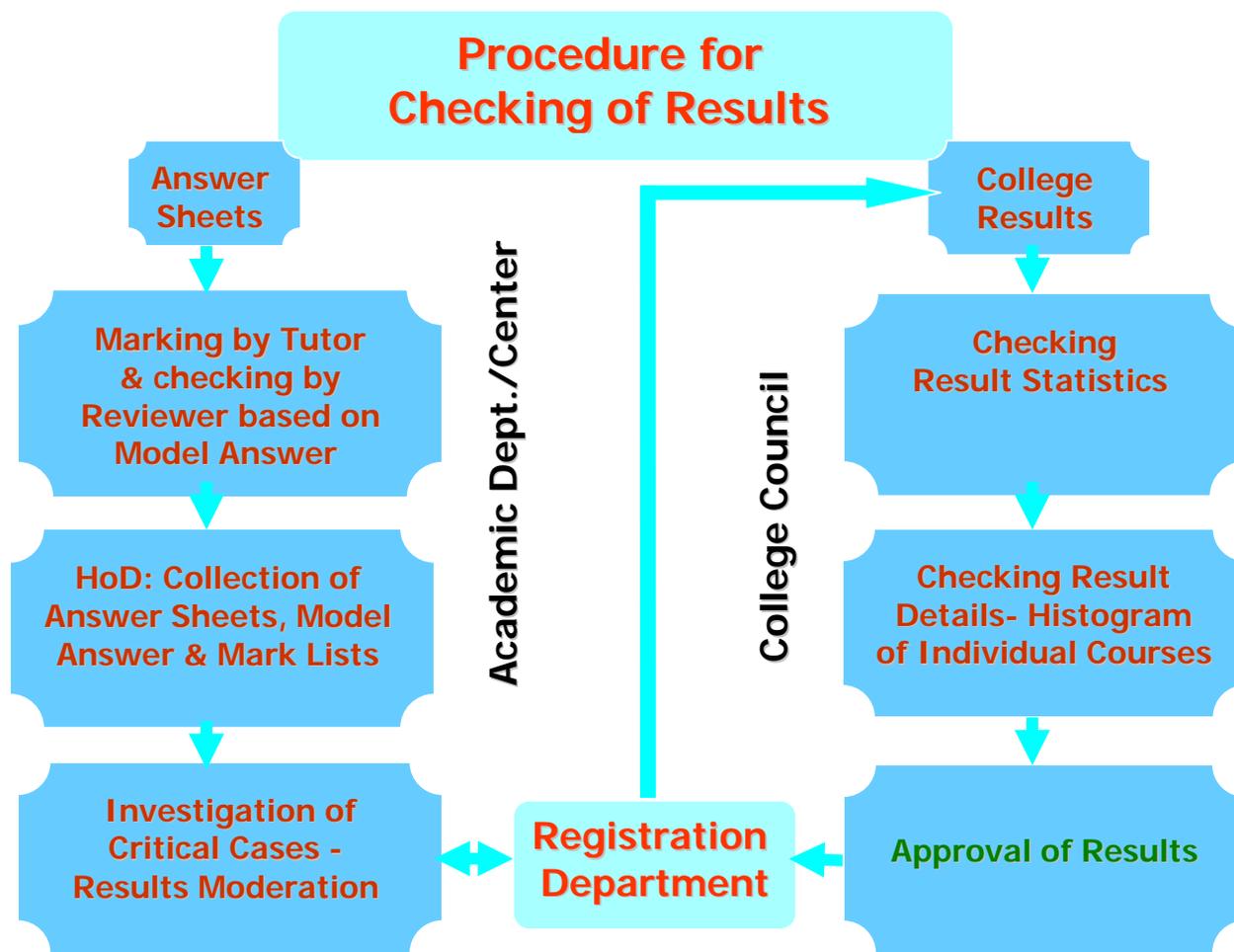


Fig. 7 Procedure for checking students' results

Results Justification

According to the college exam policy agreed in the council meeting No. (7) on 7th May 2007, the Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs has to identify the abnormal cases of results and to coordinate with HoDs to ask tutors having these abnormal results to justify it as illustrated in fig. (8). Justification of results needs to include answers of the following:

1. Distribution of the results- histogram.
2. Authenticity of mid & final exams, i.e. not repeated from previous exams.
3. Consistency of the mid & final exams, i.e., including easy, moderate and challenging parts.
4. Coverage of the exams to the objectives and outcomes of the course.
5. Time of the exam.
6. Consistency of the assessment methods applied by the tutor: quality & quantity of HWs, quizzes, class participation, attendance and other assignments.
7. The conduct of other sections having the same course and taught by other staff members.

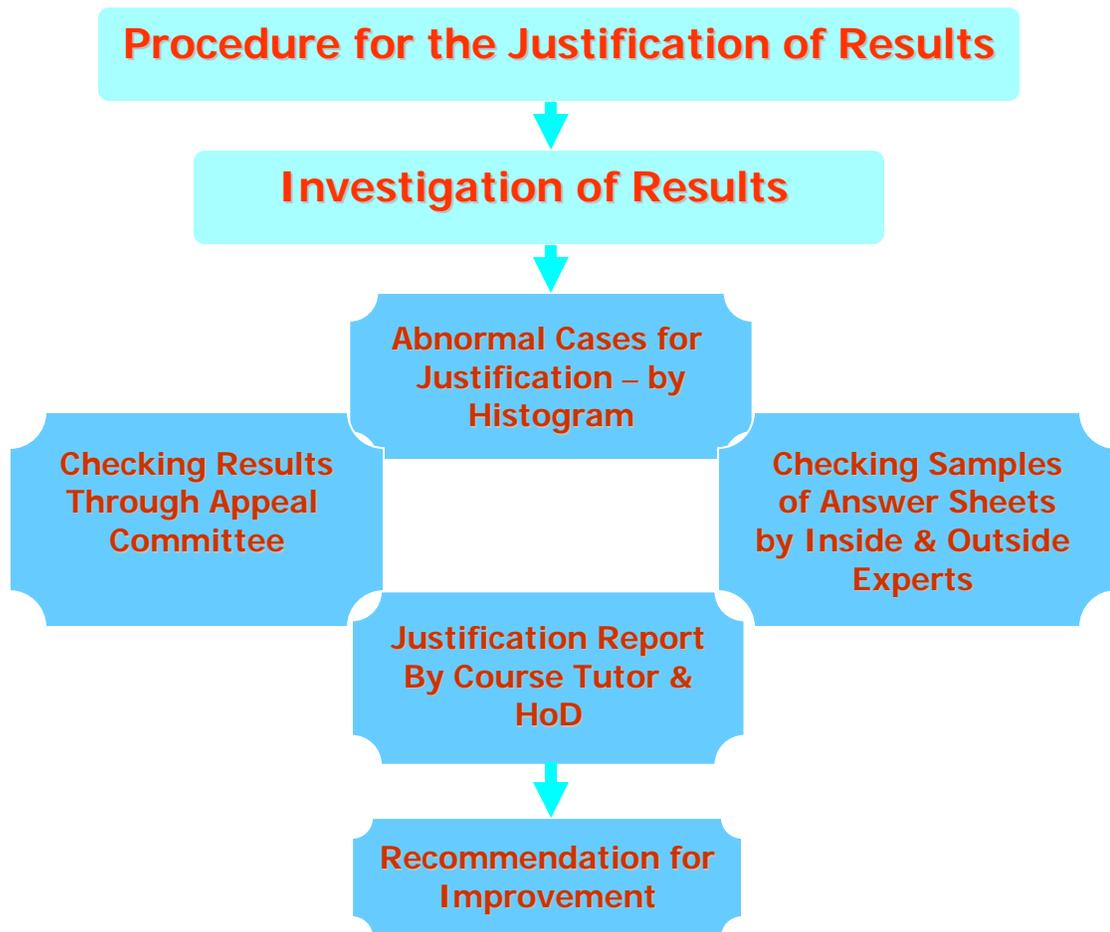


Fig. 8 Procedure for justification of results & results consistency

Chapter 4

Examination Procedure, Duties, Rules and Regulations

Chapter 4

Examination Procedure, Duties, Rules & Regulations

4.1 Examination Procedures

Examinations of the academic departments, as well as the post foundation courses of the English Language Center-ELC, are conducted centrally under the supervision of the Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs (General Examination Coordinator-GEC). A general meeting with the GEC and representatives from the Business, IT, Engineering Departments and ELC is usually held two weeks before the starting date of both Mid-Term and Final examinations to arrive a consensus on the following:

1. Date, time and allocation of common and specialization courses,
2. Announcement of exam time -table (draft copy),
3. Receiving feedback from staff and students,
4. Updating examination rules, regulations and procedures if necessary,
5. Allocation of exam halls and invigilators, and
6. Announcement of final time- table after considering feedback.

The procedure for the examination details are as follows:

A. Preparation of Time- Table

1. The Head of the Registration Department prepares and distributes a clash list of courses registered by students.
2. All examination coordinators (representatives) agree first for the allocation and dates of common courses (post foundation courses, math courses, etc).
3. Department staff in-charge of exams shall prepare a draft time-table for their department courses ensuring that there are no clashes (based on the clash list), i.e. no student has two or more exams on the same day.
4. Draft time-table without invigilators' name shall be posted on all the department notice boards to receive feedbacks from students about the appropriateness of the course examination order and clashes in the dates and times of exams, if any.
5. Draft time-table shall also be circulated to teaching staff for their feedbacks.
6. If necessary, changes can be made in the time-table by analyzing the feedbacks received from both staff and students.
7. Then, the above department final time-table will be submitted to the exam coordinator (responsibility of one representative from each department in turn) for making a consolidated time- table with halls and names of the invigilators.
8. Students are distributed based on the capacity of the exam hall taking into consideration that enough space (minimum of 1.5m distance) is provided between seats. The distribution starts first with large halls then the smaller ones.
9. More than two different sections of students are precluded to be in the same hall, especially in the large ones.
10. The number of invigilators is decided based on the capacity of the exam hall. Two invigilators are allotted for rooms with (20-30) students and three/four invigilators for large rooms with (40-60) students.
11. A column of tutors against each exam course is added in the time-table to preclude that the tutor is not invigilator in the exam hall of his course.

