

Quality Assurance in Ghanaian Higher Education Institutions

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Opportunities and Constraints

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**Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa
DAKAR**

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BP 3304 Dakar, 18524, Senegal
Website: www.codesria.org

ISBN: 978-2-86978-788-9

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Typesetting: Alpha Ousmane Dia

Cover Design: CODESRIA

Distributed in Africa by CODESRIA

Distributed elsewhere by African Books Collective, Oxford, UK

Website: www.africanbookscollective.com

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CODESRIA would like to express its gratitude to the Carnegie Corporation of New York (CCNY), the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), the Open Society Foundations (OSFs), UN Women, the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF), Oumou Dilly Foundation and the Government of Senegal for supporting its research, training and publication programmes.

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Acknowledgement

This study was initiated by the National Working Group initiated for Quality, led by the University of Professional Studies and supported by the CODESRIA Higher Education Leadership Programme (HELP), with funds from Carnegie Foundation. The Study Team was made up of Prof. Joshua Alabi Project Manager, Prof. Goski Alabi (Technical Team Leader), Mr. Richard Adjei (Representative National Accreditation Board), Mr. Paul Dzandu (Representative National Council for Tertiary Education), Mr. Kojo (Kwame Nkrumah University for Science and Technology), Dr. Godwin Utuka (University of Professional Studies Quality Assurance Coordinator), and Mr. Abdulai Munkaila. The views expressed here are those of the authors and not necessarily those of CODESRIA.

List of Acronyms

Acronym	Description
AUC	African Union Commission,
AAU	Association of African Universities
CoE	College(s) of Education
COTVET	Council for TVET
CUC	Central University College
EMIS	Education Management Information System
ERRC	Education Reform Review Committee
ESAR	Education Sector Annual Review
ESP	Education Strategic Plan
ESPRR	Education Sector Policy Review Report
ESTAC	Education Sector Technical Advisory Committee
HELP	Higher Education Leadership in Africa Program
MUC	Methodist University College
NAB	National Accreditation Board
NCTE	National Council for Tertiary Education
NDP	National Development Plan
NDPC	National Development Planning Commission
NERIC	National Education Reform Implementation Committee
NQAWG	National Quality Assurance Working Group
TNE	Trans-National Education
NCHE	National Council for Higher Education
URC	Universities Rationalization Committee
NABPTEX	National Board for Professional and Technical Examinations

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Introduction

Background

Quality assurance and relevance of higher education have become critical issues on the global higher education landscape especially in the wake of the need for relevance, accountability and value for money. The commoditisation, privatisation, massification and new modes of higher education delivery (long distance and virtual modes) as well as trans-national education (TNE) are believed to have triggered concerns about the quality of higher education globally (Mohammedhai 2008). The commoditisation of higher education by GATS-WTO (2005), require that certain minimum standards be set to facilitate the trading of higher education across countries, to allow for recognition and comparability, while maintaining relevance and functionality. In recent times, academic fraud in different forms, ranging from cheating, to falsification of certificates, to plagiarism and other forms of research and publication misconducts have become major concerns in higher education. However, it is not clear how leadership, management and governance structures are affecting the quality of higher education particularly in Africa. Alabi and Mba (2012) noted that the key issues necessitating quality assurance interventions include massification, recognition of qualifications across borders, establishing equivalences and other international dimensions of higher education which have made it imperative for some form of standards and quality practices to be deployed at the regional, sub-regional, national and institutional levels.

An OECD report (2003) notes that “around the world, higher education is under pressure to change and become more accountable with the dwindling trend of public funding and increasing competition influenced by the commoditisation of Higher Education...” McRitchie (1999) also notes that whereas the 20th century

might be viewed as the age of management, the early 21st century is predicted to be more focused on governance. This prediction has become the new reality for higher education institutions in the last decade. Currently, accountability and quality assurance practices are being stressed in the wake of higher autonomy and academic freedom for HEIs. Ironically, the fact that HEIs operate in an environment characterised by ambiguity of purpose and goals and lack of external accountability for a very long time (Leveille 2006, ACE 2004) makes the issue of accountability and quality assurance even more critical. Stensaker (2005) adds that Quality assurance is not just the latest fashion, but it is a remarkably successful management fad...'

Higher Education Institutions are expected to provide services that meet expectations of all key stakeholders, particularly the labour markets and students. In the face of dwindling public funding in HEIs, issues of accountability, fulfilling institutional mission and mandate, it has become critical for national authorities and institutions to take quality assurance of higher education seriously, as quality of higher education has a direct relationship with the development of every country. Recognising the need for quality in higher education in Africa, the African Union Commission, (AUC), the Association of African Universities (AAU) and the UNESCO Cluster office have been vigorously involved in developing and entrenching quality assurance in African higher institutions. Together, these continental organisations have called on National Authorities and HEIs themselves to set up Quality Assurance outfits to strengthen both internal quality and external quality assurance in African universities.

Many countries have also taken quality of higher education seriously and set up national bodies to regulate the quality of higher education. In 1992/1993, Ghana, recognising the need for quality in its higher education, system set up three institutions to regulate quality of Tertiary Education. These include the National Accreditation Board (NAB), The National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE), and the National Board for Professional and Technical Examinations (NABPTEx). Since then, several initiatives, policies and regulations have been introduced to enhance quality in higher education and lessons have been learnt over the period. The CODESRIA HELP Project of the Quality Working Group, therefore sought to investigate and document the quality journey in higher education in Ghana and to ascertain the factors that have promoted or constrained the development of an effective quality assurance system in higher education in Ghana. The aim is to enhance quality in all aspects and develop an effective culture for higher education in Ghana, to drive the knowledge, competencies, skills, certification and development agenda of the country.

Problem Statement

Following the establishment of universities rationalisation committee in 1987 and the subsequent reports in 1988, the recognition of the need for reforms in higher education became apparent. The aim of the reforms was to ensure quality in higher education leading to the establishment of two institutions, the National Accreditation Board (NAB) and National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE) in 1993. Both institutions were established to regulate and have oversight for quality and policy of tertiary education in Ghana. Since then, a number of initiatives, interventions, policy directives and instruments have been introduced to enhance and regulate quality of tertiary education in Ghana. Consequently, the National Accreditation Board (NAB) of Ghana is among the early ones in Africa to have introduced several interventions for quality assurance. However, the question is, have all the policies, initiatives and interventions for quality in higher education have been effective? Which ones have actually promoted and enhanced quality and which have constrained quality? The key quality interventions and instruments employed by the National Accreditation Board of Ghana included institutional and programme accreditation, affiliation of newly established institutions to mentor institutions, academic audits, cyclical reviews, reaccreditation and institutional charter. In 2012, the National Accreditation Board further directed all higher education institutions in Ghana to set up quality assurance outfits. However, there were no clear guidelines to help the institutions establish such quality assurance outfits. It was also not clear what the roles and responsibilities of these quality assurance outfits were and where to fit the quality outfits in the governance structure of institutions. Many institutions encountered challenges in institutionalising the quality outfits.

Evidence of the Problems with some Current Quality Assurance Practices

Private Institutions also complained about the effectiveness of affiliation as a mentoring process. The issue of the effectiveness of affiliation was extensively bemoaned, when about two thousand (2,000) students from the Methodist University College and the Central University College at the third and final years were asked to withdraw from the universities^{1, 2}. “The National Accreditation Board issued a directive on May 28, 2012 requiring the university to withdraw students from the schools because their grades (the students’) were fraught with deficiencies. The affected students filed a motion on May 17, 2013 seeking the enforcement of their fundamental human rights, specifically their right to education. An Accra Human Rights Court in 2014 ordered the Methodist

University College (MUC), to reinstate 651 students sacked two years earlier. The court further described the decision to revoke the admission letters offered by the Christian-based University College as illegal, and with no basis in law. A cost of GH¢10,000 was awarded against the defendants, which include the MUC, the Ministry of Education and the National Accreditation Board.

The Problem of Affiliation

The private institutions in Ghana further observe that affiliation is not effective, it introduces a double standard for private and public institutions, stifles innovation and is too expensive. The argument is, if affiliation were to be effective, why should about 2,000 students in their third and final years be sacked from private universities in Ghana? Where were their Mentors? If the students had D grades at the point of entry but managed to pass all university examinations and got to the final year or third year under the supervision of the mentors, why should they be sacked? After all, these students progressed under the watch of the institutional mentors, who should have raised the flags earlier during the due diligence process for admissions. How did the mentors of these affiliate institutions fail as well? Or rather is it the minimum standards set by the accreditation board that were defective? These also raise questions about how such quality standards are developed for the industry.

Problem of the Lack of a Quality Assurance Framework

The concept of quality assurance and the parameters that determine whether quality has been assured or not was not delineated in the directive by the NAB for institutions in Ghana to establish quality outfits. This leaves institutions to figure out by themselves the concept of quality assurance and how to implement or operationalise that concept. There are also no clear quality benchmarks against which institutional quality are to be measured against. Some HEIs prior to the directive to set up quality assurance outfits had already set up internal quality assurance outfits.

Problem of documentation of the evolution of initiatives and their consequences

The evolution of different interventions and the reasons for their introduction have not been documented. The higher education context has also changed quite significantly, since the Universities Rationalisation Committee recommended

the amalgamation of all polytechnics and universities into one tertiary system regulated by the National Accreditation Board, the National Council for Tertiary Education and the National Board for Professional and Technical Examinations in 1992.

Despite, the significant contributions of the National Accreditation Board and National Council for Tertiary Education towards quality of higher education in Ghana, there are significant instruments and tools needed to implement, facilitate, promote and support the entrenchment of quality culture in tertiary education in Ghana which were not yet available, when this study was initiated. For example, Ghana at the time of initiating this study in 2014, did not have a comprehensive policy for tertiary education, nor did a comprehensive qualifications framework exist for gauging and mapping qualifications, and there was also no quality assurance framework to guide tertiary institutions to meet expected quality standards contained in the several fragmented pieces of requirements in the form of norms, accreditation and affiliation requirements and other regulations by the regulatory and oversight bodies, though both the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE) and the National Accreditation Board have been in existence for over two decades. It was also not clear how some of the existing instruments, tools, initiatives, policies and regulations have contributed to achieving the intended purposes. For example, has the affiliation of newly established institutions to well established institutions been an effective quality mechanism?

It is not clear whether any nationwide exercise has been undertaken to document the quality journey of higher education in Ghana and to ascertain the factors that have promoted or constrained the road to quality. The need to undertake an assessment of the various internal and external quality interventions and to analyse what is working or what is not working and why is apparent and timely.

The Concept and Purpose of Higher (Tertiary) Education in Ghana

- The purpose of tertiary education in Ghana is not expressly stated in any policy document.
- Indeed there is no Policy Document covering tertiary education in Ghana, as the one sighted during this study was still work in progress.
- Tertiary education has a rather large scope making its management and assurance of quality rather a daunting task.
 - In 1987, the Universities Rationalisation Committee (URC) proposed that all post-secondary institutions be re-classified as tertiary institutions.

- In 1993, universities and polytechnics were amalgamated to constitute one level of education and classified as tertiary education institutions. At that time, there were only three public universities and about six polytechnics.
- Following that, the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) gave way to the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE), established by the National Council for Tertiary Education Act 454 of 1993.
- Currently, tertiary education institutions cover a broader spectrum of post-secondary level education that includes universities, polytechnics and colleges of education and, colleges of education after the Teacher Training Institutes were also upgraded to tertiary status in 2008 and finally established as tertiary institutions by The Colleges of Education Act, 2012, Act 847.

Need to Re-consider the Scope of Tertiary Education in Ghana to enhance Quality

In 1987 when the URC made the recommendation for the amalgamation of polytechnics and Universities, there were only three public universities and about six polytechnics. In 2013/2014 there are close to 138 tertiary institutions in Ghana, while enrolments have soared from 9,000 in 1987 to 313,846 in 2013/14.³

Policy Implications of the New Tertiary Education Context

Obviously, the situation and context which led to the 1987 recommendation for amalgamation of tertiary institutions, which put all tertiary institutions under the oversight of the National Council for Tertiary Education have changed. Therefore there is need to examine the existing policies and Acts establishing both the National Accreditation Board (NAB), the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE) and the NABPTEX to see whether they remain true to the course and have the capacity to support the desired quality of tertiary education in the 21st century. Based on the growth and diversity of the Tertiary education sector, it is timely to:

- Re-consider the separation of the tertiary sector and the re-establishment of the National Council for Higher Education, which will be responsible for university education and focus on both policy and regulation, as is the case of Nigeria, Tanzania and Mauritius or,
- Maintain the status quo with all the 138 tertiary institutions regulated by both the two agencies NCTE and the NAB at the same time.

Funding Challenges and Need for Performance Base Indicators to Track Quality

The Draft National Policy for Tertiary Education in Ghana (NCTE Undated, pg 8) notes “One of the major constraints to tertiary education governance is inadequate funding”. The policy notes that because public grants for tertiary education have not matched norm-based cost, and this has had grave repercussions on system governance and supervision. Performance monitoring of tertiary education has not been effective; and this may be attributed to the mismatch between norm-based costs and funds made available. As a result, there appears to be a general lack of interest in the performance indicators in tertiary education in Ghana. However, the performance indicators for quality higher education are not documented. There is no document that provides clear measurable indicators for quality aside from the tertiary education norms.

The Challenge of Institutional Capacity for Quality Assurance

It appears like quality assurance in higher education is still work in progress as the capacity of the various institutions for quality assurance is weak, and national capacity in terms of expertise for QA inadequate. The study in its preliminary review did not cite any formal institutionalised training in quality Assurance for higher institutions except the TRAINIQA project of DAAD that in 2014 selected a few quality assurance officers to train in quality assurance and this include a few from Ghana, though there were some isolated training in QA organised by the NAB.

It has to be noted that essentially, quality assurance is a responsibility of the higher institutions themselves and not an external body. However, the external accreditation, assessments and audit reviews are necessary to ensure that the institutions met generally accepted standards. In Ghana, two key principles of higher education governance make the role of Institutions even more critical in assuring quality.

Two key principles of the NCTE to achieve value for money and accountability are academic freedom or autonomy of tertiary education institutions and accountability. According to the NCTE, tertiary education institutions should be answerable for the use of public funds. They should demonstrate their responsiveness to the needs of society and provide information in respect of their performance against their statutory obligations – this is the concept of fitness for purpose as an approach to quality assurance. The NCTE draft policy, which is still work in progress, further notes that the enablers for achieving such

accountability include the availability of financial, human and material resources and the accreditation processes as well as the external and self-assessment roles of the tertiary institutions themselves.

On the other hand, as a principle of the NCTE, higher education institutions are to thrive in an environment devoid of interference and intervention from political authorities. The principle stresses that tertiary education should have the freedom to determine policies on curricula development, management and governance, admission, teaching and learning, assessment, and funds generation and disbursement (NTCE, undated). These principles throw the responsibility for quality in the hands of the institutions themselves with accreditation and external quality mechanisms as minimum standards. Again, this reflects the concept of fitness for purpose as a governance approach, which throws governance and accountability basically to the Institutions themselves (Vlăsceanu, Grünberg & Pârlea, 2004, p. 47), with accreditation complementing this effort by providing for minimum academic standards to be met.

However, quality assurance practices are infantile in many higher institutions of learning in Ghana and the current accreditation system seems to support merely input based assessment and not a concept of helping the institution to assure and improve quality. The quality approach as exists currently in higher education in Ghana is more a concept of fitness of purpose concept rather than fitness for purpose as espoused in the intended policy. Further to this, there is no national quality assurance framework that can help institutions interpret what quality assurance of higher education should entail and how to provide accountability for quality as would be expected. It is against this background that this study sought to document the structures and interventions put in place to assure quality in HEIs so far in Ghana. The aim is to analyse the factors that promote or constrain quality at both the external and internal levels and to compare internal quality practices and learn from the best practices in order to develop a framework for quality assurance that will suite and facilitate governance and accountability of HEIs in the country.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this NQWG for Quality project is to document the evolution of the quality assurance practices in Higher Education Institutions in Ghana and analyse how the current national quality and accreditation structures have impacted on quality of higher education by soliciting inputs from the major stakeholders of higher education in Ghana. In order to engineer quality enhancement in Higher

Education Institutions in Ghana, the project sought to identify factors that promote and constrain the practice of quality assurance in HEIs and used the results to develop a framework for QA for HEIs in Ghana.

Objective

The key objectives of the research project are as follows:

- Document the evolution of the quality assurance practices in the higher education sector in Ghana.
- Identify factors that promote / constrain quality assurance practices in higher education in Ghana.
- Trace changes in external quality assurance structures, tools and techniques and identify the factors that promoted those changes.
- Ascertain how the current national accreditation structures and initiatives have impacted on quality practices in Ghana.
- Ascertain internal quality structures and systems used in HEIs in Ghana.
- Develop a framework for assuring quality in HEIs in Ghana.

Literature Review

Introduction

Chapter two provides the contextual overview and analysis of higher education in Ghana as well as the theoretical perspective of quality in higher education. The Chapter looks at the concept of higher education and its purpose in Ghana, the history of higher education and how the evolution of Higher Education in Ghana relates to current quality practices. The Chapter examines how quality practices of the past inform quality practices in contemporary times and its associated lessons and challenges. It traces how the history of the evolution of higher education has influenced quality practices and compares the existing practices with international concepts of quality assurances practices in higher education. The chapter sets the stage with theoretical concepts for quality in higher education. It must be noted that quality is a mission-based derivative and therefore any attempt to understand quality assurance should start with understanding the mission or purpose of higher education.

Concept of Quality Assurance in Higher Education

Gaither (1998), note that Quality Assurance (QA) has been defined as; "...the policies, attitudes, actions and procedures necessary to ensure that the quality and scholarship (including research) is being maintained and enhanced.... It requires actions internal to the situation, but may also involve actions of an external body or bodies. It includes course design, staff development, and the collection and use of feedback from students and employees" (Gaither 1998:3). The above definition indicates that quality assurance is both internal and external.

The Concept of Higher Education in Ghana

Higher education refers to post-secondary education (UNESCO IUS). In Ghana, Higher education is synonymous with tertiary education and defined to include all universities, university colleges, polytechnics, and colleges of education. Though the 1992 Constitution of Ghana provides for Higher Education, This was replaced with Tertiary Education after the Universities Rationalisation Committee (URC) in 1987, proposed that all post-secondary institutions be re-classified as tertiary institutions. The recommendation consequently led to the amalgamation of all universities and Polytechnics to constitute one level of education and classified as tertiary education institutions though the 1992 constitution still maintained Higher Education in its provisions (Constitution of Ghana, 1992). Following that, the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) gave way to the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE), established by the National Council for Tertiary Education Act 454 of 1993. In 2008, the Teacher Training Institutes were upgraded to tertiary status and finally established as tertiary institutions by The Colleges of Education Act, 2012, Act 847.

Purpose of Higher Education in Ghana

It appears that Ghana does not have a clearly stated purpose of tertiary education, but this is not peculiar to Ghana. There is still debate over the nature and purposes of higher education as there is no consensus about the purpose of higher education. Higher education institutions have been described as organised anarchies (Kim Cameron 1982) because the purpose of higher education is diffused, having three missions relating to Teaching and Learning, Research and Community Service. Generally the purpose of higher education is about the generation and use of knowledge for the benefit of society. In the case of Ghana, the situation is compounded by the trio-nature of our tertiary education sector, as the purpose of Universities are not the same as Polytechnics or Colleges of Education.

The Education Strategic Plan 1 ESP Vol.1 (2008-2015) describes the mission of the Ghana Ministry of Education as “to provide relevant education to all Ghanaians at all levels to enable them to acquire skills that will assist them to develop their potential, to be productive, to facilitate poverty reduction and to promote socio-economic growth and national development⁴.” However, the Education Strategic Plan (ESP) II (2010-2020) is not as expressive about mission of higher education.

The Institute of Advancement of University Learning in Oxford University recognises that there is tension about the purpose of higher education and that this tension is historic. In a paper that summarises a series of studies on the subject of

the purpose of higher education, it was concluded that the purpose is to produce learning people who can use acquired knowledge or the pursuit of knowledge to solve societal and developmental problems.

However, there is still no consensus about the purpose of higher education. Harlan Cleveland, a USA educator, commenting on the conflicting views of higher education noted: “The outsiders want the students trained for their first job out of university, and the academics inside the system want the student educated for 50 years of self-fulfillment. The trouble is that the students want both. This ancient collision between each student’s short-term and long-term goals, between ‘training’ and ‘education’, between ‘vocational’ and ‘general’, between honing the mind and nourishing the soul, divides the professional educators, divides the outside critics and supporters, and divides the students, too.” Yet Cleveland only touched on one of the three missions of higher education, namely teaching and learning. Research and community service are often left out.

Mishra (2007) also adds to the different concepts of higher education, noting: Higher education means different concepts in different contexts owing to deferent ideologies, opinions, policies or structures. Mishra identifies four concepts of higher education based on outcomes:

- Higher education as the production of qualified human resource.
- Higher education as the training for research career.
- Higher education as the efficient management of teaching provision.
- Higher education as a matter of extending life chances (Barnett 1992)

This study posits that the definition of higher education should be limited to the level of education and not the outcome of higher education as using the outcomes to define higher education may be practically problematic owing to different purposes of different institutions that make up higher education.

Despite this tension, it is important for Ghana to have a clearly defined purpose to enable the effective management of the quality of its higher education.

Strategic Focus of Tertiary Education in Ghana: Achieving Quality and Equity

Equity: What is the concept of equity of tertiary education in Ghana and how is Ghana set to achieve equity in higher education now and in the future? In a study by Alison Girdwood (1999) on Ghana’s tertiary education, it was observed, “Although equity was an underlying principle of the educational reform programme in Ghana in 1987, it was not defined as a concept. Yet there was

little likelihood of its being achieved without careful definition and analysis of the options possible for pursuing it.” A review of the current Education Strategic Plan Volume II reveals that this situation has not changed though the ESP II spells out an outline strategy for equity. Ironically, the Ghana Education Strategic Plan (ESP Vol.2, 2010-2020) states the focus of tertiary education from now to 2020 as “equity and quality education”.

Strategic Focus Statement for Tertiary Education in Ghana (2010-2020)

“Equitable tertiary education for all who are eligible; Emphasis on science, technology and national needs; Expanded to include Open University and new universities” (ESP Vol. II, 2010-2020, pg. 3)

Strategic Goal for Tertiary Education in Ghana (2010-2020)

“Increase equitable access to high quality tertiary education that provides relevant courses to young adults within Colleges of Education, Polytechnics and Universities, and for research and intellectual stimulus” (EPS Vol. II, 2010-2020, pg.39)

Outline Strategy for Equity of Tertiary Education in Ghana (ESP Vol. II, pg 39)

1. Ensure equal tertiary education opportunities for all academically eligible students
2. Ensure that every academically eligible person is able to benefit from tertiary education

Evidently, equity is described by access to all who qualify and are eligible but the eligibility criteria in itself tends to restrict access largely. This is because the eligibility criteria requires a D grade or lower in any core subject at the senior high school level for enrollment in a tertiary institution. Thus, all who score D grade or lower in any core subject are not legible to access higher education, a reason for the withdrawal of about 2,000 students from some private universities in Ghana.

However, it is not clear whether such eligibility criteria are backed by substantial evidence that suggests that people with the D-grade are not capable of university education. As such, the D-grade eligibility criteria robs a good number of young men and women and their families off the joy of higher education and their aspiration to make a better future through higher education. There is indeed a need for a comprehensive assessment of the current eligible criteria and its effects on equity and quality.

Balancing Equity and Quality

The question is, how is Ghana achieving both equity and quality with a tertiary gross enrolment ratio of about 12 per cent (ESPR 2016) and how is Ghana balancing equity and quality? This is because both equity and quality can be pursued, but one at the detriment of the other. Therefore, there must be a balance between equity and quality and this should be a conscious policy and strategic issue. It appears that more effort is given to increasing access, with the establishment of many more public and private universities, as opposed to availing resources and building capacity for quality beyond accreditation.

Quality

Quality is what we want and what others think a good or service should offer them and what works for both the provider and end user or stakeholder. So what does Ghana want from its higher education? To answer this question, the following five questions should be interrogated:

- What are we trying to do? – Purpose of Ghana’s higher education
- Where are we trying to do it? – Context
- How are we trying to do it? – Methods
- How do we know it works? – Evaluation (Feedback from industry and other stakeholders)
- How do we change to improve? – Improvement

The current Strategic Plan for education (ESP VOL. II, 2010-2020), has the following policy objectives for quality at the tertiary level ESP II (2010-2020)

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning at the tertiary level.
- Strengthen links between tertiary education and industry.
- Promote science and technical education at the tertiary level.

It is, however, not clear how these policy objectives tie into the overarching national development plan and strategic human resource needs of the country. Though the Education Sector Performance Review Report has been published annually since 2010 when the implementation of ESP VOL.II started, the reach of this communication and who monitors achievements relative to the started target and objectives are not clear.

In respect of quality, Girdwood (1999), further notes, “The Universities Rationalisation Committee in 1987 and subsequent policy-makers also did not define what was meant by academic quality, or what would be required

to assure it. Thus, it became difficult to measure its achievement or otherwise as implementation proceeded. Although improved pedagogical training and national accreditation were initiated, there was an apparent assumption that a greater ratio of direct expenditure on academic costs (projected to increase the funding available for academic needs) would by itself result in better teaching and learning” (Girwood, 1999 pg10). Unfortunately, the picture does not seem to have changed much after Girwood’s report in 1999. Quality assurance in Ghana is still input based and accreditation led. Though it appears that competition is playing a critical role in pushing for quality within institutions and the programmes they offer, quality is assumed to be achieved once there is quality inputs, namely quality students at entry defined by C grade or better, faculty with at least research masters or Doctorate Degrees, library facilities and physical infrastructure.

