

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

**Guide for Quality Assurance Criteria and Procedures at
Higher Education Institutions**

2021

Preface

This Guide for quality assurance criteria and procedures presents guidelines for the Jordanian higher education institutions which apply for the Quality Assurance Certificate, issued by the Jordanian Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission for Higher Education Institutions. This Guide encompasses the approved set of quality assurance criteria and guidelines issued by the Commission, which will help higher education institutions conduct the self-assessment study, which is an important part of the procedures for obtaining the Quality Assurance Certificate.

In addition, the higher education institutions can get further information about quality assurance by participating in workshops that are periodically conducted by the Commission for those in charge of self- assessment, or through communicating with the Commission's Quality Assurance Directorate.

It is our hope that those in charge of self- assessment at the Jordanian higher education institutions 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

Table of Contents

Preface

List of Tables and Figures

Part One: Guidelines for Obtaining the Quality Assurance Certificate

1. Introduction to Part One
2. Eligibility Requirements for Applying for the Quality Assurance Certificate
3. Procedures and Steps of Obtaining the Quality Assurance Certificate
4. Responsibilities and Obligations of the Higher Education Institutions during the Process of Quality Assurance
5. Institutional Self-Assessment
6. Report Writing
7. Guidelines for Organizing the Self- assessment study
8. The Panel of Reviewers
9. The Process of Reviewing the Evidence Submitted by the Institution
10. Correction and Grading

Part Two: Quality Assurance Criteria

11. Introduction to Part Two
1. Criterion One: Strategic Planning
2. Criterion Two: Governance
3. Criterion Three: Academic Programs
4. Criterion Four: Scientific Research, Scholarship and Innovations
5. Criterion Five: Human, Financial and Physical Resources
6. Criterion Six: Student Services
7. Criterion Seven: Community Service and External Relations
8. Criterion Eight: Quality Assurance
20. References

List of Tables

Table 1	Descriptive ranking form for the items of quality assurance Criteria
Table 2	General reference framework for assessing the quality achieved by the institution
Table 3	Range of the raw and weighted ranking assigned to each item, and to every quality criteria item and its corresponding quality level

List of Figures

Figure 1	Steps and procedures for obtaining the certificate of quality assurance
Figure 2	The institution's grades / marks on the eight standard items
Figure 3	A Graphic representation of a Jordanian higher education institution's performance on the quality assurance criteria
Figure 4	A Graphic representation of a Jordanian higher education institution's performance development in respect of quality assurance criteria during periodic quality assurance follow-up

Part One

Guidelines for Obtaining the Quality Assurance Certificate

Introduction

The quality criteria are the elements and objectives in light of which the level of achievement of quality goals is determined. Such criteria were introduced into the different commercial and industrial fields in the last decade of the twentieth century. Then, things developed in such a way that educational institutions, including universities, became subject to global criteria and standards to ensure the quality of their education. Thereafter, various universities in many countries of the world quickly adopted the concept of excellence in performance and in applying quality assurance criteria to the services they provide and to the means they use, in order to perform their missions as effective educational institutions in their communities. Quality assurance criteria are therefore sets of specific benchmarks for making comparisons and taking decisions that are used to set aims and assessment measures of

achievement, and may reflect the current levels of achievement at the institution. These criteria may also be set by an external authority.

The educational system, like any other system, operates in accordance with a specific strategy that takes into account the circumstances surrounding the system, the prevailing culture, organizational structure, technological advances, human and financial resources, and the needs and aspirations of the community. In view of this, the educational system is keen to ensure that its outcomes are in conformity with international criteria through on –going use of criteria for measuring and controlling quality, striving to continuously apply them.

Accordingly, the Jordanian Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission for Higher Education Institutions seeks to upgrade the level of performance of higher education institutions in Jordan, to enhance their competitiveness at the national, regional and global levels and to make sure they apply the Jordanian accreditation quality criteria, and lay down criteria / measures for assuring their continued sustainability and competitiveness. The Commission was authorized, through Law No. 40 of 2007 and its amendments, to set and apply quality assurance criteria for the Jordanian higher education institutions. To this end, a quality assurance system comprising eight criteria has been established. A fixed procedure was followed for this purpose whereby the criteria are categorized into sub-criteria comprising their component and performance indicators, and their proofs and evidence. Educational institutions were given the opportunity for self-development since quality assurance lies in continued improvement. In view of this, the Quality Assurance Certificate awarded by the Commission has been set on a three - level scale from Bronze to Silver to Gold with special rubrics designed for each.

The quality assurance procedures require that higher education institutions study and review their aims, processes and achievements. A panel of reviewers will then study the proofs and evidence submitted by the institution on the basis of the self-assessment study, as well as the panel of reviewers' findings during their visit to the institution. This process is intended to culminate in writing a report that shows the degree of the quality achieved by the institution. The report is then submitted to the Commission's council for taking the appropriate decision of granting the institution the quality assurance certifies in recognition of its high quality and distinguished position among other higher education institutions. It is worth noting here that obtaining the Quality Assurance Certificate does not constitute the end of quality assurance process, the institution must continue to carry out reviews and self-assessment studies of its inputs, processes and outcomes as the Commission will conduct periodic audits of the institution's performance after being awarded the Quality Assurance Certificate.

The Jordanian Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission for Higher Education Institutions aims to achieve the following goals:

1. To encourage institutional improvements through continued self- assessment carried out / practised by the institution.
2. To reassure recipients of services that the relevant institution has specific and appropriate objectives; that it has created the right conditions conducive to achieving its goals and mission effectively; that it maintains a steady level of achieving, goals and missions; that it has an organizational structure comprising qualified and effective staff and that it provides financial, physical and human support necessary for one to expect its on-going outstanding and effective performance.
3. To encourage the spirit of positive competition among Jordanian institutions of higher education concerning excellence of their inputs, processes and outcomes in line with the requirements of local, regional and global communities, and the spirit of the age of quality, globalization and knowledge economy.

This Guide for quality assurance criteria and procedures has been prepared to show the principles of granting the Quality Assurance Certificate at the level of the educational institution, or its individual colleges. It includes an explanation of the procedures for obtaining the quality assurance certificate issued by the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission for Higher Education Institutions. These procedures include:

- Submission of an application for obtaining the Quality Assurance Certificate;
- Eligibility requirements for applying for the Quality Assurance Certificate;
- The procedures and steps of the process of granting the Quality Assurance Certificate
- The responsibilities and obligations of higher education institutions during the quality assurance process;
- The self- assessment study carried out by the institution in terms of its objectives, nature, organization, report and the recommendations in respect of its organization,
- The Panel of Reviewers in respect of its concept, its procedures of formation and membership; its role in reviewing the evidence, proofs, observations, and information indicating its assurance criteria; its visit to the institution and giving it grades in accordance with mechanisms of quality assurance standards, and writing its final report;
- Taking a decision by the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission for Higher Education Institutions' council to grant the Quality Assurance Certificate;
- The decision's form and content.
- methods of and grading quality assurance criteria
- Duties of the institution when awarded or denied the Quality Assurance Certificate.

- The privileges the institution may get as a result of being granted this certificate along with detailed quality assurance criteria and their provisions and indicators.

When the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission for Higher Education Institutions adopted the quality control criteria and provisions, it paid special attention to come up with a framework that is all inclusive for higher education institutions in line with relevant international standards in respect of inputs, processes and outcomes. As a result, eight unified criteria and their sub-criteria have been adopted. Each sub-criterion was divided into its elements. Each criterion's required indicators, proofs and evidence, and documents were stated. To measure the value of each criterion's element, a five-point scale was drawn up for rating the quality of that element, its application and effectiveness. In addition, a rubric of five descriptive levels describing the realization of the combined indicators of the item of each of the quality criteria at the concerned institution was designed. This is to eliminate any inconsistency in the decisions of members of the (Panel of Reviewers). These panels of reviewers / experts are usually entrusted by higher education institutions and quality assurance commissions with the task of overseeing the institution's quality, which contributes to achieving accuracy, transparency, standardization and institutional practice in the Commission's actions, activities and procedures.

When the Rubrics for the quality assurance criteria and procedures were designed adequate consideration and care were taken to ensure that the performance levels included therein are operational, clear and represent cumulative levels in accordance with the Guttman Scale. This allows for rating the institutions in relation to each other and rating each institution on the merits of its quality assurance achieved in respect of the related item or criterion. This ensures the provision of standard diagnostic information as a benchmark of the weaknesses and strengths of institutions of higher education when compared to each other, or when determining procedures and development /improvement plans the institution must adopt in order to achieve high quality/ excellence in its academic and administrative programme and procedures.

Furthermore, clear procedures were drawn up dealing with quality assurance criteria and sub criteria in a manner that guarantees their being institutional, transparent as regards their implementation and outcomes, flexible, and take into consideration the interests and diversity of Higher Education institutions comprising the institution applying for the certificate, the committee of Experts or even the procedures followed by the Accreditation council of Higher Education Institutions, all of which make AQACHEIs a real partner in ensuring the high quality of Jordanian higher education institutions. The successful institution will be awarded the bronze, silver, or Gold certificate it deserves in light of the points it scores

Eligibility Requirements for applying for the Certificate of Quality Assurance

The Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission for Higher Education Institutions requires the higher education institution applying for the Quality Assurance Certificate to:

1. Be an educational institution that offers academic programs higher than the general secondary school certificate
2. Have both institutional, and program accreditation by AQACHEIs
3. Have graduated at least two classes of its programs
4. Have not been penalized during the year preceding submission of the application

Procedures and steps of obtaining the Quality Assurance Certificate

The AQACHEIs steps and procedures in effect for receiving the Quality Assurance Certificate are as follows:

1. The institution submits an application for obtaining the Quality Assurance Certificate
2. The Commission examines the eligibility of the institution applying for the certificate of quality assurance.
3. After ensuring the institution's compliance with the eligibility requirements, the Commission informs the institution of accepting its application.
4. The institution submits an application for earning a Quality Assurance Certificate attached with the self- assessment report, together with the fees determined by the Commission.
5. The Quality Department of AQACHEIs studies the application and provides the Commission, in writing, with its decision accepting or rejecting the application as regards its form and organization. This is to be done within a maximum of six weeks from the date of submission of the application
6. After the application is accepted in form, the institution shall provide the Commission with six paper copies and an electronic copy of the self- assessment report in accordance with the relevant instructions, which are included in the self- assessment part of this Guide, together with the documents necessary for assessing the performance of the institution against each one of the quality criteria. No addition or deletion of any documents or making any amendments to the report is allowed.
7. The Commission's council / Board forms the panel of specialized experts

8. The Panel of experts (formed by the Commission's Council) reviews the self-assessment report as well as the documents and appendices attached to it (as shown in this Guide). The Panel then draws up a schedule of visits to the institution to collect more evidence and data about the accuracy of the information included in the self-assessment report. The panel shall also collect additional evidence and proofs to help them make accurate judgments in respect of the relevant Institution's realization of the required quality assurance criteria. All acquired evidence shall be used and organized in a manner that helps the Panel write a report with a specific recommendation concerning the realization of the required quality assurance standards / criteria, which will be provided below in this Guide. The Panel shall complete its task within the timeframe set in the letter of its formation
9. The Committee shall evaluate the work, prepare the final report and submit its recommendation to the Board/ Council of the Accreditation Commission.
10. The Commission's Council's decision.

for determining the level of the relevant institution's meeting the required quality assurance criteria, the commission's council shall study and review the following items.