12. The final time-table is sent to the A. D. Academic, one week before the start of the exams for checking and approval for announcement.
13. The final time-table is announced to students and circulated to staff.

B. Setting Question Papers

1. Questions have to be set as per the prescribed norms (referring to the assessment methods & test specification agreed in the council meeting No.2 on 25/9/2006) and submitted to the concerned Head of the Department at least three days before the date of examination.
2. For courses with large number of sections and taught by many tutors, the course coordinator (one of the tutors nominated by the HoD) is to be in-charge for meeting all tutors to agree for a common exam paper. Each tutor should participate in setting the paper taking into consideration the norms and the outcomes coverage of all.
3. To reduce opportunities of malpractice, the course tutor/coordinator has to prepare the question paper in two formats A and B especially for sections with large number of students (over 20). The differences between the two formats could include the sequence of the questions, the order of the multi-choice answers, etc.
4. Each course tutor/coordinator has to submit a model answer to the HoD with a clear marking scheme. This is necessary for cases of absence of the tutor and as a reference for checking results and student appeals.
5. Every question paper should have a cover page with the course name, duration of the exam, total marks, detailed marking statements, name of the staff, etc.
6. HoD of each Department/Center shall authorize HoS or any other senior staff of their department to ensure the conformity and prescribed standard for the questions:
 - Exam format to be standard as per the norms.
 - Exam consistency, i.e. to include easy, moderate and challenging parts.
 - Marking scheme.
 - Authenticity of exams, i.e. not repeated from previous exams.
 - Coverage of the exams to the objectives and outcomes of the course.
 - Time period of the exam to fit the length and number of questions.
 - Clarity and language proof.
7. Course tutors should keep a record of the objectives and outcomes which are covered in all exams.

C. Photocopying and Security of the Question Papers

1. Head of the Department shall arrange with any staff/s of his choice for photocopying the question papers in a secure manner.
2. Staff in charge of photocopying should ensure that all the pages of the question paper have been copied without missing any page and also the required number of copies of the question paper is made.
3. Head of the Department shall keep the copies of the question paper along with the list of students in a sealed envelope. The front of the envelope should bear the details such as course name, number of students, hall no, date of examination, and names of the Invigilators.
4. For the mid-term exam, it is the responsibility of the HoD of the concerned department/center to keep the sealed question papers in a highly secured place, and to distribute it to the invigilators during the day of the exam.
5. For the final examinations, the sealed question papers are sent two days before the exam of the particular course to the GEC to keep them in a highly secured place- Examination

Office. It is his responsibility to distribute and collect the exam papers with the help of the chief invigilator of the day, who is nominated for better exam control.

D. Conducting Theoretical Examinations

1. Departments are responsible for announcing on boards the examination rules and regulation to students (Arabic & English copy) one week before the start of exams. Similarly, the invigilation duties have to be distributed to all staff.
2. Departments are responsible for assigning their own staff as Invigilators. Equal number of invigilation is ensured for each staff.
3. The required number of seats and proper seating arrangement is ensured through the Assistant Dean of Administrative & Financial Affairs/ Service Department with the coordination and supervision of the GEC.
4. Preparation of exam halls with regard to lighting, A/Cs etc. is also ensured through the Assistant Dean of Administrative & Financial Affairs/ Maintenance Department with coordination and supervision of the GEC.
5. During each day of exam, the service and maintenance staff are kept on emergency to handle any technical problem during examinations.
6. Class delivery is stopped during final examinations, but examinations of mid-term are usually conducted while classes are running, however to allow students to concentrate on their studies during the mid-term exams and to relieve them of the exam tension, exams are conducted in the early morning (8-9 am) and the whole time-table of classes is shifted by one hour.
7. In case of Mid-Term Examinations, Invigilators have to collect the question packets at least 10 minutes before the start of the examination from the HoD office and go to the halls allotted to them.
8. In case of Final Examinations, Invigilators have to collect the question packets at least 20 minutes before the start of the examination from the Examination Office of the GEC and proceed to the halls allotted to them.
9. Invigilators are requested to read carefully the invigilation duties distributed to them and to implement it precisely to ensure smooth conduct of exams.
10. Invigilators should inform students about the exam rules and regulations especially the ones about malpractices before the start of the exam.
11. After the exam, countercheck the number of answer books against the attendance and keep them in the envelope and submit to the HoD in case of Mid Term Examinations and to the GEC for Final Examination.
12. Any case of malpractice has to be reported immediately to the GEC with any collected evidence/s and the signature of all invigilators.
13. Course tutors will collect the answer books immediately after the examination.

E. Conducting Practical Examinations

1. Practical exams are usually conducted during class time one week before the theoretical exams. However for courses with large number of sections, a time-table is prepared for the best use of the laboratories and workshops.
2. To avoid the shortage of labs/workshops and in case the same question paper (of a course with large number of sections) is used during the day, then no student is allowed to leave the laboratory/workshop till the time for the next section comes.

F. Treating Malpractice Cases

Clear cases with solid evidence/s:

1. The invigilator who discovers the malpractice has to collect the evidence of cheating like leaflets, ruler, calculator cover, GSM, programmable calculator, etc.
2. Writing on hands/clothes needs to be photographed if possible using digital camera or the invigilator mobile phone otherwise the content need to be commented in the report.
3. The student should not be stopped writing the exam except the cheating evidence has to be collected.
4. A report on the malpractice case/s has to be written with the signature of all invigilators in the exam hall.
5. At the end of the exam, the report, cheating evidence/s and the answer sheet of the malpractice case/s have to be submitted to the General Exam Coordinator, GEC (Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs)..
6. The GEC has to pass the case/s on to the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs to investigate the case/s and take action based on article (85) of the bylaws.

Cases of talking and looking at neighbor students:

1. The invigilator has to warn the particular student/s two times. In each time, warning notice with signature has to be marked on the answer sheet.
2. The invigilator has the right to ask the student/s to shift his/her seating.
3. If the student tries again, then a third notice with signature on the answer sheet has to be fixed.
4. After fixing the third warning, the invigilator has to stop the student from writing and the case to be reported to the GEC.

G. Evaluation and Review of Answer Books

1. Course tutors should evaluate the answers as per the marking criteria.
2. Marking of answer sheets should not take more than three days.
3. It is the responsibility of the HoD/HoS to ensure that the evaluated answer books are given to a reviewer (another staff in the specialization of the course) for reviewing the total, any unmarked questions, and the consistency in marking. It has to be ensured that signatures of both the course tutor and the reviewer are on the answer scripts.
4. Student marks list signed by the course tutor and reviewer has to be submitted to the HoD for approval then to the registration department for producing the students' results.
5. HoD of each department/center is responsible to call for a meeting to discuss results moderation if necessary.

H. Students Appeal

1. Students are allowed to appeal according to article (68) of bylaws for rechecking of their answer papers through a designated form to the concerned HoD in three days time from the date of publication of examination results.
2. The checking of appeals is supervised by central committee chaired by the A.D. of student Affairs with membership of the A. D of Academic Affairs, HoD and two section heads from each department/center.
3. Checking of appeals in each department/center is done by the HoD, two section Heads and one external member from another Dept/center. The internal checking committee of appeals should never include the course tutor of the appeal even if he/she is the Dean, Assistant Dean, HoD or the HoS.
4. The internal checking committee can invite any specialization staff member in the checking process who has good experience and taught the course of appeal.

5. To exclude emotional factors, the cover of the answer sheet containing the marks and the name of the student has to be removed before checking.
6. Any improvement in the students' grade shall be communicated to the Registration Department by the HoD after the approval of the Head of the central appeal committee (A. D Student Affairs).

