

THE SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL FOR THE QUANTITY SURVEYING PROFESSION

ANNEXURE A

PROGRAMME ACCREDITATION CRITERIA – CANDIDACY PHASE

Programme design

CRITERION 1: *The programme is consonant with the institution's mission, forms part of institutional planning and resource allocation, meets national requirements, the needs of students and other stakeholders, and is intellectually credible. It is designed coherently and articulates well with other relevant programmes, where possible.*

In order to meet the criterion, the following is required at minimum:

- (i) The programme is consonant with the institution's mission and goals and was approved by the appropriate institutional structures, including Senate/equivalent structure. Provision is made for the programme in the institution's planning and resource allocation processes.
- (ii) The programme meets the national requirements pertaining to programmes which are at present being developed within the context of the NQF.
- (iii) Learning outcomes, degree of curriculum choice, teaching and learning methods, modes of delivery, learning materials and expected completion time cater for the learning needs of its target student intake. Competences expected of students who successfully complete the programme are made explicit.
- (iv) The design maintains an appropriate balance of theoretical, practical and experiential knowledge and skills. It has sufficient disciplinary content and theoretical depth, at the appropriate level, to serve its educational purposes.
- (v) The design offers students learning and career pathways with opportunities for articulation with other programmes within and across institutions, where possible.
- (vi) Modules and/or courses in the programme are coherently planned with regard to content, level, credits, purpose, outcomes, rules of combination, relative weight and delivery. Outsourcing of delivery is not permitted.
- (vii) There is a policy and/or procedures for developing and evaluating learning materials and ensuring their alignment with the programme goals and underpinning philosophy. Where necessary, members of the academic staff are trained to develop learning materials.
- (viii) Programme outcomes meet national and/or regional labour market, knowledge or other socio-cultural needs. The requirements of professional bodies are taken into consideration, where applicable. Relevant stakeholders, including academic peers from outside the institution, and employers and professional bodies where applicable, are involved in the development of the programme.
- (ix) The characteristics and needs of professional and vocational education are catered for in the design of the programme, where applicable. This includes the following, in addition to (i) – (vii) above:

- The programme promotes the students' understanding of the specific occupation for which they are being trained.
 - Students master techniques and skills required for a specific profession or occupation.
 - Work-based learning and placement in a work-based environment form an integral part of the curriculum, where possible.
- (x) In the case of institutions with service learning as part of their mission:
- Service learning programmes are integrated into institutional and academic planning, as part of the institution's mission and strategic goals.
 - Enabling mechanisms (which may include incentives) are in place to support the implementation of service learning, including staff and student capacity development.

Student recruitment, admission and selection

CRITERION 2: *Recruitment documentation informs potential students of the programme accurately and sufficiently, and admission adheres to current legislation. Admission and selection of students are commensurate with the programme's academic requirements, within a framework of widened access and equity. The number of students selected takes into account the programme's intended learning outcomes, its capacity to offer good quality education and the needs of the particular profession (in the case of professional and vocational programmes).*

In order to meet the criterion, the following is required at minimum:

- (i) Advertising and promotional materials contain accurate and sufficient information about the programme with regard to admission policies, completion requirements and academic standards. Marketing and advertising are done according to DoE and SAQA regulations and accurate information is provided about the NQF level and the accreditation status of the programme.
- (ii) Admission, matriculation exemption, age exemption, etc. adhere to current legislation.
- (iii) The programme's admission criteria are in line with the National Plan for Higher Education's (NPHE's) goal of widening access to higher education. Equity targets are clearly stated, as are the plans for attaining them. Provision is made, where possible, for flexible entry routes, which includes RPL with regard to general admission requirements, as well as additional requirements for the programme, where applicable. Admission of students through an RPL route should not constitute more than 10 percent of the student intake for the programme.
- (iv) Admission requirements are in line with the degree of complexity of learning required in the programme, within the context of widening access and promoting equity.
- (v) Selection criteria are explicit and indicate how they contribute to institutional plans for diversity. The number of students selected for the programme does not exceed the capacity available for offering good quality education. The number of students is balanced against the intended learning outcomes of the programme and takes into account the mode(s) of delivery and the programme's components (modules/courses).

(vi) In the case of professional and vocational programmes, the quality and number of students admitted takes into account the needs of the particular profession, consonant with the appropriate equity considerations.

