

“The Challenges of Quality Assurance in Higher Education”

2010 Annual LIS Research Symposium

“Towards the 2020 African library and beyond”

**Unisa School for Business Leadership (SBL),
Midrand, South Africa**

29-30 July 2010

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Some Opening Remarks

- Impressed by innovation and sectoral coherence eg COLISA in ODL sector
- Evidence of progress on developmental trajectory
- Leaves me with ????



Presentation Structure



1. Situate policy goals of RSA quality regime within strategic perspective
2. Revisit Quality Criteria for measuring LIS performance in developing country contexts
3. Generic insights and lessons from Unisa
4. Repositioning LIS in the global knowledge- based society



HEQC National QA System

Institutional
Audits

Programme
Accreditation &
Re-accreditation

National
Reviews

Quality
Promotion
and Capacity
Development

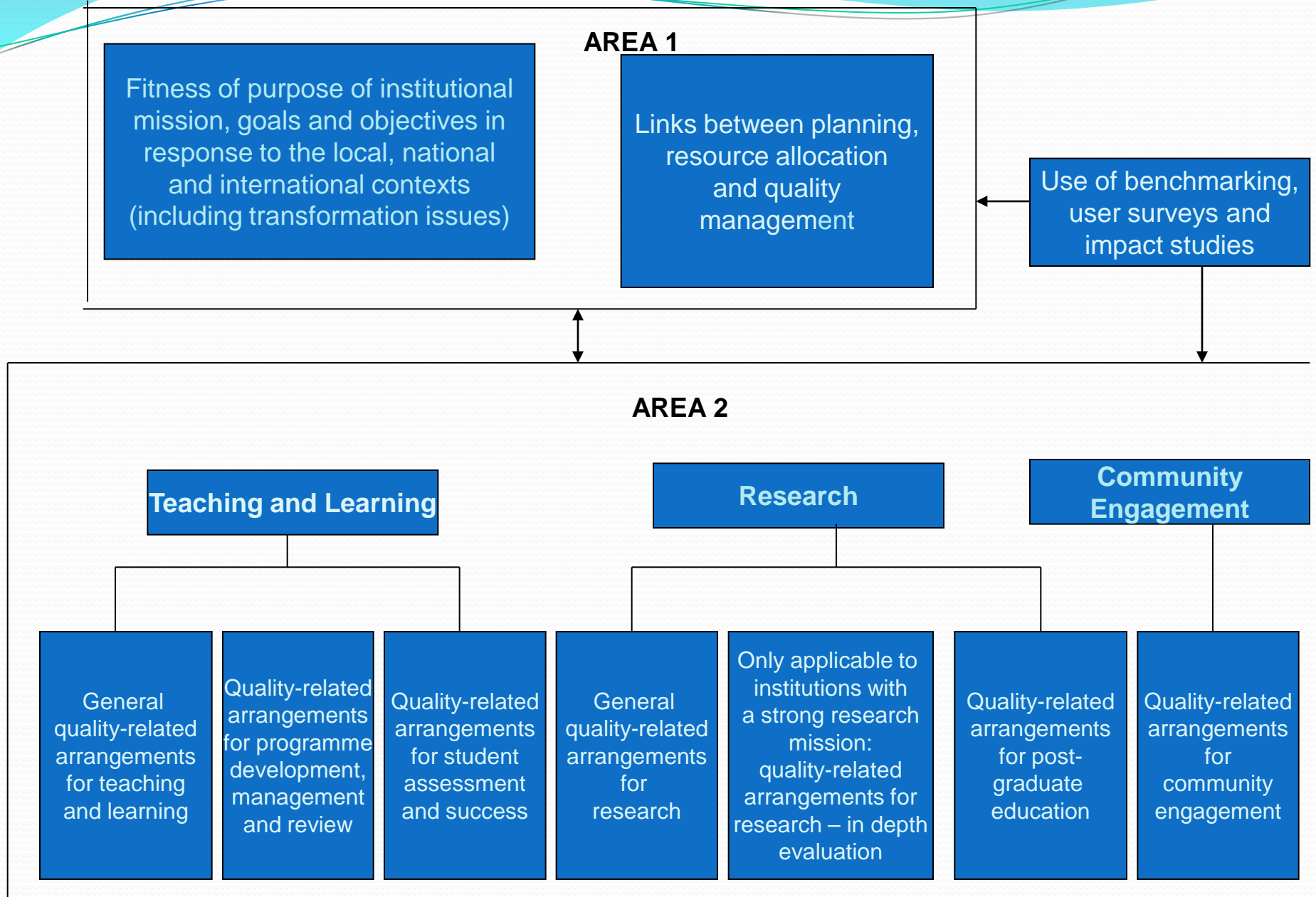
Achieve SELF-ACCREDITATION
Status



Underlying Principles of the S.A. Quality Regime

- Primary responsibility for QA lies with HEI's
- Self-evaluation with external validation by peers
- Judgments based on national criteria and evidence – claims, additional sources of data and analyses, triangulation
- Stated approaches for 2004-2010 audit cycle:
 - Audit: Developmental & Programme Acc & Re-accreditation: Minimum Standards
 - National Reviews – ensure rigour and accountability in key developmental areas (MBA; Teacher Education; disciplinary pressures from Psychology, SAICA, Engineering)
- *Evidence of Quality Transformation* (equity, responsiveness)