4.2 Duties of Invigilators

1. Invigilators have to collect the exam papers as well as one set of seat number cards from the exam officer (Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs) at least 20 minutes before the start of the exam and return them back to him at the end.
2. All invigilators need to be in their exam halls 15 min before the start of the exam. Make note if the room is not locked before you enter. Check that the number of desks fits the number of students.
3. Give randomly to every student entering the exam hall a seat number from the set of cards you received. The student should go to the desk with the number identical to the one which is already fixed on the desk.
4. Make sure that all mobiles (GSM), pagers, dictionaries, programmable calculators and any related material is taken away from the examination place. Better to keep the GSM (switched off) down on the floor near the student's chair.
5. Ensure that students are sitting according to their seat numbers before you start the test.
6. Make sure the students are seated in rows with maximum possible distance between the seats.
7. Remind the students about the examination rules especially cheating trails.
8. Distribute the exam papers with FACE DOWN then tell the students to write their full name, ID and any other required details.
9. If a question paper is in two different forms A and B, distribute them alternatively.
10. No student is allowed to answer using pencil. Answer must be given using pens only.
11. Circulate the attendance sheet to collect students' signature in front of their names. While taking the attendance, check the college ID card of each student with his name written on the answer paper. Note down the absence cases (with red color) and the total number of student attended the exam. Let all invigilators write their names and sign. Attach the attendance sheet to the answer sheet envelope.
12. Note down any student without ID and recognize him/her with the help of his course tutor. If the tutor says yes he is my student, then let him/her continue, otherwise stop his/her exam.
13. Don't allow latecomers to enter the exam hall 30 min after the start of the exam. Similarly, do not allow any student to leave the exam hall before 30 min from the start of the exam.
14. Any student who is late or confused about his/her section or exam hall, please let him calm down and allow him/her to sit in your room or a nearby room where his/her exam is there.
15. It is the invigilator's discretion to decide whether there is enough reason to shift a student from one place to another inside the exam hall or even remove him from the exam hall owing to cheating or disorderly conduct. The invigilator shall always make note of the student's name, registration number and the course of event/s as well as notify the chief invigilator (or equivalent) of the occurrence/s
16. Invigilators are not authorized to talk to students during the examination. They are not authorized to explain any doubts, ambiguities and questions raised by students. In case there is a query by many students, he/she can convey a message to the course tutor to do that.
17. Before the end of the exam collect the seat cards and arrange them in an ascending order.
18. At the end moment of the exam, do not allow any student to stand up. While they are in their seats, go round to collect the answer books from the students. Check carefully that you have

the exact number of answer sheets, put them in the specified envelope and submit the envelope/s to the chief invigilator/ exam officer in the exam office.

19. A unit tutor should not be an invigilator or a chief invigilator for his/her unit. On the day of his/her unit exam, he/she should not go round the exam halls. In case of students' queries, he/she has to convey clarifications through the chief invigilator.
20. Unit tutors should collect the answer sheets from the exam office immediately after the exam is over. They have to sign against the number of answer sheets received.
21. Visits to bathroom may be taken only after permission from the invigilator and under the condition that the invigilator's instructions given on the particular occasion are followed. The invigilator stipulates which bathroom shall be used. The invigilator can ask the help of the chief invigilator.
22. If a student falls ill during the exam and is unable to complete the examination, he/she should alert the invigilator so that suitable arrangement may be made to ensure he/she receives proper medical attention.
23. No student shall re-enter the exam hall after leaving it unless he/she was under approved supervision during the full period of absence.

4.3 Students Examination Rules and Regulations

1. Timing

- Students will be allowed into the exam hall 10 minutes prior to commencing the exam.
- After 30 min, no late students will be admitted into the exam hall
- No student is allowed to leave the hall before 30 minutes after the start of the exam.
- Students are not permitted to leave the exam hall during the last 10 minutes.

2. Identity check-up

- Students will not be allowed into the exam hall without presenting an appropriate photo ID.
- Invigilators are responsible to ensure full compliance with such requirement.
- If a student forgets his/her College ID the Omani ID card or driving license will be accepted in place.

3. Breaks

- Breaks for visits to bathroom may be taken only after permission from the invigilator and under the condition that the invigilator's instructions given on the particular occasion are followed. The invigilator stipulates which bathroom shall be used.
- If a student falls ill during the exam and is unable to complete the examination, he/she should alert the invigilator so that suitable arrangement may be made to ensure he/she receives proper medical attention.
- no student shall re-enter the exam hall after leaving it unless he/she was under approved supervision during the full period of absence.

4. Exam papers

- The invigilator distributes papers among students to be used for writing the answer. No other paper than that shall be used. An exam written on other paper will be considered invalid.
- Students are not allowed to read the exam paper until granted permission by the invigilator.
- During an ongoing exam students are not allowed to take the exam paper out of the hall. After the exam, the student should submit personally his/her exam paper to the invigilator.
- Even a blanked exam paper shall be handed-in to the invigilator.
- Each exam paper should contain details of the student's name, section and ID number.

5. Other materials

- Students should bring their own pencils, pens, erasers, rulers, calculators, and any other tools required for the exam.

- The invigilator will decide where the student's handbags, cases, outdoor clothes, GSM, etc shall be placed.
- Students are responsible for the safe keeping of all personal belongings they bring to the exam hall. The college takes no responsibility for the loss or damage of such belongings.
- Pencil cases, mobile phones(GSM), dictionaries, electronic dictionaries, written or electronic media, electronic devices, or any other materials are not permitted into the exam hall, with the exception of devices used for assisting students with hearing visual or other physical difficulties. Students may hand-in mobile phones to a member of staff prior to starting of exam.
- Calculators with more than one-line display or with alphanumeric display (programmable calculators)are not permitted into the exam hall unless specified in advance by the examiner. If the invigilator reasonably believes that a student is using a calculator that does not conform to the rules, he/she has the discretion to replace the calculator and a report on the matter will be made on the invigilator's declaration form.

6. Disturbance

- During the exam period, there must be no communications among students or between a student and an outsider via any mean, such as phones. This rule applies to students in the exam hall and those on supervised breaks for visits to bathroom/s.
- A student shall raise his/her hand if he/she wishes to communicate with the invigilator.
- No student shall leave his/her assigned seat without the permission of the invigilator.
- It is the invigilator's discretion to decide whether there is enough reason to remove a student from the exam hall owing to disorderly conduct. The invigilator shall always make note of the student's name, registration number and the course of event/s as well as notify the chief invigilator (or equivalent) of the occurrence/s

7. Cheating

- Cheating of any form is a serious academic offense. If proven, cheating will result in expulsion from the college. Cheating may include, but is not limited to, any deliberation attempt to gain an unfair advantage in any assessment including exams, homework, class projects, or any other assignments that contribute to a grade.
- If during an exam a student is found in possession of unauthorized material/s, he/she will face disciplinary actions. "In his/her possession" means on or next to his/her chair, in or on his/her clothing, on his/her body, or in his/her wallet or purse, in any written or electronic form. Failure to secure or submit unauthorized material/s prior to commencing the exam may result in a penalty or penalties for academic misconduct in accordance with the college's regulations.

8. Compliance

Failure to comply with the above rules will be considered as a breach of academic and examination rules and appropriate disciplinary actions will be taken.

4.4 Student Appeal Form

Any student has the right to appeal against the exam results. He/she has to fill an appeal form (shown below) and submit it to the HoD of his/her dept/center within three days from the date of announcement of results. (See article 68 of bylaws).

Chapter 5

Academic Advising

Chapter 5

Academic Advising

5.1 Introduction

In the context of a “student-centered education system” the enhancement of student support services has a significant role to play, to improve retention, progression and completion rates of students. Members of academic staff in the colleges of technology are expected, in addition to the teaching and training duties, to advise students on academic issues, to counsel them to overcome non-academic problems and to provide guidance with respect to their future job careers.

To play this role, academic staff is to develop a positive attitude towards helping and supporting the students to complete their studies in the colleges successfully and to develop themselves to the maximum possible standard.

This guide defines the duties of an academic advisor in the colleges of technology and provides general guidelines and explains organizational aspects necessary to make the academic advising process more effective.

5.2 What Is Advising?

Advising is the process of supporting the students to make reasonable decisions and to encourage them to take responsibility for those decisions. The advisor will support the students, but s/he will not make decisions on their behalf. The role of the advisor is to help the students to make informed decisions by providing information, assistance in defining problems, clarifying alternatives and discussing consequences of decisions reached by the students.

5.3 Major Advising Duties

The major duties of an advisor lie in the following three categories:

1) Academic Advising:

Helping the student on academic issues and make sure that they know the academic programs to be studied and their requirements, the governing regulations and s/he agrees to the right study plan. Academic advising supports the student to take the right academic decisions, helps him/her to overcome encountered academic problems, so that s/he can complete the program of study successfully within the prescribed time period.

2) Student Counseling

Counseling caters to the needs of those students, who become maladjusted in the new environment of study in the colleges of technology. The causes of such maladjustment may be academic, social, psychological or physical problems, which may affect their academic and personal performance. So counseling is a broader concept including all sorts of students’ support services. Since academic staff generally don’t have the expertise to handle the non-academic problems, their role will be to identify maladjusted students who need help and refer them to professional counselors or specialists.

Academic advisors, since they are in direct touch with the students, must play the important role of encouraging them to speak about their difficulties and facilitate the contact with professional counselors.

3) Career Guidance

Career guidance aims to help the student to understand his/her career interest, abilities and aptitudes as related to available areas of specialization of the study programs in order to make the right match with the targeted Job Career in the labor market.

Academic advisors are expected to acquaint themselves with job opportunities in the labor market and the requirements and specializations of typical job categories (information can be made available through the Industrial Link Committee in the department). The academic advisor role with respect to career guidance includes:

- Helping the students to develop positive attitudes towards technological education.
- Advising the student when making decisions about the choice of specialization, majors, elective courses, enhancement and on the job training in order to satisfy future job requirements.

