



ACADEMIC PLANNING UNIT

UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS

AKOKA, LAGOS

NIGERIA

**ACADEMIC PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT &
REVIEW GUIDELINES**

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Acronyms

APU	Academic Planning Unit
DAP	Director, Academic Planning Unit
HOD	Head of Department
NUC	National Universities Commission
QA	Quality Assurance
QAS	Quality Assurance System
QA&S	Quality Assurance & Servicom
SAC	Student Advisory Committee
SPGS	School of Postgraduate studies

Definition of Terms

Undergraduate student: Is a student enrolled to a programme leading to a bachelor's degree or equivalent qualification, typically the first level of higher education after secondary school.

Postgraduate student:

eventual phasing out of academic programmes. This document delineates the principles, processes, and responsibilities involved in the lifecycle of academic programmes, ensuring alignment with institutional missions, standards, and regulatory requirements.

The purpose therefore is to foster academic excellence, relevance, and sustainability across all disciplines and levels of study within the institution. It aims to promote continuous improvement, innovation, and responsiveness to evolving societal needs and educational trends. By establishing clear guidelines and procedures, the policy document delineates the procedures for proposing, designing, and gaining approval for new academic programmes, emphasizing the importance of needs assessment, market analysis, curriculum design, and resource planning.

These clear frameworks should facilitate effective decision-making, resource allocation, and quality assurance in the development and management of academic programmes.

1.1 Vision, Mission and Core Values

1.1.1 Vision - To be a top-class institution for the pursuit of excellence in knowledge, character, and service to humanity

1.1.2 Mission

To provide a conducive environment for teaching, learning, research and development, where staff and students will interact and compete effectively with their counterparts globally.

1.1.3 Core Values

Excellence in Learning and Character

Conducive and Enabling Environment

Integrity and Respect

Professionalism and Competency

Innovative Culture and Ethical Conduct

2.0 Academic Programme Development

2.1 Governance Structure

This policy document articulates the institution's overarching mission, vision, and educational goals, providing a strategic context for programme development and review activities. The guidelines, monitoring and evaluation including reviews are coordinated by the Academic Planning Unit under the office of the Vice Chancellor. The various activities are undertaken by designated committees populated often by select stakeholders including those outside of the academia with roles and responsibilities.

2.2 Academic Planning Unit Ad-hoc Committees

The Academic Planning Unit uses some operational committees to execute some of the oversight functions that falls within the mandate. The unit draws of the skills of staff of the unit and expertise of senior academic staff to deliver of the assignment. Some of the functional committees include;

- i. Academic Planning Committee
- ii. Mock Accreditation Committee
- iii. Resource Verification Committee

2.3 Justification for New Academic Programme

Scheme 1: Flowchart for the Application and Processing of New Academic Programmes

2.4 Processing the Application for New Academic Programme

2.4.1 Under the provisions of the Act, the Commission shall, on the application of a person, consider the application and, if satisfied, recommend the person for admission to the institution of higher learning.

Departmental minutes of meeting where it was discussed and approved to the Dean of the Faculty (Stage 1).

2.4.3 Review of New Academic Programme at the Faculty (or SPGS) Level

2.4.6

2.4.9 NUC Resource Verification Exercise

The University, through the Vice-Chancellor writes to NUC of the institutions readiness to undertake the Resource Verification for a conditionally approved New Academic programme. A letter will be forwarded to the University when NUC will visit to undertake an onsite Resource Verification Exercise. The University will be required to re-submit the full details of the academic programme. The university is mandated to fulfill the application requirements on the NUC website. Thereafter, an acknowledgement and details of the visitation exercise is communicated in a letter to the university Vice-chancellor. A panel of not less than three members of Experts and Administrators will visit on behalf of NUC to undertake a mini accreditation. Thereafter, the committee will submit a report to NUC (**Stage 6**).

2.4.10 NUC Recommendation for New Programme Application

The NUC Panel of Experts mini accreditation report is reviewed by the internal committee. In the event the assessment is favourable, NUC will communicate Approval of the New Academic Programme to the University (**Stage 7**).

