



**ESHEC**  
ESWATINI HIGHER  
EDUCATION COUNCIL

*Ensuring relevance & excellence*

# ESWATINI HIGHER EDUCATION COUNCIL



## Programme Evaluation Guidelines



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# **PROGRAMME EVALUATION GUIDELINES**

In terms of the Higher Education Act of 2013, the Swaziland Higher Education Council has the responsibility to evaluate the admissibility of all study programmes in terms of quality.

The following elements are considered in the assessment of a study programme:

## **1. Programme Mission Statement**

This refers to the overall purpose of the programme. It describes what the programme is, what it does, for whom it does and with what benefits. It should clearly convey its goals and objectives and serve as the basis for the program's day-to-day operations, as well as a guide for its strategic plans for the future. The goals must spell out the broad learning outcomes (i.e.) what exactly will the students learn.

### **Benchmarks**

- The mission statement of the programme must be in line with the overall institution's mandate, be clear and concise in articulating who the organization is, what it does and whom it serves.
- The faculty or department offering the programme has a plan or a blueprint in place with measureable objectives and realistic timeframes.
- The faculty or department offering the programme is administered by a qualified, experienced and competent management team with clearly defined roles and responsibilities
- Qualification resulting from the programme should be clearly specified and communicated and refer to the correct level of NQF.
- Provide a clear description of the purpose of the program and the skills gaps. In specific terms, reflect how the program contributes to the education and careers of graduating students.

## **2. PROGRAMME DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT**

Institutions should demonstrate that the programme enhances learning and that the programme meets the socio economic needs of the country. The mode of delivery of the programme should be ideal and it should incorporate new forms of learning and technology.

### **Benchmarks:**

- Principles and guidelines needed for the process of programme development are in place and well known to staff.
- The process of development and approval of the programme should be vigorous and thorough as evidenced by the documentation showing the extent of consultation with internal and external stakeholders.
- Programme is in line with and responds to the socio-economic needs of the country as well as meets market and industry demand locally, regionally and internationally.
- Intended exit level competencies are clearly articulated, appropriate for the purpose of the programme and aligned with the programme design and the assessment criteria.
- Content is based on relevant theories and findings gathered from related current research literature and effectively integrate relevant examples and applications.

## **3. TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGY**

The programme has in place arrangements for quality assurance of teaching and learning imperatives which can be monitored and revised when the need arises.

### **Benchmarks**

- The programme's teaching and learning strategy is clearly articulated with an appropriate mix of theoretical and applied experiences of achieving stated educational objectives.
- Teaching and learning strategies employ a variety of innovative pedagogical approaches.
- Class size enables utilization of teaching and learning resources.
- A teaching and learning policy is in place to direct the program's teaching and learning activities.
- There should be evidence of partnerships for experiential learning.

#### **4. ASSESSMENT AND LEARNER ATTAINMENT**

The programme should be accommodated in the institution's assessment policy which itself should be clear and outline assessment procedures for both programme and student assessment. For the latter, the policy should clearly outline procedures for formative and summative assessment, internal and external moderation, monitoring of student progress, validity and reliability of assessment practices, recording of assessment results, rigour and security of the assessment system, settling of disputes, etc.

##### **Benchmarks**

- Programme should be included in the institutions assessment policy.
- It should be clear how programme assessment shall be conducted □ Clear programme assessment plan should be presented.
- Students should be assessed using published criteria, regulations and procedures that are applied consistently.
- The assessment system used should be efficient, fair, and secure and employ efficient quality control measures.
- There should be proof that all teaching staff have been trained in assessment and evaluation of assessment tasks.
- There should be clear indication of how both internal and external moderation will be conducted in the programme.

#### **5. INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE MECHANISM**

This is a system aiming at setting up, maintaining and improving the quality and standards of teaching, student learning experience, research, and service to community. The overall objective is to continuously evaluate, monitor, promote and improve the quality of the programmes and courses, and the institution as a whole.

##### **Benchmarks**

- Internal quality assurance mechanisms are in place to monitor the effectiveness of the day to day activities of the faculty or department offering the programme, including governance, finances, teaching and assessment
- Development and publication of explicit intended learning outcomes of the programme.

- Programmes must be subjected to formal approval, systematic monitoring and periodic review by both internal and independent external bodies.
- Regular feedback from employers, labour market representatives and other relevant organizations.
- Monitoring of the progress and achievements of students.
- Participation of students in quality assurance activities.
- Any changes of the academic programme must first be authorized through the academic development planning process

## **6. PHYSICAL RESOURCES AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

Resources and physical infra-structure should be adequate to meet programme goals/objectives. Adequate physical infra-structure enables effective implementation of planned curricular activities and experience. Planning for these resources should take into consideration the following: a) The different needs of each of the courses in the programme b) Provide students with learning space that guarantees their health & safety c) Ensure reasonable access to all equipment to all students d) Have in place mechanisms/ procedures for upkeep and maintenance.

### **Benchmarks**

- Classrooms and library facilities should be adequate for the courses on offer
- Faculty offices should be appropriate for course preparation, student advisement and other faculty responsibilities
- There should be appropriate equipment for course work and research including computer facilities, visuals and devices etc.
- Description of guidelines and processes for resourcing, maintenance of physical facilities and replenishing used up consumables to support teaching and learning.
- The library and other resources for learner support, including ICT facilities, cater for all learners (off campus and on campus) and have flexible opening hours and staff dedicated to serve a wide variety of learner's needs
- The physical provisions / resources should take into consideration special needs of all users.

## **7. STAFFING**

The calibre of the staff working in the programme, working conditions, professional development mechanisms and productivity should enable the programme to meet its expected objectives

### **Benchmarks**

- The teaching staff must hold qualifications higher than the exit level of the programme.
- Staff must be adequately and relevantly qualified for the job they are doing.
- Recruitment and selection should be done in an objective and transparent manner.
- Staff development policy and plan exist and ensure that all staff continually get professional support in order to sharpen their skills.
- Teaching resources and working conditions enable staff to meet expected performance
- A promotion criteria should be based on a performance appraisal system, which itself should be based on a number of factors such as teaching, research, publication, etc.

## **8. STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

Academic Student Support Structures must enable a conducive teaching and learning environment of the programme's stated objectives.

### **Benchmarks:**

- Library has enough material to support the proposed programme and an appropriate library management system.
- Students have access to electronic information appropriate for the programme and its use.
- There is an effective grievance handling procedure.
- Medical, recreational and academic support structures should be place in the programme.

## **9. STUDENTS ADMISSION TO A PROGRAMME**

It is imperative that the admission of students into a programme is based on an explicit and coherent admission criteria/ requirements and procedures which are nondiscriminatory and which contribute to the quality of the programme.



### **Benchmarks**

- The programme defines, publishes and makes readily available the admission practices.
- There is an admission policy outlining clearly the admission requirements and how they are compatible with corresponding national and international priorities
- The process of admission into a programme is fair, transparent and benchmarked against best practices and ensures that the most deserving candidates are admitted into the programme (merit based).

## **10. FINANCIAL RESOURCES**

The department or faculty offering the programme has sufficient financial resources to run the programme and ensure its sustainability given the projected student enrolment and the academic staff and support staff compliment needed to run the programme effectively.

### **Benchmarks**

- The faculty or department offering the programme has plan or blueprint showing projected student projected enrolments, recurrent expenditure and details of how the programme is financed.
- The programme budget follows a defined process and procedure.
- They should project estimated expenditure for the next 3-5 years i.e. cost of equipment, supplies, and staff salaries and identify sources of revenue to support the programme.