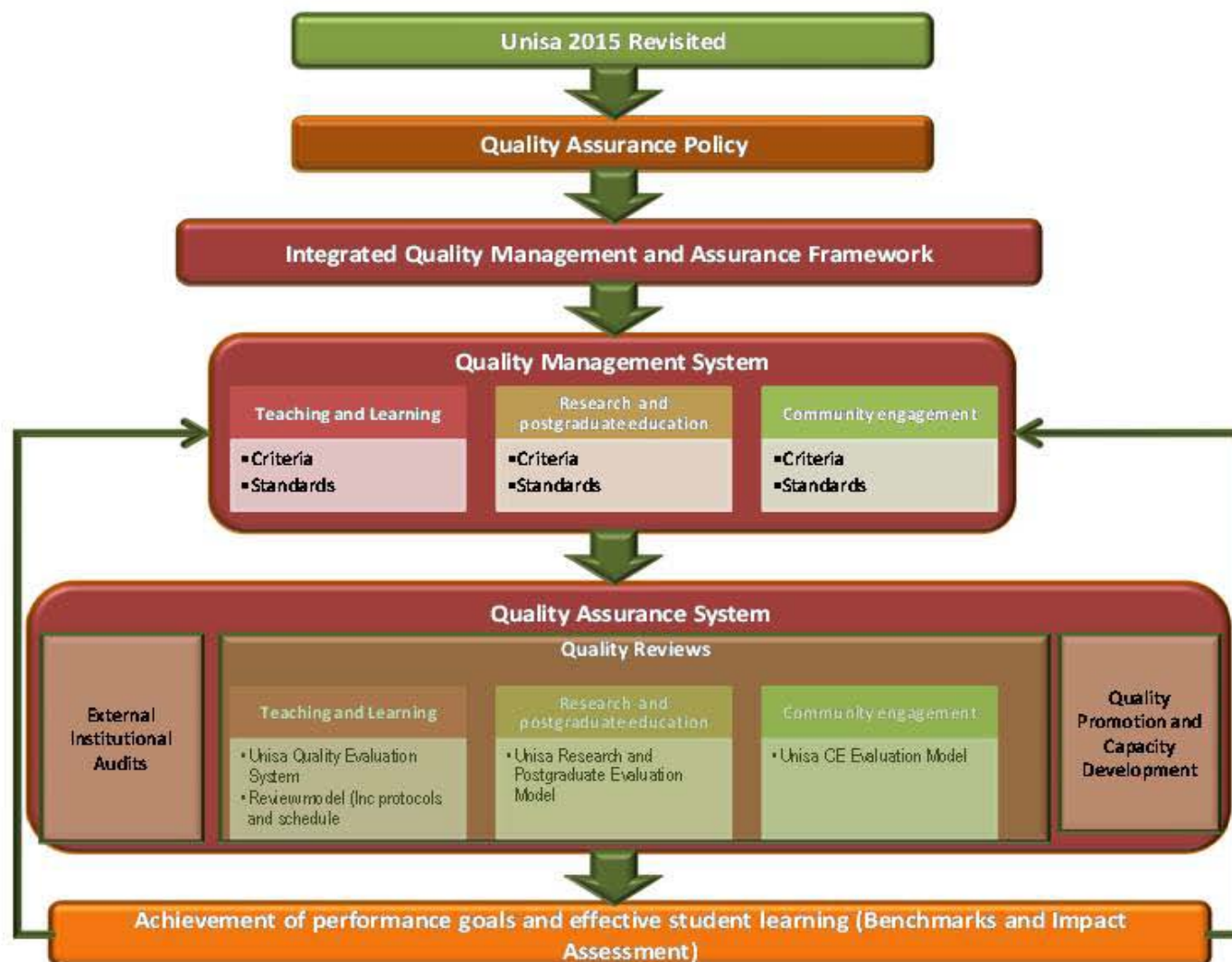
Scope of the HEQC's audit system



Scope and Use of the Criteria (Cycle 2004-2010)

- HEQC's audit criteria address different stages of planning and operations where quality considerations are expected to play a role. Stages include:
 - ❖ policy development
 - ❖ resource allocation
 - ❖ policy implementation
 - ❖ evaluation of extent and impact of implementation
 - ❖ identification of interventions for improvement and enhancement.
- Meta-agenda - examine extent of dynamic and learning organisation, self-knowledgeable/ intelligible with capacity to reflect collectively, reposition and continuously innovate
- The criteria encompass all dimensions of quality management processes, as well as
- *tracking and analysis of the effects that they have at different levels of the institution. External stakeholders are engaged to examine institutional impacts – planned and unintended.*

Unisa's Integrated Quality Management & Assurance Framework



Depiction of HEQC QA Processes

De Jager (2006)

