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Enhancing Quality of Technology-Enhanced Learning at Jordanian Universities

Baseline Jordanian TEL Quality Assurance Framework

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Abstract

State-of-the-art of technology enhanced learning in Jordanian universities is presented in order to prepare the foundation for setting guidelines and providing recommendations to establish an appropriate national quality assurance framework in accordance with the international context. The report is mainly based on the results of a national online survey that has profiled the landscape of the higher education system and targeted the state of play of technology-enhanced learning in 30 universities in the country. The proposed framework is aimed at accelerating reform and adopting change that facilitates the introduction of revised QA elements regarding technology-enhanced learning with up-to-date standards, methodologies and accreditation system.

1. Introduction

Jordan is a small country with limited resources, a population of 6.53 million in 2013 and a quite high birth rate at per 2.36% which creates a high demographic pressure with the under 15s forming one-third of the population, which in turn requires significant public investment in education and employment. The share of 15-29 age group forms another 30% of the population. Indeed, around 75,000 young people enter every year into labour market, while the number of new jobs created does not exceed 45,000 annually. In addition, youth make up over 60% of the unemployed, and university graduates are the group with the highest unemployment rate. One of the key challenges for Jordan is to improve the modest and fluctuating economic growth with low employment creation capacity in order to accommodate the growth in the labour force. The ability to create employment is a critical component to promote economic growth and key for poverty reduction and equitable and sustainable globalization.

Jordan has always considered higher education as a strategic tool in steering and transforming the kingdom's economy and as an instrument for enhancing quality of life and social well-being of citizens. The contribution of higher education to economic development has been well elaborated in all key national policy documents and a new strategy has recently been revised with the view of transforming the education sector into both an effective and efficient tool for accelerated national development.

Students' enrolment in higher education has however been growing rapidly with an average rate above 30%, being one of the highest in the world, with a total number currently enrolled, both female and male, reaching a record high of over 280,000 students, almost 5% of the population. The trend is likely to increase in the coming years and the demand for access to higher education is expected to soar. The highly strained universities, both public and private, are suffering from this massification which is placing tremendous pressure on them to open up their doors wider to the increasing numbers of students.

This has placed great constraints on resources of universities specifically the inability of the system to improve student-professor ratio which stands at over 35, a quality indicator well below world standard. The present trend seems to worsen due to the brain-drain phenomena Jordan is facing and the need to recruit more academic staff, estimated at 6000 for the next 4 years, is a matter of urgency that cannot be overemphasized.



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Jordan must therefore be in the forefront in adopting the use of ICT in delivering quality education to ameliorate the shortage of teaching space in light of the expanded enrolment. In fact, the higher education policy stresses on the need to promote use of ICT for teaching, learning and networking of universities in order to ease the pressure on its limited available resources. Providing universities with high quality connectivity and eLearning services in order to enhance the efficiency and quality of teaching and learning are top priority issues. Accordingly, universities are seeking alternate forms of delivery to fulfill demand and need to transform into new-generation institutions where technology-enhanced learning (TeL) is implemented as a first step into this evolution. New developments in pedagogy and technology provide learners, teachers, organisations and society at large, with enormous advantages, including better access to and higher quality of learning and teaching, increased effectiveness of and extension to the capacity of the institution, economic advantages and better quality of assessment and benchmarking. Such benefits are recognized by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MoHE) which gives strong support for the initiative of developing new legal acts for regulating accreditation of TeL at national system levels. MoHE and the Higher Education Accreditation Commission (HEAC) place the matter of developing standards for the assessment of quality in TeL as a top priority. The Law of Higher Education strongly support development of e-Education and accordingly, universities are taking steps towards its implementation. However, the legislations in the Law for defining accreditation process in higher education institutions still does not have specific clauses for TeL and its quality significantly varies and is oriented towards implementing courses rather than full programmes.

In 2010, HEAC has defined the initial rules and regulations on accreditation standards for TeL study programmes (Appendix I) but these remain the basic tools for assuring quality measured as state wide threshold standard. Still, self-assessment and quality review of TeL programmes remains a major obstacle. As a matter of urgency, MoHE needs to define in detail amendments in existing legislations for quality assurance in HE, where various forms of TeL including distance and technology-enhanced learning.

In this report, attempts of developing key QA performance indicators for technology-enhanced learning in Jordan are made in order to make it internationally applicable and in accordance with the Bologna process. First, analysis of the existing TeL QA framework is carried out in order to establish solid bases of standards, methodologies and accreditation system. The current bylaws and practices in Jordan are actually compared to those of few countries in the region as well as the state-of-the-art of good practices in Europe and worldwide. A survey on the status quo of QA in TeL in Jordanian universities is then conducted and results discussed. A road map for basic guidelines is then established so as to enable universities to set up a QA framework and consequently arrive at a proper model for quality programmes in TeL and distant learning in the kingdom.

2. Landscape of Higher Education System

2.1 Universities

Jordan has a total of 30 universities: 10 public, 18 private and two regional universities. In addition, there are three university colleges. As for Community Colleges, there are a total of 50: 18 governmental that follow the Al-Balqa Applied University, two follow the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) for Palestine Refugees, four follow the Ministry of Health, five follow the Jordan Armed Forces and 21 private colleges. A public university is established by a decision of the Cabinet and endorsed by a Royal Decree, while a private university requires a decision from the Board of Higher Education.

2.1.1 Universities Resources

In the academic year 2014, about 274000 students are registered for Bachelor degree programmes in all universities in Jordan. Out of these, about 143000 are females. Thus the female ratio is close to 52 %. Students registered in public universities number about 206000, while those at private universities number only 68000. Thus public universities absorb about 70 % of all the students registered for Bachelor degrees.



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The number of graduate students in Jordan in 2011 was about 17540. Out of these, 8 390 are females. Thus the female ratio is about 48 %. Out of the graduate students, 13054 students (about 74 % of the total) study for Master degrees, 2116 students (about 12 % of the total) study for a Doctorate and about 2370 students (about 14 % of the total) study for a Higher Diploma. If we look at the female ratios, we find that about 45 % of those studying for the Master degrees are female, while the female ratio among PhD students is only about 34 %. The ratio of female students in higher diploma programmes is about 74 %. The great majority of graduate students are enrolled in public universities. The numbers of students enrolled in these universities are approximately 11150 in Masters Programmes, 1700 in PhD programmes, and 2 370 students are enrolled in the Higher Diploma. Therefore, about 87 % of all graduate students are in public universities, while those at private universities represent about 13 % of the total. The number of foreign students in Jordan in 2011 was 29 028. Of these, 9907 are females.

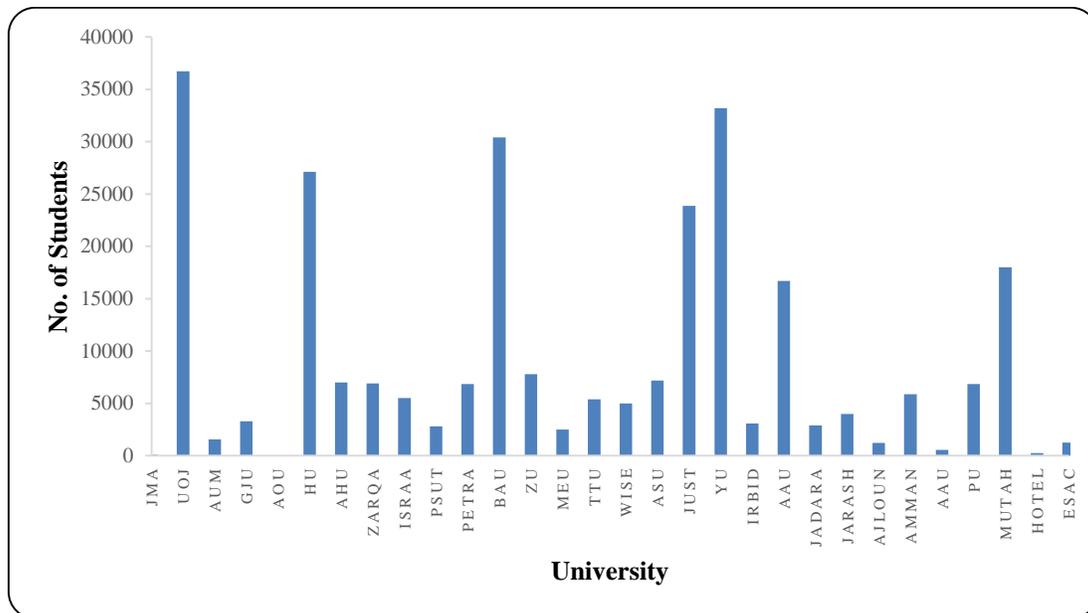


Fig. (1): Number of Undergraduate Students in Universities in Jordan.



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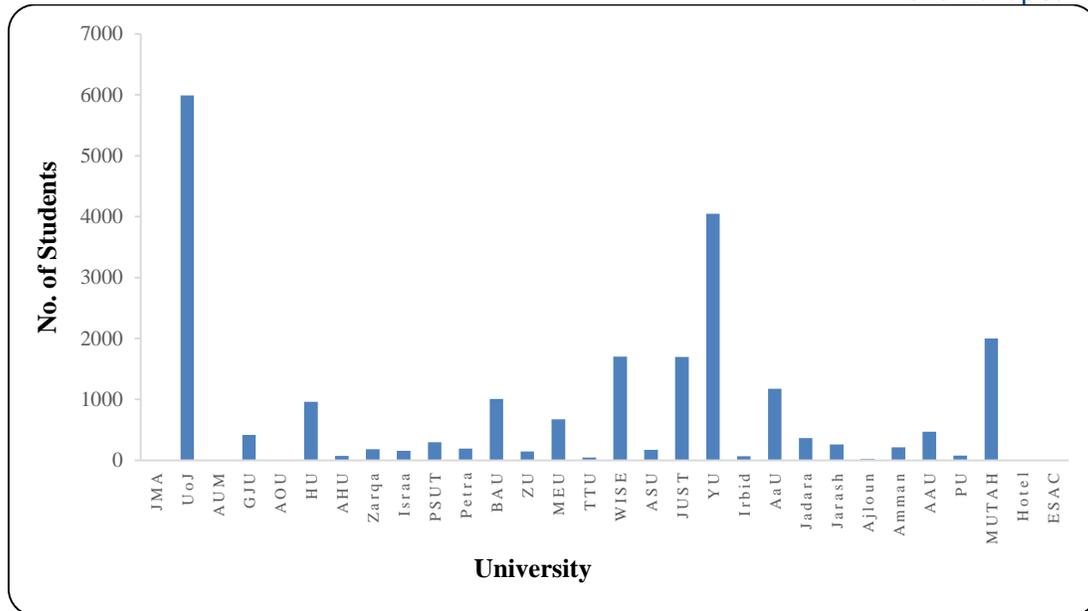


Fig. (2): Number of Postgraduate Students in Universities in Jordan.

Thus the female ratio is about 34 %. The majority of these students study for a Bachelor degree, while 3 668 are graduate students, representing about 13 % of the total. The ratio of foreign students who are studying for a Bachelor degree as compared to the total number of students at this level is about 11 %, while the ratio of foreign students at graduate level is about 21 %. The majority of graduate students study for a Master degree, while those studying towards a PhD number 438 and those studying for the higher diploma number 217.

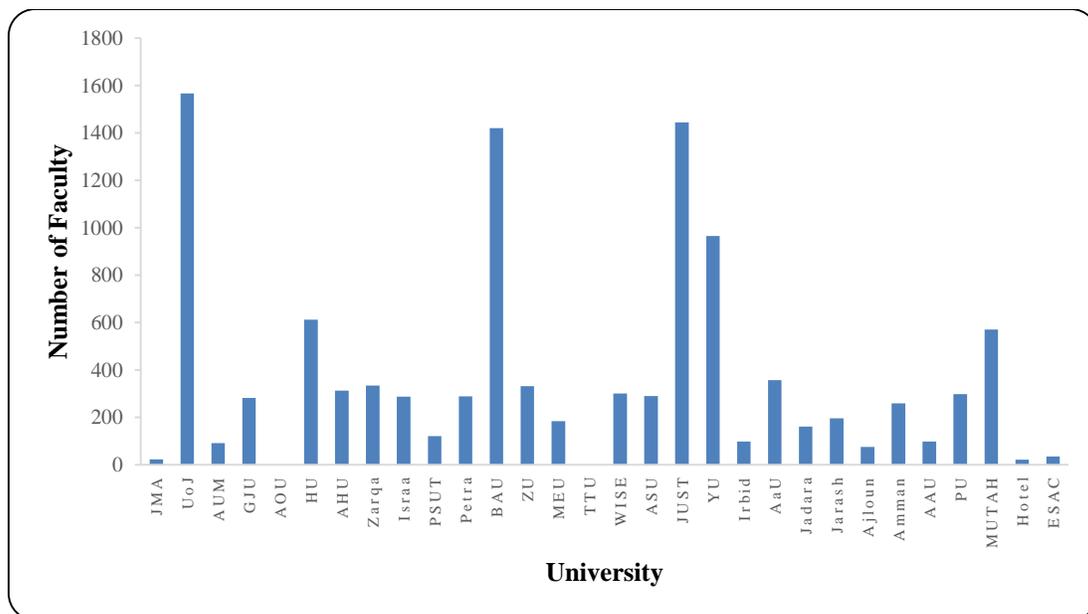


Fig. (3): Number of Faculty Members in Universities in Jordan.

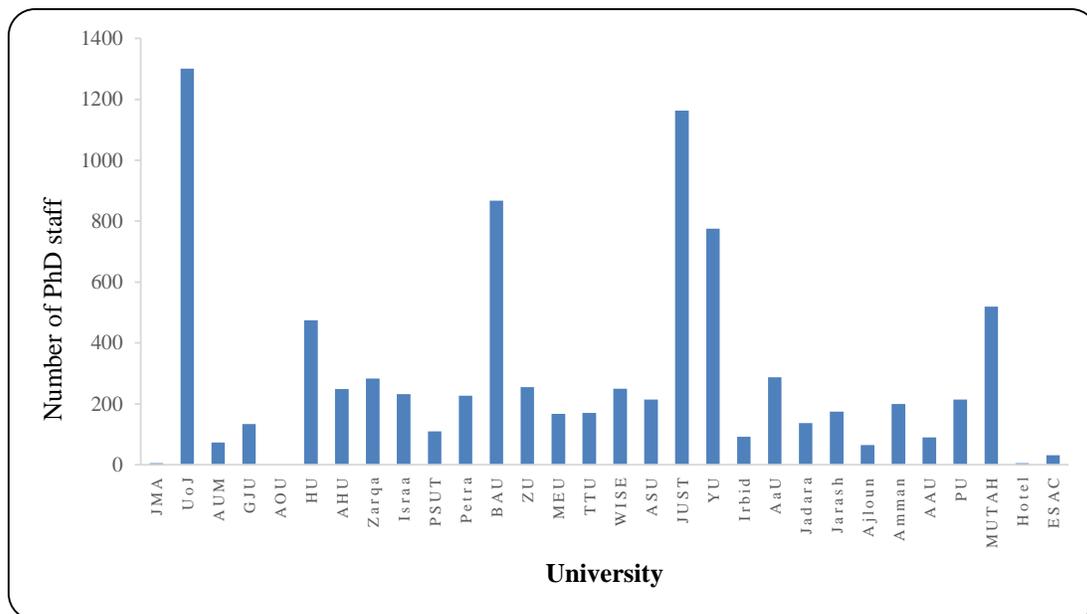


Fig. (4): Number of PhD staff/Faculty Members in Universities in Jordan.

2.1.2 University Governance

Each university has a Board of Trustees. For a public university, it consists of a Chairman and 12 members appointed through a Royal Decree upon recommendation by the Prime Minister. For a private university, the Board of Trustees has 14 members in addition to the Chairman appointed by the Board of Higher Education. The Board of Trustees undertakes a number of responsibilities, including the following:

- Setting the general policy of the higher education institution.
- Approving the strategic and annual plans based upon the recommendation of the University Council.
- Following-up of implementing and evaluating the strategic and annual plans.
- Evaluating the academic, administrative, financial and infrastructure performance of the university.
- Appointing the Vice-Presidents and Deans.
- Recommending to the Board of Higher Education the establishment of faculties, departments, institutes, centres, academic programmes, and specialisations.
- Determining the tuition and study fees
- Approving the annual budget and annual report, after recommendation from the University Council.

The University Council is chaired by the President and comprises of representatives from the various categories of stakeholders, including representatives from the local communities. It is responsible for the quality of the services offered by the university (teaching, research, training and community service). The review of the annual plan for infrastructure and recommending it to the Board of Trustees, recommending tuition and fees, approval of the annual budget and performance and accomplishment reports before submission to the Board of Trustees.

2.1.3 Curriculum Content

The structure of the curriculum is unified at all universities. Each study plan includes

- Courses required from all university students, irrespective of their field of study (these are called university requirements)
- Courses required by all students in same college (called college requirements)
- Courses required from all students in same department (called departmental requirements).



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University requirements include courses of a general nature, such as languages, humanities, and information technology. College requirements include courses needed for the college. Departmental requirements include courses that are needed to acquire knowledge and/or skills in a particular discipline or specialty. Some departments specify a certain number of hours for specialty requirements, in those cases when a department offers different specialties. Although there is no specific regulation from the ministry about this, some regulations from the Ministry of Higher Education may refer to such broad components of the curriculum. As an example, the ministry does not specify the particular courses that are needed in a certain department, but may determine the minimum number of courses (or credit hours) necessary for graduation. Each of the university, faculty, and departmental requirements may include a number of obligatory courses and some elective courses. Very few electives may be totally free, but most of the elective courses must be selected from specific lists.

