JARAMOGI OGINGA ODINGA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY

November 2017

Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology

Quality Assurance Policy   2017

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Policy Contact: Director, Quality Enhancement and Assurance

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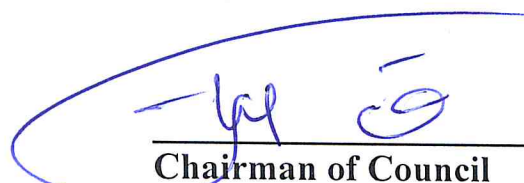**Status:**   Approved by Council
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Signed:

_____   9/11/2017
Vice-Chancellor, Secretary to Council   Date
Prof. Stephen. G. Agong'

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Chairman of Council   Date
Dr.Walter .J. Ongeti

PREAMBLE

Quality Assurance has become part of the common concern in higher education management. There are several interconnected reasons for the adoption of quality and related practice which, until recently, has been confined to industrial management only. This entails having in place internal arrangements for the monitoring and continuous improvement of quality in all aspects of the University's core functions.

Given the efforts at regional economic and political integration there is need for cross-border harmonization of quality standards in higher education, which also implies having at each credible higher learning institution an internal Quality assurance mechanism that would prepare the institution for external evaluation and accreditation.

It is in this context that this Quality Assurance Policy for Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology (JOOUST) is conceived and instituted. Its conceptualization and development took into account previous efforts at ensuring quality performance in the implementation of the core activities of the University through ISO standardization.

This policy hinges on two intertwined processes of quality assessment and improvement and ISO standardization. According to its provisions, each unit and office is responsible for carrying out these processes systematically and continuously, based on rationally established and widely disseminated performance standards. According to the JOOUST Statues, the Directorate of Quality Enhancement and Assurance hereafter known as the Directorate, shall coordinate the process centrally and to provide the various University units with professional support in self-evaluation and improvement.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

JOOUST Council and University Management Board for support and goodwill; Senate for ideas; the QEA Board and the entire stakeholders for support.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CUE	Commission for University Education
DVC (AA):	Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic Affairs)
DVC (RIO):	Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research, Innovations and Outreach)
DVC(PAF):	Deputy Vice Chancellor (Planning, Administration and Finance)
ISO:	International Organization of Standards
JOOUST:	Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology
QA:	Quality Assurance
QAB:	Quality Assurance Board
QEA:	Quality Enhancement and Assurance

POLICY FRAMEWORK

This policy shall be read and enforced alongside:

1   Constitution of Kenya 2010 and any other relevant Act as will be amended form time to time

2   Universities Act No. 42 of 2012

3   Universities Amendments Act 2016

4   Commission for University Education, Universities Standards and Guidelines, 2014

5   Code of Governance for State Corporation (Mwongozo).

6   Kenya Vision 2030

7   Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology:

- Charter 2013
- Statutes 2013
- Code of Ethical Principles and Conduct 2013
- Financial Management Policy 2013
- Rules & Regulations Governing the Organization, Conduct and Discipline of Students 2013
- ICT Policy 2013
- Risk Management Policy 2013
- Ethics and Integrity Policy 2016

1.0   BACKGROUND

The University underscores its determination to overhaul itself and review its operations with a view to improving efficiency, relevance and effectiveness. At the same time the University re-affirms its commitment to achieving the highest level of academic excellence in all its programs and units by providing quality education that is commensurate with the pressing challenges of globalization at national, regional and international level. This commitment is amply reflected in the statements of the Vision, Mission and Objectives of the University Statute and Strategic Plan.

1.1   The University Functions Guided by this Policy

i. To provide directly or in collaboration with other institutions of higher learning, facilities for university education (including technological, scientific and professional education), the integration of teaching, research and effective application of knowledge and skills to the life, work and welfare of the citizens of Kenya;

ii. To participate in the discovery, transmission and preservation and enhancement of knowledge and to stimulate intellectual participation of students in economic, social, cultural, scientific and technological development of Kenya;

iii. To provide and advance university education and training to appropriately qualified candidates, leading to the conferment of degrees and award of diplomas and certificates and such other qualifications as the Council and the Senate shall from time to time determine and in so doing, contribute to manpower needs;

iv. To conduct examinations for such academic awards as may be provided in the statutes pertaining to the University;

v. To examine and make proposals for new faculties, schools, institutes, departments, resource and research centers, degree courses and subjects of study;

vi. To play a leading role into the development and expansion of opportunities for higher education and research;

vii. To develop as an institution of excellence in teaching, training, scholarship, entrepreneurship, innovation, research and consultancy services;

viii. To participate in commercial ventures and other activities to the benefit of the institution, the community and stakeholders;

ix. To develop and provide educational, cultural, professional, technical and vocational services to the community and in particular foster corporate social responsibility;

x. To provide programs, products and services in ways that reflect the principles of equity and social justice;

xi. To facilitate student mobility between different programs at different technical training institutions, universities and industry;

xii. To promote a culture of innovation, scientific research and technology transfer for the benefit of humanity;

xiii. To provide high quality educational, research, residential, commercial, cultural, social recreational, sporting and other facilities;

xiv.   To foster general welfare of staff and students.