Roles of Institutions responsible for Quality in Higher Education

Four institutions namely; the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE), the National Accreditation Board (NAB), the National Board for Professional and Technical Examinations (NABPTEX) and the Council for Technical and Vocational Training (COTVET) are the institutions to ensure both equity and quality. For the purposes of this report, the discussion will be limited to two agencies, National Council for Tertiary education and the National Accreditation Board. Specifically, the NCTE is to promote access, quality, relevance and excellence in tertiary education, to facilitate the development of world-class human resources and to support national development” (ESP, 2010-2020). The NAB on the other hand is responsible for the accreditation of both public and private institutions as regards the quality of resources, and the academic content and standards of their programmes. The NAB is to determine the programmes and requirements for the proper operation of an institution and the maintenance of acceptable levels of academic or professional standards in the institution, in consultation with that institution; and determine the equivalences of diplomas, certificates and other qualifications awarded by institutions in the country or elsewhere. The NAB is also to publish as it considers appropriate the list of accredited public and private institutions and programmes at the beginning of each calendar year; and advise the President on the grant of a Charter to a private tertiary institution.

So exactly how are these two quality institutions ensuring equity, quality, relevance, recognition, functionality and comparability of tertiary qualifications in the tertiary education sector in Ghana? It is also important to bear in mind that quality and equity, which relate to access, also have cost and capacity implications.

Conceptual Models for Assuring Quality

Three conceptual models for assessing quality are the *Input, Process, Output and Outcome* Model; the Deming's quality assurance model based on *Plan, Do Study and Act (PDSA)* and the four dimensions of quality assurance of higher education, identified in the preliminary reviews namely *relevance, recognition, functionality and comparability*.

The overall policy framework being proposed to assess the situation of quality in higher education in this context is situated within the background provided in this paper and the broader picture of the National Education Policy objectives contained Education Strategic plan (2010-2020).

Managing the Quality of Higher Education in Ghana

Input Quality: A critical analysis of Ghana's tertiary education quality assurance approach indicates that it is largely input based. In fact, almost all the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE) norms are input based and those norms inform accreditation processes and quality assurances practices at institutional level. To ensure real quality, one must begin with the instructional design standards, which should inform curriculum, teaching and learning resources, programmatic benchmarks which detail out clear learning outcomes of programmes and the corresponding assessment strategies and activities. However, the development of programmatic benchmarks are still work in progress by the NAB. The NCTE Norms and the NAB accreditation instruments, as well as affiliation requirements and requirements for Charter, which are currently the main standards that largely inform quality of tertiary education, do cover such critical issues of instructional design standards.

On the contrary, the input based approach in Ghana, characterised mainly but not solely by accreditation, focuses on entry requirements of students, academic staff credentials and resources dominated by infrastructure and library and laboratory resources.

Students Entry Requirement as a key Issue for Quality of Higher Education in Ghana

In Ghana, a student with a D grade in any core subject from SHS is not qualified for university and graduates with third class do not also qualify to do Masters. Is there any substantial evidence to suggest that people with the D-grade are not capable of university education? What is the basis of the D grade requirement that

robs young men off the joy of higher education and their aspiration to make a better future through higher education? How does Ghana set such requirements? Mohhamedbia (2008) reports that Ghana and Kenya have some of the strictest requirement for entering the university. Mohamedbnai (2008,pg.11), notes that “*Ghana is another Anglophone country aside from Kenya, with rigorous entry requirements that restrict access to higher institutions of learning*”.

Quality of the Academic Staff

The National Accreditation Board requirement for teaching is a Research Master, but the Fair Wages Commission promotes doctorates. The problem is that universities in Ghana today are made to employ doctorate degree holders. But the question is how many doctorate degree holders does Ghana have and how many does Ghana produce in a year and in which disciplines? Are they sufficient to provide for the needed staff students ratio required by the NAB for quality?

Lack of Requirement for Teaching Competence for Academics

The assumption that a doctorate degree or a research masters is enough to teach in the university does not seem to have a basis⁵. Ironically, unlike the secondary and primary levels, teaching competence is not required for becoming an academic or for teaching in a university in Ghana. Yet at lower levels, teaching competences are recognised and even form the basis of differentiated salaries. The National Accreditation Board (NAB) and the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE) may have to reconsider the requirements for becoming a lecturer and include teaching competences and skills.

Another issue with the quality of academic staff in Ghana is the fact that as a country, we frown on experience, to the extent that a fresh doctorate without any experience is preferred over Masters with extensive field experience and professional qualification. The question however is, how can anyone without practical experience give what he or she does not have? How can people without field experience impart practical knowledge in the classroom? It is important to recognise that some homegrown PhDs go through their programmes without any industry experience yet they are expected to impart practical experience in class. Another question is, what is the focus of the PhD programs and what strategic goals inform the PhD programmes in Ghana? How is the new trend of transnational education influencing PhD and other Doctoral training in Ghana? Finally, do all PhD holders obtain the critical scholarly thinking that push them to challenge the validity of western theories in our context?

It is, therefore, critical for Ghana to make Work Experience Learning (Internships) a compulsory component of higher education for both students and academic staff. In fact, Academic staff internships should be a requirement for promotion.

Practical experience in learning how to teach and make an impact is a minimum for creating qualified staff to teach. Without understanding how people learn, the instruments of education is like a dull kitchen knife trying to perform microscopic surgery⁶.

China, for example, has made incredible advancements in the past few decades, leaping from a third world country to the top economy in the world. Their academic staff spend three to six months in a teacher-training programme before stepping into a classroom. This is one of the many secrets to their advancements into a world power. What can we do as a nation to further enhance the teaching skills of our staff?

Resources for Quality Higher Education

When it comes to resources, we need to ensure that we are not caught up in the “No money syndrome” to allow mediocrity to crystalise in Ghana’s higher education institutions. In this respect, we need to re-prioritise higher education and make resources available. Resources should not be limited to physical infrastructure and personal emoluments. It should include resources for laboratory work, practicals, incubation, work place experience and international exchanges. Why do we continue to spread thinly by establishing more and more higher institutions of learning when those existing are not well resourced? There are so many wastes and inefficiencies within the system that will have to be addressed to allow for efficient use of available resources from strategic finance to the wisdom of leaders with courage to take action. Truth is quality is not free; it requires resources.

Process Quality: It is obvious that to get a quality product, we need quality inputs or raw materials, but we also need quality processes. Process Quality here will refer to how the instructional design - curriculum is implemented and the methods of implementation, that include how teaching and learning are carried out and how assessments of learning is conducted. Let’s assume we are all given equal amounts of ingredients from the same source to prepare stew. Will our stews taste different? Why? The method, the process! If the process is poor, no matter how good the raw materials or ingredients you start with, the end products will be poor. However, bad raw materials can be adjusted before use.

Quality of the process relates to the question, “What are we teaching, how are we teaching and why? Are we teaching for certification or for critical and

creative thinking? How do we teach it? Chew, pour, pass, get a certificate and forget. Or rather contributive learning that calls the learners' experiences and context into action? Additionally, our system of education simply traps us from growing beyond our current reality, because it does not generate the needed creative thinking, problem solving skills and productive work attitudes needed to promote and support sustainable development. Truth is, we are attempting to solve current problems with the same thinking that created them, to start with. The "Self-limiting Thought Syndrome". We may only be digging the pit deeper.

For example, how do we expect graduates to be innovators, critical thinkers and problem solvers when our instructional approaches do not enact innovation, critical thinking and problem solving? So much of our education relies on regurgitation as the primary form of assessment. How can we empower our students to critically think and innovate from a curriculum design perspective?

Another issue with process quality is the lack of a Programmatic Benchmark for certain disciplines. Programmatic benchmarks clearly spell out the expected learning outcomes, which should inform instructional design, content, teaching and learning resources needed and assessment strategies. As such, without programmatic benchmarks, quality may not be achieved. However, should programmatic benchmarks be ready for all disciplines in Ghana today, Academic staff will require training, retooling and monitoring to ensure that such benchmarks can be effectively deployed.

Another issue with quality of process is the need to provide incentives and motivation for teaching excellence. At the primary and secondary levels, teachers are recognised for teaching excellence with National Awards, yet academics are not. Innovation in teaching is often not rewarded in higher education institutions in Ghana. On a more serious note, at the institutional level, teaching excellence will have to be re-weighted for promotion of academic staff. It is interesting to note that becoming a professor in Ghana relies largely on research publications. Though teaching is required, it is often down-played to the number of years of teaching and students' lecturer evaluation results.

Output Quality: To know whether you have quality at the end of the process, it important to check whether what was expected is what has been produced. In this case, there is need to check whether the graduates we produce possess the intended programmatic learning outcomes at the point of graduation. It should be possible to check and assess whether the skills, competencies and attitudes started in the programmatic learning outcomes have been achieved at the end of the academic programme before graduation. This is checking quality of outputs.

Quality of Output has to do with how higher institutions ensure that the graduates they produce meet standards? The question is, against what reference do we judge the quality of graduates? Again, this requires a comprehensive set of programmatic benchmarks for all disciplines. The National Accreditation Board (NAB) recognised the need for programmatic benchmarks and initiated the process of developing them but it is still work in progress. I wish to use this platform to appeal to the NAB to expedite action on this.

Quality of Outcome: Outcome quality has to do with feedback on how the product is working for the end user; that is the functionality of graduates. Even when the graduates meet the intended learning outcomes established by the institution or accreditation body, it should be useful to the employer. It is only the employer who can tell us whether the graduates are fit for industry. So how does Ghana consciously check the quality of graduates? Is there data on tracer studies that is matched with policy objectives and programmatic learning outcomes? Whose role is it to collect such data? The NCTE or the NDPC?

Quality of Outcome has to do with the feedback we get from employers, labour market or industry and how we use the feedback to inform the content of academic programmes development and improvement. How are our universities and other tertiary institutions proactively learning about labour market needs, requirements, demands and expectations? Where institutions do not know the expectations and requirements of the labour market, how can they fulfill them? How do we know whether what we are doing as universities or tertiary institutions is working well? No doubt, industry maintain that graduates from tertiary institutions in Ghana are not meeting their expectations, yet academic institutions also maintain it is not their responsibility to produce tailor made graduates for specific industry.

Though tracer studies are key mechanisms for addressing the issue of outcome, they are still infantile and ad hoc in Ghana. There is, therefore, need to get tracer studies entrenched in Ghana. It should be part of the quality indicators that NCTE needs to develop for the annual reporting of higher institutions in Ghana. A good set of such indicators can be found in the UMultirank Evaluations criteria.

Plan-Do-Study – Act

Table 2.1 below describes the concept of PDSA and the roles of the different stakeholders in the model.

Table 2.1: Stakeholder Responsibility for Quality of Tertiary Education in Ghana

Quality Assurance Function	Description	Key Stakeholders Responsible
Quality Planning	<p>It Entails looking ahead and determining what higher education is supposed to be delivering. This means setting educational goals and objectives for relevance, recognition, functionality and comparability of Tertiary education. Setting and communicating expectations.</p> <p>It entails setting the objectives, policies, enactments/legislations, supervisory oversight and coordinating of group activities</p>	<p>Ministry of Education National Council for Tertiary education National Development Planning Commission Ministry of Employment and Social Welfare. National Board for Professional Examinations. Professional Bodies Other regulators or service provider.</p>
Do: Processes for achieving Educational Objectives and goals	It entails the administration, mobilization, and processes for the delivering of relevant, recognized, functional and comparable Tertiary education	Universities, Polytechnics, Colleges of education. National Accreditation Board
Check: Assessment of the systems, outputs and outcomes Feedback mechanism	<p>It entails checking and aligning educational outputs with actual needs and expectations of the labour market, industry and society.</p> <p>Board Oversight reports Reports to NCTE, Ministry and Public Accounts Committee. Audits and self-assessments</p>	<p>Institutions NCTE Industry Labour Unions All stakeholders including the general public</p>

<p>Act: Improvement of Educational Outcomes</p>	<p>Ensuring Accountability and follow-up, corrective, correction, preventive and improvement actions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parliament • Annual Reports to the Ministry of Education and the NCTE • General Public, Civil Society Organisations
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Source: Alabi (2016), NCTE/TrustAfrica Summit for Strategy Development for the next 40 Years

Quality Assurance of Higher Education: Ensuring Recognition, Relevance, Functionality and Comparability

Figure 2.1 below describes the conceptual framework for quality assurance as derived from the NTCE 2016 Conference on Quality Assurance.



Figure 2.1: Model for Quality Assurance of Higher Education

Using the framework in figure 2.1 as a model for Quality Assurance, Alabi (2016) conceptualised quality assurance in higher education as “a process-driven function involving many stakeholders (group efforts) aimed at achieving

relevance, reliability, functionality and comparability of higher education in a given context.” As depicted in the model, the four main functions of Quality Assurance in higher education are summarised in table 2.1 alongside with the key stakeholders responsible for performing the various functions.

How Do We ensure Relevance of Higher Education in Ghana?

Relevance of higher education has to do with the usefulness and applicability of higher education qualifications qualification to national development. Relevance of higher education begins with examining the purpose of higher education. As indicated already, the purpose of higher education is not clearly stated anywhere. However, Prof. Anamuah Mensah, a respected policy educationist in Ghana, proposes that Ghana needs a tertiary education system that supports the development of a dynamic entrepreneurial and internationally competitive nation through the development of skilled graduates, work force, research and knowledge transfer to meet the needs of the economy and enhance welfare of all (Prof. Anamuah Mensah, 2016, NCTE Tertiary Education Summit).

The National Development Plan (2018-2057), is also not explicit about the purpose of tertiary education. It is important that the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations, the Ministry of Education, The National Development Planning Commission and or the National Council for Tertiary Education come together to develop a mission and vision for Ghana. Without a clear purpose statement and strategic goals, there will be no clear basis to judge whether tertiary education is working for Ghana or not.

Determination of Relevance of Academic Programmes

Determination of relevance of academic programmes in Ghana, is the mandate NCTE. The process deployed by the NCTE currently entails requesting public institutions to justify why they believe a new proposed programme is relevant and to indicate what makes that programme unique to existing programmes. It is not clear what forms the basis of what the NCTE considers relevant, whether there is strategic data from the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations, or from the National Development Planning Commission, (NDPC) or the Ministry of Education. One thing that is clear is that within the limits of preliminary information gathered, there was no evidence of labour market data repository for planning market responsive and strategic academic programmes in Ghana. So how then does the NCTE assess relevance of academic programmes? For example, how many doctors, nurses, lawyers, managers, accountants, architects and engineers

will Ghana need or desire to have in the next five to ten years? How many doctors do we produce and how many stay in Ghana? It should be possible to collect and analyze labour market data on national level demand for qualifications in Ghana. The NDPC and the NCTE should be in a position to provide information on demand and supply of higher education qualifications in Ghana and this should form a consistent and reliable basis for planning.

Another issue is that the relevance checks by NCTE are limited to public institutions and do not cover private institutions, leaving them to determine by themselves what is relevant.

Furthermore, there is inherent duplication of relevance checks of academic programmes. Though the NAB does not set out to check relevance, the accreditation process builds within itself relevance checks through the criterion for stating the philosophy of academic programmes during programme accreditation for both public and private institutions.

Consequently, relevance checks of academic programmes are duplicated, and the NAB seems to provide better value than the NCTE in this respect. It might be prudent, therefore, to have the NAB add relevance checks to its mandate to remove duplication and also enhance effectiveness, as it captures both public and private institutions.

Should NCTE cede the function of relevance checks to the NAB, it will afford more time to focus on pertinent strategic functions like collating labour market information on demand and supply of skills and qualifications needed on the labour market. NCTE will have to develop a labour market data repository to facilitate the planning of market responsive, strategic and relevant academic programmes in Ghana. Quality of higher education will have to be cascaded from the national level to the institutional level, a task that requires collaboration among key public organisations, NDPC, NCTE, MOE and Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations.

Again, at the institutional level, to make programmes more relevant, there will be need for Professional Advisory Boards and collaboration with the Association of Ghanaian Industries (AGI) and Ghana Employers Association (GEA), among others, to validate the curriculum and instructional designs.

Additionally, profound higher education strategy cannot be established without a normative reference in the form of national tertiary education policy from which a proposed strategic plan will have to be derived or aligned. Till now, the Tertiary Education Policy in Ghana remains work in progress under the NCTE.

How do we ensure recognition of higher Education in Ghana?

Recognition in higher education has to do with structures and systems put in place to establish the legitimacy of institutions of higher learning and ensure that such institutions meet minimum required standards to offer programmes leading to the award of higher qualifications; that is certification. These include certificates, diplomas and degrees.

Recognition of higher education is achieved through Accreditation and establishment of equivalences for external qualifications by the National Accreditation Board. Reviewing the book on Quality Assurance Capacity Building Needs of African University, by the AAU, it became apparent that Ghana's accreditation system is one of the strongest on the African Continent. This is because it combines both *Institutional and Programme Accreditation* and deploys rigid standard procedures. It must be noted that not all countries have accreditation systems or agencies in Africa (Quality Assurance Capacity Building Needs of Africa, AAU 2012). Additionally, some countries that have accreditation systems do not require institutional accreditation and affiliation of private institutions by law. However, the instruments used for accreditation are found in different documents, so unlike other global good practices like in East Africa where they have a framework document for quality Assurance and Europe and America where most accreditation and assessment bodies have comprehensive documents for accreditation. Ghana does not have such a one stop comprehensive document. As such, there is no glossary or interpretation of many of the terms and requirements. For example, the academic qualification credential requirement is contained in a separate letter to all institutions, is not part of the road map to accreditation or one of the accreditation instruments, neither is it contained in the affiliation barometer. Additionally, there are no clear benchmarks either at the institutional level or programmatic level against which quality can be measured. Much of the instruments cited were input based criteria.

Furthermore it is worthy to note that before the commoditisation of higher education and the emergence of transnational education, the term university represented a seal of authority and recognition. It was enough to bank on the university for quality of output. All of these changed with the emergence of the proliferation of various higher education arrangements including public, private, for profit, not for profit, transnational, online, distance and open universities. The need for strong and reliable recognition systems such as accreditation and cross border recognition have become even more crucial.

In addition to these, the massification of higher education due to increasing demand also makes the need for recognition critical. This is the reason why

accreditation has now become critical for recognition and establishment of equivalences. Accreditation has therefore become the proxy and label for recognition of higher education. With such a strong system of accreditation and recognition system in Ghana, what are the opportunities for improvement?

Opportunities for Improving Ghana's Accreditation System

- NAB needs a paradigm shift from the largely input-based approach and incorporate strong mechanisms for process, output and outcome-based approaches.

To accredit an institution or a programme, NAB looks at the input quality (Quality of Raw Materials, students' entry requirements, staff qualification and physical resources). What is being taught and how it is taught is simply the task of the institutions themselves. There is no system of checking whether learning outcomes are achieved and how institutions compare with each other. The Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programme (ACBSP) in America provides a good example for need to assess the achievement of learning outcomes during accreditation, but this requires the availability of programmatic benchmarks against which the achievement of critical learning outcomes are assessed.

- There is also the need for a quality assurance framework for Higher Education. The NAB could explore and compare notes and learn some lesson from East Africa, the UK, Mauritius and South Africa as some good examples.
- As already mentioned, the need for programmatic benchmarks for all programmes, stating clear learning outcomes or minimum academic standards is critical. The lack of programmatic benchmarks creates variations for accreditation panels of experts about what to consider adequate. Different accreditations panels rely on their own judgments and experiences. Why should some MBAs require one (1) year of study and others 2 years in the same country? What should be the minimum credits for an MBA or a Bsc. for example? Nigeria, Mauritius and the Tunning Africa Instrument are again very good examples to learn from in developing the programmatic Benchmarks.

Affiliation is another key issue that we need to reconsider in Ghana's accreditation system. Private institutions have complained that the affiliation system that is practiced in Ghana is not effective. The private institutions observe that affiliation stifles innovation and it is too expensive. If affiliation were to be effective, why should about 2,000 students in their third and final years be sacked from some

private universities in Ghana? Where were their Mentors? If the students had D grades at the point of entry but managed to pass all university examinations and got to the final year or third year under supervision of their mentors, why should they be sacked? After all, these students progressed under the watch of the institutional mentors. Did their mentors fail as well?

Considering the origins of affiliations as a colonial concept, which was relevant when there was no accreditation system, it is not clear whether affiliation is still required today given the current stringent accreditation system.

Ghana does not have a comprehensive qualifications framework even though the TVET system has developed one. There is, therefore, urgent need for a Qualifications Framework for mapping of qualifications and establishments of equivalences. A comprehensive national qualifications framework among many things will also give value to the Technical and Vocational system and meaning to the TVET qualifications framework, which needs to feed into the national one.

How do we ensure Functionality of Programmes?

The issue of functionality brings us *back* to the question of the relevance of higher education. Do we have feedback from industry about graduate performance? More specifically, the need for tracer, which is a key mechanism for ensuring functionality of higher education, is required in this context.

Comparability

Comparability simply has to do with who and what graduates from a particular country or programme are compared with. The ACBSP, for example, uses comparative inbound and outbound examinations across different regions in the world. In this way, a particular institution is able compare itself relative to other institutions offering similar programmes.

Ratings and Rankings are also becoming the new rules of the game of global comparability of higher education. So the question is, how is Ghana performing at the global level? As a global commodity, higher education is now a commodity, tradable on the global competitive market, and rankings and ratings are the subtle marketing tactics to attract international students and research funding. International higher education is now big business. Many countries, therefore, have internationalisation strategies for higher education that compel institutions to make themselves meaningful in the global competition. However, no national strategy for internationalisation of tertiary education was examined during this

study. Ghana, needs to see internationalisation of higher education as a strategic issue, not only to enhance the performance of its institutions in global rankings but also for emulation of good practices through exchanges.

Ghana needs to explore means of making itself visible on the global scale. Internationalisation of higher education needs to be prioritised and seen also as a diplomatic and international trade issue in Ghana. This will require a rigorous knowledge and information management system, at both the national and institutional levels

Governance and Quality

We cannot talk about quality of higher education without touching on governance. NAB, NCTE, NABPTEX, COTVET have responsibility for quality of tertiary education. There appear to be overlaps. So there is need for harmonisation.

From a governance perspective, structural enhancements are required. At the same time, the hierarchical structures should embed humility in its systems. Finally, integrating these two key governance systems is what will create and sustain quality in education. There are overlaps of course, which calls for harmonisation of systems. All of these concepts call for a new design at the systemic level of higher education.

We also need to examine the antecedents that led to the proposal of the Universities Rationalization Committee in 1987 and the subsequent amalgamation of universities and polytechnics in 1991 to constitute one level of education, the Tertiary level. Consequently, the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) gave way to the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE)⁷. Today, tertiary education institutions cover a wider scope of post-secondary level education that includes Universities, both Public and Private, Private University Colleges, Polytechnics, Colleges of Education (both Public and Private), Tutorial Colleges, Distance Learning Institutions, as well as other institutions of tertiary nature totaling about 138 by the end of 2015⁸. Consequently, it is timely to look again at the governance system of tertiary education. In this respect, lessons could be learnt from Mauritius, which went through similar evolution.

Historical Development of Higher Education in Ghana and Affiliation as a Quality Imperative

According to Effah (2010), University education in the Gold Coast (now Ghana) began in the 1920's with some families sponsoring their wards to study in universities in Europe. When Fourah Bay College was established in Sierra Leone

in 1827 as the first ‘western-style’ university in West Africa, it became the tertiary level institution for students from the Gold Coast and other British colonies in Africa. In the Gold Coast proper, the Accra Government Training College for Teachers founded in 1909, and opened on June 8 1909, was the first initiative to satisfy the growing need of the people of Ghana for post-secondary education. According to Baker, the first Headmaster of the Teachers College, in a conversation with his Excellency, Sir John Rogers the Governor of the Gold Coast Colony at that time, shortly before the opening of the College, a conversation about the establishment of the college “turned at once, not to the immediate question of the College but to the general problems of an awakening and capable people”. Baker adds “His Excellency envisaged a West African University with constituent colleges in Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast and Nigeria”. Baker further notes that, “the College at Accra was but a small beginning in his (Sir John Rogers) mind of a great educational scheme which would give Africans a full and adequate place in the scholarship of the world” (Baker 1959, Address to the 50th Anniversary of the Accra Government Training College for Teacher, Anniversary Brochure). Prior to the conversation between Baker and the Governor, Sir John Rogers, Baker had maintained that

“Concerning education of the African, the best attempt of the white man to educate the negro would only be a makeshift until some BOOKER WASHINGTON arises who, having a grasp of the fundamental principles underlying the growth of education in Europe, is able to adapt them to the needs of the people”.

In another address dated the 25th of August 1959, His Excellency, the Rt. Hon. the Earl of Listowel, Governor General of Ghana, wrote,

“When Sir John Rogers opened the College in 1909, he looked forward to the age when West Africa would have a University. That dream has come true in our time and we owe a depth of thanks to all members of the teaching profession in Ghana for this speedy achievement.”

The Accra College for Teachers later delivered the University College of Ghana and the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology; even the University of Cape Coast could trace its root to the Accra Government Teachers Training College.

In 1920, the Phelps-Stokes Fund of America sent a mission of investigation into African education. The mission’s report made the British Government to realise how great the need for education in the Gold Coast was. In the same year, the Gold Coast Government appointed a local committee to deliberate on the major requirements of education. The committee recommended that three

new institutions should be built: a secondary school, a new government training college for male teachers to replace the existing buildings of the Accra Government College for Teacher Training, which had been founded in 1909, and a training college for female teachers.

The issue was taken a step further by Sir Gordon Guggisberg, who had become the new Governor of the Gold Coast in 1919. Guggisberg set up the '1922 Committee', chaired by the Director of Education, Mr. J.D. Oman, to debate further on education in the Gold Coast. Guggisberg suggested that the three separate institutions recommended by the 1920 Committee could not be afforded by the Government, and should therefore be combined into one comprehensive institution. The Committee recommended that the site chosen at Achimota, in Accra, should provide general secondary education, teacher training, and technical education for male students.

The Prince of Wales College was subsequently founded in 1924 but opened in 1927. This College later became the Achimota College and School, which offered general secondary education as well as post-secondary technical education and teacher training for both sexes. Each of these was a department in the College. In 1928, students of the Government Training College were transferred to Achimota College to start the Teacher Training Department of the Achimota College, which was the post-secondary education outfit of the Achimota College.