Taking the above structure and comments into consideration, each institution defines its own curriculum. The curriculum is first proposed and discussed by the concerned department, then submitted to the relevant faculty for discussion and approval by the Faculty Council, then submitted to the Deans' Council for final approval. A committee chaired by a Vice-President involving four to five Deans (named the *Curriculum Committee*) usually discusses in depth all curricula submitted to the Deans' Council and this committee recommends to the Deans' Council the final curriculum for approval.

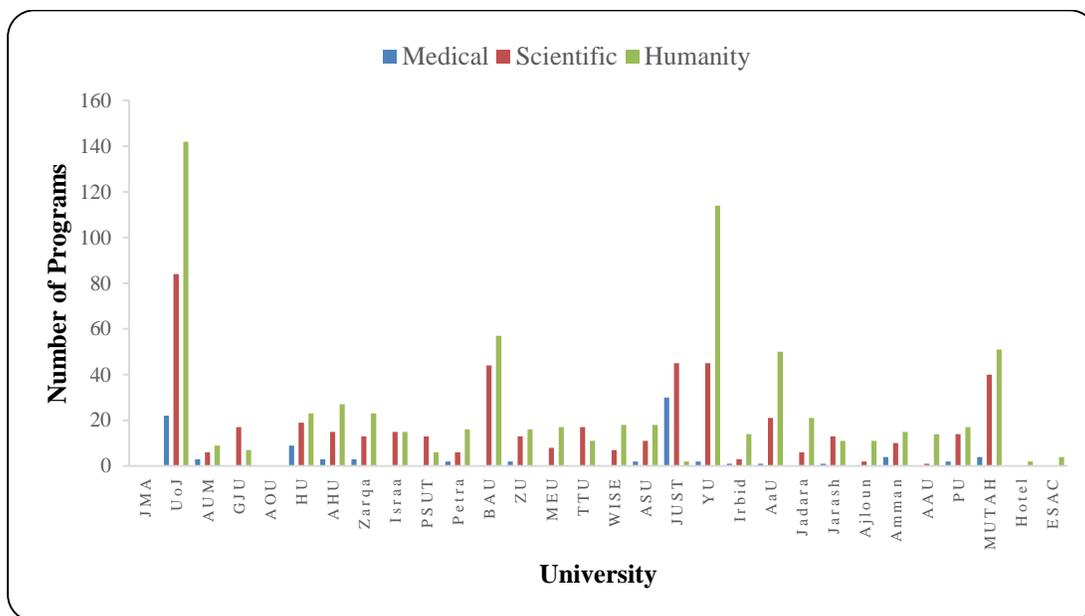


Fig. (5): Number of Programs in Offer According to Discipline.

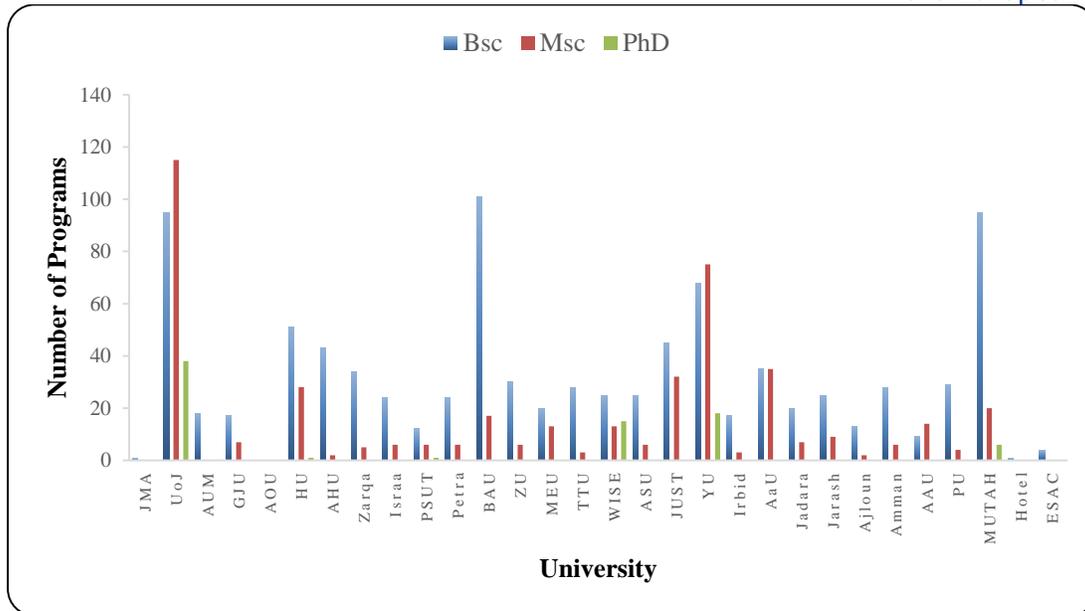


Fig. (6): Number of Programs in Offer According to Degree.

2.1.4 Assessment, Progression, Certification and Degree

Usually each Bachelor degree course requires students to sit for at least two semester exams and one final exam. Laboratory courses may require students to sit for one written exam and take one practical (oral) exam. Semester work (exams plus any other assignments, projects, etc.) has a 60 % weighting while the final exam has a 40 % weighting in the overall grade of the student. Graduate courses require at least one written exam during a semester, and the other exam may be substituted by projects, studies or research. Semester work for graduate courses has a 50 % weighting, while the final exam has a 50 % weighting. In order to pass a course, an undergraduate student must obtain 50 % or more, while a graduate student must obtain at least 70 % in each course. The grade point average for students to remain in good standing (i.e. not to be put under probation) and to graduate upon completion of all requirements is 60 % for undergraduates and 75 % for graduate students. If the cumulative grade of a student falls below these thresholds, they receive a written warning asking him/her to raise the grade in a period specified in the warning. If the student fails to do that, then they are given a final warning and if they still fail to raise the grade, the student will be dismissed from the university, college or department.

Departments usually develop study plans that guide students from the time they enter university until completing the requirements and obtaining a degree. A study plan guides the student for what courses to register in each semester. For obligatory courses, the courses will be shown in different semesters of the study plan according to their levels. Except for the entry level courses (those taken by students in their first year at the university), each course usually has one or more prerequisites. A student may enroll in a course after successfully passing the prerequisite(s). In a couple of specialties, namely medicine and dentistry, a student must pass one year in order to continue to the next. If a student fails one or two subjects, they are allowed to re-examination before the beginning of the next year. Only if they pass such subjects, may they continue to the next year. Otherwise the year will need to be repeated. Besides these cases, universities do not accredit any prior experiential learning such as work, community or volunteer experience.

In the past few years, the ministry has introduced exit exams to assess the quality of graduates and their universities. These exams were conducted in few disciplines as a pilot scheme and hence they were not obligatory. But the results of the exams were published, showing the ratios of students passing in different universities. In the case of professional specialties (engineering, pharmacy, veterinary medicine, medicine,



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dentistry, law etc.), a student needs to register in the professional association. Some associations have further requirements such as practical experience or internships. As an example, both medicine and law require students to conduct supervised practice for one year before they are allowed to practice on their own.

2.2 Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

The Council of Higher Education was established in 1982 in response to the increased demand of regulating and planning the policies of higher education. In 1985, the council was renamed to the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) and was consequently merged within the Ministry of Education in 1998. It was re-established in 2001 and was renamed as the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research in order to create a culture of excellence, innovation and scientific research in higher education and to regulate the relationship with institutions of higher education. MoHE works on supervising the sector of higher education in Jordan through the Higher Education Council which assumes the responsibility of establishing the general policy for the higher education sector, the Scientific Research Support Fund and the Higher Education Accreditation Commission.

2.2.1 Universities Recognition and Certificates Equivalency

The Department of Universities Recognition and Certificates Equivalency (URCE) and the Higher Committee of Certificates Equivalency (HCCE), at the MoHE are both empowered with authentication and recognition of certificates and academic documents issued by institutions of higher education in Jordan and abroad. Both URCE and HCCE follow specific procedure and guideline that aid in the recognition of non-traditional and distance learning degrees and institutions. The URCE carries out the duties of receiving and verifying applications from graduates for certificates equivalency, providing HCCE with relevant information, issuance of the documents of equivalency in accordance with the resolutions of HCCE, following-up the consequences of the implementation of these resolutions with the concerned authorities, and documenting and archiving HCCE resolutions thereof. The URCE analyse the necessary information on HE systems and institutions abroad; set-up the criteria for selection of non-Jordanian institution of higher education to be recognized by the Ministry, and issuing the lists of accredited institutions in the Official Gazette. EQTeL should enable both URCE and HCCE to follow specific procedure and guidelines that aid in the recognition of non-traditional and distance learning degrees and institutions.

2.2.2 Scientific Support Research Fund

The Jordan Scientific Research Support Fund (SRSF) was established in 2007 as a financially and administratively independent government institute, responsible for encouraging and supporting scientific research in Jordan. The SRSF main objectives are:

- Provision of financial support to scientific research projects submitted by Jordanian researchers.
- Provision of support for the resolution of technical problems faced by Jordanian companies and institutions in order to develop its industry and products and enable it to improve its competitive edge.
- Provision of support for enabling the utilization of science and knowledge in technological scientific research and guiding it towards problem resolution. This includes support to research centers and incubators that are able to develop creativity and market the products of its research.
- Supporting distinguished students through provision of study and research scholarships and support their higher education research programs.

The fund spent approximately JD14 million on 189 funded projects in the period 2011-2015. The SRSF supports projects in basic science as well as applied fields such as engineering, nano- and bio-technology, energy, water, environment, telecommunications and information technology, medical, pharmaceutical, agricultural and veterinary sciences. It also funds research in the humanities and social sciences such as economics but particularly encourages research that seeks to suggest solutions to Jordan's most critical



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issues: energy and water. The fund also provides students the opportunity to complete their graduate studies in Jordan. For example, it has provided students with 250 MA and 32 PhD scientific excellence scholarships with a cost of JD3 million. Scholars of sufficient merit can receive post-doctoral grants through the SRSF, which allow them to spend one academic year at a prestigious university or scientific institution abroad. The fund also support 20 internationally accredited scientific journals at Jordanian universities as of 2013.

2.3 QA in Higher Education

Recent quality assurance (QA) bylaws for higher education have placed particular emphasizes on the creation of an internal quality assurance process in each university with appropriate infrastructure to oversee standards, implement proper guidelines and manage procedures within each institution. Accordingly, a new model for internal QA management to guide universities through the process of identifying priorities, determining principles, and implementing procedures across the different context of QA and stakeholders is proposed. The model is based on comparing current QA policies and practices of Jordanian universities with European experience and then sharing experiences in terms of variation and extent of applicability. The management model naturally assumes support by an infrastructure in the form of a bureau with qualified academic and administrative staff in order to ensure its successful implementation. In addition, the engagement and involvement of all stakeholders in the higher education institutions including top management, faculty members, students, administrative staff and local community, is an essential element to successfully design, apply and implement the proposed model.

2.3.1 The Higher Education Accreditation Commission

The Higher Education Accreditation Commission (HEAC) was established in 2007 on the basis of the law issued in March 2007. This Commission replaced the Accreditation Council, which lasted from 1999 to 2007. The Commission is autonomous, from the financial and administrative points of view. The 2007 Accreditation Commission Law was amended in 2009 to make the Commission report to the Prime Minister instead of the Minister of Higher Education. The Commission aims at enhancing the quality of higher education, provides quality control and encourages Jordanian higher education institutions to be open and interact with international institutes and organisations in charge of accreditation and quality control. It also aims to develop higher education using international norms and standards.

According to the Accreditation Law, the HEAC develops accreditation and quality control criteria, ensures that higher education institutions abide by such criteria and other relevant laws and regulations, accredits institutes and their programmes and ensures that institutions conduct self-assessment. Both public and private universities fall within the mandate of the HEAC.

Establishing private higher education institutions needs the approval of the Board of Higher Education. There is a well-defined procedure concerning the application form and documents that should be submitted for this purpose. In general, the application should be well justified to secure the approval of the Board, especially as there are now about 20 private universities in Jordan and all geographic areas and programmes of study are covered by private and/or public universities. Public universities are established, based upon a recommendation of the Board of Higher Education and endorsed by a Royal Decree.

In order to keep pace with the massive and rapid expansion of higher education institutions (HEIs) in Jordan, regulatory step have been adopted to ensure its quality and raise its level to maintain excellence and competitiveness. In the period from 1990 to 1999, Council of Higher Education supervised the accreditation and quality assurance of HEIs. Then, the responsibilities were shifted to the Accreditation Council from 1999 to 2007 where the standards for Institution (general) and program (specific) accreditations were implemented to supervise and follow up the activities in private universities. The Accreditation Council was then replaced by Higher Education Accreditation Commission (HEAC) with issuing Act (20) for the year 2007 dated 25/3/2007. It was published in the Official Gazette No. (4821) on 16/4/2007, and the work according to this act was begun on 15/6/2007. This act gives financial and administrative independence.



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Then, HEAC worked on the formulation of its vision, mission and strategic goals in an institutional methodology to promote higher education into world-class levels. In 2008, the National Center for Tests was established by Law No. (75) under the umbrella of HEAC to conduct tests and utilize tools to measure activities of HEIs in terms of their inputs, processes, and outputs aiming to the ultimate goal of ensuring quality.

To attain the purpose of establishing HEAC, a strategic plan has been drawn by Jordanian expert that consists of goal and objective to achieve these goals. The main goals of this plan can be summarized as follows:

- 1) Developing program accreditation standards and institutionalize procedures of implementation and follow up.
- 2) Ensuring development and updating procedures and mechanisms of quality assurance and applying it in HEIs.
- 3) Determining and measuring outcomes of academic programs offered by HEIs and set criteria and assessment tools that indicate the achievement of objectives.
- 4) Openness of HEIs on regional and international institutions that are responsible for development of higher education and quality assurance.
- 5) Competitiveness among Jordanian HEIs based on ranking in line with international standards and criteria.
- 6) Implementation of quality standards in all HEAC departments and units.

2.3.2 QA Standards and Guidelines

The challenge for all higher education institutions (HEIs) worldwide is how best to meet both national and international standards whilst still retaining their uniqueness and personality. Whilst a number of HEIs in Jordan enjoy good reputations for their quality, the new national approach represents both a challenge and an opportunity for all HEIs to publically demonstrate how good they are and how they are improving. In line with global trends, Jordanian HEIs will, from now on, be evaluated through a consistent set of criteria and procedures, resulting in judgments that could lead to ranking. Consequently, HEIs in Jordan will be subject to a new regime of external quality assurance undertaken through the Higher Education Accreditation Commission (HEAC). In order to help HEIs prepare for the new external evaluations and also ensure a commitment to on-going quality improvement and enhancement, many universities have already begun developing their own Quality Assurance Bureaus (QABs) which have similar roles to the valuable 'quality offices' developed within many European HEIs over the past decades, most recently stimulated by the very successful quality assurance action line within the Bologna Process. These QABs are at the 'hub' of the relationship between each university and HEAC and is therefore crucial to the success of both national ambitions for (internationally) transparent QA outcomes and also for HEI's efforts to enhance their own activities, and have their advances recognized.

European experience in the development of good practice is founded on the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG). The three parts of the ESG identify the key aspects of: internal QA within and by HEIs themselves; the external evaluation of HEIs and the effectiveness of their internal QA; and also the external evaluation of the external QA agencies themselves. Such European experiences, and the development of good practices, could contribute strongly to establishing increasingly effective internal QA within Jordanian HEIs and the development of good working relationships between the HEAC and Jordanian HEIs and their QABs, to their mutual benefits.

HEAC has recently adopted 12 standards for the external quality assurance of higher education institutions, including one on the "Management of Quality Assurance" within each HEI. These standards will need to be applied within the contexts of the different visions, missions and objectives of the individual HEIs, and how they manage their different approaches to the delivery of their programmes and research.



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EQuAM was designed to provide a comparative review of the ways that the partner universities in Europe and in Jordan manage and organize quality assurance. In particular, a comparative evaluation was made of the roles of ESG and HEAC Standards. In addition to providing a valuable insight into the extent to which the national, regional and international expectations compare, the exercise also aimed to provide input into the development of Guidelines for the further establishment of QABs within Jordanian universities, so that they might best align with national and international expectations. The anticipated benefits of the project are that such comparative alignments should assist in the greater mobility and employability of graduates. The project has focused on current practices and also that planned for the immediate future. This was intended to ensure that the outcomes will primarily be realistic and practical. Since the activities have, however, also been set within an integrated framework they should additionally provide a theoretical but meaningful contribution to the further development of ‘HE QA policy’ at national, regional and institutional levels.

EQuAM was designed to provide an exchange of knowledge, drawing on the experiences gained in Europe, about how individual institutions can most successfully demonstrate their strengths in ways related to their particular contexts. The project will develop and establish a Model encompassing principles, priorities, guidelines and procedures to support Jordanian HEIs and their QABs as they seek to establish internal quality assurance measures that are aligned to the national requirements and international expectations. By identifying the agreed principles and priorities for internal QA, Jordanian HEIs will share a ‘platform’ through which they can demonstrate their quality whilst retaining their unique contexts and contributions. Guidelines on how these principles and priorities will be manifested in the internal QA of each HEI, and a shared set of procedures that meet the needs and expectations of HEAC, will complete the proposed model. It is essential that the model is accompanied by training and capacity building to ensure that it is applied within and across independent and autonomous HEIs with outcomes that are comparable where appropriate and consistent where required.

This White Paper summarises the significant outcomes of the work to date and makes proposals for developments in policy and in practice, concerned with effective and efficient evaluation of higher education provision within national (Jordanian and European) and international contexts.