Staffing

CRITERION 3: *Academic staff responsible for the programme are suitably qualified and have sufficient relevant experience and teaching competence, and their assessment competence and research profile are adequate for the nature and level of the programme. The institution and/or other recognised agencies contracted by the institution provide opportunities for academic staff to enhance their competences and to support their professional growth and development.*

In order to meet the criterion, the following is required at minimum:

- (i) Academic staff for undergraduate programmes have relevant academic qualifications higher than the exit level of the programme, but at minimum a degree. Academic staff for postgraduate programmes have relevant academic qualifications at least on the same level as the exit level of the programme. At least 50 percent of the academic staff for postgraduate programmes have relevant academic qualifications higher than the exit level of the programme. The qualifications of academic staff were awarded by recognised higher education institutions.
- (ii) The majority of full-time academic staff has two or more years of teaching experience in a recognised higher education institution, and in areas pertinent to the programme. In the case of professional programmes, a sufficient number of academic staff members also have relevant professional experience. Qualified and experienced academic staff design the learning programme, although junior or part-time tutors may act as facilitators of learning.
- (iii) Academic staff are competent to apply the assessment policies of the institution. Some of the academic staff responsible for the programme have at least two years' experience of student assessment at the exit level of the programme. There is ongoing professional development and training of staff as assessors in line with SAQA requirements.
- (iv) Academic staff members have research experience through their own research and/or studies toward higher education qualifications. The research area(s) of some of the academic staff members are relevant to the subject areas of the programme. In the case of postgraduate programmes, the research profile of the staff includes recognised research outputs.
- (v) The institution and/or other recognised agencies contracted by the institution provide orientation and induction opportunities in which new academic staff members participate. Provision is made for regular staff development opportunities in which relevant academic staff participate.

CRITERION 4: *The academic and support staff complement is of sufficient size and seniority for the nature and field of the programme and the size of the student body to ensure that all activities related to the programme can be carried out effectively. The ratio of full-time to part-time staff is appropriate. The recruitment*

and employment of staff follows relevant legislation and appropriate administrative procedures, including redress and equity considerations. Support staff are adequately qualified and their knowledge and skills are regularly updated.

In order to meet the criterion, the following is required at minimum:

- (i) The staff :student ratio expressed as full-time equivalents is suitable for the nature and field of the programme and number of enrolled students. Sufficient support staff dedicated to the programme are available, where appropriate.
- (ii) The programme has an appropriate full-time : part-time staff ratio to ensure working conditions conducive to teaching and learning and research. Part-time and junior staff and tutors are trained, where necessary, and monitored by full-time staff.
- (iii) Recruitment and employment of staff adhere to the stipulations of the Labour Relations Act and to conditions of service, and there are appropriate administrative procedures for the selection, appointment, induction and payment of staff members and tutors. Redress and equity considerations receive due attention in the appointment of staff.
- (iv) The academic staff complement is such that it ensures that students are exposed to a diversity of ideas, styles and approaches.
- (v) Contractual arrangements relating to the hours and workload of staff ensure that all programme quality assurance, teaching, research, learning support, materials development, assessment, monitoring of part-time staff (where applicable), counselling and administrative activities take place.
- (vi) Administrative, technical and academic development support staff are adequately qualified for their duties, and opportunities exist for staff development.
- (vii) For distance learning programmes, sufficient administrative and technical staff are employed to handle the specialised tasks of registry, dispatch, management of assignments, record-keeping, and other issues in relation to student needs.

Teaching and learning strategy

CRITERION 5: *The institution gives recognition to the importance of promoting student learning. The teaching and learning strategy is appropriate for the institutional type (as reflected in its mission), mode(s) of delivery and student composition, contains mechanisms to ensure the appropriateness of teaching and learning methods, and makes provision for staff to upgrade their teaching methods. The strategy sets targets, plans for implementation, and mechanisms to monitor progress, evaluate impact and effect improvement.*

In order to meet the criterion, the following is required at minimum:

- (i) Recognition of the importance of the promotion of student learning is reflected in the institution's central operating policies and procedures, including resource allocation, provision of support services, marketing, appointments and promotions.
- (ii) A teaching and learning strategy is in place which:

- Is appropriate for the institutional type as reflected in its mission (programme types, research, teaching), mode(s) of delivery (contact/distance/e-learning), and its student composition (age, full-time/part-time, advantaged/disadvantaged), etc.
- Has mechanisms to ensure that teaching and learning methods are appropriate for the design and use of learning materials and instructional and learning technology.
- Provides for staff development opportunities where staff can upgrade their teaching methods.
- Contains targets, plans for implementation, ways of monitoring progress and evaluating impact, and mechanisms for feedback and improvement.