- 1- The report submitted by the Panel of experts on the institution's achievement of quality assurance criteria
- 2 The self- assessment report submitted by the institution together with its attached documents
- 3- The report prepared by the institution about the work of the Panel of experts, if available,
- 4- The confidential recommendation submitted by the Panel of experts in respect of recommending the institution for the Quality Assurance Certificate as

in addition to its technical report on the achievement of quality assurance criteria, the Panel of experts is required to prepare a clear confidential recommendation about nominating the institution for the Quality Assurance Certificate or withholding it.

Based on the above stipulations, the Commission's council takes a decision by a majority vote (as per the rating system illustrated in Table No.3) comprising one of the following options:

- a. Withholding the Quality Assurance Certificate from the institution in case it scores $0 \leq \text{scores} \leq 49$ points
- b. Awarding the institution the Bronze Quality Assurance Certificate in case it scores $50 \leq \text{scores} \leq 79$ points

- c. Awarding the institution the Silver Quality Assurance Certificate in case it scores $80 \leq \text{scores} \leq 102$ points
- d. Awarding the institution the Gold Quality Assurance Certificate in case it scores $103 \leq \text{scores} \leq 120$ points

The decision of the AQACHEs shall be communicated to the Institution in writing together with follow-up procedures for the following five years after receiving the certificate. If the Institution is not awarded the certificate, it shall be provided with a detailed report comprising the strengths and weaknesses to be taken into consideration when reapplying for the certificate in the future. It is worth noting that the institution may not re-apply for the certificate before the lapse of at least three years following the date of the decision not to grant it the certificate.

The above procedures are summarized in the Chart given in Figure No. 1.

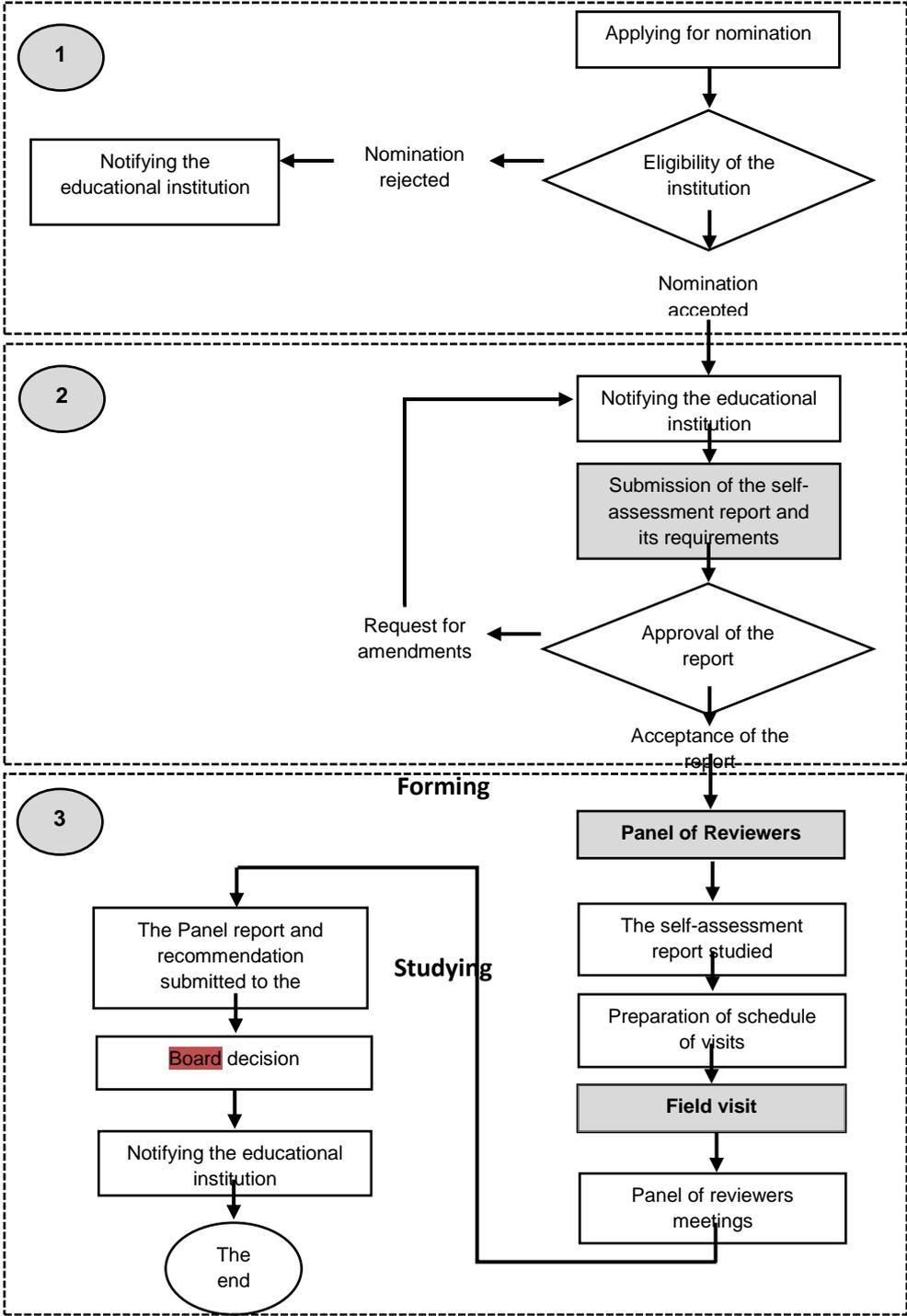


Figure No. (1): The Procedures and steps of obtaining the Quality Assurance Certificate

Responsibilities and Obligations of Higher Education Institutions during the Quality Assurance Process

The success of the procedures of AQACHEIs depends, to a large extent, on the institution's acceptance of the obligations required by the quality assurance procedures, as it is expected to carry out an analytical self- assessment study within the time frame set for that (12 months). It is also expected to provide all facilities required for the work of the Panel of experts so that they can identify the strengths and weaknesses of the institution. The Institution shall also provide information that would help the members of the Panel to arrive at precise ratings about achieving each of the quality assurance criteria by the concerned institution, in addition to the ratings of the quality criteria inputs, the quality of the processes and the good quality of their outcomes.

It is expected that the self-assessment study carried out by the institution shall cover all aspects of its academic and administrative units and programs, including its staff, students, regulations, by-laws, administrative procedures as well as its governance council in such a way that the study shall provide a comprehensive analysis of the institution that leads to identifying its weaknesses and strengths. The following is a set of responsibilities and obligations by which the institution applying for the quality assurance certificate shall abide.

1. The institution shall commit itself to abiding by regulations in effect issued by the Board of AQACHEIs, as per the Commission's Law No. 20 of 2007, and its amendment, and the by-laws currently in effect at the Commission, and the accreditation of the higher education institutions and their quality assurance.
2. The Institution shall commit itself to conducting a comprehensive self-assessment study in accordance with the regulations adopted by the Commission in respect of its content and design, the period allocated for it and the form and content of the report which will be sent to the Commission.
3. The Institution shall commit itself to paying all the accruing financial and legal obligations in accordance with relevant regulations.
4. The Institution shall be committed to providing all information and documents required by the quality assurance criteria, provided that such information and documents shall be precise and free of error or fraud. The Institution shall bear the consequences of its acts in the case of errors.
5. The Institution shall commit itself to providing the Panel with all facilities and tools that help them access information, and ensure its accuracy and authenticity. The Institutions shall fully cooperate with the Panel in all requirements of this task.

The Institution's self- assessment study

When the AQACHEs issues its decision to accept the nomination of the institution applying for the Quality Assurance Certificate, the institution shall carry out a comprehensive analytical self-assessment study, which is viewed as an important part of quality assurance procedures, and which aims at understanding evaluating and improving the actual conditions at the institution not only introducing them. When this study is conducted effectively, it leads to improving the institution's overall efforts for improving its procedures and documenting what it has achieved

The concept of on-going self- assessment varies to a great extent from one institution to another. The self- assessment study which will be submitted to the Board of the AQACHEs - in preparation for visiting it must:

1. be comprehensive, and must cover the whole institution.
2. address all quality assurance criteria as approved by the Commission.
3. Have a clearly identified objective.
4. have a pre-determined scientific methodology.
5. be conducted within the time frame set for it.

Furthermore, those in charge of the self-assessment study shall have full powers to review all necessary data and materials, and there shall be periodic progress reports indicating work completed, and there shall also be follow- up procedures by the institution in order to maintain a high level of interest.

Once the Institution completes the experimental design and sets the methodology of the study, it has to conduct a survey to find out the available relevant data. It shall refrain from collecting non-existent and unused data, and data that is not expected to provide evidence of the quality criteria which can be useful for assessing the institution's quality assurance procedures.