To map the landscape of IQA infrastructure, practices, productivity, and effectiveness, compatibility and compliance with national and international guidelines and trends, a survey was designed and conducted based on the findings of the first phase of the evidence-based activities. The number of universities responded to this survey were 27 (10 public and 17 private) out of a total of 32 universities. It was agreed that only the head of QA offices in each Jordanian universities should answer the survey in order to obtain views from the same category of QA stakeholders as president, vice presidents, and other stakeholders may have different views towards QA issues.

In order to analyze the response and quantify the manner in which universities behave, each item in the responses is given a numerical value (a weight). By doing this, we avoided some confusion in assessing responses in previous matching exercises where letters were used. For the compliance parts, the following table is used in analysis:

Response	Compliance	Weight
	Fully Comply	2
	Partially Comply	1
	Not Comply	0

To order the criteria items, we give each order a number such that

- Highest importance/priority = 1



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- Lowest importance/priority = 7 (ESG), or 12 (HEAC)

This implies that the standard or criterion of the highest importance or priority has the smallest total of scores, whereas the standard or criterion of the lowest importance or priority has the largest total of scores. The survey of Jordanian universities has provided evidence of the ‘Gap’ between external expectations and internal capacities and capabilities. It was found that the degree of compliance with HEAC criteria and ESG’s are different with the lowest compliance are with ESG #1 (policy and procedures for quality assurance), ESG #4 (quality assurance of teaching staff), ESG#6 (information systems), as shown in Figure 7, and HEAC Criterion #11 (community engagement), as shown in Fig. (8). In addition, we can conclude from Fig. (7) and Fig. (8) that the highest compliance are with ESG #3 (assessment of students) and HEAC criterion #3 (students and students support services). The most important are ESG #2 (approval, monitoring and periodic review of programs and awards), ESG #3 (assessment of students), as shown in Fig. (9), and HEAC Criterion #2 (educational programmes and their effectiveness), as shown in Fig. (10), due to very high competition in jobs locally and internationally and recruitment of students locally for private universities and internationally for public universities. Not surprisingly, both public and private universities think that ESG #7 (public information) is the least important due to admission is being controlled by government, reputation of HE in Jordan, and competition of funds in Jordan is different from that in EU. In addition, we simply noticed in Fig. (10) that criterion #11 is the least important HEAC criteria as the survey revealed. When it comes to priority, Fig. (11) (priority in accordance with ESGs) and 12 (priority according to HEAC criteria) demonstrate that ESG #2 (approval, monitoring and periodic review of programs and awards), ESG #4 (quality assurance of teaching staff), HEAC Criterion #4 (faculty members), and HEAC Criterion #3 (students and students support services) are the highest priority, whereas ESG #7 (public information) and HEAC criterion #11 are the lowest priority.

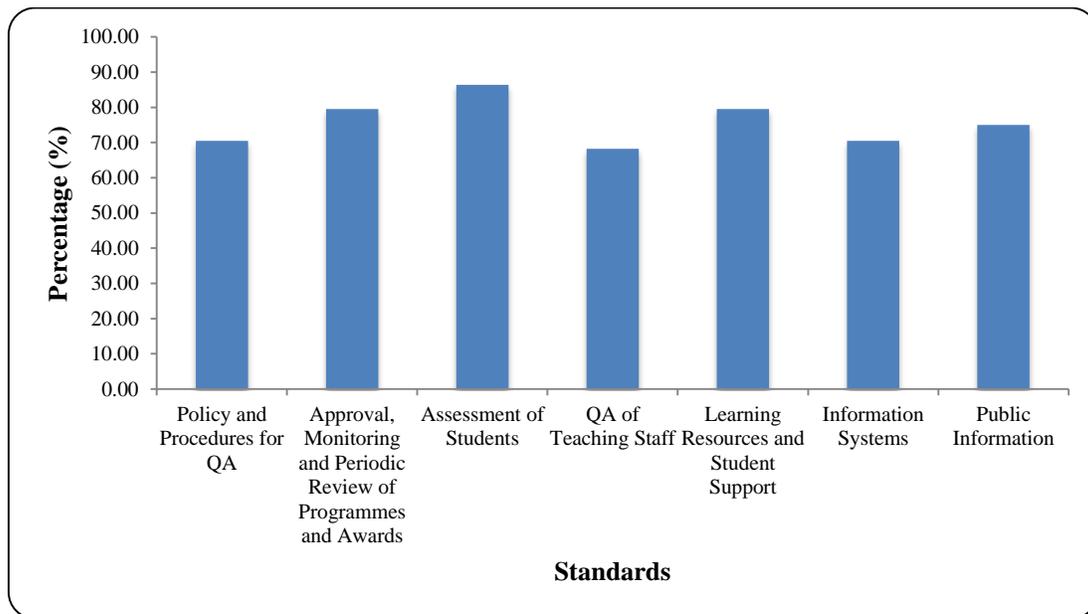


Fig. (7): Compliance with ESGs



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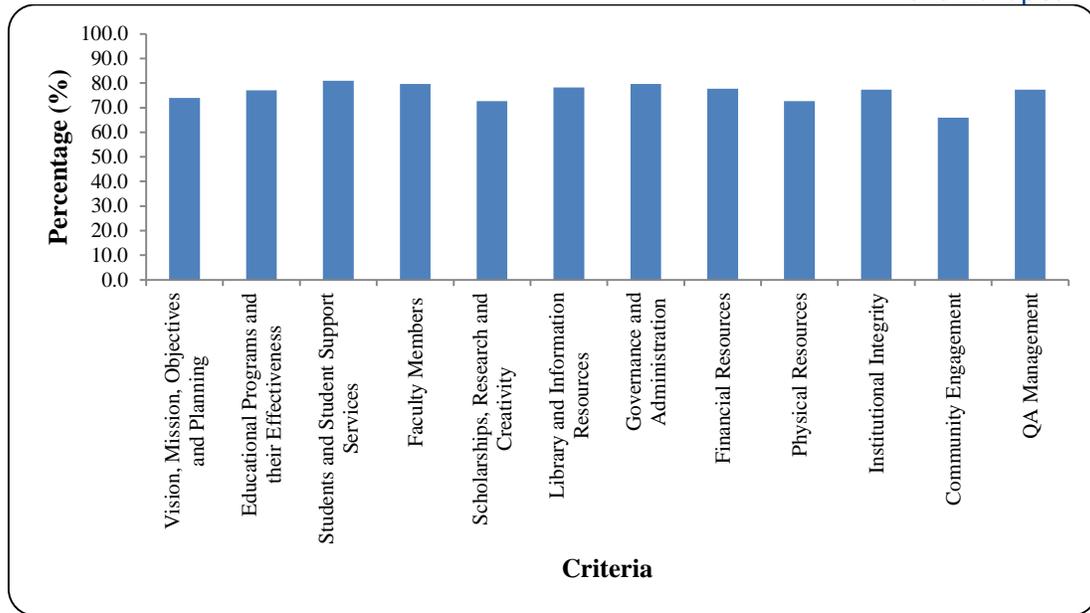


Fig. (8): Compliance with HEAC Criteria.

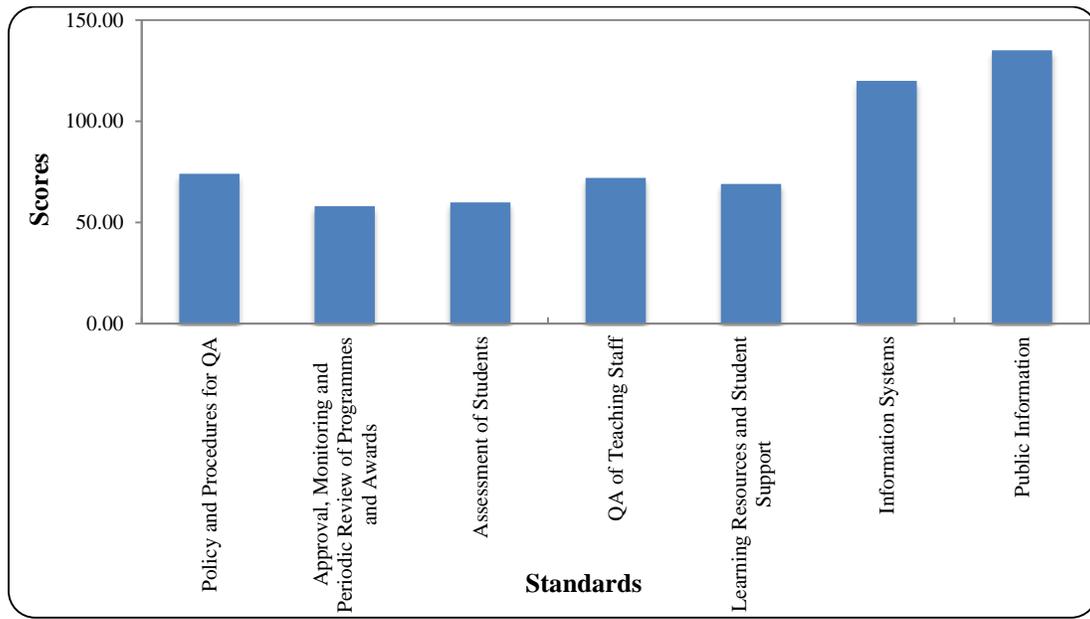


Fig. (9): Importance in Accordance with ESGs



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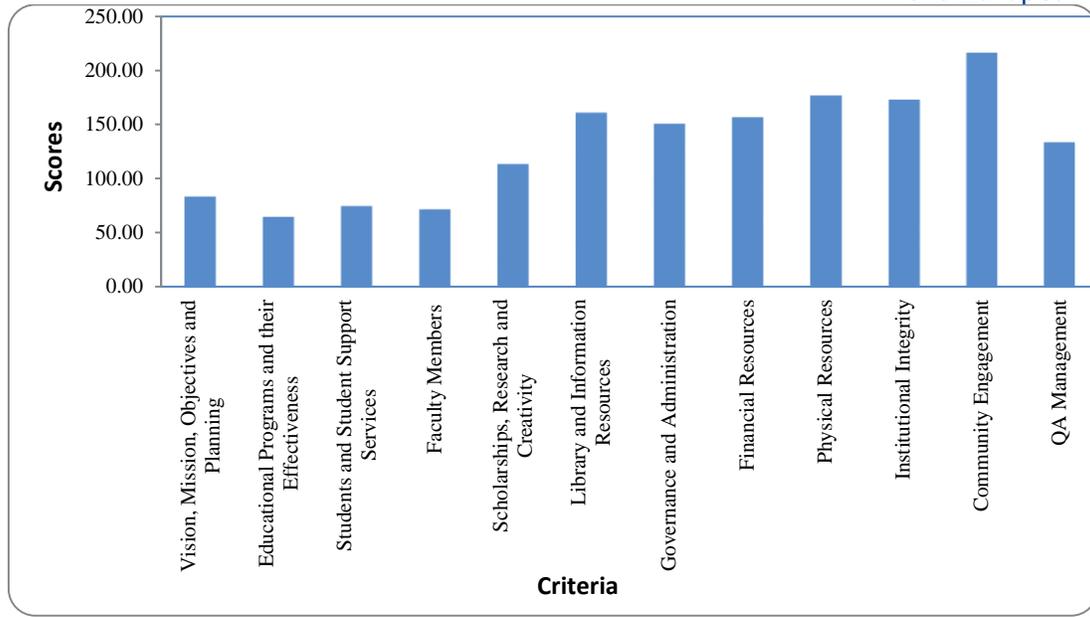


Fig. (10): Importance According to HEAC Criteria

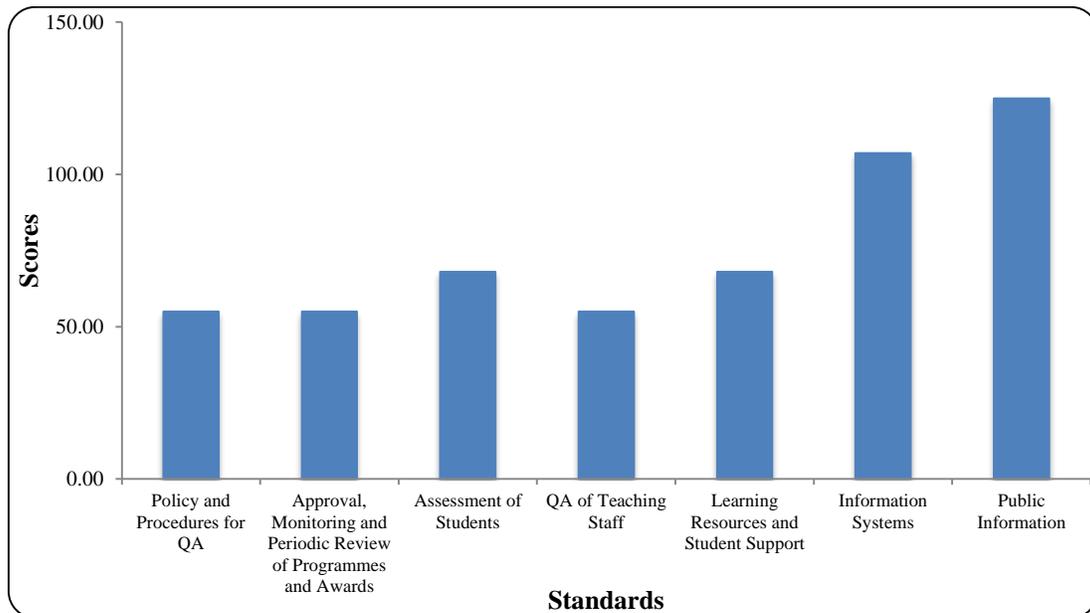


Fig. (11): Priority in Accordance with ESGs

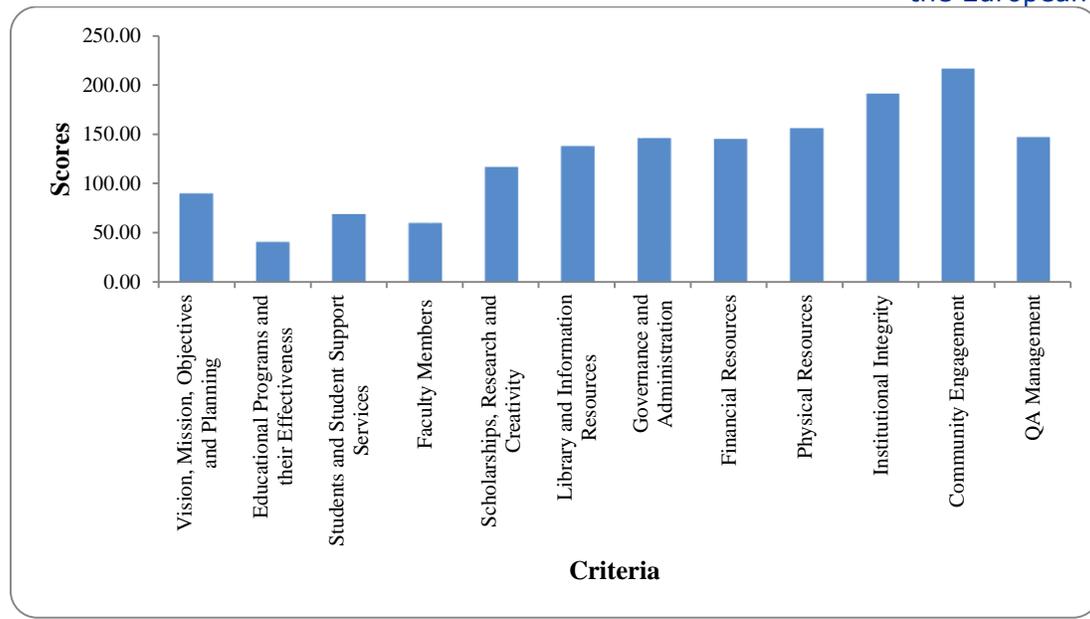


Fig. (12): Priority According to HEAC Criteria

Based on discussions and analysis of ESG and HEAC standards, we can conclude that there are significant similarities between the 12 HEAC criteria and 7 ESGs. A single HEAC criterion may be embedded in more than one ESG, and vice versa. However, HEAC criterion #8 (financial Resources) does not have a clear comparable ES and ESG #7 does not have a clear comparable HEAC Criterion. With partial compliance in all partner universities (Jordanian and European) with HEAC and ESG, it is recommended to make "Centre of Attention" on the following notions:

- Clarification/Modification: ESG #7 (public information) and HEAC criterion #8 (financial resources)
- Enhancement: ESG #1 (policy and procedures for QA), ESG #4 (QA of teaching staff), ESG #6 (information systems), HEAC Criterion #1 (institution's vision, mission, objectives and planning)
- Importance and Priority: ESG #7 (public information), HEAC Criterion #11 (community engagement)

In summary, HEAC criteria should be clarified, modified (combined, deleted,...), and enhanced with emphasis on ESG #7 and HEAC criterion #11, which the Jordanian universities pay currently less attention.

2.3.3 Internal QA System

QA in higher education institutions (HIEs) in Jordan has become a strategic key issue in recent years. A series of measures have been undertaken by HEAC to ensure proper implementation of QA guidelines and processes in the higher education system. This is manifested in the recently issued bylaws which focus only on external evaluation and assessment of academic programmes. The bylaws have, however, placed particular emphasizes on the creation of Quality Assurance Bureau (QAB) in each Jordanian university without giving any proper details for internal QA management, and left the manner to oversee guidelines and manage procedures open for each university to decide and without going into details.

The Tempus project entitled "Enhancing Quality Assurance Management in Jordanian Universities", EQuAM, comes as a response to this challenge. It aims mainly at developing a "Quality Assurance Model



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for Internal Quality Assurance Management in Higher Education Institutions in Jordan” that will be designed and piloted during the lifetime project. The model includes principles, priorities, guidelines, and procedures across the different context of quality assurance and stakeholders.

