**Gambia College Quality Assurance Policy**

This quality assurance policy outlines the belief and commitment to ensure that ongoing quality improvement is an integral part of Gambia College. Gambia College will aim for continuous improvement in the quality of all aspects of its work as part of its determination to help learners achieve the highest possible standards

To address these critical issues,

Gambia College needs to develop a Quality Assurance Framework that clearly spells out Principles, Guidelines, and Procedures for implementing institutional quality assurance process.

Quality Assurance Structure and Policy Framework- The framework provides goals and objectives for setting up the Quality Assurance Policy. It also lays down principles and guidelines which will guide in the implementation. The framework proposes that a Quality Assurance Management Structure be put in place to coordinate the implementation of the policy.

The significant features of the QA Structure include the setting up of a Joint Gambia College Council and Academic Board committee to be known as Gambia College Quality Assurance Committee (GCQAC), School Quality Assurance Committees and creation of Quality Assurance Directorate.

The Non-teaching Departments will coordinate the implementation of the QA Policy through the Quality Assurance Administrative Team. In general the implementation of the QA Policy will be spearheaded by the Gambia College top Management under the leadership of the Vice Principal. The Policy shall apply to all units of the Gambia College through internal quality assurance mechanisms on a continuous basis and external quality Assurance strategies which will be periodic. The Internal Quality Assurance mechanisms shall focus on the quality of: programmes and courses; staff; teaching and learning experiences; staff/student performance assessment; support services; resources and facilities; and research.

The Quality Assurance activity is a continuous process. It is therefore hoped that lessons learnt during the implementation of this policy will be adapted into the laid down mechanisms to ensure the mission of Gambia College is achieved.

**Preamble**

* Whereas Gambia College is the oldest Tertiary public institution of learning and;
* Cognizant of the Gambia College Vision and Mission,
* Cautious of the Tertiary and Higher Education Act, 2016 and The National Accreditation and Quality Assurance Authority which requires institutions of higher learning to ensure that their standards conform to the standards set by National Accreditation and Quality Assurance Authority and the establishment of a quality Assurance Directorate,
* Aware of public concerns about the standards at the Gambia College,
* Aware of the many emerging institutions of higher learning in the country that could pose serious competition to the Gambia College, for not only students but also academic and other professional staff,
* Informed by the Gambia College’s Strategic Development Plan.

Now therefore, the Gambia College Academic Board through this policy instrument takes positive and proactive steps to ensure quality teaching, learning, research and outreach services relevant to the needs of the institution,

This policy specifies the Gambia College approach to quality assurance and continuous improvement as well as its principles, features, structures and standards. The Gambia College wishes to assure quality teaching, learning, research, research training and service delivery through a regular review and improvement process.

Gambia College is a dynamic community of students, scholars and staff committed to performing at the highest standards. The Gambia Colleges aim is to provide a stimulating and innovative environment for teaching, learning, research and research training. Its approach to quality assurance and continuous improvement is to learn from best practice, nationally and internationally, and benchmark against leading research universities.

**QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY**

Purpose International concerns about how to maintain quality control in an environment that increasingly puts acute pressure on the traditional modes of teaching, research, learning and management have forced most developed countries to adopt a formal, transparent and credible systems of quality assurance with external verification of outcomes and processes.

The aim of the Gambia Colleges quality assurance policy is to enhance the effectiveness of its core activities of learning, teaching, research performance, research training and management. The policy addresses all areas of the Gambia College’s activities focusing on their contribution to and in alignment with the Gambia Colleges Strategic Goals.

**Quality Assurance Mission**

Gambia College’s Quality Assurance Mission therefore is:

To promote confidence in the academic provision (teaching, research and outreach services) that the quality and the standards of awards of Gambia College are safeguarded, enhanced and effectively managed.

This mission statement provides Gambia College with ample opportunities against which to build further and develop its quality of teaching, learning, and research base.

**AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY**

The Gambia College will strive to be an example of an efficient and effective QA system development in The Gambia. The Gambia College in this QA framework has adopted Quality as “fitness for purpose": a concept that stresses the need to meet or conform to generally accepted standards such as those defined by an accreditation or quality assurance body, the focus being on the efficiency of the processes at work in the institution or programme in fulfilling the stated, given objectives and mission Goals are the key drivers of a fitness for Purpose model of quality assurance. They need to be set clearly and explicitly, and in ways that can be operationalized effectively. They set the framework for planning, monitoring and measuring outcomes. They also facilitate communication with stakeholders such as employer, industry, government, students and parents

The Quality Management Policy aim to support the Gambia College’s efforts to achieve its Mission and Vision through development and implementation of academic and professional programmes that meet national, regional and international standards.

The objectives of the Quality Management Policy include the following:-

(i) To provide guidance in development and implementation of internal and external quality assurance procedures and practices.

(ii) To ensure that the quality of academic and professional programmes at the Gambia College meet standards expected by stakeholders.

(iii) To ensure that graduates have attained skills and knowledge through Gambia College academic and professional programmes that are valued by stakeholders.

(iv) To enable Gambia College to assure itself and its stakeholders that the polices, systems and processes for the development, maintenance and enhancement of quality in all its educational provisions are functioning effectively;

(v) To provide guidance in identifying internal and external standards and criteria consistent with internationally recognized standards.

(vi) To assist in maintaining and developing quality academic and professional programmes through enhanced support processes.

(vii) To facilitate development of a culture of continuous quality improvement to achieve academic excellence.

(viii) To identify areas of strength and excellence as well as areas in need of focused attention for continuous improvement in the short, medium and long-term;

(ix) Through the Gambia College organs to strengthen the independent role played by the Quality Unit in quality management and enhancement.

These aims can further be divided into specific implementation objectives as quality assurance management activities.

1. Harmonise various quality assurance activities within the Gambia College;

2. To ensure an effective performance of staff and students;

3. To strengthen ties with regional, national and international quality assurance agencies and universities;

4. To improve the Gambia College environments in order to attract and retain staff and students;

5. To continuously improve the QA system, through reviews, streamlining and modernizing of QA function, policies, procedures and their supporting protocols;

6. To provide leadership in the transformation of the Gambia College core Quality Assurance business processes through the implementation of Quality assurance initiative.

PRINCIPLES UNDERPINNING THE POLICY

Some of the principles underpinning the Gambia College approach and modus operandi are outlined. A summary is provided below. These will need to shape, if not determine the Gambia College methodologies of accountability and improvement. Several key principles are incorporated into this Policy. The principles relate to the quality framework and processes outlined in this document.

* Holistic approach.
* Based on self-assessment Trust but verify.
* Improvement focus.
* Planning framework.
* Data and resources
* Quality teaching, learning, research and administrative services and continuous improvement as a core value
* Benchmarking and evidence-based approach
* Collegiality and Team Spirit.

QUALITY ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK

The notion of quality underpinning the framework adopted by the GCQA is of fitness for purpose (i.e., the institution and its components and activities have quality if they conform to the purpose for which they were designed). The framework reflects the GCQAs dual purpose; as a mechanism for accountability.

The policy shall apply to all Schools/ Units, both academic and support staff at Gambia College through:

* Internal Quality Assurance Mechanisms -Continuous
* External Quality Assurance Mechanisms - Periodic

The Gambia College, through Council, shall determine and approve quality management frameworks for all schools and units

Regular internal audits will be conducted to ensure that the Quality Assurance Policy is implemented.

**Areas of Internal Quality Assurance**

Internal quality assurance mechanisms are departmentally generated and are continuous. The mechanisms shall be coherent with the quality assurance framework set forth in this policy and approved by Council and shall include mechanisms to assess the following areas;

* Quality of programmes and courses
* Quality of academic staff
* Quality of teaching and learning experience
* Quality in student assessment: Internal moderation
* Quality in support services
* Quality of resources and facilities
* Quality of research
* Quality program review process
* Quality of management

External Quality Assurance to ensure that high quality standards are maintained, the following external mechanisms shall be utilized;

* External Academic Review
* Quality of educational programmes shall be assured through External Academic Review by any of the following bodies:

1. External Examiners
2. External Professional bodies
3. External accreditation agencies (for professional programmes that have recognized, credible professional accreditation agencies)
4. Employers
5. Former students
6. Other Universities

RESPONSIBILITY FOR POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The Principal shall oversee the implementation of the policy.

