



**DOHA INSTITUTE
FOR GRADUATE STUDIES**

**Global Policies - Institutional Effectiveness and
Quality Assurance Policy**

This policy outlines the formal Institutional Effectiveness and Quality Assurance system at DI and underpins the institution's principles for quality assurance, the governance and management approaches to the system, and its implementation.

DI Office of the President

Policy No.	Policy Title	Sponsor	Approval Date	Approved By	Entities Affected
01	Institutional Effectiveness and Quality Assurance Policy	DI Office of the President	24/07/2022	Board of Trustees, Doha Institute for Graduate Studies	Doha Institute for Graduate Studies Community where relevant

The Doha Institute for Graduate Studies

Institutional Effectiveness and Quality Assurance Policy

I. Policy Preamble

The Doha Institute for Graduate Studies (DI) is fully committed to a system of Institutional Effectiveness and Quality Assurance (IEQA) that ensures it is effectively and efficiently attaining its mission, through the strategic goals it sets and the operational implementation it promotes, in the areas of higher education provision and academic programs, research, academic support, and administrative services.

II. Policy Definitions

Institutional effectiveness is the systematic process of measuring and assessing the performance of an institution in relation to its mission and strategic goals. Such assessment activities are shaped by the institution's mission and strategic plan and are closely linked to the planning process of the institution. Effectiveness is demonstrated through assessment conducted at the level of the institution and academic and administrative units, on an ongoing and periodic basis.

Quality Assurance is a system used to ensure that an institution's academic standards are well defined and verified, are consistent with similar standards locally and internationally, and the quality of learning, research and community involvement are adequate, and meet stakeholders' expectations.

It is important to note that institutional effectiveness and quality assurance are inter-related streams that ensure that the institution achieves its mission in the best possible way while continuously developing.

III. Policy Purpose

This policy outlines the formal Institutional Effectiveness and Quality Assurance system at DI and underpins the institution's principles for quality assurance, the governance and management approaches to the system, and its implementation.

This policy provides students, faculty, administrative staff and other internal and external stakeholders with an overview of the key elements of DI's approach to quality and should be read in conjunction with relevant policies and procedures (see section VI of this policy) that constitute a comprehensive quality assurance system which works together to realize the principles set below.

This policy is applicable to all academic and administrative staff in DI and students, where relevant.

IV. Policy Statement

Principles

DI's commitment to the principles below sets the scope of work for institutional effectiveness and quality assurance and gives direction and guidance to its activities and functions:

- Pursuing academic excellence, through continuous improvement, as a means to realizing the institution's mission;

- Developing and maintaining a governance structure that promotes quality and ensures proper responsibility and accountability;
- Promoting participative decision-making in partnership with stakeholders including students, faculty, staff, employers, and others;
- Promoting a culture of quality through continuous engagement with quality assurance principles and capacity building across all stakeholder groups;
- Engaging external stakeholders and benchmarking with peer institutions and international standards;
- Focusing on all stages of the student academic life-cycle to guarantee a meaningful educational experience;
- Ensuring the relevant interaction between teaching, learning, research and community interactions;
- Fostering a reflective environment where feedback, self-study, and external engagement can lead to improvement across all areas of activity, and;
- Continuous review and development of the institutional effectiveness and quality assurance system and operations.

References Points

DI's approach to IEQA is informed by a number of reference points at the national and international levels. The IEQA system has referenced and adapted the following frameworks and guidelines to ensure that DI has a quality assurance system that is fit for purpose, is nationally compliant, and internationally recognized.

- [Licensing and Accreditation Standards for Higher Education Institutions](#) (Ministry of Education and Higher Education in Qatar, 2018);
- [Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland](#) (Quality Assurance Agency, 2014);
- [UK Quality Code for Higher Education, including the Advice and Guidance](#) (Quality Assurance Agency);
- [Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area \(ESG\)](#) (2015) and;
- Various program accrediting bodies such as the [Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation \(FIBAA\)](#), the [Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration \(NASPAA\)](#), and other discipline-specific reference points.

Continuous Improvement

At the core of the IEQA system is the continuous improvement cycle which ensures that DI attains its mission and assures and enhances the quality of its academic provision through regular monitoring, assessment, and review of academic programs and administrative departments and the use of the evaluation results for continuous improvement.

The workflow in Figure 1 illustrates how these core components work interactively to guarantee that DI regularly and systematically reviews its annual action and operational plans while feeding into the strategic plan review.

The main components of this cycle are the monitoring, assessment and review of academic programs and the annual assessment of administrative departments.