The post-Secondary outfit of the Achimota College thereafter, ran degree programmes under a special arrangement with the University of London. Later in 1948, this college became the University College of the Gold Coast. The former College is now the present University of Ghana and what remained is the Achimota Secondary School. The university college had to be affiliated to the University of London. Without any experience in higher education, the university college should be guided and mentored/tutored. This was how affiliation to the University of London became an imperative for the University College of Gold Coast. Thus, the introduction of "*Affiliation*" as a means of Quality Assurance in the scheme of higher education in Ghana⁹.

Development of University Education in Ghana

Varghese (2004) provides an overview of the development of public higher education in the post-World War II era when state reconstruction and development were mainly state-sponsored. To meet manpower requirements, state-funded universities were established and these became dominant across the world. Ghana was no exception.

Effah (2010) records that the work of two parallel commissions established by the British Government gave impetus to the further development of higher education in the Gold Coast – “one under the Chairmanship of Lord Cyril Asquith which was to inquire generally into higher education in the colonies and, the other, under the Chairmanship of Sir Walt Elliot to make recommendations specifically on higher education in West Africa”.

In line with Effah (2010), Daniels (1996) also notes that, the history of university education in Gold Coast, now Ghana, began with the Asquith Commission appointed by the Government of the United Kingdom in August 1943 to consider the principles which should guide the promotion of higher education, learning and research and the development of universities in the colonies; and to explore means by which universities and other appropriate bodies in the UK may be able to co-operate with institutions of higher education in the colonies in order to give effect to these principles.

The commission’s report included the need to establish possible universities in those areas, which were not served, by any existing university. The immediate objective was to produce men and women who have the standards of public service and capacity for leadership which the progress of self-government requires, and to assist in satisfying the need for persons with the professional qualification required for the economic and social development of the colonies.

The Asquith Commission identified centers around the colonies, which already engaged in university-type programmes of study, and this included the Achimota College (established in 1924). Both the Asquith and the Elliot commissions confirmed the existence of a ‘university department’ at Achimota, which prepared students mainly for the External Intermediate Examinations of the University of London in Arts and Science. It also prepares students for the London external degree of BSc (Engineering) although the numbers taking this course were small. The Department was then adopted for the university type education. According to the commission’s report of May 3, 1945, students were accepted in the college for the courses leading to the following examinations of the University of London: Intermediate Arts, Intermediate Science, Intermediate Engineering, BSc (Engineering) and Intermediate Science (Economics). In 1943, there were 98 post-secondary students including (two women), some of whom came from Nigeria, Sierra Leone and the Gambia.

The secondary school teaching was not sufficiently widespread or good enough to sustain the numbers required for a viable university in both Nigeria and the Gold Coast. Another report submitted by other interest groups recommended the immediate establishment of only one (1) Institute (University College) to serve the

whole of British West Africa.

The British Government had been inclined to proceed on the basis of the minority report, which proposed the single university to be sited in Nigeria. The people of the Gold Coast, however, made it known that they did not only desire a university of their own, but that indeed they would contribute funds towards such development. By an ordinance dated August 11, 1948, the University College of the Gold Coast was established for the purpose of providing and promoting university education, learning and research.

The recommendation of the Asquith Commission included an inter-university council to advise on higher education in the British Colonies. The inter-university council served the University College of the Gold Coast in an advisory capacity, but it approved all academic appointments.

The University College of the Gold Coast and the University of Ghana (UoG)

On establishment of the University College of the Gold Coast on August 11, 1948, the College became part of the time-tested 'scheme of special relationship' under which the new university college taught according to the University of London programmes, which in some cases had been modified to suit local conditions. The examination was University of London examinations; the degrees and diplomas awarded to successful candidates were also degrees and diplomas of the University of London. This is similar to the affiliation practiced today in Ghana. In fact the feature of affiliation in 1948 and that of today are similar, except that now, affiliation in Ghana is guided by a legislative instrument (L1 1984) Tertiary Institutions (Establishment And Accreditation) Regulations, 2010.

On March 6, 1957, the Gold Coast became the new sovereign state of Ghana, providing opportunities for bilateral and multilateral educational, scientific, trade and economic agreements with the international community, of which advantage could be taken for the betterment of higher education. What was to obtain in the new scheme of things was left to be advised by the International Commission on Higher Education (chaired by the Hon. Kojo Botsio, Minister for Agriculture) appointed in 1960 by the Government of the First Republic. On the recommendation of the international commission, the University of Ghana was, by an Act of parliament of 1961, created from the former University College of the Gold Coast. Other outcomes from the international commission included confirmation that the College of Technology established in Kumasi since 1951 became a second university.

The Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology

The University of Science and Technology succeeded the Kumasi College of Technology, which was established by a Government Ordinance on October 6, 1951. It was however, opened officially on January 22, 1952 with 200 Teacher Training students transferred from Achimota to form the nucleus of the new College.

In October 1952, the School of Engineering and the Department of Commerce were established and the first students admitted. From 1952 to 1955, the School of Engineering prepared students for professional qualifications only. In 1955, the School embarked on courses leading to the University of London, Bachelor of Engineering External Degree Examinations.

Once established, the College began to grow and in 1957, the School of Architecture, Town Planning and Building was inaugurated and its first students admitted in January, 1958, for professional courses in Architecture, Town Planning and Building. As the College expanded, it was decided to make the Kumasi College of Technology a purely science and technology institution. In pursuit of this policy, the Teacher Training College, with the exception of the Art School, was transferred in January, 1958, to the Winneba Training College. And in 1959, the Commerce Department was transferred to Achimota to form the nucleus of the present School of administration of the University of Ghana, Legon. The Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi Act – 1961 (Act 80), established the College as a university. The University of Science and Technology was officially inaugurated on Wednesday November 20, 1961.

The University's name was changed to University of Science and Technology after the Revolution of 24th February 1966. However, by another act of Parliament, Act 559 of 1998, the University was been renamed Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi. By its relationship with the University of London, the KNUST also experienced some form of affiliation mentorship¹⁰.

The University of Cape Coast

A further outcome was the recommendation for a new university college to be created from a post-secondary college for training science teachers at Cape Coast. The University of Cape Coast was established in October 1962 as a University College of Cape Coast (UCCC) out of a dire need for highly qualified and skilled graduate professional teachers to meet the staffing needs of Ghana's accelerated secondary education programme at the time.

The University of Cape-Coast was placed in a special relationship with the University of Ghana, Legon. This was the first local affiliation. However, affiliation at this time was an imperative because at this time, there was no form of control

like accreditation to ensure that new university colleges were guided and tutored to ensure quality of programmes. The College attained the status of a full and independent University On October 1, 1971 (after nine years of affiliation to the University of Ghana), with the authority to confer its own degrees, diplomas and certificates by an Act of Parliament – The University of Cape Coast Act, 1971 (Act 390) and subsequently the University of Cape Coast Law, 1992 (PNDC Law 278)¹¹.

Education Reform Commissions and their impact on Higher Education in Ghana with Emphasis on the 1987 Reforms

Responding to the developments, various education commissions were established. This include: Busia (1966), Kwapong (1967), Dzobo (1974) and Anamuah-Mensah (2005). The progress made in higher education from 1948 until the present decade may be seen in two phases. The first phase is the period 1948-61 when, in ‘special relationship’ with the University of London, the University College of the Gold Coast/University College of Ghana offered limited programmes of study mainly at the undergraduate level. The second phase is the period since 1961 when national universities emerged, offering more comprehensive programmes, and under a ‘scheme of special relationship’ with selected local institutions and sometimes in collaboration with external institution. For all of the above developments, the Universities Rationalisation Committee (URC) appointed by the government of the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) chaired by Mrs. Esi Sutherland-Addy, Deputy Secretary for Education, reported in 1988 that only 0.7 per cent of the relevant age group (that is the gross enrolments ratio) was represented at university whereas a much higher rate of attendance is the case in many developing countries and that indeed in some developed countries, up to 50 per cent of the relevant age group can hope to attend college.

An educational reform programme initiated since September 1987 seeks to make good representation of the age group at every level of education. The programme seeks also to bring all post-secondary education, including polytechnics and universities, under the umbrella of tertiary education; to diversify the curriculum and to provide more emphasis, especially in science, technology and vocational training; and to provide movement across institutions and continuity from one institution to another.

The University of Development Studies (UDS), The new Thinking of Higher Education Established without affiliation. Thus UDS started abnetio

The Government of Ghana as a measure to increased access to higher education

established the University for Development Studies (UDS) on 15th May 1992 by PNDC Law 279. “The UDS was borne out of the new thinking in higher education which emphasises the need for universities to play a more active role in addressing problems of the society, particularly in the rural areas” (Effah, 1998). The University, therefore, by its mandate and constituency has a pro-poor focus. The university combines academic studies with practical training in subjects relating to agriculture, social sciences, health, environment and culture. The University for Development Studies has been assigned a unique role in the history of higher education in Ghana as the first university expected to establish campuses at several of the administrative regions (Brong Ahafo, Northern, Upper East and Upper West) in the northern part of Ghana. Its mission is to find solutions to the deprivation and environmental problems, which characterise northern Ghana in particular, and are found also in varying degrees in rural areas throughout the country. The University also has facilities of Agriculture, Integrated Development Studies, and Applied Science, and a Centre for Interdisciplinary Research. From 1996, a School of Medicine and Health Sciences was established. The Medical School of UDS was affiliated to the KNUST in the beginning. However, the affiliation was characterised by conflicts, which led to the transfer of those students to the KNUST.

The University of Education Winneba

Again, to further increase access, independent institutions including the Advanced Teacher Training College, the Specialist Training College and the National Academy of Music, all at Winneba, the School of Ghanaian Languages at Ajumako, the Advanced Technical Teachers College at Kumasi, the St Andrews Agricultural Teachers’ College at Asante-Mampong, and the College of Special Education at Mampong-Akwapim were merged to form the University College of Education, Winneba. The University College was established under PNDC Law 322 to be in special relationship (affiliation) with the University of Cape Coast ‘to provide higher education and foster the systematic advancement of the science and art of teacher education’, here again affiliated to the University of Cape Coast. The University took its first batch of students in November, 1992. It gained autonomy from UCC in 2004 by the University of Education Act 2004 (Act 672), making it 12 years of affiliation.

The University of Mines and Technology (UMaT)

The University of Mines and Technology (UMaT), Tarkwa was established in November 2004 to provide higher education in mining, technology and related sciences, and to act as a catalyst for development in the mining sector. It started

in 1952 as the Tarkwa Technical Institute. In 1961, it was reorganised to become the Tarkwa School of Mines to train the required manpower for the mining and allied industries in Ghana. It was later in 1976 affiliated to the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), Kumasi as a faculty of the University. In 2001, it became the Western University College of KNUST and later upgraded to University of Mines and Technology, (Effah, 2010).

The University of Professional Studies

The University of Professional Studies, Accra, was founded in 1965 as a private professional business education tuition provider and was taken over by government in 1978 by the Institute of Professional Studies Decree, 1978 (SMCD 200) as a result of students' agitation for better quality. It was subsequently established as a tertiary institution with a mandate to provide tertiary and professional education in the academic disciplines of Accountancy, Management and other related areas of study by the Institute of Professional Studies Act, (Act 566), 1999. The university introduced undergraduate and diploma programmes in its mandated disciplines in 2005. Consequently, the Institute was affiliated to the University of Ghana for three years from 2005-2008 when it received a Presidential Charter in September 2008, conferring on it the status of a fully-fledged public university. The development of the initial and new range of academic programmes coupled with trends in tertiary education at both local and international levels called for an amendment of the existing Act 566 of 1999. Subsequently, the University of Professional Studies Act, 2012 (ACT 850) was enacted to rename the Institute as a University of Professional Studies, Accra (UPSA) with an enhanced scope which included business management sciences, accountancy, information and communication technology, law and other social science related disciplines.

The University of Energy and Natural Resources and the University of Health and Allied Sciences

The government of Ghana also subsequently established two public universities namely: University of Energy and Natural Resources (UENR), Sunyani and University of Health and Allied Sciences, Ho (UHAS). These two universities though do not bear the designation "University Colleges" or Institutes were also under affiliation to the KNUST and the University of Ghana respectively.

Specialised Degree Awarding Institutes

Other higher Institutions like Ghana Institute of Journalism and Ghana Institute

of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA) have been upgraded to tertiary status.

Polytechnic education in Ghana started in 1963 when three technical institutes, namely, Accra, Kumasi and Takoradi Technical Institutes, were re-designated as polytechnics. They had no legal backing in terms of legislation or law and operated essentially as non-tertiary institutions, which offered mostly advanced craft courses and few technician programmes (Afeti et al, 2008). Subsequently, two other technical institutes, Tamale and Ho Technical Institutes were also elevated to polytechnic status in 1984 and 1986 respectively in a similar fashion. Cape Coast Polytechnic, which was planned originally as a polytechnic was opened in 1986. Sunyani and Koforidua Polytechnics were established in 1997 while Bolgatanga and Wa Polytechnics started operations in 2003.

The implementation of the Tertiary Educational Project (TEP) elevated the polytechnics to the tertiary status. The Government's White Paper which gave directives for the implementation of the TEP stated that the polytechnics had a distinct and important role to play in middle level manpower development and the programmes and courses were to be offered at the high level of technical training leading to the award of Higher National Diplomas but not departing from syllabi dedicated to practical technician training (Government of Ghana, 1991).

The Polytechnic Law, PNDCL 321 of 1992, which was promulgated to give a legal backing to the upgrading of the polytechnics, assigned appropriate aims and objectives which the polytechnics were to strive to achieve. The polytechnics were to provide tertiary education through full-time courses in the field of manufacturing, commerce, science, technology, applied social science, applied arts and such other areas as may be determined by authority for the time being responsible for higher education. They were to encourage studies in technical and vocational courses at the tertiary level, and provide opportunity for skill development, research and publication of research findings.

The upgrading of polytechnics to tertiary status has resulted in tremendous growth in the higher education sector in terms of study programmes and student enrolment. There has been a high patronage for polytechnic education after upgrading.

A New Polytechnic Act 2007 (Act 745) was promulgated to give polytechnics autonomy to award their own degrees. However, some of these Polytechnics were affiliated to established Universities like the KNUST.

Colleges of Education

All the thirty eight (38) Teacher Training Colleges were upgraded to Colleges of Education by an Act of Parliament (College of Education Act 2012 Act 847). Table 2.2 shows the names of the public institutions, the date of establishment and legislation.

Summary of the Evolution of Higher Education Institutions and Quality Systems before Accreditation in Ghana

Generally almost all the public universities underwent one form of affiliation or the other, some internationally and others locally, except UDS. Both the university of Ghana and KNUST were affiliated to the University of London, which had a supervisory role over academic quality and award of degrees until after independence and the passage of the various Acts, which granted autonomy or charter to these institutions to award their own degrees. The University of Cape Coast and all those public universities established after independence were affiliated to local universities that were autonomous. Similarly, the Polytechnics and colleges of education were all baptised into the culture of affiliation. So before 1992 when the National Accreditation Board was established to ensure the quality of academic programmes, affiliation and peer assessment by external examiners was the key tools and techniques for assuring quality of higher education institutions in Ghana. The question is, with accreditation in place to assure quality of higher education institutions, is affiliation still required to assure quality of new and young institution? If so how long?

Table 2.2: History of the Development of Public Universities/Institutions in Ghana

No.	University	Date of Establishment	Legislation for Full University Status
1	University of Ghana, Legon	1948	University of Ghana Act – 1961 (Act 79)
2	Kumasi College of Technology which later became Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi	1952 1961	Government Ordinance on 6th October, 1951 Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi Act – 1961 (Act 80)
3	University of Cape Coast	1962	The University of Cape Coast Act, 1971 (Act 390)

4	University for Development Studies, Tamale	1992	PNDC Law279
5	University of Education, Winneba	1992	The University of Education, Winneba Act 672, 2004
6	University of Mines and Technology, Tarkwa	2001	University Of Mines And Technology, Tarkwa Act - 2004 (Act 677)
7	Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration, Accra	1961 2004	Ghana Institute Of Management And Public Administration Act - 2004 (Act 676)
8	Ghana Institute of Journalism, Accra	2006	Act 717
	National Film and Television Institute, Accra	1978	National Film And Television Institute Act – 1978 (SMCD 151)
9	University of Professional Studies, Legon	1978 1999 2012	The Institute of Professional Studies Decree, 1978 (S.M.C.D. 200) Institute of Professional Studies Act – 1999 (ACT 566) University of Professional Studies Act, 2012 (Act 850)
10	University of Health and Allied Sciences, Ho	2011	University Of Health And Allied Sciences Act, 2011 (Act 828)
11	University of Energy and Natural Resources, Sunyani	2011	University of Energy and Natural Resources Act, 2011 (Act 830)

Sources: Official Websites of the Various Universities and Institutes.

Current Higher Education Situation in Ghana

Later developments on the higher education landscape witnessed the introduction of private participation in higher education delivery. Ghana has been an active ground for the establishment of private higher education institutions of varying types, ranging from colleges and special/professional schools to university-type institutions as well as trans- national education popularly known as TNE, both distance, open and other forms of virtual deliveries mediated by technology. The Ghana Government White Paper of 1991 on the new education reforms of the time expressly gave official backing to private participation in tertiary education delivery and this has been further reinforced by the White Paper on the Report of the Education Reform Review Committee 2004. It must be pointed out, however, that official government backing for private participation in education dates from 1961 with the Education Act, 1961 (Act 87 as amended in 1965), which “empowers the Minister for Education to approve the establishment of private tertiary institutions, close institutions and make regulations for the establishment, management and conduct of the affairs of the institutions” (Effah 2006), functions which have since been ceded to the National Accreditation Board.

From a total of 38 accredited private higher education institutions (comprising universities, university colleges and other institutes offering degree-level programmes), today the country has about 65 private higher education institutions and, in total, about 138 higher or tertiary education institutions by 2015 (ESPR, 2016).

Table 2.3: Number of Tertiary Institutions in Ghana

Institution	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Public Universities/university colleges	7	6	9	9	9
Public Specialised/Professional Colleges	7	9	8	8	8
Chartered Private Tertiary Institutions	3	3			
Private Tertiary Institutions	51	55	51	60	65
Polytechnics	10	10	10	10	10
Public Colleges of Education	38	38	38	38	38
Private Colleges of Education	3	3	3	3	8
Total	119	124	119	128	138

Source: Source: Education Sector Performance Report 2016, NAB Website 2014

Enrolment Figures in Higher Education institutions in Ghana

Table 2.4: Enrolment in Tertiary Institutions

Details	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Public Institutions						
Public Universities	107,058	115,452	109,278	128,326	138,416	147,180
Polytechnics	46,079	43,113	47,294	53,078	54,897	53,978
Colleges of Education (Public)	26,861	26,703	27,580	27,906	33,526	36,563
Specialised/Professional Institutions			14,951	7,715	11,735	10,786
Total Public Institutions	179,998	185,268	202,063	221,632	238,574	248,507
Private Institutions						
Total Private Institutions*		32,275	59,899	61,874	75,272	72,239
Total tertiary enrolment		217,543	261,962	283,506	313,846	320,746
<i>*includes: private universities and private Colleges of Education</i>						

Source: Education Sector Performance Report (2016)

Enrolment Trends in Public and Private Universities in Ghana

Ghana has a diversified tertiary education sector, the public institutions comprising nine public universities, eight public specialised Institutions, three chartered private universities, 65 private university colleges, ten polytechnics, 38 public and eight private colleges of education, and 13 public and four private nursing colleges by the end of 2015 (ESPR, 2016). The total student enrolment in the public universities in 2014/2015 was 320,746 with 72,239 in private institutions in the same year. Enrolment in the ten public polytechnics represented about a third of total enrolment in the nine public universities (ESPR, 2016; Mohamedhai 2008). Table 2.3 shows the details of the Tertiary Education Institutions in Ghana and table 2.4 shows the enrolment in tertiary institutions in Ghana.

Other Quality Management Characteristics of University Education in Ghana

Governance

The governance of higher education rest with five organs in Ghana. These are:

- The National Council for Tertiary Education Responsible for policy and administrative oversight
- The National Accreditation Board for Regulation
- The National Board for Professional and Technical Examinations
- The Various Governing Councils of Public Institutions and Boards for

Independent Institutions

- The Academic Boards for academic governance

Currently, Ghana has about 138 tertiary institutions both public and private with 82 of these being University and University Colleges combined. However, there are only eight (9) public Universities and six (8) public specialised degree awarding Institutions. Details are provided in Table 2.3. The universities are autonomous, being governed by academic boards and university councils and managed by the vice-chancellors, with oversight and regulation by the NCTE and the NAB.

Generally, strategic governance rests on the councils while academic governance rests with the Academic Boards. Governance in higher institutions has been argued to occur at three level; namely the structural level defined by the legal infrastructure or framework, the strategic level defined by the functions of the Councils and the operational levels defined by the activities of the Academic Board and Management of the institutions (Alabi et. al, 2012). At the structural level, the various public university Acts empower the Universities as corporate bodies with perpetual succession, a common seal to acquire and hold any movable and immovable property and enter into any contract or transaction in connection with the discharge of its functions. In addition, the universities can appoint lecturers and other persons to academic and administrative posts through the Councils. University Councils in Ghana therefore have adequate autonomy, devoid of unnecessary political interference, to govern the institutions as semi-autonomous institutions with funding from central government mainly covering personal emoluments. The public universities are therefore subvented public sector institutions. Funding sources for universities in Ghana include annual grants from government, charges, dues, Academic Facility user Fees (AFUF), donations and income from any other source approved by the Councils. However, donations and incomes from foreign bodies require prior written approval of the Minister for Education. The Ghana Education Trust Fund (GETFund) also supports the university in its staff and infrastructural development. The rest is generally from Internally-Generated Funds (IGF). Funding from government which used to be the main source has been dwindling steadily over the past five years (ESPR, 2012).

The Education Sector Performance Report (ESPR, 2012) notes that education in Ghana is mainly financed by the Ministry of Education (72 per cent in 2008), the GETFund (9.5 per cent in 2008), internally-generated funds by institutions (9 per cent in 2008) and multilateral and bilateral donors (9.5 per cent in 2008) (Ghana MOESS, 2008). In 2011, education expenditure as a percentage of Government of Ghana (GoG) expenditure was 25.8 per cent, making it the

largest government expenditure item.

Student Involvement in Governance

Every university or university college, both public and private, is required to have a Students' Representative Council (SRC). The SRC is required to be involved in the decision making processes of the university through its representation on various committees and bodies, including the University Council. Students choose their own leaders through democratic elections. The SRC manages its own finances, programmes and activities using laid down procedures, subject to approval by Management of the university. It also has its own judicial system and grievance procedures.

Legislative Controls

A number of legislative instruments regulate activities of public institutions in Ghana to ensure accountability and value for money. These include the Public Procurement Act 2003, Act 663, Financial Administration Act, 2003 Act 654, the Labour Act, 2003, Act 651 and the Internal Audit Agency Act, 2003, Act 658. These Acts guide decisions on procurements and determine the spending authority of the spending officers. Government has the responsibility of providing the resources and the enabling environment in which education, teaching and learning, research and innovation thrive. Government policies and directives are clearly conveyed through the appropriate recognised sector regulatory bodies, mainly the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE), and the National Accreditation Board including the Ministries of Education and Finance. It must be noted that funding and cost are directly related to quality of output, yet the mere availability of funds does not guarantee quality.

Internal Audit Function and Quality

Internal auditing is an independent, objective assurance activity designed to add value and improve the operations of universities in Ghana and it is a requirement for all public universities. It helps the universities to accomplish their objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and the governance processes.

The internal audit function is to ensure that systems and procedures for the effective and efficient running of the university have been put in place and are working efficiently and effectively. The aim is to provide assurance on the adequacy

of controls within the university's systems and activities; that is, to comment on and recommend changes to the mechanisms put in place by management to ensure systems and activities achieve their objectives; to follow up on the implementation of agreed actions; and to bring deficiencies therein to the notice of the operating management and ultimately the Audit Report Implementation Committee (ARIC). Additionally, the internal audit function includes the identification of potential risk areas and recommendations of ways to improve risk management. Responsibility to manage risk resides with Management.

Internal audit is independent of the management structure and reports directly to the ARIC. This independence gives it a unique and valuable perspective on risk management and internal control processes.

The Audit Report Implementation Committee (ARIC) is a statutory committee established by an Act of parliament under the Internal Audit Agency. The Internal Audit Agency Act, 2003, Act 658, requires every public institution to establish an ARIC as one of the Standing Committees of its Governing Council. ARIC is a statutory corporate governance body tasked to ensure the implementation of recommendations of internal and external audit reports.

Regulatory Framework

Ghana also has a well-coordinated tertiary education sector. Following the recommendations of the University Rationalisation Committee and the subsequent Government White Paper (1991) on the Report, three regulatory agencies were established. These are: the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE), the National Accreditation Board (NAB) and the National Board for Professional and Technician Examinations (NABPTEX). NCTE is charged by law to advise the Minister responsible for education on the development of institutions of tertiary education and to formulate policies. NAB has responsibility for accreditation of both public and private institutions with regard to the contents and standards of their programmes. The Board determines, in consultation with the relevant institution, the programme and requirements for the proper operation of that institution and the maintenance of acceptable levels of academic or professional standards. Determination of the equivalence of diplomas, certificates and other qualifications awarded by institutions in Ghana or elsewhere is also conducted by NAB. NABPTEX is responsible for formulating and administering schemes of examinations, evaluation, assessment and certification for professional bodies, non-university tertiary institutions and private institutions. (MOESS, 2007; Effah & Hofman (ed.) 2010).

Higher education in Ghana is offered generally at the university and higher professional institutions. Academic higher education is offered by both public universities and private national or international universities through transnational education, while professional education is offered by specialised and professional institutions, professional bodies and the ten national polytechnics and several national or international specialised colleges that are affiliated to some of the local universities for the award of professional bachelor and postgraduate degrees (Gondwe & Walenkamp 2011). Universities offer academic programmes (Bachelor, Master and PhD as well as Certificates and Diplomas).