A number of activities have been already carried out by EQUAM partners aimed at creating a QA management model for Jordanian universities based on evidence on the ground of the current policies and practices, through comparing QA systems in both Jordan and Europe and then sharing experiences in terms of variation and extent of applicability. Two matching exercises, three workshops, two roundtables, meetings, surveys and field research have been conducted and contributed to better understand the current QA situation in Jordan. Outcomes of these activities have been discussed thoroughly and conclusions that are applicable for the Jordanian universities are drawn in the form of two reports.

The specific objectives of EQUAM are to make a comparative analysis of current QA practices and outputs from Jordanian universities against the expectations of HEAC standards, and their equivalents at regional and international levels, analyse the extent and methods by which QA agencies in Europe provide support for universities and their development and implementation of internal QA capacities. In addition, EQUAM aimed to develop the draft model with all associated principles, priorities, guidelines and procedures for internal management of QA within Jordanian institutions and their QABs, best align to HEAC expectations as well as European and international standards and guidelines, pilot the draft model in different types of institutions to inform its completion, develop training programmes for expert evaluators to promote the model and enhance its impact, support the model’s sustainability through targeted dissemination and monitor and evaluate its uptake and early impact.

A number of activities have been already carried out by all EQUAM partners who aimed at building a strong evidence-based proposal for policy and practices through discussing QA systems in Jordan and Europe and sharing the experience in terms of variation and extent of applicability. The activities of the project commenced with scoping of QA practices in Jordan that included a survey of the current situation, a workshop on gap analysis between Europe and Jordan, which resulted in producing a white paper on QA in Jordan. The state-of-the-art of European QA was also investigated through a number of activities that included two matching exercises and a roundabout on internal QA management practices in Europe.

Partners subsequently looked at ways to develop a QA management model through a series of workshops on shared QA management principles, priorities, guidelines, standards and procedures. A full report was drafted and a model of internal QA management in Jordan was then suggested. Piloting to test the proposed model were then carried out in 3 partner universities; Yarmouk University, Princess Sumaya University for Technology and Tafila Technical University, showing encouraging initial results.

The project is still going on for one more year in which capacity building exercises will be carried out alongside training sessions on institutional QA management and cooperation, external evaluation and setting up and empowering QA bureaus in each of the 6 partner universities in Jordan. The project will conclude with multiplying-effect workshops that will be conducted in Jordanian universities other than those which are partners in the project in order to disseminate the project and have the widest possible impact. An international conference will also be organised.

The following are the most important findings of the survey:

- Almost all QABs have written Mission/Vision/Objective.
- One third (of 6 partners) do not implement QAB regulations.
- QABs number of staff ranges between 1 and 8.
- QA councils are available but they are not active.
- Basis for employing academics/administrative staff in QAB do not take proper qualifications for QA field into consideration.
- No formal training is provided for personnel in QABs. On-the-job and self-trainings are provided.
- Accreditation and International QA are the most popular activities in QABs.
- Infrastructure looks poor; small number of old PCs and black/white printers are available in QABs.



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- Software related to QA is not available at any QAB.

It may be concluded that internal QA has little interest among Jordanian universities while interest in international QA seems to super passes that of the national HEAC QA standards and that the infrastructure of QABs is still poor. Furthermore, although QABs were established with clear mission/vision/objective, they do not get the weight they deserve in HEIs. This is clear from the mechanism employed in assigning staffs, their number and infrastructure. QAB regulations should therefore be written and implemented to reflect the look-for purpose. Academic and non-academic staff should be employed according to certain qualifications and measures and should be trained continuously according to a well-drafted plan designed by experts.

2.3.4 QA Certificate (QAC)

HEAC aims at promoting the level of performance of higher education intitutions in Jordan, increasing its competitivness on national, regional and global levels, and setting standards that ensure continuation of its quality. To do so, HEAC set a quality system of eight criteria with a uniform pattern such that each criterion is divided into subcriterion with items, indicators, and proofs. In order to guarantee the continuous improvement, the Quality Assurance Certificate is divided into three level; gold, silver, and bronze, with defined rubrics for each level. In addition to QAC at institutional level, HEAC launched QAC at program levels with the same institutional QA criteria but modified to take into account the nature of these program. Currently, QAC is optional for institutions and program levels except for medicine where it is mandatory. HEAC is planning to consider QAC as a basis for ranking Jordanian higher education institutes in the near future.

At the institutional level, HEAC sets a set of conditions for eligibilty of higher education institutes that can apply for QAC. The institution should offer academic programs after the general secondary certificate, have institutional and program accreditations by HEAC, have at least two batches of graduates, and have a penalty during the year prior to the submission of the application. In addition, HEAC issued a guide of procedures to help institutions and programs have clear path during QAC process. These procedures are summarized as follows:

1. Candidacy request shall be submitted in order to obtain quality assurance certificate.
2. Institution Eligibility shall be examined by HEAC.
3. Having met the eligibility requirements, institution would be informed with the approval of request.
4. Pay required pre-condition fee, associated with self-assessment report.
5. The candidacy decision is issued by HEAC, and institution would be officially provided with approval or rejection the request in a maximum period of six weeks from the date of applying.
6. After formal approval, a self-assessment report (SER) would be presented to HEAC accompanied with needed documents to measure institution performance of each standard. It is not permissible to add or eliminate any formal document or to make any amendments to the report by the institution.
7. Forming a committee of experts from specialists by HEAC council.
8. The expert-panel formed by HEAC reviews the SER together with the documents and appendices (as stated in this guide) develops a schedule of institutional visits to the institution proofs and evidence about the accuracy of the information appearing in the SER and other proofs and evidences that assist the panel in making precise judgments about meeting the criteria. This will also help the panel to compose the report and a specific recommendation about the fulfillment and QA criteria at the institution.
9. The Committee shall assess the mission and setting the final report with recommendation to be presented to Council

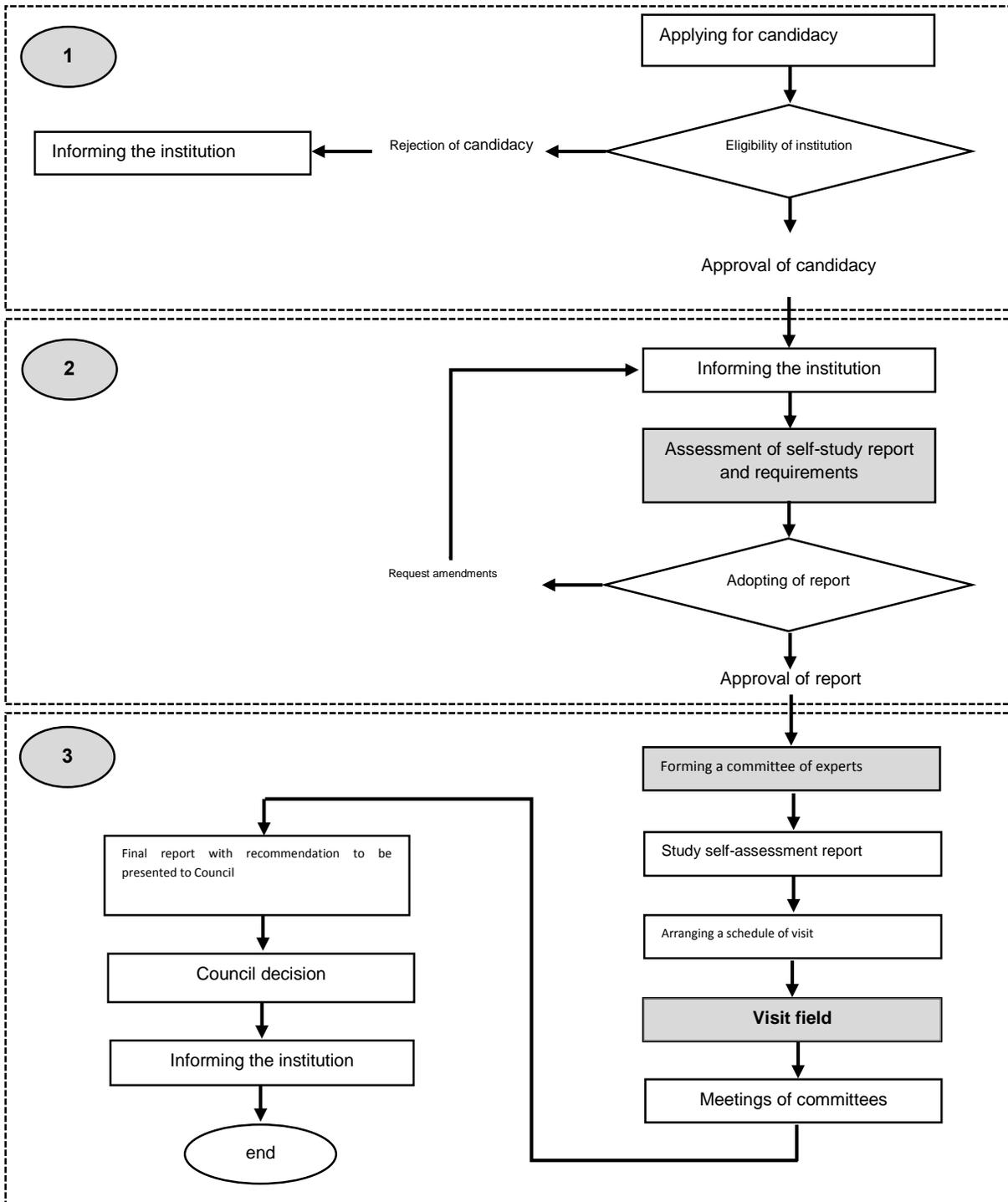


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10. The decision of the Commission Board: the Commission Board in its assessment of the achieved quality degree by the institution, relies on reviewing and studying the report presented to it by the expert-panel about the fulfillment of quality criteria in the institution and its SER and the attached documents in addition to the written report by the institution as well as the confidential recommendation presented by the expert-panel together with its technical report about the fulfillment of QA criteria in the institution by writing a clear, frank and confidential recommendation about the candidacy of the institution to get the QA certificate, postponing or withholding it.



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3. QA in Technology-Enhanced Learning

3.1 National Survey on TEL in Jordan

The consortium discussed thoroughly issues related to QA in Technology-Enhanced Learning. A survey was designed to serve as an important landmark for the TEL QA Framework. The survey was conducted online targeting the 30 universities including all public and private universities. It was agreed that QA officers in the Jordanian universities are responsible for answering the survey in order to obtain views from the same category. Because the field of TEL is unfamiliar to all stakeholders in HE body in Jordan, the survey began with a section about "Important Definitions" that help the respondents understand unambiguously the different types of TEL.

The survey consisted of three main parts:

1. General Information

- Name of institution and main system of teaching at university
- Type of institution and its branches, if any.
- Physical location
- Number of students in Undergraduate and Postgraduate
- Number of faculty staff and PhD staff
- Number of programs offered at three level
- Number of programs according to its type: medical, scientific, and humanities and number of students each division.

2. Style of Teaching and its Available Resources

- Teaching styles (systems)
- Availability of teaching resources
- Software packages used in nontraditional teaching
- Entity (body) responsible for employing technology within university organizational structure (section, unit, department, center, deanship, other specific entity, or no specific entity)
- The university offers nontraditional teaching in the following programs
- Course taught using electronic methods
- Training courses offered by the university through nontraditional learning
- In case of non-traditional learning, course and material are preparing by
- In case non-traditional learning, the university uses the following methods to evaluate performance of students.

3. QA Criteria

- Quality assurance system that the institution implements (internal, local system (HEAC), or international system)
- Ranking the importance and priorities of the E-learning QA criteria issued by HEAC
- The degree of compliance in case of adopting E-learning QA criteria issued by HEAC.

3.2 Teaching Resources, Infrastructure and Programmes

Teaching resources in HEIs are available in all HEIs as shown in Fig. (13). All HEIs have traditional libraries; this is expected because it is a requirement of general accreditation imposed by HEAC. Electronic database, computer labs, and Internet are available in almost all HEIs. However, electronic libraries are not available in several institutions due to, perhaps, the high cost of having such libraries. Labs for preparing teaching material with different degree of sophistication are available in almost two thirds.



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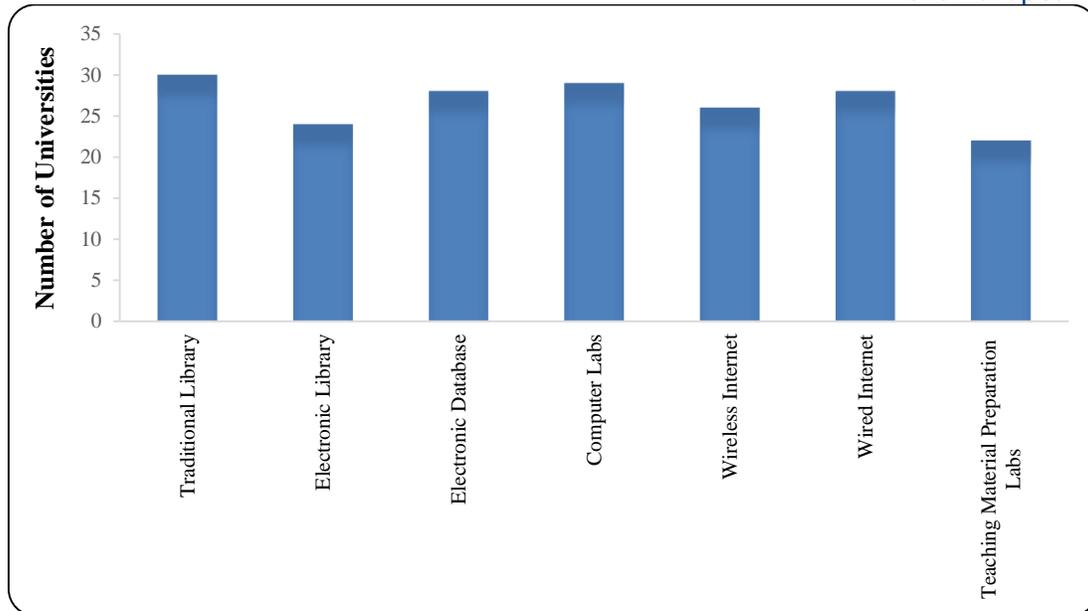


Fig. (13): Availability of teaching resources

Internet and social media are the dominant methods of communication in HEIs as clear in Fig. (14). Electronic learning systems, such as Moodle and Blackboard, and employees' and students' portals come in the next level. Communicating through cell phones began to penetrate the HEIs. Few universities use Satellites to connect tele-conference calls.

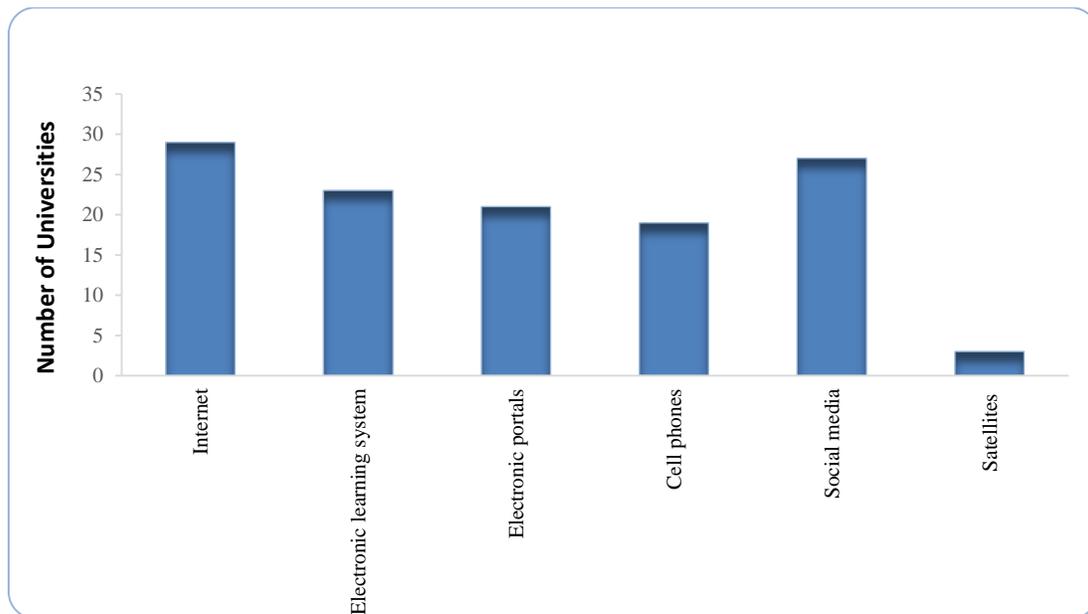


Fig. (14): Types of Available Electronic Communication Means.



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Among different styles of TEL, electronic and blended learning methods are being utilized to deliver programs in the medical, scientific and humanities fields. Whereas open, distance and virtual learning methods are less employed as shown in Fig. (15).