Karin de Jager

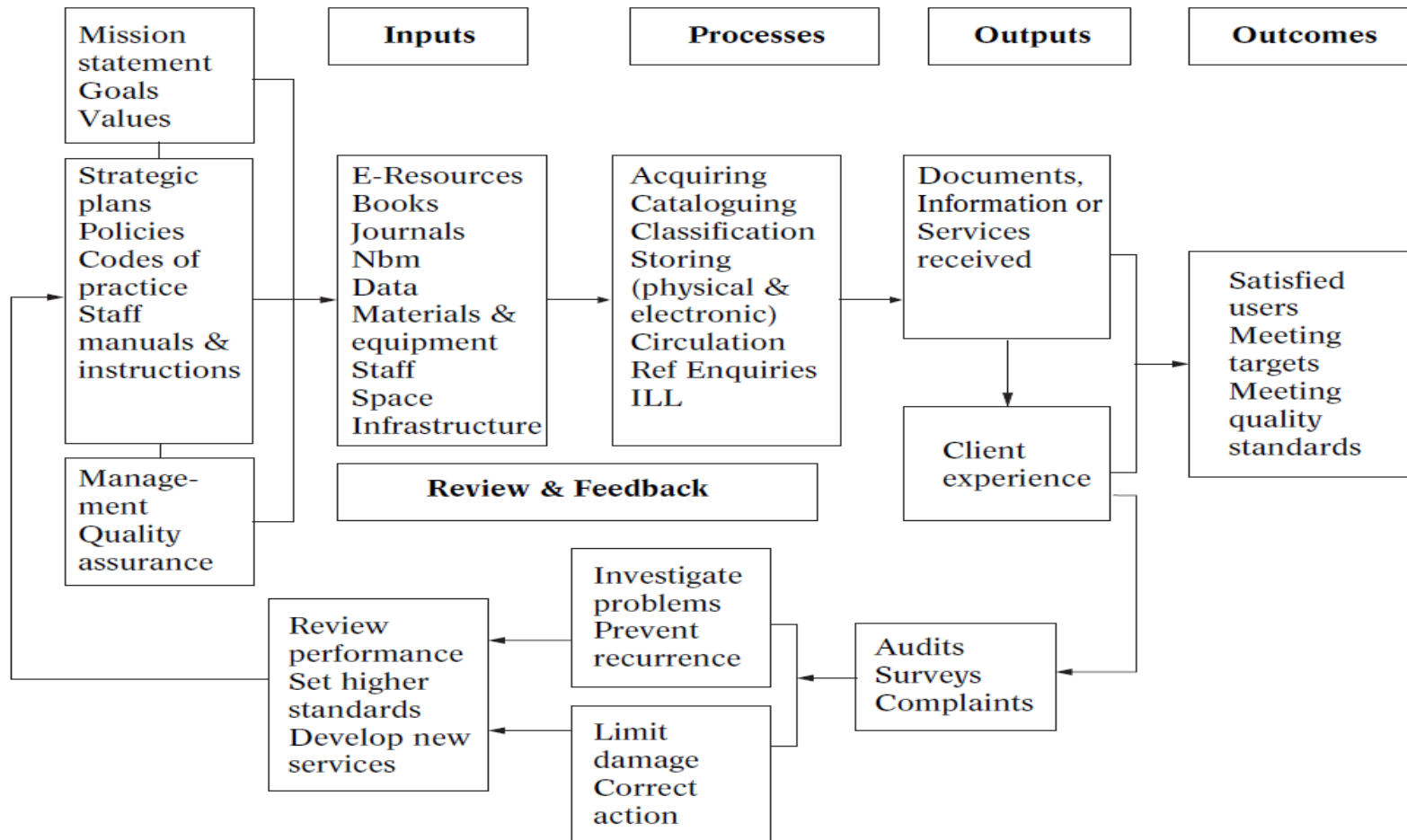


Figure 1. Map of quality concepts. Reconceptualized with input from Brophy and Coulling, 1997: 46, 66.

CHELSA Framework and Criteria

Evidence of quality and impact of library services on teaching and research – accountability and responsiveness to divergent range of user needs.

2004 Committee for Higher Education Librarians in South Africa (CHELSA) - agreed set of criteria, standards and models for QA and critical success factors for self assessment

Provided coherent direction and operationalized processes of library performance evaluation according to consensual measures

CHELSA Framework and Criteria cont.

Unintended policy consequence - HEMIS seriously flawed - no provision for library data collection – impacting on comparability of data / HE landscape status quo (DoHET now redressing)

Measuring for Quality Benchmarking

- Association of Research Libraries (ARL)
- Council of Australian University Librarians (CAUL)
- Society of College, National and University Libraries (SCONUL)

CHELSA Framework and Criteria

- 2005 – saw 7 Higher Education libraries in South Africa participate in the internationally standardized and validated user survey instrument, LibQUAL+.

Integrated System of Quality Assurance in South African HE Libraries (HEQC aligned)

- Aligned to institutional core functions, goals and objectives
- adequate provision for the needs of teaching and research
- run efficiently and effectively, adequately resourced
- suitable development opportunities for staff / systems
- regular review to ensure continuous improvement
- Measurable evidence of the extent to which goals and objectives are achieved, impacts of LIS on T & L , Research *and PG ED+ (CE)*

Quality Criteria for Measuring Performance in a Developing Country Context

Overview of concerns and trends in the field:

1. Impressive, thoughtful responsiveness
2. Scaffolded and adding value to sector positions
3. India (Sahu, 2006); Nigeria (Adebayo, 2009); Iran (Moghaddam et al, 2008)
4. Futuristic 26 scenario planning exercise (Staley & Malenfant (2010)
5. Benchmarking Tools (Gehrke & Britz)
6. TQM, GAPS Model, SERVQUAL; LibQual





