

**Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission for
Higher Education Institutions**

**Guide for Quality Assurance Criteria for the
Agricultural Sciences Program**

2021

Preface

This Guide for quality assurance criteria and procedures for the Agricultural Sciences program presents guidelines for the Jordanian Faculties of Agriculture which apply for the Quality Assurance Certificate issued by the Jordanian Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission for Higher Education Institutions. It encompasses the approved set of quality assurance criteria for the Agricultural Sciences program and guidelines issued by the Commission in this respect. This will help the Jordanian faculties of Agriculture conduct the self-assessment study, which is an important part of the procedures for obtaining the Jordanian Quality Assurance Certificate.

Jordanian faculties of Agriculture can get further information about quality assurance by participating in workshops periodically held by the Commission for those in charge of the self-assessment study, or through communicating with the Commission's Quality Assurance Directorate.

It is our hope that those in charge of the self-assessment study at the Jordanian faculties of Agriculture will provide the Commission with their comments and suggestions on the content of this Guide to enable the Commission to modify and update it in future editions.



His Majesty King Abdullah II Bin Al Hussein



His Royal Highness Prince Hussein Bin Abdullah II

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1. Criterion One: Strategic Planning

Strategic planning is the process through which future objectives are identified, policies and strategies laid down and means and methods appropriate for achieving these objectives are identified. It also includes studying the opportunities and the organizational challenges and developing strategic responses to them.

1.1 Elements of the Criterion:

1. Vision
2. Mission
3. Objectives
4. Planning Processes

1-2 Indicators of the Criterion:

1-2-1 Element One: Vision

1. The meaning of the vision shall be clear to the major beneficiaries.
2. The vision shall be identified and formulated in consultation with the major beneficiaries concerned with the Agricultural Sciences Program.

1-2-2 Element Two: Mission

1. The program's mission shall be consistent with that of the educational institution.
2. The mission shall specify areas of program development in accordance with its nature and with the needs of students in respect of the agricultural sector's botany and zoology components.
3. The mission shall be drawn up in consultation with the major beneficiaries concerned with the Program.
4. The mission shall be periodically reviewed and confirmed or amended as needed. Any changes made to it shall be declared.

1-2-3 Element Three: Objectives

1. There shall be documented, and clearly declared and circulated (to major beneficiaries) general objectives for the academic program,. These objectives shall identify the intended academic knowledge and applied skills in line with the needs of the local and regional labour market.
2. There shall be detailed objectives, documented, circulated, and informed by the general objectives of the academic program.

3. The academic program's objectives shall be consistent with the general policy of the educational institution.
4. The program's objectives shall be formulated in a clear manner that allows their use in the planning and decision-making processes in accordance with methods compatible with the Program's mission.
5. Periodic review of the Program's development objectives in light of changing circumstances for ensuring their consistency with, and support for, the Program's mission.
6. The Program's main objectives shall be linked to clearly identified measurable indicators that can be used for judging their achievability
7. The Program's objectives shall be based on benchmarks at the local and regional levels.
8. The major beneficiaries, including teaching staff members, students, graduates, members of the local community and agricultural public and private sector employees shall take part in designing and reviewing the academic program's objectives.

1-2-4 Element Four: Planning Processes

1. Planning shall be strategic and shall include development priorities and a suitable sequence of each action that must be done in order to get the best short and long term results.
2. Plans shall fully and realistically take into consideration internal and external environmental factors that affect the demand for graduates and the skills they need.
3. Planning processes shall allow for the participation of those major and directly concerned beneficiaries, including teaching staff members, students and employers as well as other parties through exchanging views with them at appropriate levels.
4. The planning process shall focus on ensuring the high quality of graduates through the content of courses in line with the strategies of education, field evaluation and applied research for students in the different learning styles, and obtaining more information about program review.
5. Major beneficiaries shall be well informed of the Program's plans. The effects of these plans and what they require of all concerned parties shall be explained.
6. The implementation of plans shall be monitored; the level of achievement of the short and medium term objectives shall also be monitored and the results shall be evaluated.
7. The planning process shall include regular preparation of reports about key performance indicators to be submitted to the senior management of the institution.

8. Plans shall be reviewed, upgraded and amended and corrective decisions shall be taken as needed in response to developments that take place during the implementation process in response to results of constructive evaluation or changing circumstances
9. Risk assessment and management processes shall constitute a major component of planning strategies, and appropriate mechanisms shall be put in place to assess risks, and alleviate their effects.

1-3 Evidence and Documents Required for the Criterion

- √ An official document including the Faculty's vision, mission, goals and the method of its development and history as well as the dates of amendments made to them, and approving them by the competent councils
- √ Minutes of meetings, decisions, recommendations and surveys related to the formulation of the Faculty's vision, mission and objectives.
- √ Committees, forms/ templates and mechanisms followed in preparing the Faculty's vision, mission and objectives.
- √ A document showing consistency of the vision, mission and objectives.
- √ Workshops, training courses and seminars related to strategic planning.
- √ Dissemination of the Faculty's vision and mission through all means.
- √ Meetings, surveys and tools followed for the purpose of review and evaluation.
- √ Documents identifying the policies, authorities, roles, responsibilities and executive procedures for key committees.
- √ Minutes of meetings, decisions, recommendations surveys and reports in respect of planning the Program.
- √ Information provided through websites, advertisements and publications.
- √ Outcomes of surveys of the views of teaching staff members, students, graduates, employers and specialized professional bodies in respect of planning the program.
- √ Information providing evidence that the Faculty usually evaluates and analyzes its outcomes, such as:
 - The Faculty's annual goals and verified evaluation outcomes.

- Studies conducted to follow up the progress of students (in the Faculty)
- Studies conducted for following up graduates,
- Studies conducted on the effectiveness of programs offered by the Faculty,
- Studies indicating the graduates' real employment conditions.
- Comparative studies indicating the level of students' skills, their knowledge and their competence before and after joining the Faculty's programs.
- Results of surveys of the views of the Faculty's students, graduates and employers, and results of surveys of employer satisfaction with the graduates,
- Legislations in force at the Faculty that ensure its academic autonomy,
- Analysis of the needs of the Faculty's programs and departments,
- Plans for developing the Faculty's financial resources,

2- Criterion Two: Governance

This criterion comprises the methods and mechanisms used for specifying objectives and their applications with respect to academic programs, social life, financial affairs, professors and other staff affairs. These methods and mechanisms aim at realizing transparency, accountability and participation.