5.4 Duties of Academic Advisor

The academic advisor will be responsible to perform the following duties:

1. Develop a positive attitude among the students toward technological education and the importance of studying a certain specialization for their future job careers as well as for the development of the country.
2. Acquaint the students with the structure of the program of study, majors at the selected degree level and the graduation requirements of each degree. Ensure that every student receives the college bylaws, degree audit and student hand book.
3. Make sure that the student understand the registration process and give the advice when needed before signing the registration form.
4. Ensure that the student has satisfied the prerequisites before registering for courses. Also check the student's previous transcripts and has passed all courses or has planned to repeat or change a failed course.
5. Make certain that the student know lectures, workshops and labs time table and s/he has no time conflicts.
6. Explain to the students how to calculate semester and cumulative GPA and make sure that they know the minimum required GPA for graduation at each level and the admission required GPA to proceed to the study of higher degrees.
7. Discuss with student on "Access probation". (i.e. whose GPA is less than 2.0) ways and means of bringing their GPA to the required standard by:
 - Repeating the failed courses.
 - Changing the course/s.
 - Registering for a reduced course load.
8. Coach the students on the following administrative tasks:
 - 8.1. Changing Majors:

Check that the student to use the right form and make sure that the Heads of Departments involved, approve the change.
 - 8.2. Dropping or Adding a course:

Advise the student to use the "Drop & Add form" provided by the Admission and Registration section and that the deadlines are met.
 - 8.3. Withdrawing from a course:

Inform the students that courses withdrawal is not allowed for any case. The reason is that the college bylaws does not support the withdrawal of courses.
 - 8.4. Student absence:

Check the students' attendance record and advise students with poor attendance record, who received the first warning to improve their attendance before they are debarred from examinations and receive an "F". Poor attendance may be a symptom for difficulties encountered by the students, which need further investigation and transfer to professional counselor.
 - 8.5. Transferring to another college:

Transferring to another college is allowed for very limited cases on humanitarian ground bases on social investigation. Coordinate with the Admission and Registration and the student affairs section before you advise the students. The Deans of the involved colleges are to approve the transfer.

8.6. Postponing the study:

A temporary leave for study “postponement of study” for specified period of time is allowed on justified and accepted reasons. Advise the student to use the appropriate form “Study Postponement form”.

8.7. Withdrawing from the college:

Some of the students apply for withdrawing from the college. Discuss with the students the reasons behind this decision and explain to them that such withdrawal means no return is possible and advise them to apply for postponement first. In case the student insists on withdrawal then the “withdrawal form” is to be used and approved by the HOD, Dean of the college and submitted to the Admission & Registration and Student Affairs Sections.

9. Arrange in coordination with other course lecturers for special tutoring and remedial classes for the students, who encounter difficulties in meeting the required standards.
10. Arrange for group tutoring to improve students’:
 - Study skills.
 - Examination skills.
 - Time management.
11. Advise the students with respect to enhancement and on- the-job training.
12. Make sure that the students are aware with academic and general regulations and abide by health and safety regulations.
13. Explain to the students the significance of proper handling of and dealing with the machines and equipments in workshops and labs.
14. Counsel the students with respect to choice of majors, elective courses and training programs to meet the requirements of jobs in the labor markets.
15. Identify points of strength in the characters of students and encourage them to develop themselves further by praising them and discussing with them alternatives and available opportunities.
16. Transfer students who encounter problems beyond your ability to professional counselors.
17. Encourage the students to participate in extra-curricular activities like Talent Center, social or sport activities.

5.5 Organizational Issues in Making Academic Advising Effective:

1. You will be assigned a number of students between 15 and 30 to act as their academic advisor.
2. As an academic advisor you are expected to show interest, respect and cooperation in your relationship with the students.
3. Gain the confidence of the students, so that they can talk to you about their difficulties and trust you with respect to confidentiality of information about them.
4. Keep a file for each individual student containing biodate, copies of admission and registration documents, academic record, attendance record (Warnings) and any disciplinary action taken against the students, prizes received, postponement/freezing and withdrawal application. Ensure the validity and the approval of all documents.
5. Get informed about issues of academic advising and anticipated difficulties usually encountered with students at this stage of the program.(Sources of information: Student

- Handbook, Bylaws, Degree Audit, HODs, Administration Staff, Industrial Link Committee, ect.).
6. Liaison with other academic advisors and ask the help of other specialized departments and sections.
 7. Schedule office advising and counseling hours for students that are both convenient for yourself and them.
 8. Use both; group and individual advising and counseling techniques such as:

5.6 Group Advising / Counseling:

- Induction program for new students.
- Guest lecturers to address specific topics of interest to the students: time management, stress, studying skills,
- Group discussion of relevant issues.
- Induction presentations about the post foundation program by specialization/ vocational departments.

5.7 Individual Advising/ Counseling:

- Advising students individually on academic and other related personal problems.
- Answering individual queries about the program of study, regulations and academic performance

Chapter 6

Students Issues Registration & Attendance

6.3 Registration of Transition Cases

1. Student left with one course only from certificate, diploma or higher diploma level can be allowed to register higher level courses with a total credit hours not less or more than 12hrs unless if he/she cannot get the required GPA for joining higher level even if he/she passes the left course with A grade.
2. Students left with two or three certificate courses:
They can register Diploma with not less or more than 12 credit hours if their $GPA \geq 2.4$ (GPA of the passed certificate courses only) but first they have to register the certificate courses. An undertaking (shown below) has to be signed by the student and to be kept in his file.
3. Students left with one or two or three diploma courses:
They can register H.D with not less or more than of 12 credit hours if their $GPA \geq 2.7$. Also an undertaking (shown below) has to be signed by the student and to be kept in his file.
4. Students left with two or three higher diploma courses:
They can be allowed to transfer to the Higher College of Technology in Muscat to register for B. Tech. if their $GPA \geq 3.0$

UNDERTAKING - No.(1)

My Name is
ID.....Department
I am left with: 1 (), 2 (), 3 ()
certificate course/s. My cumulative
GPA in passed courses of certificate
is I am allowed to register
diploma courses with the left
certificate courses such that the total
credit hours is not less or greater than
12hrs.

I do hereby undertake that I am still a
certificate student and not diploma
until I pass the left course/s and get
cumulative certificate $GPA \geq 2.25$.
My specialization will be altered
accordingly. Otherwise if I could not
get the required certificate GPA or I
could not clear the left courses I will
not be allowed to continue the
diploma level.

Name:.....

Signature:.....

Date:.....

تعهد - رقم (1)

إلى الطالب
رقم:.....
قسم:.....

تبقى لي من مستوى الإنجاز: مادة () ،
مادتين () ، ثلاث مواد () ولدي معدل
تراكمي GPA في مواد الإنجاز الناجح فيها
يساوي وقد أُسْمِح لي بتسجيل مواد
من الدبلوم بحيث يكون عدد الساعات الكلية
بما لا يزيد أو يقل عن 12 ساعة معتمدة.

أتعهد با زني لا أزال طالب إنجاز ولست
طالب دبلوم حتى اكمل مواد الإنجاز بنجاح
وأحقق معدل تراكمي GPA يساوي أو أكبر
من 2.25 وان تخصصي سوف يعدل وفقا
لذلك وفي حالة عدم حصولي على المعدل
المطلوب او عدم نجاحي في مواد الانجاز
المتبقية سوف لن يسمح لي بالاستمرار في
الدبلوم الا بعد اجتياز مواد الانجاز ولهذا
وقعت.

الاسم:.....

التوقيع:.....

التاريخ:.....

UNDERTAKING -No.(2)

My Name is

ID.....

Department

I am left with: 1 (), 2 (), 3 () diploma course/s. My cumulative GPA in passed courses of the diploma is I am allowed to register courses of higher diploma with the left diploma courses such that the total credit hours is not less or greater than 12hrs.

I do hereby undertake that I am still a diploma student and not higher diploma until I pass the left course/s and get cumulative diploma $GPA \geq 2.5$. My specialization will be altered accordingly. Otherwise if I could not get the required diploma GPA or I could not clear the left courses I will not be allowed to continue the higher diploma level unless I clear the left diploma courses.

Name:.....

Signature:.....

Date:.....

تعهد - رقم (2)

إبن الطالب

رقم:.....

قسم:.....

تبقى لي من مستوى الدبلوم: مادة () ، مادتين () ، ثلاث مواد () ولدي معدل تراكمي GPA في مواد الدبلوم الناجح فيها يساوي وقد أُسْمِح لي بتسجيل مواد من الدبلوم العالي بحيث يكون عدد الساعات الكلي بما لا يزيد أو يقل عن 12 ساعة معتمدة..

أتعهد بانني لا أزال طالب دبلوم ولست طالب دبلوم عالي حتى اكمل مواد ال دبلوم بنجاح وأحقق معدل تراكمي GPA يساوي أو اكبر من 2.5 وان تخصصي سوف يعدل وفقا لذلك وفي حالة عدم حصولي على المعدل المطلوب او عدم نجاحي في مواد الدبلوم المتبقية سوف لن يسمح لي بالاستمرار في الدبلوم العالي الا بعد اجتياز مواد الدبلوم ولهذا وقعت.

الاسم:.....

التوقيع:.....

التاريخ:.....

6.4 Common Registration Problems

1. Registration of a course before checking its prerequisite/s which should be cleared first.
2. Allowing a normal student with GPA ≥ 2 to register courses with less than 15 credit hours during the 1st and 2nd semester.
3. Allowing to register Diploma courses with uncompleted certificate & GPA less than 2.4.
4. Allowing to register Higher Diploma courses with uncompleted Diploma & GPA less than 2.7.
5. Allowing to register transition case with less or more than 12 credit hours.
6. Allowing to register less or more than 12 credit hours for a student under the first or second academic probation.
7. Doing Add & Drop without informing the Reg. Dept.
8. Doing Add & Drop with total credit hours below the minimum.
9. Allowing a student to repeat a certificate course with D or C grade.
10. Allowing a student to repeat a diploma or higher diploma course with grade C or above.
11. Accepting a student to attend in a section in which his/her name is not included in the list.
Any transfer or change of section should be through the registration department.
12. Not checking and reporting students who did not register.