Writing the Report

It is the responsibility of each committee entrusted with studying some of the institution's aspects related to the eight quality assurance criteria to write a report on what it was asked to do within the context of self-assessment. Such a report shall highlight answers to the questions, the data collected about them, the method followed for obtaining the data and the procedures and techniques used to analyse it. Moreover, the aspects of success and failure the institution witnessed and the way results can be utilized to improve the institution's effectiveness shall also be revealed. The self-assessment study steering supervisory committee shall incorporate all of these reports into one unified report. It is expected that this report will be reviewed by one member to put it in its final form.

Although the Board of AQACHEs recognizes the special character of each higher education institution and the limitations and guidelines required by this special

character as regards the self-assessment study conducted by this institution, it proposes a framework that illustrates the basic considerations that must be taken into account in the self-assessment study report to be submitted to the Panel of Experts. The Institution is advised to design an analytical report that fits its mission and is supported with accurate and legible data. Whatever the form of the self-assessment report is, it is expected to include the following:

1. The title page, which shall include the following information:

- a. The name of the Institution and its postal and electronic addresses
- b. The report's title (self-assessment study report of the University of).
- c. The party to whom the report will be sent (The Quality Assurance Department of the AQACHEIs)
- d. The date the report was prepared.

2. The basic information pages, including:

- a. The name of the educational institution's President
- b. Name of the coordinator
- c. Addresses and telephone numbers
- d. The year the educational institution was accredited
- e. The list of the programs offered at the educational institution and their year of accreditation

3. The report's table of contents

4. A list of the terms used in the report and their procedural definitions

5. An introduction, including:

- a. An executive summary of the self-assessment study procedures
- b. The process of engaging the academic and administrative units and student representatives and their organization in conducting the Institution's self-assessment study.
- c. The objective of the self-assessment study and the degree of its realization.
- d. Any other information that the Institution considers necessary and useful for understanding the self-assessment study procedures

6. A summary of the self-assessment report

7. Sections of the report

This report shall include eight sections, each of which deals with one of the quality assurance criteria. The report presents the analytical conclusions that support the degree to which the institution has achieved the performance indicators of the eight quality assurance criteria. Each section shall comprise the results of the self-assessment study concerning its criterion, as well as the conclusions, and modifications the Institution must make, improvement recommendations and the implementation plan that realizes the required improvements in respect of this criterion

8. Documents to be highlighted or presented

There shall be a reference on a separate page to the annexes to the documents of this criterion –which is the subject matter of the section- or those that the institution may provide to the Panel of Reviewers - during the visit to the institution - in the evaluation committee room at the end of each of the chapters related to each criterion.

At the end of each criterion's section there shall be a separate page comprising reference to appendices of documents related to the section's criterion, or documents the Institution will make available to the Committee of Experts during their visit (to the institution) in the evaluation committee's room.

9. The summary section

This section shall include a summary of what has been achieved concerning all quality assurance criteria, the most prominent conclusions of the self-assessment study, the most significant amendments required of the Institution, the recommendations for improvement, and the plans that lead to that improvement.

10. The general organization of the report

It is preferable to adhere to the following points when writing the report:

- a. It should be printed on **(A4)** paper with margins of **(2.5 cm)** from all directions.
- b. The letter font size shall be **(11)** or **(12)** for the content of the report, the main and sub-headings shall be typed in bold with letter size **(16)** for the main headings and **(14)** for the sub-headings.
- c. Pages shall be numbered except for the cover, the table of contents, the list of terms and the preface pages.
- d. Single spacing shall be used **(Single Space)**.

Guidelines for conducting the self-assessment study:

The following is a set of recommendations that the institution should take into consideration when conducting the self- assessment study:

1. Highlighting the role of the Chairman of the Institution's Governance council in providing financial, administrative and academic support to the institution and the projects that contribute to sustaining the Institution's effectiveness and directly reflect on both its short-term and long-term plans.
2. Appointing a guidance and supervisory committee (a steering committee) of a membership in line with the organizational structure of the institution, and providing effective mechanisms and a good action plan for coordination between it and the committees charged with conducting the assessment
3. Providing the members of the guidance and supervisory committee overseeing the self-assessment study with copies of the quality assurance indicators as approved by the council of AQACHEIs
4. Forming committees that include in their membership an adequate number of members representing the academic and administrative units of the Institution and identifying specific tasks for them, most important of which is their deep and accurate understanding of quality assurance criteria as approved by the Commission
5. A Report on how to evaluate the effectiveness of the institution in achieving its mission, what indicators and evidence are needed to support the institution, and what data the institution needs to collect

6. There shall be emphasis on the relationship between the institutional units and their internal performance, as the study must address all units of the Institution.
7. Setting a realistic timetable for completing the study within the time limit specified by AQACHEIs

The Panel of Experts

The Panel of Experts is a technical committee entrusted with drafting a report that includes a recommendation to the council of AQACHEIs about the degree of quality achieved by the relevant institution in respect of the eight criteria approved by the council of the Commission, as the Council will, on the basis of this report, take the appropriate decision to grant the Quality Assurance Certificate to the institution or to withhold it. It is an evaluation committee that works along with the staff of the institution as colleagues and evaluators of the degree of the quality achieved by the institution in accordance with specific and standardized criteria and procedures.

The Panel includes in its membership a head and four members selected on the basis of the following criteria:

1. They shall be specialized, qualified and experienced colleagues known for their integrity, objectivity, perseverance and precision,
2. They shall have been trained by the Commission on the use and implementation of the quality assurance criteria, whether they work for national higher education institution or regional or global institutions related to the higher education institutions.
3. They shall have the same academic level of the faculty members working at higher education institutions.
4. The Panel Head shall be appointed from among these members. (He/ she shall be the most experienced in the field of specialization and evaluation).
5. No member of the Panel shall have any direct relationship with the institution being evaluated (such as being a shareholder or an employee of that institution, or a relative of the first or second degree of consanguinity to the owners or shareholders).

A list of the names of the Panel members shall be provided to the institution at least three weeks before the Panel's visit. The head of the governance council at the institution shall be required to provide AQACHEIs with any reservations about any of the Panel's members.

In addition, the letter of appointment shall specify the period and tasks given to the Panel to complete its work, and shall also indicate the size of the concerned institution, provided that the time frame is both suitable and adequate for the Panel and the institution to complete what is expected of them within the context of quality assurance procedures in force at the Commission.

The process of reviewing the evidence and proofs submitted by the institution

The review process undertaken by the Panel of Experts is based on the evidence provided by the institution as given in the self-assessment study, the documents and their attached appendices, and the observations gathered by the panel in the course of their visit to the Institution, and their use of the clear rubrics designed by AQACHEIs to monitor the extent of achieving the eight quality assurance criteria by the institution. This makes the process of evaluating the Institution a procedural, precise and transparent operation. The evaluation process shall include the following steps and sequence:

- a. Reviewing the report of the self-assessment study conducted by the Institution, together with the supporting documents and appendices attached to it.
- b. visiting the institution and interviewing those in charge of the governance councils, the Institutions faculty members, staff and students
- c. Allocating grades to the Institutions level of achievement on the eight quality assurance criteria and their components in accordance with the relevant regulations
- d. Submitting a recommendation to the Board of AQACHEIs to make a decision

Marking and Grading

The procedures in force at the AQACHEIs include giving grades to the institution for each of the items of the eight quality assurance criteria, which shall be dealt with in respect of:

- (1) The degree of the quality of the inputs relating to the areas covered in the the quality criterion's item
- (2) The degree of the quality of the processes of the aspect covered in the item of the quality criterion
- (3) The degree of the quality of the outcomes achieved in respect of areas covered by the quality criterion's item

The Panel of Experts shall, within the context of quality assurance procedures, give three ratings to each criterion, the first of which is represented by the degree of the quality of inputs of each of the items that fall under each quality assurance criterion. The second is represented by the degree of the quality of relevant processes, and the third is represented by the degree of the quality of outputs, based on a five-point scale as shown in (Figure 2)

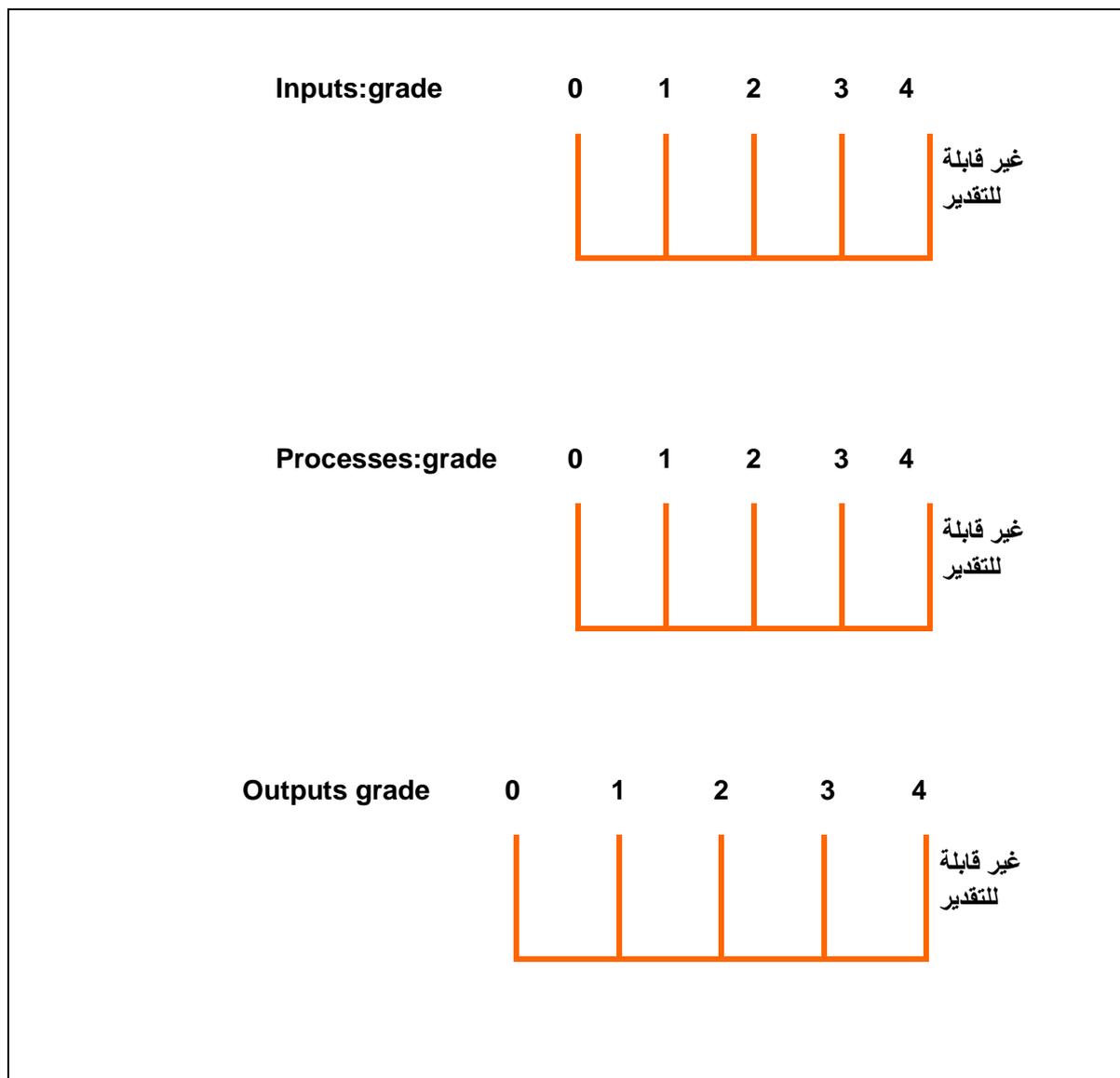


Figure (2)