2-1 Elements of the Criterion

1. Leadership and program management
2. Institutional integrity
3. Policies and internal organizational regulations

2-2 Indicators of the Criterion:

2-2-1 Element One: Leadership and program management

1. The responsibilities of those in charge of program management (chair persons or other supervisors) shall be identified through clear recommendations.

2. There shall be an adequate level of flexibility at the level of the department or the faculty offering the program to allow for prompt response to the evaluation of the courses and learning outcomes.
3. The Program's management shall anticipate issues and their incidence and take appropriate initiatives to cope with them.
4. The Program's management shall ensure effective and timely completion of required procedures.
5. Those in charge of the Program's shall have adequate authority to ensure compliance of concerned parties with policies agreed upon at the educational institution.
6. Those in charge of the Program management shall encourage initiatives by teaching staff members and other program staff and shall reward them for these initiatives.
7. Those in charge of the Program's management shall be responsible for the quality and effectiveness of activities and tasks falling within their responsibilities.
8. The chairperson of the department shall submit annual reports about the performance of teaching staff members and other staff of the program.
9. Administrative performance and policies shall be periodically reviewed and appropriate amendments shall be made to ensure effective and efficient achievement of the Program's vision, mission and objectives.
10. Delegating authority within the program shall be officially specified in signed documents clearly indicating the limits of delegated responsibilities and the responsibilities for submission of reports on taken decisions.
11. Proposals for program development shall be submitted to decision makers in a manner that clearly specifies issues which require taking decisions and the consequences of their alternatives.

2-2-2 Element Two: Institutional Integrity

1. The Program's teaching staff members, other staff, and students shall abide by the rules of academic ethical practice, teaching and evaluation, and carrying out administrative and service activities.
2. Financial interests, wherever they exist, shall be declared, and any conflict of interest in all dealings of the Program's teaching staff members and other employees shall be avoided.
3. Advertisements used in promoting the Program shall reflect a factual and clear image without any exaggeration; any unfavourable statements about other educational institutions or programs shall be avoided.
4. The powers and responsibilities of the Program's central committees and administrative positions/ jobs shall be identified.

2-2-3 Element Three: Policies and Internal Organizational Regulations

1. policy guides, corporate regulations, and related documents shall be kept in easily accessible locations and shall be readily available for all teaching staff members, other staff, and students interested in these guides, including members of the various committees.
2. Decisions taken by committees about procedural and academic issues shall be documented and used as a reference to be consulted when taking future decisions, in order to ensure consistency.
3. Regulations and guidelines on recurrent procedural and academic issues shall be developed.
4. All policies, organizational regulations and terms of reference related to program management shall be reviewed periodically and amended as required in light of the changing circumstances.

2-3 Evidence and Documents Required for the Criterion

- √ Documents identifying the policies, authorities, roles, responsibilities and executive procedures for the key committees and administrative jobs/ posts.
- √ Minutes of meetings, decisions, recommendations, and surveys related to program management
- √ Results of surveys of views of teaching staff members and other staff regarding procedures in place (at the Faculty).
- √ Information provided through websites, advertisements and publications.
- √ Laws and by- laws of the institution hosting the Faculty.
- √ Samples of the minutes of meetings of the Faculty and department councils for each of the three last years
- √ A description of the Faculty's administrative units and their responsibilities and duties.
- √ A directory of the names of the Faculty's employees (teaching and administrative staff)
- √ A description of the Faculty's committees and their functions, tasks, and membership.
- √ The Faculty's organizational structure and the changes made to it in the last three years

- √ Copies of the Faculty's budget for the previous three years preceding the year in which the Faculty applies for the quality assurance certificate
- √ Information provided through websites, advertisements, and publications.

3- Criterion Three: The Academic Program

This criterion comprises specifying the requirements and procedures for offering an academic program in a manner that leads to graduating students competent in one of the discipline's domains of knowledge. It also includes evaluating and modifying the program in response to changing circumstances, and needs of the community and its organizations.

3-1 Elements of the Criterion

1. Learning and teaching outcomes
2. The study plan of the Bachelor's program, and post-graduate studies program
3. Student performance evaluation
4. Program development processes
5. Program evaluation and review processes

3-2 Indicators of the Criterion

3-2-1 Element One: Teaching and Learning Outputs

1. The Faculty shall define the measurable competencies and knowledge skills in line with the program's academic stated goals.
2. Competencies acquired upon graduation shall be linked to those acquired during practical training.
3. Priorities of the Faculty of Agriculture in respect of improvement and development shall be determined in light of graduates knowledge, skills and competencies.
4. Learning outcomes shall be informed by benchmarks at the local, regional and global levels. There shall also be mechanisms and tools for measuring the learning outcomes and benefiting from them in the academic program's review and evaluation processes.
5. Intended learning outcomes shall be identified after studying the views of concerned academic and professional experts.
6. Understanding the learning outcomes by teaching staff members and students
7. Extent of achievement of learning outcomes by the program's graduates.
8. Compatibility of intended student learning outcomes with the discipline's accepted standards.

9. Appropriate mechanisms shall be used for evaluating the program including surveys of graduates views and employment data, views of employers and the subsequent performance of graduates, for providing evidence and proofs of the appropriateness of learning outcomes.