MISSION, VISION AND VALUES STATEMENT

Gambia College Vision, Mission and Values Statement shall underpin the execution of this policy. Gambia College’s current Mission Statement is, to provide quality teaching, carry out research and offer professional services to meet the changing needs of society by utilizing world-wide and internally generated human resources, information and technology to enhance the Gambia College leading position in The Gambia and beyond.

Gambia College’s Vision is, to be a centre of academic excellence, providing world-class teaching, research and service relevant to sustainable development needs of a society.

NB: The mission and vision statement is currently under review for 2007/2017 strategic plan

In pursuing its mission the Gambia College shall be mindful of maintaining and reinforcing its core values of:

1. a global outlook and outreach
2. breath of vision, creativity and openness to change
3. Collaboration and team work.
4. excellence and continuous improvement
5. transparent and courteous internal and external communication in the organization
6. the highest intellectual and ethical standards and;
7. the values of humane and just society; and in realizing Gambia College as an internationally recognized and globally focused, research-intensive institution, with a vigorous learning and teaching environment; the Gambia College commits an equivocal commitment to high quality permeating all dimensions of academic activities and support services.

**Quality Management Policy**

* The policy shall be implemented and carried out in the context of the Gambia College Vision, Mission and Values Statements.
* The policy is based on the expectation that high quality standards shall be achieved and maintained and that academic and professional programmes shall be internationally recognized.
* Quality management shall include all of the following activities;
* Mandatory internal moderation procedures to ensure validity of student assessments and reliability of marking
* Assessment and monitoring of academic honesty
* Monitoring academic staff performance standards
* Self-study reports
* Standardized programme and course development procedures, which include Academic Board approved guidelines/templates
* An annual appraisal of:
* What the department is trying to do (planning)
* What it has done (doing)
* Monitoring and evaluating processes and outcomes, (Reviewing),
* Making appropriate changes bases on the data (improving)
* Academic and nonacademic staff performance
* Taking measures to remedy gaps and miss-performance.

**Areas for Internal Quality Assurance**

The following areas for internal quality assurance are further described.

* **Quality of Programmes and Courses**: Assessment of quality in the design and implementation of programmes and courses shall ensure that well-qualified staff carry out such activities, which are based on the guidelines and procedures approved by Academic Board.
* **Quality of Academic Staff:** Assessment of quality in academic staff shall include expectations with regard to qualifications, scholarly work and continuing professional development. Benchmarks for minimum qualifications, scholarly work and involvement in continuing professional development activities shall be determined by academic units. Guidelines and procedures from the Performance Management and Appointments and Promotions procedures shall be considered when developing these academic staff expectations.
* **Quality in Teaching and Learning Experience**

**Assessment of quality in teaching and learning shall cover the following;**

* Use of well-established tools such as the Head of Departments assessment,
* Student Evaluation of Course and Teaching (SECAT)
* Teaching portfolios and peer review iv. Individual performance management goals, Appointments and Promotions Procedures that pertain to teaching shall be included in the assessment of quality teaching
* The Quality Assurance Unit shall have an advisory and supportive role in the improvement of teaching, for example, through implementation of the induction courses for academic staff, ongoing professional development programmes, Teaching Improvement Grants and Teaching Excellence Awards.

**Assessment of students engagement in the teaching and learning experience.**

* Quality in Student Assessment: Internal Moderation Quality assurance mechanism for determining quality of student assessments, both continuous and final shall be developed. In the absence of external examiners, departments shall develop systems that are coherent with the QA framework approved by Academic Board. These shall include a minimum of internal moderation procedures that ensure validity of student assessment and reliability of marking.
* Quality in support services Assessment of quality in the academic support services provided to Schools,units and departments including record keeping and attention to process as it relates to academic excellence; shall be included in the framework for quality assurance.
* **Quality of resources and facilities**: Assessment of quality of resources and facilities shall include measures of the availability and appropriateness of lecture rooms, library, book banks, ICTs, laboratory or practical facilities and equipment, etc
* **Quality of research**: In order for Gambia College to keep an outstanding international reputation in research, it must be committed to maintaining and expanding its research capacity to achieve research and research training of international distinction. Quality of research shall include the following:
* Assessment of capacity to perform research at the individual and School level. Assessment of the research relevance to the discipline, Gambia College, locally and globally.
* Assessment of external research and internal funding
* Assessment of research management
* Assessment of research findings and dissemination
* Assessment of research & research training strategies whether they reflect international best practices.