6.5 Attendance Record

According to article (69) of bylaws, each staff member is accountable to record the student attendance and to check the percentage of absence for critical absence cases of 10%, 20% and 30%. A warning has to be issued for the mentioned cases by the registration department based on the record submitted by the staff member. The following table shows how to calculate the % of absence based on a 14 weeks semester (Likewise, one needs to find the number of weeks per semester according to the academic calendar):

Suppose a staff teaches 3 contact hours/ week then the total hours/semester = $3 \times 14 = 42$ hrs.
% absence = (No of hours of absence / total hours per semester)

No of Absence Hours	Percentage
4.2 or 5 Hours ($4.2 \div 42$)	10%
8.4 or 9 Hours ($8.4 \div 42$)	20%
13 Hours or more ($13 \div 42$)	30% (In this case the student will not be allowed to sit for the final exam in that course).

Important Notes:

1. A student may not come to register for a certain reason. Every academic advisor needs to check the list of advisees and report such cases immediately to the head of the academic and the registration departments. Such cases need to be followed -up carefully since some students may join work or leave the college for any reason. An action is to be taken to stop the student allowance.
2. The class tutor and the OJT assessor are fully responsible for following- up cases of absence violating the percentages in point 6.5 above. Also any case of absence for two successive weeks, immediately the tutor should report it to the head of the academic and the registration departments (see article 72 of bylaws). An attendance sheet should be submitted every two weeks to the HoD of the Department/Center.

Chapter 7

Strategic Plan of the College

Chapter 7
Strategic Plan of the College

Colleges of Technology
Generic Strategic Plan
2007-2012



Quality Assurance Department
Ministry of Manpower

7.1 Foreword

This document is the result of consultation with the Colleges of Technology. It has been re-drafted in the light of constructive suggestions received from the Colleges, and will continue to be revised and updated as circumstances change. Approved versions of this document provide guidance to Colleges in drawing up their quality plans, putting in place or upgrading systems of quality assurance, and carrying out their day to day operations.

7.2 Definitions

Access and Equity: Important principles in education which must be evident in an institution's policies and procedures to ensure that the diverse needs of all clients are met and that such groups as female students, students from remote areas, and students with disabilities are welcomed and supported

Accreditation: Accreditation is a public endorsement of status and quality that is granted to an institution (such as a college) when it can demonstrate that it has met the requirements of an official body, such as a government department.

Benchmarking: In respect of academic standards, benchmarking means the comparing of processes and data relating to standards (e.g. programmes approval processes and assessment criteria) in the interests of comparability and self improvement.

Course: A discrete unit of study approved as a component of one or more programmes.

Credit: A currency for learning based on the idea that learning can be broadly quantified in terms of credit points representing the quantity of student work (see level, level descriptors and standards). Credit is based on an estimation of the notional time it would take the average higher education student to achieve particular learning outcomes. A credit-rating is assigned to higher education qualifications and to learning achieved elsewhere.

Goals: Institution outcomes to be achieved and they are closely related to the mission and used primarily to guide planning and decision-making.

Human Resource Development: Strategic policies and practices of an organisation that relate to the effective development and retention of staff.

Learning outcomes: Precise and clearly articulated expressions of the learning expected to result from successful completion of modules, units or programmes of study. Learning outcomes are often formulated in terms of what a student will know, understand and be able to do.
Learning

outcomes are designed to make the learning associated with particular modules, units and programmes more accessible to students, employers and any other interested parties.

Mission Statement: A plan to be implemented by an institution which is realistic in relation to the institution's capacity. It states the steps to be taken by the institution for effective development and improvement (for example in planning, evaluation and resource allocation) and is used as a basis for decision making in the institution's strategic plan.

Objectives: Are demanding, achievable and consistent with mission to which they are linked through the strategic planning process. These include performance indicators and target levels that are to be achieved.

Performance Indicators: Quantitative and qualitative measures used as evidence when assessing performance against objectives.

Programme: The approved set of compulsory and optional courses to be taken by students attempting to gain a particular College award, such as a specific Certificate or Diploma.

Quality: The extent to which processes and activities in an institution are fit for purpose and meet the requirements of all stakeholders.

Quality Assurance: Planned and systematic mechanisms to ensure that responsibility for quality and standards are properly discharged and that all processes and activities are fit for their stated purposes.

Quality Assurance Department (QAD): The department in charge of working with the colleges of Technology to promote and develop the quality of Technology education in Oman in a way that realize international standards at quality and enables the colleges to graduate occupationally competent outcomes.

Quality Assurance Manual (QAM): A document, available in hard and soft copy, which sets out the College's approach to quality assurance and enhancement, and specifies how this translates into practice through a rigorous set of policies, procedures, guidelines, forms and regulations.

Quality Audit: An independent, document-based, critical review of the way quality management systems operate in an institution, focusing on the extent to which the mechanisms genuinely support the fulfilment of an institution's mission, goals and objectives.

Quality Enhancement or Quality Improvement: A commitment to improve the quality of activities and services, put into practice through forms of regular scrutiny leading to immediate action by named individuals or bodies.

Quality Management System: A system that is designed to ensure that the programmes and services provided by an institution are of a good standard, are consistent with its goals and objectives, and are subject to continuous improvement.

Research: High-level academic endeavour by individuals or groups leading to such outcomes as commissioned research reports, articles in refereed journals or books published by reputable academic publishers.

Risk Management: Identification of risk factors likely to cause disruption or damage to an organisation, and contingency planning (through policies and procedures) to minimise the impact of these

Scholarly Activity: Academic endeavour by teachers/lecturers that supports their teaching and keeps them up to date with developments in their field of specialisation, such as publishing book reviews and original work in reputable conferences and journals, giving presentations at local workshops, or undertaking consultancy work.

Self-Assessment: A systematic process through which an institution reaches an honest and transparent appraisal of its strengths and weaknesses. Self-assessment is often achieved through guidelines supplied by a national body, and its results provide an opportunity for institutional reflection, planning and improvement.

Standards of Academic Awards: Predetermined and explicitly stated levels of achievement required from students before particular academic awards (such as B.Tech, higher diploma, diploma and certificate) can be granted.

Strategic Planning: An approach to institutional planning that takes into account current position and performance and compares these with the mission statement. Strategic thinking and planning focuses on actions to be taken in both the short- and long-term.

7.3 College Vision

Nizwa College of Technology intends to become the “College of Choice” for students and for the industry by providing demonstratively high quality teaching, learning, and research that make significant contribution to ongoing national economic development.

7.4 Mission Statement

Our mission is to achieve and sustain a strong reputation for excellence in teaching and learning. The College is dedicated to the delivery of high quality technological education. It aims to produce graduates who have the professional and personal skills to enter employment with confidence, contributing effectively to the Sultanate’s ongoing economic development.

7.5 Objectives of the Colleges of Technology

The objectives of the Colleges of Technology are set out in the document *Bylaws of the Colleges of Technology*, p12:

The Higher Colleges of Technology and the Colleges of Technology are academic and technological institutions which aim at:

1. Working towards the application of technological and administrative knowledge in technological and administrative fields in line with the requirements of the labour market.
2. Meeting the students’ needs through the provision of chances for individual, social, academic, technological and vocational development.
3. Building up a generation of highly competent technicians through the provision of recognized, high quality technological programs.
4. Providing the economic sector and other sectors with technically and administratively qualified personnel.
5. Providing technological and parallel education and training services.
6. Conducting scientific and applied researches and studies and publishing them for the benefit of the Colleges of Technology and the society.

7.6 College Goals

The College of Technology is an academic and technological institution with nine principal goals:

1. To achieve excellence in governance and administration, and act at all times according to strong ethical principles.
2. To offer to all students high-quality teaching, learning and training opportunities in line with the requirements of the market needs, so as to provide society with graduates who are equipped with appropriate technical knowledge and personal/professional skills.
3. To provide excellent services to students.
4. To provide state of the art learning resources for students, and encourage students to develop their academic, vocational and social skills.
5. To ensure that College facilities are managed well, effectively used, and developed innovatively.
6. To ensure that financial planning and management follow well-defined rules, procedures and standards.
7. To develop its staff, offering opportunities for professional and personal growth and development, rewarding hard work and fostering leadership skills and innovative thinking.
8. To achieve and sustain a national and regional reputation for excellence in specialist technological and applied research of benefit to Omani society.
9. To foster an open and fruitful relationship with public and private sector organizations and with the community at large.

7.7 College Values

In pursuing its mission, the College's core values are:

- ✿ **Professionalism** - a personal commitment to contribute through hard work to the delivery of high quality student-centred technological education.
- ✿ **Integrity** - honesty, fairness and openness to constructive criticism.

- ✿ **Accountability** – recognition that the College’s staff have a collective responsibility to Omani society.
- ✿ **Flexibility** - willingness to learn, develops new skills, and takes on new responsibilities.
- ✿ **Creativity** – a full recognition of the value of innovation in all areas of the College’s work.
- ✿ **Tolerance and teamwork** – readiness to work effectively with others, regardless of background, and to recognize and welcome cultural diversity.
- ✿ **Communication** – a commitment to the effective exchange of information (inside and outside the College) to foster goodwill and support efficiency.

7.8 College Graduates

At this stage in its development, the College is primarily an institution whose focus is on effective teaching and learning. It aims to produce graduates who

- Are discerning and disciplined individuals.
- Are able to relate the knowledge and skills they have acquired to the work environment.
- Are able to evaluate, think critically, and solve problems.
- Have a high degree of competence in information technology.
- Are professionally competent and up to date in their field of specialisation.
- Can communicate effectively in written and spoken English.
- Are capable of working effectively as a member of a team, or of taking the lead role.
- Know the value of personal qualities such as reliability, responsibility and dedication.
- Recognize the importance of lifelong learning and are committed to self-development.