Student assessment policies and procedures

CRITERION 6: *The different modes of delivery of the programme have appropriate policies and procedures for internal assessment; internal and external moderation; monitoring of student progress; explicitness, validity and reliability of assessment practices; recording of assessment results; settling of disputes; the rigour and security of the assessment system; RPL; and for the development of staff competence in assessment.*

In order to meet the criterion, the following is required at minimum:

- (i) The programme has appropriate policies and procedures in all modes of delivery for:
- Internal assessment of student learning achievements by academic staff responsible for teaching a course/module of the programme in a system that includes internal moderation.
 - External moderation of students' learning achievements by appropriately qualified personnel. Moderators are appointed in terms of clear criteria and procedures and conduct their responsibilities in terms of clear guidelines.
 - Monitoring student progress in the course of the programme.
 - Ensuring the validity and reliability of assessment practices.
 - Secure and reliable recording of assessment results.
 - Settling of student disputes regarding assessment results.
 - Ensuring the security of the assessment system, especially with regard to plagiarism and other misdemeanours.
 - Development of staff competence in assessment.
- (ii) There are appropriate policies and procedures for RPL, including the identification, documentation, assessment, evaluation and transcription of prior learning against specified learning outcomes, so that it can articulate with current programmes and qualifications. Assessment instruments are designed for RPL in accordance with the institution's policies on fair and transparent assessment.

Infrastructure and library resources

CRITERION 7: *Suitable and sufficient venues, IT infrastructure and library resources are available for students and staff in the programme. Policies ensure the proper management and maintenance of library resources, including support and access for students and staff. Staff development for library personnel takes place on a regular basis.*

In order to meet the criterion, the following is required at minimum:

- (i) Suitable and sufficient venues are available at all official sites of learning where the programme is offered, including teaching and learning venues, laboratories and clinical facilities, where appropriate. There are codes for clinical conduct, laboratory practice and safety, where appropriate. Venue allocation and timetabling are carefully planned to accommodate the needs of students.
- (ii) Suitable and sufficient IT infrastructure, as determined by the nature of the programme, is available at all sites of learning. This includes functionally appropriate hardware (computers and printers), software (programmes) and databases. The infrastructure is properly maintained and continuously upgraded and adequate funds are available for this purpose. Students and staff are trained in the use of technology required for the programme.
- (iii) Suitable and sufficient library resources exist which:
 - Complement the curriculum.
 - Provide incentives for students to learn according to their own needs, capacity and pace.
 - Support appropriate professional and scholarly activities of students and staff involved in the programme.
- (iv) Policies exist for the proper management and maintenance of library resources, and for their continuous renewal and expansion. These policies are integrated into the institution's financial plan.
- (v) On- and off-campus students have adequate library support and adequate access to library research and computing facilities.
- (vi) Staff development takes place on a regular basis to update the library staff's knowledge and skills.

Programme administrative services

CRITERION 8: *The programme has effective administrative services for providing information, managing the programme information system, dealing with a diverse student population, and ensuring the integrity of processes leading to certification of the qualification obtained through the programme.*

In order to meet the criterion, the following is required at minimum:

- (i) The programme information system is managed effectively in order to provide reliable information on the following:
 - Venues, timetables, access to library and IT facilities, availability of academic and support staff for student consultations, and student support services. Information and communication needs of students in remote (rural) areas receive due attention.

- Records of the students in the programme, including admission, progression, grades/marks, fees and graduation.
 - Records of students in the programme for the National Learner Records Database (NLRD) of SAQA.
- (ii) Effective administrative systems are in place for:
- Identifying academically non-active students, particularly in distance education programmes.
 - Monitoring student performance in order to ensure timely identification of at-risk students. There are strategies for advising students on improving their chances of success and for referral to appropriate academic development programmes. Rules for re-admission to programmes are clear and are sensitively applied.
 - Dealing with the needs of a diverse student population.
- (iii) Clear and efficient arrangements are in place for ensuring that the integrity of certification processes for the qualification obtained through the programme is not compromised. These include:
- Effective mechanisms to quality assure the processing and issuing of certificates.
 - Effective security measures to prevent fraud or the illegal issuing of certificates.