The grades/ marks earned by the institution on each of the items of the eight quality assurance criteria

The rating category (zero) indicates non-existence of inputs (or non-existence of processes or absence of outputs) of the item under discussion. The rating category (1) indicates the availability of minimum acceptable limits of quality (or processes of the lowest degrees, or unclear outputs) of the item under discussion. The rating category (2) indicates the availability of good and acceptable inputs (or good

processes or good outputs) of the item under discussion. The rating category (3) indicates the availability of very good inputs (or very good processes, or good outputs that need more work) of the item under discussion. The rating category (4) indicates excellent inputs (or efficient and excellent processes or complete and high-level outputs) of the item under discussion.

The Panel of Experts also gives ratings to each item of the quality assurance criteria items. These items indicate the extent of achievement of the quality indicators related in accordance with the descriptive grading system (Rubrics) for the quality assurance indicators of that item of the quality criteria under discussion, which have been developed by the Commission to help the members of the Panel of Experts arrive at precise, clear and consistent ratings and give this process more transparency and credibility. This is done in accordance with specific regulations and procedures and on the basis of prior intensive training of the members of the Panel of experts as well.

Descriptive gradation scales (Rubrics) have been designed for the items included in the eight quality criteria, which help the Panel's members give gradations to the degree each of these items achieved in a precise and transparent manner. Table (1) shows one of these descriptive gradations.

Table (1): A model of one rubric for the items of quality criteria

Performance Descriptive Gradation criterion One: Strategic Planning Sub-areas: Item (b) – The Mission	
Performance Level (0)	The Institution does not have a clear, specific and declared vision and does not have goals to direct its procedures, policies and services.
Performance Level (1)	The Institution has a vision, a mission and goals all of which are announced inside the Institution (to its staff), and outside it, approved by its councils , appear in its publications, and developed in accordance with clear and correct procedures, but are inconsistent with the human, financial and physical resources of the institution. Moreover, they do not direct the Institution's policies and activities in respect of student admission, the appointment of faculty members, allocation of resources to the services and the educational programs offered by the institution. The educational programs are not clear enough to verify their achievement and development in light of the variables of actual realities.
Performance Level (2)	The Institution has a vision, mission and goals announced to its staff and outside the institution, approved by its councils and appear in its publications. They were developed in accordance with clear and correct procedures and are consistent with the human, financial and physical resources of the Institution, but do not direct the institution's policies and activities in respect of student admission, the appointment of faculty members, distribution of resources to the services and the educational programs offered. There are well-specified mechanisms to verify their achievement and development in light of the variables of actual realities.
Performance Level (3)	The institution has a vision, mission and goals announced to its staff and outside the institution, approved by its councils and appear in its publications. They were developed in accordance with clear and correct procedures and mechanisms, and are consistent with the human, financial and physical resources of the Institution. They direct the institution's policies and activities in respect of student admission, appointment of faculty members, distribution of resources to the services and educational programs offered. There are specific very high quality mechanisms available for verifying the achievement of the Institution's vision, mission, objectives and development in light of the variables of actual realities.
Performance Level (4)	The institution has a vision, mission and objectives announced to its staff and outside the institution, approved by its councils and appear in its publications. They were developed in accordance with clear and correct procedures and mechanisms, and are consistent with the human, financial and physical resources of the institution. Moreover, they direct the institution's policies and activities as regards student admission, appointment of faculty members, distribution of resources on the services and educational programs offered. The institution has specific mechanisms for verifying the achievement of the institution's vision, mission, and objectives and development in light of the variables of actual realities.

The above table indicates that the rubric of each of the quality criteria items consists of descriptive levels of performance; it is given grades from zero to four and it represents the general reference framework for assessing the degree of quality achieved by the institution. These levels are shown in Table No. 2.

Table (2) General reference framework for evaluating the degree of quality achieved by the institution

Grade	Verbal description of the quality	Definition of the quality
0	Lack of quality	Non-availability of any of the item indicators of the quality criterion at the Institution
1	Poor level of quality	Availability of item indicators of a minimum acceptable level, but they lack proper processes. Results are unclear
2	Good level of quality	Availability of acceptable / good item indicators in terms of inputs, processes and outputs
3	Very good level of quality	Availability of very good item indicators in terms of inputs, processes and outputs, but outcomes are in need of more work
4	Excellent level of quality	Availability of item indicators in an excellent form in terms of the high-level inputs, processes and outputs

After getting the ratings achieved by the institution on the items included in the quality assurance criteria, the grade the institution deserves on each of the quality assurance criteria is computed and assigned. This is done by finding out the total sum of the points obtained by the institution for each of the items of that criterion and then turning it into a standard score against the upper limit of raw ratings. Table No. (3) shows the extent of ratings on the item, the ratings related to each criterion of the quality assurance criteria, their weighted grades and the grade of the corresponding quality ratings.

The ratings appearing in the above table can be used for identifying the degree of the quality achieved by the institution, and interpreting it in accordance with each of the items of the quality assurance criteria and to each criterion, in addition to translating these ratings into graphic figures showing the degree of quality achieved by the institution on the eight quality assurance criteria, which helps us the identify weaknesses and strengths in the grades of the quality assurance criteria achieved by the institution and take appropriate decisions in this regard with respect to judging the degree of quality and making the necessary plans for ensuring and improving its quality assurance. These grades can also be used for understanding the extent of progress achieved by the institution in respect of the quality of these criteria in the various cycles of following up quality assurance through observing changes the degrees of the quality achieved for each of these criteria. .This is illustrated in

Figures(3) and(4). Figure(3) is an example of a graphic page that can be drawn to indicate the degrees of quality achieved by the institution on the quality assurance criteria to compare them to each other, while Figure (4) shows how to trace changes in the degrees of quality on the quality assurance criteria achieved by the institution during the diffrenet cycles.

Table (3) The range of ratings assigned to each quality criterion

Criterion	Range of Raw Ratings	Corresponding grades				
		Rating of the level of quality achieved by the institution				
		Quality Rejected	Good Level Quality	Very Good Level Quality	Excellent Level Quality	Total
Strategic Planning	0-10	0.0-4.0	4.1-6.5	6.6 – 9.0	9.1-10.0	
Governance	0-20	0.0-8.0	8.1-13.0	13.1-18.0	18.1-20.0	
Academic Programs	0-20	0.0-8.0	8.1-13.0	13.1-18.0	18.1-20.0	
Missions, Scholarships, Scientific Research and Innovation	0-20	0.0-8.0	8.1-13.0	13.1-18.0	18.1-20.0	
Physical, Financial and Human Resources Criteria	0-20	0.0-8.0	8.1-13.0	13.1-18.0	18.1-20.0	
Students and Student Services	0-10	0.0-4.0	4.1-6.5	6.6 – 9.0	9.1-10.0	
Community Service and External Relations	0-10	0.0-4.0	4.1-6.5	6.6 – 9.0	9.1-10.0	
Quality Assurance	0-10	0.0-4.0	4.1-6.5	6.6 – 9.0	9.1-10.0	
Total Grade on Combined Criteria	0-120					

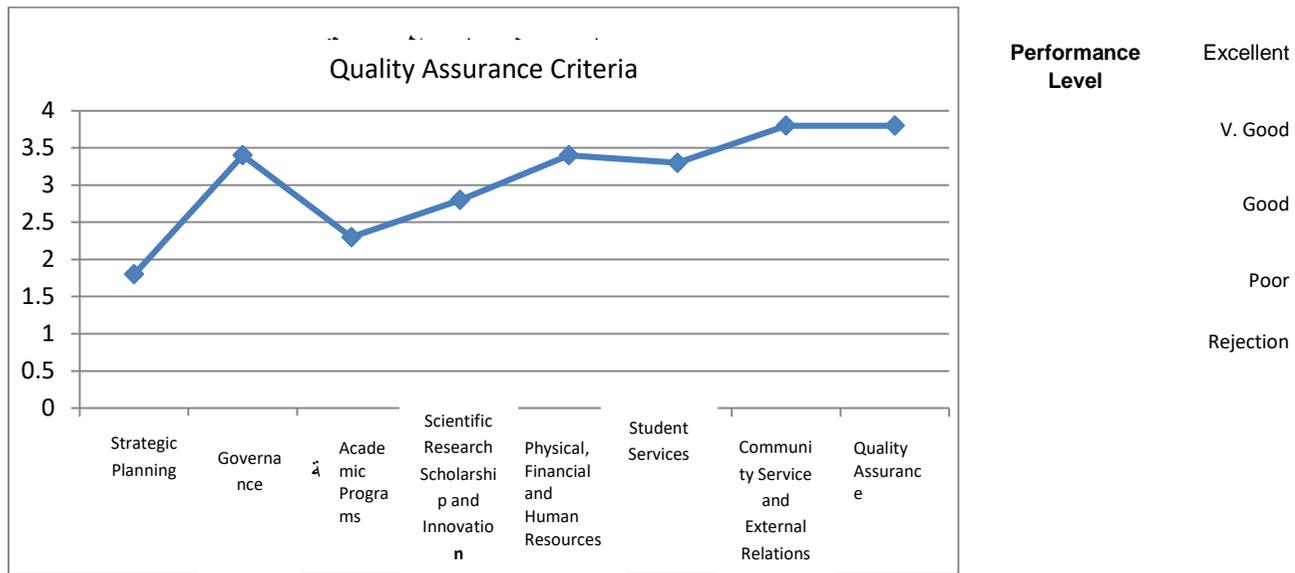


Figure (3) Graphic page for the performance of one of Jordan's higher education institutions on the quality criteria