7.9 The College Strategic Plan 2007-2012

Nizwa College of Technology
College Strategic Plan
2007-2012
(Updated in October 2007)



NCT - COLLEGE STRATEGIC PLAN 2007-2012

Standard	Strategies
<i>Standard 1: Mission, Goals and Objectives</i>	1.1.* Achieve the Mission, Goals and Objectives described in NCT QA Manual within a reasonable period of time.
<i>Standard 2: Governance and Administration</i>	2.1.1 Ensure that the College Board meets regularly
	2.1.2 Identify three committed individuals from the private sector to join the College Board
	2.2.1 Provide an organization chart for each department, setting out line management responsibilities
	2.3.1 Require an annual self-assessment report from units/departments covering all areas of College activity
	2.4.1 Make all plans, regulations and policies available on the College intranet
	2.5.* Develop a more systematic process for administering the college.
	2.6.* Establish a mature e-governing system with proper infrastructure that supports easier, smoother, faster and more transparent decision making process.
	2.7.* Achieve international quality standards.
<i>Standard 3: Learning & Teaching</i>	3.1.1 Hold in-College events to stimulate sharing of best practice in teaching, learning and assessment and ensure that excellent teaching is one avenue to promotion
	3.1.2 Put in place a system of feedback on teaching
	3.2.1 Set recruitment targets annually; support newly-recruited staff through induction
	3.3.1 Review the curriculum annually in the light of market needs and produce recommendations on new programmes to be validated and on amendments to existing programmes
	3.3.2 Review course documents annually
	3.3.3 Actively support student learning and systematically collect student feedback on the quality of the learning experience
	3.3.4 Collect employer feedback on the quality of graduates, and track students after graduation
	3.3.5 Benchmark learning quality with other similar institutions in the region
	3.4.* Promote an e-learning environment among staff and students.
	3.5.* Developing self-learning culture among the students
	3.6.* Establish an e-feedback system to monitor and improve the activities within the college.
	3.7.* Review and continuously improve the curriculum to cater for the needs of the industry and the developments in the fields of Engineering, IT and Business.
	3.8.* Standardize the assessment procedures.

Standards	Strategies
Standard 4: Student Services	4.1.1 Provide a monthly opportunity for students to raise issues on matters such as accommodation, student discipline and so on
	4.1.2 Produce a comprehensive Student Handbook giving full details on registration, disciplinary matters, medical services, health and safety, student counselling, social matters, sports, and all other student-related matters
	4.2.1 Ensure that student services are reviewed annually and that students contribute ideas and feedback to stimulate improvements
	4.2.2 Put into practice procedures for an annual cycle of review and improvement
	4.2.3 Staff delivering student services are well qualified
	4.3.* Create a Counseling Center that is capable of addressing students' social and academic problems.
	4.4.* Create a Job Center to strengthen the link between the graduates and the job market.
	4.5.* Establish an Alumni Association to maintain the relationship with the graduates.
	4.6.* Develop a Complete Registration System with sufficient resources.
	4.7.* Promote students' activity clubs in order to unfold the student's hidden talents and skills.
Standard 5: Learning Resources	5.1.1 Foster excellent IT skills and awareness among students
	5.1.2 Transform the College library into a Learning Resources Centre
	5.1.3 Ensure students have maximum access to learning resources
	5.1.4 Ensure learning resources meet learner needs
	5.1.4 Ensure that staff in the Learning Resources Centre and computer labs are qualified to assist students
	5.2.1 Put in place efficient systems for the cataloguing and search/retrieval of learning resources
	5.3.* Develop a Business Simulation Center that serves all academic departments in order to provide hands-on-experience to the students in the areas of their studies and to prepare them to be confident entrepreneurs.
	5.4.* Enhance the present Lab/Workshop facilities to meet the demands of the future needs in terms of advancements in technologies and to cater to the increasing number of students.
	5.5.* Create a Digital Library/Self Access Center
	5.6.* Convert the traditional classrooms into Smart Classrooms to develop an efficient e-learning environment.
Standard 6: Facilities and Equipment	6.1.1 Conduct regular audits of classrooms, workshops, lecture theatres and library to check the need for replacement or repair of furniture, and redecoration or maintenance work
	6.1.2 Ensure that all workshops and labs are assessed annually for adequacy of space, numbers of machinery, and need for upgrading
	6.2.1 Ensure efficiency of use of classrooms, labs and workshops
	6.3.1 Keep servicing records and serial numbers for all technical equipment
	6.3.2 Put in place formal procedures for booking and returning hi-tech equipment
	6.4.1 Provide students with the opportunity to complete a survey once per year

	6.5.1 Conduct regular inspections of facilities, equipment and work practices to ensure compliance
	6.6.* Convert present staff offices into modern offices to create a comfortable working environment.
	6.7.* Create more spacious student and staff canteens
	6.8.* Develop state-of-the-art staff club equipped with all necessary facilities.
	6.9.* Establish a College Press to cater for the needs of the college.
	6.10.* Establish safe working environment according to international standards.
	6.11.* Implement a Complete College Security System.
<i>Standard 7:</i> Financial Planning & Management	7.1.1 Ensure that the College Board advises the Dean on College planning and budget allocation
	7.1.2 Reduce long-term operating costs
	7.1.3 Increase income from sources such as fundraising and grants
	7.2.1 Risk management strategy drawn up and revised annually
	7.3.* Raise fund through: attracting sponsorships from the private sector; the business simulation center; and conducting self financing courses.
	7.4.* Adopt participative budget allocation in a way that involves all the departments of the college in the process of the annual budget allocation.
<i>Standard 8:</i> Staffing & Employment Procedures	8.1.1 Identify staff shortages promptly and accurately, and inform the Ministry
	8.1.2 Produce clear College procedures for the periodic identification of staff shortages
	8.1.3 Ensure that new staff receive a full and formal induction on arrival
	8.2.1 Produce clear and explicit procedures through which all staff are subject to regular appraisal
	8.3.1 Link staff appraisal to staff development
	8.3.2 Provide in-house training for staff
	8.3.4 Reward excellent performance by all staff
	8.4.* Establish a “Staff Development Center” that offers programs for the continuous learning of staff and for continuing the professional development of staff.
	8.5.* Implement more effective and transparent recruitment policies
8.6.* Adopt more transparent policies for staff appraisal.	
<i>Standard 9:</i> Research	9.1.1 Set up a Research & Scholarly Activity Committee
	9.1.2 Support staff who apply for external funding for research or consultancy
	9.1.3 Ensure that a record of research and scholarly activity is one avenue to promotion for Omani staff, and is rewarded for all other staff
	9.2.* Establish Research & Development (R&D) and/or Consultancy & Development (C&D) Centers
	9.3.* Encourage faculty members to do collaborative projects with the private sector for the mutual benefit.
<i>Standard 10:</i> Community	10.1.1 Set up a Marketing Unit reporting to the Assistant Dean for Administration & Financial Affairs
	10.1.3 Draft a College marketing strategy and have this approved by College Board

Relationships	10.1.3 Establish and maintain effective relationships with print and broadcast media
	10.1.4 Institute or strengthen College Open Days
	10.1.5 Invite eminent speakers to College evening events and invite guests
	10.1.6 Set up a programme for Assistant Deans to visit schools and companies to talk about the College
	10.2.* Set up a “Marketing Unit” to introduce the college programs and graduates to the private sector and to the society.
	10.3.* Create a “NCT-Community Service Scheme” by involving the interested, service minded student volunteers and staff to serve the local community.
	10.4.* Conduct regular prestigious annual career fairs.
	10.5.* Carry out a staff exchange program with the private sector on part-time basis to share the expertise for the mutual development.

7.10 Ten Standards of the College

The College's goals are also closely aligned with its Mission Statement and with the ten standards set out in the Ministry of Higher Education document *Requirements for Oman's System of Quality Assurance in Higher Education*, pp57-93. These cover the following areas:

- ✿ Mission, Goals and Objectives (Standard 1)
- ✿ Governance and Administration (Standard 2)
- ✿ Learning and Teaching (Standard 3)
- ✿ Student Services (Standard 4)
- ✿ Learning Resources (Standard 5)
- ✿ Facilities and Equipment (Standard 6)
- ✿ Financial Planning and Management (Standard 7)
- ✿ Staffing and Employment Procedures (Standard 8)
- ✿ Research (Standard 9)
- ✿ Community Relationships (Standard 10)

Chapter 8

Quality Assurance

Chapter 8

Quality Assurance

8.1 Self Assessment

The college is subject to the Technological Education Quality Assurance System to assure the compliance of the qualifications awarded by the college with the set standards. The college is following the ten standards of the ROSKA document for higher education (see the quality assurance manual of the college QAM). For that purpose, and in order to ensure the quality process, the college has established eight groups for the self assessment of the following:

- i) College Management Structure & Methods- Group 1
- ii) Educational Programs, Teaching and learning- Group 2
- iii) Students & Students Services- Group 3
- iv) College Staff- Group 4
- v) Learning Resources- Group 5
- vi) External Relations & Social Services- Group 4
- vii) Graduate follow-up- Group 7
- viii) Research & Consultancy- Group 8

8.2 ADRI Module

This Training Module is part of the Training Program open to staff of public and private higher education institutions, the Oman Accreditation Council, the Ministry of Higher Education and the Ministry of Manpower. The Training Program is a joint initiative of the Directorate General, Private Universities and Colleges and the Oman Accreditation Council. It aims to raise the capacity and capability of the higher education sector in issues and practices related to assuring and improving quality.



