Quality Management System

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REGISTRATION STANDARDS

Guidelines Standards for Registration

Authority: Director, Standards, Regulations and Institutional Support

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1.0 REGISTRATION REGULATIONS AND QUALITY MEASURES

1.1 Purpose

The Jamaica Higher Education Commission has in its remit, the registration of all institutions classified as Higher Education Institutions. It is with that purpose that this document seeks to engage these institutions, by outlining the expected areas that each institution is to have satisfied in order to receive provisional licensing with the Jamaica Higher Education Commission (J-TEC). The Commission continues to support the 2030 National Development Plan, under the Education and Training Section, which speaks to the creation of a single national framework which guides the conformity of all training programmes to a set of established standards (2030 Vision, PIOJ). The licensing, which aligns itself with international standards and standards of the University Council of Jamaica (UCJ) and has adapted some of the ideas from the Australian Framework and Application Guide, the Canadian Framework, and the Mauritius Framework. The Standards will be accessible to stakeholders and should be used to ensure compliance with the areas in order to facilitate each institution's licensing.

1.2 Scope

To ensure quality in the operations of each institution, the licensing process includes a set of eleven (11) Criteria, with the requisite standards and quality elements applicable to all Higher Education Institutions offering higher level certificates, diplomas, or degrees. The document through the process also recognizes the laws and regulations governing the Higher Education Sector.

2.0 LEGISLATION GUIDING THE OPERATIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

Table 1: <u>Major Legislation Guiding the Operations of Institutions within the Jamaica Higher Education Landscape</u>

Major Legislation	Purpose
Education Act, 1965	The Act provides the definition of tertiary and operations of public tertiary institutions, scheme orders (e.g. Mico Case). It defines tertiary education as • full-time education other than primary or secondary education; • part-time education; and (iii) leisure-time occupation in organized cultural available in pursuance of any provision made under this Act further education for students who have attained the age of fifteen years, training and re- creative activities;
Education Regulations, 1980 (Public Tertiary Institutions)	The Education Regulation 1980 outlines the framework under which all schools should operate, its focus is mainly on secondary and primary schools within the education sector. Little is mentioned about the tertiary/higher education sector, but a stipulation for entrance for tertiary education.
Fair Competition Act And Consumer	An act to provide for the maintenance and encouragement of competition in the conduct of trade, business and in the supply of services in Jamaica with a view to providing consumers with competitive prices and product choices

Major Legislation	Purpose
Consumer Protection Act - Especially In The Provision Of Private Education Services;	An Act to provide for the promotion and protection of consumer interest, in relation to the supply of goods and the provision of services in order to ensure the protection of life, health and safety of consumers and others, the establishment of a Consumer. Affairs Commission and for connected purposes.
Copyright Act	The Jamaica Copyright Act 1993 gives these creators the sole right to publish, distribute, reproduce or authorise the reproduction of their works in any form. This protection given by the Copyright Act comes into effect as soon as the work is put into a fixed form.
Public Health Legislation	An act to make provision for promoting the public health and for preventing the spread of communicable and epidemic diseases
Planning And Environmental Legislation	This provides regulatory guidelines for planning and environment Each parish is designed an act by which is it govern.
The Building Code, Act 2017	This Act provides the regulation of the building industry to facilitate the adoption and efficient application of national building standards to ensure safety in the built environment enhancing amenities and promoting sustainable development
Disabilities Act & The Code Of	The Act is to promote, protect and ensure the full equal enjoyment by persons with disabilities of privilege, interests, benefits, and treatment, on an equal basis with others.

Major Legislation	Purpose
Codes Of Practice To Protect Persons With Disabilities	The Codes of Practice will provide minimum standards by which the public will be guided on how to interact with, and allow for the participation of persons with disabilities. It is a component of the Disabilities Act which was passed in Parliament in October 2014.
Cyber Crime Act 2015	The Act addresses activities in cyberspace, includes an offence titled 'the Use of a Computer for Malicious Communication', which addresses specifically the transmission of data via a computer which is threatening, menacing or obscene AND with the intention to harass or cause harm or the apprehension of harm, to any person or property.

3.0 STANDARDS, CRITERION AND QUALITY ELEMENTS

3.1 Standard: Legal Status and Regulation
Standard Statement:

The institution is registered as a legal entity and actively complies with all national legal and regulatory requirements.