Postgraduate policies, procedures and regulations

CRITERION 9: *Postgraduate programmes have appropriate policies, procedures and regulations for the admission and selection of students, the selection and appointment of supervisors, and the definition of the roles and responsibilities of supervisors and students, etc.*

In order to meet the criterion, the following is required at minimum:

- (i) Appropriate policies, procedures and regulations are in place for student admission, selection and assessment. These are communicated to all postgraduate students, and academic and administrative staff, and implemented consistently across the institution and programme.
- (ii) The selection and appointment criteria in place for postgraduate supervisors are acceptable to the research community in the area of study. These include the following:
- The supervisor has a qualification in a relevant field of study higher than, or at least at the same level as, the exit level of the postgraduate programme he/she is supervising.
 - The supervisor has an appropriate research track record, as well as experience, expertise and peer recognition in the field of study.
 - In the case of inexperienced or new supervisors, there is ongoing staff development and support, and joint supervision is explored as an option.
- (iii) Explicit guidelines exist on the roles and responsibilities of supervisors and students and other matters relevant to the performance of research. These include the following:
- The nature, format and expected turnaround time for work submitted to the supervisor.
 - Forms of assessment, and the communication of feedback to the student, which includes:
 - The periodicity of contact between student and supervisor, and the schedule for the submission of progress reports and written work.

Research ethics, code of conduct, regulations on plagiarism and intellectual property rights.
Examination and qualification requirements.

PROGRAMME ACCREDITATION CRITERIA – ACCREDITATION PHASE

Programme coordination

CRITERION 10: *The programme is effectively coordinated in order to facilitate the attainment of its intended purposes and outcomes.*

In order to meet the criterion, the following is required at minimum:

- (i) An academic is identified as programme coordinator and operates within the framework of an agreed-upon mandate and defined procedures and responsibilities. This includes responsibility for:
 - Ensuring the academic coherence and integrity of the programme and that all conditions for the delivery of the programme are met.
 - Coordination of logistical and other issues regarding:
 - The day-to-day delivery of the programme.
 - All aspects of the programme quality management system, including the provision of resources.
 - The review of the programme and feedback with a view to improvement.
 - Monitoring of expenditure.
- (ii) Opportunities exist for student input and participation in relevant aspects of programme coordination.
- (iii) Policies for ensuring the integrity of certification processes for the qualification obtained through the programme are effectively implemented. These include:
 - Mechanisms for monitoring the eligibility of candidates for the award of certificates.
 - Mechanisms for quality assuring the processing and issuing of certificates.
 - Security measures for preventing fraud or the illegal issuing of certificates.

Academic development for student success

CRITERION 11: *Academic development initiatives promote student, staff and curriculum development and offer academic support for students, where necessary.*

In order to meet the criterion, the following is required at minimum:

- (i) Staff responsible for academic development are adequately qualified and experienced for their task, and their knowledge and skills are regularly updated.
- (ii) Student and staff development initiatives are responsive to the needs of the students and staff. This includes foundational and skills-oriented provision for students.
- (iii) Curriculum development at programme and course/module levels includes strategies for language skills development, numeracy and cognitive skills which enhance the use of disciplinary discourse and skills by students.
- (iv) Additional student academic support is offered where necessary.

- (v) The effectiveness of academic development initiatives is regularly monitored and feedback is used for improvement.

Teaching and learning interactions

CRITERION 12: *Effective teaching and learning methods and suitable learning materials and learning opportunities facilitate the achievement of the purposes and outcomes of the programme.*

In order to meet the criterion, the following is required at minimum:

- (i) Students are provided with guidance on how the different components of the programme (for example, subjects, courses and/or modules) contribute to the learning outcomes of the programme.
- (ii) There is an appropriate balance between, and mix of, different teaching and learning methods. Teaching and learning methods are appropriate to the design and use of the learning materials and instructional and learning technology.
- (iii) Suitable learning opportunities are provided to facilitate the acquisition of the knowledge and skills specified in the programme outcomes, and within the stipulated time.
- (iv) Students actively participate in the teaching and learning process.
- (v) The staff have opportunities to upgrade their teaching methods and there is facilitation of suitable learning opportunities.
- (vi) The effectiveness of teaching and learning interactions is regularly monitored and the results are used for improvement.

Student assessment practices

CRITERION 13: *The programme has effective assessment practices which include internal (or external) assessment, as well as internal and external moderation.*

In order to meet the criterion, the following is required at minimum:

- (i) Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process and is systematically and purposefully used to generate data for grading, ranking, selecting and predicting, and for providing timely feedback to inform teaching and learning and to improve the curriculum.
- (ii) The learning achievements of students are internally assessed by the academic staff responsible for teaching a course/module in terms of a system that includes internal moderation. This includes:
 - Academic staff who teach a course/module are responsible for designing, implementing and marking both formative and summative student assessments, for recording results and for feedback to students.
 - For summative assessment, especially where more than one marker is involved, internal moderation checks are undertaken to ensure the reliability of the assessment procedures.