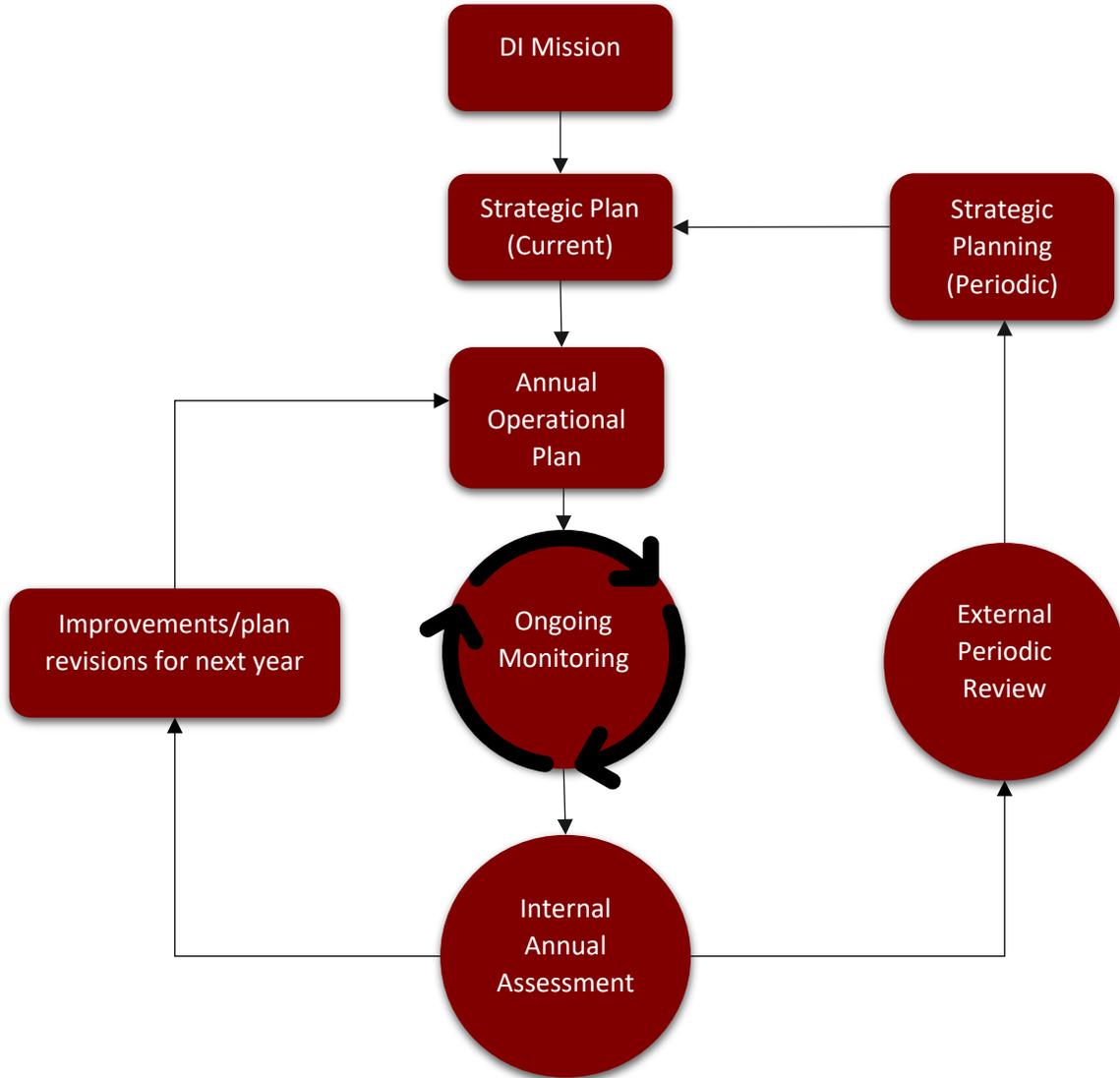


Figure 1. The Continuous Improvement Cycle at DI

V. Governance and Management

IEQA governance is supported by an organizational structure that embodies and fosters quality assurance at DI through academic and administrative units, councils and committees. This offers the governance, management and operational elements that are required across the institution to effectively and efficiently operate the IEQA system.

DI's governance ensures that the IEQA system is operational by a number of building blocks that allow for continuous improvement and form a quality assurance infrastructure that include components such as bylaws and quality assurance policies, mandating units, committees and councils with responsibilities for implementing IEQA functions across the institution. Related quality assurance policies include but are not limited to: New Degree Program Approval Policy; Major Modifications to Existing Programs; Course Approval and

Withdrawal; Academic Conduct Policy; Student Academic Appeals Policy; Policy for Policies; Institutional Effectiveness and Quality Assurance Policy and Program Monitoring, Assessment, and Review Policy.

A number of committees are specifically involved with quality assurance and include the IEQA Committee, the Teaching, Learning and Assessment (TLA) Committee, and the Academic Policies Committee.

The IEQA Committee establishes, implements and oversees quality assurance and continuous improvement activities at DI, including accreditation and re-licensing. The TLA Committee works closely with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Quality Assurance (OIEQA) and enhances the quality of teaching, learning and assessment practices through the development of processes and policies as needed. The Academic Policies Committee contributes to quality assurance at DI by reviewing academic policies, developing new ones and making recommendations accordingly.