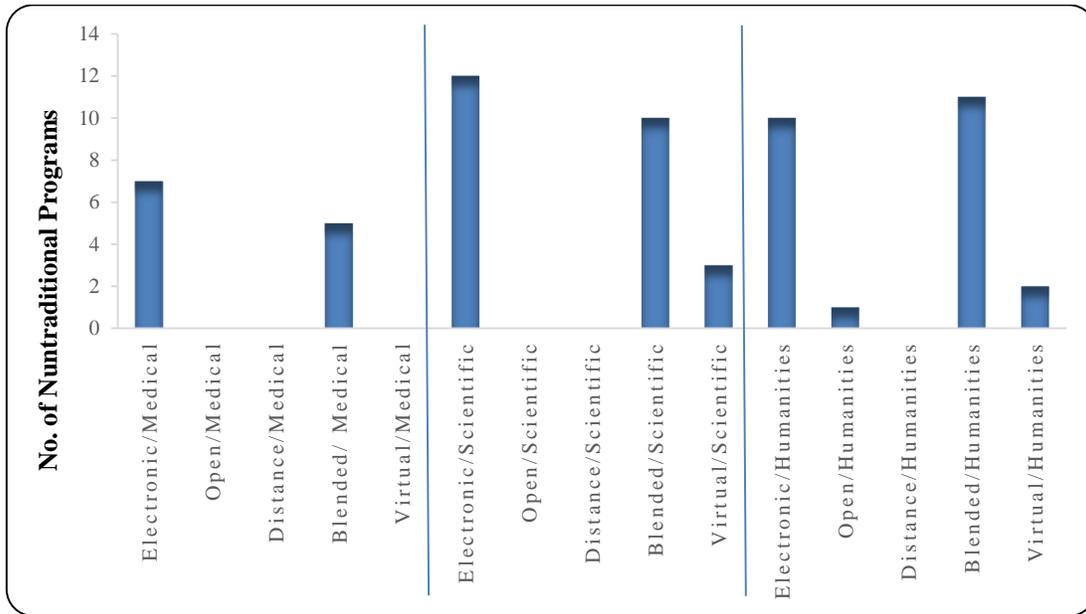
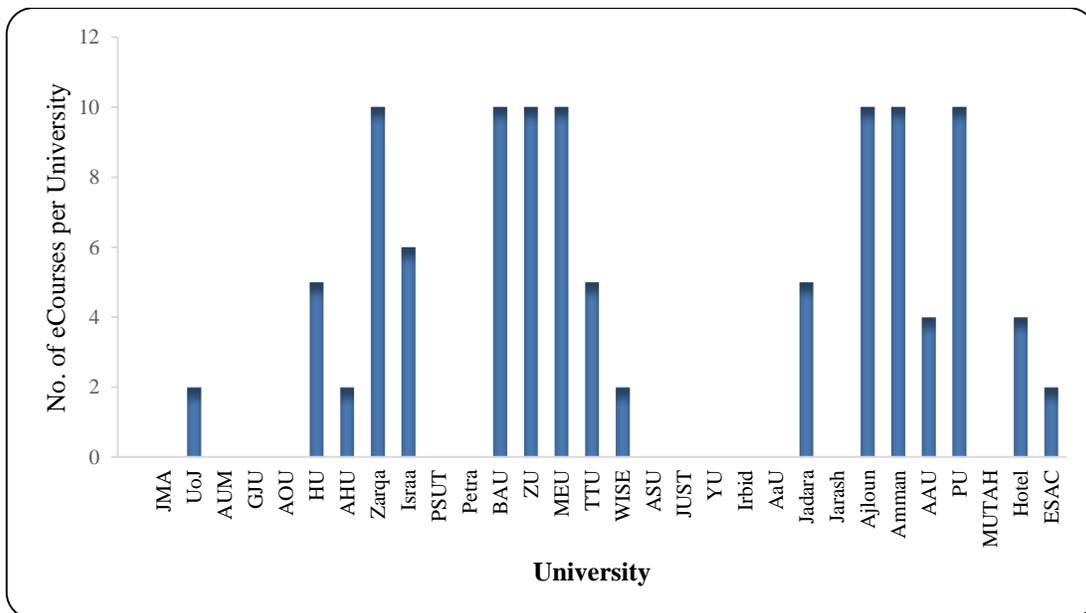


Fig. (15): Nontraditional Programs According to Study Field.

The numbers of full eCourses and nontraditional training programs offered each HEI in Jordan are presented in Fig. (16) and Fig. (17) respectively. It is obvious that these numbers are small compared to total courses and training programs offered. However, large percentage of HEIs neither offer any full eCourse nor nontraditional training program.





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Fig. (16): Number of eCourses in each HEL.

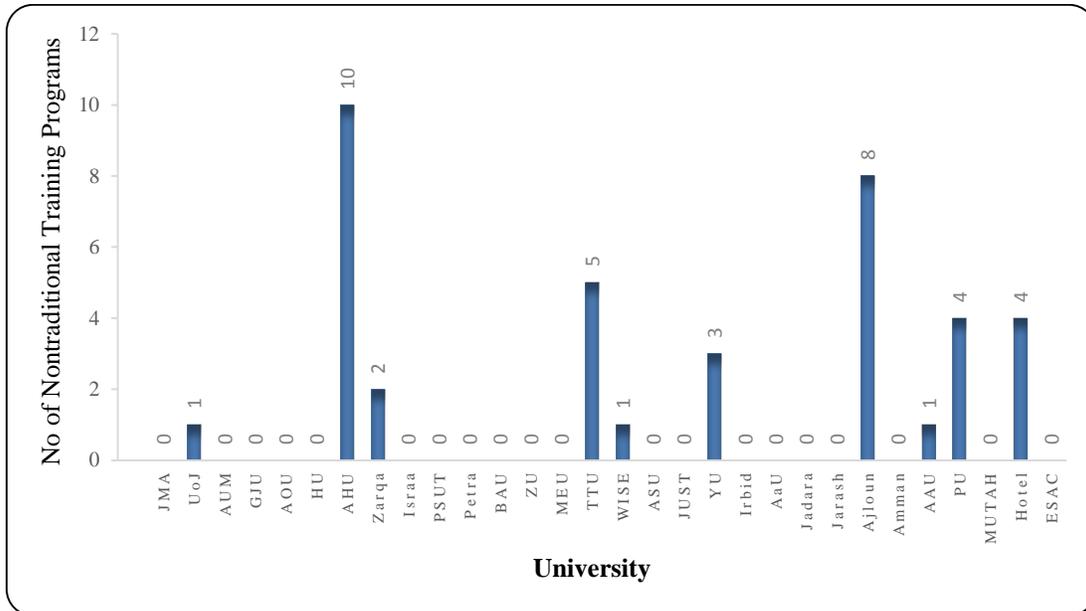


Fig. (17): Number of Nontraditional Training Program in each HEL.

Preparing the materials for TEL courses mainly depends on the faculty members themselves as indicated in Fig. (18). Half of HEIs has the responsibility of making this type of material available. Few institutions depend on local and international agencies to prepare material for nontraditional courses.

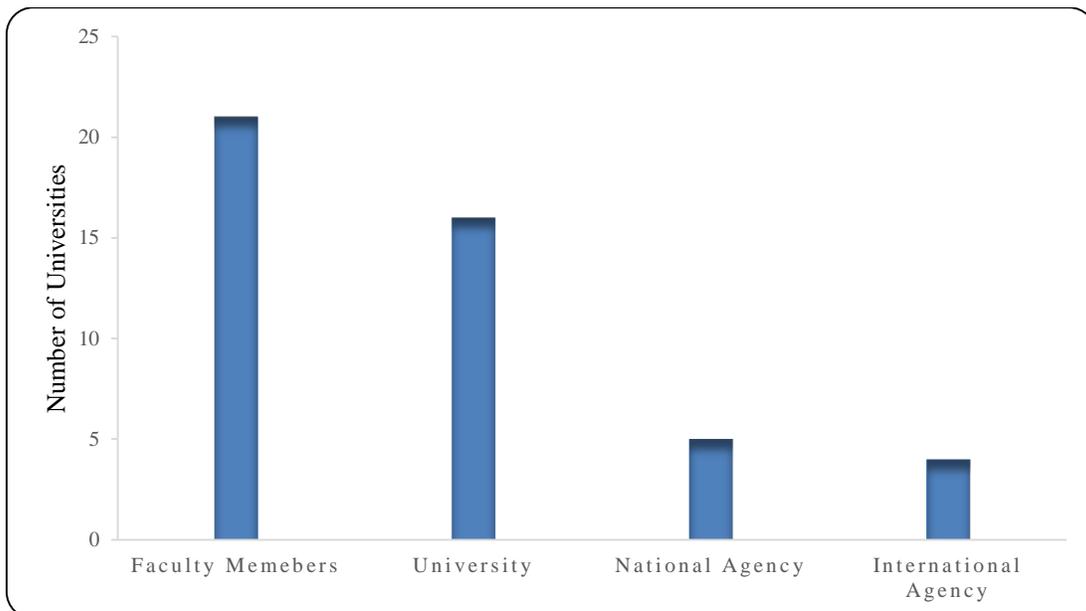


Fig. (18): Nontraditional Learning Course and Material Preparation

3.3 TEL QA Practices



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All methods used to measure performance of students in traditional courses (written and online exams, research, homework assignments, and practical projects) are used in nontraditional courses as seen in Fig. (19). The quality assurance (QA) of delivering nontraditional courses and programs follows the internal regulations of the institution and the criteria imposed by HEAC with few institutions implement international QA systems as shown in Fig. (20).

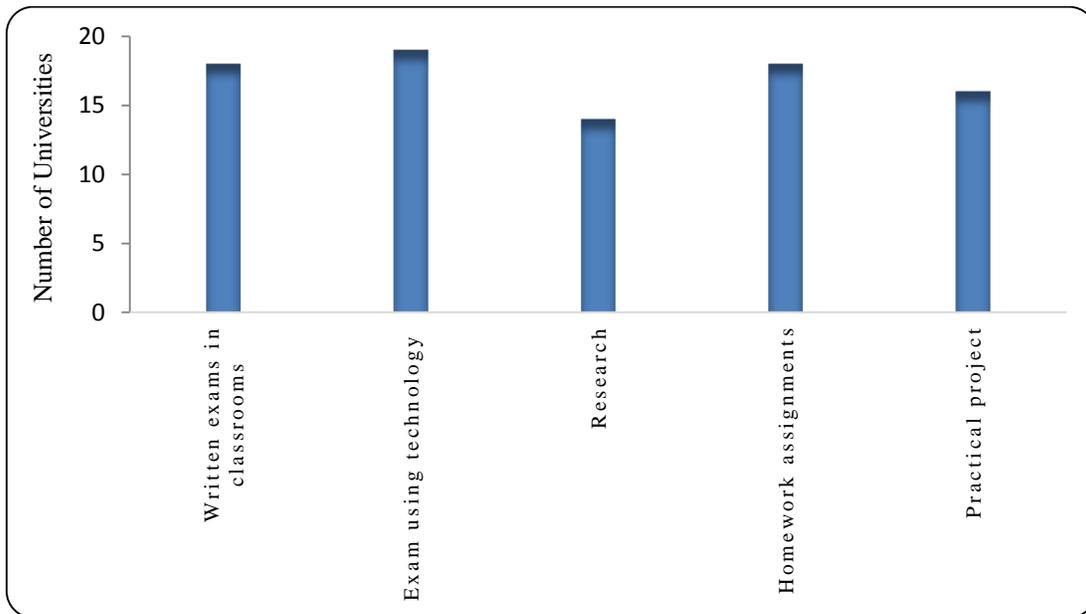


Fig. (19): Methods to Evaluate Performance of Students in Nontraditional Learning

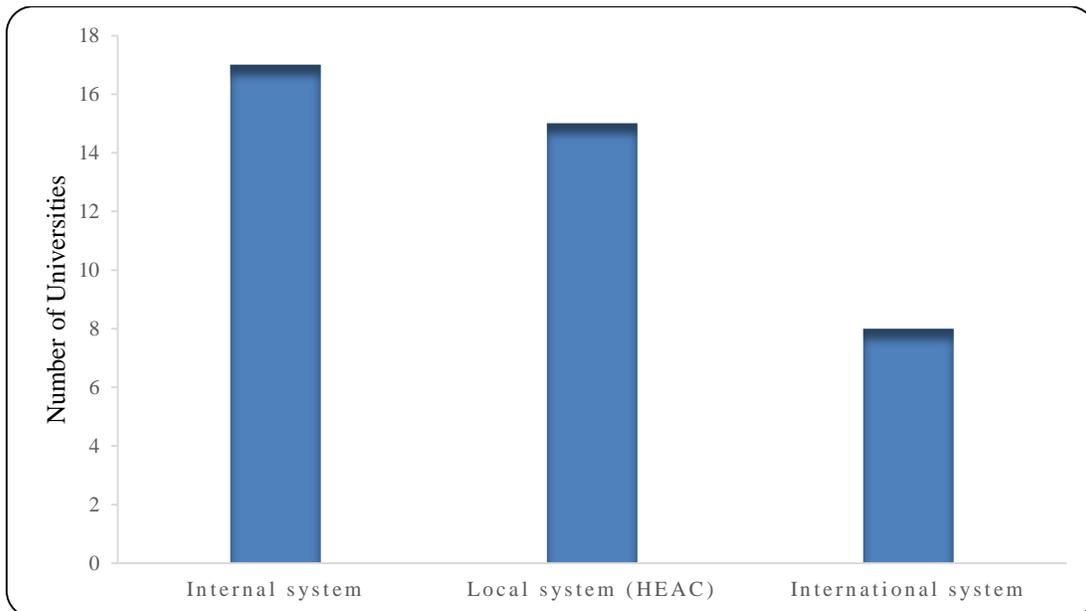


Fig. (20): QA Systems in Nontraditional Learning

The last part of the survey explores the importance and priority of the Jordanian e-Learning QA Standards issued by HEAC. To order these standards, the respondent gives a number to each standard such that the standard of the highest importance or the most priority is given 1, while the standard of the lowest importance or least priority is given 9. This implies that the standard of the highest importance or priority has the smallest total of scores, whereas the standard or criterion of the lowest importance or priority has the largest total of scores. In Fig. (21), the shortest is the most important and the tallest is the least important. It indicates that the standard of having mission, vision, goals, and planning is the most important, while the standards of instructional design, course development and evaluation, infrastructure of e-learning and design programs come in the second level of importance. Evaluation of the learning experience has the least importance. Fig. (22) shows how the Jordanian HEIs ranks the priority of the the elearning quality assurance criteria issued by HEAC. The standard of mission, vision, goals, and planning has the highest priority among all the other standards, while the evaluation of the learning experience has the least priority.

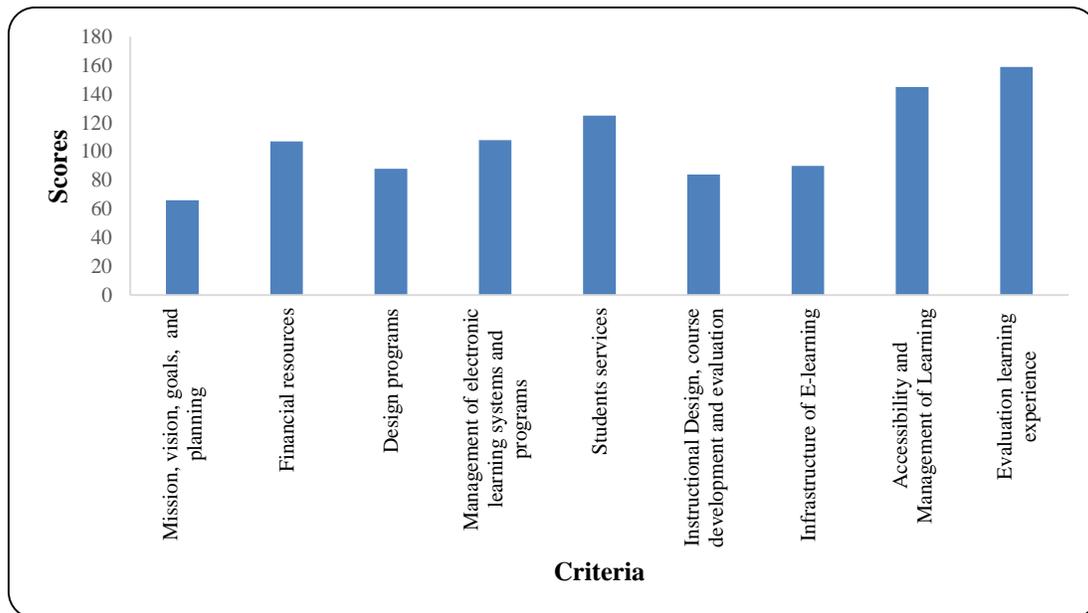


Fig. (21) Importance of the E-learning QA HEAC Criteria.



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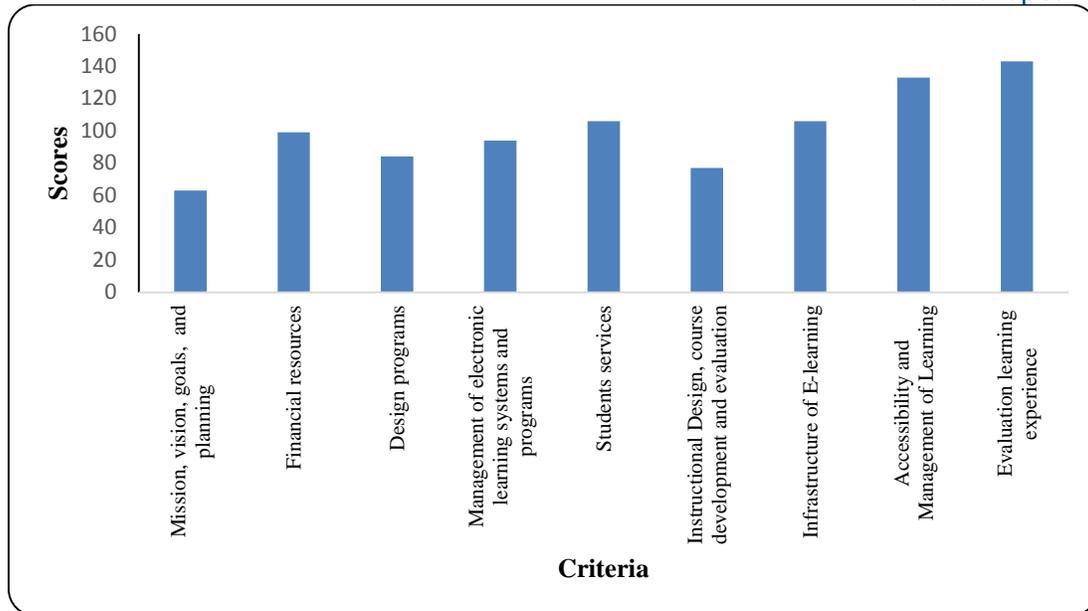


Fig. (22): Priority of the eLearning QA HEAC Criteria.