Ministry of Higher Education
& Oman Accreditation Council

Training Module 01 v6

ADRI

**A quality assurance model for
self-reviews and external reviews
Workshop Handout**

© Martin Carroll

Prepared with assistance from Dr Salim Razvi

Last updated: 11 September 2006



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1 MODULE AIMS

1.1 Intended Participants

This Training Module is for anyone in higher education involved in analyzing and reviewing work activities. Specifically, this is likely to include:

- . • Management of higher education providers;
- . • Staff of higher education providers;
- . • Members of external audit and accreditation panels; and
- . • Government higher education policy makers.

1.2 Learning Outcomes

ADRI is a model for critically analyzing the effectiveness of quality assurance systems. It can be used for self-reviews and also for external reviews (such as

those conducted by the Oman Accreditation Council). The specific learning outcomes of this training module are:

- To develop an awareness of the distinction between 'fitness of purpose' and 'fitness for purpose';
- To develop an awareness of the international 'ADRI' model for analyzing the effectiveness of quality assurance systems; and
- To be able to critically analyze quality assurance systems using the ADRI model.

2 MODULE SLIDES

2.1 Summary of the Presentation

Note that a version designed for use in presentations is available online and free of charge (www.oac.gov.om/enhancement/training). It contains slides that are not included in this printed version (such as model answers to the workshop scenarios).



Slide 1 content:

Oman Accreditation Council

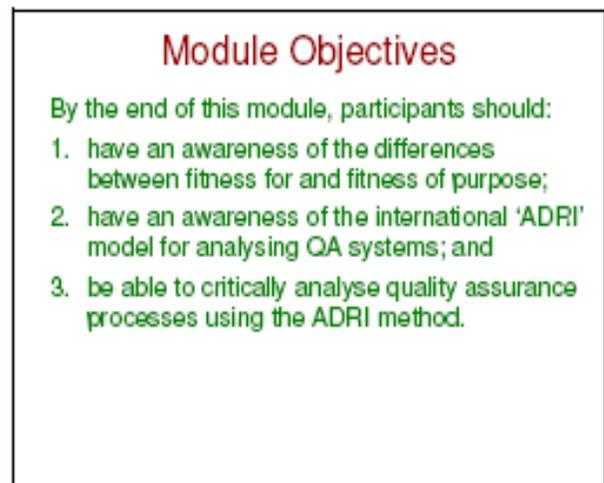
Ministry of Higher Education

ADRI

A quality assurance model
for self-reviews and external reviews

OAC & MoHE Training Module#1 (v5)
© 2006 Martin Carroll
Prepared with assistance from Dr Salim Razvi
Last updated: 7 June 2006

Slide 1



Slide 2 content:

Module Objectives

By the end of this module, participants should:

1. have an awareness of the differences between fitness for and fitness of purpose;
2. have an awareness of the international 'ADRI' model for analysing QA systems; and
3. be able to critically analyse quality assurance processes using the ADRI method.

Slide 2

Acronyms used in this Module

- ADRI – Approach–Deployment–Results–Improvement
- HEP – Higher Education Provider
- OAC – Oman Accreditation Council
- MOHE – Ministry of Higher Education
- IIP – Investors in People (www.investorsinpeople.co.uk/)
- HRM – Human Resources Management
- SET – Student Evaluation of Teaching
- ROSQA – Requirements for Oman System of Quality Assurance

Slide 3

Fitness of vs. Fitness for Purpose

- Fitness of purpose = doing the right things.
- Fitness for purpose = doing the things right.
- Quality Assurance in Oman focuses on both.
- The OAC determines whether the HEP's internally-set purpose is consistent with, and appropriate for, its externally set purpose.
- The OAC reviews whether the HEP's systems for fulfilling its purpose are appropriate and effective.

Slide 4



Approach

What an HEP proposes to achieve

- Presented in, at least, applicable Royal Decrees, HEP Strategic Plan and Bylaws.
- Internal and external purposes must align.
- The set purpose requires evidence of appropriate benchmarking and stakeholder involvement.

A model template for a strategic plan follows...

Slide 5



HEP STRATEGIC PLAN

High level

- Mission** What is the main thing that we do? Ideally, this should be distinctive, differentiating us from other HEPs.
- Vision** What will have changed in ## years, in society and in our HEP, as a result of successfully implementing our Strategic Plan?
- Values** What fundamental principles and beliefs guide our behaviour as an HEP?

Slide 6



HEP STRATEGIC PLAN

Background information

- Environmental** What is going on out there that affects us and what we want to do? What changes are on the horizon? Must be backed by sound evidence.
- SWOT** What are our strengths and weaknesses (internal factors) and opportunities and threats (external factors)? Must be backed by sound evidence.

Slide 7



HEP STRATEGIC PLAN

Operational level

- Goals** What are we going to do? (About 6-10 goals)
- Objectives** Each goal is usually made up of a number of more specific, action-focused objectives.
- Strategies** Each objective has associated strategies outlining how the objective will be achieved and by whom. Includes resource allocations.
- Measures** Objectives require a means by which success will be measured.
- Targets** There is normally a specific target for that measure, including a date by when it will be achieved.

Slide 8



Approach

How an HEP proposes to achieve its purpose

- Operational Plans – detailing what should be done by when, by whom, to what standard and with what resources.
- Manuals – detailing how processes should be implemented.
- Professional development and training aligned to HEP operational needs.
- Alignment of resource allocation to plans.

Slide 9



Approach

Broad Questions

- What external requirements apply to this HEP? How are they incorporated into the Strategic Plan?
- Does the HEP have set of goals, objectives, strategies and targets that are clearly understood by the Board and staff?
- Was there appropriate consultation, benchmarking and analysis in developing the Strategic Plan?

Slide 10



Approach

Broad Questions (cont.)

- Does the planning process incorporate appropriate risk management?
- Does everyone know what they are supposed to be doing, how and why?
- Are goals well supported with plans, manuals and training?
- Are there clear means for monitoring progress against the goals?

Slide 11



Approach

Cautions

- An assessment of Approach, on its own, does not tell the whole story – only what is intended.
- Need to look at a wide range of sources to get the full Approach.
- Alignment of various goals and strategies ought to be by design, not accident.
- Equally, alignment of plans with resource allocation models ought to be by design.

Slide 12



Deployment

Deployment Dimensions

- Also known as 'implementation' or 'process'.
- Looks at how an HEP is implementing its approach.
- In other words, do the plans and bylaws happen in reality?
- This is best tested through interviews; tap into people's 'lived experiences'.
- Also includes consideration of input factors such as the quality of resources.

Slide 13



Deployment

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Slide 14



Deployment

Broad Questions

- Are there appropriate indicators for monitoring the effectiveness and efficiency of processes? How are these reported and used?
- Are there appropriate means for intervening if necessary? How well do they work?
- Where the approach is deliberately not being followed, why not? How are changes to the planned processes managed?
- Are people allowed to contribute ideas?

Slide 15



Deployment

Cautions

- It is insufficient to only focus on deployment. It must relate to an approach and lead to results.
- It is essential to 'triangulate' anecdotal evidence about deployment (e.g. from interviews) with other sources of information.

Slide 16



Results

Results Dimensions

- Quality cannot be assured by only focusing on the goals, plans, inputs and processes.
- There must be an emphasis on what is actually achieved – the results!
- Every goal must have a reported result.
- Every result should link back to a goal.

Slide 17



Results

Results Dimensions

- It is essential that a causal relationship can be shown between the approach, the deployment and the eventual result – otherwise the result may be just chance.
- If you know that $A+B+C = 19$ you still do not know what B is (i.e. whether each step in the process is adding value or not).

Slide 18



Results

Results Dimensions

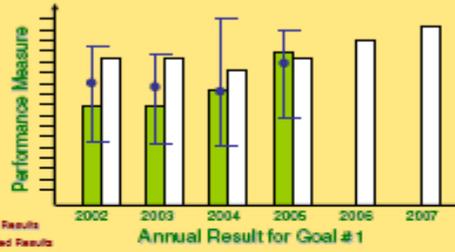
- Results will be both quantitative and qualitative.
- In order to be meaningfully interpreted, results ought to be expressed as trends over 5 years, with targets and benchmarks.
- Results for many goals will be aggregated from the results of its component objectives.

Slide 19

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

One quantitative approach

With result, trend, targets, benchmark averages & best practices



Actual Results
Targeted Results
Peer Average
Upper and Lower Quartiles

Annual Result for Goal #1

Slide 20

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

One qualitative + quantitative approach

A	Low awareness of issue. Ad hoc plans. Random training.	Commitment established. Planning framework. Training available.	Systematic approach. Full set of plans. Training linked to plans.	Leading edge vision. Plans aligned & integrated. Training comprehensive.
D	Ad hoc practice. Not linked to plans. Not monitored.	Numerous good practices. Practice aligns with plans. Processes are analysed.	Good practice systematic. Plans inform practice. Monitoring in place.	Processes benchmarked. Practice informs plans. Good practice promoted.
R	Results not linked to plans. Results not measured. Where measured, variable.	Most plans have results. Most results reported. Most targets achieved.	All plans have results. All results reported. Targets achieved.	Stretch targets established. Results are analysed. Targets exceeded.
I	Staff input limited. Review processes limited. Improvements are random.	Staff input allowed. Review framework. OPI and GP identified.	Staff input encouraged. Reviews systematic. Benchmarking undertaken.	Staff directly empowered. Self review activities. Benchmark best.

Annual Result for Goal #1

Slide 21



Results

Broad Questions

- For each goal or objective, what are the results?
- Does the HEP know exactly how and why those results were achieved?
- Have these results been appropriately contextualised (e.g. using targets, trends and benchmarks)?
- What meaning/interpretation does the HEP derive from the results?