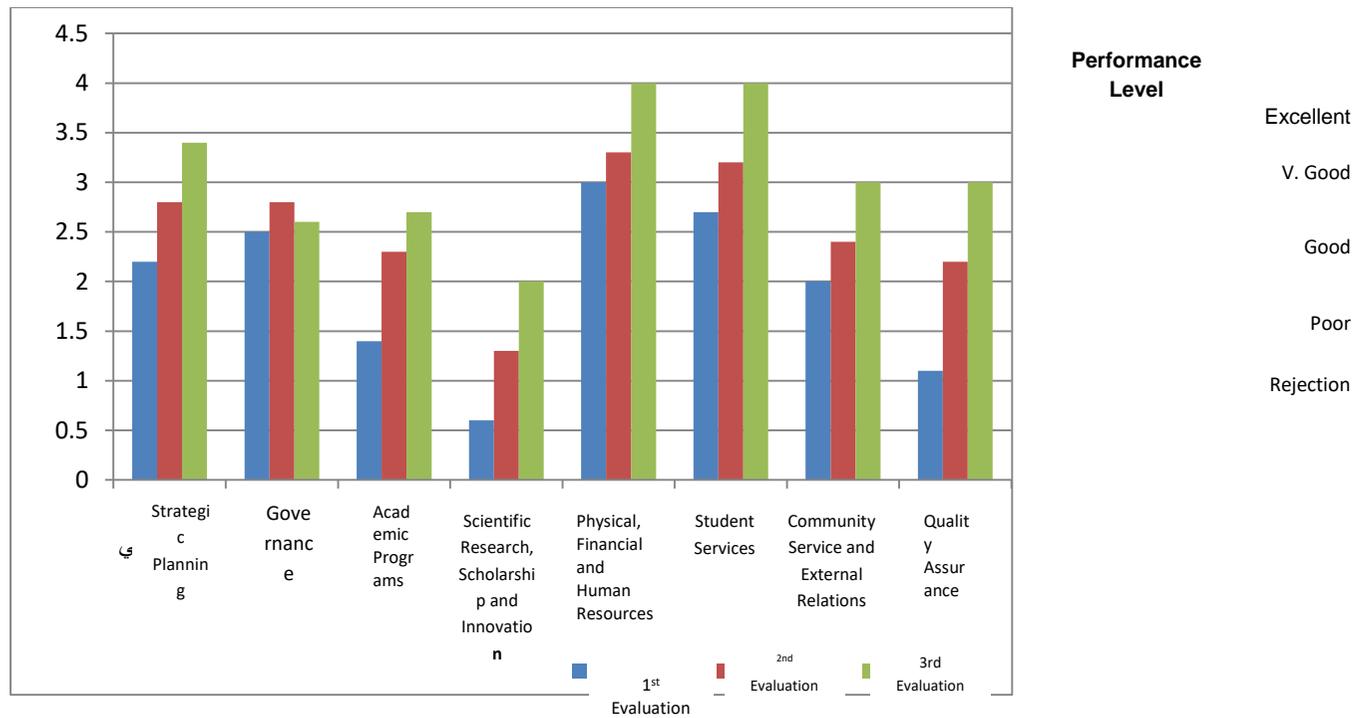


Figure (4) Graphic page for the evolution of the performance of one of Jordan's higher education institutions on the quality criteria in the optimum periods of follow-up for quality assurance

Part Two

Quality Assurance Criteria

Introduction to Part two

Assessment of University Education has become an integral part of the educational process at the global level. It has also become an essential condition required by all global academic accreditation and quality assurance bodies. The areas of total quality assurance at educational institutions can be so diverse and inclusive of all inputs, processes and outputs of the educational system. The major themes addressed by the overall quality control in education include the quality of the educational administration, educational programs, regulations and legislations, teaching methods, adequacy of financial resources, the educational and administrative competence and the good quality of performance evaluation. In order to have a qualitative breakthrough / transformation at Jordanian higher educational institutions, we must identify the domains of the institution's performance in advanced societies as a stepping stone to be on the right track.

Philip Crosby, a global quality consultant, has identified four criteria for total quality management of education. These criteria were established in accordance with the principles of total quality management (TQM). They comprise adopting the quality assurance requirements through developing a specific, clearly defined and coordinated definition of quality. They also include a description / specification of a quality control system for avoiding making errors through developing proper performance criteria, and avoiding making mistakes through ensuring correct performance from the first try, and through evaluating quality by accurate measures on the basis of objective qualitative and quantitative criteria.

Malcolm Baldrige has also developed a quality control system in education, which has been approved as a strong and recognized criterion for quality control and excellence of the performance of general education institutions in order for them to cope with the harsh competition in light of the limited resources of the educational system and the demands of its beneficiaries. Baldrige's system for the quality control of education is based on 11 core values that provide an integrated framework for the development of education. It includes 28 secondary criteria for the quality of education that can be collapsed into 7 groups, comprising, (Leadership, data and analysis, procedural planning, Human Resources Management and Development, Educational Management, Performance of the Educational Institution and Beneficiary Satisfaction with the System).

In view of the existence of specific and declared areas for today's and tomorrow's University, that achieve the aspirations and ambitions of graduates, communities, and organizations and institutions that receive these graduates with a close look at their areas of university performance, we find that universities operate as educational, teaching , research , community service, environmental and cultural institutions, where it is impossible to address any part of the preceding aspects of performance without taking the other parts into consideration. We cannot consider universities only as educational institutions because their role is completely different

from that of schools. The focus on universities as educational institutions has led to a decline in the level of performance in all aspects and to the absence of the real role of the university in serving the community, as the university is an academic system that gives due care and attention to upgrading the level of the learner, the faculty member and successful management, together with developing the methods and techniques of university education and attempting to overcome performance obstacles. The committee entrusted with the preparation of these criteria has taken all the above into account. The methodology followed by the Committee, is as follows:

1. Keeping in mind that quality is a process of continuous improvement, it was decided that the Quality Assurance Certificate will be granted in three performance levels: Bronze, Silver and Gold
2. Studying the globally applicable quality assurance criteria;
3. Studying the quality assurance criteria in effect in the Arab and Islamic countries;
4. comparing the above criteria with those followed in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan;
5. Holding brainstorming sessions
6. Laying emphasis on the three major components of educational institutions functions, which are: teaching, scientific research and community service
7. Agreeing eight criteria designed according to a uniform model;
8. Designing a Rubric for helping in the evaluation process

Based on the above, a definition of, and introduction to, the eight quality criteria adopted by AQAHEIs has been included in this part of the Guide. Each criterion in this Guide was given a number under which other numbers for each sub-criterion were listed. Each criterion's indicators, evidence and required documents were identified. An introduction was prepared for each criterion indicating what is intended by its items as shown below.

1. Criterion One: Strategic Planning

Planning in Higher Education is considered one of the key and most important management functions in modern institutions. It is a structured process based on rigorous scientific techniques in addressing obstacles and challenges facing educational institutions. This can be achieved through actual interaction with the problems of the community, sound and realistic assessment of its needs, resources and potentials, and working on setting up a general framework for a realistic plan that

can be implemented in light of available resources. The culture of strategic planning shall be one of the top priorities of educational institutions, as strategic planning at universities is considered a new culture and way of thinking and acting in accordance with the vision and strategic objectives of each university.

The importance of strategic planning at universities stems from its contribution to achieving the educational objectives of educational institutions. There are two sub-criteria that fall under this theme. The following is a description of the elements and performance indicators of these criteria and the required evidence and documents for achieving them.

1-1. Sub-criterion One: The vision, mission, objectives and values

1.1.1 Elements of sub-criterion One:

- The Vision
- The Mission
- The Goals
- The Values

1-1-2 Indicators of sub-criterion One:

- Accuracy and clarity of wording
- Methodology of preparing (items of the criterion)
- Compatibility and harmony
- Means of raising awareness, and conveying information
- Means and tools of review and evaluation

1-1-3 Evidence and documents required for sub-criterion One:

- Minutes of meetings, decisions, recommendations and questionnaires on the formulation of the educational institution's vision, mission and objectives;
- The committees, forms and mechanisms followed in preparing the educational institution's vision, mission and objectives;
- Consistency of the vision, mission and goals;
- Workshops, training courses and seminars;

- Publishing the university's vision and mission through various means;
- The meetings, questionnaires and tools followed for review and evaluation.

1-2 Criterion Two: Strategic Planning

1-2-1 Elements of Criterion Two:

- Analysis of internal and external environments
- Strategic plan domains
- Strategic goals
- Implementation plan (plan of action)
- Risk management plan
- Performance indicators
- Benchmarking

1-2-2 Indicators of Criterion Two:

- Consistency of strategic analysis and the relationship of its results with the strategic goals of the educational institution's goals, domains and objectives
- Strategic objectives coverage of the goals of the educational institution
- Benchmarking at the local, Arab and international levels
- Accuracy, clarity and measurability of objectives
- Complete elements of the implementation plan
- Availability of a risk management plan
- Adherence to review and evaluation mechanisms and methods

1-2-3 Evidence and Documents Required for Criterion Two:

- A mechanism for identifying the internal and external elements of the environment
- Evidence of staff participation in preparing the implementation plan

- Minutes of meetings, mechanisms and means for following up the implementations of the Strategic Plan
- Improvement plans based on review, comparison and evaluation

2- Criterion Two: Governance

The governance theme represents the general framework of any organization. It represents the laws, by-laws and decisions that help in making decisions, taking actions, and in identifying clear and specific roles of the staff within any organization on the basis of a high level of transparency and monitoring, aiming at achieving quality and excellence in the performance of any institution. This theme involves three basic criteria that we will discuss separately here in terms of the elements, indicators, evidence and documents necessary for realizing each criterion.