Conclusions and Recommendations

QA is a culture (process not exercise). Its core is faculty members. Process is made at the faculty level which is the basic autonomous in EU. There is no standalone framework for QA in TEL as seen as a tool. Any framework or bylaws should follow these lines with indicators that deal specifically TEL.



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Appendices

Appendix I

Online Learning Accreditation Standards and Instructions

They have articles dealing with the following issues:

1. Definitions related to online learning environment
2. Infrastructure : building, classes, labs and rooms, equipment communication media and network, computer labs, software packages Website)
3. Class and virtual meetings, Concurrent and asynchronous meeting and percentages of each category.
4. Capacity of students based on the number of faculty members and supervisors
5. Percentage of faculty member holding Master degree compared to PhD holders, and percentage of full and part time faculty members.
6. Documentation, records and files
7. Branches, administrative and supporting units
8. Development of faculty members, students, employees and administrators skills, especially skills on using technology in learning.
9. Educational material
10. Coordinators and supervisors responsibilities
11. Exams, academic year, transfer, and intellectual property rights.

The articles are

Article (1)

These instructions shall be cited as (On-Line Learning Accreditation Standards and instructions no (8) for the year 2010) shall come into effect as of the date of issuance.

Article (2)

The following words and terms, whenever mentioned in the law, shall have the meanings assigned below unless otherwise indicated by context:

Kingdom: the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

Higher Education Council: council formed according to Higher Education and scientific research Law

Commission: Higher Education Accreditation Commission

Council: Commission Council

Institution: Higher Education Institution depends on On-Line Learning and granting Bachelor/High Diploma degrees.

Branch: institution branch located outside Jordan. No more one branch shall be opened in the Kingdom.

Education centre: equipped with appropriate classes, labs and tools.

Academic coordinator: faculty member PhD holder.

Teaching, coordinating with academic supervisors.

Academic supervisor: faculty member of PhD holder or at least MA holder in specialization.

Educational material: shall include CDs, content website, homework, instructions show educational meetings and exams.

Educational material measure: the credit hours for each educational material.

Class meetings: lectures are held between students and the faculty member to discuss the material contents.

Virtual Meetings

a. The concurrent: electronic meetings between students and supervisor through networks using (E-Learning Platform)



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b. Asynchronism: electronic individual meetings between students and supervisor held remotely via electronic communication.

Article (3)

Open Learning shall be cited as "educational system that deals with the presence of students and lecturers in different places and times, includes distribution of book, attendance, receiving electronic materials, browsing electronic websites with interactive dialogues between students and supervisor through advanced electronic learning style so that the following criteria shall be applied:

- 1- Classroom meetings shall not be less than 25% of lectures of credit hours.
- 2- Concurrent virtual meetings shall cover at least 25% of the total credit hours per week
- 3- Interactive unsynchronized meetings shall cover no more than 50% of the total credit hours per week.
- 4- Electronic system and software mechanism shall be available to follow up hours student proceeded according to items (1, 2) of this article.

Article (4)

Open learning programs can be set up, provided the advanced attainment of Higher Education council allowance. Institution that its headquarter in the Kingdom may establish educational centers in the rest of governorates.

Article (5)

Mission, vision and aims shall be clear and be reviewed regularly. The institution shall provide proof of the ability to achieve goals effectively.

Article (6)

The following shall be available:

- a. Specific location to accommodate all the requirements of the technical, educational and administrative
- b. Classes, scientific computer labs connected to internet to boost interaction between students and lecturer, binding with servers of the main branch, as well as the presence of centre manager.

Article (7)

1. Institution shall be available with accurate academic organizing structure as provided in Jordanian universities law.
2. Institution shall be provided with:
 - a. Executive director for managing the affairs of institution, assisted by deputies and assistants, including deputy for technical affairs.
 - b. Branch council
 - c. Academic departments council for branch
 - d. Heads of academic departments in the branch.

Article (8)

- a. Institution/branch shall have organizational, administrative, academic, technical and financial structure that follow President/branch manager directly and be completely independent from the owner.
- b. Owner, shareholder or any person having direct benefit shall be prohibited to work in administrative or academic career at institution/branch.

Article (9)

a. Institution Council Headed by Manager Branch and the Membership of:

1. Vice-director



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2. Deans of colleges and/or heads of departments.
3. Directors of centers in different governorates.

b. Council Responsibilities

1. Establishing colleges, departments, programs, and incorporating or cancelling them.
2. Appointing faculty members in branch, promoting, tenuring, assigning, seconding, granting them sabbatical furlough, unpaid furlough, and accept their resignation.
3. Evaluation of faculty, their academic activities, teaching methods, scientific researches.
4. Dispatching faculty members, full time lecturers (teaching and research assistants), academic technicians working in branch or associated with the work on scholarships, training courses and determining the duration of their deployment and any other matters relating to the candidates.
5. Recommendation to council with the appropriate students' numbers who are accepted each year in various programs and tuition fees.
6. Study plans submitted by department councils, discuss and make decisions.
7. Assess the level of academic performance and achievements.
8. Granting of degrees and certificates.
9. Establishing professional courses.
10. Setting admission instructions according to regulations approved by Jordanian higher education council.
11. Setting appropriate instructions for the implementation of regulations related to academic work.
12. Considering any subject relating to academic work presented by branch head that is not within the authorities of any party scripted in these instructions.

Article (10)

Council Responsibilities

1. Reviewing study plans in college/branch departments and submit them to competent council.
2. Suggesting extra conditions for student's admission in the department.
3. Supervising organization of study at college/branch and coordination between different departments in
4. Organizing and supervising exams procedures at college/branch
5. Recommendation of exams' results at the end of each semester.
6. Recommendation for granting degrees and certificates.
7. Supervising and encouraging scientific research organizing with coordination with scientific research deanship.
8. Recommendation on all matters relating to faculty members of college/branch of appointment, promotion, transfer, delegation, secondment, dispatch, granting sabbaticals, accept resignation and other tasks in accordance with regulations.
9. Preparing annual budget draft of college/branch
10. Forming various committees on the work of college/branch
11. Consider issues referred by the Dean of college/branch.

Article (11)

- a. Branch head shall be Jordanian PhD holder and Professor. appointment shall be for a period consistent with legislation in the Kingdom
- b. Each department shall have a head that is responsible for administrative educational issues, scientific research, performing council decisions, offering courses to faculty members by their specialties. Presenting reports about department performance and activities to branch/college head.



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- c. Department head shall be professor and appointed by institution president upon branch/college dean recommendation renewable for one year.
- d. President may appoint one of faculty member to be a head of department as deputation upon dean recommendation that not more than 50% of all departments heads in the kingdom.
- e. President shall appoint a manager of PhD holder for educational centre upon branch head recommendation renewable for two years.

Article (12)

1- Each department shall have council known as (council department) or resembles consisting of head department, full timers of PhD holders and responsible for the following:

- a. Suggesting study plans and developed methods.
 - b. Suggesting study plans items, objectives, teaching methods, evaluation and modification.
 - c. Distributing curriculum in accordance with instructions of granting degrees and preparing guiding plans for students.
 - d. Books, resources shall be accredited and appropriate for each material in study plan.
 - e. Developing weekly course schedule for class and concurrent virtual meetings. Students' absence shall not exceed 20% of these meetings.
 - f. Ensuring good supervision, academic scientific guidance and solving students' problems.
 - g. Developing practical application and field training instructions.
 - h. Developing the necessary arrangements for supervising exams.
 - i. Following up research projects submitted by faculty members and providing necessary recommendations to the competent committees.
 - j. Following up promotions, appointments applications, furlough, tenure, termination, secondment, and any issues relating to faculty members taking into account the non-participation of faculty member to vote on promotion or appointment with high rank than him.
 - k. Description of the study plans.
 - l. Discuss exam results, alumni list and submit them to college/branch council.
 - m. Suggesting new specialties.
 - n. Any other matters presented by department's head
- 2- College/branch dean or his vice holds functions of president council during his absence.
- 3- Council meetings shall be regular but not less than 6 ones per semester, meetings minutes shall be documented officially.

Article (13)

Institution which its headquarter is in the kingdom of branch shall be provided with administrative, technical units responsible for institution programs implementation and achieving its objectives that shall include the followings:

- 1. Production unit provided with sufficient tools and software for developing educational materials electronically.
- 2. Computer and communication unit responsible for the communication and data structure.
- 3. Admission and registration unit
- 4. Administrative and finance unit
- 5. Unit for Habilitation and development of full timer and part timer faculty members, students, employees and administrators skills.
- 6. Student affairs unit.
- 7. Administrative unit to follow up centers affairs.
- 8. Quality assurance unit.
- 9. Unit for supplying and distributing Educational materials.



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10. Technical assistant unit (Help Desk).

Article (14)

- a. Coordinator functions: preparation, evaluation and supervision of exams, educational materials, students' results, academic supervisors work. He shall follow academically department head and administratively branch head.
- b. Supervisor functions: responsible for direct class and virtual meetings.

Article (15)

Faculty members and assistants shall be sufficient, qualified in open education within the following criteria:
1-Full timers of PhD holders shall not be less than 3 and their specialties covering various fields of knowledge.

2-Academic coordinator of PhD holder with an average 1 for each academic supervisors for calculating institutional program capacity and educational hours for each supervisor shall not exceed 16 credit hours

3-Provide sufficient number of supervisors of PhD holders to cover direct and virtual meetings, but no less than one supervisor of full timer PhD holder for each coordinator. Institution may also hire academic part timer to cover direct and virtual meetings.

4-The following shall be take into account for the purpose of calculating program capacity:

- Percentage students to supervisors: 1:80
- Full time MA holders shall not exceed 40% of supervisors of PhD holders
- Adding 35% of full time PhD holders to cover overtime of full time and part time job.
- Full time coordinator may have academic courses equivalent to half of full time supervisor at maximum in proportion to his/her teaching burden compared to teaching burden of full time supervisor.

5-Full timers of faculty members shall prepare materials and requirements appropriately.

6-Faculty member who is over the age of 70 shall:

- Be professor
- Have more than 12 years of practical experience at university, and have not stopped in scientific production in the area specified in the last five years from the date of designation or renewal of his contract. Provided that appointed professors in accordance with this paragraph shall not exceed 10% of the total of full timer in BA program. Exceeding could be done by the commission council if university offers justifications.

Article (16)

Educational materials shall have the followings criteria:

1. Various detailed information ensures interaction between student and educational material.
2. Providing assistant materials for supporting educational materials to ensure interaction between students and learning resources through various multimedia, such as: websites, homework, projects, references and others.
3. Materials shall be drafted in a way allow students to acquire knowledge and understanding.

Article (17)

Electronic infrastructure shall be available that guarantee presenting educational materials. Educational materials prepared electronically at any specialization shall not be less than 75% of total hours of obligatory study plan.

Article (18)

Holding final exams in writing at a common date under academic supervision, and may use electronic tools (E-Exams) by using developed electronic system.



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Article (19)

- a. The school year in the institution or the branch consists of 2 semesters each for (16) weeks.
- b. It is permissible to present subjects at summer semester for undergraduate students with no less than 8 weeks.
- c. Minimum number of credit hours required for Bachelor's degree or higher Diploma in any discipline is at least equal to the minimum of its coordinate and is applicable in the traditional higher education institutions.
- d. The minimum length of time for obtaining the degree shall be at least equal to minimum that is applicable in the traditional higher education institutions and not more than 11 years for undergraduate, 4 years for higher diploma as well.
- e. It is permissible a student of Bachelor degree to postpone his study 2 years maximum, higher diploma 1 year as well. The period shall not be counted as a part of the maximum limit of the length period for obtaining the degree. It is permissible for the new student to postpone his study after one semester as well.
- f. Teaching language shall be Arabic and/or and other foreign one according to the specialization.
- g. It is permissible to enroll per semester no more than 18 credit hours and no less than 6. In particular cases, student may enroll 3 credit hours per semester with the approval of the Dean.
- h. It is permitted to transfer from institution of traditional or online learning inside or outside the Kingdom to another institution follows online learning according to the following:
 1. Institution shall be recognized by the Ministry of Higher Education if it is outside the Kingdom and by Accreditation Commission if it is inside the Kingdom.
 2. Average of student in high school or its equivalent shall be acceptable in the specialization that student transferring to in the year of obtaining high school degree or the year of enrolling at the institution.
 3. Percentage of credit hours partied by the institution the student transfer to from another one shall not exceed more than 50% of the total requirements for obtaining a degree.
 4. Materials that student has studied in his former institution shall not be counted if the average in each less than 60%.

Article (20)

- a. Institution or the branch that accredited Institutional Accreditation shall apply for a program accreditation tor any specialization before accepting student.
- b. Institution or the branch shall not establish academic program before obtaining a prior license from the Ministry of Higher Education Council.
- c. Institution or the branch shall announce each semester about the specializations that has program accreditation and the specific termed.
- d. Student shall not be registered at any unaccredited or unlicensed program.
- e. Article (21)

Institution or the branch is considered to be a set of internal regulations necessary for organizing academic and administrative action that be submitted to Higher Education council for approval, provides the Higher Education Accreditation with hard and electronic copy.

Article (22)

Institution shall take into account intellectual property rights, preparation of public private policies that are disseminated, copyright as well with taking in consideration local laws and regulations.

Article (23)

Institution shall meet the following criteria of the building, facilities:

- a-the structural area of the institution or the branch:



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1. Specify 7.5 m² from the land for each student.
 2. The total of Ground floor spaces shall not exceed 75% from the entire land area of the campus.
- b- Classrooms:
1. The total area of classrooms shall be 1.5 m² for each student; each classroom shall not be less than 40m² with capacity of 25% of the students' total.
 2. Students shall not exceed 40 in scientific specializations and 60 in humanity specializations.
 3. Classrooms shall be equipped with advanced visual audio tools; data show projector, internet and intranet, developed computer as well.
 4. Classrooms of virtual meetings shall be equipped with modern electronic tools ensure the interaction between students and supervisor, student themselves as well.
 5. Supervisor shall be hired for each faculty to ensure the validity of the class for teaching purposes (cleanliness, lighting, ventilation, teaching tools and other services).
- c- Faculty and support staff:
- University shall specify area of 7.5 m² for each faculty member or administrator, and faculty members shall not exceed 2 in the same office. Each faculty dean and department head shall be provided with an office apart, in addition to providing meeting room for the college and department councils.
- d- Library:
1. Library shall be of a minimum 500 m².
 2. Library shall be provided with a minimum 100 sufficient seats.
 3. Provide sets of various resources with 10 addresses of electronic and hard copy for each material in the specialty.
 4. Each program shall be provided with (paper, electronic, miniature of films and CDs,...etc) of periodicals published recently that date back to 5 years. In the case of electronic subscription, students shall be permissible to be provided with paper copy of researches they need of a minimum 150 free printed paper for each student per semester.
 5. Books, periodicals, lexicons, encyclopedias, bibliographies, atlases and other resources shall be provided and published in Arabic and English languages.
 6. Library shall be computerized according to the recent international standards.
 7. Recent PC and screens shall be provided as mechanical index with an average of one screen per 300 students.
 8. Set sufficient staff with an average of one employee for 600 students. Professionals in library science and information technology shall not be less than 50% of the total of library staff.
 9. Rooms shall be air conditioned and furnished with sufficient chairs, tables, cabinets, desks, and shelves.
- e- Administration and registration unit:
1. Sufficient areas with the necessary stores for files and documents shall be specified and offices space shall be the same ones as mentioned in paragraph (f) for faculty members and administrators.
 2. Full time registrar shall be hired with sufficient staff.
- The unit shall contain:
- Admission unit
 - Registration unit
 - Documents unit
1. The department shall provide applications, official records such as: admissions applications, registration paper, adding and withdrawal papers, register of students' marks, certificates and register of alumni. In addition, the original documents or certified copies shall be kept in particular files.
 2. Students shall not exceed 600 per one registrant.
 3. The department shall be computerized, equipped with the needed supplies and provided with one screen at least per registrant.



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4. Higher Education Ministry and scientific research and Higher Education Accreditation Commission shall be provided with accredited signature forms of persons authorized to sign the documents, certificates, official seals and forms of certificates granted by institution.

f- Clinics

Institution shall be provided with emergency equipped room and hired practitioner or nurse.

g- Facilities:

No	Facility	Specification
1.	Necessary Laboratories	Each lab shall be 60 square with a maximum capacity for 20 students. Lab shall be provided with appropriate materials and tools.
2.	Canteen	At least one with proper specifications.
3.	Chapels	One for female students and the other for males each space no less than 30 m ² .
4.	Hall activities	At least one with space no less than 50 m ² .
5.	Seats for students	One seat for per student at least.
6.	Bathrooms	Health conditions and serve staff and students.
7.	Healthy fountains	Distribution shall serve students and staff
8.	Parking	Providing proper numbers of locations for each faculty members, staff and students.
9.	Water	every building shall be provided with reservoir at least with an average of 100 m ³
10.	Production, design of educational materials	At least one equipped with advanced hardware and software for the design and production.