3-2-2 Element Two: Study Plans

3-2-2-1 The Study Plan of the Bachelor's Program

1. The study plan of the Bachelor program shall be prepared so that it provides students with basic knowledge, skills and competence required for agricultural specializations, in addition to providing them with general knowledge horizons. The minimum number of credit hours required for getting a Bachelor's degree in agricultural sciences shall be consistent with the requirements and criteria of the Accreditation Commission (AQCHEIs) for the agricultural sciences program's specializations.
2. The Program shall be designed in a manner that ensures clear and practical consistency between theoretical and practical courses in accordance with national and global standards. The practical application of theoretical courses shall deal with all cognitive fields of the specialization.
3. The subjects included in the study plan shall comprise the basic knowledge, skills and competencies of the fields of knowledge comprising the major and related themes of the specialization.
4. In its study plan, the program shall take into account keeping pace with developments in the field of agricultural sciences, scientific technologies, in addition to community needs.
5. The study plan shall include a significant number of academic agricultural themes, in addition to requirements for competencies related to oral and verbal communication skills, quantitative mental processing, and skills of research and knowledge generation in such a way that leads to qualifying an agricultural engineer who is well qualified / specialized to perform his role in an effective manner.
6. Programs and courses shall be planned and developed within a specific timeframe.
7. There shall be periodic review of policies and regulations of procedures for adding or removing program courses, in line with local and global agricultural developments
8. The procedures for terminating or amending programs shall be carried out through arrangements that take into account the ability of enrolled students to attain/ fulfill their scientific degrees graduation requirements, without delay or interruption, while fully preserving their acquired rights.

3-2-2-2 The Study Plan of the Graduate Program

1. Students, scientifically and academically, belong to the Faculty of Agriculture, and administratively to a deanship dedicated to postgraduate studies.
2. The graduate program's study plan for both the Master's and Doctoral programs shall be prepared so that it provides students with the basic knowledge, skills and competencies of agricultural specializations, in addition to providing them with general knowledge in line with the alignment of course content with the learning outcomes and community needs. It shall also keep pace with modern academic developments.
3. There shall be a documented specification of the Master's and Doctoral programs and their courses so that there is clear consistency between the theoretical and practical courses according to national and global standards to serve students in determining the scientific research themes of the theses track (or the comprehensive examination).
4. The number of teaching staff members shall be commensurate with the teaching load of the courses and the scientific specializations of the teaching staff members for teaching the courses of the Master's and Doctoral programs. The academic departments of the institution shall commit themselves to allocating the supervision of theses in accordance with the specialization.
5. There shall be accredited procedures for following up those enrolled in postgraduate studies for obtaining scientific degrees, for evaluating graduate students performance prior to and during their study, and for preparing databases for graduate students enrolled for obtaining degrees. The institution shall also utilize certain means for measuring graduate students, satisfaction.
6. The Faculty shall have a system for external examiners to evaluate graduate students and to diversify evaluation methods used in postgraduate studies.

3-2-3 Element Three: Student Performance Evaluation

1. The mechanisms for student performance evaluation shall be consistent with the required learning models.
2. Student evaluation procedures shall be explained at the beginning of teaching courses. Appropriate and valid mechanisms shall be used for verifying student achievement levels in comparison with relevant benchmarks.
3. The quality/ standard of work required for giving different assessments shall be consistent and commensurate with the level of the Program's courses and courses offered in the Faculty and the University. It shall also be comparable to standards at other prestigious institutions (Arrangements for verification of standards may include measures like: reviewing of random samples of student work by teaching staff from other educational institutions, conducting independent

comparisons between the levels of achievement attained by students with other similar institutions within the Kingdom and at the global level).

4. When correcting student tests, homework and projects, the testing specifications table shall be utilized to ensure coverage of all intended student learning outcomes for the relevant fields of knowledge.
5. Necessary arrangements shall be made inside the institution to train teaching staff members in the theoretical and applied aspects of student evaluation.
6. There shall be procedures followed for dealing with cases of inadequate student achievement levels, or cases of unfair evaluation.
7. Effective measures shall be taken to ensure that work submitted by students is truly their own.
8. Feedback about student performance and the results of their evaluation during each semester shall be immediately given to them, accompanied with mechanisms for assistance when needed.
9. Student work shall be evaluated fairly and objectively.
10. Academic grievance benchmarks and processes shall be well known to students, and shall be applied in complete fairness.
11. Evaluation tools in effect shall be effective, diversified, and appropriate for academic courses of study included in the study plans and for the objectives, competencies and skills that the program seeks to be achieved by the students. These tools shall be effective.
12. The evaluation tools used shall measure the various achievement levels (knowledge, understanding, application, analysis and synthesis) and shall help in revealing individual differences among students and skills, competence and knowledge they acquired.
13. There shall be clear policies and procedures regarding approval of grades earned by students.
14. The program shall make available accurate and comprehensive academic records and shall follow procedures that ensure safeguarding and protecting these records.
15. The program shall make available specific procedures for appealing/ challenging evaluation results and review.
16. Evaluation results shall be used for making the necessary amendments to learning outcomes and evaluation methods.

3-2-4 Element Four: Program Development Processes

1. Program evaluation plans shall be fully detailed in the Program's specifications. These plans shall include the knowledge and skills to be acquired, in addition to strategies of gradual progression in learning.

2. Course specifications should include the knowledge and skills that should be acquired in addition to teaching strategies within the learning fields that will be focused on in each course.
3. There shall be harmony between the content and the strategies included in the course specifications so that a gradual progression within the educational program is ensured.
4. The Program's planning process shall include all items that ensure familiarity of teaching staff members with strategies specified in the Program and its courses so that they can use them effectively.
5. Theoretical and applied areas of the Program shall be constantly monitored, and necessary amendments shall be made to ensure their continued compliance with these areas requirements and quality.
6. The professional program shall seek assistance from permanent consulting teams incorporating in their membership distinguished practitioners in professions and jobs relevant to the program, for follow-up and provision of consultancy on the program's content and quality.
7. Proposals for new programs shall be evaluated by the educational institution's higher academic committee so that appropriate amendments are made, accepted or rejected through using benchmarks that ensure making appropriate and detailed consultations in the planning process and the feasibility of implementing the program effectively.