Futuristic 26 scenarios- Staley & Malenfant (2010)

Six themes relevant for our discussion:

- **Bridging scholar/practitioner divide (6)**
- **Bridging digital divide (15)**
- **Lack of sustainable funding (16)**
- **Scholarship stultifies (22)**
- **Sign on the dotted line (23)**
- **Consortia programme delivery (25)**

Quality Criteria for Measuring Performance in a Developing Country Context

- Affirm stakeholder responsiveness approaches
- Focus on corporate governance and improved management interventions
- Gaps identified:
 1. Locate “effective information delivery system” within core pillars of HE (T&L; Research and *PG Ed and CE*)
 2. Improved M & E Strategies –
Quantitative data aligned to institutional goals buttressed by qualitative data

Repositioning LIS in Global Knowledge Economy (1)

Education as a Public Good –

“Fitness of” and “Fitness for” dimensions well covered,

BUT

“Transformation, Value for Money and Sustainability issues neglected ??

Olssen and Peters (2005) – Globalisation and neo-liberalism NOT benign



Repositioning LIS in Global Knowledge Economy (2) – Unisa Case Study

- Programme reviews since 2002 commended Unisa Library services highly – MBA; ECSA, SAICA, HEQC National Teacher Education Reviews
- HEQC Audit in August 2008 conducted regional site visits and student / stakeholder interviews
- Revealing access, space and service gaps for especially rural students
- *Transformation – equity of access*



Repositioning LIS in Global Knowledge Economy (3)Adebayo, 2009

Library managers have a lot of work to do on the ICT issue. Mortenson Centre Draft (2005) notes that “funding, however is not the only issue, providing access to the electronic resources is critical and it has been difficult for University libraries to establish services that facilitate the use of the information”. It asserts further that selecting and managing electronic resources is a challenge because librarians are not aware of the most recent products or what might best serve their individual community. Ekong (2005) observes that the current ICT infrastructure in Nigeria cannot enable Nigerians or their universities to be fully part of the global information society.



Repositioning – Disaster Planning and Risk Management (3)

Fire at Academy of Sciences, Leningrad in Soviet Union in February 1988 destroyed 4000,000 volumes and damaged 1,700,000.

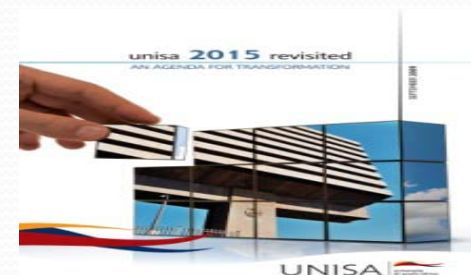
Thefts in England 1989/90 accounted for 52.3% among 9 different crimes investigated.

Securing holdings and mitigating risks critical issues for managers.



Repositioning – Redefining Roles, Rules and Quantifying Value and Costs Staley & Malenfant (2010)

- Proactive knowledge brokers – upscaling
 - Knowledge management contributions - specialised resources (ODL T & L)
 - Clarifying conceptual difficulties (Adebayo, 2009)
1. Summative analyses of shifts/user trends to achieve institutional objectives ie Africanisation
 2. Funding, infrastructure, staffing constraints – state-of-the art technology





Repositioning – Redefining Roles, Rules and Quantifying Value and Costs

- Value added to research and postgraduate outputs – stakeholder impact studies
- Infrastructure /ICT innovation costing parameters for planning and resource allocation
- Library architecture and advisory role
- Cost/benefit analysis of sectoral planning and engagement
- Facilitating strategic partnerships – Gov CIS;
- Influencing R & D agendas as sector



Concluding remarks

The LIS sector appears to be dynamic and constructively engaged to continue making a significant quality contribution to Education Training and Development in SA.

I sincerely hope that my contribution has sparked some new ideas and raised additional QA challenges for your consideration.



I thank you for your attention!

Ngiyabonga!

Ndiyabulela!

Kealeboga!

Dankie!