**Program Review Process**

A program is normally reviewed once every three years, or depending on the duration of the programme. In consultation with the Heads of School, the Gambia Colleges Academic board and Library Committee selects the programs to be reviewed and recommends the order of their review. A program review features both quantitative and qualitative analysis. The quantitative analysis consists of gathering and analyzing numerical data related to the program. These data are reported in the self-study report. The qualitative analysis is embodied into two parts: a self-study completed by program representatives and a study by an external review team that augments and validates the self-study. With a balance between quantitative and qualitative analysis, the program review process can ensure accountability and fairness.

**Purpose of Program Review**

The primary purpose of a program review is to evaluate five aspects of a program;

i. Quality

ii. Resource use

iii. Contribution to the Mission and Vision of the institution

iv. Adaptability

v. Transferability and recognition of qualifications.

**Implementation of the Internal Quality Assurance Framework**

* The participatory nature of the QA structure is critical and shall be reflected in the composition of all Gambia College committees and task forces, and proposals written for funding at Gambia College.
* The available expertise and leadership in each School shall be exploited when identifying the leaders of teams, for example, where possible Professors, senior lecturers in good standing may be used in key positions.
* Wherever possible current students and alumni will participate in the Quality Assurance Committees and Teams.
* The direction and support provided by the Gambia College leadership, management and by the Joint Gambia College Council and Academic Board Quality Assurance Committee is critical to operationalizing the policy.

**External Academic Review**

Areas of External Review will include but not be limited to the following areas:

* Courses/programmes content and delivery
* Student assessment
* Programme resources
* Academic staff qualifications, scholarly work and professional development activities.

Procedures for External Review will include but not limited to the following areas:

* Review of documents, i.e., staff and students records
* Observations, e.g. lecture room teaching, laboratory work, counseling, etc.
* Interviews with staff, students, senior management, etc
* On site visits to the academic and support units at an agreed time and duration to examine the quality, reliability and validity of the self-study data through review of documents, observation and interviews with staff and students.

The following documentation should be available for the External Academic Reviewer (s). Other documents may be required and should be made available upon request of the External Reviewer (s) Students assignments, tests, projects, examination papers, answer scripts

* Academic staff course materials such as course outlines, handouts, monographs, laboratory manuals and study guides
* Programme and course structure and content
* Physical facilities: laboratories and equipment, library facilities, computer facilities
* Information and Administrative support
* Financial support information, i.e. research grants, conference funds, etc.
* Academic staff Curriculum Vitae
* Publications by academic staff
* Student tracking information, i.e. progression and employment data
* Records
* Any other material in connection with teaching, research and publications as shall be requested by the External Academic Reviewer (s)

The Department Self-Study should include but not limited to the following areas of academic programme review;

Assessment methods analyses/evaluations

Marking guides/strategies

Assessment of teaching and learning environments including teaching strategies used, resource availability, etc.

Summaries of peer assessments

Statistical summaries of student evaluation of course and teaching scores

5.4.6 Academic staff information, i.e., qualifications, scholarly work and professional development activities

5.4.7 Student result

s 5.4.8 Department organizational structure including record keeping

SECTION TWO: QUALITY MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE The Gambia College is undergoing rapid expansion in terms of staffing, student enrolment and new programmes. An effective teaching and learning policy is a precondition for social change and economic development. There is at the same time an increasing number of institutions of higher learning posing competition. This calls for a review of the organization and administration of the QA function at . This creates the need to harness QA mechanisms for better and efficient staff, teaching and research, management and administration.

1.0 Principles for Quality Management and Enhancement

Gambia College reaffirms its commitment to the development and implementation of a formal, integrated Quality Assurance Management System as part of its strategic mission. It seeks to further engender a creative, dynamic and supportive quality assurance culture built upon the following overarching principles:

An Independent Quality Assurance Unit

* Establishment of an Independent Quality Assurance Unit which has an overall responsibility for quality assurance function.