3-2-5 Element Five: Program Evaluation and Review Processes

1. The Program shall be evaluated every two years, and there shall be reports with adequate information about the effectiveness of planned strategies, and achievement of intended learning outcomes.
2. Details of amendments made and their reasons shall be kept in the Program's file as well as in its course files.
3. Quality indicators including standards for learning outcomes shall be developed and used in respect of all program courses.
4. There shall be records of the degree of students' successful completion of studying all courses of the Program, and their inclusion within quality indicators for all program courses.
5. Reports submitted about the Program shall be annually reviewed by quality assurance committees and the educational institution's senior management.
6. The Program's quality indicators shall be compared with those of all programs of the educational institution. They shall also be compared with appropriate external benchmarks.
7. Appropriate measures shall be taken to make the necessary improvements when problems are detected through program evaluation processes.
8. A comprehensive evaluation of the scientific program shall be carried out at least once every four years, and the policies and procedures necessary for conducting these re-evaluation processes shall be disseminated within the institution.

9. The program review processes shall include seeking assistance from experts from related sectors, in addition to teaching staff members from other educational institutions.
10. Views of students and graduates in respect of the Program's quality shall be benefited from, together with the extent of realizing intended learning outcomes directly or indirectly, including surveys and interviews with graduating students.

3-3 Evidence and Documents Required for the Criterion

- √ Tools and procedures used for measuring the effectiveness of academic programs
- √ Documents on the evaluation of the outcomes of the educational programs, including the following:
 - Studies for verifying the Faculty's achievement of its objectives and effectiveness
 - Studies of outcomes or outputs that the Faculty's graduates achieved
 - Studies of the effectiveness of the programs and their graduates
 - Study plans and their objectives and outcomes
 - The Faculty's program's practical training programs and plans
 - Practical training criteria and the number of hours allocated to it (practical training).
 - A list of the objectives of each of the programs offered by the Faculty
 - A description of the procedures for developing the Faculty's programs' study plans and the councils in charge of that
 - Samples of student evaluation of teaching staff members, courses used at the Faculty, and a summary of the results obtained in the last three years
 - Reports of self-assessment conducted by the Faculty, or evaluation results obtained by the Faculty from external parties within the last five years
- √ A copy of the Faculty's program manual, with an attachment comprising a summary containing the following:
 - All academic degrees granted by the Faculty
 - The general and special graduation requirements for the Faculty, the department, and the specialization

- Names of the Program's teaching staff members, together with their qualifications, ranks and exact specializations in accordance with the equivalence of their degrees
- √ A list of the documents or studies indicating results of the evaluation of the Faculty's program outcomes, such as, by way of example:
- Studies on graduates or currently enrolled students
 - Studies showing the degree of success of the program's graduates in obtaining jobs related to their specialties.
 - External surveys of student satisfaction
 - Studies of internal evaluation of programs
- √ Printed documents that acquaint students with the services, facilities, sources of information, and information technologies available at the Faculty, such as libraries, computer labs and audiovisual facilities available in other learning resources; and students shall also be informed of the time they are available for use.
- √ The Faculty's policy in respect of the safe use of its facilities
- √ Tools and procedures used to measure the effectiveness of academic programs and plans
- √ A description the procedures followed for developing the Program's study plan
- √ The Faculty's carrying out evaluation and analysis of its outputs, such as:
- The Faculty's annual objectives and verified evaluation results
 - Studies verifying the Faculty's effectiveness and realization of its objectives
 - Studies on program effectiveness and graduates
 - Results of student evaluation of the various programs teaching process.
- √ The tools and procedures used by the Faculty to measure the effectiveness of the educational programs it offers
- √ The number of scientific degrees granted by the Faculty in the last three years for each program it offered
- √ The Faculty's mechanisms for decision-making and planning and the parties responsible for that.

- √ Samples of printed materials that highlight the Faculty's commitment to providing feedback on the effectiveness of its programs to its students, teaching staff members, employees and to the local community
- √ A sample of the lists of committees formed by the Faculty and charged with the task of planning or evaluating its programs.
- √ A description of the procedures followed for developing the Faculty's study plans and the councils performing that
- √ Results of benchmarking the learning outcomes criteria against appropriate external benchmarks. This can be done through several different methods such as reviewing the marking of samples of students' work and independent evaluations of the level of test questions and student answers.
- √ Data used when selecting performance indicators of the quality of teaching and learning. These indicator shall be quantitatively measurable and shall be used in benchmarking with other institutions, and with former performance.
- √ The Program's study plan and its objectives and outcomes
- √ Analysis of consistency between the study plan and its objectives and content and labour market requirements
- √ A description of the procedures followed for improving the Program's study plan
- √ Documents on the evaluation of the Program's outcomes
 - Studies confirming achievement of the Program's objectives and effectiveness
 - Studies that dealt with the outcomes achieved by the Program's graduates
 - Studies that addressed the Program's effectiveness, the level of its graduates and employer satisfaction with their performance
 - Results of student evaluation of the program's educational process
- √ Percentage of the Program's graduates and percentage of graduate's who got jobs related to their specializations during the last three years
- √ Reports of self-assessment studies, or reports of the results of the Program's evaluation by external parties within the previous five years
- √ Documents proving that students enrolled in the Program do achieve the program's goals and objectives in all courses

4. Criterion Four: Scientific Research, Scholarship, and Innovation(s)

- Specification of the policies, regulations, and means required for supporting scientific research, innovation(s), and scholarship in order to deepen, develop and apply knowledge for serving the community.
- Training students in methodical means of seeking knowledge and conducting research
- Supporting ways and means for helping teaching staff members acquire competence and skills in developing their teaching and research performance, and encouraging them to be innovative in their disciplines and to contribute to their sustainability

4-1. Elements of the Criterion

1. Scientific research and innovation
2. Scholarships

4-2 Indicators of the Criterion

4-2-1 Element One: Scientific Research and Innovation

1. The Program shall identify its research priorities, including the interests of its teaching staff, and areas of cooperation with various local and global organizations and institutions, in line with its vision, mission, and objectives.
2. Departure from academic scientific research directed toward promotion, toward practical research directed towards solving the problems of the local community and the Jordanian agricultural sector.
3. Holding field days at applied experimental sites with the participation of farmers and other stakeholders to see scientific and field results.
4. Paying attention to agricultural guidance operations in the surrounding areas, including encouraging low-income families to establish small development projects that support these families' needs of agricultural and animal requirements, which will yield tangible financial returns to these families.
5. The Faculty shall seek to involve visual, written and audio-visual media with a view to evaluating the effects of scientific and applied research on the local community, thus creating a kind of partnership together with disseminating the culture of positive interaction between the faculties of Agriculture and the local community.
6. The Program shall have a policy of strengthening the relationship between scientific research and education/ teaching.

