

# Closing the Gap: Quality Assurance at 360 Degrees

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# Challenges in Higher Education Today

- Schooling system
- COVID-19 impact
- Funding (“the missing middle”)
- Psychological wellbeing
- Accessibility
- Debt
- Transport and accommodation
- Loadshedding
- Employment after graduation

**What do all of these  
challenges have in  
common?**

**THE STUDENT**

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Can we afford not to include our students in QA?



## Do our students know what to expect from us?

- The schooling system and the workplace do not prepare students for higher education.
- How do students know what to expect from us unless we tell them (both overtly and covertly)?
- Student surveys.
- Programme Stakeholder Committee Meetings.
- Student Fora.
  - Are we providing our students with the best possible learning experience?
  - Are we doing what is best for the student?
  - Are we creating reputational damage?
- The impact on lives and livelihood is irreversible.

ARE WE DOING EVERYTHING WE CAN TO GIVE OUR STUDENTS THE BEST POSSIBLE LEARNING EXPERIENCE?

# Quality Assurance and the Student

- The responsibility for quality is that of the higher education institution.
- Planning, programme design, staffing, resources, teaching, learning, assessment, administration, and monitoring is undertaken by all of us for the student.

## INTEGRATED QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM



**QUALITY** ✓

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# At the core of Quality Assurance?

## What are some of the things we do?

### Reviews

- Institutional survey.
- Programme oversight files.
- Textbook reviews.
- Programme reviews.
- Staff training.
- External moderation.
- PSC meetings.
- Exam/assessment credibility.
- Programme changes.
- Self-evaluation reports.

There is a  
template for  
everything!!

Consistency is  
key



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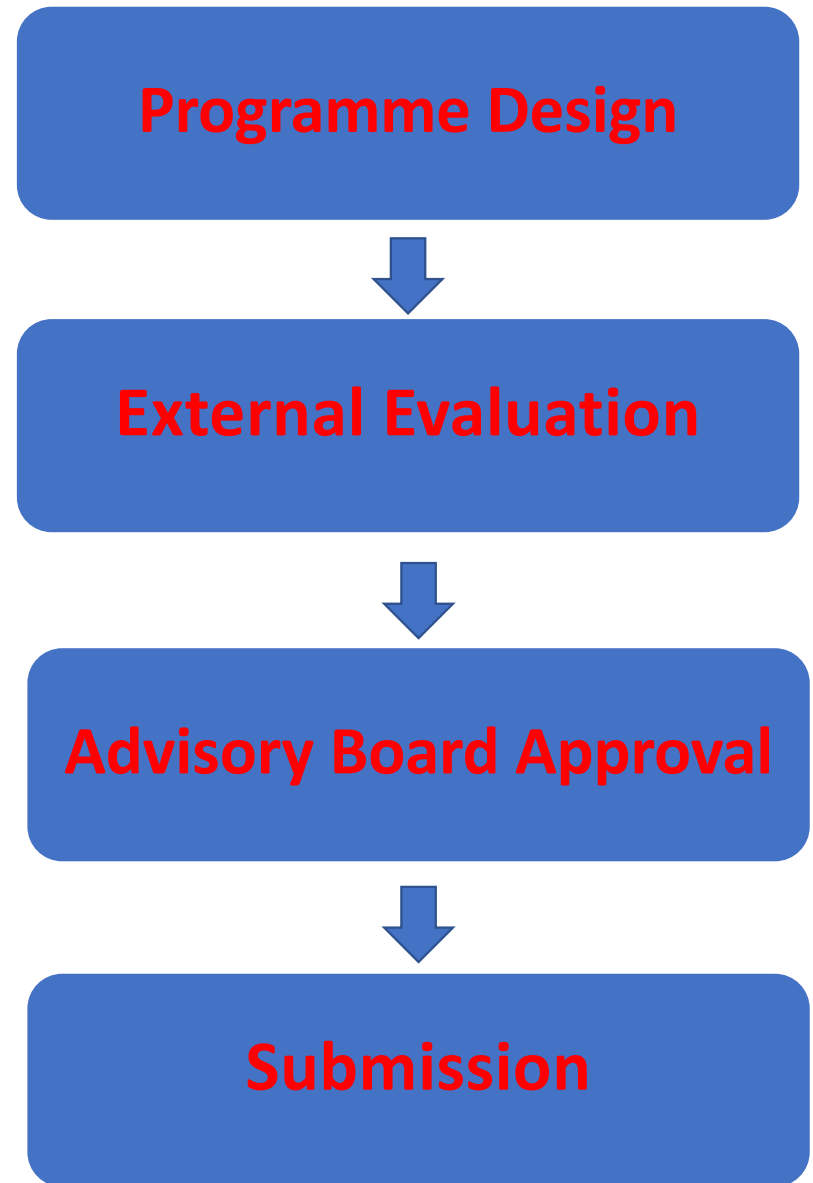