2- Sub-criterion One: Legislation

2-1-1 Elements of sub-criterion One:

- Policies
- By - laws
- Regulations
- Principles, procedures and criteria

2-1-2 Indicators of Sub-criterion One:

- Issuing the by-laws stipulated by the laws
- Issuing of the regulations stipulated by the by- laws
- Availability of declared policies on the domains of the university's business
- Compatibility of principles, procedures and criteria with the by-laws and regulations

2-1-3 Evidence of Sub-criterion One:

- Legislation manuals
- Files and minutes of meetings on the implementation and development of legislation(s)
- Evidence of publication of the educational institution's legislations

2-2 Sub-criterion Two: Leadership and Management

2-2-1 Elements of Sub-criterion Two:

- Organizational structures
- Governance councils
- Tasks and responsibilities
- Job Descriptions
- Performance evaluation and accountability.

2-2-2 Indicators of Elements of Sub-criterion Two:

- There shall be macro and micro organizational structures covering the academic and administrative areas
- Mechanism for building, approving and reviewing the organizational structures
- Mechanism for preparing, documenting and reviewing tasks, responsibilities and job descriptions
- Procedures for performance evaluation and accountability and documenting their results

2-2-3 Evidence and Documents Required for Elements of Sub-criterion Two

- Organizational configuration of the institution and its structures
- Evidence of the university administration's commitment
- Files (minutes of meetings) of governance councils
- Job description files (tasks, responsibilities and authorities of the departments and their heads and staff)
- Performance and Accountability files (records of actual cases in the institution).

2- Sub-criterion Three: Institutional Integrity

2-3-1 Elements of Sub-criterion Three:

- Transparency
- Justice
- Incentives and disciplinary sanctions

2-3-2 Indicators of Sub-criterion Three:

- Applying of transparency in implementing all governance criteria
- Measures for attaining justice and equal opportunities
- Principles of procedures for giving incentives and issuing disciplinary sanctions
- Grievance and follow-up procedures.

2-3-3 Evidence and Documents Required for Elements of Sub-criterion Three:

- Files of appointment, promotion and termination of services of administrative and technical staff
- Evidence of following up grievances
- Sabbatical leave files
- Scholarships, missions and training courses files

3. Criterion Three: Academic Programs

Academic programs represent one of the important criteria that ensure university accreditation since this cannot be achieved by any educational institution unless it has clear goals and by-laws that are consistent with its educational mission, and ensure its ability to continue attaining its educational mission and desired objectives, and help in coping with the requirements of this century and in earning the satisfaction of the local and international communities, which will determine the sustainability or unsustainability of the institution. This domain includes three criteria we will discuss separately in terms of the elements, indicators, evidence and documents necessary to achieve each one of them.

3-1 Sub-criterion One: Teaching and Learning Policies

3.1.1. Elements of Sub-criterion One

- Initiating / introducing and developing academic programs
- Admission, equivalence and transfer policies
- Teaching and learning methods

3.1.2. Indicators of Elements of Sub-criterion One

- Policies on introducing, developing and terminating academic programs
- Admission and graduation policies and procedures
- Policies and procedures on the transfer of students and equivalence of courses
- On- going improvement of the learning and teaching methods
- Integrated relationship between faculty members and the staff working at the library and databases
- The role of councils and their responsibility for implementing, and following up teaching and learning policies
- Publishing all expected intended learning outcomes of all academic programs

3-1-3 Evidence and Documents Required for Elements of Sub-criterion One

- Procedures and proofs used for the introducing, developing and terminating academic programs
- Forms and files of student admission, graduation, transfer and equivalence of courses
- Studies and surveys on program effectiveness
- Meetings of committees and councils
- Correlation matrix of goals and learning outcomes
- Evidence of publishing learning outcomes

3-2- Sub-criterion Two: Study Plans

3-2-1- The study plans include two key elements:

- Bachelor's program
- Graduate programs

The following is a discussion of the indicators, evidence and documents required for the study plans criterion of each individual program:

3-2-2 Indicators of Sub-criterion Two

■ Bachelor's Degree Indicators

- Clarity and integration of the study plans of offered programs
- Extent of compatibility of the programs with the University's vision, mission and goals
- Policies and procedures for evaluating and developing study plans on a regular basis
- Academic guidance and counseling programs for students
- The extent of consistency of the qualifications of the faculty members with areas of specialization
- Availability of the educational resources required for the academic programs
- Follow-up policies and procedures of the quality assurance of the inputs, processes and outputs of offered programs
- Student exchange programs with other educational institutions

■ Graduate Program Indicators

In addition to the indicators of the undergraduate program, the following indicators are required for the graduate programs;

- Admission policies and procedures related to the higher diploma, Master's and doctoral programs
- Comprehensiveness, depth of knowledge and logical sequence of offered programs
- Policies and procedures of graduation requirements for the higher diploma and the Master's and Doctoral programs, such as the proficiency examination (the prelims) for the doctoral programs, the comprehensive examination for the master's programs, and any other requirements
- Regulations and procedures for the preparation of dissertations and theses
- Availability of an adequate number of full-time qualified and experienced faculty members commensurate with the Program's areas and levels
- Adherence to the time limits specified for the offered programs
- Subsidies and grants offered to graduate students

3-2-3 Evidence and Documents Required for Elements of Sub-criterion Two

3-2-3-1 Evidence and Documents Required for the Bachelor's Program

- Samples of study plans and their objectives
- Tools and procedures used for developing study plans
- Student Guides
- Minutes of meetings of committees and councils
- Statistics of the numbers of faculty members, their academic ranks and specialties
- Regulations and procedures for testing and grading
- The forms used in student academic guidance
- Proofs of follow-up of the quality assurance of offered programs
- Statistics of the number of students benefiting from student exchange programs with other educational institutions

3-2-3-2 Evidence and Documents Required for the Graduate Program

In addition to the above mentioned evidence related to the undergraduate program, the following indicators are needed:

- Guides related to the graduate programs
- Guides for the preparation of dissertations and theses
- Regulations and procedures for testing and grading in respect of the graduate studies
- Evidence of, and procedures for, conducting the efficiency and comprehensive examinations, models thereof and documentation of their results
- Statistics of the number of students benefiting from grants and scholarships offered to graduate students

3-3 Sub-criterion Three: Evaluation of Learning Outcomes

3-3-1 Elements of Sub-criterion Three

- Evaluation of student performance

- Evaluation of faculty members' performance
- Graduates and the labour market

3-3-2 Indicators of Elements of Sub-criterion Three

- Policies on student performance evaluation process and procedures
- Policies on the faculty members' evaluation process and procedures
- Compatibility and consistency between educational outcomes and the labour market requirements
- Cooperation agreements concerning student training

3-3-3 Evidence and Documents Required for Elements of Sub-criterion Three

- Surveying students' opinions concerning the educational outcomes
- Surveying the teaching staff opinions concerning the learning outcomes
- Studies on the labour market and the satisfaction of graduates and employers
- Plans for continuous improvement
- Samples of agreements and partnerships

4. Criterion Four: Scientific Research, Scholarship and Innovations

This criterion constitutes a substantial dimension in the development and excellence of the institution and the integration of the relationship between faculty members and students. Both theoretical and applied scientific research is the engine that drives the development and modification of theories and their implementation in the transfer of knowledge as well as meeting the development needs of the community and the development of the productive and service sectors.

As far as sending people on scholarships or missions, it contributes to the qualification and upgrading of the capabilities of faculty members, and provides them with new knowledge and skills that enhance the educational and research outcomes and help in maintaining the sustainability of the institution and its investments. An outstanding university provides an appropriate environment that encourages artistic and literary creativity, patents and entrepreneurship. There are three sub-criteria that come under this theme. The following is a description of the elements of these criteria and their indicators and the evidence and documents required for achieving them.

4-1. Sub-criterion One: Scientific Research

4-1-1 Elements of Sub-criterion One

- Scientific research projects
- Conferences, seminars and scientific workshops
- Publication of research work and books
- Incentives, rewards and prizes

4-1-2 Indicators of Elements of Sub-criteria One

- Policies, by-laws, regulations and procedures related to the support and dissemination of scientific research
- A plan for following up and evaluating scientific research
- Identification of research priorities and concerns
- Cooperation with educational institutions and research centres inside and outside Jordan
- Provision of financial, physical and information support as needed for conducting research and writing books and publishing them
- Research work published in refereed journals and conferences
- Regulations and procedures related to incentives and merit awards
- The role and responsibilities of research committees and **councils**
- The benefits received by graduate students from supported scientific research projects
- The benefits received by the local community and by the productive and service sectors from supported scientific research projects
- Marketing scientific research

4-1-3 Evidence of Elements of Sub-criteria One

- Availability of an annual plan for scientific research
- Criteria and forms of supporting scientific research projects and monitoring their implementation

- Criteria and forms of supporting the publication of research work and writing books and other manuscripts
- Annual statistics of supported research projects and the amount of funds spent on them
- Annual statistics of the nature, areas and number of research projects published in refereed and specialized journals and conferences
- Annual statistics of published research projects derived from higher education dissertations
- The scientific research projects that meet the development needs of the local community and the production and service sectors
- Statistics of the number of conferences, seminars and scientific workshops held annually by the educational institution
- The agreements concluded with educational institutions and research centres inside and outside Jordan
- minutes of meetings the relevant committees and **councils**
- Samples of research projects and books written by Faculty members and published, or accepted for publication, together with the mechanisms for documenting them within the University
- Annual expenditure on individual components of scientific research
- Annual expenditure on awards and merit incentives

4-2 Sub-criterion Two: Scholarship(s)

4-2-1 Elements of Sub-criterion Two

- Scholarships for the Master's and Doctoral degrees
- Research and development training courses

4-2-2 Indicators of Elements of Sub-criterion Two

- Availability of a declared and integrated plan for scholarship(s)
- By-laws and regulations concerning scholarship(s)
- Transparency and justice in the selection process for research scholarship(s)
- Following up on the academic study of students sent on scholarships

- Regulations and procedures for conducting and participating in training courses
- Consistency of the training courses with faculty members' teaching and research needs
- The role of concerned committees and councils
- Expenditure on scholarship(s) and training courses

4-2-3 Evidence and Documents for Elements of Sub-criterion Two

- Annual Plan for sending people on scholarship(s)
- Criteria of, and forms used in, the scholarship process
- Follow-up and evaluation mechanism of the performance of people / students sent on scholarships/ missions and mechanisms for scholarship program members and their performance
- Annual statistics in respect of the number and exact specializations of students sent on scholarships and the Universities where they are studying.
- Annual expenditure on scholarships
- The agreements concluded with educational and other institutions for getting scholarships
- Annual statistics of the number of persons participating in training courses inside and outside the educational institution
- Annual expenditure of training courses.