7. Teaching staff members shall have a primary role in promoting scientific research in line with the Faculty's vision, mission, and objectives.
8. The Program shall document research means and priorities.
9. Interaction between teaching activities and research shall be reflected in the curriculum and teaching methods in use.
10. Study plans shall include courses that contribute to preparing students for participating in, and developing, scientific research.
11. Provision of financial, physical and administrative support as required for promoting scientific research within the program.
12. Teaching staff members shall be given academic freedom to conduct scientific research and studies.
13. Teaching staff members shall participate in programs for developing research capacity.
14. The Program shall support research for serving the community and contributing to finding solutions to problems facing farmers.
15. There shall be a specific policy for the Program to upgrade the abilities of its teaching staff members to bring them to the level of experts. The program shall also provide them with in-service training and educational opportunities, as well as opportunities for improving their performance in the fields of university learning, teaching, and evaluation; scientific research skills, supervision and training; attending local, regional and global workshops, seminars, lectures, and conferences.
16. The Program shall offer material and moral incentives to encourage teaching staff members to grow professionally and develop their academic and research performance and on-going self-learning.
17. Teaching staff members shall effectively participate in activities of on-going learning, scientific research and attending training courses, specialized workshops, conferences, and seminars.
18. Teaching staff members shall compete for getting local, regional and global awards and registering patents to their name.
19. Teaching staff members shall publish books and research papers in refereed scientific periodicals, and indexed and globally classified journals

4-2-2 Element Two: Scholarship(s)

1. The Program shall facilitate regional and global exchange of teaching staff members and students, and shall provide appropriate resources for this exchange.
2. The Program shall have agreements on scientific exchange concluded with scientific institutions in respect of teaching staff members and students; or exchange of training experience and expertise and organizing workshops, conferences and seminars.
3. The Program shall have clear policies and specific procedures on scholarships and missions.
4. The Program's budget shall include clear provisions for supporting scholarship(s) and educational exchange.

4-3 Evidence and Documents Required for the Criterion

- √ Policies, regulations and procedures for scientific research, and for convening conferences and seminars
- √ Documents indicating cooperation agreements at the local and global levels, and educational exchange between the Faculty and other scientific institutions
- √ Academic committees formed for scientific research purposes and their follow up
- √ Samples of teaching staff members' research papers and innovations
- √ Criteria and procedures used in evaluating teaching staff members published research
- √ The Faculty's policies on scholarships and innovations for students and teaching staff members
- √ A summary of actual studies, scientific research and innovations by teaching staff members and students, together with their quality and the names of periodicals in which they were published
- √ A summary indicating the role of teaching staff members in developing scholarship, innovations and scientific research, and conferences and seminars
- √ The number of the lectures, seminars, workshops and scientific conferences teaching staff members attended and participated in at the local, regional and global levels

- √ Statistics of the number of students on scholarships, their exact specializations and their progress in their academic studies
- √ The balance sheet of scientific research for the previous three years and the instructions related to it
- √ Lists showing the expenditure supporting research carried out by teaching staff members and students in the previous five years
- √ A summary of teaching staff members most prominent innovations, scientific activities and research, the rewards they got, the patents they registered to their names and the number of joint projects they carried out with other researchers at the local, regional and global levels in the previous five years

5. Criterion Five: Financial, physical/ facility and Human Resources

This criterion comprises specifying the requirements necessary for human and physical management of resources to provide an effective educational environment and to safeguard and monitor it, to acquire the skills required to do that, as well as utilizing and developing this environment. This criterion also comprises managing human, financial, physical, and technological and communication resources.

5.1 Elements of the Criterion

1. Financial Resources
2. Physical Resources
3. Human Resources

5.2 Indicators of the Criterion

5-2-1 Element One: Financial Resources

1. Building close relations between the faculties of agriculture and the local community, including the relevant private institutions and companies, with the aim of involving the private sector and laying down the building blocks of cooperation with it and securing the support requirements for building and establishing some private facilities that enhance the additional financial resources of faculties of agriculture, which will (positively) affect the academic atmosphere/ environment of teaching and administrative staff, and students. These private facilities comprise public parks on the university's campus and contributing to building grand halls/ lounges on campus for social gatherings and seminars.

2. Establishing scientific relationships such as joint scientific days and medical days and seminars in cooperation with the private sector including agricultural companies, all of which are seen as significant financial sources for the faculty. They are also seen as a scientific marketing activity that encourages private sector institutions to seek scientific consultancy and expertise, which in turn brings in financial revenues for the Faculty.
3. The Faculty shall identify the financial resources required for implementing the study plan. These resources shall be included in the Faculty's budget.
4. The Faculty shall enjoy adequate autonomy to control its financial resources, including submission of recommendations to reward teaching staff members in an appropriate manner to achieve previously set goals.
5. Laying down policies for financial allocation procedures, and for revenues and expenditure.
6. Developing plans to ensure long-term provision of financial resources from academic or non-academic bodies, and laying down plans for managing potential risks.
7. Ensuring accountable and transparent financial management that follows legal financial procedures in effect at the academic institution.

5-2-2 Element Two: Facility/ Physical Resources

1. The Faculty laboratories shall be used in a manner that serves local community institutions such as analysis of soil, water, fertilizers, insecticides and food supplies against charges paid to the Faculty.
2. There shall be sustainable financial resources adequate for supporting and assuring the quality of the Program, and services such as buildings, instruction halls, teaching staff members' offices, health facilities, laboratories (including computer laboratories), technical workshops, libraries and technological and environmental equipment, which shall be effectively utilized, and comprehensively and periodically maintained.
3. Facilities shall be commensurate with the number of the Faculty's students, and must meet safety and security requirements, and be suitable for people with special needs.

