

Extract, on work-based learning, from the HEQC's 'Criteria for Institutional Audits'

The following definitions apply:

Work-based learning (p. 26) – A component of a learning programme that focuses on the application of theory in an authentic, work-based context. It addresses specific competences identified for the acquisition of a qualification which relate to the development of skills that will make the learner employable and will assist in developing his/her personal skills. Employer and professional bodies are involved in the assessment of experiential learning, together with academic staff.

Experiential learning (p. 25) – A term traditionally used within the former technikon sector for **work-based learning** (see Work-based learning).

Professional programmes (p. 25) – Programmes that have to meet the licensure and other professional and **work-based** requirements of statutory councils.

Relevant criteria:

Criterion 4 (pp. 8-9) deals with the adequacy of academic support services and the adequate staffing thereof.

CRITERION 7 (pp. 10-11)

The administration of academic programmes is conducted within the framework of an effective programme management system. Responsibility and lines of accountability are clearly allocated. Management information systems are used to record and disseminate information about the programme, as well as to facilitate review and improvement.

(iii) In the case of **work-based learning**:

- **Learning contracts or agreements** by which the student, higher education institution and employer can negotiate, approve and assess the objectives and outcomes of the learning process. The **roles and responsibilities of the various parties**, i.e. the institution, students, mentors and employers, are clearly spelled out in the contract or agreement;
- **Regular and efficient communication** between the institution, students, mentors and employers;
- A system (both at the institution and at the place of employment) to **record and monitor regularly and systematically the content and progress** of the student's learning experience in the workplace; and
- A **mentoring system which 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.

CRITERION 8 (pp. 11-12)

Clear and efficient systems and procedures are in place for the design and approval of new programmes, courses and modules. The requirements are consistently applied and regularly monitored.

(vii) Where appropriate, accounting for the characteristics and requirements of professional and vocational education in the development of the programme. This includes the following:

- The programme promotes an understanding on the part of the student of the specific occupation for which he/she is being trained;

- The programme has a balance of theoretical and practical or applied knowledge. The student has opportunities to master the techniques and skills which are required by a specific profession or occupation; and
- **Work-based learning** forms an integral part of the curriculum, and placement in a work environment is regarded as an essential component of the programme.

CRITERION 11 (p. 14)

The institution has an assessment policy and clear and effective procedures for its implementation. The policy and its procedures ensure academic and professional standards in the design, approval, implementation and review of assessment strategies for programmes and modules, and for the qualifications awarded by the institution.

(iv) With regard to **work-based learning**, procedures whereby academics as well as workplace based assessors (e.g. mentors and/or supervisors) provide input into assessment.