4-3 Sub-criterion Three: Innovations

4-3-1 Elements of Sub-criterion Three

- Patents
- Artistic and literary innovations
- Entrepreneurship / pilot projects and business incubators

4-3-2 Indicators of Elements of Sub-criterion Three

- Regulations and procedures related to registration of patents and protection of intellectual property rights
- Regulations and procedures related to the support of artistic and literary innovations and the mechanisms of their documentation and publication
- Policies and procedures for initiating and developing pilot /entrepreneurship projects and business incubators
- Evaluation and follow-up of entrepreneurship projects and business incubators
- Expenditure on innovation(s) of all kinds
- The role of the committees and **councils** concerned with innovations

4-3-3 Evidence and Documents Required for Elements of Sub-criterion Three

- Criteria and forms used to document patents and artistic and literary innovations
- Statistics of patents registered annually locally and globally
- Statistics of the artistic and literary innovations documented or published annually
- Annual statistics of entrepreneurship projects and business incubators
- Annual expenditure on all individual elements of innovative works
- Mechanisms for following up the implementation and evaluation of innovations of all kinds
- Minutes of meetings of committees and **councils**
- Samples of certificates of patents and other innovations

5. Criterion Five: Financial, Physical and Human Resources

The importance of this criterion stems from the fact that it constitutes the context for all activities and tasks undertaken by the academic institution such as teaching, learning, scientific research and community services. It also acts as a sponsor for human resources that make up the university body including students, academics, researchers, administrators and staff. Therefore, the proper conditions and the quality of this environment are one of the pillars on which the university must develop

efficient plans for ensuring their continued assurance, monitoring, improvement and implementing measures that ensure the implementation of these plans and monitoring them periodically.

Perhaps one of the main themes for ensuring a sound quality university environment is to ensure the availability of financial resources required for this environment, in addition to good management in terms of sound financial planning and drafting clear budgets for the activities of the institution and its tasks. This should be in compliance with its vision and mission, to develop plans that can secure that, whether academic or non-academic and to lay down plans for managing potential risks. The Institution has to provide evidence of accountable and transparent financial management that follows established financial procedures.

When considering the financial and human resources provided by the Institution, it is not enough to look for the adequacy of these resources in terms of number and availability, but focus must be on efficiency and expertise which shall be employed in achieving the tasks undertaken by the educational institution, whether these are academic, research or community service. Emphasis shall be on the plans laid down by the Institution to monitor the performance of these resources and to assure their quality and the procedures followed by the institution for on-going improvement, both in terms of the on-going modernization of facilities resources and upgrading of human resources through programs for the development of their skills and effectiveness.

There are three sub-criteria that fall under this criterion, each of which focuses on one aspect of these resources. Below we will discuss each criterion separately in terms of the elements, indicators, evidence and documents necessary to achieve for achieving it.

5-1 Sub-criterion One: Financial Resources

5.1.1. Elements of Sub-criterion One

- Financial Planning and Budgeting
- Financial Management and Budgeting

5.1.2. Indicators of Sub-criterion One

- Financial planning policies and procedures
- Budget preparation policies and procedures
- Financial allocation policies and procedures
- Revenues and expenses (and investment, if any) policies and procedures

5-1-3 Evidence and Documents Required for Sub-criterion One

- Financial planning and budgeting records
- Evidence of financial allocation for the budget items
- Financial forms (in financial planning and budget calculation)
- The educational institution's budget for many past years
- External financial audit reports for many previous years

5-2 Sub-criterion Two: Material Resources

5-2-1 Elements of Sub-criterion Two

- Academic elements
- Research elements
- Administrative elements
- Public services
- Sources of information

5.2.2. Indicators of Sub-criterion Two

- Availability, easy access and efficient use
- Quality and convenience
- Policies and procedures for safety and security
- Appropriateness of facilities for students and staff with special needs
- Improvement and development plans and procedures
- management, improvement and monitoring of facilities and services
- Maintenance procedures and effectiveness
- Employers' satisfaction with the facilities
- Diversity of learning resources such as books, databases and periodicals

5-2-3 Evidence and Documents Required for Sub-criterion Two

- Files of material resources
- Follow-up and supervision records
- Security and safety guidelines and regulations
- Guides for persons with special needs
- Annual statistics and questionnaires about satisfaction with facilities and services, and their follow-up and improvement
- Internet subscription contracts
- Subscription contracts related to electronic global libraries and journals
- Annual statistics of the use of library and information resources and media
- Annual statistics of the use of the internet and electronic portals
- Specialized research laboratories and equipment
- Maintenance request forms and records

5-3 Sub-criterion Three: Human Resources

5-3-1 Elements of Sub-criterion Three

- Academic staff
- Research staff
- Administrative staff
- General services staff
- Information sources staff

5.3.2. Indicators of Sub-criterion Three

It is important to consider what each category of the human resources working at the Institution performs, such as:

- Attraction, appointment and employment policies and procedures
- Tenure and promotion policies and procedures
- Policies and procedures for sabbatical and research leaves

- Professional and career development of human resources
- Support and services provided to human resources
- Maternity benefits
- Staff satisfaction with the services provided: (appointment, training and qualification, services and benefits)

5-3-3 Evidence and Documents Required for Sub-criterion Three

- The documents showing recruitment policies and procedures at the educational institution
- Training workshops and staff development records: (statistics of workshops held, attendance, and participant feedback forms)
- Services and support committee files and statistics of the number of beneficiaries
- Questionnaires measuring staff satisfaction and follow-up
- Records of the benefits offered (housing, savings ...) and related statistics and beneficiaries.
- Leave forms

6. Criterion Six: Student Services

The Student Services are the pivotal axis of the educational institution through which students interact with all staff of the institution with the aim of developing the students' skills academically, professionally, socially and culturally in the quest achieving their academic and personal integration. Student guidance and counseling, communication with the graduates, and support services help students engage in academic life, broaden their horizons and knowledge, enhance their personalities and prepare them for the labour market through a collection of varied programs, facilities and services, all of which contribute to the promotion of students' personal development and academic progress. There are three sub-criteria that fall under this criterion each of which focuses on one aspect of these resources. In what follows, each criterion will be discussed separately in terms of the elements, indicators, evidence and documents necessary for achieving it.

6-1 Sub-criterion One: Student Guidance and Counselling

6-1-1 Elements of Sub-criterion One

- Raising student awareness
- Psychological and social counselling
- Guidance and vocational training

6-1-2 Indicators of Sub-criterion One

- Policies and procedures of raising student awareness
- Policies concerning the rights and responsibilities of students
- Psychological and social counselling procedures
- Vocational guidance procedures
- Training courses directed toward students
- The role of committees and **councils** in student guidance and counselling
- Plans for development and follow-up of student guidance and counselling

6-1-3 Evidence and Documents Required for Sub-criterion One

- Availability of organizational units or offices concerned with student guidance and counselling
- Evidence of student guidance and counselling activities
- Regulation related to student guidance and counselling
- Minutes of meetings of committees and **councils** concerned with student guidance and counselling
- Annual statistics of the numbers of those benefiting from:
 - Raising student awareness
 - Psychological and social counselling
 - Counselling and vocational training
- The forms used in student guidance and Counselling
- Students' evaluation of the student guidance and Counselling activities
- Annual reports on student guidance and Counselling and the extent of benefiting from them

6-2 Sub-criterion Two: Support Services

6.2.1. Elements of Sub-criterion Two

- Student elections
- Financial support
- Sports services
- Health Services
- Students facilities
- Extra-curricular activities

6-2-2 Indicators of Sub-criterion Two

- Regulation of student elections and procedures
- Regulation of student grants and loans and procedures
- Regulation followed in the provision of support services, and their procedures
- The educational institution's policy adopted for extra-curricular activities
- The role of student clubs in supporting services
- Following up support services performance and development

6-2-3 Evidence and Documents Required for Sub-criterion Two

- Evidence of conducting student elections
- The number of student clubs and their objectives and quality
- Annual statistics of the number of those benefiting from student grants and loans
- Surveys of student views toward services (sports, health, restaurants, banks and bookshops,... etc.)
- Annual statistics of the extra-curricular activities and number of their participants
- Minutes of meetings of committees and **councils** concerned with support services
- Mechanisms for looking into student complaints and how they are benefited from

6-3 Sub-criterion Three: Communicating with Graduates

6.3.1. Elements of Sub-criterion Three

- Graduate data
- Representation on governance **boards**
- Means of communication with the graduates

6-3-2 Indicators of Sub-criterion Three

- Procedures for strengthening the institution's relationship with the graduates
- The graduates' representation on governance **boards**
- Coordination and cooperation with employers and employing parties

6-3-3 Evidence and Documents Required for Sub-criterion Three

- Minutes of meetings of concerned committees and **councils**
- Annual statistics of the participation of graduates in the educational institution's activities
- Evidence of student representation on the governance **boards**
- Opinion polls oriented toward graduates and employers
- Annual statistics of alumni activities and numbers of their participants

7. Criterion Seven: Community Service and External Relations

The importance of this issue stems from the fact that it is the main factor that governs the relationship between the educational institution and the external community, whether at the local, national or international levels. It involves organizing the relationship between the educational institution and the various bodies such as the institutions, communities and individuals and others within an institutional framework that promotes the exchange of scientific, knowledge, humanitarian and other fields.