3.1.1 CRITERION: The institution is an established legal body, and operating within its legal boundaries.

Quality elements:
1) *The institution has all relevant legal documents supporting its registration with the Companies Offices of Jamaica or established by government as a Corporate Body or a Public body having a Scheme of Management.*
2) *Processes, systems, procedures and internal mechanisms are all in line with regulatory requirements of the State.*

3.2 Standard: Philosophy and Strategy
Standard Statement:

The institution must have a clear philosophy and appropriate strategy which guides its education and research operations. This must be consistent with either the Government of Jamaica's, or the institutional and/or industry's philosophy and strategy.

3.2.1 CRITERION: The institution has a Philosophy, Mission and Vision

Quality Elements:

1) *The official position of the Institution is clearly and briefly stated in its mission, vision, goals and purpose.*
2) *This is publicly displayed for ease or reference and viewing by all.*
3) *The mission, vision, goal and purpose are included in the annual management reviews of the institution.*
4) *The institution accurately and consistently demonstrates its mission, vision, goal and purpose through its services, programmes and publications.*

5) *Any change(s), especially major, to the mission, vision, goal and purpose is communicated to all the stake holders and relevant agencies.*

6) *The should be evidence the communication and new endorsement of any changes made to the vision, mission, goals and purpose of the institution.*

3.2.2 **CRITERION: The institution should have a Strategic Business Plan**

Quality Elements:

1) *The Institution has approved current strategic plan that:*
   - *shows that the Institution has clarity about its future directions for higher education;*
   - *identifies key performance indicators*
   - *clearly addresses risk management and assessment*
   - *presents adequate mechanisms and modalities for communication with internal and external stakeholders;*
   - *guides management decision making*
   - *identifies the sources of funding to support existing and proposed programmes and includes development priorities.*

2) *The strategy shows evidence of collaboration and consultation with a broad representation as possible of all stakeholders, both internal and external.*

3) *The strategy demonstrates flexibility to accommodate changes in technology, trends and new development.*

3.3 **Standard: Corporate and Academic Governance**

Standard Statement:

The institution demonstrates sound corporate and academic governance for the category of education operations with a properly constituted corporate governing body which has responsibility for oversight of all educational operations, including conferral of its educational awards and to which management is accountable.

3.3.1 CRITERION: The institutions has a governance structure

Quality Elements:

1) *The institution has a designated governing body with the enabling legal authority (whether by statute or otherwise) for formulating, monitoring and evaluating performance against broad policies that are consistent with mission and purpose.*

2) *The institution has a governance structure that is appropriate for the mission and purpose of the category for which registration in being considered.*

3) *The corporate governing body has a majority of external members and uses a full range of expertise required for effective governance of the institution through its membership and/or through external advisors.*

4) *The institution's corporate governing body ensures that all delegations (including financial, academic and managerial) are appropriate, documented, observed and regularly reviewed.*

5) *The Institution has an administrative body headed by Chief Executive Officer and other relevant personnel, which operate with the delegated authority from the Governing Body to implement policies and is responsible for the day-to-day operations of this entity.*

6) *The Institution has a system of continuous quality assurance that emphasizes responsiveness to the changing environment in which it operates, the effectiveness of its operations, and its contribution towards the achievement of its objectives.*

7) *The Institution has an effective system for proper record management and communication of its deliberation and decisions for relevant internal and external stakeholders.*

8) *The institution's corporate governance arrangements demonstrate a clear distinction between governance and management responsibilities.*

9) *An organization chart is available, showing the functional relationships among the Institution's personnel.*

10) *3The organization structure is designed to enable the effective delivery of programmes and services to students.*

11) *The institution's corporate governing body protects the academic integrity and quality of the education operations through academic governance arrangements that provide a clear and discernible separation between corporate and academic governance, including a properly constituted academic board and course committee.*

12) *The Institution's corporate and academic governance strategic and arrangement demonstrate:*

- *the effective development, implementation and review of policies for all aspects of the academic activities including delivery of the courses of study by other entities;*
- *the maintenance of academic criteria, with appropriate mechanisms for external input, in*
- *accordance with conventions for good academic practice.*

3.4 Standard: Financial Viability and Sustainability

Standard Statement:

The institution has the financial resources, support and management capacity to sustain the category of education consistent with the registration criteria.