Currently, the Education Sector Performance Report (ESPR) which is based on the National Education Sector Annual Review (NESAR) and was instituted with the implementation of the country's Education Strategic Plan (ESP) 2003-2015 is the source of various comparative statistics and information for the education sector (Gondwe & Walenkamp, 2011). The ESPR reports on access to education, quality of education, education management, education finance, and the state of science and technology.

Capacity to set Priorities for Teaching, Research and Innovation

Universities in Ghana are empowered to set their own priorities for academic programming, curriculum content and structure, teaching philosophy and research agenda, subject to laid down requirements and procedures by the National Accreditation Board (NAB), National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE) and the Governing Councils. The type and nature of academic programmes are, however, restricted by the law establishing the university, NCTE guidelines for programme introduction and by accreditation.

Theoretical Review

The Concept of Quality

The word quality is not a definite concept as it means different things to different people in different contexts and different things to the same people at different times. Historically, the way quality is defined determined how it is managed. As such, the definition of quality as a concept is always important to manage and measure its achievement. Quality was defined as fitness to customisation, then it was later considered as anything that was fit to specifications or standards, then it changed to fitness to use, then it became anything that meets or exceeds the expectation of customers in a given context at a reasonable cost. ISO 9000's definition of quality is

“degree to which a set of inherent characteristics fulfills requirement”.

Methods for Achieving Quality

The concept of quality has been of utmost importance, originally, in business but now also in education and other public services sectors. Quality remains the most important attribute that creates value about the product/service for the receiver. It is also the means by which institutions and nations differentiate themselves from their competitors. Nations, Industries and organisations that are thriving in excellence and effectiveness are benefiting from quality management practices. The gains are far enormous from customer satisfaction through to higher revenues, cost reduction; enhance reputation to increase in market share. Becher (1989) thus defines the concept of quality as a creative of political fashion. Neave (1986) says quality is elusive. Gilbson (1986) asserts that quality is notoriously elusive if prescribed and even easier to describe and discuss than deliver in practice. Harvey and Green (1993) define quality as slippery and value-laden. The concept of quality thus evolves from different perspectives and phases at a time. Kelada (1996) states that before total quality, when quality was defined as fitness to specifications and standards, inspection on factory floor had been the means of assuring quality. Wilger (1997) adds that, in the days of craftsmanship, when quality was seen as fitness to customisation, the responsibility of quality rested with the manufacturer and no inspection was required, except, the acceptance of the customer. Later, there was the need to do total inspection of all products to ensure products met specification before they left the factory. Subsequently, due to the wastage associated with that system of total inspection, the concept of ensuring quality changed to intermittent sample inspection where products were inspected stage by stage. This later became known as quality control era. At a time, two main countries were particular about quality assurance, namely the United States of America and Japan. Wilger (1997), traces the quality assurance practices as indicated in table 2.5

Table 2.5: Evolution of Quality Assurance Practices

Pre – 1900	Quality as an integral element of craftsmanship
1900 – 1920	Quality control by firemen
1920 – 1940	Quality Inspection
1940 – 1960	Quality Control
1960 – 1980	Quality Assurance

1980 – Present	Total Quality Management
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Source: Wilger (1997)

Also, Dule and plumkett (1980) present a hierarchy of quality management practices as shown in table 2.6.

Table 2.6: Hierarchy of Quality management

Total Quality Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involves Supplier and customer Aims for continuous improvement Concerns products and processes Responsibility with all workers Delivered through team work
Quality assurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of statically process control Emphasis on prevention External accreditation Delegated involvement Auditing a quality system Cause and effect analysis
Quality control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerned with product testing Responsibility with supervisors Limited quality criteria Some self-inspection Paper based system
Inspection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post production review Reworking Rejection Control of workforce Limited to physical product

Source: Dule and plumkett (1980)

Wilger (1997) also maintains that quality assurance must rest on four basic assumptions. Firstly, an institution must have a clean and well defined mission and

goals. Secondly, understanding of the mission by all through effective communication. Thirdly, the organisation having a defined quality in its mission statement and goals. Finally, well-structured communication network. This assumption is seeing quality assurance from the internal perspective which is not wrong anyway, but must address the external perspective as well, owing to the fact that external perspective is likely to give more objective evaluation of the instruction. Notwithstanding this observation, quality assurance must necessarily be imbued in the mission statement.

The mission states what the organisational exists to do, the need it seeks to satisfy, the customers it seeks to serve as well as the differentiating factor. Hence, well thought out mission statements that inculcate quality assurance in their communication strategy might out competes competitors. Green (1994) adds that quality is a philosophical concept and that the means of assuring it is dependent on the definition espoused for it. Hence, how quality is defined by an institution will determine the means of assuring it.

However, since the definition in literature is quite elusive and there is no universally accepted definition (Bernard 2012), assuring it also requires subjective measures and initiatives by institutions. The concept of QA has been espoused in various forms by different writers and bodies and defined in different ways according to purpose and context. In sum, QA is the means by which an institution can guarantee, with confidence and certainty, that the standards and quality of its operation are maintained and enhanced to prevent all forms of defects by ensuring that stakeholders are satisfied the first and every time.

Evolution of Quality Assessment in Higher Education

Vught and Westerheijden (1994) argue that the roots of quality assessment in higher education date back to the medieval era. Two major models of quality assessment were adopted. The first is the French model of vesting control in external authority (as cited in Cobban, 1988, p, 124). And the second was the English model of a self-governing community of fellows. The French model was characterised by the struggle for autonomy by the University of Paris in the early thirteenth century. The Chancellor of the Cathedral of Notre Dame thought universities should be seen as ecclesiastical colonies.

Viewing Universities as higher form of education required that it was to be aligned with the ecclesiastical structure and to be governed under the episcopal authority. The chancellor then controlled the teaching license and decided the contents of studies. Later after a bitter conflict between the chancellor and the master, Pope Gregory stepped in to stop the dominance of the chancellor over the masters

(Cabborn 1975). The English model of self-governance took inspiration of the masters at the Medieval Universities of Oxford and Cambridge to be independent of external control. During the period English Medieval Colleges were sovereign, self-governing of communities of fellow. Quality of education was vested in the English colleges. Hence, had the right to hire and fire masters (Cobban 1975).

Vught and westeiheiden (1975) describe the French model as archetype of quality assessment in terms of accountability. The power to hire and fire was vested in external authority. The English model is now commonly known as the peer review. The masters determined what was to be taught and who should teach. It can be said that the two models are still relevant to contemporary educational quality assessment. Both the External and the internal dimensions are paramount in assuring quality of higher education in Ghana. Higher education in Ghana thus relies on both External quality mechanisms: Accreditation and internal quality mechanisms, academic boards and institutional self-arrangements for quality.

Vught and westeiheiden (1975) further argued that the increasing demand of quality of higher education all over the world from 1980 were due to the following factors.

- The increasing number of higher education institutions and students, calls for quality to be checked.
- Higher education is cost intensive and stakeholder's investment must be justified.
- The emergence of technological mediated deliveries of higher education through trans-national education (TNE) and other forms of distance education demand an external source of quality in the higher education institutions (Neave 1986).

Contributing to the discussion, Charles (2007) states that, in medieval institutions, students maintained standards and mutual interest through the formation of guilds. Students then held professors accountable. Professors then formed master guilds to maintain instructional standards. The Germans conceptualised the university as a research institution and approached quality in a different perspective. This is the same for the conceptualization of accountability in the United States. Mishra (2007) argues that across the globe, quality assurance is measured through one or more of these means: Self-assessment; Self-evaluation; Peer review, Surveys of students, graduates, employers, and professional bodies testing the knowledge, skill and competences of students.

Concept of Quality Assurance in Higher Education

There are a great number of different perceptions of what is meant by quality assurance in higher education with Scott (1994) maintaining that no authoritative definition of quality assurance in higher education is possible. Higher education prepares students to occupy sensitive positions in society and must be tailor made to the societal needs. Hence QA initiatives in HEIs must be focused on developing students to meet the needs of industry and society. However, Stensaker, Brandt and Solum (2008) noted that over the past two decades, the issue of quality assurance has been one of the major concerns in higher education resulting in the establishment of external quality assurance mechanisms for the assessment of teaching and learning. The assertion of the length of debate of QA in HE may hold right, considering the fact that QA as described in the literature was originally developed in the manufacturing industry and as a result, the concept in higher education appeared to be more complicated than in industry because there are more players in higher education than manufacturing or other services sectors and because higher education has three different diffused missions (Vroeijenstjen 2014).

Generally, the concept of achieving quality in higher education has remained at the quality control practice, a practice that manufacturing and industry generally have long moved away from. Unlike quality control, quality assurance is essentially an internal mechanism with some external control in the form of regulatory standards.

In the area of higher education, the adoption of quality control has been superficial and diluted by the exercise of academic freedom (Largosen, et al, 2004). Further, the prevailing culture of universities is often based on individual autonomy, which is zealously guarded (Colling and Harvey 1995). Thus, it is usually difficult to apply the features of quality assurance to higher education considering the fact that quality requires everybody's involvement and systems approach (Boaden and Dale 1992). Generally, QA has been defined as all the coordinated efforts to guarantee customer and stakeholder satisfaction through defect prevention at a reasonable cost (Alabi & Alabi, 2010). To apply this concept to the higher education environment, it is critical to determine the customers and stakeholders needs, requirements and expectations and how their satisfaction can be guaranteed through initiatives that would prevent all forms of defects in the educational delivery processes. Amongst the notable stakeholders of HEIs whose needs, requirements and expectations which have to be identified and fulfilled as a justification of quality assurance practices include; students, regulatory bodies, employers of graduate, employees, government, the community members and international partners (Srikanthan and Dalrymple 2003).

As noted by Harman and Meek (2000) quality assurance has been defined

as the “systematic management and assessment procedures adopted by higher education institutions and systems to monitor performance against objectives and to ensure achievements of quality outputs and quality improvements”. They further noted that with quality assurance, the stakeholders become confident about the management of quality and the outcomes achieved. Additionally, Cheng (2001) states that, there are three waves of educational quality. The first wave is based on internal quality assurance. Mainly efforts are made to improve internal institutional performance, specially the methods and the processes of teaching and learning. This wave is characterised by close monitoring, evaluation, assessment of faculty, students and the learning environment by the institution. In this case, the external assessment might be an issue of endorsement if it is properly done.

The second wave as described by Cheng (2001) is geared towards interface of quality assurance through organisational effectiveness taking key focus on stakeholders satisfaction and market competitiveness. Having considered this wave, there are basic questions to ask. Looking at the resources of the institution, what programmes can be pursued effectively and affordably in order to generate commensurate returns on the investment of the stakeholders? What must be done to make the teaching staff, administrators and students happy and comfortable? These two waves suffer from a narrow conception of education quality and don't meet the changing needs of society in an era of globalisation and information technology.

Cheng (2001) asserts that the third wave of quality assurance is the most preferred because it looks at future quality practices. This is where value addition becomes imperative for institutions as the needs of the stakeholders and society are fluid and keep changing. Also, The International Organization for Standardisation (ISO) explained quality assurance as “all those planned and systematic actions necessary to provide adequate confidence that a product or service will satisfy given requirement for quality (Praxion, 2010)”. In the context of ISO, higher education institutions would be assuring quality if they consciously initiate structures and systems to meet stakeholders' requirements, expectations and as well as boast their confidence in the institutions.

Contemporary Quality Practices in Higher Education

In contemporary times, the means of assessment of QA in HEIs has changed with more focus on both Internal and External practices to meet stakeholders' needs, expectations and requirements. QA in higher education can, therefore, be classified as either an External Quality Assurance (EQA) mechanism or Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) mechanism. External Quality Assurance (EQA) mechanisms

often are provided for by regulatory bodies normally in the form of accreditation processes, conformance to national or regional norms and standards and external assessment and audits. Normally referred to in general quality assurance practices as second and third party audits. *Second party* audits are normally organisation based assessments that are voluntarily self-initiated to gauge how the organisation is fairing with respect to its mission and vision and how it conforms to expected standards. On the other hand, *third party* audits entail mandatory assessments by an external regulatory or professional body. EQA is therefore a quality intervention mechanism.

The Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) mechanism refers to the institution's own initiatives, processes, procedures and systems for ensuring that the institution is fulfilling its mission in an effective, efficient and meaningful manner as well as meeting the standards that apply to higher education in general, or to the profession or discipline in particular. IQA thus reflects true quality assurance steps that an institution uses in a pragmatic way to fulfil the three missions of higher education, namely: teaching and learning, research and community service.

According to Alabi and Alabi (2012) quality assurance has three key functions: Quality Planning, Process Implementation and Quality Control and improvement. This suggests that as a typically control mechanism, EQA must be present in IQA to achieve the overall function of quality assurance in higher education. Though IQA encompasses first party assessments often called internal audits and assessment, these internal quality control interventions may not be enough to inform institutions about how it knows that its processes and procedures are working. It is clear here that quality of higher education cannot be achieved out of the institution.

Alabi and Alabi (2012) describe other approaches to IQA based on the European Universities Institutional Evaluation Programme (IEP) Model which entail the institution's ability to answer the following five questions:

1. What is the Institution trying to do and why?
2. Where is the Institution trying to do it?
3. How is the institution trying to do it?
4. How does the institution know it works? and
5. How does the institution change in order to improve?

This calls for well-defined quality policy, which often times could be found in the mission, vision and quality related objectives of the institutions. Quality assurance has two underlying broad objectives: control/accountability and improvement.

Control/accountability relates to processes which assess whether minimum standards are in place in a higher education institution or programme. Quality improvement identifies developmental processes, such as how the institution gets and uses feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of institutions and their academic provision.

Often, when educational institutions are responding to stakeholders' pressure to pay more attention to and be more accountable for quality, the issue of autonomy and freedom within academic life according to Vukasovic (2002) is one of the most contentious areas among academics in the discussion regarding the introduction and development of a functioning QA system. There are various approaches to quality assurance such as accreditation, assessment, academic audit and external examination. Common to each practice is the development or setting up of criteria and the application of those criteria or set standards to a programme or institution by the accrediting body. The purpose may be assessment or enhancement with the aim of further improvement of the programme or the educational system at large (Lenn, 1992). Quality assurance is the responsibility of everyone in an educational institution that requires top management commitment to set the policies and priorities. Thus, assuring quality should be a continuous and ongoing process. It should not be considered as a onetime activity for accreditation alone. However, accreditation as external quality monitoring (EQM) can be found in all types of higher education systems (Harvey, 1998) except for countries, where accreditation bodies or agencies are not available.

In spite of the importance of EQM and the credibility attached to an impartial and objective system, developing an internal quality assurance mechanism in every educational institution is highly important. It is, in fact, this unit within the higher education institution that will prepare the base for EQM. Thus, understanding the criteria of quality assurance and adhering to the best practices become highly significant.

Concepts of Quality Assessments in Higher Education

The study identified and describes six concepts and perspectives that describe QA in higher education. These include:

Fitness of Purpose

Quality as fitness of purpose is a concept that focuses on ensuring that products meet the requirement of pre-established specifications or standards. In practice, this refers to the controls put in place by external bodies or agencies to ensure that

the activities and products of an institution are generally acceptable and are able to fulfill the intended purposes. This requires that there are established acceptable standards and programme level benchmarks, which become the yardstick against which quality is measured. Fitness of purpose focuses on the institution's ability to meet pre-established standards without consideration to relevance, and does not determine whether output meets the expectations of end users. In the higher education context, the application of fitness of purpose as a quality approach is to evaluate whether the quality-related intentions of the institutions are adequate. To assess whether an institution's programmes are fit for purpose, there must be a set of norms or standards and programmatic benchmarks which external assessors can use to measure the degree of conformance. The current accreditation practices of Ghana typify fitness of purpose, albeit without programmatic benchmarks, or clear quality indicators that institutions need to report on or can be measured against.

Fitness for purpose

Quality in the context of fitness for purpose approach is concerned with how an institution fulfills its mission or intended purpose as well as the processes and improvements needed to achieve the goals of the institution. Quality is achieved when institutions are able to fulfill their stated or formulated goals, objectives and intended purpose. The limitation of this approach as described by Lester (1995) is that it operates within the boundaries set by the purpose itself. Hence, in applying the concept of *fitness for purpose* in the higher education context, HEIs become the judges of their own quality, which may not be reliable. On the contrary, *Fitness for purpose* recognises and respects variability in missions of institutions and therefore, departs from using a common yardstick to measure institutions. From the perspective of fitness for purpose, an institution's quality must be measured solely from the standpoint of the institution's stated mission. The belief in this context is that, institutions must not be forced to become clones of one another by measuring them with the same standards. HEIs vary in terms of goals and objectives hence, it may not be prudent to use a common yardstick as a measure of quality. The European Universities Association's Institutional Evaluation Programme (IEP) methodology follows the concept of fitness for purpose and uses the four questions framework to achieve this.

Generally, before the introduction of accreditation in Ghana, HEIs relied solely on the concept of *fitness for purpose* though in some cases, the practice did not depict the completeness of *fitness for purpose where institutions themselves determined quality through peer assessment of the external examiners system*. This

implies that quality in HE ought to be considered from both the perspective of fitness of purpose and for purpose. Thus, the recommendation of the concept **fitness to purpose** as a concept of quality to be used in Ghanaian context.

Fitness to purpose

The reviews of the literature and policies of Ghana higher education systems reveal the absence of accepted approach to quality assurance. Hence, the study proposed the fitness to purpose approach. The approach refers to a situation where an institution's goods or services meet certain industry minimum requirements, fulfill the intended purpose and are not detrimental to or incur the displeasure of the end user. In the context of HE, this would refer to an institution's products meeting the requirements of fitness for purpose, fitness of purpose and safety requirements, which requires both external quality mechanisms and well as internal quality mechanisms. This concept of QA in the context of "**fitness to purpose**" has a comprehensive scope as it blends fitness of purpose and for purpose. In the context of HE, QA with this approach would mean that an institution would have to meet the minimum educational regulatory requirements, programmatic benchmarks, industry norms and produce graduates to fulfil the manpower needs of industry (Alabi, 2014).

Quality as threshold

This approach is synonymous to fitness of purpose and refers to a situation where an institution is considered to deliver quality if it meets certain minimum norms and criteria set as threshold requirements. These threshold requirements are set by key stakeholders, whilst the institutions mandate is to design mechanisms to satisfy the requirements in order to be justified as "quality". Quality in this context may be described as stakeholder satisfaction based on predefined requirements. In many higher education systems, a variant defining quality as a basic standard is closely linked to accreditation. In this case, the starting point is the specification of a set of minimum standards/benchmarks to be met by an institution or programme. The challenge of this approach is how to identify the changing requirements of stakeholders. Also, the approach stifles innovation as institutions are only required to meet espoused standards in order to be judged as quality institutions.

Quality as Added Value

The concept emphasises on value addition to the product or service delivered.

In the context of HEIs, quality would be judged based on the value added to students after going through a curriculum. Quality can thus be judged by undertaking in-bound and out-bound assessments. The enhancement in terms of knowledge, skills and behaviour of students during the training process is a means of verification of the quality of the institution. The method of formulating the learning outcomes and realising the outcomes in graduates of the institutions become the bases of quality measurement (vroeijenstijn 2014).

Quality as Value for Money (VFM)

According to the University of Cambridge (2010), the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) 'Value for money' (VFM) is a term used to assess whether or not an organisation has obtained the maximum benefit from the goods and services it both acquires and provides, within the resources available to it. VFM not only measures the cost, but also takes into account the mix of quality, cost, and resource use, fitness for purpose, timeliness, and convenience to judge whether or not, together, they constitute good value.

Hence, to describe quality of HEIs based on VFM demands consideration of the efficiency with which institutions deploy the resources at their disposal. This approach often connotes accountability to government and key stakeholders on how the resources have been utilised to achieve the goals and objectives of the institutions. The approach is, however, constrained by some elements of subjectivity, as it difficult to measure efficiency which is intangible. Sound judgment is therefore required when considering whether VFM has been satisfactorily achieved or not by an institution in order to determine its quality assurance practices.

Quality as Transformation

Harvey (1995) states that Quality as *transformation* is seen in terms of change from one state to another. In educational terms, transformation refers to the enhancement and empowerment of students or the development of new knowledge (Harvey & Green, (1993). Campbell and Rozsnyai (2002) also discuss quality as transformation in education when the activities of the educational institutions are focused firmly on the learners: the better the higher education institution, the more it achieves the goal of empowering students with specific skills, knowledge, and attitudes which enable them to live and work in the knowledge society. This notion of quality may be particularly appropriate when there have been significant changes in the profile of learners. It is argued that the delivery of a transformational

quality approach involves five key elements (Harvey & Knight 1996):

- Envisioning quality as a transformational process designed to enhance the experience of students;
- A bottom-up approach to continuous improvement;
- Responsiveness and openness as the means of gaining greater trust;
- An emphasis on effective action;
- External monitoring which is sensitive to internal procedures and values.

The limitation is that while this notion is popular in quality theory, it may be difficult to measure quality as transformation in terms of intellectual capital in higher education (Lomas, 2002). Quality can be measured before and after performance (in or outbound assessment).

Quality Assurance Initiatives in HEIs in Africa

The approaches for Improving Quality of HEIs in Africa at one time was focus on Accreditation and Academic Evaluation. Accreditation was concerned with institutions meeting standards set by governments, national agencies or professional bodies. It is applicable to programmes, academic units or the whole institution. Mainly externally driven, several countries set up accreditation bodies, Kenya being the first in 1985, followed by Nigeria in 1990s; initially, mainly for accrediting private HEIs, later also for accrediting public HE programme & institutions.

Then Ghana also followed suit by setting up the National Accreditation Board in 1992 to regulate the education sector through both institutional and programme accreditation. Academic Evaluations/Assessments/Audits on the other hand are undertaken by governments or national agencies to assess the HEIs academic processes to ensure quality of teaching and learning. The academic audit uses the fitness for purpose approach; that is the institution achieving its own set objectives and standards based on the accreditation requirements. The audit could be applicable to some part of the academic process or to the whole institution. It thus involves preparing an institutional self-assessment report which is reviewed by a panel of external assessors who undertake a site visit and submit their report. The objective of the academic evaluation is for development and enhancement but in some countries, it is linked to accountability and public funding. The evaluation process is now widely used internationally. Both Accreditation and Evaluation processes are important for improving Quality in African HEIs.

Continental and National QA Initiatives in Africa

Towards the end of 1990s and early 2000s, several HEIs such as University of Mauritius, St Mary's University College, Ethiopia and University of Dar es Salaam, introduced QA at institutional level through collaboration with European universities, before the introduction of national QA processes. South Africa's Council for Higher Education was first to introduce national QA processes through its HEQC in 2001. In several African countries, a QA unit/section under the Commission or Council for HE undertakes this function (Nigeria, Kenya, Mauritius,). In Ghana, two separate entities, both the Council for Tertiary Education and the National Accreditation Board, are responsible for quality assurance. In some countries, Quality is assured by the Ministry responsible for HE.

A few countries (Ethiopia, Ghana and Tanzania) have now set up specific QA agencies for Accreditation and/or Evaluation processes in HEIs Regional Initiatives. HEQMISA, an initiative created to promote QA in SADC (Southern African) HEIs with support from GIZ (GTZ); also provided assistance to set up similar structures in Malawi and Namibia in 2003. In 2005, the Inter Universities Council of East Africa (IUCEA) embarked on promoting QA systems in public and private HEIs in East African countries with support from DAAD. From 2005-06, CAMES undertook LMD reform as per the Bologna Process in Francophone HEIs to improve Quality; it is also responsible for Accreditation; but no explicit activities in Evaluation processes; same with CEMAC for Central African countries; and UNESCO Bamako Cluster Office and UEMOA for West African countries.

At continental level, efforts have been made at the forefront to introduce initiatives and support African HEIs to develop QA practices for better HE in the sub region. In 2007, Association of Arab University (AARU) set up QA and Accreditation Council (QAAC) to assist member institutions to develop their QA systems. Also with the help of the World Bank, the Arab Network for QA in HE (ANQAHE) was set up to assist in creation of QA agencies and develop standards for QA practices. In 2007, after surveying HEI needs for QA, the AAU launched the promotion QA in HEIs and this resulted in the establishment of African Quality Assurance Network (AfriQAN). The AfriQAN is mainly for capacity building of national QA agencies with HEIs having observer status. Additionally with support by World Bank and UNESCO, the African Union's Strategy for Harmonisation of HE in Africa launched one objective to develop QA mechanisms in Africa (part of AU's Plan of Action for the Second Decade of Education 2006-2015). Additionally, in 2009, a pilot African Quality Rating

Mechanism (AQRM) for rating HEIs was launched by the African Union. The AQRM uses self-assessment against set standards plus external evaluation. That is to say a mixture of Accreditation and Evaluation processes was initiated and subsequently implemented. Again, in 2011, ADEA launched a study on creating, the African Higher Education Research Space (AHERS), with a QA component, which introduced the International Conference on Quality Assurance in Higher Education in Africa (ICQAHEA) held every two years by the Bamako Cluster Office with support from GUNI Africa.

Internal Quality Initiatives

The TrainIQA is an internal quality assurance initiative of the DAAD to support the development of internal quality capacities in West Africa. The initiative was a training on Internal Quality Assurance and its book series which were jointly developed by University of Duisburg-Essen and University of Potsdam with the support of experts and organisations from Africa, Europe and Southeast Asia. It comprises five Modules which are designed to support quality managers and institutions to set up and enhance their internal quality management systems. The training and parts of it have been implemented within various international settings. The five books or modules developed cover the following thematic areas of quality

- Module 1: Designing Effective Quality Management Systems
- Module 2: Tools and Procedures for Quality Assurance
- Module 3: Quality Assurance of Teaching and Learning
- Module 4: Information Management
- Module 5: Quality Management and its Linkages to Higher Education Management

Summary of Higher Education Quality Initiatives in Africa

It is evident from the initiatives presented in the study that many attempts have been made to promote QA in HE in Africa but they are quite disparate and uncoordinated, mostly at regional levels, with little collaboration among regions and key organisations. Effective application of QA process requires institutional QA systems to be set up backed by both regional and national provisions. Generally, the key challenges for having effective systems at the regional, national and institutional levels include lack of knowledge about QA process, inadequate capacity, too heavy teaching and administrative load of academic staff as well as lack of financial resources. These remain major handicaps in attempts to implement QA structures and systems.