Since the educational institution is an integral part of the local community and one of the drivers of the economy, it has to preserve the natural environment hosting it. This can be done through the conservation of natural resources and the natural environment, contributing to boosting the economy and upgrading

the social well-being through physical and cognitive support and community development projects, and including of community members on its governance **boards** within the decision-making group. Providing local community with efficient graduates is one of the direct contributions to the development of local communities.

Cooperation at the regional and international levels, especially with donors, research centres and Universities, is a major contributor to the development of the university's performance and progress to advanced scientific levels, improving the outcomes of higher education through the necessary agreements, joint projects, and participation in the various conferences and courses that enrich the exchange of knowledge and the transfer of technology and best practice in all fields. At the national level, the educational institution is an integral part of the higher education system of the state. Teamwork results in harmony between the universities and the various higher education institutions, which in turn leads to prosperity and elevation of the nation, community development and providing the local market with graduates who are fully capable of performing their duties thanks to policies that are in harmony with the education sector.

There are two sub-criteria that fall under this criterion that support evaluating this criterion. These two elements include some indicators, as well as examples, evidence and documents that support the evaluation of this criterion. This criterion focuses on two sub-criteria: community service and external relations at the national and international levels. We will discuss each criterion in terms of its indicators, evidence and documents required for achieving it.

7-1. Sub-criterion One: Community Service

7.1.1. Elements of Sub-criterion One

- Aspects of local community development
- Representation on governance **councils**

7.1.2. Indicators of Sub-criterion One

- Policies and plans related to the nature of the relationship with the community
- Studies and research related to sustainable development
- Training courses and developmental and awareness-raising lectures

- Joint initiatives and development projects
- Health services and medical days
- Financial and physical support for meeting the needs of local community development
- Selection and representation of the local community on the governance **councils**
- Contributions of faculty members and students to the local community service and development
- The educational institution's contribution to the preservation of the environment and natural resources

7.1.3. Evidence and Documents Required for Sub-criterion One

- Documents showing the policies, plans and procedures related to the local community
- Annual statistics of studies, projects and research related to the local community
- Annual statistics of joint initiatives and development projects
- Statistics of the actual annual expenditure on all activities of community service
- Statistics of faculty members/ administrative staff/students who participated in local community service activities
- Statistics of local community members benefiting annually from the health services and medical events
- Mechanisms and decisions on the selection of local community representatives to governance **councils**
- Annual statistics of students from the local community benefiting from grants and student loans
- Statistics of the awareness-raising lectures and training courses related to community service
- Annual statistics of the various activities related to the protection of heritage and conservation of natural resources

7-2. Sub-criterion Two: External Relations

7.2.1. Elements of Sub-criterion Two

- Relations at the national level
- Relations at the regional and international levels

7.2.2. Indicators of Sub-criterion Two

- The policies governing the establishment of relationships at all levels
- Procedures and mechanisms of cooperation at local, regional and international levels
- Grants and assistance offered by national, regional and international institutions and organizations
- Joint projects and studies
- Joint courses, conferences and workshops
- Marketing graduates at open recruitment days and fairs
- Mechanisms and activities related to attracting students

7.2.3. Evidence and Documents Required for Sub-criterion Two

- The documents showing the policies, plans and procedures associated with cooperation at the national, regional and international levels
- Availability of offices or units within the relevant organizational structures concerned with international cooperation
- Samples of concluded memoranda of understanding and agreements and the mechanisms for approving and signing them
- Mechanisms of following up memoranda of understanding and agreements and their evaluation and implementation
- Annual statistics of grants and assistance provided to the educational institution 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/employment days
- Evidence of attracting students from inside and outside Jordan

8. Criterion Eight: Quality Assurance

Quality assurance management is one of the pillars of successful management models in academic education since it aims at applying advanced methods for quality assurance, continuous improvement and development and achievement of the highest level of standards in the practices, processes and outcomes of higher education institutions. It also helps Institutions in setting up an appropriate management system that is realised through procedures the institution carries out to improve its performance.

There are four sub-criteria that fall under this criterion. What follows is a presentation of the elements of these criteria, their indicators, evidence and documents which are required to achieve them.

8-1 Sub-criterion One: Institutional Commitment to Improving Quality

8.1.1. Elements of Sub-criterion One

- Leadership
- Resources
- Institutional participation

8.1.2. Indicators of Sub-criterion One

- Follow-up and support by the Leadership
- Availability of physical, human and financial resources
- Dissemination of the culture of Quality assurance
- Involving all staff of the organization
- Commitment to the areas of improvement
- Benefiting from feedback in the improvement processes

8.1.3. Evidence and Documents Required for Sub-criterion One

- Level of responsibility and representation
- Quality assurance management improvement plans
- The institution's manual of Quality assurance

- Evidence of dissemination of the of Quality assurance culture
- Periodic reports on the performance of the Institution's colleges and different units
- Reports on the effectiveness of academic and administrative development programs
- Integration and inclusiveness of the Institution's quality reports and documents
- Training programs related to improving levels of quality / performance

8-2 Sub-criterion Two: Scope of Quality Assurance

8.2.1 Elements of Sub-criterion Two

- On-going periodic evaluation
- Comprehensiveness of quality assurance of inputs, processes and outcomes

8.2.2. Indicators of Sub-criterion Two

- Applying and following up quality assurance management at the various colleges and administrative and technical centres and units
- Evaluation of inputs, processes and outcomes
- Quality control, improvement, and dissemination of related results

8-2-3 Evidence and Documents Required for Sub-criterion Two

- The committees concerned with quality assurance and the minutes of their meetings
- Reports on on-going periodic evaluation
- Evidence and procedures followed in quality assurance management

8-3 Sub-criterion Three: Indicators, criteria and benchmarks

8.3.1. Elements of Sub-criterion Three

- Key performance indicators

- Secondary performance indicators
- Benchmarking criteria of the Institution's performance quality
- Feedback
- Verification of learning outcomes

5.3.2. Indicators of Sub-criterion Three

- Inclusiveness of key performance indicators and their complementarity and measurability in an objective manner in all sectors of the educational institution
- Selection of secondary performance indicators for following up the performance of the various academic and administrative units taking into consideration their special character
- Identifying benchmarking criteria for institutional performance quality
- Verification of the learning outcomes achieved by the students and comparing them to the requirements and needs of the labour market
- The self-assessment processes of the quality of performance shall be based on multiple sources of relevant evidence and proofs whenever possible. This includes feedback through surveys of users' views and the views of the beneficiaries (stakeholders), such as students, faculty members, employees, graduates, and employers (of the institution's graduates).

8-3-3 Evidence and Documents Required for Sub-criterion Three

- Periodic and on-going reports on the key and secondary performance indicators and the areas of their application
- Studies or reports related to the benchmarking of the quality of institutional performance and all academic and administrative units

8-4 Sub-criterion Four: Independent Verification of Assessment

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

- Multiple sources of evidence and proofs
- Feedback obtained through polls
- Verification of learning outcomes

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

- Validation of the findings based on interpretations of the evidence and proofs of quality by getting independent advice from people knowledgeable in the type of activity in question. This is so because impartial mechanisms are used for eliminating discrepancies between different views.
- Validation of the learning outcomes achieved by students in comparison with the requirements of national qualifications and the levels achieved by similar educational institutions

8-4-3 Evidence and Documents Required for Sub-criterion Four:

- Comparisons between the Institution's learning outcomes and those of other similar institutions
- Polls of students, faculty members, graduates and employers views, and their improvement plans.
- A verification matrix of the teaching and learning outcomes (compatibility between outcomes and content) and the correlation between the institution's vision and mission and the labour market
- Review of the self-assessment study and graduates' views
- Plans for improvement of the quality assurance processes

References

(In Arabic)

1. King Abdul Aziz Al Saud University, **Guide for Applying the Total Quality Management Systems at the University**, First edition, Saudi Arabia.
2. Ghazi, Amer Ahmad (2007), **Guide for the Applying Total Quality Management Systems at the University of Babylon: the basic specifications for Applying of quality criteria in preparation for academic accreditation**, Babylon, Iraq.
3. Majeed, Sawsan Shaker, Al-Ziyadat, Mohammed (2007), **Quality and Academic Accreditation of General and University Education Institutions**, Dar Safa for Distribution and Publishing, Amman, Jordan.
4. Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission for Higher Education Institutions, **Guide for Quality Assurance Criteria and Procedures at Higher Education Institutions (2009)**
5. The Iraqi Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (2005), Performance Evaluation Department, **Criteria for Performance Quality at Iraqi Universities**, Baghdad University Press, Iraq.
6. The Ministry of Higher Education in the Arab Republic of Egypt (2005), Project Management Unit, **Guide for Higher Education Quality Assurance and Accreditation**, Print Right for Advertising, Cairo, Egypt.
7. The Ministry of Education and Higher Education (2003), the National Commission for Higher Education Accreditation and Quality Assurance, **Accreditation Methodology and Quality**, Ministry of Education and Higher Education, Printing Press, Ramallah, Palestine.

References

(In English)

1. Australian Universities Quality Agency, **Audit Manual Version 4.1** (2007).
2. British Accreditation Council for independent further and higher Education, (2007-2008), **Quality Assurance and Accreditation hand book, UK.**
3. (BSI) ISO 9001-2000, **Ten Tips for Selection and use of a quality Management System** (USA).
4. (BSI) ISO 9001-2000, **Practice Guide to Implementing ISO 9001-2000(USA).**
5. Christian, Thune (2001), **Quality Assurance of Higher education in Denmark**, Ash gate Publisher, ISBN 0754618293.
6. **General Principles of Accreditation for universities**, (2005), National Institutions for Academic Degrees and University Evaluation, Version 1.20.
7. National Assessment and Accreditation Council, India, (2005). **Guideline for UDC assistance for assessment and accreditation for higher education institutions.**
8. Quality Assurance of Higher education in Portugal (2006), **An Assessment of the Existing System and Recommendations for Future System.**
9. **Quality Assurance of higher education An Introduction (2006)**, National Assessment and Accreditation Council, Bangalore, India.
10. **Criteria for University Evaluation Center for International Relations National Institutions for Academic Degrees and University Evaluation** (Tokyo, Japan).