

OBA and The Quality of Student Learning

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The main objective of a Quality Assurance Council (QAC) quality audit is to assure the quality of student learning. A QAC audit is one of an institution's Fitness for Purpose in teaching and learning. The audit process is particularly concerned with the ways institutions articulate and measure the student learning outcomes they expect or aspire to. The UGC encourages institutions to adopt an outcome-based approach to student learning (OBA); and the QAC audit process reinforces these objectives. OBA is therefore an important driver for quality student learning and quality improvement. The outcome-based initiative should help institutions in identifying appropriate measures for their teaching and learning activities, so that this initiative and the quality assurance system become mutually reinforcing.

The QAC recognises that at the time of their first audits between 2008-2011, institutions will be at different stages in their preparations for the four-year undergraduate degree and in their development of an outcome-based approach to student learning. This will be fully recognised by audit panels: there will be no expectation or judgement of an institution's progress in taking forward these initiatives as part of the audit process. Nevertheless, the OBA initiative and QAC audits are inextricably linked. Several of the audit focus areas relate either directly or indirectly to an outcome-based approach to student learning. It is therefore to be expected that institutions, in their Institutional Submissions for audit, will wish to highlight how OBA is impacting on their assurance of the quality of student learning.

This session will consider the interrelationship between OBA and QAC audits and how the audit focus areas and audit process can support institutions in adopting an outcome-based approach. In doing so, the importance of OBA in ensuring a quality student learning experience will be re-inforced.