National QA agencies also lack trained staff and capacity for implementing evaluation process in HEIs. As a result, few Africa countries and HEIs have developed guidelines and standards. In summary, the strategies adopted for promoting QA in HE in Africa at all three levels include:

- AfriQAN
- Continental level: African Quality Rating Mechanism, African Union Commission
- IUCEA-DAAD Quality Assurance Framework
- Train IQAfrica Initiative, a DAAD initiative
- International Conference of Quality Assurance for Higher Education in Africa
- Institutional Quality Outfits
- National Quality Assurance Agencies
- Other regional level initiatives
- Arusha convention
- Courses on EQA for QAAs
- Online IQA course
- Assessment of QAAs
- Sub-regional QA advocacy meetings
- Self-Assessment training
- Publications – The Quality Assurance Situation and Capacity Building Needs Capacity building of Africa Higher Education
- The DAAD QA book series.

The Concept of Quality Assurance in Higher Education in Ghana

Generally, there is no consensus around the concept of Quality assurance in higher education. Different people have described it differently. However, it is believed that whatever cannot be described cannot be measured and what cannot be measured cannot be managed. It is, therefore, important to have a common description of what quality assurance represents in HE in Ghana. Deducing from the result of the work done by the NWG for quality enhancement in HE in Ghana, Quality in HEIs in the Ghanaian context will mean

“Ensuring that programmes of study are relevant, recognised, functional and comparable. This means programmes of study are fit to purpose and comparable to national and global standards. This definition connotes a shift from the input

based approach to an outcome approach for assuring quality. The outcome approach takes into consideration inputs, processes, outputs, reviews and impact.

In higher education, quality assurance practices come in two different forms: *Internal* and *External* quality practices. External quality practices refer to the controls put in place by external bodies or agencies to ensure that the activities and products of an institution are generally acceptable and are able to fulfill the intended purposes. This requires that there will be in place established acceptable standards and programme level benchmarks which become the yardstick against which quality is measured. The Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) practices refer to the institution's own initiatives, processes, procedures and systems for ensuring that the institution is fulfilling its mission, objectives and intended purposes in an effective, efficient and meaningful manner. IQA also ensures that the institution is meeting external benchmarks, standards and norms that apply to higher education in general, or to the profession or discipline in particular. IQA thus reflects true quality assurance steps that an institution uses in a pragmatic way to fulfill the three missions of higher education: Teaching and Learning, Research and Service.

Quality Assurance Framework, Ranking and Excellence / Assessment Models in Higher Education

The League Tables

The league table looks at nine key aspects of the university activity. Namely, students' satisfaction, research assessment, entry standards, students staff ratio, academic services spend, facilities spend, good honours, graduate prospects and completion (the complete university guide.co.uk)

It must be mentioned here that when it comes to assessment of higher education, there are several league tables used by the stakeholders of education worldwide. The main ones are The Shanghai University Ranking, The Times Higher Education, The Webometrics, QS World Rankings, Global University Ranking, The Guardian, The Times, The Sunday Times and the Complete University Guide. Each calculates their tables using different criteria and weighting. These league tables provide some amount of confidence to the stakeholders. Chief amongst the criteria used are:

Student satisfaction scores: this appraises the level of satisfaction provided by the institution to the direct consumer of education. It can be said that it is a helpful indicator of assessing how students rate elements of their university experience. For instance how lecturers and administrative staff treat them as well as other departments which also interface an educational institution. This criterion is key

to the success or otherwise of the institution to the extent that without students, universities have no business in existence.

Student to staff ratio: another factor used across the league tables. A helpful estimation of how much a university invests in its staffing. How does the institution engage in staff training and development? Does the institution invest much into recruiting to meet the standard of NCTE teacher-student ratio or the pyramid in Ghana?

Graduate prospects: This, at times called trace backs, gives a snapshot of what graduates go on to do next. Basically, trying to evaluate core duties of an educational institution in terms of training to satisfy manpower requirements in order to promote socio-economic development.

Entry grades: where the grades for entering an institution are critically looked at. Unfortunately, it looks as if in Ghana, there is not a comprehensive research into what grade is the best to perform in higher education. This can have a major impact on subject rankings, but you could argue that how well students perform at university is more important than what students came in with. Commenting on the use of league tables Oyewole (2011) states that the league tables do not tell the teaching quality, investment in infrastructure and institutional specialisation¹².

U-Multirank

Newby (2014) argues that, U-Multirank provides an excellent solution to a problem which undermines conventional rankings like the league tables. It does not seek to weight different activities of a university, but allows users to devise their own ranking according to what they believe is important. This makes it a more user friendly and customised solution. Therefore, it democratises university ranking and will be an essential tool for all stakeholders – the government, students, industry and parents alike – in a modern university (u-multirank.ed/home). U-Multirank is a new multidimensional and multifaceted, user-driven approach to international ranking of higher education institutions. It compares the performances of higher education institutions – basically universities – in the five broad dimensions of university activity:

- Teaching and Learning
- Research
- Knowledge transfer
- International orientation
- Regional Engagement.

This tool gives a more customised solution to the major consumers of education. That is to say the evaluation criterion hinges much on the consumer of education – the student. Teaching and learning is the major core activity of an educational institution. So it may not be correct for one to evaluate the outcome of education in isolation to teaching and learning. If really education should transform the people and involve and affect the community in which it exists, then there should be advancement in knowledge as well as creation of new knowledge. This can be achieved through constant research into new phenomenon. Knowledge, they say, is power. But this study opines that knowledge stuck in the minds of the owners is useless. Knowledge becomes power only when is transferred into something practical and feasible to impact on society. In view of this, if any tool of measurement of education includes an element of knowledge transfer, it should be hailed. It is believed that in Ghana, people have the technical know-how, yet most live in poverty. The world is becoming a global village. So organisations are often times advised to think globally and act locally. Because is difficult to preempt competition, an educational institution should be make its programmes more comparable internationally. So international orientation and regional engagement are key when it comes to contemporary educational activities. The U-Multirank web tool enables comparisons at the level of the university as a whole and at the level of specific fields of study. Based on empirical data, U-Multirank compares institutions with similar institutional profiles ('like-with-like') and allows users to develop their own personalised rankings by selecting indicators in terms of their own preferences.

Based on the results of a feasibility study covering 150 universities which was carried out in 2010/11, the European Commission decided to fund the implementation of U-Multirank. This roll out is carried out by a consortium led by Professor Frans van Vught of the Centre for Higher Education Policy Studies (CHEPS), University of Twente in the Netherlands and Professor Frank Ziegele of the Centre for Higher Education (CHE) in Germany. Other partner organisations include the Centre for Science and Technology Studies (CWTS) from Leiden University, the International Centre for Research on Entrepreneurship, Technology and Innovation Management (INCENTIM) at the Catholic University Leuven, the academic publisher Elsevier, the Bertelsmann Foundation, and the software firm Folge 3. The consortium also works closely with a range of national ranking partners and stakeholder organisations.

Table 2.7: U-Multirank Criteria of for QA Assessment

Area of Interest	Performance indicators	
Teaching and Learning	Graduation Rate	
	Graduates in Normative time	

Knowledge transfer	Income from private sources	
	Industry joint publications	
	Patents awarded	
	Industry co-patents	
	Spin-off	
	Publication cited in patents	
	Continuous Development revenues	
International orientation	Foreign Language programme	
	Student Mobility	
	International academic staff	
	International doctorate degrees	
	International joint publications	
Regional Engagement	Graduates working in region	
	Students internship	
	Regional joint publication	
	Income from regional sources	
Research	External research income	
	Publication output	
	Art related output	
	Citation rate	
	Interdisciplinary publication	
	Post-Doc positions	

Source: U-Multirank website

The first U-Multirank ranking is the 2014 edition, covering more than 850 higher education institutions from more than 70 countries. It provides a ranking at the institutional level as a whole as well as at the level of specific fields of study. For the latter, the fields of electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, business studies and physics are covered in the 2014 edition. Table 2.7 shows the assessment criteria.

Malcom Baldrige Assessment Model

The Malcom Baldrige assessment model looks at seven major areas known as the Baldrige criteria for performance excellence. These criteria look at the following:

- *Leadership*: how upper management leads the organisation and how the organisation leads within the community. Leadership is essential in any

organisation if only it has a goal and vision to pursue. The leader must create the path, deal with road blocks and motivate the team with an inspirational vision. By so doing, the organisation stands to succeed.

- *Strategic planning*: how the organisation establishes and plans to implement strategic direction. Decisions in any serious organisation must take into consideration trans-border and trans-generational perspectives.
- *Customer and market focus*: how the organisation builds and maintains strong, lasting relationship with customers. As has been mentioned elsewhere, an educational institution without students cannot exist. So any evaluation of that institution which takes into consideration customer focus is in line with the modern way of doing things.
- *Measurement analysis and knowledge management*: How the organisation uses data to support key process and manage performance. Performance management is key to ensuring that things get done. So the institution must measure performance of both academic and nonacademic staff as well as the students. How, for instance, is the institution ensuring and encouraging creativity and innovation?
- *Human Resource Focus*: How the organisation empowers and involves its workforce. Empowerment often times promotes creativity and new ways of doing things. The empowered staff get the opportunity to initiate new ideas within the organisation. A good manager or a leader should ensure optimum use of resources of the organisation. By so doing, each member and his/her knowledge is tapped for development.
- *Process management*: how the organisation designs, manages and improves key process
- *Business or organisational performance result*: how the organisation performs in terms of customer satisfaction, finances, human resource, supplier and partner performance, operations, governance and social responsibility and how the organisation compares to its competitors (American Society for Quality).

African Quality Rating Mechanism

The African Quality Rating Mechanism (AQRM) was developed by the African Union Commission as part of the African Union's strategy for harmonising higher education, and was adopted by the Conference of Ministers for Education of Africa (COMEDAF) in 2007. The Commission of the African Union, therefore,

spearheaded the development of an African Quality Rating Mechanism (AQRM) as an African system that will ensure that the performance of higher education institutions can be compared against a set of common criteria. The essence is to help the institutions carry out self-evaluation exercises to support the development of institutional cultures of quality assurance practices. As Achiampong (2014) puts it, the essence of quality assurance in HEIs is to ensure that your programmes are comparable worldwide. In so doing, the Commission conducted a pilot self-rating exercise in 2010 where 32 institutions across Africa took part. Based on the experience and feedback gained from the pilot survey, the Commission came out with assessment criteria that can be used as a surrogate to index the performance of universities in Africa (African Union, 2013).

According to Oyewole (2007), there were priorities to revitalise higher education with four thematic priorities namely: Production of Knowledge, Quality Assurance, Support to lower levels of Education and Financing of Education. The purpose was:

- To support processes aiming at improving quality of African HE (Focus area of Plan of Action for the Second Decade of Education).
- To present an alternative to existing global quality rating/ranking systems that do not take African specificities into account.
- To contribute to the successful implementation of the AU HEP Harmonisation Strategy.
- Provides support to the scholarship scheme and the Mobility Programme.

The component of AQRM is based on a blend of 'fitness for purpose' and 'excellence' approaches to quality, so it explicitly takes institutional diversity into account and proposes a series of quality criteria which are assessed, taking institutional context into account. It further essentially combines an external approach, but seeks to build in opportunity for institutional self-evaluation and reflection. No comparison of institutions, but allows AUC to rate quality as 'unsatisfactory', 'satisfactory' or 'excellent'. With this, detailed feedback will be provided and institutions able to see what steps to take to improve their quality (Oyewole, 2007). The objectives of AQRM were as follows:

- To revitalise and strengthen African HEIs so as to be globally competitive and locally relevant.
- To be used as tool for benchmarking quality in HE.
- To encourage HEIs to undertake self-evaluation and develop an institutional culture of quality.

- To help in selecting institutions to benefit from Mwalimu Nyerere Scholarships and in establishment of Pan-African University (PAU) network institutions. Table 2.8 shows the AQRM assessment criteria.

Table 2.8: Africa Quality Rating Mechanism (AQRM) Assessment Criteria

Criteria	Mean Rating
<p>Institutional Governance</p> <p>The institution has a clearly stated vision, mission, and values with specific goals and priorities.</p> <p>The institution has specific strategies in place for monitoring achievement of institutional goals and identifying problem areas.</p> <p>Clear accountability structures for responsible officers are in place.</p> <p>Where appropriate, staff, students and external stakeholders are represented in governance structures. Governance structures are representative in terms of gender.</p> <p>The institution has developed quality assurance policies and procedures.</p> <p>Appropriate mechanisms are in place to evaluate staff in line with performance agreements with relevant authorities.</p> <p>The institution has put a management information system in place to manage student and staff data, and to track student performance.</p> <p>The institution has specific policies in place to ensure and support diversity of staff and students, in particular, representation of women and the disabled.</p> <p>The institution has a policy and standard procedures in place to ensure staff and student welfare.</p>	
<p>Teaching and Learning Policies</p> <p>The institution encourages and rewards teaching and learning innovation.</p> <p>The institution has procedures in place to support the induction to teaching, pedagogy, counselling and the upgrading of staff teaching and learning skills through continuing education and lifelong learning.</p> <p>Students have sufficient opportunity to engage with staff members in small groups, individually or via electronic platforms.</p>	

<p>Student-staff ratios and academic staff average workloads are in line with acceptable norms for the particular mode of delivery, and are such that the necessary student feedback can be provided.</p> <p>The institution has policies/procedures in place to inform the development, implementation and assessment of programmes offered by the institution and these policies take account the contribution of higher education to socio-economic development.</p> <p>The institution has developed a policy or criteria for staff recruitment, deployment, development, succession planning and a system of mentorship and/or apprenticeship.</p> <p>Student support services, including academic support and required counselling services are provided, in line with the institutional mode of delivery.</p> <p>The institution has mechanisms in place to support students to become independent learners, in line with the institutional mode of delivery.</p> <p>The institution has a devoted office to promote international cooperation and enhance Intra-Africa mobility of students and staff.</p>	
<p>Teaching Assessment</p> <p>The institution has systems in place for external examiners.</p> <p>Clear information about mode of assessment is provided for all courses/modules making up the programme.</p> <p>Assessment is used as an integral part of the teaching and learning process and seeks to ensure that students have mastered specific outcomes.</p> <p>The level of challenge of assessments is appropriate to the specific programme and targeted students.</p> <p>A variety of assessment methods are used in the programme.</p> <p>Marking procedures ensure consistency and accuracy and the provision of feedback to students.</p>	

<p>Programme Planning</p> <p>The programme is aligned with the overall institutional mission and vision.</p> <p>The programme meets national accreditation criteria.</p> <p>The institution allocates sufficient resources to support the programme.</p> <p>There is a programme coordinator(s) responsible for managing and ensuring quality of the programme.</p> <p>The mode of delivery takes account the needs and challenges of all targeted students.</p> <p>Staff teaching on the programme have the appropriate type and level of qualification.</p> <p>The programme is regularly subjected to internal and external review in a participatory manner to reflect developments in the area of study.</p> <p>Programme planning includes a strategy for the use of technology in a manner appropriate to the programme, facilities available, and target students.</p>	
<p>Learning Materials</p>	
<p>Infrastructure</p> <p>The institution has sufficient lecturing spaces to accommodate student numbers taking the institutional mode of delivery into account.</p> <p>The institution provides sufficient learning/studying space for students, including access to electronic learning resources, as required for the institutional mode of delivery.</p> <p>Academic and Administrative Staff have access to computer resources and the internet.</p> <p>Students have access to computer resources and the internet at a level appropriate to the demands of the institutional mode of delivery.</p> <p>The institution has sufficient laboratory facilities to accommodate students in science programmes, taking institutional mode of delivery into account.</p>	

<p>Laboratory equipment is up to date and well maintained.</p> <p>The institution invests in maintaining an up to date library to support academic learning and ensures that appropriate access mechanisms are available depending on the mode of delivery.</p> <p>The institution makes provision for managing and maintaining utilities and ensuring that appropriate safety measures are in place.</p>	
<p>Research and Publication</p> <p>The Institution has a research policy and publications policy, strategy and agenda. The research policy includes a focus on research supporting African socio-economic development, among others.</p> <p>The institution has a policy and/or strategy on Innovation, Intellectual Property Ownership and Technology Foresight.</p> <p>The institution has demonstrated success in attracting research grants from national or international sources and in partnership with industry.</p> <p>The institution has procedures in place to support academic staff to develop and enhance their research skills, including collaborative research and publication.</p> <p>Staff and students publish their research in accredited academic journals and apply for patents (where relevant).</p> <p>Researchers are encouraged and supported to present their research at national and international conferences.</p> <p>Researchers are encouraged and facilitated, using the Research and Development budget, to engage in research relevant to the resolution of African problems and the creation of economic and development opportunities.</p> <p>The institution encourages and rewards research whose results are used by society</p> <p>The institution has a mechanism for partnership with industry, including attracting resources from industry. The institution receives requests from industry for specific research and training support.</p> <p>The institution has established linkages to promote international joint research and publications</p>	

<p>Curriculum Development</p> <p>The curriculum clearly specifies target learners and learning outcomes/competencies for each module/course and for the programme as a whole.</p> <p>The curriculum is regularly updated to take account of new knowledge and learning needs to support African development.</p> <p>Modules/courses are coherently planned and provide a sequenced learning pathway for students towards attainment of a qualification.</p> <p>The curriculum includes an appropriate balance of theoretical, practical and experiential knowledge and skills (where applicable) as well as core and elective areas</p> <p>The curriculum has been developed to maximise student career pathways, opportunities for articulation with other relevant qualifications, and employment prospects.</p> <p>Curriculum development has been informed by thorough research and consultation with relevant stakeholders, including public sector planners, industry and other employers.</p> <p>The curriculum reflects positive African values, gender sensitivity and the needs of society.</p>	
<p>Programme Assessment</p> <p>Student progress is monitored throughout the programme and early warning is provided for students at risk.</p> <p>Completion rates per cohort conform to established norms for the subject area and mode of delivery and strategies to increase completion rates are in place.</p> <p>Quality student feedback is provided.</p> <p>Expert peers and/or professional bodies review the relevance and quality of learning achieved by students.</p> <p>There is established linkage with potential employers that facilitate graduate employment.</p> <p>Tracer studies of graduates and their employers are conducted to obtain feedback on achievement of graduates.</p> <p>The programme has an effective research plan with suitable implementation, evaluation and feedback mechanisms.</p> <p>Research and consultancy is undertaken in the subject area to solve industrial problems and support the social and economic development.</p>	

<p>Finance</p> <p>The institution has access to sufficient financial resources to achieve its goals in line with its budget and student unit cost.</p> <p>The institution has procedures in place to attract funding, including from industry and the corporate sector.</p> <p>Clearly specified budgetary procedures are in place to ensure allocation of resources reflects the vision, mission and goals of the institution.</p> <p>The institution provides financial support to deserving students (institutional bursaries and/or scholarships).</p> <p>Information about financial aid and criteria for its allocation is provided to students and other stakeholders.</p> <p>The institution publishes income and expenditure statements.</p>	
<p>Community Engagement</p> <p>The institution has a policy and procedure in place for engaging with the local community or society in general.</p> <p>The community often requests the institution for specific academic/research assistance</p> <p>The institution encourages departments and staff to develop and implement strategies for community engagement.</p> <p>Students are required to engage with communities through their academic work.</p> <p>The institution has forged partnerships with other education sub-sectors to enhance the quality of education in the country and region.</p> <p>The Institution disseminates information on its community engagement activities to the local community.</p> <p>The institution offers relevant short courses to the community/ broader society based on identified needs and supporting identified economic opportunities.</p> <p>The institution makes its facilities available (where possible) to the local community in support of community and socio-economic development activities.</p>	

Source: Africa Quality Rating Mechanism website

African Virtual University's (AVU) Quality Assurance Framework

The AVU is a constituted and established autonomous, non-profit making and non-partisan international teaching, training, research, advisory and information dissemination institution and has full intergovernmental legal personality in the territories of its Member States. The vision is to be the Leading Pan-African Open, Distance and eLearning network. And the mission is to facilitate the use of effective Open, Distance and eLearning in African institutions of tertiary education. The Core Values are to facilitate increased access to tertiary education in Africa professionally, passionately and efficiently. The AVU also has a quality assurance framework which the study deemed fit to draw lessons from in order to create a workable quality framework for Ghana. The AVU has ten (10) criterion statements under which minimum standards are stipulated. These are depicted in the table 2.9.

Table 2.9: The Quality Assurance Framework of AVU

	Programme Areas	Criterion
Input	Mission, Vision, Strategic Planning	1
	Programme design	2
	Student recruitment, admission and selection	3, 4, 5
	Staffing	4, 5
	Teaching and learning strategy	5, 4
	Student assessment policies and procedures	6, 2
	Infrastructure and library resources	6,2
Process	Programme coordination	7, 1
	Teaching and learning interactions	5, 4
	Student assessment practices	5, 4
	Coordination of school-based learning	8
Output	Student retention and throughput rates	9
Outcome	Programme impact	9
Review	All of the above programme areas	10

Source: AVU Website

Ghana National Council for Tertiary Education norms

The National Council for Tertiary Education developed a tertiary education policy to define the norms and requirements that an institutions in Ghana must meet to be accredited to run diploma and degree programmes. The norms cover five thematic areas: enrolments, students: academic ratio (STR), personnel, finances and student accommodation. The description of each thematic area is presented as follows as culled from the NCTE website.

Enrolments

- a) New entrants
 - Male: female participation = 50: 50
 - Science : social sciences and humanities = 60:40
- b) Total enrolment
 - Target for gross enrolment ratio for the sector 25 per cent.
 - Male: female participation = 50: 50
 - Post graduate enrolment = 25 per cent of the total enrolment
 - Quota of international students = 10 per cent
 - Quota of fee- paying students 5 per cent
 - Quota for students from disadvantage secondary schools= 5 per cent
- c) Growth rates in enrolment for established public universities
 - Humanities/business = 4 per cent
 - Science and technology = 6 per cent
 - Postgraduates = 25 per cent

Table 2.10: Student – Academic Staff Ratio (STR)

Subject category	STR
Social sciences and humanities	27:1
Business administration	27:1
Sciences	18:1
Applied science, technology and health	18:1
Engineering	18:1
Pharmacy	15:1
Medicine	12:1

Source: NCTE Website

Personnel

Table 2.11: Academic staffs pyramid

Category	Norm (per cent)
Professor	10
Associate professor	15
Senior lecturer	35
Lecturer	40

Source: NCTE Website

Table 2.12: Recommended number of staff for administrative services in the teaching departments

Position/grade	Recommended number of staff
Administrative Assistant	1
Accounting Assistant	1
Clerks	1
Driver	1
Messenger/cleaner	2

Source: NCTE Website

*Driver and accounting assistant should be provided for where necessary

Table 2.13: Recommended number of staff for administrative services in the teaching departments for faculties/institutes/schools

Position/grade	Recommended number of Staff
Dean	1
Senior assistant registrar/assistant registrar	1
Accountant	1
Assistant librarian	1
Administrative assistant	1
Accounting assistant	1
Junior technical	2
Junior Non-technical	2

Source: NCTE Website

Table 2.14: Number of senior technical/ junior technical staff recommended for teaching departments

Category	Science Based Department	Humanities/Business Based Department
Senior Technical	1:5	1:10
Junior Technical	2:5	2:5

Source: NCTE Website

Financial Norms

NCTE has established the standard cost per student using the performance indicators and prevailing approved rates of costs for the purpose of determining:

- The realistic level of funding required by the institution for their work;
- The level of revenue that an institution must raise in order to maintain and improve quality. The level of revenue must include government grant, fees charged to students and internally generated income;
- The adequacy or otherwise of financial, material and physical facilities. This will give an indication of the quality of service provided by the institutions; and
- Efficiency in the use of financial resources

Determining cost per student

The following variables are considered in the determination of cost per student:

- The approved rates of remuneration of all categories of staff;
- The standard cost of goods and services required in the training of a student;

Norms for resource allocation

The current norms identify seven (7) cost activities cost centres for which allocation from the revenues basket should be made. The rationale behind this is to monitor the allocation of resources to ensure that critical needs or areas in the operations of tertiary institutions are given adequate attention.

These seven cost centres are:

Academic Expenditure

- I. These are salaries and allowances of both academic staff and the non-teaching staff of the academic department in the various faculties.
- II. Goods and services used for instructional purposes: these are periodicals, printing materials including live biological specimen, teaching aids, office furniture and equipment, consumables, working materials, stores, transport and travelling, cleaning materials, student projects and field trips, photocopy and computer time related to individual faculty activities.

Library Expenditure

- I. Salaries and allowances of professional library staff, supporting administrative, technical, secretarial, clerical and manual staff.
- II. Goods and services: books, special collections and journals, periodical newspapers, binding materials, photocopying materials, printing and stationary, local travel, office furniture and equipment.

General Education Expenditure

Staff development including study leave, sabbaticals, cost of examinations, expenditures related to academic ceremonies, activities of the academic board and its committees, university-wide computer activities in data processing and programming, university official publications, relationships with other institutions (link arrangement), travel costs and allowances of external examiners.

Central Administration Expenditure

- I. Salaries and allowances of all staff not located in the academic departments/units of direct teaching, teaching support and “organise research”
- II. Goods and services: goods and services for the offices of the vice-chancellor and registrar, financial officer, departments/offices, printing and stationary, cleaning materials, office furniture and equipment, local transport and travel, books and periodicals, etc.

Municipal services expenditure

Cost operations, maintenance, repairs and monitoring, modification of plants, building and grounds, electricity and water.

Staff and Student Facilities Expenditure

- I. Salaries and allowances of all staff in the halls of residence and security
- II. Good and services: cleaning materials toiletries for hall of residence, replacement of linen and mattresses, books, periodicals, printing and stationary for the hall administration, furniture and fittings, repairs of staff houses, health services and staff welfare

Miscellaneous Expenditure: sundry charges, legal and bank charges, packages, insurance, telephone and postages

Table 2.15: Staff and Student Facilities Expenditure

Cost Centre	Norm (per cent)
Direct academic cost (departmental cost)	50
General educational expenditure	10
Library	5
Central administration	8
Staff/student facilities	10
Municipal services	15
Miscellaneous	2
Total	100

Source: NCTE Website

Student Accommodation

Sleeping space in halls of residence should not be allocated to more than four (4) students in a room, and the measurement of a room should be at least 3600 mm * 5400 mm.