Goals for the Periodic Review of Course Content are to:

Ensure the currency and appeal of course content, providing students with opportunities to acquire pertinent knowledge, skills, and experiences within the discipline

Maintain the delivery of high-quality learning experiences consistent with the University's Learning, Teaching, and Assessment Strategy, and associated priorities.

Ensure that course documentation, including handbooks, remains transparent, accurate, and accessible to students and stakeholders, in compliance with relevant consumer protection laws

Facilitate input from external subject matter experts.

Identify exemplary practices for broader dissemination.

Identify areas for improvement.

3.1 Internal Periodic (Mock Accreditation) of Academic Programme

Academic Planning Unit will undertake a mock accreditation and comprehensive review of every academic programme. The schedule of the programmes due for that academic session will be released at the beginning of the session. The Mock accreditation team of (6-8) experts will be constituted by the DAP. The team will be led by an expert at the rank of a Professor, and will have an internal academic staff member, one or more external subject specialists from other higher education institutions, a relevant external professional representative, employer, or recent graduate and at least one member representing the students. External members will be nominated by the Head of Department in consultation with a staff member in t

professional body. During the review the professional body will assess compliance with expected professional body standards as presented below:

- i. curriculum design vis-a-vis industry advancements, technological developments, and societal needs
- ii. instructional delivery
- iii. faculty expertise
- iv. student outcomes.

The checklist to be administered can be obtained at the Academic Planning Unit and is downloadable online at www.unilag.edu.ng. Overall, the periodic reviews by professional bodies will foster continuous improvement, uphold standards of excellence, and ensure that academic programmes remain relevant, effective, and responsive to the needs of stakeholders and society.

Outcome of Reviews

At the conclusion of the review event, the Panel will convene to evaluate the results of the process.

These outcomes encompass:

- Affirmation of the academic quality and standards within the reviewed area.
- Recognition of exemplary practices and strengths observed during the review.
- Suggestions for improving and enhancing the subject area.
- Stipulations concerning areas requiring improvement and the timeframe within which these improvements should be implemented.

If the Panel is unable to affirm the quality and standards of provision, the Chair will consult with the Vice-Chancellor: Academic Planning Director and Director of Quality Assurance to determine the next steps.

The Secretary will compile a comprehensive report on the subject area, drawing from both the pre-submitted documentation and records of discussions held during the review event. This report will outline the rationale for confirming quality and standards, as well as any commendations, recommendations, and conditions identified.

The Department will be tasked with discussing and initiating actions in response to any identified conditions and recommendations. These actions will be integrated into the final report, which will then be submitted to the Academic Planning Committee. The Department is expected to provide progress updates during each subsequent semester to Academic Planning Unit.

3.3 NUC Accreditation of Academic Programmes

The accreditation exercise of university academic programmes in Nigeria by the National Universities Commission (NUC) serves as a critical quality assurance mechanism to ensure that higher education institutions maintain standards of excellence, relevance and continuous improvement. NUC sets a predetermined quality benchmarks in terms of curriculum, faculty expertise, instructional resources, and student learning outcomes.

Thus the NUC constitutes a team of academic experts within the relevant fields of study which is headed by a member not below the rank of a Professor. The accreditation exercise is conducted every 5 years. Departments are awarded either Full Accreditation for scores (70% and above), Interim/Partial Accreditation (50-69%) or a Denied/Fail score (49% and below).

Overall, the accreditation exercise conducted by the NUC plays a crucial role in upholding the integrity, global competitiveness, relevance, and excellence of university academic programmes in Nigeria, thereby contributing to the overall advancement of higher education and national development objectives.

3.4 Review of One or More Course Curriculum

Courses can be reviewed anytime during the session against the next academic session when the knowledge is deficit, knowledge is incorrect, new emerging knowledge is available, new skills set to enhance capability of the graduates are recommended by relevant stakeholders such as the teaching team, professionals, industry partners, students and guardians.

Framework for Course Curriculum Review

- i. Review of the course content can be initiated through a memo from course teaching team, industry partner or any other stakeholder. Minutes of meeting will be attached to the memo.