- Procedures are in place and are followed to receive, record, process, and turn around assignments within a time frame that allows students to benefit from feedback prior to the submission of further assessment tasks.
- (iii) The learning achievements of students on the exit level of a qualification are externally moderated by appropriately qualified people who have been appointed according to clear criteria and procedures and who conduct their responsibilities in terms of clear guidelines. External moderation includes the following:
- External moderators are recommended by the examining academic department, are independent experts in their fields, have qualifications at least on the same level as the qualification being examined, are changed regularly, are not appointed as part of reciprocal arrangements (where possible), and are approved by and responsible to Senate/equivalent body.
 - The institution provides information on the curriculum and on continuous assessment, and guidelines to assist external moderators in the completion of their reports.
 - External moderators mark fully at the exit level of the programme at least 10 percent of the examination scripts for each paper written and do random checks of at least 20 percent of examination scripts for each paper.
 - Completed external moderator reports are returned to the lecturer concerned and also to the programme coordinator or head of department/school. Problems are discussed with the lecturer concerned and the programme coordinator monitors the implementation of agreed improvements. External moderators approve the final marks list for the qualification concerned.
 - External moderators are expected to comment on the validity of the assessment instruments, the quality of student performance and the standard of student attainment, the reliability of the marking process, and any concerns or irregularities with respect to the observation of institutional/professional regulations.
- (iv) Assessment practices are effective and reliable in measuring and recording student attainment of the intended learning outcomes. This includes the following:
- Assessment criteria are commensurate with the level of the qualification, the requirements of SAQA and, where appropriate, professional bodies, and are made explicit to staff and students.
 - Learning activities and the required assessment performances are both aligned with learning outcomes at the programme and modular level.
 - Learning outcomes for a programme/module and their link to assessment criteria and judgements are clearly stated and communicated to students. A range of appropriate assessment tasks is effective in measuring student attainment of the intended learning outcomes. There is at least one integrated assessment procedure for each qualification which is a valid test of the key purposes of the programme.
 - A system is in operation for maximising the accuracy, consistency and credibility of results, including consistency of marking and concurrence between assessors and external examiners on the nature and quality of the evidence which indicates achievement of learning outcomes.
 - Students' assessment records are reliable and secure. Assessment data is accessible to academic coordinators, administrators, teaching staff and students, as appropriate.
- (v) RPL is done in an effective, reliable and consistent manner.

CRITERION 14: *The programme has taken measures to ensure the reliability, rigour and security of the assessment system.*

In order to meet the criterion, the following is required at minimum:

The assessment system is rigorous and secure. This includes:

- Institutional/faculty/professional rules governing assessment are published and clearly communicated to students and relevant stakeholders.
- Evidence is provided to demonstrate that these rules are widely adhered to.
- Breaches of assessment regulations are dealt with effectively and timeously.
- Students are provided with information and guidance on their rights and responsibilities regarding assessment processes (for example, definitions of and regulations on plagiarism, penalties, terms of appeal, supplementary examinations, etc.).
- Student appeals procedures are explicit, fair and effective.
- There are clear and consistent published guidelines/regulations for:
 - Marking and grading of results.
 - Aggregation of marks and grades.
 - Progression and final awards.
 - Credit allocation and articulation.

Coordination of work-based learning

CRITERION 15: *The coordination of work-based learning is done effectively in all components of applicable programmes. This includes an adequate infrastructure, effective communication, recording of progress made, monitoring and mentoring.*

In some professional programmes, work-based learning does not traditionally form part of the curriculum. Although strongly supported, it is recognized that work-based learning is not a mandatory requirement for quantity surveying tertiary programmes. However, for those programmes which do incorporate this learning approach, the requirements of this criteria should be adhered to.

In order to meet the criterion, the following is required at minimum:

- (i) Learning contracts or agreements are implemented through which the student, the higher education institution and the employer can negotiate, approve and assess the objectives and outcomes of the learning process. Various parties, i.e. the institution, students, mentors and employers, adhere to the contract or agreement on their roles and responsibilities.
- (ii) Regular and effective communication takes place between the institution, students, mentors and employers involved in work-based learning. Good working relations are maintained between the various parties involved.