1.2   Vision and Mission

1.2.1   Vision

A beacon of excellence and global leader in University education for sustainable Development

1.2.2   Mission

To provide quality University Education that nurtures creativity and innovation through integrated training, research and community outreach for the advancement of humanity

1.2.3   Core Values

Fairness, Professionalism, Integrity, Meritocracy, Equity, Transparency and Accountability

1.3   Philosophy of the University

The University is anchored on the philosophy of holistic approach to the service of humanity and other related areas of scholarship mediated through wisdom, science and technology.

1.3.1   Motto

Oasis of Knowledge

1.3.2   Professionalism

Embrace professionalism as the fountain of its design and delivery of its products and services with innovation and creativity as the hallmark.

1.3.3   Transparency and Accountability

Conduct affairs with utmost transparency and accountability.

2.0   POLICY STATEMENT

2.1   Introduction

Quality is described here as the totality of features and characteristics of a service or object that bear on its ability to satisfy the stated or implied needs. The notion of quality in higher education is tied to understanding of the purpose of education. The fitness to purpose pays particular attention to intrinsic qualities, values and ideals for truth and pursuit of knowledge and its capacity to respond to the changing needs of society.

Quality assurance in the context of this policy means measures or a set of measures taken to satisfy itself and demonstrate to its clients that it has constant capacity to keep its promise to deliver goods and services of the desired standard and continual strives to enhance activities to achieve equality for all her stakeholders.

JOOUST therefore has a mandate to explicitly pursue a combination of approaches to higher education, i.e. instilling intrinsic values and developing practical capabilities among students and staff.

Responsibility for maintaining and promoting quality of academic programs is vested in the Senate, through its various committees. The Directorate will work with the committees to implement quality across the board in the University structure. In carrying out these functions, the Directorates relies on reviews and judgments made by peers from within as well as from outside the institution. Such reviews will largely focus on the academic contents and processes of the particular programs through external moderation and other stakeholders.

3.0   OBJECTIVES
3.1   The Goal and Main Objectives
The main goal of this Quality Assurance Policy is to ensure that relevant and appropriate academic standards are achieved and good quality education is provided to students by encouraging and supporting continuous quality improvement in institutional as well as in programs and research management. In particular the QEA policy aims to achieve the following objectives in conformity to that of safeguarding educational standards in the country:

(i)   To safeguard and improve the academic standards and quality of education at the University;

(ii)   To ensure the integrity of the academic awards of the University;

(iii)   To develop and maintain, through enhanced support processes, quality academic programs appropriate to the academic strengths of the University where a recognizable market has been clearly identified;

(iv)   To ensure that all programs are of high standard, of continued relevance to graduate labor markets and the needs of the workforce in the country, and dovetail with the Quality Management Systems Standards currently in force;

(v)   To continually improve quality of community service programs offered by the University ;

(vi)   To enhance constant improvement of internal support services provided to students and staff as necessary;

(vii)   To develop and refine internal Quality Assurance mechanisms that are appropriate and to apply such mechanisms systematically across all programs offered by JOOUST , all services rendered to the society and all support services provided to students and staff; and

(viii) To develop and sustain a culture of quality seeking and Quality assurance among members of the university community.

3.2   Scope of the Quality Assurance Policy
Quality is the outcome of interactions of many factors. All such factors are within the scope of this Policy. However, certain factors tend to stand out conspicuously as major determinants of

quality in higher education processes. The policy therefore embraces, applies and is of particular interest and relevance to the following:

  i). All JOOUST Campuses, Open and Distance e-Learning Centers, Schools, Institutes, Departments, academic and administrative departments and other institutional structures operating under the umbrella of the Jaramogi University of Science and Technology ;

  ii). All staff, temporary and permanent, who are active in teaching, research and providing any form of support service to the core functions of the University ;

  iii). All students registered with the University ;

The entire institution has to view quality as an overarching principle of all its operations.