Quality teaching, learning and research

* Ensuring that the Gambia College environment meets students and staff needs through good academic planning and evaluations. The need to focus on results, performance and outcomes of both students and staff, and provide leadership and motivation, to support staff development, career progression and high completion rates.

**Outreach Professional Services**

* Identifying and disseminating good practices within and from outside the Gambia College in terms of upholding the highest standards of professionalism, ethics, gender mainstreaming and equal opportunities for all students and staff.

**Collaboration**

* Ensuring that there is an effective liaison with stakeholders in offering out programmes. To build and sustain productive relationships within the Gambia College, government departments, regional bodies, and other universities while strengthening and promoting confidence in the public and the Gambia College herself that the quality of provision and awards are safeguarded, enhanced and maintained.

**Gambia College Quality Assurance Committee**

Membership of the Gambia College Quality Assurance Committee The Gambia College joint Council and Academic Board Committee on Quality Assurance shall provide the overall approval on the implementation and effectiveness of the QA strategy, facilitate in publicising the achievements made, and independence of the Quality Assurance Unit. Its composition shall be as follows:-

* Chairperson (Representative from Council)
* Two representatives from Management
* Two representatives from Council
* One representative from the Ministry of Education
* Two representatives from Academic Board
* One Administrative representative
* Two student representatives.
* One representative of the public appointed by the Council ix. Director Quality Unit (Secretary)

**Terms of Reference**

* To promote a quality culture at the Gambia College;
* To establish and monitor quality standards and practices;
* To review and evaluate quality assurance system and procedures;
* To attend to specific recommendations as required from time to time by Council and Academic Board on Quality Assurance Issues.

**Quality Assurance Unit**

The main duties of the members of the Quality Assurance are to:

1. provide leadership for Quality Assurance and Good Practice at the Gambia College;
2. shall be accountable for implementing the QA initiatives, managing its details and bringing it successful implementation
3. lead the development and oversee the implementation of Gambia College-wide Quality Assurance initiatives;
4. lead, co-ordinate and support Quality Assurance and Enhancement Management System across the Gambia College;
5. contribute to the identification, development and promotion of the Gambia Colleges quality assurance protocols and mechanisms;
6. Contribute to the formulation of the Gambia Colleges Quality Assurance and Enhancement Policies and Practices and to their implementation and monitoring across the Gambia College and, where appropriate, in collaborative partner institutions.

**School Quality Assurance Committee**

Schools have a Departmental Structure, in which Heads of Department have defined responsibilities that include the management and monitoring of the quality of the courses offered by the Department. The existing School Irregularities Committee is to be dissolved since its scope lies within the roles of the School Quality Assurance Committee.

Membership of the School Quality Assurance Committees

* Chairperson, Head
* One representative from each Department
* One representative for support staff
* One representative for Technical staff.
* Two student representatives (Undergraduate and Post graduate)
* School Quality Assurance Coordinator (Secretary)(based in academic units providing a link with QA Unit at the rank of Registrar/Administrator).

**Terms of Reference**

* To promote the Gambia College quality culture within the School
* To establish and monitor quality standards and practices
* Review and evaluate Quality Assurance Systems and procedures
* Attend to specific recommendations from QAC on Quality Assurance issues
* To handle irregularities issues of staff and students

**Administrative Quality Assurance Team**

This team shall have the same status as the School Quality Assurance Committees. The composition of the team will be as follows: Chairperson (to be elected by Committee members) At least one representative from Principal’s office, Library, Registrar, Students Office, Finance Office, Gambia College Secretary’s office, and Quality Assurance Directorate shall provide the Secretariat.

**Terms of reference**

1. To promote the Gambia College quality culture within the Central Administration
2. To establish and monitor quality standards and practices
3. Review and evaluate Quality Assurance Systems and procedures
4. Attend to specific recommendations from QAC on Quality Assurance issues

Tenure of Membership The members of QAC shall serve for a period of four years and shall be eligible for reappointment. However the student representatives shall hold office for a period of one year.

**ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESS**

All members of the Gambia College community and its organs should be sensitized to strive for high quality in their activities. All members of the Gambia College, including teaching staff, researchers, support staff and students themselves-contribute directly or indirectly to the quality of the teaching, research and outreach services. This summary relates principally to the stakeholders most directly concerned with the quality of the academic provision.