# How do we do Quality Assurance?

## PART 1: PROGRAMME ACCREDITATION (Criteria 1-9)

### The promises we make

- Market research – the needs of industry and the needs of potential students.
- Benchmarking – locally and internationally.
- Recruitment, selection and admission for widened access.
- Resources and capacity.
- Learning resources.
- Learning and teaching and assessment.
- Career path.
- Employment/entrepreneurial opportunities.



# How do we do Quality Assurance?

## PART 2: EXISTING PROGRAMMES (Criteria 10 -19)

### How we uphold our promises

- Benchmarking and recognition.
- Admission, success and throughput.
- Stakeholder feedback.
- Content review.
- Staffing, infrastructure and budget

**Programme Reviews**



**Institutional Reviews**

Internal and  
external  
stakeholders

# Programme Reviews

## Benchmarking and recognition:

- Developments in industry
- Similar programmes
- Recognition of the programme
- Professional bodies

## Stakeholder feedback:

- Student feedback
- Alumni feedback
- Employer/industry feedback
- Lecturer/marker/examiner/moderator feedback

## Staffing, infrastructure and budget:

- Staffing capacity
- Staffing qualifications and experience
- Staff workload
- Facilities and infrastructure
- Budget

## Admission, Success and Throughput:

- Admission and exemption trends
- RPL
- At-risk statistics and interventions
- Enrolment history and cohort management
- Throughput rates and pass rates

## Content Review:

- Textbook relevance
- Study-guide relevance
- Peer reviews
- Module changes
- WIL management

*None of the processes are linear*



# What happens if Quality Assurance is poor?

## NOTICE OF WITHDRAWAL OF ACCREDITATION

- Reputational damage.
- Market damage.
- Financial risk.
- No programmes = No institution.



AND WHAT ABOUT THE STUDENT????

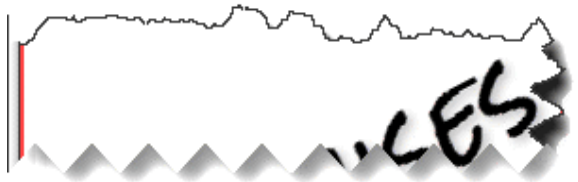
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Who does this affect?

BROKEN PROMISES

The students



Compromised students

Student drop-out



Unemployment

Poor economic growth

Reputational damage

Risk of programme withdrawal

# What is 360° Quality Assurance?

**X** Quality Assurance is not a tick-box exercise.  
Quality Assurance is not linear.  
Resistance.

Ongoing.