- ii. The Memo/ letter by the initiators to the Department Head should provide; (a) justification for the review, (b) state clearly the deficit content to be added, wrong information in the synopsis that should be removed, content not relevant to the curriculum at all, or content overlapping and taught in another course where it is better cited. (c) The new recommended Curriculum should be provided.
- iii. The Departmental APC will review the documents submitted and may then make a recommendation through the HOD to Academic Planning Unit
- iv. The Request for Curriculum review is processed through the central APC to Senate.
- v. Senate response is then comm

ownership, motivation, and relevance to their learning. The university will continue to raise the bar at the forefront of Student Centred and inclusive Learning,

Guidelines for Student Curriculum Development

The engagement of students in curriculum development will undertake the following key strategic principles;

- i. The Dean of Students Affairs will establish Student Advisory Committees (SAC) drawn from Departmental Student Association Executives, with diversity across the academic programmes
- ii. Academic Planning Unit will conduct a student's needs assessment to identify any specific topics or skills they feel are lacking in the current curriculum using surveys, suggestion boxes, or online forums, Focus groups, Interviews
- iii. Representatives of the SAC will be nominated to participate in collaborative workshops or meeting for Curriculum co-creation specifically to give student perspectives on (a) curriculum content, (b) teaching methods, and (c) assessment strategies
- iv. The collaborative sessions should be document for future referencing
- v. Review and use feedback from students to continuously improve the co-creation process.

4.2 Industry Co-Creation of Curriculum

The co-development of curriculum with industry is a dynamic process that requires active engagement from both educational institutions and industry partners. The collaboration helps ensure that educational programmes align with the needs and demands of the industry towards producing graduates who are well-prepared for the workforce. The roles for industry involvement include;

Ensure students projects to reflect real projects

Recommend industry partners

Mentorship/ networking opportunities for students and staff including career advice to students

Offer workshops for curriculum co-creation or training sessions for insights on latest industry practices and technologies

Undertake joint research initiatives that benefit both academia and industry

Guidelines for Industry Curriculum Development

The engagement of Industry in curriculum development will undertake the following key strategic principles;

- i. Departments will identify the relevant Industry Stakeholders and Professional bodies that are authorized to accredit academic programmes within the professional discipline
- ii. Academic Planning Unit will create a check list of specific areas required for inputs by Industry and Professional Partners which may include; programme moderation, Internships, Lecture presentation, Co-project supervision, research, Curriculum development, Accreditation
- iii. Academic Planning Unit will establish a Curriculum Advisory Team of Academia and Industry experts from subject areas who will brainstorm to generate ideas for curriculum content, teaching methods, project areas, and assessment strategies
- iv. The Advisory Team will evaluate and review feedback from students and faculty to continuously improve the co-creation process.

4.3 Parents and Guardian Co-Creation of Curriculum

The parents are important stakeholders represented by the Parents Association. The body is made up of representatives from diverse backgrounds and can serve as a platform to integrate parents and guardians into university curriculum development. By fostering collaboration between educators and families, UNILAG will co-create a curriculum that promotes student success and addresses real-world challenges.

Guidelines for Parents/ Guardian Curriculum Development

The engagement of Parents and guardians in curriculum development will undertake the following key strategic principles;

- i. The parents Association representatives (1 or 2) will be invited by APU during curriculum review.

6.0 Assessment Recommendations and Intervention Plan

After each review exercise, the recommendations by the assessors are submitted to the Vice Chancellor. The report is presented to Management and forwarded to the Director Academic Planning Unit for processing to the respective academic Departments.

The DAP writes through the Dean of the Faculty to the HOD to submit an intervention plan to address the gaps identified (if any) with specific timelines and expected outcomes. The report is reviewed by the Academic Planning Unit performs oversight for Monitoring and Evaluation using a stakeholder team that involves the Quality Assurance unit. Monitoring visitation is undertaken 6 months after the report is transmitted to the HOD. Any deficiency is expected to be regularized 12 months after transmission of the assessment report to the HOD

7.0 Oversight on Academic Teaching and Learning

The QA team provides oversight on teaching and learning while Academic Planning Unit provides oversight on the academic programme. Consequently, a

Appendix 1

**A: Checklist - Departmental Preliminary Assessment for New Academic Programme/
Course**

1. Programme / Course Rationale and Goals

State how the proposed programme objectives and goals align with the institution's mission and strategic plan

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Demonstrate the current or emerging need for the programme in the community

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.....