Structure of Academic Provision: Gambia College academic provision forms a basis for defining roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders in a quality assurance management system. The academic provision of Gambia College is the responsibility of academic units i.e. faculties, institutes, schools and colleges.

**Roles of Students**

a) Students can make a significant contribution to the quality of their own learning and that of their fellow students. They can also contribute to the improvement of the learning opportunities of future students on similar programmes.

b) Some students’ responsibilities are defined in the Academic Regulations. To maintain and enhance the quality of their own learning and that of others, students also have a responsibility to;

* 1. Attend regularly,
  2. Prepare for taught sessions, especially seminar and workshop sessions,
  3. Spend the recommended time in student managed learning,
  4. Use the information and guidance provided,
  5. Take up available opportunities to receive academic advice and feedback on their work,
  6. Thoughtfully complete course questionnaires and other surveys and consultations,
  7. Use the system of academic boards, course representatives, and representations though the students Union to raise issues for improvement.

**Roles of Academic staff**

1. The Gambia Colleges confidence in the quality of its programmes rests mainly on its expectations with regard to the professionalism of individuals, who are aggregated in programmes and course teams, organized and managed in departments and Schools and act within a policy framework laid down at institutional level. The majority of these guidelines relate to the institutional policy and procedural framework, but the professionalism of individuals is of great importance.
2. Individual staffs are normally members of subject group of a department but may contribute to several programmes. Departmental and School structures vary and though roles of subject groups and programme teams are set out separately below. The separation of responsibilities is not clear-cut. Staff have responsibilities both for the development of the research or subject area and for the coherence and quality of programmes as experienced by students.

Roles of Individual, subject group and programme team responsibilities

a) It is the responsibility of individual academic staff to:

1. undertake scholarly activities which underpin teaching and research,
2. be well prepared for teaching,
3. provide students with clear information and academic guidance in accordance with Gambia College regulations, both through written information and by making themselves accessible to students,
4. where relevant, maintain contact with professional practitioners, professional and subject associations and wider academic community,
5. pursue professional development whether in the subject area or in pedagogic techniques which supports teaching.

b) It is the responsibility of subject groups to develop systems which ensure that:

* The scope, content, learning outcomes and recommended reading and other sources for units in the subject remain current.
* courses are developed and enhanced to serve the needs of all programmes to which they contribute
* Programme and course content and learning strategies are appropriately matched to students knowledge and skills at entry.
* units are monitored
* course guides accord with Gambia College guidelines and are fit for purpose
* subject area external examiner comments are considered, appropriate action initiated, and response made

Roles of Heads of Schools and Heads of Departments

Heads of Schools and Heads of Departments have the primary responsibility for ensuring that the programme portfolio is developed and enhanced, and that subject specific resources and operational systems appropriately support the quality of the learning experience. School and Departmental roles include:

* + - allocating individual roles and ensuring that staff are prepared for those roles,
    - developing the programme portfolio to optimise academic and vocational opportunities and student appeal and collaborating with other Faculties/Departments to achieve this where relevant,
    - Ensuring that the teaching and learning environment meets students and staff needs as fully as possible,
    - promoting contact with employers and with the wider academic community,
    - supervision and monitoring policies and procedures for selecting students and for assessing prior learning,
    - ensuring that there is an effective liaison with partners in offering collaborative programmes,
    - identifying and disseminating good practice within and from outside the School /Institute/School or Department,
    - ensuring that course planning committees and review teams are adequately supported by senior staff experienced in evaluation and programme development, and that new and revised programmes receive thorough internal scrutiny before progressing to validation or review.

Role of the Quality Assurance Directorate in Best Practice

* The Quality Assurance Unit shall share best practice with key stakeholders in quality assurance implementation at Gambia College. This shall be done by organising Workshops to disseminate lessons learned, successful innovations, and difficulties encountered in implementing quality assurance system. The unit shall also put in place mechanism for an annual conference on quality assurance implementation and research for the Gambia College.
* The Unit shall develop website to provide information to students, staff and employers about the quality teaching and research and other key performance indicators expected of Gambia College .