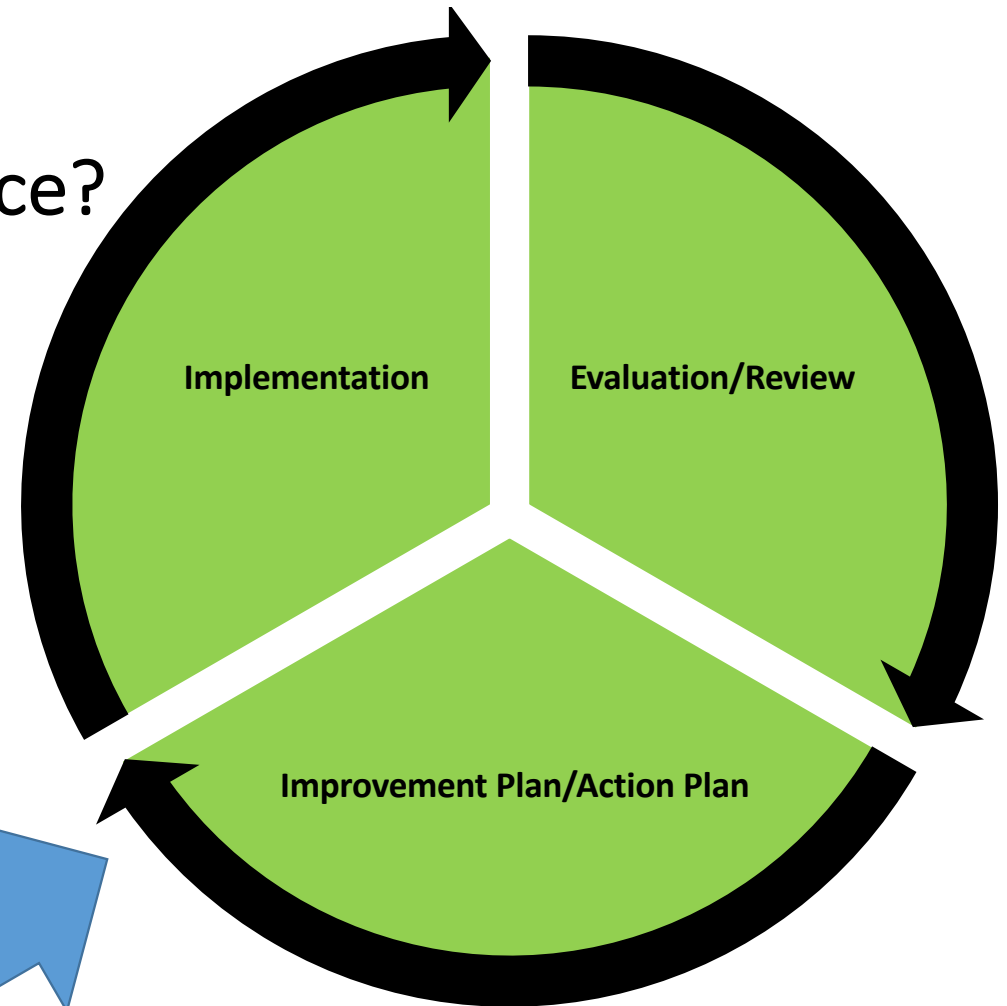


Full implementation is required. Check that the gaps are closed.

Systemic process – change in any one part will create change in other parts.

Internalisation and integration.

Big-picture overview.



# What is the Risk of Not Closing the Gap?



Notice for **programme withdrawal** and possible **loss of accreditation**.



QA in HE is not like QA in the automotive industry.



Problem with car = car recall = fix/replace car = satisfied customer.

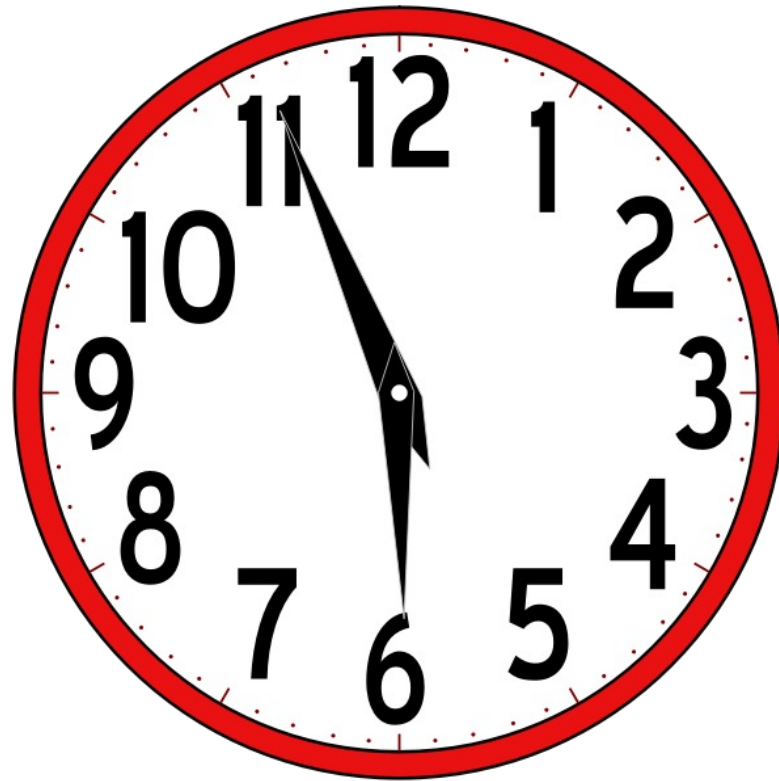


In HE, cannot recall the student and fix the problem.



Not closing the gap compounds the problems, which then become more challenging to fix = **Non-compliance**.

Quality is not about having time  
It is all the time



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**I THINK IT'S  
UNETHICAL TO TAKE  
MONEY FOR POOR  
QUALITY  
PERFORMANCE**

ALVIN BURGER

PICTUREQUOTES.COM



**THANK YOU  
ENKOSI  
RE A LEBOGA  
DANKIE**