

# **ZAMBIA STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION (ZSG-QA)**

**April 2021**



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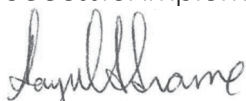
## FOREWORD

Since the liberalisation of the higher education sector by the Government of the Republic of Zambia in the early 1990s, Zambia has witnessed unprecedented growth in higher education as evidenced by the increase in the number of both public and private Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). While the increase in the number of HEIs has played a critical role in increasing access to higher education, it has had its own challenges. One of the major challenges has been how to strike a balance between growth and achieving quality education that meets the needs of the learners and society at large. A particularly problematic issue has been how to define, measure and monitor quality in the absence of enforceable national standards and guidelines for higher education.

To address this gap, and fulfil its mandate of setting standards for quality assurance in higher education in Zambia, the Higher Education Authority has developed the Zambia Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ZSG-QA). The Standards and Guidelines represent the first ever national standards for the higher education sector and have been developed in line with the requirements of the Higher Education Act No.4 of 2013 as defined in section 6.

The ZSG-QA, which have been benchmarked against international best practices, including the African Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ASG-QA), provide a shared understanding of quality in higher education and allow for monitoring and evaluation of HEIs based on a common set of parameters.

The Ministry of Higher Education welcomes these standards and expects that their implementation will, among other things, promote good governance of HEIs, foster development of quality learning programmes and promote the development of student-centred teaching and learning in the sector. Ultimately, it is hoped that the ZSG-QA will play a vital role in guiding HEIs to produce graduates that are professionally competent and internationally competitive. The Government of the Republic of Zambia will thus endeavour to provide all the necessary support to ensure successful implementation of the standards and guidelines.



Mrs. Kayula Siame  
**Permanent Secretary**  
**Ministry of Higher Education**

## PREFACE

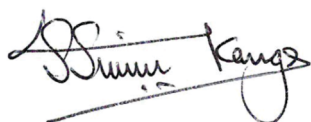
The Higher Education Authority has developed the Zambia Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ZSG-QA) as a response to the need for a set of minimum standards for quality assurance in higher education in Zambia. The guidelines are aimed at fostering a culture of quality among higher education institutions in Zambia and provide a shared understanding of quality in the higher education sector. They provide a frame of reference for higher education institutions in the development and implementation of their own internal quality assurance systems.

The road to the development of the ZSG-QA involved a number of activities. These included background research on regional, continental, and global higher education practices, technical committee meetings and stakeholder consultations. The development was spearheaded by a committee of experts drawn from the Higher Education Authority, the Ministry of Higher Education and higher education institutions. Consultations with HEIs and other key stakeholders were conducted through validation meetings which were held in Lusaka and Ndola in order to allow for wide participation in the process.

In order to ensure that the higher education sector in Zambia develops in tandem with continental developments in higher education, the ZSG-QA has been aligned to the Africa Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ASG – QA). The guidelines have been further benchmarked against international best practices from the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) region and other global actors in higher education.

The ZSG-QA are framed around a set of 15 essential areas that are critical to achieving quality and developing a robust higher education sector. These include institutional vision and mission, governance and management, learning programmes, teaching and learning, financial resources and physical and technological infrastructure. By focusing on these core areas, the Authority is hopeful that the quality of education in Zambia will be greatly enhanced as HEIs develop a culture of quality. This will, in turn, ensure that higher education institutions produce well skilled human resource that will contribute positively to the socioeconomic development of the country.

The ZSG-QA are for use by both HEA and HEIs. The Higher Education Authority will use the standards in external quality assurance processes such as registration of HEIs, institutional audits, learning programme accreditation and classification of higher education institutions. Higher Education Institutions, on the other hand, will use the guidelines in the development of internal quality assurance mechanisms and conducting self-assessments for institutional audits, classification and learning programme accreditation. Thus, the ZSG-QA will apply to all public and private HEIs established under the Higher Education Act No. 4 of 2013.



Prof. Stephen Simukanga  
**Director General**  
**Higher Education Authority**

## Definition of Key Terms

“Accreditation” means the evaluation and recognition of learning programmes to ensure that they meet the necessary quality requirements;

“Affiliated institution” means a college or higher education institution affiliated to a public or private higher education institution in accordance with the Higher Education Act;

“Authority” means the Higher Education Authority;

“Constituent College” means a college or institution, school or faculty declared by statutory order or by registration, as a constituent college or institution of a higher education institution in accordance with the Higher Education Act;

“Council” means the Council of a higher education institution established in accordance with the Higher Education Act;

“Credit” means a measurement of the quantity or volume of learning of a module, course, or programme of study;

“Department” means a teaching or research unit of a higher education institution recognised as a component of a school;

“Higher education” means tertiary education leading to the qualification of a diploma, Bachelor’s Degree, Master’s Degree or Doctorate Degree;

“Higher Education Institution” means an institution that is registered or established under the Higher Education Act and provides higher education on a full-time, part-time or distance learning basis;

“Learner” means a person who is enrolled and receiving knowledge, skill, or competence at a higher education institution;

“Learning Programme” means a process by which learners acquire knowledge, skills and competence, or a course of study or instruction, apprenticeship, training, and employment;

“Librarian” means the person appointed Librarian of a higher education institution responsible for the development, control, management, and coordination of library services;

“Qualification” means the formal recognition of a learner’s achievement of the required number and range of credits or other requirements at a specified level of the National Qualifications Framework;

“quality assurance” means providing tangible evidence to demonstrate compliance with standards of relevant education which are accepted and recognised by employers and other educational institutions nationally and internationally;

“School” means an academic unit of a higher education institution in which teaching, learning, study, and research are pursued;

“Senate” means the Senate of a higher education institution as provided in the Higher Education Act;

“Statutes” means the rules governing a higher education institution;

“Students’ affairs unit” means a unit responsible for students’ affairs;

“University” means a higher education institution which provides learning programmes leading to award of degrees and postgraduate qualifications and engages in research and innovation in various academic disciplines.

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## Introduction

Since independence, higher education has been recognized as key to realising Zambia's vision of a prosperous country through production of well qualified and skilled human resources for various sectors of the economy. This role of higher education is well articulated in the Seventh National Development Plan which notes that access to quality, equitable and inclusive education is crucial to the country's human capital development. The value attached to higher education by government is further re-affirmed in the National Higher Education Policy of 2019 which has prioritized increased access to higher education and enhancement of its quality in order to meet national development aspirations.

Over the past three decades, increased access to higher education, which has been a hallmark of national development plans and policies has been achieved through establishment of new public and private HEIs. These efforts, in turn, have been instrumental in increasing higher education enrolment and graduation rates.

While high enrolment and graduation rates are crucial to meeting the country's human resource needs, these are only one side of the coin in the quest to develop the country's human capital necessary for achieving a wealthy country status. The other side of the coin, which has continued to be a major challenge, is how to ensure that the sector provides quality education that is fit for purpose and is responsive to learners, employers and societal aspirations. It is critical that higher education produces high quality and skilled human resources with capacity to identify opportunities and develop innovative means of exploring the country's vast natural and cultural resources for national development.

In order to achieve this goal of providing relevant and quality education, it is necessary that higher education institutions embrace a culture of quality. In the context of Zambia, which has diverse types of higher education institutions, a culture of quality can best be fostered through national quality standards that espouse societal expectations of higher education and provide a framework for regulating institutions based on comparable standards. Until now, however, the country's higher education sector has had no consolidated national quality standards.

Arising from this gap, and in line with its statutory mandate, the Higher Education Authority has developed standards and guidelines to provide a shared understanding of quality among stakeholders in the sector. The guidelines are based on the *African Standards and Guidelines (ASG)* and have been benchmarked against regional and global best practices.