3.3   Anticipated Benefits of the Quality Assurance Policy

It is anticipated that successful implementation of this policy will result in:

  i.   Improved student performance and success in learning;
  ii.   Improved work performance of academic and other staff;
  iii. Fuller satisfaction of society's and stakeholders' interests, expectations and needs;
  iv.   Enhanced transparency and public confidence, and thus internal and external material support;
  v.   Improved institutional and public image, and thus enhanced relations with stakeholders and the wider society;
  vi.   Enhanced capacity to compete with other higher learning institutions nationally, regionally and globally; and
  vii. More focused approach to the implementation of the University vision and mission statements.

3.4   Quality in the Changing Perceptions and Demands

The Universities should be perceived as honest, self steering, self censuring and quality conscious center of learning. The desire is to create greater accountability and efficiency in respect of public financing, greater stakeholder scrutiny of education and training processes and outcomes and to encourage trust in the efficiency and effectiveness of internal Quality assurance mechanisms. The policy is meant to assist and support the divisions in their internal Quality assurance activities in order to improve quality of output. JOOUST will strive to show that quality is available in the rules, regulations and procedures governing inputs, processes and outputs of academic programs as well as other facets of operations. Thus there are:

  i.   Formal admission conditions and requirements that filter out possible unqualified persons;
  ii.   Recruitment, appraisal and staff development requirements and procedures that ensure that only quality staff members are allowed to teach;
  iii. Stipulations regarding course contents, structure and assessment;
  iv.   Examination regulations and degree classification procedures.
  v.   Establishment of a Quality assurance and Control system;
  vi.   Establishment of Academic Performance Indicators and Benchmarks;

vii.   Setting of Annual Performance Contracting Targets;

viii.   Regularization of Academic Audits based on CUE standards.

4.0   ASSUMPTIONS AND QUALITY STATEMENT

4.1   Introduction

In the effort to realize its vision, mission and objectives, Jaramogi University of Science and Technology (JOOUST) shall consistently monitor and systematically evaluate the implementation of all its authorized activities. As a starting point, JOOUST shall review all its existing policies, regulations and procedures and, where such instruments are lacking, develop appropriate ones, so as to ensure all these guides are in line with its vision, mission and overall objectives. The University shall ensure that at all times it has in place well stipulated and widely understood criteria for judging performance standards in all its core activities which are essential for implementation of the policy.

4.2   Assumption Statement

4.2.1   Teaching and Learning Requirements

To ensure quality in the area of teaching and learning:

i.   The University shall periodically review teaching programs in order to confirm the extent to which:

   a) Programs are meaningfully structured and organized;

   b) Programs not only meet student needs but actually provide an experience that lives up to their highest expectations;

   c) Teaching and learning constantly address critical national human resources requirements and meets expectations of stakeholders

   d) The quality and quantity of available human, material and financial resources meet the program requirements; and

   e) Programs are both viable and relevant in the job market.

ii.   Schools shall professionally evaluate academic programs through curriculum review workshops and other appropriate mechanisms;

iii. Every program shall undergo at least one review within a span of five years.

4.2.2   Support Services

In discharging its responsibility to ensure quality in the area of provision of support services, JOOUST shall continually support services provided for students and staff, especially in respect of adequacy and quality of:

   (i)   Academic and social counseling services;

   (ii) Study materials, space and teaching and learning infrastructure;

   (iii) Social amenities, including health, catering, recreational and other services.

JOOUST has set for itself the goal of becoming a reputable world-class university through unrelenting pursuit of quality in carrying out all its activities. To realize this vision, JOOUST and

all its units shall abide by rules, regulations and quality criteria developed internally to guide the implementation of its set objects in all spheres of its operation.

4.2.3   Students and staff support services

i.   Its physical infrastructure sufficiently supports the core mission activities of teaching and learning, research and provision of services to the public;

ii.   Reasonably good and accessible social services are made available to students and staff. These shall include catering, healthcare, recreational, academic advising and mentoring, social counseling and other services; and

iii.   Students' learning is continually enhanced through constant adoption of the latest innovations in educational media and technology and in the professional field of pedagogy.