**Support Services Departments**

Support services Departments equally have a responsibility to maintain professional standards appropriate to the service function, and to plan, manage and review the services they provide to ensure that those services align with institutional priorities, support academic developments and add to the quality of the student experience. Support Departments which provide services directly to students have an additional responsibility to:

* + Gather information on student needs and priorities to inform the planning of the service,
  + Consider student feedback, through local surveys or through the student satisfaction survey,
  + Develop an ethos of customer service.

Management Function Commitment from the top management is an essential pre-requisite for an effective quality assurance system. Members of top management are the bedrock, the anchors of Quality Assurance. The Leadership/Management roles will be as follows:-

* Guide the Gambia College in reviewing the organizational performance for quality assurance.
* Establish a clear mission, articulate core values, and communicate high expectations of performance at all levels.
* Create and sustain an educational environment that promotes ethical values and equity for all stakeholders at Gambia College.
* Encourage research, innovations and pursue current and future opportunities for improvement.
* Establish priorities for quality improvement to ensure that Gambia Colleges Mission is successfully achieved.
* Ensure the Gambia College is strategically located to achieve its Mission and Vision.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND ACCESSIBILITY

The Gambia College is required to gather certain classes of information regarding the standards and quality of its programmes, and to publish some of this information. This is in order to enable the general public and more specifically prospective and current students to have access to up-to-date, consistent and reliable information about the standards and quality of programmes offered.

* Information for Students Gambia College policy on information for student shall be that every student should receive a Student Handbook, a Programme Guide, and a Course Guide for every course for which he or she is registered.

Accurate and accessible information for students will assist them to:

* + 1. understand what is required to achieve the standards for the award for which they are enrolled,
    2. understand their responsibilities, both to maintain their enrolment and in respect of their own learning,
    3. understand their responsibilities as members of the Gambia College community and, where relevant, their responsibilities in respect of professional conduct,
    4. know how to derive maximum benefit from the learning opportunities available to them,
    5. know how and in what circumstances to access support services,
    6. understand the regulatory framework which governs decisions about progression and awards,
    7. know how to use the systems which exists for students to express their views or to make complaints.

Course Guides

a. The purpose of Course Guides is to help students understand what is required to meet the learning outcomes of the course, in terms of supervised contact with staff, private study, preparation and assessment.

b. A Handbook for Academic Staff provides detailed guidance on the purpose of Course Guides, content which is required or desirable, the relationship between the Course Guide and what is approved at validation, and responsibilities for preparing the guides and checking their quality. For uniformity across the Gambia College, an electronic template for course Guides should be available on the QA Unit website.

c. Assessment criteria for course assessments should normally be in the Course Guide, but may alternatively be issued to students with the assessment task. Their purpose is to help students understand the attributes of their work for which marks will be allocated, and what is required to pass or achieve good marks for their work.

d. It is the responsibility of the Lecturer to prepare the course Guide. Each Department shall have in place a system to monitor the quality of Course Guides.

Programme Guides

The purpose of Programme Guides is to help students to:

1. Understand the aims and outcomes of the programme and the standards that they are expected to achieve to complete it successfully. I
2. understand how the separate courses of the programme contribute to its overall aims, the themes which run through the programme as a whole, and any pre-requisites or decision points in terms of options and award paths
3. Understand the teaching and learning approaches used. iv. plan their work with knowledge of the overall assessment workload for a semester
4. understand programme-specific regulations, and other programme-specific information
5. know who to contact for academic, personal and administrative advice, vii. Know how to access and benefit from relevant learning resources and support services.
6. The Programme Guide must be compatible with the programme specification and may cover the whole programme, or may be issued for each year or level.
7. It is responsibility of the Programme Department to prepare the Programme Guide, with support from the Programme Administrators. Each Department should have in place a system to monitor the quality of Programme Guides.

The Student Handbook The purpose of the Student Handbook is to help students:

* 1. Understand the Gambia Colleges regulations and codes of behaviour,
  2. Recognize and accept their own responsibilities,
  3. . know what Gambia College services are available, and any requirements which users must satisfy,
  4. know procedures for complaints, appeals and claims for mitigating circumstances, v. The Student Handbook is prepared by Registar. At registration students sign a declaration that they agree to be bound by the Gambia Colleges regulations.

***Adapted from Makerere university Quality Assurance Policy***