These standards and guidelines for HEIs in Zambia shall be used for registration of HEIs, institutional audits, and accreditation of learning programmes. These standards and guidelines shall be used by HEIs for development of their internal quality assurance frameworks.

### **Aim of the Guidelines.**

The ultimate goal of the national standards and guidelines is to foster a culture of quality among higher education institutions by providing a framework to guide institutionalisation of quality assurance mechanisms.

### **Objectives.**

The specific objectives of the Zambia Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ZSG-QA) in higher education are:

1. to provide a common framework and shared understanding of quality assurance systems for teaching and learning among HEIs and other stakeholders
2. to provide a basis for quality improvement in higher education through institutional audits and assessments and learning programme accreditation
3. to guide HEIs in the development and implementation of good internal quality assurance systems and practices
4. to promote mutual trust among HEIs, thus facilitating recognition and mobility of students and academic staff within the higher education sector
5. to promote international competitiveness of Zambia's higher education system

### **Application of the ZSG-QA.**

The standards shall be cited as Zambia Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in higher education (ZSG-QA) and shall apply to:

1. higher education institutions established and registered under the Higher Education Act,
2. constituent colleges of higher education institutions,
3. institutions affiliated to established and registered higher education institutions, and
4. higher education institutions engaged in Open Distance and e-Learning (ODEL).

# **Zambia Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ZSG – QA)**

The ZSG-QA has been developed on the premise that HEIs have the primary responsibility for quality assurance in teaching and related activities. The ZSG-QA will guide HEIs in developing robust quality assurance systems. In this regard, the standards and guidelines focus on the following essential areas critical to the development of quality assurance mechanism in HEIs:

- a) vision, mission, and strategy.
- b) Governance.
- c) learning programmes.
- d) teaching, learning and assessment.
- e) staffing.
- f) physical infrastructure.
- g) library services and resources.
- h) financial resources.
- i) health and safety.
- j) research and innovation.
- k) technological infrastructure.
- l) quality assurance implementation.
- m) public communication.
- n) collaboration and public services.



## 1.0: Vision, Mission and Strategy

### 1.1 Standard:

**A higher education institution shall have published vision and mission statements that reflect its commitment to quality enhancement.**

#### 1.1.1 Guidelines:

A higher education institution shall ensure that:

- a) the Vision statement shall clearly outline what the HEI aspires to be;
- b) the Mission statement shall incorporate elements of the HEI's purpose and values, succinctly describing why it exists and what it does to achieve its vision;
- c) the vision and mission statements are publicly disclosed and prominently displayed;
- d) the vision and mission statements reflect commitment to quality enhancement; and
- e) Statements of Vision and Mission are translated into key documents (e.g. Strategic Plans/ Operational Plan, Quality Assurance Policy, Statutes) of the HEI.

### 1.2 Standard:

**A higher education institution shall have short, medium, and long-term plans and strategic objectives that are consistent with its vision and mission to ensure sustainability and quality enhancement.**

#### 1.2.1 Guidelines:

- a) A higher education institution shall have at least a 10-year Master Plan that outlines its physical, academic, financial, and human capital development aspirations.
- b) A higher education institution shall have at least a 5-year strategic plan that reflects its vision and mission and inter alia outlines its overall development including, but not limited to learning programmes, physical facilities, student enrolment, staff and staff development, research, and community service.
- c) The strategic plan of a higher education institution shall have an implementation framework and means of monitoring and evaluation.
- d) The formulation of the strategic plans shall be collegial with involvement of all staff of the HEI and shall promote a high degree of institutional integrity and responsiveness to change and shall be known to stakeholders.

- e) The HEI's short, medium, and long-term objectives shall reflect the programmes being offered, as well as the institution's research and innovation focus to ensure sustainability and continuous improvement;

## 2.0 Governance and Management

### 2.1 Standard:

**A higher education institution shall have defined governance and management statutes and structures that ensure sound and ethical governance and management of the institution. The governance and management of the institution shall be in line with the Higher Education Act.**

#### 2.1.1 Guidelines

A higher education institution shall ensure that:

- a) it adopts statutes to govern its administration and shall lodge a copy of the statutes with the Authority;
- b) the statutes shall provide the regulatory framework for the HEI and prescribe details related to the membership and powers of governance bodies such as the Council, Management Boards, Senate and Board of Studies. The statutes shall also:
  - i. provide details on appointment of officers of the higher education institution,
  - ii. provide clear organisational and administrative charts showing the interrelationships of the various organs and offices,
  - iii. deal with ethical issues in matters concerning appointment, and promotion of officers of the HEI and the constitution of governance bodies/committees.
- c) has qualified, competent and experienced leadership to oversee the development and management of a quality culture within the institution (see appendix I for detailed qualifications of management staff;
- d) has relevant governance and management bodies in line with the Higher Education Act, that is, the University Council, Senate, Management Board, Student Body, and various committees, each with a clear mandate, duties, responsibilities, powers, privileges and tenure;
- e) has clear communication systems and networks for the promotion of internal and external information dissemination for public accountability;
- f) has policies and procedures for the delegation of authority;
- g) has policies that enable students to participate in the governance of the HEI;
- h) promotes institutional integrity and responsiveness by advocating and demonstrating honesty and non-discrimination in its treatment of staff, students and members of the public and in the management of institutional affairs;
- i) has disciplinary code of conduct for staff and students and has systematic, timely and fair processes for the investigation of complaints, grievances and appeals by students, staff and other stakeholders;

- j) communicates revisions to the code of ethics to the Authority within three months of such changes; and
- k) notifies the Authority within 30 days of any significant changes in governance, ownership or control, location, facilities or learning programmes.

## **2.2 Standard:**

**A higher education institution shall ensure that there is clear separation of powers between the governing organs.**

### **2.2.1 Guidelines**

A higher education institution shall ensure that:

- a) there is clear separation of powers between the governing organs, and in particular, no one person shall head two organs whose relationship is oversight in nature;
- b) the Chairperson of a Council shall not be Chairperson of Senate; and
- c) the Chairperson of a College Management Board shall not be the Chairperson of the Board of Studies.

## 3.0 Learning Programmes

### 3.1 Standard:

**A higher education institution shall have learning programmes that meet aspirations and needs of learners and society and that are commensurate with national, regional, and international standards.**

#### 3.1.1 Guidelines

A higher education institution shall ensure that it:

- a) has policies, procedures, and processes for introducing, amending and phasing out learning programmes;
- b) reviews learning programmes every 3-5 years;
- c) has learning programmes that are in line with its mission and objectives and address the expectations and needs of stakeholders;
- d) has learning programmes that are relevant, up to date and adequate in content and scope;
- e) has learning programmes that promote core content, ideas, values and the acquisition of employability and entrepreneurial skills;
- f) has learning programmes that incorporate some work-related learning such as attachment, internship, and traineeship;
- g) has learning programmes that incorporate emerging issues such as climate change and other sustainability issues;
- h) ensures that learning programme structures and credit units are in accordance with national and international qualifications requirements;
- i) has effective mechanisms for stakeholder participation in curriculum design, review, and validation, including feedback from students, alumni and employers;
- j) has policies guiding the formulation of learning outcomes for each learning programme and ensure that the programme specifications are accessible to learners or stakeholders;
- k) has structures and procedures for the approval of learning programmes by relevant bodies, such as the Board of Studies, Senate, professional bodies (where applicable) and Higher Education Authority;
- l) has learning programmes that are delivered by adequate and qualified staff with at least six (6) months of pedagogical training from a recognised institution;
- m) has appropriate formal agreements for all learning programmes offered in partnership with other institutions, specifying in detail the roles and responsibilities of both partners, including teaching commitments and quality assurance arrangements;

- n) submits for accreditation, any learning programme that it offers in collaboration with a partner institution (local or foreign). Such a learning programme shall be treated as being offered jointly;
- o) only hosts learning programmes from foreign HEIs that are recognised or registered in their home countries;
- p) ensures that the formulated learning outcomes are benchmarked against level descriptors of the national qualification framework;
- q) ensures that at least one external examiner is appointed for each learning programme to provide external quality assurance; and
- r) maintains records of external examiners' reports for each learning programme.

### **3.2 Standard:**

**A higher education institution shall offer a minimum of three accredited learning programmes, except in special circumstances permitted by the Authority.**

#### **3.2.1 Guidelines:**

- a) All learning programmes of the higher education institution shall be accredited by the Authority;
- b) except where special approval has been obtained from the Authority, an HEI shall not offer less than three (3) accredited learning programmes;
- c) A learning programme of the higher education institution shall only be offered after the entire accreditation process is complete;
- d) The evaluation process of a learning programme shall only commence once the higher education institution has met the requirements for submission of learning programmes. These requirements shall include but not limited to the following:
  - i. the submitted learning programme is in line with form II of Statutory Instrument No. 25 of 2016,
  - ii. a needs assessment and stakeholder engagement report on the proposed learning programme,
  - iii. evidence of approval by the Senate, and in the case of a college, the Board of Studies,
  - iv. proof of financial resources to support the learning programme,
  - v. an approved institutional quality assurance framework or policy,
  - vi. where a learning programme requires approval from a professional body, evidence of such approval shall be provided to the Authority, and
  - vii. a learning programme shall be considered new, thus warranting re-accreditation, if the content is more than 30% different from the accredited programme.

### **3.3 Standard:**

**A higher education institution shall align the structure of learning programmes to HEA standards and conform to national qualifications requirements.**

#### **3.3.1 Guidelines:**

- a) Learning programmes shall carry the following minimum notional hours and credits:
  - i. a certificate programme (ZQF 5) - 1200 notional hours (120 credits),
  - ii. a diploma programme (ZQF 6) - 3600 notional hours (360 credits),
  - iii. a bachelor's programme (ZQF 7) - 4800 notional hours (480 credits),
  - iv. a postgraduate diploma (ZQF 8) - 1200 notional hours (120 credits),
  - v. a master's programme (ZQF 9) - 1800 notional hours (180 credits), and
  - vi. a doctorate programme (ZQF 10) - 3600 notional hours (540 credits).
- b) Each HEI shall clearly define programme learning hours and total number of courses in relation to the academic calendar. The academic calendar, except in unique circumstances, shall be based on a semester system comprising two (2) divisions/terms of between 15 -18 weeks in an academic year;
- c) A standard semester course shall have a minimum of one hundred and fifty (150) notional hours or fifteen (15) credits;
- d) A standard course that runs throughout the academic year shall have a minimum of three hundred (300) notional hours (30 credits);
- e) Each HEI shall have a course code policy.

### **3.4 Standard:**

**A higher education institution shall provide minimum admission requirements for every learning programme in line with its admissions policy.**

#### **3.4.1 Guidelines:**

HEIs shall set up the programme admission requirements for learning programmes on offer in line with national standards. The minimum admission requirements into the following levels of study shall be:

- a) Certificate, Diploma and Bachelor's degree;
  - i. 5 credits or better in five subjects. The combination of subjects required for admission shall depend on the nature of the learning programme applied for,
  - ii. any other equivalence as determined by the appropriate Authority, and
  - iii. HEIs admission policy shall take into consideration A-Levels and prior learning.

- b) Postgraduate diploma and master's degree, the minimum shall be a bachelor's degree or its equivalency; and
- c) Doctorate, the minimum shall be master's degree or its equivalency.

**3.5 Standard: A learning programme shall have at least one (1) appropriately qualified programme coordinator and an adequate number of appropriately qualified full-time academic staff.**

#### **3.5.1 Guidelines:**

- a) Each learning programme shall be coordinated by an appropriately qualified academic staff employed as a full-time lecturer;
- b) The minimum ratio of full-time to part-time academic staff members shall be 3:2;
- c) The minimum academic qualifications of academic staff to teach in any learning programme shall be at least one level above that of the learning programme as follows:
  - i. Certificate: Appropriate diploma qualification,
  - ii. Diploma: Appropriate Bachelor's degree,
  - iii. Bachelor's Level: Appropriate Master's Degree,
  - iv. Postgraduate diploma: Appropriate Master's Degree,
  - v. Master's Level: Appropriate Doctoral Degree, and
  - vi. Doctorate Level: Appropriate Doctorate degree, with evidence of research experience.
- d) The maximum lecturer: student ratio for each course shall be 1:50, however, exceptions can be made for courses taken by all students in a school or across schools. For such courses, the HEI shall ensure that it provides sufficient tutors for tutorials and has provisions for e-learning.
- e) An academic staff shall be assigned to supervise students' thesis/dissertation based on a combination of his or her teaching load, administrative duties, supervision experience and capacity to supervise. The maximum number of students an academic staff shall supervise in any given academic year shall be:
  - i. Undergraduate - 8
  - ii. Master's - 5
  - iii. Doctorate - 3



- f) The maximum lecturer-workload shall be 40 hours per week and shall include teaching, research, public service, and administrative work.

### **3.6 Standard:**

**A higher education institution shall support its learning programmes with relevant study resources.**

#### **3.6.1 Guidelines:**

A higher education institution shall ensure that:

- a) each course of a given learning programme shall be supported by relevant core texts and references recommended for further reading, which shall comprise of both print and electronic books and journals;
- b) a maximum of three (3) prescribed core texts are assigned to every given course, except for research based programmes;
- c) a list of recommended texts is assigned to every given course;
- d) it adopts referencing styles in accordance with the requirements of each learning programme; and
- e) the library is stocked with appropriate reference materials for each learning programme in print and/ or electronic.

### **3.7 Standard:**

**A higher education institution shall support its learning programmes with appropriate and adequate number of facilities and equipment.**

#### **3.7.1 Guidelines:**

- a) Dedicated, adequate and relevant number of facilities and equipment shall be available for the support of a given Learning Programme and shall include but not limited to lecture rooms /theatre, seminar/tutorial rooms and for practical based courses appropriate laboratory facilities for each learning programme; and
- b) A rotation plan shall be available for facilities and equipment that are shared among several other learning programmes.

### **3.8 Standard:**

**A Learning Programme offered at an affiliated institution shall lead to a joint qualification.**

#### **3.8.1 Guidelines:**

- a) Where an HEI affiliates a college or any other institution for the purpose of offering a learning programme, it shall be the responsibility of the HEI to submit

the learning programme to be offered at the affiliated institution for accreditation to the Authority;

- b) An affiliated higher education institution, shall under the arrangement in (a) above only offer the level of qualification for which it was established or registered;
- c) The Senate of the established or registered higher education institution shall ensure that examination papers, scripts and results of the affiliated institution are moderated in the areas of study for which the established or registered education institution provides certification; and
- d) The qualifications of the affiliated institution, for which certification is granted by the established or registered higher education institution shall be joint qualifications. The qualifications shall be awarded at a special ceremony to be held at the affiliated institution with the participation of the established or registered higher education institution's representatives.

## 4.0 Teaching, Learning and Assessment

### 4.1 Standard:

**A higher education institution shall have policies and procedures that promote learning and acquisition of appropriate knowledge, competencies and skills; and assure fair and transparent assessment.**

#### 4.1.1 Guidelines:

Teaching and learning, whether conventional or through ODeL, are core activities of an HEI. Therefore, it is important that the academic staff ensure quality student experience to enable the students to acquire appropriate knowledge, competences, and skills. Thus, an HEI shall ensure that:

- a) it has its own teaching and learning policy that reflects its teaching and learning philosophy and approaches;
- b) it has a Board of Examiners and/ or examinations committees to provide oversight on matters pertaining to examinations;
- c) the teaching, learning and assessment strategies are student-centred and flexible;
- d) the teaching, learning and assessment strategies stimulate students' self-reflection and engagement in the learning process;
- e) the teaching and learning environment (e.g., classrooms, laboratories, library etc.) and resources (e.g., study resources, teaching and learning equipment etc) are appropriate and adequate to support each student;
- f) there are systems in place for periodic monitoring, assessment and evaluation of the teaching and learning approaches for quality improvement; and
- g) there are mechanisms for students to provide feedback on their learning experience (e.g., through student satisfaction surveys, student evaluation of lecturers).

#### **In the case of Open Distance and e-Learning (ODeL):**

- h) the decision on the medium of delivery shall consider the following:
  - i. accessibility to the learners,
  - ii. cost of using it, both by the institution and the learners,
  - iii. teaching strengths in relation to specific content,
  - iv. the training of academic staff in relation to the chosen medium of delivery,
  - v. its capacity in creating inter-activity,
  - vi. organisational requirements for development,
  - vii. its novelty, and
  - viii. speed within which it can be set up.
- i) there is a residential school policy, where applicable.

## 4.2. Standard:

**A higher education institution shall have assessment standards and procedures that are explicit and made available to students and staff.**

### 4.2.1 Guidelines

A higher education institution shall ensure that:

- a) student assessment is carried out in a professional manner;
- b) assessment procedures shall be published and consistently applied, and shall include:
  - i. a range of assessment methods (e.g., coursework, projects, dissertation, seminar presentations and examinations to serve continuous summative assessment purposes),
  - ii. internal and external moderation,
  - iii. invigilation procedures,
  - iv. monitoring of student progress,
  - v. validity and reliability of assessment practices,
  - vi. recording of assessment results and settling of disputes, and
  - vii. rigour and security of assessment system;
- c) assessment standards are spelled out for each learning programme and are competence or outcomes-based, where applicable;
- d) assessment is carried out by competent and impartial examiners;
- e) the Integrity of examinations and award of qualifications are safeguarded;
- f) there is regular objective feedback to students on their strengths and weaknesses, and appropriate counselling support for improvement;
- g) there is a disciplinary process for erring students;
- h) there is an appeals process for students who may feel aggrieved;
- i) there is a quality assurance handbook/policy, which is known to staff and students.

## 5.0 Learner Support Systems

### 5.1 Standard

**A higher education institution shall have pre-defined, accessible, and consistently applied policies and procedures that ensure fair and equitable recruitment, admission, progression, certification, and support services through all phases of the student's lifecycle.**

#### 5.1.1 Guidelines:

- a) A higher education institution shall have clear guidelines and strategies:
  - i. for marketing the institution and its learning programmes, recruitment, admission, selection and registration of students;
  - ii. that promote diversity in admission, including gender mainstreaming and consideration of disadvantaged groups and persons with disabilities, where applicable;
  - iii. that ensure that students admitted meet minimum general and programme specific entry requirements;
  - iv. that ensure monitoring, evaluation, and benchmarking for improvement of enrolment management;
  - v. that guarantee continual collection and compilation of data on students' admission, progress and performance, and graduation rates;
  - vi. that promote student retention and progression, and address issues concerning drop-out rates;
  - vii. that ensure rigorous processes for issuance and storage of certificates; and
  - viii. that ensure storage of detailed records and transcripts, indicating the list of courses and credits.
- b) A higher education institution shall have clear policies and strategies:
  - i. for promoting gender equality and the welfare of differently abled persons, and
  - ii. for wellness including issues of mental health, communicable and non-communicable diseases.

### 5.2 Standard:

**A higher education institution shall provide student services that are commensurate with the student population and promote the highest standards of teaching and learning.**

#### 5.2.1 Guidelines:

The student support services shall include but not limited to recreation facilities, counselling services, sickbay, accommodation, and student canteen. There shall be clear memoranda of agreements on hired or outsourced student services and HEIs

shall provide adequate facilities and services that specifically support student academic life as follows:

#### **5.2.1.1 Accommodation**

- a) An HEI shall provide information on accommodation to students;
- b) Where an HEI is not in proximity to an area where it is possible to lease student accommodation, the HEI shall provide such facilities;
- c) There shall be separate accommodation for male and female students;
- d) All accommodation facilities shall meet the requirements of the Local Authority building standards and the Public Health Act;
- e) The minimum total floor area per student shall be:
  - i. Eight square meters (8m<sup>2</sup>) for a single room,
  - ii. Twelve square metres (12m<sup>2</sup>) for a double student room,
  - iii. Fifteen square metres (15m<sup>2</sup>) for four student room.
- f) Every student room shall be well-lit and ventilated;
- g) The accommodation premises shall be well secured (e.g., have security guards, security lights, secure doors, and perimeter fence);
- h) Where self-catering accommodation is provided, the kitchen area shall have suitable cooking equipment, refrigeration, and floor space of one square metre (1.5m<sup>2</sup>) per student occupant;
- i) There shall be appropriate laundry and drying facilities for students;
- j) There shall be appropriate furniture and fittings for the rooms as follows:
  - i. a bed (90cm X 191cm) with free space between the beds of over 1m,
  - ii. lockable closet,
  - iii. reading table and chair for each occupant.

#### **5.2.1.2 Cafeteria**

- a) Where an HEI is not in close proximity to where students can buy food, a higher education institution shall have a cafeteria.
- b) A cafeteria shall have adequate light, ventilation, good cooking facilities and efficient services to cater for students;
- c) The cafeteria shall meet public health standards outlined in the Public Health Act; and
- d) The facility shall be clean and in good state of repair;
- e) The following shall be the minimum space requirements:
  - i. a minimum food preparation area of 0.5 m<sup>2</sup> per food handler,
  - ii. dining space with a floor area of at least 1m<sup>2</sup> per student per feeding session,
  - iii. dish washing and serving area, and
  - iv. storage area with working refrigeration facilities or cold rooms

#### **5.2.1.3 Recreational facilities**

A higher education institution shall provide indoor and outdoor recreational facilities at their established or registered premises.

#### **5.2.1.4 Health support services**

higher education institution shall have a sickbay and minimum first aid services with qualified personnel to cater for minor ailments and emergencies.

#### **5.2.1.5 Academic support**

- a) A higher education institution shall have in place a system of educational, occupational, and personal advice/guidance to students and such a system shall be responsive to academic and socioeconomic characteristics of the students;
- b) A higher education institution shall provide personalised learning opportunities through a tutorial/seminar system for groups and for individual students;
- c) Adequate provisions shall be made for information and advice to potential students during the application and enrolment phases;

#### **5.2.1.6 Guidance and Counselling Services**

- a) A higher education institution shall have policies and guidelines for the promotion of staff and students' health and social well-being; and
- b) A higher education institution shall have a guidance and counselling unit with qualified guidance and counselling staff.

#### **5.2.1.7 Open Distance and e-Learning (ODEL) Support Services**

- a) A higher education institution shall have policies and guidelines for use of virtual learning platforms;
- b) A higher education institution shall provide access to electronic books and journal resources to students and staff;
- c) A higher education institution shall provide staff and students' access to online learning platforms;
- d) A higher education institution shall have reliable internet facilities to facilitate learning processes;
- e) Purely ODeL institutions (non-dual institutions) shall ensure that students are provided with the means to access learning platforms and electronic journal and book resources;
- f) A higher education institution shall provide ICT support to both staff and students;
- g) A higher education institution shall have an ICT unit staffed with qualified personnel;

- h) Purely ODeL institutions (non-dual institutions) shall have facilities (e.g., studios) for development of learning and teaching materials/ resources such as video and audio recordings. Studios shall be staffed with skilled personnel;
- i) A higher education institution shall have mechanisms for students to provide feedback on their learning experience; and
- j) The HEI shall have the following in place:
  - i. a help desk or toll-free line to address student queries or complaints, and
  - ii. a system for Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), which should be assessed, and feedback given to students and the public.



## 6.0 Staffing and Training

### 6.1 Standard:

**A higher education institution shall have policies on human resources that are inclusive, and that ensure recruitment and retention of adequate numbers of qualified and competent staff to achieve its mission.**

#### 6.1.1 Guidelines:

A higher education institution shall ensure that:

- a) it has clear policies and procedures that ensure equal opportunities and actual gender equality in human resources for recruitment, retention, and promotion of staff that is based on qualification, competence, and skills;
- b) it has full-time staff and keeps up-to-date records of staff numbers, qualifications, and employment turnover rates;
- c) it has clear policies, plans and procedures for continuous staff development;
- d) it has clear contractual agreements with staff that outline the conditions of employment and are aligned with the Employment Code Act of Zambia;
- e) recruitment and retention of academic staff shall be based primarily on academic qualifications and experience appropriate to the field an academic staff would be required to teach or research;
- f) academic and key support staff possess qualifications awarded by registered/recognised institutions;
- g) it retains validated/verified copies of academic certificates from the appropriate national qualification Authority that qualify academic and key support staff to assigned duties;
- h) academic and key support staff shall be engaged on well-defined terms and conditions of service. Such terms and conditions shall be in conformity with the Employment Code Act of Zambia;
- i) it engages adequate numbers of suitably qualified key support staff for effective functioning of the higher education institution;
- j) it undertakes periodic performance appraisal of staff.
- k) it shall have clear policies and strategies:
  - i. for promoting staff welfare, gender equality and differently abled persons, and
  - ii. for promoting staff wellness.

## **6.2 Standard:**

**A higher education institution shall promote academic staff based on the guidelines contained in the “Classification of Academic Ranks and general Promotions Criteria for Higher Education Institutions in Zambia”.**

### **6.2.1 Guidelines:**

- a) a higher education institution shall develop appointment and promotions policies and procedures based on the guidelines in the “Classification of Academic Ranks and general Promotions Criteria for Higher Education Institutions in Zambia”; and
- b) a higher education institution shall appoint and promote academic staff based on the approved appointment and promotion criteria.

## 7.0 Physical Infrastructure

### 7.1 Standard:

**A higher education institution shall have adequate and appropriate infrastructure, facilities, and resources to support teaching, learning, research and innovation.**

#### 7.1.1 Guidelines:

- a) As a minimum, a higher education institution shall have the following facilities:
  - i. lecture theatres and rooms,
  - ii. Staff offices,
  - iii. Conference or seminar rooms,
  - iv. library,
  - v. sports (sports field and hall) and other recreation facilities,
  - vi. water reticulation and sanitation system,
  - vii. ICT infrastructure,
  - viii. practicum facilities, where applicable,
  - ix. student accommodation, where applicable,
  - x. cafeteria,
  - xi. bookstore,
  - xii. a sickbay and for medical universities, a teaching clinic,
  - xiii. fire assembly points and fire extinguishing facilities,
  - xiv. stable source of energy
  - xv. parking facilities,
  - xvi. facilities for special needs.
- b) At initial registration, an HEI shall be allowed to either lease or use own premises as long as it is suitable for teaching and learning purposes. However, after five (5) years of operation, an HEI shall have its own premises;
- c) After five years of operation, an HEI shall submit a land ownership plan of its premises;
- d) The land on which the HEI's premises shall be developed shall be at least five (5) hectares for urban based HEIs and at least 10 hectares for rural based HEIs;
- e) The land shall be registered in the name of the higher education institution;
- f) Institutions operating in rented premises shall have a lease agreement of a minimum of three years;
- g) Any building designed and constructed for use as a higher education institution building or any building altered or extended so as to be used as a university or college must be approved by the respective Local Authority;
- h) All buildings and other physical facilities used by a higher education institution shall have:

- i. certificate of occupation from the Local Authority for the newly constructed or altered buildings, and
  - ii. approved architectural and structural drawings of the complete and proposed buildings.
- i) In determining the adequacy of lecture rooms and laboratories, the minimum floor area per student shall be as specified in Appendix II.

## **7.2 Standard:**

**A Higher Education Institution shall have principal offices which shall be the administrative hub of the institution.**

### **7.2.1 Guidelines:**

- a) An HEI shall have an administration block that will inter alia, have the offices of principal officers and other key management staff;
- b) The administrative block of an HEI shall have facilities that are adequate to support administrative functions;
- c) Where the administrative offices are located on premises other than where teaching and learning takes place, the HEI shall seek the approval of the Authority;
- d) The principal offices shall have suitable signage for visibility and easy of location;
- e) The principal offices shall have communication facilities such as office telephone line and internet connectivity.

## **7.3 Standard:**

**A higher education institution's teaching and learning facilities shall be located in an environment that is conducive.**

### **7.3.1 Guidelines:**

- a) A higher education institution's teaching and learning facilities shall not be located in areas that could be harmful to the health of students. These comprise but are not limited to dumping sites and quarries;
- b) A higher education institution's teaching and learning facilities shall not be located in areas that can be a disturbance to learning such as bars, night clubs, bus stations, malls, supermarket premises and markets;

## **7.4 Standard:**

**A higher education institution's premises shall be easily accessible by students, staff and the public.**

### **7.4.1 Guidelines:**

- a) A higher education institution shall ensure that it is accessible through motorable access road;
- b) A higher education institution shall have suitable signage for visibility to the public (e.g., along the road leading to the HEI);
- c) A higher education institution shall have facilities' location map at the entrance of its premises;
- d) A higher education institution shall maintain proper signage in all its facilities as to assure ease of movement.

#### **7.5 Standard:**

**A building used for a higher education institution activity shall have sufficient provisions to cater for the differently abled persons.**

##### **7.5.1 Guidelines:**

- a) A lift, a ramp or other means shall be provided to enable access to the facilities by the differently abled; and
- b) Suitable toilets shall be provided for the differently abled persons.

#### **7.6 Standard:**

**A higher education institution shall provide adequate office space to accommodate academic and non-academic staff.**

##### **7.6.1 Guidelines:**

- a) An HEI shall ensure that it has adequate office space to accommodate academic and non-academic staff.

#### **7.7 Standard:**

**A higher education institution conducting courses requiring the use of laboratories or specialised facilities as part of instructional facilities shall, in addition to providing lecture rooms or lecture theatres, provide suitable laboratory facilities.**

##### **7.7.1 Guidelines:**

- a) Practicum sites, Laboratories and equipment used in a programme shall be in conformity with the standards and requirements of the relevant professional bodies (e.g., EIZ, HPCZ, GNC etc.);
- b) Basic science laboratories shall have room for instructional workstations and each workstation shall, where possible adhere to the specifications contained in Appendix III;
- c) Every laboratory shall have provision of storage and preparatory rooms; and

- d) Learning programmes that are largely field based such as agricultural sciences and forestry shall also have demonstration plots or sites.

### **7.8 Standard:**

**A higher education institution offering Creative Arts and Design shall have the relevant studios, laboratories, and workshops.**

#### **7.8.1 Guidelines:**

A higher education institution offering Creative Arts and Design learning programmes shall provide:

- a) studios for drawing from life, general drawing, basic design painting, films, graphic photography and print, painting, textile and fashion design, sculpture, dance and choreography etc;
- b) laboratories for pottery, glass design and technology, silversmithing, blacksmithing and jewellery, musicology, photography etc; and
- c) workspace for calligraphy, woodcarving, sculpture, landscape architecture and such other facilities as may be specified by the Authority.

### **7.9 Standard:**

**A higher education institution offering Mass Communication, Journalism and related programmes shall have facilities with adequate space for print, electronic and digital media programming and production.**

#### **7.9.1 Guidelines:**

- a) A higher education institution shall provide laboratories for creative multimedia; animation, modelling and imaging, video and motion-graphics, interactive web design, audio editing/mixer and print editing;
- b) A higher education institution shall have suitable facility for reporting, writing and production; and
- c) The requirements in (a) and (b) above will be dependent on specific learning programmes offered by the HEI.

## 8.0 Library Services and Resources

### 8.1 Standard:

**A higher education institution library shall provide up-to-date information resources for all learning programmes, which shall facilitate teaching, learning, research and community service for students and staff.**

#### 8.1.1 Guidelines:

- a) Library resources shall be appropriate and shall include peer reviewed journals, textbooks, periodicals, monographs, and other readings;
- b) Library resources shall include those that cater for users with special needs;
- c) The library shall subscribe to databases and facilitate access by students and staff to the databases; and
- d) The library shall establish and sustain institutional repositories.

### 8.2 Standard:

**A higher education institution library shall adopt and maintain Information Communication Technologies in information management and its operations.**

#### 8.2.1 Guidelines:

- a) The library shall provide suitable computer infrastructure and working space;
- b) The library shall have dedicated computer terminals connected to Intranet and Internet for users and with relevant software for research;
- c) A higher education institution shall have trained ICT personnel to ensure smooth running and maintenance of library ICT facilities; and
- d) A higher education institution shall provide up-to-date ICT hardware and software that adequately facilitate the information management needs of the library.

### 8.3 Standard:

**A higher education institution library's information resources shall be organised, for easy access and retrieval, using internationally recognised conventions and standards.**

#### 8.3.1 Guidelines:

- a) Library resources shall be organised using appropriate international recognised classification systems;
- b) Library resources shall be accessed through a comprehensive catalogue of the library holdings; and

- c) Access and retrieval of resources shall take into consideration persons with special needs.

#### **8.4 Standard:**

**A higher education institution shall provide adequate library facilities for students, staff and other users and shall be a convenient and conducive place for study and research.**

##### **8.4.1 Guidelines:**

- a) The library building shall have security mechanisms in place to safeguard the users, equipment, and resources;
- b) The library shall have adequate doorways which are openable outwards, to ensure speedy exit in case of an emergency;
- c) The library building shall be convenient for all users including users with special needs; and
- d) The library building shall have sufficient ventilation and conducive fenestration;
- e) The library building shall be provided with secure windows in line with the national building codes and standards;
- f) The library building shall have emergency and fire safety measures;
- g) Each study space shall occupy a minimum of 2.5 square metres;
- h) Aisles between fixed ranges of book stacks shall be one (1) metre in order to accommodate users on wheelchairs and permit them to turn; and
- i) The library shall have space for staff offices and service areas.

#### **8.5 Standard:**

**A higher education institution library shall have appropriately qualified staff.**

##### **8.5.1 Guidelines:**

- a) The higher education institution shall appoint a designated Chief Librarian of the university library and in the case of college, a college librarian;
- b) The library staff shall comprise both academic and support staff;
- c) The library shall be adequately represented on the university Senate or Board of Studies; and
- d) Library staff shall be sufficient in quantity to meet the diverse teaching, learning and research needs of staff and students.

#### **8.6 Standard:**



**A higher education institution shall have an annual budget allocation for acquisition of information resources.**

**8.6.1 Guidelines:**

- a) The library budget shall be adequate to support the appropriate needs of the library;
- b) The library budget shall be adequate for the library to acquire print and electronic information resources;
- c) The library budget shall provide for the current user population and anticipated size of the user population;
- d) The library budget shall be prepared, justified and administered by the chief/college librarian;
- e) The higher education institution shall have a clear mechanism for disbursement of budgetary allocation to the library;
- f) The library shall keep records of received funds from budgetary allocation and expenditure.

## 9.0 Financial Resources

### 9.1 Standard:

**A higher education institution shall have adequate financial resources and prudent financial management systems that are aligned to its mission, objectives, and mandate to ensure quality education.**

#### 9.1.1 Guidelines:

Financial sustainability is the backbone of any institution, and adequate financial resources and prudent financial management should be conducted within an approved framework of institutional strategies, policies, and procedures, which enable the higher education institution to meet its financial needs to ensure quality academic outcomes. Therefore:

- a) At initial registration, a higher education institution shall have sufficient financial resources to cover at least 12 months of operations including staff emoluments.
- b) A registered higher education institution shall have sufficient financial resources to cover at least 3 months of operations including staff emoluments;
- c) A higher education institution shall have diversified financial and sustainable resource base, and ensure a balanced allocation of resources to core functions of teaching and learning, research and innovation, and community engagement;
- d) An HEI shall have a financial management policy and strategy to guide resource mobilisation, allocation, budgeting, disbursements, expenditure, asset management, debt management and financial reporting;
- e) An HEI shall have a financial risk management policy and strategy to guide risk identification, evaluation, analysis and mitigation; and
- f) An HEI shall have a business recovery and continuity plan for sustainability.

### 9.2 Standard:

**A higher education institution shall operate on an approved annual budget and maintain financial statements.**

#### 9.2.1 Guidelines:

- a) A higher education institution's annual budget shall be approved by the HEI's council or management board;
- b) The budget shall be sufficient to sustain all operations of the institution including staff emoluments and statutory obligations including HEA annual levy;
- c) A higher education institution shall maintain financial statements and related support documents.

### **9.3 Standard:**

**A higher education institution shall have internal and external financial auditing systems and shall keep annual audited accounts.**

#### **9.3.1 Guidelines:**

A higher education institution shall:

- a) have mechanisms for internal financial auditing; and
- b) appoint external financial auditor(s) in line with statutory requirements and maintain up to date annual audited financial statements.

### **9.4 Standard:**

**A higher education institution shall maintain bank accounts with registered financial institutions.**

#### **9.4.1 Guidelines:**

- a) All bank accounts of a higher education institution shall be in the name of the HEI;
- b) A foreign HEI shall maintain at least one (1) functional account with a local financial institution.

## 10.0 Health and Safety

### 10.1 Standard:

**A higher education institution shall have adequate, safe, and reliable water supply installed in accordance with the requirements of the Public Health Act.**

#### 10.1.1 Guidelines:

- a) The water supplied shall be safe and free from any contamination that may cause disease or injury to health and the water supplied shall meet the requirements of the relevant Authorities;
- b) A higher education institution shall have water storage facilities with sufficient capacity to meet not less than twenty-four hours demand from users;
- c) The higher education institution shall provide and maintain fire hydrant points for firefighting purposes;
- d) A higher education institution, with its own water sources, shall have a relevant permit from the relevant Water Authority;
- e) A higher education institution shall have a drainage system to drain and dispose of storm water in such a manner as to cause the least inconveniences or nuisance to the public.

### 10.2 Standard:

**A higher education institution shall operate in facilities and structures that are safe and meet the requirements of the Public Health Act.**

#### 10.2.1 Guidelines:

- a) The buildings shall be kept in a good state of repair and maintenance;
- b) The buildings shall be free from structural failures, excessive deflection, cracking or dilapidation of building material fabric and components;
- c) All buildings shall be safe for users and free from hazards such as falling, slipping, tripping;
- d) The building to be used by an HEI shall be kept in a cleanly state and free from offensive smell arising from sources such as any drain or water closet, earth closet and urinal facilities;
- e) Any building used for keeping animals shall have a relevant permit from the Local Authority.

### **10.5 Standard:**

**All buildings and other physical facilities used by a higher education institution to accommodate HEI's activities shall provide for adequate fire safety.**

#### **10.5.1 Guidelines:**

A higher education institution shall ensure that:

- a) it obtains a fire certificate for its premises from the relevant Authority;
- b) all buildings and other physical facilities shall conform to the requirements of the Local Government Act and other standard practices with regard to fire prevention and management;
- c) all buildings of the HEI shall have fire prevention, fighting and escape facilities;
- d) all buildings used for HEI activities shall be provided with proper signage for fire escape and location of fire prevention and fighting facilities; and
- e) doors for lecture rooms, lecture theatres and other rooms used for public purposes shall open outwards.

### **10.6 Standard:**

**A higher education institution shall provide and maintain clean, adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.**

#### **10.6.1 Guidelines:**

A higher education institution shall ensure that:

- a) separate convenience facilities shall be provided for male and female students;
- b) in the premises for teaching and learning, the following well-lit and ventilated toilets, urinals, and hand wash basins shall be provided:
  - i. One Toilet for every fifteen (15) female students,
  - ii. One Toilet for every twenty (20) male students,
  - iii. One urinal stall for every thirty (30) male students,
  - iv. One hand wash basin for every (30) students,
  - v. Appropriate sanitary disposal facilities,
  - vi. One Toilet for every ten (10) female staff, and
  - vii. One Toilet and one urinal for every fifteen (15) male staff.

### **10.7 Standard:**

**A higher education institution shall provide health support services to students and staff for minor ailments and emergencies.**

#### **10.7.1 Guidelines:**

A higher education institution shall:

- a) have a sickbay to cater for minor ailments and emergencies for students and staff;
- b) at a minimum, have first aid services with qualified personnel.

## 11.0 Research and Innovation

### 11.1 Standard:

**A higher education institution shall promote and engage in research and innovation, consistent with its policies and strategic plans, and address societal needs.**

#### 11.1.1 Guidelines:

A higher education institution shall ensure that:

- a) it has a research and innovation policy to guide students' and staff research;
- b) there are standards, procedures and processes for the conduct and management of research and innovation;
- c) it has an established research unit for coordination of research activities;
- d) it has a seed grant to promote research and innovation;
- e) it has national and international research collaborations;
- f) its faculties/departments have research agendas to facilitate implementation of research that is responsive to societal needs and academic advancement;
- g) there is a research information management system;
- h) there is a research monitoring and evaluation system;
- i) it has a budgetary allocation to support research activities such conference attendance, subscription to journals and publications;
- j) it has guidelines on utilisation and exploitation of research results;
- k) it maintains a record of its patents and copyrights; and
- l) a higher education institution shall have a mechanism of providing incentives to members of staff who undertake research, attract research funds, innovate and/or patent.

### 11.2 Standard:

**A higher education institution shall promote and engage in scholarly publications consistent with its research agenda.**

#### 11.2.1 Guidelines:

A higher education institution shall ensure that:

- a) it has policies and procedures to promote and guide publication activities;
- b) it maintains a directory of scholarly journals that staff should publish in;
- c) it maintains at least one local journal in line with its research agenda; and
- d) it maintains a record/repository of its publications.

### **11.3 Standard:**

**A higher education institution shall have an approved framework for the management of postgraduate studies that ensures quality and ethical research.**

#### **11.4.1 Guidelines:**

A higher education institution shall ensure that:

- a) there are standards, procedures, and processes for the approval of research proposals, and theses, and the conduct and supervision of research studies;
- b) approved research proposals are in line with the research needs of society;
- c) there are standards and processes for handling of intellectual property, commercialisation of research and management of research information;
- d) there is adequate academic integrity through the establishment and use of appropriate research committees and boards;
- e) for all Doctoral and Master of Research theses submitted, the HEI shall appoint at least two (2) examiners who shall be authorities in that discipline. One of the examiners shall be an external with an academic background; and
- f) for each thesis, it constitutes an ad hoc examination board or panel for assessment.



## 12.0 Technological Infrastructure

### 12.1 Standard:

**A higher education institution shall have adequate Information and Communication Technology (ICT) infrastructure and qualified support staff.**

#### 12.1.1 Guidelines:

- a) A higher education institution shall have an ICT infrastructure plan for purposes of:
  - i. acquisition of ICT infrastructure,
  - ii. maintenance of ICT infrastructure,
  - iii. upgrading of technologies, and
  - iv. ensuring reliability, privacy, safety, and security of the ICT infrastructure.
- b) The staffing structure shall be filled with qualified staff for the support of the available ICT infrastructure;
- c) A higher education institution shall have a closed access server room with air conditioning; and
- d) A higher education institution shall have ICT policies to guide adoption and maintenance of ICT facilities.

### 12.2 Standard:

**A higher education institution shall maintain an up-to- date Students' Information Management System.**

#### 12.2.1 Guidelines:

A higher education institution shall ensure that:

- a) it has a robust and secure student Information Management System, including:
  - i. a comprehensive database of learner profiles,
  - ii. learner status (student financial record, student results etc.),
  - iii. archived information, and
  - iv. security procedures that ensure that only authorised personnel have access to students' personal data.
- b) it maintains a comprehensive record of each student's admission, academic progress, and assessment of learning;
- c) students are provided with transcripts of academic record showing:
  - i. full name of the student,
  - ii. student identity number and nationality,
  - iii. the learning programme pursued,

- iv. courses taken by course code and course name arranged for each year in chronological order, and
  - v. the mark or grade for each course, with an explanatory note on the marking or grading system.
- e) it provides its graduates with a certificate, upon successful completion of studies, which shall show information, including the following:
- i. full name of the graduate,
  - ii. learning programme, and
  - iii. year of graduation.
- f) it provides its former graduates, a copy of certificate, upon request;
- g) in the case of e-learning and purely ODeL institutions, the institution shall ensure that it has sufficient infrastructure to address technical support in terms of:
- i. server capacity,
  - ii. technical help desk,
  - iii. reliable internet access, and reliable technical services in terms of back-up and remote services,
  - iv. resources to develop the knowledge and skills of their ICT practitioners, and
  - v. an ICT plan for purposes of maintaining and upgrading of ICT equipment and technologies, and ensuring reliability, privacy, safety, and security.
- f) it has an ICT technical framework which ensures that any change in technology is introduced in a way that minimises disruptive impact on an HEI's operations. Therefore, the institution shall have:
- i. a strategy that enables the HEI to smoothly transition from one technical system to the other,
  - ii. a clear structure for communicating changes in software, hardware, or technical system, and
  - iii. a training programme / process for both staff and students when new software or a new system is adopted.
- g) the HEI shall have the following in place:
- i. a help desk to address ICT related queries, and
  - ii. a system for Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), which should be assessed, and feedback given.