- (iii) A system (both at the institution and at the place of employment) is in operation to record and monitor regularly and systematically the progress of the student's learning experience in the workplace.
- (iv) A mentoring system enables the student to recognise strengths and weaknesses in his/her work, to develop existing and new abilities, and to gain knowledge of work practices.

Delivery of postgraduate programmes

CRITERION 16: *The postgraduate programme is managed properly, offers opportunities for students to develop research competence, and ensures that research is properly assessed. Policies for student admission and selection, criteria for the selection and appointment of supervisors, and guidelines on the roles and responsibilities of supervisors and students are effectively implemented.*

In order to meet the criterion, the following is required at minimum:

- (i) The postgraduate programme is managed properly and offers students opportunities to develop research competence. This includes the following:
 - A senior academic with research and postgraduate supervision experience:
 - Coordinates research programmes, monitors the progress of postgraduate students and oversees assessment procedures.
 - Coordinates structured master's and doctoral programmes, monitors the progress of postgraduate students and oversees assessment procedures.
 - Training is provided in research skills, including guidance on research design and methodology. Training is also provided in language, writing and numeracy skills, where required. Employment-related skills are developed, where appropriate.
 - Monitoring and review of the postgraduate system takes place regularly and includes student feedback on the quality of the learning experience, supervision and support infrastructure.
- (ii) Research is properly assessed, which includes the following (in addition to the requirements for assessment specified in Criterion 13)
 - At least one examiner external to the institution is appointed per dissertation/thesis.
 - Without undermining the principle of assessment based on academic judgement, assessment decisions are made transparently and students are afforded reasonable access to information (e.g. examiners' reports).
 - There are opportunities for students to defend their theses (e.g. through an oral defence).
 - Higher degree committees or similar structures consider examiners' reports and make considered decisions about examination outcomes.
- (iii) Policies for student admission and selection are effectively implemented (see Criterion 8).
- (iv) Criteria for the selection and appointment of postgraduate supervisors are effectively implemented, as well as guidelines on the roles and responsibilities of supervisors and students (see Criterion 8).

Criteria for programme output and impact

These criteria pertain to what is delivered and attained by a programme. Programmes have to be effective with regard to student retention and throughput rates, especially in relation to race and gender equity. The programme should contribute to enhancing the employability of students and alleviating shortages of expertise in relevant fields, in cases where these are the desired outcomes of the programme.

CRITERION 17: *Student retention and throughput rates in the programme are monitored, especially in terms of race and gender equity, and remedial measures are taken, where necessary.*

In order to meet the criterion, the following is required at minimum:

- (i) The programme coordinator has access to and monitors information on retention and throughput rates for the programme, also in terms of national benchmarks. Appropriate remedial action is taken where necessary.
- (ii) The race and gender profile of the qualifying class increasingly resembles that of the entering class.

CRITERION 18: *The programme has taken steps to enhance the employability of students and to alleviate shortages of expertise in relevant fields, in cases where these are the desired outcomes of the programme.*

In order to meet the criterion, the following is expected at minimum:

- (i) There is evidence that the programme attempted to have an impact on the employability of students, where these are the desired outcomes of the programme.
- (ii) Conscious efforts are made to get the programme acknowledged in the workplace/community and by other institutions. An improvement plan is put into operation, where necessary.

CRITERION 19: *User surveys, reviews and impact studies on the effectiveness of the programme are undertaken at regular intervals. Results are used to improve the programme's design, delivery and resourcing, and for staff development and student support, where necessary.*

In order to meet the criterion, the following is required at minimum:

- (i) User surveys are undertaken at regular intervals for feedback from academics involved in the programme, graduates, peers, external moderators, professional bodies and employers, where applicable, to ascertain whether the programme is attaining its intended outcomes.
- (ii) There are regular reviews of the effectiveness of benchmarking in the programme against equivalent national and international reference points, with a view to goalsetting and continuous self-improvement in the programme.
- (iii) Student throughput and retention rates are regularly reviewed, also with regard to national requirements.

- (iv) Impact studies are regularly undertaken to measure and evaluate the impact of the programme and its graduates on the employability of students and in alleviating shortages of expertise in relevant fields, where these are the desired outcomes of the programme. Impact studies could also ascertain the degree of acknowledgement of the programme in the community, by other institutions, and in the workplace, where applicable.
- (v) Results of user surveys, reviews and impact studies are used in a regular evaluation of all programme aspects and to develop improvement plans.