It must be noted that the NCTE norms, which form the main quality indicators for higher education in Ghana, are limited to input and administrative requirements. Leaving other key process, output and outcome indicators out, comparison with the Umultirank and other excellence models, it is evident that Ghana needs a more comprehensive framework for assurance quality of higher education in Ghana.

Quality Assurance practices in Ghana

Quality assurance activities of universities in Ghana include both institutional and programme accreditation at the external level. Accreditation is mandatory for both

public and private institutions. However, institutional accreditation is not required for chartered universities/institutions though programme accreditation continues irrespective of the status of the institution. Chartered universities are rather subjected to five-year cyclical reviews to ensure that governance and other structures are functioning effectively towards achieving the set goals of the respective institutions.

On the other hand, institutions that are not chartered are required by law to have institutional affiliation with chartered or recognised institutions, in or outside Ghana, for the purpose of mentoring and award of certificates to graduands of non-chartered institutions. Affiliation is an institutional mentoring process which has been acclaimed as a best practice by the International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE).

Quality assurance practice in universities in Ghana is prescribed by both fitness for purpose and fitness of purpose and as such relies on both the external controls of the Accreditation Board through Academic Audits and a reliance on an internal quality culture. Though of purpose requires programme level benchmarks, these are not generally not available in Ghana. However, steps have been taken by the National Accreditation Board to develop benchmarks for the various disciplines.

Typically, internal quality assurance practices include but are not limited to the implementation of strict student admission, staff recruitment and promotion policies, examination controls and regulations, resource planning and standardised internal procedures. There has been advocacy for Ghana to move from the input based quality approach which is typically a control philosophy to a process and outcome approach. Worthy of note will be a reconsideration of the strict entry requirements to higher institutions in Ghana. Currently in the HE environment, it appears Ghana as a country does not have national policy for quality assurance, national quality assurance framework, national qualification framework, programmatic benchmarks for HEIs and national data repository for HE statistics. In view of these loopholes, there has been myriad of repercussion on the quality assurance practices and initiatives by various HEIs.

As a result, in coming out with policy recommendation for the He sector, two key principles of governance, which are “Due Diligence and Substantial Evidence should be considered. Though a number of quality practices in Ghana have been acclaimed as best practices by INQAAHE, improvements could be made in areas of developing programme level benchmarks, as well as industry benchmarks. As a starter, the country can adapt the “African Tuning Process Initiative” which allows programmes to be standardised in knowledge and skills requirements from a perspective of fitness for purpose and fitness to Purpose. The country can also

benchmark some of the best practices in Europe and America, for example, the Institutional Evaluation Programme, (IEP) by the European Universities Association (EUA) and the mentoring process of the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programmes (ACBSP) in the US. Additionally, alternative funding mechanisms should be explored to enhance both access and quality assurance practices in HEIs in Ghana. The challenges associated with the country in reference to QA practices and the paucity of data repository for HE management has made this study timely to assess the factors promoting and constraining the development of QA practices in HEIs in Ghana. The study thus intend to develop national QA framework for HEIs in Ghana to augment the already initiatives devised at institutional level to enhance their access and quality of education.

Empirical Literature

Machunu and Kisanga (2014) conducted a study into the Quality Assurance Practices in Higher Education Institutions, Lessons from Africa, using a desk data that involves analysing information that already exists and realist and meta-narrative reviews to synthesis of data in Tanzania. The conclusion is presented herewith. The debate of quality education is currently related to a paradigm shift from accountability to improvement and enhancement of QA practices in higher education and it has been clouded by a slew of slightly differing definitions and understanding of what is actually meant by the term quality education. Arriving at a common understanding, one can conceive that quality education connotes high standard of educational services provided at schools, colleges or universities.

The primary concerns are parents and students, in particular, and, society at large. To parents, quality education is only measured by good academic performance which determines a student's qualification beyond doubt. In this regard, quality education is judged by the core clients who are largely recognised everywhere in the society. Quality education means achievement of basic learning; and it is increased through teacher training, allotted budgets, equipment, international openings and learning from others. It can be viewed as a means to break away from the current limitations in learning of most classrooms in terms of teaching and learning process as well as assessment procedures. It involves blending technological development and instructional practices that allow free interaction such as combinations of both face to face and online learning. However, any kind of education offered, whether being formal, informal or non-formal, should strongly abide to the principles of lifelong learning which in turn aims to improve quality education. The principles also influence better practices above average and maintenance of QA aspect.

This line of thinking is commonly applied in most of African states. For instance, most parents are comfortable when their children are passing exams. In Tanzania, for example, it can be found that many private educational institutions (pre-primary, primary, secondary and by some means in higher learning) are striving for excellence on examinations' results rather than what the students have acquired for their long life and for working life after school; what they really know and have in their mind for their future career. The tendency is not only happening in Tanzania but also in other countries of the world. The question is, how sure we are that: better score is a quality education? What quality practices can make better scores among students?

In line with Machunu and Kissanga (2014), Ruiz and Jumo-Sabio (2012) looked at the quality assurance in higher education in the Philippines and concluded that QA practices should be implemented in HEIs even if QA practices come with a cost tag, since there is no free lunch. Specific standards that cover a wide range of HEIs work and operations should be reported. However, there is no methodology set as evidence that an HEI had achieved the relevant standards. To this end, improved QA practices are an effective instrument to help HEIs achieve a quality brand in the eyes of their stakeholders (UNESCO, 2007); the importance of establishing a new quality 'life style' of the people, products and services. Also, addressing the importance of team building and changing the work culture of staff as well as continuous assessment is crucial in QA and improved institutional performance and work satisfaction can result from enhanced good QA practices.

QA practices in HE are associated with the insurance relevance of programmes, greater linkages with productive sectors, setting minimum academic standards and improving employability of students. As educational practitioners and teacher-educators, experiences inform that the QA system is working properly as a results of appropriate QA practices and quality education offered which can be determined by the way we structure our education, focusing on teaching and learning environment; increased research output, and content (curriculum and instruction). Not only that, but also human resources (recruit and retain qualified both academic and non-teaching staff), infusing technology and pedagogical approaches such as blended learning; and abilities of students (output-performances-to their future career) to solve problems pertaining to their professions.

To this end, standards should be our pillars to assure QA practices are implemented successfully in most HEIs. In Africa, we need to rethink and act on what quality assurance practices must be implemented. We need to go beyond

normal QA practice and HEIs capacity by employing new models as such of those proposed by DAAD; and also develop a QA system, criteria and procedures that have direct link to current education conditions in most African states. Lastly, we need to meet standards set by governments, national agencies or Professional bodies. Various efforts for quality assurance have been made by the government with solicited cooperation of the private sector. HEIs are essentially dynamic operations – their quality cannot be assured with a static process. Thus, there is need to recognise and validate different institutional models, learn about the features that make them effective and find new ways to define quality that is adaptable to different circumstances.

Equally, we should avoid standards that are too rigid, or the application of procedures or standards that are too homogeneous. Standards that are too formal or have a strong focus on quantitative indicators make it difficult to pay attention to the substantive, underlying issues. There is need to avoid prescribing a preferred way of doing things – HEIs are different, and there may be many different ways of achieving the desired outcome. At present, there is a need to revise the definition of quality, the criteria, procedures, and mechanisms for self and external review, on the basis of experience. HEIs need to constantly learn, and work towards developing self-regulatory policies, mechanisms and procedures.

Materu (2007) studied higher education quality assurance in Sub-Saharan Africa – status, challenges opportunities and promising practices, and enumerated these challenges in Africa:

- Insufficient human capacity.
- Insufficient funding at agency and institutional levels.
- Lack of national QA policy.
- Overlapping mandates with professional associations and with other tertiary QA bodies.
- Lack of QA standards for distance learning programmes.
- Lack of appeals procedure for dissatisfied institutions.
- Insufficient communication within institutions about external QA processes.
- Lack of incentives and sanctions to enforce compliance.
- Accreditation standards not linked to outcome and skills needed by the labour market.
- Lack of standards and mechanisms to regulate quality of education from cross-border providers.

Methodology

This section describes the approach, techniques and methods that were used to acquire data, select respondents and analyse the data. It specifically describes the study design, population, sampling procedures/techniques, sample size, data collection, instrumentations, how the data was analysed and validity and reliability.

Research Design

The research employed a qualitative research approach using mixed methods of data collection which included expert interviews, surveys, focused group discussions, and review of existing reports and documents. Glenn (2010, p95) maintained that a qualitative approach would be appropriate in situations where researchers aimed to gather an in-depth understanding of human behaviour or phenomenon. The study used a Force Field Analysis (FFA) to ascertain the factors that promoted or constrained quality assurance in HEIs in Ghana. Brice (2010) maintained that the FFA can be used for two (2) purposes: to decide whether to go ahead with an intervention; and to increase your chances of success by strengthening the forces supporting the intervention and weakening the forces against it.

The data collected was affinitised to identify the key themes and factors that promote and constrain the development of quality assurance practices in higher education in Ghana. Survey approach was used to ascertain how the system of getting academic managers into the position of Deans and HODs affect QA in HEIs (Election, Selection or Appointment). Six (6) public and four (4) private universities were purposively selected and their quality practices documented and analysed using content analysis. The results obtained from institutional respondents, regulatory bodies, expert interviews, and focus group discussions was used to develop a framework for QA in HEIs in Ghana and the suitability

of the framework was tested with the Futures Wheel Tool. Watkins, West-Meiers and Visser (2012) maintain that the Future wheel tool has the future as the prime focus of assessment. Proposed initiatives are analysed through a brainstorming session to anticipate their likely failures and successes and consequently ascertain factors that could promote and facilitate the success of the initiatives or concept.

Population and Sample

The population of Higher Education Institutions in Ghana as at 2012 was 68 (www.nab.org), comprising ten (10) public, two (2) chartered private universities and fifty-six (56) private university colleges. The staff, students, academics and experts in QA related positions in all these universities in Ghana or a QA related agency in Ghana (regulatory body NAB and Policy body, NCTE) constitute the target population for the study. The sample frame for institutions from which the sample was drawn for the purpose of the study were as follows

- The Number of years of institutional existence (10 years and above).
- Programme diversity (Post Graduate and Undergraduate Programmes).
- Regional Distribution (Location).
- Population of students and staff.
- People who have been associated with the institution or QA practice in higher education for at least two years. This means for students, the study considered level 300 and 400 who might have adequate experience in the university. And for experts, one should have worked in a QA-related position for at least two years.

Using these criteria, only the ten (10) purposively selected institutions qualified to be part of the study as described below.

Sampling

The study employed a multi-stage sampling approach for the entire project. The selection of universities was purposively done based on the sample frame criteria whilst convenience sample was used to select the target respondents in the selected universities. The experts interviewed included all founding QA directors in the public universities selected and current QA directors. Ten (10) purposively selected universities comprising Six (6) public and four (4) private institutions were approved for the study.

The universities selected for the study include University of Professional Studies, Accra (UPSA), University of Cape Coast (UCC), Ghana Institute of

Management and Public Administration (GIMPA) Accra, University of Ghana (UG), the University of Education, Winneba, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) Kumasi, University for Development Studies (UDS) Tamale and University of Mines and Technology (UMAT), Valley View University (VVU), Central University College (CUC), Methodist University College (MUC) and Garden City University College. The universities selected met the sampling criteria as defined for the study as espoused above. However, they are also unique and represent the majority of higher education institutions in Ghana. UPSA is a professional university and the only public university accredited to run both degree and professional programmes. University of Ghana is the premier, UCC is the institution with the largest population in Ghana; KNUST is the largest public university in Ghana providing pure science related degree programmes. GIMPA is a public university that does not rely on government subvention unlike the other public universities. UDS is the only public university serving the higher education needs of the three northern regions. UMAT is one of the newly accredited public universities specialised for training competencies in the mining related fields. Valley View University is the first private university to be granted with presidential charter (autonomy), Central University College, Methodist University College and Garden City University College are among the top private universities in Ghana.

Instrumentation

The instruments used for data collection included a self-designed interview guide, survey instrument (questionnaire) and focus group discussion guide. The interview guide was developed by the technical team and reviewed by experts at the CODESRIA methodological workshop held in Kampala from 16-18th September 9, 2013 based on the objectives of the study. The instrument is an eight (8) item open ended questionnaire covering the concept of QA, Evolution of QA in HEIs, current QA practices in HEIs in Ghana, challenges of QA practices and Initiatives for QA enhancement. The guide was used to facilitate the expert's interviews of past QA directors and current directors of regulatory bodies in HEIs.

The Questionnaire was used to collect data on QA initiatives in the various institutions as well as the challenges and the factors promoting or constraining QA practices in the institutions. It contained six sections, with sub items covering internal quality assurance system, perception about quality assurance, quality of teaching and learning processes as well as institutional governance and national accreditation structures and initiatives.

Ethical Considerations

In fulfilling the ethical issues of this project research, the study respected the autonomy and voluntary participation of the participants. Informed consent were sought and given by participants to publish their names and titles as the study findings does not possess any real or potential harm. Wester (2011) maintained that as contained in Belmont Report that ethical consideration which needs to be clarify during research includes but is not limited to respect, justice and beneficence. Also, all cited materials were duly referenced and the appropriate procedure in the sampling process deployed. Issues of anonymity of participants and confidentiality of respondents were dully protected with reference to the consent given.

Data Acquisition

Primary and secondary data were collected from the institutional respondents, regulatory bodies, and selected past experts of Quality Assurance in Higher Education. Survey instruments were sent to the quality assurance unit of the selected universities to assist the NWG to collect the data from the students, administrative and teaching staff. However, the NWG granted interviews to heads of QA units and top management of the selected universities to obtain the necessary data for transcription.

Selection of Respondents

The Institutional level respondents included Students, teaching faculty, administrative staff, head of quality assurance units/directorate and top management of the universities were considered. Two hundred (200) final year students were randomly selected from each university. The choice of final year students was to ensure that the students selected were familiar with the universities processes having gone through four (4) years in the institution. Also, Forty (40) lecturers and ten (10) Administrators from each university with at least three years' experience in the university was randomly selected to provide responses. However, the head of quality assurance unit/directorate and one (1) representative of top management of the universities were interviewed on quality assurance practices of their respective universities.

Also, expert's interviews were granted to five (5) past Quality Assurance Directors in higher education institutions in Ghana. On the regulatory bodies or Policy Agencies sector, interviews were granted to four (4) Board and Management level members at the National Accreditation Board (NAB) and National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE) sector. Also, an expert at the Association of African

Universities (AAU) was interviewed on quality assurance initiatives in higher education in Africa.

Reliability and Validity of Study Instruments

The instruments developed for the study were all piloted to ensure that the items could address the objectives of the study. Additionally, the NWG held two (2) focus group discussions to discuss and fine-tune the instrument. A methodological workshop held in Kampala (Uganda) September 16 -18, 2013 also critically reviewed the methodology and the instrument to ensure that the items could indeed address the objectives of the study. To ensure data reliability, the interviewees were revisited for clarification of the key points captured from the content analysis. Also the content of the transcript were sent to respondents to affirm the responses provided.

Data Analysis

Content analysis was used to analyse interview transcripts in order to catalogue the evolution of the quality assurance practices in the higher education sector in Ghana. FFA was used to analyse all the data collected. This was used to identify the factors that promote or constrain quality assurance practices in higher education in Ghana. To ascertain the internal quality structures and systems used in HEIs in Ghana, a three-by-four matrix was developed to capture components covering the purpose of QA in each of the ten (10) institutions purposively sampled for the study, the QA procedure used in the institutions, key area of focus, implementation strategies, feedback and information management systems and use of information from feedback mechanisms. This is analysed by examining answers to the four key questions: what is the institution trying to do? How is the institution trying to do it? How does the institution know it works? And how does the institution change in order to improve? To analyse what is working and what is not working, data from the matrix in respect of “*how the institution knows its initiatives are working*” and “*how the institution changes in order to improve*” were used as the key indicators to critically examine key interventions and why these interventions had to be changed.

A generic matrix was then developed to trace changes in external quality assurance structures, tools and techniques and identify the factors that promoted those changes. A content analysis of the interviews and surveys were used to ascertain how the current national accreditation structures and initiative have impacted on quality practices in Ghana.

Key indicators and issues identified were synthesised and used to develop a framework for QA in HEIs in Ghana.

Presentation and Discussion of Findings

This chapter presents results of the data in line with the objectives of the study. It commences by analysing and discussing the results and findings in reference to the research objectives.

Factors that promote/constrain quality assurance practices in higher education in Ghana

Promotional factors

As part of the objectives, the study was to identify factors that promote quality practices within higher institutions of learning. The heads of regulatory bodies, vice-chancellors and past and present quality assurance directors of higher institutions were interviewed. Respondents noted that quality assurance has become a key issue in higher education due to its nature of stakeholders. Many factors were adduced by the respondents as promoting quality assurance practices in HEIs in Ghana. Chief among them were as follows:

Establishment of good infrastructure

The respondents posit that quality of higher education thrives on sound infrastructure. *The infrastructure base is the foundation of establishing quality initiatives and structures*, a respondent noted. The respondents explained that the infrastructure includes the availability and sufficiency of physical buildings, library resources and Information Technology infrastructure. However, cost of technology was one key thing hampering quality, as this has become relevant to both the delivery of academic programmes and information management.

The institutional vision towards quality

The institutional vision permeates everything that happens in an organisation. The respondents noted that quality assurance practices would be promoted if HEIs consciously develop quality policies and are committed to providing the resources needed for implementation of such policies. A respondent noted

“in my university, we were privileged to have a vice-chancellor who clearly understood the need for quality assurance so his vision was to make the university a high quality standard university – that is world class. As a result, his management abilities were geared towards pursuing quality which led to creating a quality office under the Vice-Chancellor that supported QA programmes”

Availability of qualified staff with Quality Mindset

The respondents argue that the availability of quality staff also promotes QA practices. They noted that if qualified, renowned and experienced staff are engaged in both administrative and academic positions, they are able to drive quality initiatives. The absence of qualified staff with a quality mindset impedes the implementation and sustenance of quality initiatives. A respondent indicated that

“our institution was fortunate to have a director who caught up with the vice-chancellor’s quality vision eventually. Therefore, we worked all the energies out at our disposal to make sure we used resources and facilities that were provided to achieve quality. For me, lack of resources is not a limitation to quality though it may be a constraint. Rather, it is unprepared minds for quality that are the biggest limitation to quality”.

Proper information and Documentation Management

At the National Level and Institutional Levels

Respondents noted that records management is an important aspect of quality assurance practices. Developing and implementing standard operating procedures to manage documents and information generation, storage, access, retrieval and disposal are a critical part of quality assurance, one responded noted. One of the respondents indicated that when quality assurance systems are in place, institutions are able to manage documents with ease.

An interviewee noted:

“One of the benefits we enjoyed after an institutional self-assessment initiated by my institution as a result of participating in the quality-connect project was the revelation that documentation management was the weakest link in our institutions and that it was affecting our quality initiatives. We learned from such revelation to put measures in place to strengthen information and documentation management systems and it reflected in our quality drive. Though the importance attached to quality practices may not be limited to the sole role of data management systems, a good information management system becomes a good asset for efficient institutional management and participation in rankings.”

Accreditation

Accreditation is the key external mechanism that keeps the institutions on their toes to ensure and maintain quality standards. Respondents generally agreed that accreditation has helped to improve their systems to a great large extent although the process is sometimes long and tedious and panelist are sometimes acrimonious or hostile, but generally it is worth the effort. As one interviewee put it “Indeed without accreditation, degree mills and diploma mills will poison the higher education environment and rob university education off its prestige”.

Other Factors that promote quality Assurance Practice

Establishment of national quality assurance guideline or framework to direct the implementation of QA in higher institutions of learning; Higher education institutions’ ranking, global competition for quality, prospective faculty and students all have to play a central role in promoting quality assurance practices among Higher education institutions in Ghana.

Other promotional factors enumerated by respondents included establishment of managerial and clear organisational structures to define and simplify responsibilities, reporting lines and chain of command. An interviewee indicated “because quality is an administrative unit under the registry, it is difficult for an administrator to tell professors what to do or even hold them accountable. After all the thinking is who are you?”

Factors that Constrains Quality Assurance Practices

Lack of Capacity and Competence for Quality Assurance

The most significant element raised by the respondents on factors constraining quality assurance practices is the inadequate supply of human resources who are knowledgeable in the area of quality assurance. This is further worsened by the limited number of such personnel at the various quality assurance units in the various institutions. A respondent noted that

“Internally, some of the challenges that constrain quality assurance initiatives in my university includes the attitude of our staff as most of them resist quality directives, poor leadership at various levels of the university faculty and departments, limited expertise of staff in the quality drive, infrastructure deficit in terms of physical facilities and laboratories”.

This is supported by Materu (2007) who argued that insufficient numbers of adequately trained and credible professional staff at the agencies to manage QA processes with integrity and consistency across institutions/programmes over time constitute a technical constrain to quality assurance in HEIs. In addition, there were not enough effective staff capacity building programmes.

Affiliation

Section 25 of the National Accreditation Board Act, 2007 (Act 744), through session 8v. of LI 1984 of 2010, requires proof of affiliation to a recognised mentoring institution within or outside the country; or affiliation by private institutions to renown government institutions before a private university can have both institutional and programme accreditation.

Though the intended purpose of the affiliation requirement is laudable, respondents of private institutions maintain that affiliation is not an effective mentoring mechanism and it is too expensive. Respondents indicated that institutional affiliation costs between \$12,000 to \$15,000 as one-off fees and about \$2,000 to \$5,000 per programme per a year. In addition to these basic fees, institutions pay for visitation fees among other charges. However, respondents were of the view that there is no value for money in the process. Citing the ineffectiveness of affiliation, respondents referred to the withdrawal of over 2,000 students from some of the private universities in May 2012 as an example of the ineffectiveness of the affiliation mentoring process.

Respondents also lamented that affiliation introduces double standards for private and public universities. Additionally, affiliation stifles innovation and creativity as the mentor institutions impose their values, and standards on the affiliated institutions.

Considering these issues raised against affiliation, it becomes important to interrogate the antecedents of the concept of affiliation in Ghana. Review of available information revealed that affiliation is a colonial concept, which was necessary at the time when Ghana had no experience in tertiary education and when accreditation was not in place. With accreditation firmly rooted in Ghana, it is not clear whether affiliation should be maintained. Respondents from private institutions were of the view that affiliation had outlived its usefulness.

Lack of a Quality Assurance Benchmarks

Ghana has no quality assurance framework to provide guidance on how to develop an international quality culture or even measure whether quality has been achieved or not. This is because due to the non-availability of a quality assurance framework, there are no clear benchmarks for measuring quality. Though the NCTE norms provide some indicators, these are mainly input-based and not process and output or outcomes-based. Establishment of national quality assurance guideline or framework to direct the implementation of QA in higher institutions of learning in Ghana is, therefore, critical.

Lack of a Quality Policy

The lack of a tertiary education policy is another area which constrains the achievement of quality of tertiary education in Ghana. Without a clear policy, it is not clear what tertiary education is trying to achieve. From a strategic point of view, the need for a comprehensive tertiary education policy is critical, though the National Development Plan (2018-2057) has some policy objectives for education.

The lack of a Qualifications Framework

The lack a comprehensive national qualifications framework is another factor that constrains quality assurance in higher education in the area of certification, thus affecting recognition, one of the quality assurance dimensions and the establishment of equivalences of qualifications.

Quality Assurance in the Organisational Structure of HEIs

The place of a quality assurance outfit in the structure of the institution can either promote or constrain quality. Some had it within the Vice-Chancellor's office and others as a unit within the registry which creates a number of challenges with authority to follow through on key initiatives.

Other Constraining Factors

Other factors noted by the respondents included poor educational environment, unacceptable government directives as well as the use of quality assurance as a basis to intimidate smaller universities. Moreover, the non-existence of a quality assurance manual/framework was seen as one of the most significant constraints to the quality assurance in HEIs in Ghana. Table 4.1 shows the summary of most important factors raised by respondents.

Table 4.1: Factors Promoting or Constraining Quality Assurance Practices in HEIs in Ghana

NO.	PROMOTING FACTORS	CONSTRAINING FACTORS
	Proper Quality Assurance Framework	Inadequate Qualified Quality Assurance Personnel
	Good Managerial and Organisational Structure	Lack of effective staff capacity building programmes
	Good Infrastructure and Equipment	Poor educational Environment
	Availability of Qualified Staff	Use of Quality Assurance as a punitive tool by NAB
	Admitting Qualified Students	Non-existence of Quality Assurance Manual to direct
	Introduction of Institutional Academic Audit	The absence of national quality assurance framework
	Introduction of System of Affiliation	Limited capacity in Internal Quality Assurance
	Progressive training on Quality Assurance issues for Tertiary Institutions	The internal quality structures not fully operational

	Institutions and appointments of QA heads at top managerial level.	No comprehensive tertiary education policy
	Compulsory establishment of internal quality assurance units in all tertiary schools.	No qualifications framework
	Existence of National External Quality Assurance body backed by law	Poor Governance structures
	The growing need for Collaboration among the regulatory bodies.	Non-enforcement of policies on standard norms and regulations by regulatory bodies.
	There is increasing awareness among higher education institutions	Inadequate provision of resources that drive quality
	Awareness of tertiary institutions of the value of QA and the efforts to strengthen institutional QA unit	Inadequate professionals in QA at both sector and institutional levels

Source: Field Survey (2013)

To overcome the challenges posed, the inadequate qualified quality assurance personnel and capacity building, Njoku (2012) called for an urgent attention to capacity building within universities, national and regional levels. He noted that the capacity building should involve identification of best practices in HE governance and delivery, identification and understanding of quality academic and physical standards, conduct of self-assessment, improving the value of external examination systems and budgeting for academic excellence. At the national level, capacity building should be geared towards training staff to be able to determine academic and physical standards, accreditation criteria, processes and assessment, ranking of universities, development of quality assurance guidelines for cross-border higher education as well as guidelines and resource verification for the establishment of private universities.