5-2-3 Element Two: Human Resources

1. There shall be an adequate number of experienced and competent teaching and administrative staff members as per national and global standards to manage the Program and achieve its objectives
2. There shall be policies and procedures for attracting, appointing, tenuring, promoting and upgrading staff in compliance with the Program's mission and objectives

3. There shall be opportunities for on-going professional development through conferences, workshops and training courses for teaching and administrative staff
4. The Faculty shall have an administrative unit for quality control and management, a unit for the development of teaching staff members and employees and an office for following up graduates.
5. The Faculty shall have a website on the university's intranet covering all academic, educational and administrative information related to the Faculty and its departments.
6. There shall be a system of accountability applied at the academic and administrative units of the Faculty.
7. There shall be clear policies for evaluating teaching and administrative staff

5-3 Evidence and Documents Required for the Criterion

- √ Financial planning and budget records, and proofs of financial allocation for the budget items
- √ Files of facility resources, records of follow-up, and annual questionnaires about satisfaction with facilities and services, and their follow-up and improvement
- √ Documents indicating policies on, and procedures for, attracting, appointing, tenuring, promoting and upgrading, and records of on-going professional development in respect of the teaching and administrative staff
- √ Copies of the Faculty's budget for the three years preceding the year in which the Faculty applies for the quality assurance certificate.
- √ A copy of the Faculty's financial budget for the year in which the faculty applies for the quality assurance certificate
- √ The Faculty's budgets in respect of financial investment projects

6. Criterion Six: The Students

This criterion comprises laying down the required policies, regulations and procedures concerning students, from the stage of their admission up to their follow-up after graduation. It also comprises providing the required services necessary for facilitating their academic achievement and university life, using appropriate evaluation methods for measurement, differentiation, and for identifying the causes of poor academic performance and addressing them

6.1 Elements of the Criterion

1. Admission policies
2. Number of students

3. Academic counselling
4. Student services
5. Graduation Requirements
6. Policies on student transfers and equivalence of courses
7. Follow-up of graduates

6-2 Indicators of the Criterion

6-2-1: Element One: Admission Policies

1. The Program shall have a clear policy on selecting and accepting students which complies with the Program's vision, mission and objectives, and which is in harmony with current laws and regulations issued by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research and the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission for Higher Education institutions.
2. When laying down its admission(s) policy, the Faculty shall take into account the relationship between student selection, and the educational program and quality of graduates.
3. The Program shall make contributions comprising submitting recommendations related to the policy of admission(s) to the program in accordance with local community needs, social, demographic and professional data, unemployment rates, and the institution's social responsibilities.
4. The requirements for success in courses offered by the Faculty shall be clearly specified.

6-2-2 Element Two: Numbers of Students

1. The Program's intake capacity shall be taken into account when agreeing the number of students to be admitted to the program in compliance with the requirements of the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission for Higher Education Institutions.
2. The number of students shall be determined in light of the Faculty's capabilities throughout all education and training stages.
3. The number of students and the nature of their selection shall be regularly reviewed in consultation with concerned parties to meet community needs.

6-2-3 Element Three: Academic Guidance/ Counselling

1. Introducing a program of scientific visits and tours within Jordan, especially to the natural, agricultural and pastoral reserves to learn about them and enhance the spirit of belonging.
2. There shall be a program of student academic counselling to provide students with guidance, awareness-raising and relevant information upon joining the program and during the study period.

3. The program shall have means for guiding students at the time of registration. This guidance shall be given by staff assigned for this by the Program's management.
4. The academic counseling program shall be improved in accordance results of evaluation and feedback.

6-2-4 Element Four: Student Services

1. There shall be student services compatible with the program's vision, mission and objectives, together with clear and declared procedures for evaluating, developing and upgrading these services based on their utilization results.
2. There shall be qualified human resources to supervise student services
3. There shall be an effective and transparent program to provide assistance and financial support to the students
4. There shall be health services, including psychological health, ambulance services and services to persons with special needs
5. There shall be food services (restaurants) for students joining the program, supervised by professional nutritionists in compliance with health, safety and nutrition standards.
6. There shall be a reception program for new students to inform them about university, faculty and Program regulations and services. The student guide shall be distributed to students during this program.
7. There shall be appropriate extra-curricular activities (sports, arts, cultural, media ...etc.), that support the mental and personal development of students, accelerate this development in a manner compatible with the Program's vision, mission and objectives, in addition to ensuring availability of capabilities, services and facilities required for students
8. Non-academic guidance shall be provided if needed, and shall be based on monitoring student development, with the psychological and emotional challenges they face and their personal and social needs taken into consideration.
9. There shall be plans for awareness-raising and professional guidance to help students in finding employment after graduation.
10. Availability of appropriate activities to enhance social interaction between students and the teaching staff.
11. The Faculty shall issue guides or other publications/ bulletins that can be easily accessed and kept by the students. These guides shall cover the following subjects:
 - The Faculty's vision and goals
 - Admission(s) procedures and requirements
 - Basic information about the programs offered by the Faculty and their study plans and courses

- The Program's requirements and requirements for granting academic degrees
- The facilities provided by the Faculty for academic purposes
- The laws and regulations of students' required operations, such as deferment, withdrawal and absence
- Opportunities available for obtaining grants, financial support or loans
- Fees and policies on, and procedures for, payment and recovery
- Academic evaluation of the Faculty

6-2-5 Element Five: Graduation Requirements

1. Giving due attention to applied training at public and private-sector institutions such as major agricultural companies and related Ministry of Agriculture institutions, especially the National Center for Agricultural Research and Extension services, the Deir Alla Agricultural Research Station, and large nurseries
2. There shall be a summary of the Program's graduation requirements and a process for safeguarding and documenting graduating students academic records
3. The Program shall have a clear policy in respect of substitute courses.

6-2-6 element Six: Policies on transfer of students and equivalence of courses

1. There shall be clear policies on transfer of students between universities or programs.
2. There shall be a clear policy on course equivalency/ equivalence .