3.4.1 CRITERION: The institution sustains Financial Viability and Sustainability

Quality Elements:

1) *The institution is financially viable and has the capacity to sustain quality in its current and planned education operations, using realistic projections of student demand and income from all sources.*
2) *The institution exercises prudent financial management, financial controls and business practices and has adequate financial resources to effectively achieve its declared mission, purpose, and goals in a sustainable manner.*
3) *The institution applies, and demonstrates the capacity to continue to apply, sufficient financial resources to ensure the achievement of its educational objectives.*
4) *The institution has business continuity plans and financial and tuition safeguards in place for students, should the institution cease to provide a course of study, cease to operate as tertiary institution or suffer a major incident affecting the operations of the institution.*
5) *The financial records of the institution are accurate and independently audited by an appropriately qualified auditor.*
6) *The financial aspects of the institution's operations are well-managed in accordance with the legal requirements and as per applicable accounting standards; the institution has effective arrangements for the detection and prevention of fraud and mismanagement.*
7) *Academic planning and related decisions are supported with adequate financial resource allocations.*

3.5 **Standard: Academic Programmes Quality and Integrity**

Standard Statement:

The Institution establishes and maintains policies and programmes that ensure the academic quality and integrity of its education operations are maintained.

3.5.1 **CRITERION: The institution's admission policies and requirements are clearly stated, published and available to the public. The policies and requirement must meet the established admission criteria.**

Quality elements:

1) *There must be no gender or religious bias for students who meet the matriculation requirement and are eligible for entry into any programme of study.*
2) *The Institution's objectives for its Higher Education operations include the cultivation in students of critical and liberated thought and the aptitude for learning throughout life.*
3) *The Institution promotes and protects free intellectual inquiry and expression in its learning, teaching and research activities.*
   - ensures the integrity of student assessment, research and research activity
   - prevents, detects and addresses academic misconduct by students or staff, including cheating of any kind and plagiarism
   - adheres to its documented and publicised admission policies, procedures, and requirements
   - Ensures that the awarding of multiple awards, at any level, offered in conjunction with another entity, protects the integrity of the education awards offered by the institution.
4) *Admission activities are ethical.*
5) *All material used during the process of admission of students accurately represents the institution.*
6) *Documented admission processes and procedures outline the requisite admission criteria.*

3.5.2 **CRITERION: The institution has effective mechanisms to manage and quality assure academic programmes offered by the institution**

Quality Elements:

1) *Research carried out under the auspices of the institution satisfies appropriate codes of conduct, safety and ethics clearance requirements, and*

is consistent with legislative or other regulatory requirements and any applicable national guidelines.

2) *Where the Institution has an arrangement in place with another entity to manage or deliver some or all of a course of study on its behalf, the institution has effective mechanisms to manage and quality assure all aspects of the arrangement, including admission and support of students and delivery of the course of study to ensure student learning outcomes equivalent to those for the same or a cognate course of study when delivered by the institution.*

3) Formal and effective procedures for developing, approving, implementing, monitoring, reviewing, and ensuring the quality of the academic programmes offered.

4) *The academic programmes offered by the institution are congruent with its mission and purpose and any particular niche that it occupies*

5) *The should be effective quality assurance arrangements for all education operations, encompassing systematic monitoring, review and improvement*

6) *Procedures for admissions are documented and elaborated and include, but are not limited to, the following key elements:*

   - A prescribed approval process culminating with final approval by an Academic Board (or equivalent body) and the Governing Body.
   - Agreed review cycles

7) *The use of external examiners to reduce bias and prejudice and to assure quality*

   - Capturing and incorporation of feedback from students
   - Involvement of faculty members
   - Emphasis on consistency, openness, Criterions, and outcomes
   - Rigorous application of quality control at key points
   - Central regulation by an Academic Board (or equivalent body) at critical junctures, such as assessment and the granting of awards
   - Delegation of appropriate responsibilities to key committees

8) *The institution has an Academic Board (or equivalent body) that has the authority to set, maintain, and assure academic criteria.*

9) *The learning outcomes of the academic programmes offered by the institution are explicitly stated in the form of programme specifications (i.e. concise descriptions of the intended learning outcomes, and the means by which the outcomes are achieved and demonstrated).*

10) *The institution has academic policies, procedures and requirements are elaborated, documented, and publicized by the institution for the benefit of faculty, students, and other relevant stakeholders and include, but are not limited to, the following key elements.*

11) *Documented procedures for*

- transfer of students between programmes and from other institutions
- Granting of exemptions to students
- Time limit for programme completion by students
- Graduation and award of credentials (including categories of awards)

12) *The academic programmes offered by the Institution meet the expectations and distinguishing features of the different levels of qualifications of the NQF, thereby ensuring the consistency and comparability of tertiary-level qualifications.*

13) *Teaching and learning should be arranged in such a manner to afford the opportunity for student participation and feedback*

14) *Class sizes should be so arranged to provide opportunities for individual student interface, as may be required.*

15) *The learning outcomes of the academic programmes offered by the institution are explicitly stated in the form of programme specifications (i.e., concise descriptions of the intended learning outcomes, and the means by which the outcomes are achieved and demonstrated).*

3.6 Standard: Human Resource Requirements

Standard Statement:

The institution ensures that the human resource is managed, and faculty and staffs are appropriate for function to enable the fulfillment of the expressed mission and vision.