Identify the target audience and potential student demand

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2. Market Analysis

List the programmes/ courses which is(are) close in terms of curriculum that may compete with the proposed programme?

.....
.....

List the unique selling points of the proposed programme compared to the competing programme if any?

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.....

3. Curriculum Development

Will the programme require development of any new course(s) not offered currently in the university?

Will the programme require Professional Accreditation?.....

4. Faculty and Staff

Are there at least six (6) or more qualified Faculty with expertise in the programme field to commence?

Appendix 2: Academic Programme/ Course Review Panels

2.1 The panel comprises representatives capable of assessing the course's academic integrity in relation to internal and external reference points. Panel members should not have been involved in the course's development or delivery.

2.2 Panel membership typically includes a Chair, external academic subject expert(s), employer representative(s), Departmental representative(s), University of Lagos academic staff member(s), student representative(s), Quality Assurance representative, and Learning Services representative.

2.3 Panel membership for partner institutions mirrors the composition for University re-approval panels, with the inclusion of a senior staff member from the partner institution.

2.4 A member of the Validation team or senior University administrator services all re-approval panels.

2.5 In the absence of any panel members on the event day, the Chair's decision determines whether the re-approval event proceeds.

2.6 Peer observation may be arranged to facilitate staff development, subject to agreements and the Chair's discretion.

Criteria for Appointment

2.7 Chairs within the established pool should have substantive involvement in course delivery or management, chairing experience, understanding of University quality assurance processes, and relevant training.

2.8 Potential candidates for the pool are identified by the Quality Assurance and Enhancement team, subject to approval by the Quality Committee.

2.9 Chairs are allocated to events with consideration for independence and impartiality.

Criteria for External Panel Members

2.10 External academic panel members must demonstrate competence, qualifications, experience, and knowledge relevant to the subject discipline and course delivery.

2.11 Employer representatives should be senior professionals with sector experience relevant to the course.

2.12 External panel members may have additional criteria set by the Department.

2.13 Certain individuals or circumstances are not permissible for external panel membership to maintain impartiality and avoid conflicts of interest.

Responsibilities

2.25 The Chair is responsible for facilitating constructive dialogue, highlighting positive aspects of the course, and ensuring that issues are addressed in a manner that enhances the course's quality.

Concluding Meeting of the Panel

2.26 The final private meeting of the panel begins with each member giving their view on whether the course should be re-approved outright, re-approved with conditions/requirements, or not re-approved. The Chair makes the final decision if there is disagreement.

2.27 If the course is not re-approved, provisions are made to protect the interests of current students and applicants.

2.28 A unanimous decision of the panel is typically required, with the Chair making the final decision if necessary.

2.29 The panel identifies commendations, conditions, requirements, and recommendations, ensuring clarity of wording.

2.30 The course team receives feedback on the outcome, and deadlines are set for meeting conditions and responding to recommendations.

2.31 The Chair and Secretary ensure that draft reports are circulated for review and approval.

Academic Programme / Course Review Report

2.32 The Secretary, in collaboration with the Chair, produces a report summarizing the panel's discussions and outcome, including commendations, conditions, requirements, and recommendations.

2.33 The draft report is circulated to the full panel for review before being finalized and shared with the course team.

2.34 The report is submitted to the Quality Committee for information.

Academic Programme/ Course Team's Response

2.35 The course team submits a formal response addressing conditions, requirements, and recommendations, providing evidence of compliance.

2.36 The response includes amended documents, a summary of how each condition/requirement has been met, consideration of recommendations, a completed definitive course record, and other relevant evidence.

2.37 The response is normally signed off by the re-approval panel Chair, with a conditions meeting arranged if necessary.

2.38 Upon successful completion of the re-approval process, the course is re-approved, and a course re-approval outcome form is signed.

2.39 If conditions or requirements are not met, the matter is referred to the Quality Committee for further action.

Appendix 3

ACADEMIC PLANNING UNIT Programme Development and Reviews Documents

A: