



**DOHA INSTITUTE  
FOR GRADUATE STUDIES**

This policy sets a number of quality assurance tools and mechanisms that ensure consistency of the quality of DI's academic provision and ensures continuous improvement to inform and support the monitoring, assessment, and review of programs.

**Program Monitoring, Assessment, and  
Review Policy**

**Office of the President**

<b>Policy No.</b>	<b>Policy Title</b>	<b>Sponsor</b>	<b>Approval Date</b>	<b>Approved By</b>	<b>Entities Affected</b>
01	<b>Program Monitoring, Assessment, and Review Policy</b>	Office of the President	24/07/2022	Board of Trustees, Doha Institute for Graduate Studies	Responsible Academic and Administrative units

## **Academic Policies**

### **Program Monitoring, Assessment, and Review Policy**

#### **I. Purpose and Scope:**

The Program Monitoring, Assessment, and Review Policy is an integral component of the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies' system of Institutional Effectiveness and Quality Assurance (IEQA). It provides a systemic approach that allows programs to maintain their academic standards, assure the quality of their academic provision, ensure alignment with the institute's mission and strategic goals, and guide their own development on a continuous basis. It is a mechanism of continuous improvement that provides programs with the opportunity to evaluate their current status and achieved progress, and set direction for the future, including the needs and priorities for those programs.

All degree programs at DI are subject to this policy and are required to conduct ongoing monitoring, annual assessments, and periodic reviews.

Heads of Programs are responsible for the implementation of this policy within their program in collaboration with their program members and in coordination with relevant units such as the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Quality Assurance (OIEQA) and the Office of Teaching, Learning, and Assessment (OTLA). The Provost, through the Deans of the Schools, has oversight of the implementation of this Policy.

Programs typically conduct their academic reviews through accreditation by an independent body and must maintain an accredited status at all times.

#### **II. Policy Definitions:**

##### **A. Monitoring:**

Ongoing monitoring is a continuous process of monitoring, collecting, and analyzing program data and feedback from different sources that are pertinent to the program's success and quality assurance, particularly in relation to the students' academic experience.

##### **B. Assessment:**

Annual assessment is a process of self-reflection by the program based on pre-determined criteria, using data and feedback from ongoing monitoring, with a primary purpose of evaluating a program's effectiveness and whether it is meeting its goals, including student achievement of intended learning outcomes. The annual evaluation results drive the program's annual action plans and improvements for the upcoming year.

##### **C. Review:**

Periodic review is a process where programs are subject to external evaluation, typically through a mechanism of program accreditation from an independent entity. The basis of the review is a self-study by the program in which it is appraised by external peer reviewers and serves to ensure that the academic standards of the degree awarded by the program is of good standing and comparable with peer higher education institutions regionally and beyond.

### III. Policy Statement

#### A. Quality Assurance Tools and Mechanisms

To inform and support the monitoring, assessment, and review of programs, DI has put in place a number of quality assurance tools and mechanisms that ensure consistency of the quality of its academic provision and its continuous improvement. The OIEQA coordinates and maintains these tools and mechanisms and provides the programs with the necessary support in utilizing them effectively.

#### 1. Program Specification

The Program Specification is a document that records the design, structure and content of the curriculum of each program, including the program learning outcomes. It is required from all DI programs and is a core component of the Program File.

The program specification template and guidelines have been informed and adapted from the “Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland,”<sup>1</sup> “Master’s Degree Characteristics Statement,”<sup>2</sup> and the 2011 versions of the UK Quality Code, Part A3<sup>3</sup>. It also conforms to the National Qualification Framework in the State of Qatar.<sup>4</sup>

#### 2. Program and Course Files

To support program assessments and reviews, monitor the chronological development of a program and its courses, and ensure their delivery according to their intended design, each academic program must retain, at the least, the following materials, as below.

At the level of each program, the program will retain a Program File that includes:

- The Program Specification document which includes program information such as but not limited to its mission, goals, Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs), structure and career destinations;
- The program’s course materials in the form of Course Files (see below);
- Assessment surveys such as students’ evaluation of their course, and student satisfaction and alumni surveys and their analyses;
- Annual assessment of the program;
- Copies of all student theses and;
- The program accreditation file including the self-study and the external reviewers’ report, when available.

At the level of each course, the program will retain a Course File that includes:

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<sup>1</sup> Quality Assurance Agency, (2014) “Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland,”. <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/qualifications-frameworks.pdf>. Accessed 16 January 2022.

<sup>2</sup> Quality Assurance Agency (2020) “Master’s Degree Characteristics Statement,”. [https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/master's-degree-characteristics-statement.pdf?sfvrsn=86c5ca81\\_18](https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/master's-degree-characteristics-statement.pdf?sfvrsn=86c5ca81_18). Accessed 16 January 2022.

<sup>3</sup> Quality Assurance Agency (2011) “The UK Quality Code for Higher Education - Part A: Setting and maintaining threshold academic standards. A3-The programme level” <https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/13488/3/Quality-Code-Chapter-A3.pdf>. Accessed 16 January 2022.

<sup>4</sup> Qatar Cabinet Resolution No. 31 of 2020 Approving the National Qualification Framework. <https://www.almeezan.qa/ClarificationsNoteDetails.aspx?id=18449&language=ar>

- The syllabus of each course that includes the course’s details such as but not limited to its name, credit hours, instructor(s), requisites, duration, as well as its goals, course learning outcomes, teaching methods, assignments, assessment tools, and weekly thematic plan;
- Assessment instruments (examinations, assignments, etc.) and marking criteria/guidelines used in the course;
- A representative sample of graded student papers/exams with evidence of instructor feedback;
- Assessment Rubrics (where applicable);
- Teaching materials used in the course by the instructor;
- Student evaluation of the course, and;
- Instructor’s evaluation of his/her course.

### 3. Course Syllabus Template

All courses at DI must develop course syllabi using the standardized course syllabus template. The template defines both required and optional information to be included in the syllabus. It also acts as guideline for the development of course syllabi.

### 4. Surveys:

The OIEQA administers a number of surveys at the institutional, program, and course levels to measure the quality of teaching and learning and student satisfaction as well as different aspects of various services at DI. The OIEQA analyzes the survey results and prepares final reports for each survey emphasizing the most important issues and improvements and providing recommendations at the program, School and DI levels. These reports, along with the complete data, are shared with the relevant stakeholders, specifically the Schools and programs, and are used for monitoring, assessment, and review of programs and informing the programs’ development and action plans.

- Student Course Survey  
Student course surveys are completed by students for the courses they have registered in during a given semester. The survey collects feedback on courses regarding teaching, assessments, course learning resources and overall course satisfaction.
- Student Satisfaction Survey  
Students complete a Student Satisfaction Survey at the end of each of their academic year. The survey collects feedback on teaching and learning in the student’s specific program; educational resources; evaluation of assessment tools used in the program; student workload in program; program content and interdisciplinarity; general program learning outcomes; environment and academic support at DI; master's thesis; practical training, the Language Center; administrative units; facilities and services; university life and activities; and satisfaction with the overall experience at DI.
- Alumni Survey  
This survey is administered to DI alumni every two years to follow up on the accomplishments and career trajectories of students after graduation. The survey collects student feedback on their overall satisfaction at DI in terms of their study experience at DI; student services provided; the impact of study on working life; professional status; likely PhD study; research and outreach activities conducted by student; and sense of belonging to DI community.

## **5. Student Forums**

All programs are required to conduct formal forums between the program's faculty and students at least once a semester. These forums are used to discuss academic issues in relation to teaching and learning, program study plans, learning resources, and any other areas pertaining to the students' wellbeing and academic progress. These forums should have formal minutes and inform the program's development and action plans.

## **6. Instructor Course Feedback Form**

Program faculty are central to the assessment process and required to monitor and evaluate their courses at the end of each semester. They evaluate their courses through the electronic Instructor Course Feedback Form where they comment on their student course survey results; evaluate the course delivery and student performance; identify any challenges faced and determine future improvement plans. The respective Head of Program also provides his/her feedback on each form and the School Dean can also access all forms to review and comment on them.

## **7. Ongoing Feedback**

DI encourages Heads of Programs and faculty to engage students on an ongoing basis in classroom and outside to solicit feedback on issues pertaining to the students' academic experience and progress. Various channels are used including in-person meetings, emails, and Learning Management Platforms.

## **B. Monitoring, Assessment, and Review Processes**

The DI uses ongoing monitoring, annual assessment, and periodic review to maintain and develop its programs. These processes consider data stemming from the quality assurance tools and mechanisms described above, and, in turn, inform each other to allow for all relevant analysis and feedback to be given attention, when necessary.

### **1) Ongoing Monitoring of Academic Programs**

To ensure adequate ongoing monitoring of programs, DI utilizes various quality assurance tools and mechanisms such as those outlined above which allow programs to collect, monitor, analyze different types of data and feedback. Programs are required to ensure the consistency of their academic provision through the use of these tools and mechanisms and to continuously improve the quality of this provision. Programs are also encouraged to be responsive to students' needs through analyzing student feedback from both formal and informal sources.

Ongoing monitoring is important to allow for various corrections and improvements to be implemented at a quicker pace, outside of the annual or periodic processes, so that the DI can be responsive on a continuous basis to students' needs.

Some feedback collected on an ongoing basis may require extensive analysis and debate before a decision can be reached; in which case, it may be considered under the annual assessment process or the periodic review process, as necessary.

## **2) Feedback collected throughout the year, predominantly through student forums or various other channels supports the ongoing monitoring process. Internal Annual Assessment**

All academic programs conduct an annual assessment to determine whether they are meeting the goals they have established for themselves and to use these assessment results towards continuous improvement for the following year.

The annual assessment is a recurring process that starts at the beginning of each academic year and is completed by the end of that year. The assessment results are used in improvements for the following year including impact on resources.

The annual assessment of academic programs at DI is an internal periodic evaluation that ensures consistency of DI's academic provision and maintains an adequate level of quality review across all programs. It is supported by the ongoing monitoring of programs and in turn informs the periodic review of programs.

The annual program assessment is conducted through the use of an Annual Program Assessment Report template. The report captures diverse data such as but not limited to student admissions; graduation rates; alumni and their employment; student grades; program changes; teaching and learning strategies; stakeholder involvement; and future improvement plans. The process also includes a program learning outcome assessment which utilizes a specific sub-form of the template that is administered by the OTLA.

The Annual Program Assessment Report makes use of and is informed by various quality assurance tools and mechanisms, as outlined above, predominantly but not limited to the various student surveys and instructor feedback forms. It is also an opportunity to revise the program and course files, as necessary, and consider any ongoing feedback collected throughout the year, which may be outstanding.

Programs complete the Annual Program Assessment Report every year and submit it to the relevant School Dean for discussion and approval where necessary. The OIEQA and OTLA provide feedback on the reports and support programs in developing the report. The School Dean reviews all program reports which feed into the School's annual report and action plan submitted to DI Provost and President.

In reviewing and approving the action plans and changes to the programs, the respective Head of Program and Dean of the School are responsible for maintaining the integrity of the program educational goals and its learning outcomes.

Any major changes to the program resulting from the annual assessment will be subject to the "Major Modifications to Existing Programs Policy" and any other relevant policies.

## **3) External Periodic Review of Academic Programs**

The external periodic review or program accreditation serves to assess and appraise the programs at DI by ensuring that the academic standards of graduate degrees awarded are of good standing and comparable with peer higher education institutions regionally and beyond. It is a quality assurance mechanism that supports confidence in the academic degrees DI awards and is an integral part of the IEQA system at DI.

The foundation of the review process is the self-study. In the self-study, a program engages in a comprehensive analysis of its content and operations including but not limited to program curriculum and admission; teaching and learning; program management and communication; and faculty and

administrative support to students through the collection and analysis of data and the use of the results of this analysis to make recommendations for program improvement and development.

The self-study is organized and prepared in reference to the quality standards set by the accrediting body. These standards establish criteria and guidelines for academic quality and function as a framework for program self-evaluation and improvement. By meeting these standards, the program demonstrates that it:

- has clearly defined mission and goals that are appropriate to serve DI's mission;
- has assembled and organized the resources necessary to achieve its mission and goals;
- is achieving its mission and goals, and;
- has the ability to continue to achieve its mission and goals and improve.

The self-study is the responsibility of the program, through its Head, who may delegate all or parts of the study to faculty of the program at his/her discretion. All program members must take part in reviewing and endorsing the self-study draft before finalization.

The self-study draws on the quality assurance tools and mechanisms described above and makes comprehensive use of the analyses derived from the feedback received from these sources. This gives the program a clear overview of its progression from one accreditation cycle to the next and allows it to demonstrate oversight of its adjustments, corrections and improvements.

Programs are encouraged to select accrediting bodies that are specific to their discipline whenever applicable.

Programs are expected to maintain an accredited status on a cyclical basis with the frequency determined by the relevant accrediting body.

#### IV. Revision/Modification History:

Version	Title	Date Produced	Produced by
01	Institutional Effectiveness and Quality Assurance Policy	19/01/2022	Department of Institutional Effectiveness and Quality Assurance
Revision Date	Revised by	Date Approved	Approved by
		09/03/2022	DI Council - Doha Institute for Graduate Studies
		24/07/2022	Board of Trustees, Doha Institute for Graduate Studies

- This policy was drafted by the department of Institutional Effectiveness and Quality Assurance on 19/01/2022 based on the original framework ratified by the Board of Trustees in 2015.
- It was discussed and modified in the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies Council on 27/01/2022 and was approved on 09/03/2022.
- It was submitted to the DI Board of Trustees in its fifteenth meeting held on 03/03/2022 and was ratified on 24/07/2022.