Article (24)

Electronic and hard copies of Bulletins shall be issued that display the following requirements, standards and plans:

1. Requirements of academic programs.
2. Admissions, fees, transmission, exams, warnings, sequestration, withdrawal, deferral, transfer, refund, and any items related to study.
3. Study plans for all programs.
4. Requirements of granting degrees and certificates.

Article (25)

Requirements of documents:

1. Mechanisms and procedures in the assessment of students including (exams, places of exams, methodology used to ensure the confidentiality and credibility.
2. Procedures to ensure the continuity of contacts and interaction among students and supervisors, faculty members.

Article (26)

First: Equipment, Communication Media and Network

a- Institution shall provide equipment, communication media and network:

1. Computer services with advanced specifications to ensure the presenting of the best services efficiently during 24 hours daily and weekly.



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2. Infrastructure needed to establish network of communication within the campus (LAN) including fiber optic network, adaptors, and dispensers of communications to connect all the facilities.
 3. Linking comports of institution/branch with external information network especially the electronic one.
 4. Advanced network.
 5. Advanced computers with high efficiency linked to local and global network. One computer for each faculty member, one computer for 25 students.
 6. Advanced Servers and software for electronic educational materials that student can obtain data rapidly.
 7. Hardware and software backup for preserving confidentiality and credibility.
 8. Sets of identical servers apart geographically for storing learning material.
- b- Institution can use external providers of services provided that technical specifications of equipment meet the required criteria mentioned in item (a).

Second: Software

Institution shall provide the following:

- a- Efficient software for learning process can preserve all learning materials and their websites, following up work hours for each student and filling them electronically.
- b- Management software of institution.
- c- Production software unit.
- d- Software for the support of educational materials such as compilers, scientific programs, statistical programs, databases and others.

Third: Labs

Institution shall provide the following:

- a- Applicative labs according to programs.
- b- Computer labs; each for 500 students and shall at least be equipped with:
 1. 20 computers.
 2. 3 advanced printers.
 3. 1 scanner.
 4. Data show projector.
- c- Production of visual and audio tools unit shall be provided with (digital camera, recorder, visual audio tapes, CD writer, scanners, software, multimedia and other)

Fourth: Website

Online multilingual website (especially Arabic and English language) with the following specifications:

- a. shall fork to other websites, (one for each academic department containing data about the department, faculty member, their specializations, scientific degrees, numbers of students within various years, curriculum, resources, sites of electronic materials and others.
- b. Shall be provided with forum combines all employees, faculty members, students and alumni for the purpose of communication.

Fifth: Records and Files

Institution shall provide the following:

- a. Records and files of financial department, including (files, cards, receipts fees, earnings, expenses, and supplies).
- b. Records and files of personnel (date of appointment, contracts, degrees and other).
- c. Records and files of institution management.
- d. Printed brochures include (manual of names of employees and faculty members, phone numbers, student handbook institution guide, yearbook and others).



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Article (27)

- a. Providing a hall for Video Conferencing at each educational center has students more than 300 ones.
- b. Updating information system, software and equipment periodically.

Article (28)

Providing a high quality of places, educational process, organizational structure (administrative, academic, financial, admission and registration process) to monitor the administrative and academic performance.

Article (29)

- a. Institution may open other branches through cities in the Kingdom.
- b. Institution may open a learning center within the Kingdom but not less than 500m².
- c. Number of students shall not exceed 500 at each center.
- d. Institution shall provide the following:
 1. Staff (manager, secretary, technicians)
 2. Providing facilities mentioned in article 22:
 - Classrooms
 - Offices for faculty members and employees.
 - Software
 - Computer labs.
 - Educational labs.
 - Public and private facilities except preparation and design educational materials unit.
 - 1- The ability of dealing with interactive electronic software.
 - 2- The ability to access learning resources at electronic and educational library.
 - 3- Providing administrative equipment.

General Regulations

Article (30)

- a. Land is allocated for the purpose of academic, scientific services.
- b. Admission shall be according to regulations of Ministry of higher education.

Article (31)

Set future plans- approved by higher education council- to traineeship faculty members on open learning skills.

Article (32)

Commission shall not take in consideration capacity lift request of any specialty unless of the removal of fines (If available).

Article (33)

These instructions are based on higher education accreditation standards for open learning.

Article (34)

Commission council will decide other issues that have not scripts in these instructions

Article (35)

Foregoing scripts or decisions will be omitted that contradictory to instructions.



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Article (36)

These instructions were issued in accordance with decision no (44/6/2010) date (25/2/2010).

Appendix (1)

Calculation of institutional and program capacity:

a. Program capacity= number of academic supervisors * 80

b. Institutional capacity:

1. Faculty members pivot: number of students= academic supervisors * 80

2. Structural area pivot: number of students = structural space/7.5 m²

3. Classrooms pivot: number of students = (total of classes' spaces * 1.52m) (.25) of the total number of students.

4. Library pivot: number of students = (employees * 600)

5. Registration pivot: number of students= (space of registration department*20+employees of registration /600)/2

6. Institutional capacity of institution= institutional capacity rate for the least of 3 pivots or institutional capacity according to faculty members pivot, whichever is less.



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Appendix II New HEAC QA Criteria

No.	Criterion	Items
1	Strategic Planning	a) Vision, mission, objectives, and values b) Strategic plan
2	Governance	a) Legislation b) Leadership and management c) Institutional Integrity
3	Academic Programs	a) Teaching and learning policies b) Curricula (Study Plans) c) Assessment of teaching outcomes
4	Scientific Research, Scholarships and Creativity	a) Scientific research b) Scholarship (to pursue Master and PhD) c) Creativity (patents,)
5	Financial, Physical and Human Resources	a) Financial Resources b) Physical Resources c) Human Resources
6	Students Service	a) Students orientation and counseling b) Supporting Services c) Communications with Graduates (alumni)
7	Community Services and External Relations	a) Community service b) External relations
8	Quality Assurance	a) Institution commitment of improving quality b) Scope of work of QA c) Indicators, criteria and benchmarking d) Autonomous verification of assessment

Old HEAC QA Criteria

No.	Criterion	Items
1	Institution's Vision, Mission, Objectives and Planning	a) Mission and Objectives b) Planning and Effectiveness
2	Educational Programs Effectiveness	a) General Requirements b) Planning and Evaluation in the Educational Programs c) Bachelor Degree Program (Initial Degree) d) Post – Graduate Programs e) The Faculty Members and the Relevant Resources in the Post-Graduate Programs
3	Student Support Services	a) Objectives and Organization b) General Responsibilities c) Student Academic Assessments d) Student Support Services
4	Faculty Members	a) Qualifications and Development
5	Scholarships, Faculty Performance	
6	Library and Information Resources	a) Library b) Institution Resources includes technology



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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c) Facilities d) Administration and Personnel e) Planning and Assessment, Budget
7	Governance and Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Institution Governance and Administration System b) The Governance Council (the Deans) c) Leadership and Administration
8	Financial Resources:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Financial Planning b) Adequacy of Financial Resources c) Financial Management d) Financial Investment and Development
9	Physical Resources:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Teaching and Supporting Facilities. b) Equipment and Materials. c) Planning For Natural Resources
10	Institutional Integrity.	
11	Community Engagement.	
12	Institution self ongoing Quality Assurance Self Assessment	



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Appendix III

Standards and Indicators of Jordanian e-Learning QA

1. Vision, mission and objectives

A. Mission and objectives

Shall show the consistency with the offered programs and display to what extent those objectives and missions are achieved.

Indicators

1. Mission, vision and objectives shall be clear to staff, adopted by various councils, periodically reviewed.
2. Mission, vision and objectives shall be published (Brochures and manuals).
3. Procedures to achieve objectives, mission and vision shall be documented and easy to be accessed.
4. Objectives shall be consistent with mission and vision, based on human, physical and financial resources.
5. All academic activities shall be addressed to objectives, including the policy of admission, selecting faculty members, planning and dissemination resources.
6. Public services of program shall be in accordance with its educational objectives.
7. The availability of processes and mechanisms to ensure the achieved objectives and missions.
8. The availability of processes and mechanisms to develop objectives and mission in the light of variables.

B. Planning and Efficiency

The availability of continuous planning ensures the achievement of program's objectives and mission, assessing the level of this achievement. Assessment outcomes would be utilized for the ongoing procedures of planning and evaluation to determine the challenges to adjust the policy, objectives and procedures.

Indicators

1. The clarity of planning process with developing the procedures to determine to what extent objectives and mission are achieved.
2. Program assessment, planning and various activities (teaching, research, and community services) shall be engaged in line with objectives and mission.
3. Staff, faculty members and students shall be involved in planning and evaluation process.
4. Outcomes of continuous planning and evaluation shall be used to a better dissemination of resources and improvement of programs activities.
5. Process of planning and evaluation shall be employed to determine the priorities of improvements and development.
6. The availability of the needed requirements to ensure the efficiency of planning and evaluation process.
7. Research effort of program and the process of evaluation shall be regularly reviewed and documented.
8. Outcomes of planning and evaluation shall be used to display the efficiency of proofs and indicators.

2. Financial Resources

Ongoing activities of financial planning and setting budget shall be in line with objectives of program.

Indicators



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1. Institution shall financially capable to present efficient educational services in line with objectives and mission with the accurate commitment to enrolled students in programs electronically designed.
2. The availability of required budget to programs offered to students.
3. Institution shall be committed to provide the financial support needed to ensure the presence of qualified cadre and accurate techniques.
4. Organized program shall be presented and consistent with objectives, functioned as financial support from by various resources parallel in terms of importance of planning for e-learning program.
5. The availability of audit and financial internal control program that is responsible for financial control procedures.
6. Clear policies and legislations shall be presented and applied about the management of monetary status.
7. Program shall provide future financial plans in which ensures achieving main items of income and plans of expenditures, as well as plans of income and expenditure management for 3 years minimum.
8. Annual budget including policies and developed plans shall be disseminated.
9. Proofs of commitment of providing suitable financial resources shall be presented and used as a support to e-learning program.
10. Financial Stability shall be presented. In case of Fiscal deficit, remedial authorized plans by governance council shall be provided to reduce this defect.
11. Institution shall display the adequacy of financial resources.

3. Program Design

Maintaining the high quality of programs aims at graduating efficient students. Institution and Accreditation Commission are partners to ensure the efficiency of programs to keep up with technical and educational developments.

Indicators

1. Academic standards of offered degrees of e-learning programs shall be in line with offered degrees of original one, and shall follow the accredited standards according the operational legislation.
2. The consistency among learning objectives, e-learning strategies of teaching, content of scientific materials, patterns and standards evaluation as well.
3. Provide fair and reasonable opportunities for students to get to the levels required to complete graduation requirements.
4. The availability of clear and specific mechanism for continuous evaluation from inside and outside the institution and shall be subdued to inspections, review and re-accreditation periodically.
5. Institution shall display its commitment to international standards related to teaching and learning by providing human, material, financial and technological resources to support effective programs of e-learning and to facilitate students task to accomplish program objectives.
6. Academic standards of e-learning shall match the academic standards of traditional programs.
7. Learning objectives of program shall be in line with teaching strategies and content knowledge of courses and strategies evaluation.
8. Courses elements of objectives, content and methods of teaching shall be consistent, taking into account the distinctive features of teaching and time elements during learning.
9. The availability of special models determines the mechanism and standards for internal and external assessment.
10. Program design and courses shall include reciprocal interaction between teacher and student, student and the student as well through notes or survey or other measures.
11. Learning needs of enrolled students shall correspond e-learning objectives and learning outcomes.



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12. Holism & consistency of e-learning programs, study plans which also shall characterized with logical sequence and include learning strategies and outcomes assessment methods.
13. Each program shall determine cognitive fields and have a clear definition and content of mental skills and creative abilities, competencies and professional skills and attitudes to be acquired by students.
14. Commitment with the specific time to receive accurate qualified learning experiences universally.
15. Institution councils will be in charge of designing, developing and applying curricula with a clear and specific communication channels with faculty members who are responsible for the design, integration and implementation.
16. Policies and instructions (add or maintain courses from programs) shall be periodically reviewed in limited time according to local and global changes related to specialization.
17. Cessation, developing and amending programs, taking into account enrolled students' ability to avoid postponing or cessation while maintaining fully their acquired rights.

4. Manageability of eLearning Programs

A. Manageability

1. Providing consecutive information about learner and content, indicators on the achievements of learners and their educational level, and the content of "speak the same language," that reflects the easiness of creating managing and assembling system properly.
2. Facilitating program management approach to achieve the academic standards of the granted degree.
3. Providing fair and reasonable opportunities for students to enable them to reach required levels to complete graduation requirements.
4. Staff shall be continuously engaged in conducting evaluation, review, and feedback outcomes to develop all teaching and learning components, used software as well.

B. Effectiveness of Manageability

Providing efficient administrative system to a better educational services operating accurately. This requires the following:

1. Appointing qualified experienced staff (with e-learning fields) including faculty members, lecturers, trainers capable to support and advise students.
2. Appointing well qualified staff in library performing various tasks like (academic guidance solving technical support and problems). In addition to, cadre for following up and management of student learning and their academic outcomes, planning for the use of technology in all academic services provided to them and respond to their requirements and their changing needs and continuous improvement to a better system, strategies and methods of learning and teaching to maintain the effective continuity.

C. Students' Services

Students' affair program shall be consistent with the mission and objectives of e-learning to ensure its success. Services including Registration services:

1. Providing students with registration steps.
2. Academic and educational guidance:
 - Presenting individual advice.
 - The availability of learning opportunities of assessment of content.
 - Documenting students' achievement in each course.
 - The confidentiality of students' academic records and easiness to be accessed.
3. Technological assistance to display the purpose of the technology, required skills and knowledge to interact with technology.



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Indicators

1. Appointing well experienced qualified faculty members (with e-learning fields).
2. Means to ensure the confidentiality of electronic database shall be provided.
3. Specific period of time shall be provided to update and save data.
4. The attainability of a website presenting e-learning programs easily, flexibility and modernity.
5. Learning management programs shall be consistent with mission and objectives. As well as providing reports and information related to the students learning.
6. The flexibility of e-learning manageability that would allow creating icons as academic activities for explanations, interactions and testing.
7. Database of personnel management system (teachers, students and staff) shall be provided.
8. The consistency among learning management and personnel management systems and the official website of institution.
9. The availability of multimedia (video, audio and graphs) which would illustrate steps of registration, downloading activities and conducting a test, in addition to other educational events.
10. The availability of procedures of necessary training for students and teachers when adopted a new programs and systems.
11. Consistent plans to adjust the quality of programs, used tools and devices.
12. Providing the necessary technical support for students when using the technology or new hardware & software such as (Help Desk Function) that assists students and provide communication service from person to person with the students by means such as email, phone and fax. In addition to presenting an official site for repeated questions received by Internet or fax.
13. Presenting Clear mechanisms to a better follow up monitoring and quality assurance of inputs, processes and outputs.

5. Student Services

Service-programs for students would contribute to a better achievement mission, academic objectives, development of cognitive and educational fields for students, as well as providing accurate, comprehensive, clear, and updated information and can be easily accessed for students through transparent advertising. Information shall provide the following:

Program's Requirement. How to interact with system. Prerequisite of accessing program. Quick glance at curricula. Program accreditation. Program timetable. Evaluation of learning, tuition fees. Ways of students' interactions.

Statistics on the level of earned outcomes of students, indicators of academic progress, calculate the cumulative average. Information would help the students to make decisions about their studies and evaluation of the academic route. Means of communication among students and methods to present academic works and ensure of receiving them by faculty members. Providing students with complete and accurate information about course requirements, and techniques.

As well as presenting the needed Technical training and support. Displaying data about the complete learning package (course description, learning objectives, and evaluate achievements and information of trainer, additional lectures, prescribed activities and tasks, tests and questions, accessing answers of questions and examinations, the development of achievement file and the comprehensive package of material characterized by attractive appearance, ease of use, the ability to be amended, the holism of services and activities, integration, reviewing evaluation.

Indicators

1. Institution maintains holistic, accurate handbook and can be easily accessed that includes all policies and procedures.
2. Providing documented procedures display the receiving of program requirements by students.



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3. The institution has a policy concerning providing mechanisms to inform students with the requirements of technology and technical skills needed for registration.
4. The institution has accurate declared policies regarding students' capability to follow up academic schedule.
5. The governing body operates policies regarding mobility and transfer of credit hours in a program at the institution to another program or from institution to another one.
6. Institution determines the students' admissions and dissemination policies.
7. Institution implements procedures and mechanisms to maintain the continuity of program.
8. Offering official website functions as multimedia shows: each program Plan, course description, objectives and needed techniques, guided plan, an electronic database elucidate the courses completed and incompletes by the student, fiscal information of each student, information regarding e-registration, cumulative and semester average, common frequently questions of students, support software to deal with the material content presented on the site such as (Media Player & Adobe Reader), information about the lecturer and how to communicate with him.
9. Data shall be provided about student satisfaction by the performed procedures to implement the program.
10. Institution presents amendments and proposals lists that have been received from students and faculty to facilitate the implementation of the program.
11. Strategies and used practices to a better interaction of student in the institution community.
12. The availability of well-qualified staff that would conduct accurately student services.
13. Institution operates accurate patent policies and procedures to develop student services programs.
14. The governor body disseminates students' resources based on the actual needs, adequacy or suitability to support the offered services and programs.
15. Providing mechanisms to a better student services and assess the achieved effectiveness.
16. Offering channels for the contribution of students and faculty members in developing, managing and evaluating student services.
17. The institution has policy concerning the rights and responsibilities of students, as well as concerning the scientific integrity.
18. The institution has clear statement concerning the privacy and confidentiality of students' academic rights.
19. Specific and clear standards should be adopted regarding assessment process (marks or grades). As well as institution has appropriate polices governing the holistic academic records and maintaining the security of them.
20. Clear policies and procedures regarding grades.
21. Providing regular programs concerning academic, educational and professional legacy including opportunities that assist students to take academic decisions about their educational experiences and Employment.
22. The accuracy and clarity of graduation requirements.