4.3   Quality Statement

4.3.1   Teaching and learning

In ensuring quality in the area of teaching and learning, JOOUST commits itself to continually seek the highest possible standards in respect of resource inputs, implementation processes and the end product. The major inputs into the teaching and learning process are academic and technical staff, students, teaching programs and materials, and an efficient administrative structure. JOOUST is committed to ensuring that its inputs are of the highest possible quality, and to this end it shall:

i.   Encourage recruitment and engagement of the best available academic and technical personnel, selected on the basis of established and regularly updated quality criteria, and through an absolutely transparent procedure;

ii.   Admit its students from among the qualified candidates available, by using set and frequently reviewed selection criteria, following a fair and transparent procedure;

iii.   Offer academic programs that are relevant locally and internationally

4.3.2   Implementation Processes

In carrying out its core function of facilitating learning JOOUST shall ensure that:

i.   Its teaching programs are effectively delivered through the use of appropriate technologies and pedagogic skills;

ii.   Delivery of its teaching programs emphasizes practical training where appropriate, and therefore provides for the development of a good balance between academic knowledge and practical skills; and

iii.   Its academic and technical staff is sufficiently motivated to effectively fulfill their leadership obligations in the teaching and learning process.

4.4   Outputs

The ultimate goal for the University engagement in its core activities of teaching and learning is production of knowledgeable and skilled graduates and through the post-graduation activities of products, positively impact on the society. JOOUST therefore always anticipates that its graduates shall demonstrate excellent knowledge, skills, creativity and appropriate social values

in their post-graduation engagements, and that they will therefore make significant contributions towards the common imperative of improving the quality of life in society.

    4.5   Research

Research, teaching and learning are inextricably intertwined. JOOUST gives equal weight to the two processes, and is thus equally committed to achieving the highest possible quality of research outputs through provision of enabling environment. In ensuring quality in research it shall ensure that the policy priorities and regulations guiding research at the Schools are at all times relevant, operational and effective by working closely with the policy stipulations from the division of Research, Innovation and outreach

    4.6   Institutional Set-up

To achieve its core mission goals, JOOUST shall operate on the basis of an efficient governance structure, consisting of administrative structures and participatory organs or committees. It shall maintain clear lines of authority and accountability while maximizing transparency and legitimacy through effective and efficient participation of stakeholders in major decision-making processes. In creating and constantly improving such a governance system, JOOUST shall abide by the provisions of its Service Charter and the principles emanating there from.

5.0   ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

    5.1   Quality Assurance Board

Whereas the University and its various operational units shall continue to strive to meet set quality standards in carrying out their day to day activities, there shall be a university-wide Quality Assurance Board (QAB) as an organ of the Directorate, whose task will be to constantly monitor and evaluate Quality assurance processes at JOOUST. The pivotal role of this organ is to determine whether or not quality standards set internally for measuring performance in all core operational areas of the University are constantly met and updated to maintain high performance standards.

    5.2   The Administrative Structure of the Board

QAB shall be headed by the Director of Quality Assurance that will provide the secretariat for all of its functions and activities as stipulated in the University Statute XXXVIII. The secretariat will be supported by at least five assistants (Senior Administrator, administrator, Secretary and an Office Assistant). The QAB shall be chaired by a senior University personnel appointed by the Vice-Chancellor.

    5.3   Functions of the QAB

The QAB shall be responsible for the overall management of Quality Assurance activities at the Directorate. Its day to day activities shall focus on monitoring and evaluation of all Quality Assurance operations at JOOUST including the following:

i.   Ensuring that set performance standards in all aspects of university functions are appropriate and relevant;

ii.   Developing and periodically updating general operational manuals to guide university-level QA operations, as well as instruments for use in internal and external evaluations;

iii. Monitoring and implementation of Quality Assurance activities in all units as per the set ISO standards and provide the units with feedback for improvements.

iv. Analysis of all QA reports (students' course evaluations, External Examiners' reports, external audit reports and functionalities etc.) and identification of issues arising from them for the attention of the management at the department, faculty/school, and University and update units with emerging issues.

v. Facilitation of external evaluation of JOOUST and its academic programs;

6.0 STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY

Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology Quality Assurance shall utilize a variety of strategies and instruments to evaluate the implementation of its core mission activities. The main strategies include surveys of students' alumni, employer and community satisfaction, as well as institutional audits and program reviews which shall be both external and internal based on the ISO-Certification standards and relevant professional association boards.

6.1 Student Satisfaction Surveys

The Quality Assurance Secretariat hereafter referred to as the Directorate shall regularly and systematically organize student satisfaction surveys. These surveys will aim at giving the students an opportunity to provide feedback on their experience of individual modules, courses and teaching programs as a whole. In carrying out this task, the directorate shall design appropriate tools for collecting views, coordinating data collection activities and analyzing the results. Capturing of student experiences and opinions may be done by use of a questionnaire, a structured interview or any other appropriate method. It shall eventually disseminate the survey results to teaching units and staff, and shall coordinate the formulation and oversee implementation of strategies to improve on problem areas revealed by the evaluation results.