Slide 22



Results

Cautions

- It is insufficient to only consider results.
- Results only make sense in the context of the approach and deployment.
- The manner in which a result is presented can influence how it is interpreted, so adopt an attitude of healthy skepticism.

Slide 23



Improvement

Improvement Dimensions

- This dimension looks at what an HEP knows about itself in order to get better and better.
- Goals should be continually set higher.
- Processes should get more efficient and more effective over time.
- Results should indicate increasing success.
- This requires a comprehensive system of review – not just consideration of results.

Slide 24



Improvement

Broad Questions

- What data about HEP performance is routinely collected and reported? How is the validity of the data ensured? What happens to the data?
- How is the Strategic Plan (and other plans) reviewed and revised?
- What review processes are in place for the HEP's major activities? How does the HEP know that the review processes are effective?

Slide 25



Improvement

Broad Questions (cont.)

- Is the process of self review, learning and improvement endemic throughout the organisation?
- Are all staff empowered and encouraged to contribute to ongoing improvement efforts?
- What has changed/improved as a result of the review processes?

Slide 26



Improvement

Cautions

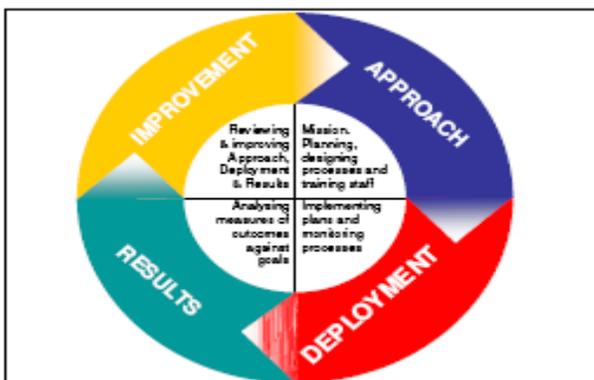
- If not driven by sound values, this aspect of ADRI can be very threatening and disempowering for staff and students.
- Findings from surveys and reviews are often not used effectively.
- 'Wet Paint' syndrome is fine if it leads to improvements.

Slide 27

Analysis vs. Problem Solving

- ADRI is a method for analysing a total QA system. It can be used internally or externally. It can identify strengths as well as opportunities for improvement (OFI).
- ADRI is not a planning framework, although it provides useful information for planning.
- ADRI does not identify the best solution to an OFI. To do so would require problem-solving methods (such as benchmarking).
- Therefore, recommendations arising from ADRI ought to focus on *what* needs to be improved, not *how* it needs to be improved.

Slide 28



Slide 29

Conclusion (1 of 3)

- Quality assurance requires a comprehensive and appropriate set of topics (fitness of purpose), and a suitable method for analysing the effectiveness of the systems for achieving them (fitness for purpose).
- The scope of issues comes from external and internal sources.
- The ADRI method is a global best practice. It can be used by small work teams, internal review committees and external review panels.

Slide 30

Conclusion (2 of 3)

- For a given topic at any point in time, an HEP will be strong in some dimensions of ADRI and not in others. This is OK. Quality improvement is a continuous cycle of improvement.
- Because ADRI combines an assessment of the quality system with a constructive analysis, it is not something extra to do, but rather a better way of doing what we should be doing anyway.

Slide 31

Conclusion (3 of 3)

Please use ADRI within your HEP to regularly review such things as:

- Governance systems
- Faculties
- Programs
- Administrative Services

This is what world class higher education institutions do. And that is what we want to be.

Slide 32

2.2 Workshop Activity

The following slides outline the workshop activity. Four scenarios adapted from higher education provider self-study reports are provided. The task is to analyse each scenario using the ASDRI model, commenting on each dimension (Approach, Deployment, Results, Improvement). Model answers are provided here for the first scenario. The following three scenarios are to be done in small groups. Model answers for those three scenarios can be found in the online version.

Try it first as if you were a member of an internal review team reporting to the Vice-Chancellor/Dean. What do you conclude about the scenario? Does it represent good practice? If you were the reviewer, what further information would you require? How would you get it?

Then try it as if you were a member of an external review panel from the Oman Accreditation Council. Do you notice any difference doing it this way?



Workshop #1 Scenario

Academic Advising

"We pay special attention to academic advising. Plans related to academic advising are constantly revised and modified in the light of the feedback received and problems encountered. The Dean allocates considerable time for discussing academic advising issues in his meetings at the beginning of each semester. All academic departments tackle realistic mechanisms of supervision to achieve the best results. To guarantee the flexibility and accuracy of advising, advisors meet with students on regular basis to discuss students' academic progress and problems, if there are any."



Workshop #1 Some Responses

Academic Advising

- A:** Are there any clear goals, objectives, strategies and targets relating to academic advising?
It does seem as though the Dean provides some level of leadership. Is it effective?
- D:** What is the scale of the advising activity? What are the "realistic mechanisms" and how is their effectiveness monitored?
- R:** What outcomes does academic advising achieve? What do students think of it?
- I:** It says plans are "constantly revised." Good. How is the academic advising process reviewed and improved? What changes have been made?



Workshop #1 Possible Conclusion

Academic Advising

Academic Advice is clearly an important issue for the College.

The quality management model is incomplete, although there are some key elements in place.

For now, there is insufficient evidence and analysis to conclude that this is a good quality academic advice system.



Workshop #1 Scenario

Academic Advising (improved version)

"Our bylaw says that all students are entitled to free, personal academic advice provided by staff trained in academic advisory processes. We aim for our advice to be accurate and helpful, resulting in strong student satisfaction. All staff receive academic advice training and printed guidelines as part of their induction. This is supported with annual staff development workshops. Issues raised by students are logged on the Advice Server. Progress resolving them is also logged. Outcomes are monitored by the Assoc Dean (Academic). Outcome themes are determined by an Advisory Committee (of the Academic Board) and used to refine training programs and guidelines. The 2005 survey shows 82% satisfaction, up from 72% in 2004."



Workshop #2 Scenario

Staff Appraisal

"All our three new Faculties (made as a result of merging the previous five smaller faculties) have adopted the staff appraisal bylaw. According that bylaw, all staff participate in an annual appraisal meeting with their Associate Dean (head of faculty), with the option for informal sessions each semester. The meetings provide opportunities to constructively discuss workload, working conditions, personal competency, and staff development needs. The model is consistent with best practice according to Investors in People (an international HRM quality framework)."



Workshop #3 Scenario

Library

The Library supports the academic programs and serves as a centre for academic life at our college. Students have opportunities to read a wide range of text to build an understanding and acquire new information. The area of the main library is 160m² with a capacity of 85 students. The number of books in the academic year 2004-05 has reached 5,500. The collections are sufficient in quality, diversity, quantity to enrich the college's academic offerings and meet international standards. Changes in periodical holdings and the general collections are made based on statistics and requests of academic departments.



Workshop #4 Scenario

Student Evaluation of Teaching

"We have had our standardised voluntary student evaluation of teaching (SET) programme in place for 4 years. The surveys use quantitative and qualitative questions. Teachers run the surveys in the last week of each semester. It was reviewed last year by an international teaching evaluation expert, who commended it as "best practice". Mean results rate consistently high (above 4.2). SET results are required for promotion applications. Our staff development programmes build on areas of weakness identified through aggregated results."

3 ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

These additional references are supplied for general educative purposes only. Their inclusion here does not imply any endorsement or warranty by the authors of this training module.

Note that web references provided below may not remain active for long! If you want to check them out, it is better to do so quickly!

3.1 Further Reading

- The ADRI model was first known internationally as PDCA (Plan Do Check Act). This model was originally developed by Walter A. Shewhart, a Bell Laboratories scientist and the developer of Statistical Process Control (SPC)

in the late 1920s. So PDCA is sometimes referred to as the “Shewhart Cycle” (see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shewhart_cycle).

• Later, it was popularised by W. Edwards Deming (see <http://www.deming.org/>), who was Shewhart’s friend and protégé. He changed the model slightly to Plan-Do-Study-Act, out of concern that “check” implied halting progress.

• There are some excellence PDCA resources at Six Sigma (See <http://www.isixsigma.com/me/pdca/>).

• The Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) uses ADRI in its fitness for purpose quality audits of Australian universities. Detail is available in the AUQA Audit Manual v2.1 which is available online (in particular, see

http://www.auqa.edu.au/qualityaudit/auditmanuals/auditmanual_v2_1/2/index.shtml).

• The Australian Business Excellence Framework relies upon ADRI as its method for evaluating applications for the Business Excellence Awards (see

<http://www.saiglobal.com/PROFESSIONALSERVICES/CONSULTING/BUSINESS%20EXCELLENCE%20SOLUTIONS/ABEF/CONSULTING-BUSINESSEXCELLENCE%20SOLUTIONS-ABEF.HTM>).

• The New Zealand Business Excellence Foundation administers New Zealand’s business excellence awards program. The NZBEF Manual is available free at <http://nzbef.org.nz/index.html>. NZBEF uses a version of ADRI which focuses on ‘Process’ (including Approach, Deployment, learning and Integration)’ and ‘Results’ (see p51 of their manual)

3.2 Internet Search Tips

To do an effective Google or Yahoo search, try the following advanced search

•With all of the words: ADRI quality education

•Without the words: clothing apparel diamond diabetes

A search on PDCA Quality will return many, many useful results. If you want a more specific search result try the following:

•With all of the words: PDCA quality education

•Without the words: painting

3.3 Discussion Board Details

The online discussion board for this module is not yet in operation