6-2-7 Element Seven: Follow-up of Graduates

1. Holding days of acquaintance between operating agricultural companies and students expected to graduate so that they get to know each other to facilitate student employment after graduation
2. There shall be an office to follow up on graduates. The tasks and work mechanisms of this office shall be identified, and it shall be operated by competent staff.
3. There shall be databases on graduates and their sustainability shall be ensured.
4. There shall be channels of communication between graduates and employers for exchanging views about of the program.
5. The Faculty shall have a mechanism for following up the level and quality of graduates' performance in the labour market to assure the quality of the Program's outcomes and the extent of realising its vision, mission and goals and benefiting from this in development.

6-3 Evidence and Documents Required for the Criterion

- √ Policies on, and procedures for:

- Student conduct and discipline
- Student Rights
- Student Responsibilities
- Looking into the student complaints/ grievances
- Cheating and similar violations
- Sports activities
- Fees
- Recovery of fees

√ Student Guide

√ Copies of the mission and goals of the institution's service units

√ Proofs and indicators about the University's distinct effects on students

√ The institution's publications concerning students

√ The Faculty's strategy on student services

√ Samples of student publications, if any

√ The student union's regulations

√ An organizational chart showing student services offered at the University or Faculty

√ A table of the Program's student services staff

√ The Program's publications concerning students

√ Samples of examinations and evaluation documents used in the Program

√ Studies conducted to review the Program's evaluation procedures and methods, if any

√ The Faculty's grading system

√ An electronic system for guiding students, if any

√ Samples of office hours

√ Documents indicating academic, social and awareness-raising guidance to students

√ A table comprising student services and their staff.

√ Questionnaires of students and graduates evaluation of the Program's policies of admission, counselling, teaching and services.

√ Questionnaires and data on studying the employment circumstances of graduates, and employer satisfaction with them, levels of their performance,

percentages of those who got jobs in the first, second and third years after graduation

- √ Samples of data available in the databases on graduates
- √ Documents indicating tasks of the graduate follow-up office and the names of those in charge of it and their CVs
- √ Documents of the policies on course equivalence, accreditation of credit hours and substitute courses
- √ Documents on graduation requirements
- √ Documents on review of grades

7- Criterion Seven: Interaction with the Community and National and Global Relations

- This criterion comprises developing principles required for serving the community, including: continuing education, providing technical consultancies and specialized services, and creating circumstances appropriate for their application
- Strengthening relations with the local and regional community organizations and the labour market
- Holding scientific, cultural, development and training fairs, seminars and conferences
- Issuing journals and publications
- Strengthening relations with foreign comparable institutions through concluding scientific and research agreements for participation, support and exchange of visits

7-1 Elements of the Criterion

- 1- Interaction with the community and concerned sectors
- 2- National and global relations

7-2 Indicators of the Criterion

7-2-1 Element One: Interaction with the Community and Concerned Sectors

- 1- There shall be a clear commitment to the relationship with the local community, in line with the program's mission
- 2- There shall be clear and specific policies and plans for the relationship with the community, together with provision of necessary resources

- 3- There shall be a mechanism for advertising, promoting and documenting relevant activities and including them in the Program's annual report.
- 4- There shall be mechanisms for motivating teaching and administrative staff and students to take part in community activities by allocating weight to community service in promoting, upgrading and rewarding participants
- 5- There shall be activities and services related to community needs and sustainable development such as training programs and courses, studies, lectures and research as determined through evaluation of the actual needs of the community
- 6- The local community shall be represented on the Program's consultative councils and other bodies
- 7- Consolidating relations with schools, industries and graduates for mutual benefit
- 8- Striving to get material and moral support from appropriate parties of the community and using available community material resources to serve the Program and its students
- 9- Striving to maintain the image and reputation of the Program in the community by identifying legal channels for talking on behalf of the program and responding to any comments that adversely affect this image or reputation
- 10- Issuing introductory brochures providing information about the program, and the possibility of using them by the different sectors of the community
- 11- Conducting scientific studies and surveys to find out the community's views toward the program
- 12- Disseminating the culture of volunteer work and practice among the Program's staff and students
- 13- Cooperating with trade unions associated with the program at the level of the Program's staff and students

7-2-2 Element Two: National and Global Relations

1. There shall be policies that govern establishing national and global relations at all levels
2. There shall be clear mechanisms for carrying out cooperation at the local, regional and global levels
3. Striving to get grants and assistance from national, regional and global institutions and organizations
4. Participation in projects, studies and research with regional and global researchers and educational institutions
5. Participation in regional and global training courses and workshops
6. Marketing graduates at open recruitment days and fairs (career days)
7. There shall be mechanisms and activities for attracting students from various backgrounds and cultures

8. There shall be programs for exchange of teaching staff members and students with other internal and external higher education institutions

7-3 Evidence and Documents Required for the Criterion

- √ Surveys and opinion polls for assessing community needs, in addition to relevant awareness-raising events and activities
- √ Documents showing the policies, plans and procedures concerning the community
- √ Annual statistics of the number of activities, and their budgets, initiatives, studies, projects and research concerning the community and the extent of benefiting from them
- √ Documents related to documentation of statistics on the number of teaching and administrative staff members and students who participated in community service activities
- √ Documents related to the evaluation and promotion of teaching staff members and other employees
- √ The Program's bulletins and publications targeting or including community service and directed toward the community for introducing the Program and its activities and services
- √ The program's annual reports
- √ Documents showing participation of the Program's staff in community committees, bodies and councils
- √ Reports on interaction and cooperation with schools and the industry
- √ Statistics of the number of the local community members annually benefiting from the services offered by the Program in its field of specialization
- √ Mechanisms of selection and participation of local community members in the program's consultative council and its decisions
- √ Documents of the value of support received by the program from the community's individuals and organizations
- √ Annual statistics of the number of students from the local community benefiting from grants and student loans
- √ Documents indicating the policies, plans and procedures associated with cooperation at national, regional and global levels

- √ Documents related to offices or units within the relevant organizational structures concerned with graduates and international cooperation
- √ Samples of concluded memoranda of understanding and agreements, mechanisms for approving and signing them, as well as mechanisms for their follow-up, evaluation and implementation.
- √ Annual statistics of grants and assistance provided to the Program from inside and outside Jordan
- √ Annual statistics of joint projects, studies, training courses, conferences and workshops
- √ Annual statistics of the number of graduates who benefited from career days
- √ Documents of agreements on exchange of professors and students, and joint academic programs and relevant statistics
- √ Documents on cooperation and activities with trade unions concerned with the Program

8- Criterion Eight: Program Quality Assurance

- 1- Laying down principles for maintaining the desired quality for the program and its outcomes by adhering to the directives and recommendations informed by various internal and external evaluation processes, consistent with standard benchmarks and carried out on a regular basis
- 2- Providing reports and statistics informed by the results of objective studies for assuring the quality of the Program and holding training courses that address the causes of any decline in attaining the desired level of quality.