6.2 Employer Satisfaction Surveys

Departments and schools, in collaboration with the directorate shall conduct employer satisfaction surveys on regular basis. The surveys will provide vital information on relevance of teaching programs on offer and on ways in which they can be made more responsive to the market needs. The University employer satisfaction surveys shall be conducted by the secretariat regularly, but the various units may do their own surveys more frequently, and the directorate may ask particular units to carry out employer satisfaction surveys with respect to particular teaching programs as need arises.

6.3 Alumni Satisfaction Surveys

In addition to the employer satisfaction surveys, the teaching units and directorate shall regularly conduct alumni satisfaction surveys on regular basis. The purpose of such surveys shall be to know from former students the extent to which their studies at JOOUST have been relevant to their post-graduation needs and challenges. The information from these surveys shall be used in curricula reviews and in improving approaches to teaching. The surveys shall ordinarily focus on recent graduates (2-3 years), but older alumni may be surveyed for specific purposes. Alumni satisfaction surveys shall go hand in hand with employer satisfaction surveys, to be conducted for

the entire university once every five years. Faculties and departments may conduct surveys more frequently if they wish, and the directorate may ask particular units to carry out alumni satisfaction surveys with respect to particular teaching programs as need arises.

6.4 Surveys of Academic Staff Opinions

The secretariat shall also occasionally conduct academic staff opinion surveys, specifically aimed at assessing the level of academic staff satisfaction with the current quality of teaching and learning at the University and collecting suggestions on required interventions and possible improvement measures. The Directorate shall communicate the results of such surveys to individual units and the University Management. The Director shall coordinate discussions at both the unit and Senate levels, aimed at streamlining the improvement proposals and strategizing on their implementation. The Director shall also monitor the implementation of improvement strategies and report progress to the University Management Board.

6.5 Surveys of External Community's Perceptions

The directorate shall periodically run surveys to collect information about the neighboring communities' feelings and attitudes towards the University. The exercise shall aim at assessing the general social acceptability of the institution by the broader society as well as identifying specific problem areas in the University-local community linkage. The resulting data shall be used to improve the JOOUST outreach programs and relationship with the surrounding communities as well as designing activities that involve neighboring communities in a mutually beneficial manner.

6.6 Implementation of proposed Improvements

The evaluation reports shall be discussed at the department, schools, and the Deans' Committee where strategies for addressing the shortfalls emanating from these reviews are drawn. The Units shall then forward these improvement plans to the appropriate divisions, who shall arrange the discussion of the same by appropriate participatory organs.

6.7 Program Accreditation

Whenever applicable, JOOUST teaching programs shall be accredited by relevant and legally competent agencies. However the internal procedures for such accreditation shall be coordinated and overseen with consultation of the Directorate for coordination. In this context, the directorate shall cause the concerned unit to prepare an application portfolio based on the guidelines given by the accrediting agency, and shall advise on proper filing of such applications.

7.0 IMPLEMENTATION, REVIEW AND AMENDMENTS

7.1 Policy Scope and Implementation

This policy paper provides a general guide to the process of monitoring and evaluating quality in all aspects of JOOUST operations. It does not specify modalities or procedures for the actual process of ensuring quality, a task left to individual units and the ISO Implementation Committee. The policy assumes that the units and the University administration shall continually set and review quality standards in all the major fields of operation. The task of the Quality

Assurance process is to constantly determine the extent to which JOOUST achieves the standards it set out and to advise on ways of improving quality at both the institutional and unit levels.

7.2 Validity of the Policy Provisions

These policy provisions shall become operational immediately upon approval by the University Senate and shall remain valid until the Quality Assurance Board advises otherwise. However, given the changing circumstances under which the University operates, the document is subject to periodic reviews and alterations, and, whenever such alterations happen, the revised version of the document shall supersede the previous one.

7.3 Revision/Review of the Policy Document

In the event that any statement in the policy provision is outdated or a need to introduce new statements arises as a result of the changing university environment, or market forces, or any other reason, such statements may be changed or modified at the direction and approval of the Quality Assurance Board, University Senate and University Council. In any case this policy and the implementation modalities specified in this document shall be reviewed every three years or as need arises or as deemed necessary.

7.4 Transitional Arrangements

Quality Enhancement and Assurance matters are currently under the Director QEA who, upon approval of this policy and under the guidance of the Vice-Chancellor, shall facilitate the establishment of the QAB and subsequent implementation of the various proposals.