6. Instructional Design, Course Development and Evaluation

Instructional design needs effective training for faculty members, organizational commitment to provide adequate support for the program, the selection of appropriate technology and infrastructure, focus on students learning outcomes, setting a design of teaching programs and systems that intend to be piloted before adopting, providing all requirements in order to maintain the desired level of quality, requiring organization synchronous models of modernization which requires the presence of multiple elements of self-management skills, and the ability to access the solution immediately.

The following are needed:



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1. Teaching and learning materials shall be prepared by experts, as well as shall be accurate and sustainable to learner needs.
2. Design of educational materials so that they have providing an easy-to-use technology, allowing the use of multimedia consistently, subject to intellectual property rights, and consistent with the information and communication technology standards.
3. Developing software to be commensurate with the bases of HEI taking into account the specificities and the requirements of this non-traditional style.
4. Curriculum and scientific topics shall be updated, providing balance in the ways of topics, extracting from reliable didactic sources that fit the quality of learner needs and commensurate with learning outcomes.
5. Crucially of building knowledge and create jobs, improving students' abilities to solve problems with taking into account individual differences, providing mechanism for improving the scientific material and strategies of teaching and evaluation based on the continuous feedback.
6. The diversity of learning resources and teaching materials that shall be easily accessed, and taking into account intellectual property rights.
7. Providing an electronic library characterized by easy search and access to assess students' skills and knowledge.
8. Providing mechanisms and models.
9. The evaluation focuses on providing students with cognitive skills that improve learner's knowledge and be prepared for citizenship and work.

Indicators

1. Training programs to faculty members shall be provided.
2. Institution has policies regarding each course teaching design in terms of implementation and updating.
3. Institution has policies concerning intellectual property rights for programs and e-learning curricula offered by other institutions.
4. Curriculum and multimedia are up-to-date in terms of content and the diversity of the resources used in the implementation of decisions.
5. Students are oriented to the ongoing learning skills, (teamwork skills, communication skills, and computer skills) through programs.
6. Students are oriented to develop and demonstrate skills of analysis, understanding, effective communication and research.
7. The program shall be integrative and cohesive, and the used materials and teaching aids shall be convenient.
8. The institution provides electronic up-to-date library services that support the needs of e-learning students.
9. Developing the feedback mechanism of students' activities electronically.
10. Institution has policies concerning mechanisms and assessment procedures to assess the level of students' achievement, and regarding the updating Standards and degree-granting measurement tools covering all the learning outcomes of cognitive skills.
11. The continuous follow-up to the level of students' performance and the outcomes achievement or expected learning outcomes.
12. Institutions clearly define the learning outcomes and the expected of student achievement for each of the offered programs.
13. Institution periodically reviews program and courses.
14. Institution provides assessment of students and faculty members and e-courses.



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15. Institution assures the integrity of student work in the e-learning environment; it demonstrates steps taken to limit the possibility of fraud and abuse.
16. Governor body provides data concerning students and faculty member's satisfaction in the area of student services and projects.
17. The institution has a policy concerning the confidentiality and integrity of the academic systems, the administrative systems, students' records and individual privacy, the confidentiality of, and the best interests of the student and institution.

7. E-Learning Infrastructure and Technological Structure

In order to ensure successful learning and teaching, institutions would have to provide solid infrastructure and also support to students and staff. The using of Digital courseware, online repositories for educational material, tools management systems and student portals are for content development and course management. Infrastructure would provide students and faculty members with a high degree of reliability and accessibility.

High infrastructure would provide protection of data and communications and make it possible to develop usable and integrated learning elements, could be stored and retrieved. Assisting to avoid the problems of translation and communication and exchange of information and provide solutions clearly, as well as to provide technical support for all hardware, software needed to implementation of e-learning process.

Indicators

1. The institution provides policies concerning infrastructure to keep up with latest developments.
2. The availability of technical and physical infrastructure to ensure better e-learning programs.
3. Institution has policies concerning disabled services and have met the operational legislations.
4. Infrastructure is being met with curriculum implementation (student and teacher interaction, student and student).
5. Institution has policies regarding budgeting to sustain quality and foster institutional improvement.
6. Institution provides efficient internet connectivity required for the program.
7. Institution provides accurate quantity servers to a better dissemination of program.
8. Special security measures to a better confidentiality of data shall be applied.
9. The availability of alternative solutions in case of malfunctions in the main system.
10. Learning management program (MLS) is being met with other programs.
11. Providing help desk 24 hours in case of emergency.
12. The availability of centralized or decentralized system of technical support within specific time.
13. Presenting programmed courses of hardware and software maintenance.
14. The availability of internal assessment to determine the appropriate technical support system used.

8. Accessibility and Management of Learning

The availability of effective channels leading to content of the e-learning program and active learning tools are essential for a successful e-learning process. It is expected from the institution to show interest in the development and reinforcement of self-learning, to enable learners to control their educational evolution and to facilitate the student-institution, teacher-student and student-student communication, as well as setting realistic goals and to ensure achieving those using scientific methods. The student shall have access to the content in a suitable time, with an enhanced storage capacity available for users. The institution shall utilize active learning methods to develop communication and assessment skills. Institutions must have measures to manage time and curricula, and to make synchronous and non-synchronous remote communication while providing written and verbal assignments as well as self-assessment tools.



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Institutions must execute assessment using achievement portfolio and written tests that suit teachers' needs and circumstances, and to develop the digital archive essential in the electronic achievement portfolio.

Indicators

1. Institutions must utilize networks such as YouTube and Facebook.
2. Institutions must provide active channels for the execution of e-learning measures in order to offer synchronous technical assistance (interactive videos, phone calls, and chatting websites) or non-synchronous (e-mails).
3. Institution must provide effective and simple measures to facilitate the use of the e-library and related database by students and faculty members.
4. Institution must have a calendar demonstrating deadlines for students, faculty members and trainers.

9. Learning Experience Evaluation

E-learning development system must include an independent assessment plan for the whole system, which is a degree that would enhance the outcomes of learning (specifically from users' viewpoint).

Student Evaluation

Student learning evaluation is essential in the learning process, it is expected that this pattern of learning would include updated procedures for final assessment that take the programs' circumstances and nature as well as learner's needs and the nature of learning in a way the final evaluation of the program or its constituents assess student accomplishment of program or its constituents' requirements and for the assessment correction and result publishing procedures to be carried out according to academic standards and for the final evaluation and the result determining to be performed under the direct supervision of the institution. As well as holding periodic review, alteration and development of the measures and procedures depending on the feedback.

Indicators

1. Institution has procedures concerning the conduct of tests that shall be characterized with accuracy, objectivity, confidentiality.
2. The institution engages in comprehensive transparent assessments and measurements.
3. Various procedures and learning tools are being met with course outcomes and learners' ability.
4. Institution provides general framework concerning learners' assessment and implementation within a specified period.
5. Institution has patent standards concerning courses assessment (students and experts viewpoint and objectives).
6. Data shall be provided for demonstrating the extent to which institution procedures contributes to the satisfaction of program outcomes.
7. Data shall be provided for demonstrating the extent of students' satisfaction of program outcomes and transparency.
8. The data shows the consistency of programs objectives.



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Appendix IV

UAE eLearning Standards

1. Mission and Institutional Effectiveness

The institution has a distinct and clearly articulated mission that is appropriate to an institution of higher education, focused upon its identity, its educational and other goals, and the students and communities it wishes to serve. The mission serves to distinguish the institution and aids in planning and resource allocation. The institution delivers academic programs and courses; it pursues other activities, such as service, research, and scholarship; it operates relevant academic, student, and administrative services. All these are consistent with the institution's mission.

The institution demonstrates institutional effectiveness. Systematically evaluating its academic programs and courses and its academic, student, and administrative services based on evidence, the institution uses the results of that evaluation in planning, budgeting, establishing priorities, and improving its academic programs and services. The institution employs appropriate methods to assess its outcomes and objectives periodically and evaluates them on the basis of the evidence obtained; it can demonstrate how evidence based planning has led to improvements in programs and services, to new programs and services, and to more effective use of resources.

2. Organization, Governance, and Leadership

The institution has a system of governance that facilitates the accomplishment of its mission, furthers institutional effectiveness, and clearly distinguishes the authority, roles, and responsibilities of its governing body (the board) and the chief academic and administrative officers and the relationship between the board and the administration. The institution's board has the final responsibility for, and control over, the institution. The board organizes and governs itself in accordance with a set of by-laws. The by-laws provide specific regulation of membership and responsibilities. Effective leadership is established at all levels of the institution.

3. The Academic Program

The programs and courses offered by the institution are appropriate to its mission. International academic Standards are reflected in program design and composition, in teaching and instruction, and in the assessment of student achievement. The institution demonstrates that academic programs are assessed and continuously improved and that students meet the outcomes of its programs and courses.

4. Faculty and Professional Staff

The institution demonstrates that it has an appropriately qualified faculty and an administrative and technical staff of a sufficient number to meet all requirements of its programs, services, and activities and to achieve its mission. All faculty members and professional staff hold appropriate credentials; their preparation and qualifications are suited to the field and the level of their instructional assignments or field of activity. The institution has orderly, transparent processes and policies for recruiting, developing, evaluating, promoting, and retaining members of the professional staff and faculty members who exemplify diverse educational and cultural backgrounds.

5. Students

The institution defines the characteristics of the students it seeks to enroll, and provides an environment that contributes to their cultural, social, moral, intellectual, and physical development. Student services and programs are based upon an assessment of students' needs, support the achievement of their educational goals, and are consistent with the institution's mission.



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6. Library and Other Information Resources

The institution provides information resources and services for students and faculty members that adequately support teaching and learning, and, if applicable, research, in ways consistent with the institution's mission and goals. Library and information resources and services are sufficient in quality, depth, diversity, and currency for the institution's curricular offerings at the appropriate level for the programs offered, and they meet the needs of the faculty, students, and academic support personnel, regardless of where they are located.

7. Physical and Technology Resources

Whether owned or rented, the physical facilities—including buildings, materials, equipment, and campus—are designed and maintained to serve the needs of the institution in relationship to its mission. The campus area adequately provides for the institution's buildings and activities and includes a sufficient number of classrooms and other specialized physical resources (such as laboratories) to support its academic programs. The necessary equipment, including computing and laboratory equipment, and software systems are readily accessible and meet educational and administrative requirements. A reliable network supports the uses of information technology.

8. Fiscal Resources

The institution evidences present and future financial stability with resources adequate to accomplish its mission effectively and to ensure that all enrolled students are able to complete their academic program. A finance officer, reporting to the chief executive officer, oversees all business and financial functions of the institution. Essential policies and procedures for budgetary planning and control, accounting, and external audits are in place.

9. Public Disclosure and Integrity

The institution adheres to the highest ethical standards in its teaching, research, scholarship, and service; in its treatment of its students, faculty, and staff; and in its external interactions and relationships. It is committed to the search for and the dissemination of knowledge. Both print and electronic publications for students, prospective students, and the public provide complete, clear, consistent, and accurate information about the institution.

10. Research

As compatible with its mission, the institution pursues research. In line with a research strategy, the institution's physical, fiscal, and human resources, its organization, services, policies, and programs all reflect a commitment to the creation, integration, and application of knowledge and scholarly and creative activity. The quality of its research activities and their contribution to the community, nation, and region are demonstrated.



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Appendix V

The Arab Organization for Quality Assurance in Education (AROQA)

1. Mission and institutional effectiveness

This standard focus on strategic plan, institutional effectiveness and the international dimension.

2. Governance and Management

The institution should have a clear regulations and policies, which applied on the organizational structure. A durable information system support all institution activities.

3. Learning and Teaching

This standard set comprehensive characteristic for educational environment, curriculum and faculty member to meet institution mission.

4. Resources

All required resources are identify to enhance the university environments, these resources are: Human, Technical, Financial, Material resources and support systems.

5. University Environment

This standard set complete student services requirements, emphasis on virtual communications since in a vital factor in e-learning.

6. Corporate Social Responsibility

The CSR means: Devising specific programs to community responsibility based on community needs, providing specific budget for these programs, evaluating, and developing of these programs fitting adaptation and changes requirements, and the needs of the local and regional community.

7. Assessment and Improvement

The institution have to create Measurement, assessment center and quality assurance unit, which will evaluate students and curriculum, the effectiveness of programs and follow- up graduates and faculty members.

8. Scientific Research

The institution set a plan for scientific and applied research, which should be related to trends and national priorities. Scientific research activities should be used in addressing the problems of the local community and national industry. Where all research tools are available to motivate and support researchers with student contributions.



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Appendix VI

Association of Arab Universities

Quality and Accreditation standards for Open and Distance Learning Universities and Programs

1. University Vision, Mission, Goals and Plans

The university is clearly defines its vision, mission, goals and plans. The requirement tools to achieve this standard:

- Document of the university's mission, vision and goals.
- Samples of action plans in the various fields (physical and human resources, research, training, community service, ...etc).

2. Leadership and administrative structure

The university has a clear administrative system and leadership. Defining the structure and responsibilities at the general or unit's level. The quality of this domain is evaluated against a number of elements that the university should make available. The required tools to achieve this standard:

- University organized structure.
- Samples of minutes of meetings
- Systems of recruiting administrative leadership.
- Samples of working instructions and authorities.
- Job specifications.

3. Physical, Human, Technological and Financial Resources

The university should plan for establish and develop its resources in a manner that guarantees quality and the best utilization to support its programs and services; specify publically and clearly the standards, qualifications and procedures pertaining to recruiting the employees and academic faculty in a way compatible with its organizational structure; provide supportive service for learning and use its technological resources to support teaching programs and intellectual, cultural and academic activities

4. University Ethics

The university applies in all administrative units a code of ethics that has a clear value reference. The required tools to achieve this standard:

- Samples of codes of ethics.
- Standards for employment and promotion.
- Standards for reward and punishment (administrative accountability rules).

5. Faculty Members

The university should take the following measures to secure qualified academic faculty for the different specialization. Including: Setting up a clear vision for its requirements of academic faculty in the light of its vision, mission and goals; availability of sufficient of fill-time and part-time academic faculty required for supporting educational programs and services. The required tools to achieve this standard:

- Criteria for selecting faculty members.
- Academic faculty.
- Professional development programs.
- Faculty performance appraisal systems, and assessment report templates.
- Statistics for academic faculty.

6. Student Affairs



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The university should use scientific methods to identify students' basic needs for academic and administrative services; provide brochures of mission, vision as well as guidance and counseling for non-academic services. The required tools to achieve this standard:

- University Guide.
- Documents / brochures introducing the university services and its various bodies.

7. Admission and Registration

The university aspects students whose qualifications are congruent with its mission, goals, values, academic programs, capabilities and relevant regulations, and grants them good academic and administrative environment, which fulfils the goals. The required tools to achieve this standard:

- Regulations and instructions for admission, transfer, change of major and penalties
- Exams regulations and instructions
- Samples of student records and documentation; admission tests, and intelligence measures

8. Academic Programs and Teaching Methods

The collection of programs and textbooks intended to fulfill the university mission and goals according to quality standards; the university has learning Resources Center (LRC) that encompasses capabilities, hardware, modern technology, books, and other publications and tools necessary the scientific growth for both students and faculty members. These contribute to the development of the teaching methods used.

9. Research

The university should provide a unit responsible for devising a plan for research and managing in affairs; give priority to scientific research yielding financial and economic revenues for the local community and its institutions. The required tools to achieve this standard:

- Research plan.
- Sabbatical system applied at the university.
- Statistics of published research numbers and fields.
- Financial budget allocated to scientific research.

10. Continuing Education and Community Service

University should provide a plan for community service, and create the appropriate conditions for its implementations; establish specialized centers to serve the community and to strengthen the relationship with local and international institutions. The required tools to achieve this standard:

- Community services plan.
- Samples of agreements and contracts with community institutions.
- Database of the activities carried out to serve the community.

11. Assessment

It is a process carried out by the university to identify the strengths and weaknesses in its academic, administrative, financial and technical performance. The required tools to achieve this standard:

- Examination system.
- Samples of exam questions.
- Statistics on success and failure.
- Evaluative studies on the university performance.



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Appendix IV Comparison of QA Criteria

Jordan	UAE	AARU	AROQA
Vision, Mission and Objectives	Mission and Institutional Effectiveness	University Vision, Mission, Goals and Plans	Mission and Institutional Effectiveness
Financial Resources	Fiscal Resources	Physical, Human Technological and Financial resources	Resources
Program Design	The Academic Program	Academic Programs and Teaching Methods	Learning and Teaching
Manageability of e-learning Programs	Organization, Governance, and Leadership	Leadership and Administrative Structure	Governance and Management
Student Services	Students	Student affairs	
Instructional Design, Course Development and Evaluation			
E-Learning Infrastructure	Library and Other Information Resources Physical and Technology Resources	Physical, human technological and financial resources	University Environment
Accessibility and Management of Learning			
Learning experience evaluation		Assessment	Assessment and Improvement
	Faculty and Professional Staff	Faculty members	
	Public Disclosure and Integrity	Continuing Education and Community Service	Corporate Social Responsibility
	Research	Research	Scientific Research
		Admission and Registration	
		University Ethics	