Additionally, affiliation was interrogated as part of the quality assurance measures. However, respondents argued that chartered institutions are only interested in the money but do nothing to ensure proper mentorship of affiliate institutions. Respondents observed that the institutions collect the affiliation fee and bother not to ensure that the standards were the same or similar. To solve this, deliberate national policy directives should be implemented to coax mentor institutions to implement structures to develop capacities of mentee institutions.

Externally, there are constraints of limited budget facing government institutions as they cannot recruit without national governmental clearance and approval. A respondent exclaimed..

“The institutions need clearance from Ministry of Education and Ministry of Finance, so the process is slower than we would have wished. I hope a time will come when we will be truly independent and some of these things will be done internally rather than looking at external sources for approval,”

In reference to these challenges, respondents noted that

“we need money, we need dedicated staff to make quality work and yet without it everything is nothing”. The leaders of our institutions must inspire a confidence in the staff, cultivate a team spirit, and lead by example, helping staff to know their priorities and preparing them towards envisioned quality assurance implementation challenges.

Trace Changes in External Quality Assurance Structures in Higher Education in Ghana

As part of the objectives, the study sought to identify the changes that have taken place with reference to the external quality assurance structures and to understand what accounted for those changes. Respondents, basically the National Accreditation Board and National Council for Tertiary Education, noted that changes in external quality assurance structures started with the government review of its national educational policies and regulations as well as continual engagement with stakeholders in higher education environment. Externally, the government through the Universities Rationalisation Committee recommendations brought about a number policy, governance and regulatory changes leading to the amalgamation of all post-secondary institutions into Tertiary Education, and the establishments of the National Accreditation Board and the National Council for Tertiary education in 1992. This ushered in a new era and paradigm to Quality in higher education – External Regulation of quality, a concept which was not known to tertiary institutions in Ghana at the time. Before External Regulation (Accreditation of Programmes and Institution), tertiary quality was mainly achieved through self-regulation-using affiliation passed down from colonialism and peer review through external examiner and assessor systems. Sequel to that initiative, the National Council for Tertiary Education was set up with responsibility to regulate academic higher education institutions and advice government on tertiary education policies. The NCTE as part of the QA practices subsequently developed and implemented the guidelines

for governance and administration of tertiary institutions. The guidelines here refer to tertiary education norms, which spell out the specific minimum requirements tertiary institutions must meet to be able to deliver quality education. The NCTE has the responsibility of establishing the relevance of academic programmes before they are accredited, but this practice is limited to public institutions because it is tied to ability of government to fund new programmes, and to rule out duplication of programmes by different public institutions. It is, however, not clear how the NCTE establishes relevance of academic programmes, whether it derives its decisions from a pool of labour market data or information from the national planning needs for human resource from the National Development Planning Commission or the Ministry of Labour and Employment Relations Priorities and Strategies. This is a gap identified in the current QA practices in Ghana, and is considered at this point as a constraint.

In 1993, another major quality assurance initiative was implemented by establishing the National Accreditation Board (NAB). The NAB was tasked with the role of ensuring quality of output from all tertiary institutions. The NAB, therefore, developed institutional and programme level accreditation requirements that newly established institutions must meet to be legally approved to operate. The NAB relies on both Institutional Accreditation as well as Affiliation, Academic Audits and Institutional re-accreditation to achieve its goal. However, many of the requirements for both institutional and programme accreditation are derived from the NCTE norms. It must be noted that the NAB accreditation and Quality Assurance Processes is one of the most effective on the continent (Alabi and Mba, AAU, 2012). Institutions indicated that the accreditation practice, though thorough and strict, often come across as a policing activity and that this has helped a lot in improving academic programmes and delivery. The NAB initiatives have also helped to eliminate a lot of mushrooming institutions that did not meet set standards.

Affiliation was also introduced in 2010 by LI1984 of 2010 requiring an accredited institution to be mentored for ten (10) years before Charter. Charter confers on an institution the ability to award its own degrees. However, Linda Tseve (2015) reports that there were two private universities at the time of collecting data in 2014 in Ghana that had been under mentorship for more than ten years but their request for Charter were declined. Does that suggest ineffectiveness in the mentoring process or a gap? Affiliated institutions have also expressed concern that the mentoring process is not effective and that with accreditation now firmly in place, mentoring should not be mandatory.

Some respondents did not have knowledge of the affiliation instruments like the LI 1984, and the Affiliation barometer together with other Quality Assurance instruments used by the NAB. It was evident that these instruments intended to facilitate external quality assurance were not adequately disseminated to Mentoring Institutions and Mentees, except for displaying them on the NAB website.

Establishment of Institutional Quality Assurance Outfits in Higher Education Institutions in Ghana

Furthermore, the NAB, in 2012, gave another critical quality assurance policy directive to all tertiary institutions to establish quality assurance outfits in their institutions. The policy directive resulted in the creation of quality assurance and institutional advancement outfits in most tertiary institutions. However, the policy directive did not spell out what specific task the QA units were supposed to do. This allows variation and ambiguity in how QA practices were interpreted in various institutions.

Key Issues with the Establishment of Quality Assurance Offices in HE in Ghana

In some institutions, Quality Assurance Offices were established as units under the Vice-Chancellors Office (e.g. KNUST) reporting directly to the Vice-Chancellor, in others as a desk within the Registry reporting to the Registrar which limited their authority and effectiveness (e.g. University of Ghana, Legon). In others, they were directorates or departments (e.g. University of Professional Studies, Accra). It was also not clear what the person specifications for the QA officer should be as there was no job descriptions developed for the position. As such, some institutions employed administrators for the position (UPSA), while other employed academics (e.g. University of Ghana, KNUST, University of Cape Coast). The lack of a framework specifying job descriptions with person specifications detailing out the tasks, roles, responsibilities, reporting lines, competences, skills and attitudes required for the QA office was a major constraint to developing an effective quality culture in the higher institutions of learning.

The institutions were also not guided to introduced the policy and neither were they monitored to learn the challenges associated with the implementation the newly QA units in line with the policy directive. Respondents indicated that the discretion given to tertiary institutions to decide on the mandate of the QA units was a challenge. Most institutions had little or no experience in QA issues and limited QA personnel. The policy thus forced tertiary institutions to resort to capacity building to train staff to take charge of the operations of the QA unit.

The policy directive thus drives the capacity building initiative of QA personnel to advance the course of quality practices in higher education institutions in Ghana.

Moreover, the NAB instituted periodic institutional academic Audit for all tertiary institutions. The essence of the audit was to monitor and evaluate the level of compliance and effectiveness of internal QA practices to national policy directives. The exercise weeds out malpractices and inefficiencies within some tertiary institutions as it informs regulatory bodies of the state of affairs to achieving quality of teaching and learning in the tertiary sector. The quality audits culminates into audit reports for stakeholders' discussions in strengthening QA practices in higher education.

The legislative instrument LI1984 specified the policy on Affiliation. Initially, universities were government owned. When private sector participation was allowed, there was a need to regulate their operation. The proliferation of private universities across the country, resulted in the policy of affiliation to serve as guideline to allow experienced universities to mentor newly established private universities. The initiative was a quality assurance measure to empower renowned universities to supervise the academic processes of institutions they are mentoring. The essence was to develop and mentor these institutions and bring them to a level of independence in promoting quality tertiary education. It, however, appears mentor institutions used the policy as a money making machine to the detriment of the mentee institutions. In an interview with the heads of the mentee institutions, they proposed a review of the affiliation policy and process as it places a financial burden on mentee institutions.

Apart from the changes discussed above, the regulatory bodies also identified the following ongoing initiatives that drive changes in QA measures across the country:

The NAB identified the changes as follows:

- Increasing engagement with the institutions and stakeholders periodically, through a stakeholder conference.
- New Policy formulations and development of assessment instruments to guide QA practices.
- Capacity building initiatives both for staff of the EQA (NAB) and IQAUs.
- Orientation sessions for quality experts.

And the NCTE prescribes the following changes:

- The establishment of policy and regulatory bodies' i.e. NCTE, NAB, COTVET.

- Existence of policy documents on standard norms and accreditation requirement, regulations and monitoring mechanisms by NCTE and NAB.
- Requirement for every tertiary institution to establish QA unit. The changes have been summarised in table 4.2.

Table: 4.2: Summarised Changes in External quality assurance practices in HEIs

Number	Date	Changes Intervention
	2012	Introduction of Guideline for establishing and operating QA unit by NAB
	2013	Academic Quality Audit for all HIEs
	2010	Passing Legislative instrument for affiliation of private institutions LI 1984
	1993	Establishment of National Accreditation Board
	1987	Establishment of National Council for Tertiary Education
	1987	University rationalisation committee)

Source: survey data 2013

Ascertain how the current national accreditation structures and initiative have impacted on quality practices in Ghana

The National Accreditation Board (NAB) and National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE) have the mandate to initiate programmes and structures that aim at ensuring quality, accountability and transparency in HEIs in Ghana. Among the numerous initiatives and structures which were noted by respondents as having impact on quality of education in Ghana include institutional accreditation, programme re-accreditation, affiliation, NCTE norms, mandatory establishment of quality assurance units, entry requirements for staff and student, academic audit and programme and institutional accreditation.

All the respondents were unanimous in arguing that these initiatives have ensured that the benchmarks and requirements are uniform across all universities and set the grounds for quality to be achieved. Moreover, they have also promoted the sharing of best practices among HEIs in Ghana as one respondent noted.

The respondents identified some benefits and impact associated with the roles of the NAB/NCTE which included standardisation of quality in all HEIs; helping prospective students to know credible HEIs; and putting institutions on their toes to conform to standards set for HEIs. However, the respondents argue that there are some constrains posed by NAB/NCTE in the quest to assure quality in HEIs.

Chief amongst them were the rigidity with which they operated and having rules and regulations/norms that are difficult to achieve. Furthermore, not only do they delay in giving accreditation for programmes, they also put so much pressure on HEIs to ensure quality with limited resources whilst providing little or no support. A respondent noted that

“the question of impact of NAB/NCTE on quality assurance practices in HEIs is a dicey question because ... there was nothing coming by way of directive from them to QA offices in universities. In matters of programmes accreditation, when the NAB was supposed to be dealing with the QA departments, the NAB dealt directly with the departments that hosted such programmes. This has quality implications as some of us were not enthused about their dealings”. Another respondent also noted that “the time duration for NAB to accredit programmes were not known or clearly specified. They delay without justification or reasons and it is sometimes frustrating.”

Most of the respondents, especially from private HEIs, further posit that even though NAB is trying to ensure quality of teaching and learning, they are not championing the mentoring institutions’ interest of obtaining charter status. The charter provides autonomy and independence to affiliated institutions to operate like a fully-fledged institutions that can award its own degrees and diploma with its name. The role of NAB in facilitating this process was questioned. The argument advanced was that some of the HEIs have the capability in terms of staffing and experience to operate autonomously without mentorship. However, the NAB is frustrating their efforts to charter-ship.

Issues of the nature of academic audit was also interrogated. While supporting the quality initiative of academic audit by NAB, respondents were not happy by the manner in which it was conducted. The arguments raised was that the purpose of the audit is to identify areas for improvement, however the panel that visit institutions turn the activity into a kind of policing with carrot and stick approach. The major concern is to identify flaws and non-compliance and recommend feasible remedies that can improve on the quality of teaching and learning. Some of the panel members are very rude in their approach during visits. Also, the guideline for the academic audit was not exhaustive and explanatory enough, hence the panel use their discretion to determine what to look out for. It is imperative for the NAB to standardise the instrument that is used for the academic audit and also to train the panel members on how to conduct audit and report audit findings.

Additionally, respondents noted that NAB is trying its best but more can be done in the area of tracer studies. Respondents noted that NAB should ensure that tracer studies become mandatory for HEIs in Ghana to check how graduates are

performing in the world of work. The end users of HEIs products is the industry, and without proper system to ascertain feedback on their performance, deficiency in quality assurance practices is entrenched. Hence, the NAB should take the task of developing instruments that HEIs can use to conduct tracer studies. The tracer studies report should form part of the key items for academic audits.

Furthermore, most of the traditional universities are now running a dual mode of learning, bricks and mortar system and distance learning. Respondent noted the open and distance learning emerging system of tertiary education has its own QA related issues which need to be properly identified and addressed. However, the NAB is yet to develop QA practices to properly regulate that sector. The NAB explained that ensuring quality in distance learning is yet to be effected because this a new form of higher education provision in Ghana and there is therefore need to carefully examine the philosophy behind it.

QA processes are being developed to distinguish them from the traditional bricks and mortar system and with time they would be proper regulated. NAB noted that Open universities are set up to give opportunities to people who would otherwise not have had those opportunities in the regular universities and using the same yardstick of QA practices to regulate them is improper. Respondents were concerned with the rising enrolments in that sector and the need to expedite actions to ensure quality is not compromise. The NAB in their response noted:

“At the moment, what we are trying to do to ensure some quality in the distance learning is that you will have to convince the accreditation board about the integrity of the examining system being used. How do you prove that the right people are those writing the examinations and they are not being impersonated? That is key to one of the things we are trying to enforce before we give permission to anyone to run those programmes”.

Another issue raised by respondents is the entry requirements for students into the tertiary sector. Currently, the NAB has directed that students with WASSCE grade D7 as part of their results are qualified for university. Respondents argue that such directive is questionable as there is no empirical evidence to suggest that such students are not capable of completing university education. Several Ghanaians do not understand why this directive was issued by NAB. Hence, the NAB is seen as limiting the gross enrolments rates of Ghana as compared to other developed countries. The NAB in joining the discussion indicated academia has not developed any alternative to use to ensure that qualify students enter university, hence tasking the HEIs to conduct research and recommend alternatives. Excerpts from the interview with NAB:

“As I said, personally I am not fixed on the entry requirements, but academia should continually research into this and come out with alternative measures as we grow. In other places, I think they have come out with certain things and I think we can do the same.”

The argument put forth by respondents is that several students are denied access to higher education through the actions of the NAB and this has to be discussed further with stakeholders to remedy the situation. The impact of the NAB on quality education is elicits mixed feelings. To some extent, they have positively affected quality of teaching and learning, even though without any critical consideration for the relevant issues.

Ascertain internal quality structures and systems used in HEIs in Ghana

In attempt to address these objectives, respondents were required to address four questions:

- What are the institutions trying to do?
- How are they are trying to do it?
- How they do know their mechanisms work?
- How do the institutions change in order to improve?

The respondents noted that the structures in place for assuring quality of HEIs in Ghana are the established quality assurance units in various universities as well as similar units in the supervisory bodies. The quality assurance units were mostly established as a requirement by the supervisory bodies in order for the HEIs to meet quality standards. These units in HEIs are tasked with devising systems to ensure quality of output; educating members of the institutional quality assurance mechanisms; providing parameters for assessment; and creating the requisite environment for effective performance of HEIs. In a nutshell, the respondents were of the view that the units are to improve quality in all departments in HEIs while assuring stakeholders that their expectations will be met. However, there was no indication of the existence of a quality assurance framework for the units to follow in the activities. Moreover, most of the HEIs did not have a quality assurance manual of their own.

Respondents, however, noted that with the establishment of the QA units, some processes have been followed by HEIs in assuring quality. The main processes include staff development on quality assurance through the organisation of workshops and seminars. In addition, staff assessment was seen as one of the key processes for assuring quality together with the provision of facilities, equipment

and teaching aids; and review of curricula of the various programmes to ensure continual conformance to industry standards. Some institutions also publish assessment results of some internal KPIs (KNUST) based mainly on ranking indicators. Some of the responses as captured in the table 4.3 shows below.

Table 4.3: Sample Institutional Responses

NO.	KEY COMPONENT	INTERNAL QA	EXTERNAL QA
Sample of Institutional Response 1			
1.1	What is the institution trying to do (purpose)	Improvement, stakeholder satisfaction accountability	Accountability, improvement, employer satisfaction.
1.2	How is the institution trying to do it (method)	Evaluation of courses by students, internal accreditation, departmental ranking, satisfaction surveys, tracer studies.	Institutional accreditation, programme accreditation
1.3	How does the institution know it works (feedback mechanism)	Formative (quarterly report, students' evaluation every semester) and summative (annual reports)	Assessment instrument for programme and institutional accreditation by NAB and annual questionnaire by NCTE
1.4	How does the institution change in order to improve (use of feedback)	Use of feedback to organise workshops (summer school), use of students' evaluation to improve facilities and use of feedback for curriculum development and enrichment.	Programme accreditation and institutional accreditation. National research and policy development
Sample of Institutional Response 2			
2.1	What is the institution trying to do (purpose)	Faculty and students involvement in ensuring satisfaction and accountability.	Accountability, improvement, employer satisfaction.
2.2	How is the institution trying to do it (method)	Evaluation of courses by students, faculty peer reviews, satisfaction surveys, tracer studies.	Institutional accreditation, programme accreditation and affiliation

2.3	How does the institution know it works (feedback mechanism)	The QA units regularly monitor and evaluate teaching practices, examination and research activities at faculty level and generate reports on such activities, Reports of students' evaluation every semester and annual reports to management as means of our verification.	Assessment instrument for programme and institutional accreditation by NAB and annual questionnaire by NCTE
2.4	How does the institution change in order to improve (use of feedback)	Obtain feedback from faculty and students satisfaction surveys and reaccreditation of programme to improve upon our quality practices. Engage in collaboration and partnership with sister universities and industry in other to learn best practices for improvement. Involve the services of quality experts to provide regular training to HODS and Deans on quality management practices.	Programme accreditation and institutional accreditation. National research and policy development
Sample of Institutional Response 3			
3.1	What is the institution trying to do (purpose)	The purpose of GIMPA's quality assurance policy is to enhance the effectiveness of its core activities of training, consultancy and research in leadership, business management and public administration.	Undertake external monitoring of the performance of the institution - dual purpose – Accountability, improvement

3.2	How is the institution trying to do it (method)	The use of student/ faculty evaluation instrument. There is also quantitative approach, which depends on peer review of course outlines, exams questions and results moderation. Faculty performance evaluations as a specific approach to management.	Programme evaluation and accreditation by a panel of experts
3.3	How does the institution know it works (feedback mechanism)	Feedback from the analysed evaluation reports. Students' satisfaction expressed in qualitative comments included in the evaluation instrument.	Programme evaluation and accreditation exercises and academic audit of the institution's quality assurance processes undertaken by NAB Submission of annual report of the institutions activities to the NAB
3.4	How does the institution change in order to improve (use of feedback)	By using the student/ faculty evaluation findings to design actions that will improve services and processes (including the quality assurance processes themselves)	Ensure recommendations are implemented for improvement
Sample of Institutional Response 4			
4.1	What is the institution trying to do (purpose)	Provide quality higher education to students Satisfy the manpower needs of the nation/industries Meet the requirements of our stakeholders	Undertake external monitoring of the performance of the institution - dual purpose – Accountability, improvement
4.2	How is the institution trying to do it (method)	Providing quality teaching Engage quality faculty, provide them with adequate training, teaching and learning resources Constant review of curriculum Involve stakeholders in programme review and other activities, Evaluation of courses by students, internal assessment at the departmental level.	Programme evaluation and accreditation by a panel of experts

4.3	How does the institution know it works (feedback mechanism)	<p>The university obtains both formative and summative information on the quality of the activities of the institution. These feedback mechanisms are an integral component of the university's quality assurance provisions. The QA Directorate undertakes surveys of all kinds - students' satisfaction surveys, students' exit surveys, staff surveys and graduate experience survey or tracer studies - to obtain feedback on how the University meets the expectations of its key stakeholders.</p> <p>2. Mid-year management reviews and annual retreats to assess the institution's performance relative to its strategic goals.</p>	<p>programme evaluation and accreditation exercises and academic audit of the institution's quality assurance processes undertaken by NAB.</p> <p>Submission of annual report of the institution's activities to the NAB</p>
4.4	How does the institution change in order to improve (use of feedback)	<p>Incorporate feedback from the various assessments (internal and external) for curriculum development.</p> <p>Implementation of the recommendations from the NAB and management retreats.</p>	Ensure that recommendations are implemented for improvement
Sample of Institutional Response 5			
5.1	What is the institution trying to do (purpose)?	<p>Improvement, Engender Public trust, Employee involvement, Accountability</p>	Meeting standards, Stakeholder satisfaction
5.2	How is the institution trying to do it (method)?	<p>Teaching and learning environment assessment, Tracer study, Assessment of courses and teaching, Institutional resources survey</p>	<p>Programme accreditation, Institutional accreditation, Institutional auditing, Institutional evaluation</p>

5.3	How does the institution know it works (feedback mechanism)?	Regular research on the effect of QA on activities of the institution. Evaluation of departments/ programmes activities/ policies. Self-assessment.	Reports from external accreditors, auditors and evaluators
5.4	How does the institution change in order to improve (use of feedback)?	Provision of infrastructure, University-wide acceptance of quality assurance, Decentralisation of QA activities. Changes in attitude of lecturers and students.	Provision of infrastructure, projection of good image for the university. Enhancement of institutional confidence.
Sample of Institutional Response 6			
6.1	What is the institution trying to do (purpose)	The University seeks to enhance quality practices with regard to its core activities of teaching/ learning, research and the contribution to society and the community.	Accountability, improvement, employer satisfaction.
6.2	How is the institution trying to do it (method)	The University develops benchmarks, standards and policies for Quality Assurance Practices for all departments. The QA units uses Observations and Questionnaires based on the QA policies to gather data on quality of teaching and learning.	Institutional accreditation, programme accreditation and international affiliation.
6.3	How does the institution know it works (feedback mechanism)	The QA unit monitors and evaluates teaching and learning practices, examination and research activities for all departments and reports are sent to the Vice-Chancellor and faculty members.	Assessment instrument for programme and institutional accreditation by NAB and annual questionnaire by NCTE
6.4	How does the institution change in order to improve (use of feedback)	The University uses the feedback to formulate new policies for improvement. The result of the feedback is also used to train faculty that are performing below average.	Programme accreditation and institutional accreditation. National research and policy development

The results portrays that in terms of quality assurance practices, HEIs engage in the following activities to promote quality teaching and learning to enhance stakeholders satisfaction and produce graduates to meet the manpower needs of industries:

- Establishment of quality assurance directorates or units to supervise quality of teaching and learning.
- End of semester evaluation of courses by students.
- The use of departmental rankings to stimulate competition among institutional departments.
- Undertaking staff and student satisfaction surveys to use as feedback to improve the quality of teaching and learning.
- Evaluation of summative and formative assessments reports to identify areas that need strengthening during teaching and learning.
- Conducting tracer studies to evaluate graduates performance at the job market and to obtain feedback to improve the system of teaching and learning.
- Periodic Curriculum reviews.
- Faculty peer reviews.
- Faculty performance evaluation.
- Use of external assessment moderators.
- Institutional self-audit.
- Mid-year reviews and annual retreats to assess institutional performance against strategic goals.
- Inauguration of strategic planning and reviews committee to monitor the progress of implementation of institutional strategic goals and objectives.
- Conducting institutional resources surveys.
- Developing international benchmarks and policies to drive departments and programmes.

The above thus constitute the internal quality assurance systems and structures deployed by HEIs in Ghana to engender public confidence in the education system in the provision of quality graduates.

Develop a framework for assuring quality in HEIs in Ghana

Reviewing the existing policies on quality assurance practices, the study identified that the absence of national quality assurance framework to direct quality delivery was a major factor constraining quality of teaching and learning. The study, as

part of the objectives, sought to develop a quality assurance framework for HEIs in Ghana. This was done in consultation with past and present QA directors and the regulatory bodies. The results were further validated through a workshop of practitioners, scholars, vice-chancellors, students and other key stakeholders in HEIs. The NAB requirement and the NCTE norms and academic staff requirements were also considered to arrive at the final framework.