3.6.1 CRITERION: The Institution manages its human resources to ensure effective

Quality Elements:

1) *Human resource policies are consistent with the legal and regulatory environment and with good practice;*

2) *The duties and responsibilities of each position are specified in a written job description that is made available to staff.*

3) *The Institution ensures that its philosophy, mission, purpose and strategy are communicated effectively to all faculty and staff to ensure that they are consistent with their operations.*

4) *The Institution has adequately appropriately qualified personnel to manage and to provide academic leadership for the category level for which it has applied to be registered.*

5) *The institution manages its human resources to ensure effective workload management, merit- based selection, orientation, promotion, induction, performance reviews, and grievance.*

3.6.2 **CRITERION: The Institution has an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced faculty members directly correlated with the programme types and levels offered – a core of full-time persons to effectively perform the required academic and related functions.**

Quality Elements:

1) *The qualification of faculty members is, normally, at the minimum, one degree level higher than the level of the programme in which they teach. For example, for undergraduate programmes, faculty should have at least a Master's degree; where post-graduate degree programmes are offered, faculty members hold at least a Doctorate in the relevant discipline.*

2) *Faculty members are professionally qualified and sufficiently experienced to be effective in teaching, facilitation of learning, and assessment of students consistent with the levels of qualifications being awarded.*

3) *Faculty members through linkages with relevant industries and corporations are abreast of current developments in research and scholarship in their disciplines, and structured opportunities exist for them to maintain currency in these areas.*

4) *Faculty members have on-going affiliations with the wider academic community, relevant professional bodies, and/or related industries.*

5) *Adjunct Faculty are integrated into the culture and ethos of the institution.*

6) *Where research is a declared component of the mission and purpose of the Institution, there must be suitably qualified faculty and adequate faculties and resources for faculty and staff to effectively undertake and publish the results of meaningful research activities.*

7) *The Institution has an adequate number of qualified and experienced administrative, ancillary, and technical staff to provide the supporting expertise and skill sets necessary to effectively create the environment required for the delivery of the programmes offered.*

3.7 **Standard: Student Services, Information and Responsibilities**

Standard Statement:

The institution has a well-documented plan for the provision of student services that meets its responsibilities to students, including the provision of information, support and equitable treatment. These should be reviewed and adjusted annually.

3.7.1 **CRITERION: The institution has a variety of services available and accessible to students to enhance their academic success, personal and social development and well-being,**

Quality Elements:

1) *Welfare, accommodation and career services are provided by qualified personnel. These services include, but are not limited to, the following: Counselling and Academic Advising (by faculty and department); Emergency Health Care; Recreational Facilities; Lounging Areas; Cafeteria/Tuck-shop; Work Experience/Job Placement; and Financial Aid/Scholarships/Grants/Bursaries/Fee Payment Plan.*
2) *Responsiveness to students is at the centre of the institution's approach*
3) *Student feedback is secured through a variety of appropriate mechanisms.*

3.7.2 CRITERION: The institution should ensure that all students are informed about their relationship with the institution, prior to enrolment and during their studies.

Quality Elements:

1) *Information provided to students should include*
   - Any contractual arrangements
   - The commitments and obligations of the institution; and
   - The expectations, rights and obligations of the student
2) *The institution ensures that all students and prospective students have ready access to information about all charges, conditions, refund, and costs involved in the completion of their program of study, including course-specific costs and any other that will affect the student financially.*

3.7.3 CRITERION: The institution and any other partner or agents with which it has arrangements for the delivery of a course of study must provide current, accurate, adequate and openly accessible information for the prospective and enrolled students on all matters relating to their studies for awards offered by the institution

Quality Elements:

1) *Information provided should include but not limited to:*
   - The award that will be given for each course or programme

   - Registration status of the institution and the accreditation status of each programme of study.

   - Structure, credit points and duration or volume of learning for each programme of study

   - Admission criteria, recognition of prior learning and credit and articulation to and from other studies and institution

   - Content and assessment for each unit in the course of study

   - Job placement arrangements

- Schedules (when and where) the course of study will be offered, including the units that will be offered in any teaching period; and,

- Availability of student advisory services

- The necessary systems are in place to support proper student governance and creation of an atmosphere that will facilitate effective development of student leaders, free of the institution's control or manipulation.