## 13.0 Quality Assurance Implementation

### 13.1 Standard:

**A higher education institution shall have a robust and well-functioning quality assurance system for its activities.**

#### 13.1.1 Guidelines:

A higher education institution shall ensure that:

- a) it has an established internal quality assurance unit which is well staffed and financially resourced;
- b) the head of the internal quality assurance unit is at senior level in the structure of the HEI;
- c) it has a Quality Assurance Policy and structure, which flows down through all levels;
- d) the internal quality assurance system has resources and services that are fit for-purpose and accessible to students and staff;
- e) internal quality assurance unit facilitates the various processes for strategic, institutional, academic, and financial planning to enhance the quality of academic outcomes;
- f) there is continuous and periodic monitoring, evaluation, and benchmarking of processes, including self-assessment of learning programmes and institutional self-assessment for purposes of continual improvement;
- g) learning programmes are subjected to continuous monitoring and evaluation (including periodic external review) and development to ensure quality and relevance; and
- h) the internal quality assurance system conforms to the requirements of the national quality assurance agency.

### 13.2 Standard:

**A higher education institution shall have mechanisms for evaluating the impact of its academic activities on students, alumni, industry, and the public.**

#### 13.2.1 Guidelines:

The higher education institution shall, among others:

- a) collate and analyse student progression, drop-out and graduation rates;
- b) ensure that it conducts periodically students' satisfaction surveys;

- c) conduct periodically tracer studies to determine the graduates' employability and social mobility;
- d) conduct periodically employer satisfaction surveys;
- e) collect and analyse data on research uptake (e.g., patents, copyrights, and adoption of innovations);
- f) ensure that it conducts periodic staff satisfaction surveys.

## **14.0 Public Communication**

### **14.1 Standard:**

**A higher education institution shall publish information about its activities in a clear, accurate and objective manner; and ensure that the information is up-to-date and accessible.**

#### **14.1.1 Guidelines:**

A higher education institution shall ensure that It has a communication policy and strategy.

## **15.0 Collaboration and Public Service**

### **15.1 Standard:**

**A higher education institution shall promote cultural and social life of society through public service engagement.**

#### **15.1.1 Guidelines:**

For the benefit of the students, the institution, and the community, the HEI shall have:

- a) public and community engagement policy;
- b) a corporate social responsibility policy;
- c) a consultancy policy, reflecting its vision and mission;
- d) a system for reporting, monitoring, and evaluation of public engagement activities; and
- e) a mechanism for disseminating outcomes of research, innovation, and consultancy.

### **15.2 Standard**

**A higher education institution shall establish forms of collaboration with local and international higher education institutions and other actors.**

#### **15.2.1 Guidelines**

A higher education institution shall have policies and strategies for collaboration with other HEIs, professional bodies, research institutions and relevant social actors at national and international levels.

## References

Commission for University Education, 2014. Universities Standards and Guidelines. Nairobi, Kenya.

European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), 2015. Standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).

HAQAA Initiative, 2017. African Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ASG-QA).

National Assembly of Zambia, 2013. Higher Education Act No. 4 of 2013. Lusaka, Zambia.

## Appendices

### Appendix I: Qualifications for Key Management Staff in HEIs in Zambia

#### Qualifications for Key Management Staff in a University

Position	Qualifications	Work Experience	Type of Work Experience
Vice Chancellor	PhD or equivalent	10 years	Academic and Administrative
Deputy Vice Chancellor – Academic Affairs	PhD or equivalent	8 years	Academic and Administrative
Deputy Vice Chancellor- Research and Innovation	PhD or equivalent	8 years	Academic, Research and administrative
Deputy Vice Chancellor – Finance and Administration	Master's degree or equivalent professional qualification	8 years	Finance, administration, corporate governance
Registrar	Master's Degree	5 years	Administrative, legal, corporate governance
University Librarian (Chief Librarian)	Master's Degree	5 years	Library work and administration
Bursar (Chief Financial Officer)	ACCA, CIMA, CA Zambia or equivalent	5 years	Accounting, Financial administration and Management
Dean of Students Affairs	Master's Degree	5 years	Administrative, academic

#### Qualifications for Key Management Staff in a University College

Position	Qualifications	Work Experience	Type of Work Experience
Principal	PhD	8 years	Academic and Administrative
Vice Principal	Master's Degree	5 years	Academic and Administrative
Registrar	Master's Degree	5 years	Administrative, legal,



			corporate governance
Chief Librarian	Master's Degree	5 years	Library work and administration
Finance Director	Bachelor of Accountancy, ACCA, CIMA, CA Zambia or equivalent	5 years	Accounting, Financial administration and Management
Dean of Students Affairs	Bachelor's Degree	5 years	Administrative, academic

#### Qualifications for Key Management Staff in a College

Position	Qualifications	Work Experience	Type of Work Experience
Principal	Master's Degree	5 years	Academic and Administrative
	Bachelor's Degree	10 years	
Vice Principal/Training Manager	Bachelor's Degree	5 years	Academic and Administrative
Registrar / Administration and Human Resources Manager	Bachelor's Degree	5 years	Administrative, legal, corporate governance
College Librarian	Bachelor's Degree	5 years	Library work and administration
Finance Manager	Bachelor of Accountancy, ACCA, CIMA, CA Zambia or equivalent	5 years	Accounting, Financial administration and Management
Student Affairs Officer	Bachelor's Degree	5 years	Administrative, academic

**Appendix II: Minimum Lecture Room Floor Area Per Student in a Higher Education Institution in Zambia.**

<b>No. of students</b>	<b>Space in square meters with desk and chair (m<sup>2</sup>)</b>	<b>Space in square meters with chairs only (m<sup>2</sup>)</b>
0-30	1.8	1.8
31-40	1.8	1.5
41-50	1.6	1.4
51-60	1.6	1.3
61-100	1.6	1.2
101-150	1.6	1.1
151-300	1.4	1.0

**Appendix III: Laboratory Required Space Per Student in a Higher Education Institution in Zambia.**

<b>Type of Laboratory</b>	<b>Required space per student in square meters (m<sup>2</sup>)</b>
Agricultural Sciences Laboratory	2.70 - 3.60
Building Science Laboratory	3.60 - 4.50
Biological Health and Veterinary Sciences Laboratory	2.60 - 4.50
ICT Laboratory	2.50 - 3.60
Engineering Laboratory (excluding Mechanical)	3.60 - 6.40
Engineering Laboratory (Mechanical)	6.40 - 9.20
Fine Arts, Architecture and Design Studio	2.70 - 4.50
Nutrition and Dietetics Laboratory	2.80 - 4.50

## ABOUT THE HIGHER EDUCATION AUTHORITY (HEA)

The Higher Education Authority (HEA) is a statutory body established by the Higher Education Act No. 4 of 2013, with the mandate to regulate and monitor standards in HEIs in order to ensure quality services and contribute to the enhancement of human capital and accelerated national development.

The Authority's functions are outlined in the Higher Education Act and include:

1. Regulate Higher Education Institutions and coordinate the development of higher education.
2. To establish a coordinated higher education system which promotes cooperative governance and provides for a programme based higher education.
3. To develop and recommend policy on higher education, including the establishment of public higher education institutions and the registration of private higher education institutions, and
4. To promote quality assurance in higher education.

**Vision:** "A dynamic Quality Assurance body promoting internationally recognised Zambian higher education."

**Mission:** "To promote standards of higher education in order to ensure knowledgeable, skilled and well-disposed internationally recognised graduates for enhanced human capital and accelerated national development."

**HEA's Core Values:**

Honesty, Transparency, Integrity, Teamwork, Courtesy, Confidentiality, and Commitment.



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