Table 4.4: Quality assurance framework for HEIs in Ghana

Key Performance Areas (Kpas)	Weight	Unit	Key Performance Indicators (Kpis)	Target
INPUT				
GOVERNANCE / LEADERSHIP			Institutional Vision/Mission, Objectives and Values	
			Clearly Stated Academic Policies	
			Strategic Plan	
			Stakeholders Requirements	
			Constitution of The Governing Council/Board	
			Involvement of Stakeholders	
			Decentralisation Processes	
			HR Policies	
			Academic Staff Requirement	
			Student Entry Requirement	
			Financial Management Policy	
			Environmental Policies	
			Documentation and Information Management Policy	
			Quality Assurance Policy	
			Organisational and Committee Structure	
			Management Reviews and Controls	
			Structures for accountability and transparency	
			Assurance and Control	
			Inputs of Key stakeholders in programme development and review.	
			Inputs of programmatic benchmarks and requirements into programme development and review	
			Number of academic processes mapped and standardised	
			Number of critical risk points controlled	
			Number of adverse audit findings	
		Number of Late submission of marks		
		Number of Violation of code of ethics by staff		
		Number of Exam malpractices per year		
		Number of Question papers/marking scheme submitted late		
		Number of Courses with late submission of mark		

RESOURCES			Infrastructure	
			Physical Facilities for Teaching and Learning	
			Maintenance of Infrastructure	
			Library Resources	
			ICT (Internet Facilities)	
			Medical Facility	
			Student Hostel Facility	
			Security Facilities	
			Auxiliary Services Facilities	
				Human Resource
				Composition of teaching staff (staff pyramid)
		10%	% of Professors	
		15%	% Associate Professors	
		35%	% of Senior Lecturers	
		40%	% of Lecturers	
		80%	% Of Academic Staff with Terminal Degrees	
		100%	% Of Academic Staff who are Academically or Professionally Qualified	
		Ratio	Staff-Student Ratio	
				Retention rates (turnover rates)
				Induction and Integration of Academic Staff into the Lecturing Profession
				Requirement for pre-engagement teaching qualification or training
				Number of post-engagement training in teaching and research
				Number of orientation and dissemination seminars
				Financial
		GH¢	Average cost per training of student	
		%	% of average fee paid per student related to cost of training	
		%	% of government subvention of total expenditure excluding developing partners support	
			% of Academic Facility User Fees to Total IGF	
		%	% of other sources of revenue, other than fees, to the total IGF	
		%	%Administrative Expenditure as a percentage of total expenditure	
		% Developmental partners support		

PROCESS			
TEACHING AND LEARNING			Academic Calendar
			Learning Outcomes
			Educational Philosophy
			Curriculum Development and Review
			Programmes' Philosophy
			Programme Structure
			Instructional Design Standards
			Syllabus and Course Outlines
			Teaching Plans
			Monitoring of Delivery Process
			Teaching and Learning Resources
			Assessment and Examinations
			Peer Review of Assessment
			Evaluation and Follow-Up Actions
			Student Centred Learning
			Student Feedback
		Student Workload	
		Course load	
		workload	
ACADEMIC PROCESSES			% Admission and graduation of students
		%	% of applicants who qualify
		%	% of applicants admitted
		%	1 st year retention rate (attrition records)
		%	4 th year graduation rate
			Graduate performance (10%)
		%	First class
		%	Second class upper
		%	Second class lower
			Third class
		%	Pass
			Programmes
		#	Number of programmes
			Industrial Relations
		%	% of students involved in internship and industrial learning
		#	Number of signed MOU's with industrial firms
		ICT/Library	
	Ratio	Students to computer ratio	
	#	Library books per programme	
	#	Subscribed journals per programme	
	#	Subscription to top rated online journals	

OUTPUT			
		%	% of research cost funded by IGF
		%	% of research cost funded by development partners
		%	Total research costs as a % of total recurrent expenditure
		#	Journal publications per year
		#	Peer reviewed conference presentations per year
		#	Registered or published inventions/ innovations per year
1.1.COM-MUNITY/ EXTENSION SERVICES		#	Number of community outreach programmes per year
		%	% of staff involved in outreached programmes
		%	% of students involved in outreach programmes
1. EMPLOY- ABILITY			Conduct of Tracer studies
			Number of graduates who are employed within 18 months after graduation.
			Provision of information about relevant professional fields to students
			Number of courses related to practical work
			Number of real life work related cases used in teaching and learning
			Availability of incubators/cases lab for simulations of real life work issues
			Support of the university in finding placements
Outcomes			
2.KNOWL- EDGE TRANSFER			Income from private sources
			Industry joint publication
			Patents awarded
			Industry co-patents
			Spin-off
			Publication cited in patents
			Continuous Development revenues

1. INTERNATIONALISATION				Number of Foreign Language programmes	
				Number of Student Mobility (exchanges)	
				Number of Faculty exchanges	
				% International academic staff	
				% International doctorate degrees	
				Number of International joint publications	
				Number of MOUs with International Institutions.	
2. REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT				Number of graduates working in region	
				Number of regional Students internship	
				Regional joint publications	
				Income from regional sources	
				Regional and national labour market trends	
3. REVIEW				Number of management reviews with follow up actions	
				Audit	
				Number of Assessment	
				Second Party Assessment	
TOTAL SCORE	100	100			

The framework contain 11 key performance areas, key performance indicators and measurements in the areas of Governance and Leadership; Resources; Teaching and Learning; Academic Processes; Employability; Research; Knowledge Transfer; Regional Engagement; External Services; Internationalisation and Reviews. The framework is generic and can be used by institutions to customise their own setting and peculiar needs.

The Scope of the framework

The proposed framework covers internal and external quality assurance standards in HEIs in Ghana. It is intended to be applied to all private and public universities and university colleges in Ghana. The framework has been developed in accordance with the International Standardisation Organization 9001 (ISO 9001:2008), International Working Agreement 2 (IWA2:2007), the National Council for

Tertiary Education (NTCE) Norms, the National Accreditation Board (NAB) requirements and the proposed benchmark indicators for performance contracting to be piloted at Accra Polytechnic by Ministry of Education. The following documents were also benchmarked for the development of the framework:

- IUCEA Guideline.
- U-Multirank Instruments.
- Africa Quality Rating Mechanism Questionnaire.
- African Virtual University's (AVU) Quality Assurance Framework.

Principles of the framework for Quality Enhancement

The framework thrives on the following basic principles and philosophy:

Stakeholder Focus

The NWG believes that consistent customer focus is the single most essential factor for institutional success. Quality in this context is not merely about how good the inputs or processes are but the relevance and functionality of the product to end users. This requires that institutions:

- Understand stakeholders' needs, requirements and expectations which keeps changing.
- Ensure that the internal operations are directly linked to stakeholder expectations.
- Continually improve the processes to fulfill stakeholder needs in its day-to-day activities.
- Ensure that the faculty and staff have the necessary knowledge and skills to satisfy stakeholders always.

Process Approach

The process of evaluating the outcome of a system is not enough, but it is equally important to analyse the conditions under which those outcomes are achieved and how the work is organised.

Involvement of people

The governance and leadership systems must recognise that the responsibility for quality lies at all levels of the University; Council/Boards through to Departmental staff and Administrative staff. The monitoring of quality should occur at all levels.

Effectiveness in the institutions, therefore, depends on the involvement of people and transparency in the system.

Visionary Leadership

Leadership in this context refers to the extent to which the mission, vision, purpose, focus and internal environment work together for the effectiveness of the institution. Leaders create the institutional vision and the internal environment in which people develop their skills and apply them for the achievement of the strategic goals and the benefit of the entire institution. To achieve quality:

- The University shall develop and communicate a clear vision and strategies to the entire university community.
- Translate the vision into measurable goals.
- Involve the faculty and staff in the realisation of goals.
- Develop competent, committed and stable faculty and staff with quality mindset and attitudes. Quality mindset is the ability to do the right things right, right away, without being prompted.

Continual improvement

It is believed that if an institution ceases to improve, it ceases to be good. Therefore, continual improvement of programmes and systems is the ultimate goal of Quality Assurance. The aim of quality assurance is, therefore, not merely to detect and correct faults or errors but to bring about enhancement.

Factual approach to decision making

Quality does not happen by chance but is based on systematic planning, preparation and fact. Institutions ought to recognise that efficient decisions are based on the analysis of reliable data and information. Appropriate decisions, based on experience, academic and entrepreneurial intuition can only be reached when these data and information are reviewed and verified continuously. The essence of the factual approach to decision making principle is to ensure that administrative decisions are based on clearly understood facts and not on convenient speculation. To this end, information and wisdom are combined with analysis, logical thinking, and the scientific approach. Institutions shall therefore develop strategies, programmes and processes based on facts and valid information, taking into account relevant comparative data. This requires that there must be a national repository of data of key performance areas for comparative purposes.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Summary

The study sought to document the evolution of quality assurance practices and to identify the promotional and constraining factors that exhibit quality assurance practices among HEIs in Ghana. The findings indicate that quality assurance practices include external and internal practices. Externally, quality assurance began with the establishment of the university rationalisation committee. This was replaced with the establishment of the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE) and later augmented with the establishment of the National Accreditation Board (NAB). The NCTE introduced the norms for tertiary education and requirements for teaching at the university level. The NAB also introduced the requirements for institutional and programme accreditation, and issued directives for the establishment of quality assurance units in HEIs and periodic quality audits of HEIs and cyclical reviews.

On the issue of promotional factors, the study identified the following influences: establishing good infrastructure, including physical, library and IT; institutional vision towards quality, availability of qualified staff, proper information and documentation management, establishment of managerial and clear organisational structure to define and simplify responsibilities, reporting lines and chain of command; accreditation, Affiliation by private institutions to renowned government institutions; establishment of a national quality assurance guideline or framework to direct the implementation of QA in higher institutions of learning; Higher education institutions ranking and global competition for quality prospective faculty and students. These factors accounted for the promotion of quality assurance practices among HEIs in Ghana.

On the other hand, the constraining factors identified by the study include: Resistance by staff to QA initiatives, poor leadership at various levels of the university faculty and departments, limited expertise of staff in the quality issues and infrastructure deficit in terms of physical facilities and laboratories. Affiliation by private institutions to renowned government institutions introduces double standards and stifles innovation; lack of a national quality assurance guideline or framework to direct the implementation of QA in higher institutions of learning. Other factors the study unravelled included poor educational environment, unacceptable government directives, and the non-existence of a quality assurance manual/framework among others. These were seen as the most significant constraints to quality assurance in HEIs in Ghana.

Impact of current national accreditation structures and initiatives on quality practices in Ghana

The study reveals that national structures and initiatives are aimed at ensuring quality, accountability and transparency in HEIs in Ghana. Among the numerous initiatives and structures which were identified as having impact on quality of education in Ghana include institutional accreditation, programme accreditation, policy on affiliation, NCTE norms, mandatory establishment of quality assurance units, entry requirements for staff and students, academic audit and programme and institutional re-accreditation. The study found that these initiatives have ensured that the benchmarks and requirements are uniform across all universities and set the grounds for quality to be achieved. Moreover, the structures have also promoted the sharing of best practices among HEIs in Ghana.

Internal quality structures and systems used in HEIs in Ghana

The study identified the internal quality assurance practices deployed by HEIs among which include; establishment of quality assurance units, end of semester evaluation of courses by students, departmental rankings, staff and student satisfaction surveys, and evaluation of summative and formative assessments reports. Other practices include conducting tracer studies, periodic curriculum reviews, faculty peer reviews, faculty performance evaluation, use of external assessment moderators, institutional self-audit, mid-year reviews and annual retreats to assess institutional performance against strategic goals and inauguration of strategic planning and reviews committees to monitor the progress of implementation of institutional strategic goals and objectives.

Develop a framework for assuring quality in HEIs in Ghana

The study proposed a quality assurance framework to support and promote quality assurance practices in Ghana. It is intended to help harmonise policies and practices for quality enhancement in higher education institutions in Ghana. The framework thus seeks to reduce ambiguity, create stakeholder confidence and satisfaction, continually improve effectiveness and efficiency of performance and support HEIs to deliver quality educational services in Ghana. The framework contains a matrix of indicators, key performance areas, key performance indicators and measurements.

The Matrix covers Eleven (11) Key Performance Areas (KPA):

1. Governance and Leadership
2. Resources
3. Teaching and Learning
4. Academic Processes
5. Employability
6. Research
7. Knowledge Transfer
8. Regional Engagement
9. External Services
10. Internationalisation
11. Review

Scope of the framework

The proposed framework covers internal and external quality assurance standards in HEIs in Ghana. It is intended to be applied to all private and public universities and university colleges in Ghana. The framework has been developed in accordance with the International Standardisation Organisation 9001 (ISO 9001:2008), International Working Agreement 2 (IWA2:2007), the National Council for Tertiary Education (NTCE) Norms, the National Accreditation Board (NAB) requirements and the proposed benchmark indicators for performance contracting to be piloted at Accra Polytechnic by Ministry of Education. The following documents were also benchmarked for the development of the framework:

- IUCEA Guideline.
- U-Multirank Instruments.
- Africa Quality Rating Mechanism Questionnaire.
- African Virtual University's (AVU) Quality Assurance Framework.

Principles of the framework for Quality Enhancement

The framework thrives on the following basic principles and philosophy: Stakeholder Focus, Process Approach, Involvement of people, Visionary Leadership, Continual improvement, Factual approach to decision making

Quality does not happen by chance but is based on systematic planning, preparation and fact. Institutions ought to recognise that efficient decisions are based on the analysis of reliable data and information. Appropriate decisions, based on experience, academic and entrepreneurial intuition can only be reached when these data and information are reviewed and verified continuously. The essence of the factual approach to decision making principle is to ensure that administrative decisions are based on clearly understood facts and not on convenient speculation. To this end, information and wisdom are combined with analysis, logical thinking, and the scientific approach. Institutions shall therefore develop strategies, programmes and processes based on facts and valid information taking into account relevant comparative data. This requires that there must be a national repository of data of key performance areas for comparative purposes.

The Quality Assurance Framework

The NWG recommends the *Fitness to Purpose* approach to quality management in HEIs which shall be measured by the parameters or criteria specified in table 4.3.

Fitness to purpose

The reviews of the literature and policies of Ghana higher education systems reveals the absence of an accepted approach to quality assurance. Hence the study proposed the fitness to purpose approach. The approach refers to a situation where an institution's goods or services meet certain industry minimum requirements, fulfill the intended purpose and are not detrimental to or incur the displeasure of the end user. In the context of HE, this would refer to an institution's products meeting the requirements of fitness for purpose, fitness of purpose and safety requirements. This concept of QA has a comprehensive scope as it blends fitness of purpose and for purpose. In the context of HE, QA with this approach would mean an institution would have to meet the minimum educational regulatory requirements, programmatic benchmarks, industry norms and produce graduates to fulfil the manpower needs of industry (Alabi 2014).

Table 5.1: Key Performance areas and Indicators

Key Performance Areas (Kpas)	Weight	Unit	Key Performance Indicators (Kpis)	Target
INPUT				
1. GOVERN- ANCE /LEAD- ERSHIP			Institutional Vision/Mission, Objectives and Values	
			Clearly Stated Academic Policies	
			Strategic Plan	
			Stakeholders Requirements	
			Constitution of The Governing Council/Board	
			Involvement of Stakeholders	
			Decentralisation Processes	
			HR Policies	
			Academic Staff Requirement	
			Student Entry Requirement	
			Financial Management Policy	
			Environmental Policies	
			Documentation and Information Management Policy	
			Quality Assurance Policy	
			Organisational and Committee Structure	
			Management Reviews and Controls	
			Structures for accountability and transparency	
			Assurance and Control	
			Inputs of Key stakeholders in programme development and review.	
			Inputs of programmatic benchmarks and requirements into programme development and review	
			Number of academic processes mapped and standardized	
			Number of critical risks points controlled	
			Number of adverse audit findings	
			Number of Late submission of marks	
			Number of Violation of code of ethics by staff	
			Number of Exam malpractices per year	
		Number of Question papers/marking scheme submitted late		
		Number of Courses with late submission of mark		

2. RESOURCES		<i>Infrastructure</i>		
		Physical Facilities for Teaching and Learning		
		Maintenance of Infrastructure		
		Library Resources		
		ICT (Internet Facilities)		
		Medical Facility		
		Student Hostel Facility		
		Security Facilities		
		Auxiliary Services Facilities		
		<i>Human Resource</i>		
		Composition of teaching staff (staff pyramid)		
		10%	% of Professors	
		15%	% Associate Professors	
		35%	% of Senior Lecturers	
		40%	% of Lecturers	
		80%	% Of Academic Staff with Terminal Degrees	
		100	% Of Academic Staff who are Academically or Professionally Qualified	
		Ratio	Staff-Student Ratio	
			Retention rates (turnover rates)	
			<i>Induction and Integration of Academic Staff into the Lecturing Profession</i>	
			Requirement for pre-engagement teaching qualification or training	
			Number of post-engagement training in teaching and research	
			Number of orientation and dissemination seminars	
			<i>Financial</i>	
		GH¢	Average cost per training of student	
	%	% of average fee paid per student related to cost of training		
	%	% of government subvention of total expenditure excluding developing partners support		
		% of Academic Facility User Fees to Total IGF		
	%	% of other sources of revenue, other than fees, to the total IGF		
	%	%Administrative Expenditure as a percentage of total expenditure		
		% developmental partners support		

PROCESS			
3. TEACHING AND LEARNING			Academic Calendar
			Learning Outcomes
			Educational Philosophy
			Curriculum Development and Review
			Programmes' Philosophy
			Programme Structure
			Instructional Design Standards
			Syllabus and Course Outlines
			Teaching Plans
			Monitoring of Delivery Process
			Teaching and Learning Resources
			Assessment and Examinations
			Peer Review of Assessment
			Evaluation and Follow-Up Actions
			Student Centred Learning
			Student Feedback
			Student Workload
		Course load	
		workload	
4. ACADEMIC PROCESSES			% Admission and graduation of students
		%	% of applicants who qualify
		%	% of applicants admitted
		%	1 st year retention rate (attrition records)
		%	4 th year graduation rate
			Graduate performance (10%)
		%	First class
		%	Second class upper
		%	Second class lower
			Third class
		%	Pass
			Programmes
	#	Number of programmes	
5. EMPLOY-ABILITY			Industrial Relation
		%	% of students involved in internship and industrial learning
		#	Number of signed MOU's with industrial firms
			ICT/Library
		Ratio	Students to Computer ratio
		#	Library books per programme
		#	Subscribed journals per programme
	#	Subscription to top rated online journals	

OUTPUT					
6. RESEARCH			%	% of research cost funded by IGF	
			%	% of research cost funded by development partners	
			%	Total research costs as a % of total recurrent expenditure	
			#	Journal publications per year	
			#	Peer reviewed conference presentations per year	
			#	Registered or published inventions/ innovations per year	
7. KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER			#	Number of community outreach programmes per year	
			%	% of staff involved in outreached programmes	
			%	% of students involved in outreach programmes	
8. REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT				Conduct of Tracer studies	
				Number of graduates who are employed within 18 months after graduation.	
				Provision of information about relevant professional fields to students	
				Number of courses related to practical work	
				Number of real life work related cases used in teaching and learning	
				Availability of incubators/cases lab for simulations of real life work issues	
				Support of the university in finding placements	
Outcomes					
9. EXTERNAL SERVICES				Income from private sources	
				Industry joint publication	
				Patents awarded	
				Industry co-patents	
				Spin-off	
				Publication cited in patents	
				Continuous Development revenues	

10. INTERNATIONALISATION			Number of Foreign Language programmes	
			Number of Student Mobility (exchanges)	
			Number of Faculty exchanges	
			% International academic staff	
			% International doctorate degrees	
			Number of International joint publication	
			Number of MOUs with International Institutions.	
			Number of Graduates working in region	
			Number of regional Students internship	
			Regional joint publications	
			Income from regional sources	
			Regional and national labour market trends	
11. REVIEW			Number of management reviews with follow up actions	
			Audit	
			Number of Assessment	
			Second Party Assessment	
TOTAL SCORE	100	100		

Notes

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Appendices

The national accreditation Board National Accreditation Board Requirements Acceptable Minimum Entry Requirements into Tertiary Programmes in Tertiary Educational Institutions in Ghana

1. West African Examinations Council (WAEC) Examinations Category

These are the standard nationally recognised examinations for academic progression into tertiary educational institutions in Ghana.

i. Senior Secondary School Certificate Examinations (SSSCE)

Grade D or better in three (3) core subjects (English Language, Mathematics Core, Integrated Science or social studies and three (3) elective subjects.

ii. West Africa Secondary School Certificate Examinations (WASSCE)

Grade C6 or better in three (3) core subjects (English Language, Mathematics Core, Integrated Science or Social Studies) and three (3) elective subjects.

iii. General Certificate of Examinations (GCE) Advanced Level

Grade E or better in three (3) subjects (at least, one of the passes should be Grade D or better). Also, the applicant must have had credit passes (Grade 6) in five GCE Ordinary Level subjects including English, Mathematics and a Science subject (for non-science students).

iv. Advanced Business Certificate Examination (ABCE)

Grade E or better in three (3) subjects (at least, one of the passes should be Grade D or better). Also, the applicant must have had credit passes (Grade 6) in five (5) subjects including English Language, Mathematics, Integrated Science or Social Studies in the General Business Certificate Examination (GBCE)

2. Higher National Diploma (HND) Qualifications

For institutions willing to admit HND holders, the applicant must have graduated with a good HND certificate (i.e. at least a 2nd Class Lower Division). In addition, the applicant must have acquired a two year post HND qualification working experience. Institutions under mentorship should follow their mentoring institutions 'practice with regard to entry levels for HND applicants.

Other Diploma qualification from elsewhere assessed to be equivalent to HND may be similarly considered (e.g. University Diplomas). It is to be noted that admission requirements to Polytechnics as tertiary education Institutions are the same as those for the Universities.

3. Professional Qualifications

All professional certificates must be referred to the National Accreditation Board for the establishment of their equivalences, to determine their eligibility for admission to tertiary education institutions Universities, University Colleges, Polytechnics etc.

4. Mature Student's Entry

Mature students entry avenues to tertiary education provide opportunities for people who could not do so earlier in their lives to further their education at the tertiary level after some years in the workplace (Preferably, the formal workplace). Such applicants should normally not exceed 5 per cent (for Public Tertiary Education Institutions) and 20 per cent (for Private Tertiary Educational Institutions) of the total admissions of an Institution in a given academic year. The applicant must:

- a) Be at least 25 years old;
- b) Show proof of age with birth certificate or any legitimate documentary proof of birth date which is at least five years old at the time of application;
- c) Provide introductory letter from employer or show any other proof of employment;
- d) Pass Mature Students 'Entrance Examinations conducted by the Institution itself (English Language and Aptitude Test). In the case of Non-chartered Institutions, the examinations should be moderated and the marked scripts, vetted by their Mentor Institutions; In lieu of such examinations the applicant should show proof of credit passes in English and Mathematics in WASSCE or any other nationally recognised standard High School level Examinations (for qualifications from countries outside WAEC's aegis).

5. Foreign Qualifications

All foreign qualifications should be referred to the National Accreditation Board (NAB) for determination of equivalences and eligibility for admission to tertiary Institutions in Ghana. Note should be taken however that the American SAT, TOEFL etc. cannot in themselves be acceptable as entry qualifications into Ghanaian tertiary educational Institutions.

6. Other Entry Qualifications

Any other entry qualifications beyond the ones specified above shall be considered only upon prior approval by National Accreditation Board.

Qualification for Lectureship, Headship of Department, and Faculty Size for a Program

Minimum Qualification

The acceptable minimum qualification for teaching in a tertiary institution is a **Researched masters degree** with a thesis component of not less than one year duration. The conventional global minimum is a terminal degree which is a PhD. All institutions are encouraged to develop their staff to attain terminal degrees. It is a key indicator for programme /institutional Ranking

Minimum Qualification for Headship of a Department

For a person to qualify to Head a Department, he/she must attain the minimum qualification for lectureship and must, at least be rank of **Senior Lecturer**. Previous administrative experience in a comparable position should be an advantage but not a substitute for the academic rank. These are the necessary qualifications to ensure that the person provides the needed and administrative leadership

Minimum Faculty Size to Start a Programme

The minimum number of full time faculty for a programme to start is **three (3)**: the Head of Department and two (2) others. These may be augmented with adjunct/part - time lecturers. For an existing programme however, the acceptable minimum number for full- time faculty is six (6) (NAB Website).

Performance Contracting Pilot Indicators in Ghana, Accra Polytechnic. Specific Indicators and Targets for Assessment (Higher Education Key Performance Indicators, KPIs)

Table: 2.14: Higher Education Key Performance Indicators, (KPIs)

Areas of Interest	Weight	Unit	Performance Indicators	Targets for 2013-2016
Academic	40		Admission and graduation of students	
		1 %	% of applicants who qualify	
		1 %	% of applicants admitted	
		1 Ratio	Ratio of to business students admitted	
		2 %	1 st year retention rate (attrition records)	
		2 %	4 th year graduation rate	
			Graduate performance (10%)	
		4 %	First class	
		3 %	Second class upper	
		2 %	Second class lower	
		1 %	Pass	
			Programmes	
		2 #	Number of programmes	
			Industrial Relation	
		2 %	% of students involved in internship and industrial learning	100
		2 #	Number of signed MOU's with industrial firms	
			ICT/Library	
		2 Ratio	Students to Computer ratio	
		2 #	Library books per programme	
		2 #	Subscribed journals per programme	

Composition of teaching staff (100%)			
	4	%	% of Professors
	3	%	% of Senior lecturers
	1	%	% of Lecturers
	3	%	% of PhD's in academic staff

Areas of Interest	Weight	Unit	Performance Indicators	Targets for 2013-2016
Financial	25			
			Accountability	
	4	GH¢	Average cost per training of student	
	4	%	% of average fee paid per student related to cost of training	
	4	%	% of government subvention of total expenditure excluding developing partners support	
	4	%	% of other sources of revenue, other than fees, to the total IGF	
	4	%	%Administrative Expenditure as a percentage of total expenditure	
			Assurance	
	5	#	Number of adverse audit findings	
Research	20			
	2	%	% of research cost funded by IGF	
	2	%	% of research cost funded by development partners	
	4	%	Total research costs as a % of total recurrent expenditure	
	4	#	Journal publications per year	
	4	#	Peer reviewed conference presentations per year	
	4	#	Registered or published inventions/ innovations per year	
Governance	10			
	2	#	Number of Late submission of marks	
	2	#	Number of Violation of code of ethics by staff	

		2	#	Number of Exam malpractices per year	
		2	#	Number of Question papers/marking scheme submitted late	
		2	#	Number of Courses with late submission of mark	
Community/ Extension services	5				
		2	#	Number of community outreach programmes per year	
		2	%	% of staff involved in outreached programmes	
		1	%	% of students involved in outreached programmes	
Total score	100	100			

Source: Ghana Education Service

Interestingly, academia is divided over aligning educational initiatives and programmes to a national plan or strategy. In a recent interview with some vice chancellors in Ghana, we noted with interest the sharp division in perspectives on whether or not educational programmes, particularly research, should be aligned to national development priorities. Some opined that aligning research and academic programmes to a set of national priorities would restrict innovation, curiosity and undermine the principle of academic freedom, while others held strongly that the need to align academic priorities to national plans is critical.

The Ministry of Education's Research Department prepares the Education Sector Performance Reports (ESPR), which covers a number of strategic indicators and this is highly commendable as it the most instructive and reliable document on educational performance. However, it does not compare performance to expected outputs or targets. The NCTE also collects some data in this respect and that is very commendable, however, there are gaps in the data fields and the indicators are also not consistent. It may be necessary for the MoE to re-examine the objectives of the "Development of Skills for Industry Project (DSIP) and scale it up beyond the TVET system.

It may also be helpful if the NCTE can provide consistent data on supply of academic programmes and research undertaken by higher education institutions in Ghana. Perhaps it will be useful to know what the research outputs are practically doing for Ghana and how many patents Ghana has so far, as research allowances are paid to academics. We need accountability in research, Ghana's research should offer value for money and lessons can be learnt from South Africa and other leading nations in various fields.