8-1 Elements of the Criterion

- 1- Commitment to improving the Program's quality
- 2- Management of the quality assurance processes
- 3- Using performance indicators and benchmarks

8-2 Indicators of the Criterion

8-2-1 Element One: Commitment to improving the Program's quality

1. All of the program's teaching staff members and educational staff shall take part in the self-assessment processes, and they shall cooperate in the processes of preparing reports and improving performance in the areas of their activities.

2. Mistakes and weaknesses/ shortcomings shall be admitted/ recognized by those responsible for them. This information shall be used in the review and performance improvement process.
3. Outstanding achievements and better performance shall be acknowledged.
4. Performance evaluation processes shall be integrated into the normal planning processes.
5. The competencies required from students upon graduation shall be amended in accordance with needs and the environment where they are expected to work.
6. Educational resources shall be updated and renewed in accordance with the Faculty's changing needs, such as number of students, the status of teaching staff members, the educational program and contemporary academic principles.
7. Management principles and the Faculty's organizational chart shall be developed to keep pace with the changing conditions and needs of the Faculty.

8-2-2 Element Two: Management of Quality Assurance Processes

1. The quality assurance processes shall be totally integrated into the Program's normal planning and implementation processes so that they become an integral and inseparable unit.
2. The evaluation processes shall be:
 - √ Based on evidence and proofs;
 - √ Bound to appropriate criteria;
 - √ Inclusive of identified performance indicators
 - √ There shall be independent verification of interpretation of results
3. The Program's quality assurance processes shall be utilized in the opinion poll used at the educational institution.
4. The data on surveys of student opinion toward the Program's courses and the program as a whole, and the data on surveys of graduates and employers opinions toward the program shall be collected and analyzed.
5. Statistical data of indicators comprising distribution of grades, and ratios of the Program students' progression and completion of study shall be kept in an easily accessible central database that is reviewed regularly and included in the program's annual reports.
6. One of the Program's teaching staff members shall be appointed to undertake the responsibility of leading, supporting, and managing the

quality assurance process. This offices shall get other teaching staff members and employees involved in the activities of the quality assurance center.

7. Quality assurance procedures shall be regularly evaluated and improved. These procedures shall be simplified by excluding any unnecessary action.
8. The quality evaluation processes shall be transparent and inclusive of criteria for making judgments. Evidence and proofs shall be clarified.

8-2-3 Element Three: Use of Performance Indicators and Benchmarks

1. Data in respect of the Program's key performance indicators required by the educational institution shall be provided on a regular basis.
2. Special additional key performance indicators and benchmarks shall be selected and used in evaluating the Program and preparing its reports.
3. The Program shall have benchmarks approved by the educational institution's competent higher committee or council.
4. A number of benchmarks shall be selected for comparing the current quality of the Program's performance with its former performance. The program shall also be compared with other comparable programs at other institutions. These criteria shall be used in evaluation and report preparation processes.
5. The framework for determining the Program's indicators and benchmarks shall be integrated with the formula used in all parts of the educational institution.

8-3 Evidence and Documents Required for the Criterion

- √ Minutes of meetings showing how well the quality assurance processes are managed
- √ Documents showing the participation of the Program's teaching staff members and other staff in the quality assurance process
- √ Documents showing the appropriateness of steps taken in response to the process implemented for evaluating the Program, and its courses. Also required are the evaluation processes of reports prepared about the Program
- √ Results of inspecting cumulative data to find out whether there was on-going improvement in planning, management, and learning outcomes achieved by students

- √ Opinion polls of the Program's teaching staff members, other staff or students in respect of the quality of its management, including how much evaluation processes utilized evidence and proofs, and using appropriate reference comparisons with external standard benchmarks.
- √ Establishing a unit or centre concerned with quality assurance at the level of the institution, faculty or program, as the case may be, and appointing a program teaching staff member to carry out and supervise the tasks of quality assurance.

8-4 Sub-criterion Four: Independent verification of evaluation

The University and the Faculty shall implement a mechanism for independent external evaluation of the Faculty's quality assurance indicators and criteria and their outcomes.

8-4-1 Elements of Sub-criterion Four:

1. Multiple sources of evidence and proofs
2. Feedback obtained through surveys
3. Verification and validation of learning outcomes

8-4-2 Indicators of Sub-criterion Four:

1. Verifying conclusions based on interpreting quality assurance evidence and proofs provided by independent external parties experienced in, and well aware of, the work of faculties of agriculture
2. Verifying the results of learning outcomes achieved by students in comparison with the national qualification requirements and the levels achieved by similar educational institutions
3. An external evaluation report
4. Procedures for implementing external evaluation recommendations

8-4-3 Evidence and documents required for Sub-criterion Four:

- √ Comparisons between the Faculty's learning outcomes and those of other similar institutions
- √ Surveys of the views of students, teaching staff members, graduates and employers, and improvement plans related to them
- √ A verification matrix of teaching and learning outcomes (compatibility between outcomes and content)

- √ Correlation of the Faculty's vision and mission with the labour market
- √ The self-assessment study, and the graduates' views and feedback on the Faculty's programs
- √ Plans for improving the Faculty's quality processes
- √ Decisions and procedures taken for implementing the recommendations made in external evaluation report