Ultimate responsibility of all IEQA activities set within this policy resides with the President, who delegates this responsibility to the Provost (Vice President for Academic Affairs), Executive Director for Finance and Administration, the Schools through its Deans, the academic programs through their Heads of Programs, and the OIEQA who is tasked with operationalizing and monitoring the IEQA system.

VI. Implementation

DI implementation of this policy is supported by policies, procedures, and specific departmental mandates which focus on the maintenance and improvement of the quality of the DI provision in the following areas of work:

A. Design and Development of New Academic Programs

DI ensures that new programs are developed in accordance with a formal policy (New Degree Program Approval Policy) and processes that guarantee alignment with DI's mission, are in response to national and regional educational needs, meet the standards of quality expected by DI, and are compliant with regulatory and accrediting bodies.

B. Monitoring and Review of Academic Programs, including Accreditation Activities

DI ensures that all programs are continuously monitored and periodically reviewed through a formal policy and processes. The Program Monitoring, Assessment, and Review Policy ensures that the needed quality assurance components such as program specification documents, course files, and surveys are used for the continuous improvement of programs through a process of ongoing monitoring and annual program assessments that determines whether programs are meeting their goals and are using these assessment results towards planning for the following year.

The policy also ensures that programs are periodically reviewed through an external process of independent program-level accreditation which 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.

C. Changes to and Closures of Programs

DI ensures that any major changes to programs or their closure are conducted under formal policies which ensures proper evaluation of such changes, their proper implementation, and mitigation of any resulting consequences specifically in relation to the well-being of students. The policies are: Major Modifications to Existing Programs Policy and Program Closure Policy.

D. Teaching, Learning, and Assessment Activities

DI ensures that all functions pertaining to teaching, learning, and assessment are maintained through formal policies and procedures that safeguards students' interests and guarantees staff's responsibilities, and that quality assurance mechanisms are operationalized, transparent, and fit for purpose. The policies most supporting these activities, amongst others, are: Academic Conduct Policy, Assessment and Examination Policy, Grading System Policy, Student Academic Appeals Policy, Thesis Policy, and Attendance Policy.

Moreover, the Office of Teaching, Learning and Assessment is tasked with monitoring functions and procedures within this area with a focus on quality assurance and continuous improvement, and the support of faculty and their professional development within the area of teaching.

E. Monitoring and Assessment of Research Activities

The Research and Grants Department tracks and analyzes research outcomes at DI and facilitates effective dissemination of these outcomes internally and externally. The analysis entails measuring key metrics associated with research productivity, quality and impact at the faculty member, program, School and institutional levels. The metrics include volume trends over time, impact factor and journal ranking ratings within the pertinent fields, citation volume, collaborative arrangements, and stakeholder or end-user engagement with produced research.

F. Monitoring and Assessment of Administrative Departments

The Planning, Development and Documentation Department oversees the annual assessment of administrative departments and provides the needed feedback and support. Administrative departments at DI undergo an annual assessment of their operational plans by identifying departmental goals and objectives, Key Performance Indicators and the assessment methods for measuring the achievement of these objectives. Each department then evaluates the achievement of each objective by presenting its assessment results and conclusions and improvements for the following year to the President of DI and to the Executive Director for Administration and Finance. The reports then feed into the DI institutional-level operational planning as well as the strategic plan.

G. Capacity Building and Training for Quality Assurance Purposes

The OIEQA conducts periodic, refresher and on-demand quality assurance workshops and training throughout the year. This includes orientation for new students and faculty, and other workshops for staff, faculty and programs including specific training for accreditation.

H. Engagement with Stakeholders

DI actively seeks stakeholder engagement both internal and external, including actively seeking students' feedback through engagement with the Student Council, various forums and survey channels, student participation in committees, and others. DI also encourages and seeks external stakeholder feedback such as external reviewers in new program development, external stakeholder participation in DI committees, external advisory boards to Schools and programs, and others.

I. Interaction with other policies in relation to IEQA

In addition to the above, DI's IEQA system interrelates with other policies that contribute to DI's maintenance of a quality provision and assuring it. This includes but not limited to the following policies:

- Policy for Policy Development, Approval and Adoption

- Diversity Policy
- Student Advising Policy
- Academic Standing Policy
- Student Complaints and Grievances Policy
- Degree and Graduation Clearance Policy

VII. 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 24/03/2022 and was ratified on 24/07/2022.

VIII. References:

- Ministry of Education and Higher Education. (2018). *Licensing and Accreditation Standards for Higher Education Institutions*. Edu.gov.qa. Accessed 16 January 2022. <https://www.edu.gov.qa/Documents/HigherEducationLicensing/Standards%20for%20licensing.pdf?csf=1&e=PzR5wh>
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- Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA). Naspaa.org. Accessed 16 January 2022. <https://www.naspaa.org/>