3.7.4 CRITERION: Institution must implement reliable methods to satisfy their stakeholders

Quality Elements:

1) *Students have ready access to effective grievance process, which enables them to make complaints without fear of reprisal about any aspect of the institution's operations, including those provided by any other entities on behalf of the present institution, victimization and which provides for review by an appropriate third party if any internal processes fail to resolve a grievance.*

2) *The institution promotes an inclusive and safe culture and ensures there are appropriate security arrangements for all its locations and advises students of actions they can take to ensure their safety and security both on and off campus.*

3) *Security personnel must be supervised to offer protection of students.*

4) *Students have representation from the student governance body within the decision-making bodies of the institution, for example boards and relevant committees.*

3.7.5 CRITERION: The institution identifies and adequately meets the varying learning needs of all its students.

Quality Elements:

1) *Needs should be met through*
   - Provision of orientation courses and transition support
   - Ongoing academic language and learning support
   - Appropriate developmental, coaching and/or mentoring processes should be available to students

3.8 **Standard: Health & Safety Policies and Procedures**

Standard Statement:

The institution must have procedures and systems in place that cater to the health, security and safety of all students, including student with special needs.

3.8.1 **CRITERION: The administration has a well-documented plan, which makes allowances for the provision of health services in cases of illness or accidents on campus and includes a system for reporting and investigating all accidents on campus. These documented plans must also include the provision for students participating in school activities on or off campus on behalf of the institution and should be reviewed annually.**

Quality Elements:

1) *Contact numbers of campus security personnel, the nearest police station, fire station and all other relevant contacts are provided.*
2) *Plans for the safety of students in the event of real, threatened or impending dangers, man- made or natural must be published and be the subject of sensitisation of all students.*
3) *The institution provides trained personnel in sufficient numbers to cater to the medical needs of students and staff prior to them being taken to or reaching a hospital or health centre facilities.*

3.8.2 **CRITERION: Institution has written plans for student housing under its control.**

Quality Elements:

1) *Where applicable, the institution ensures that health practitioners are available at all times at the boarding facility or arrangements must be made in a timely manner with health centers or personnel to ensure emergency response within reasonable time;*
2) *Provide proper staffing (wardens, guidance counsellors, etc.) to cater to the needs of students who live in institutional housing.*
3) *There is a system for transporting students and/or staff members to health care facility in cases of emergency;*
4) *The institution ensures safe transportation of its students from boarding facility operated by the institution to the grounds of the campus;*
5) *Emergency plans should be known by all students and staff members.*
6) *There should be a student orientation programme designed to orient all students to the policies, procedures and personnel of the institution with regard to the health and safety of students.*

3.9 Standard: Physical and Electronic Resources and Infrastructure

Standard Statement:

The institution must place emphasis on the importance of having well-maintained physical and electronic resources and infrastructure sufficient to enable the achievement of its objectives, across all its location in Jamaica and any other location regional or international.

3.9.1 CRITERION: The institution has an adequate overall physical plant to effectively support delivery of the programmes offered; the physical facilities satisfy statutory health and safety regulations, as well as the ergonomic, aesthetic, and other needs of all users (including those with special needs).

Quality Elements:

1) *The buildings, open spaces (parking lots, student lounging areas, etc.), and other aspects of the physical plant are well maintained, organized, secured, well-lit, and otherwise managed in a manner that adequately serves the needs of users.*

2) *The institution places emphasis on proper maintenance (preventative, corrective and predictive) and housekeeping by providing adequate materials, equipment, supplies, safety gear and personnel to carry out such activities.*

3) *The institution has plans for managing natural and man-made disasters which is widely publicized and involves participation from members of the institution.*

4) *The institution ensures there are safe, well-maintained physical and electronic resources and infrastructure sufficient to enable the achievement of its strategic goals and objectives, across all its locations.*

5) *The institution ensures that there are safe, well-maintained facilities and infrastructure sufficient to achieve expected student learning and research outcomes, as appropriate to the scale, scope, location, mode of delivery and nature of its courses of study, including:*

- Classrooms and other teaching and learning spaces
- Library and/or learning resource centre spaces and collections, and electronic learning resources
- Laboratories and technical facilities
- Appropriate work environments for personnel who are on site, including research students

- Facilities for student support services; and
- Student meeting and recreation areas

3.9.2 **CRITERION: The institution has adequate IT infrastructure and software to support student learning in courses of study, including a website with current programmes and course offering and ensures that students and personnel have ready access to online information and resources.**

Quality Elements:

1) *The institution maintains the adequacy and security of facilities and resources through effective capital investments and IT planning and project management, adequate for its scale and scope.*
2) *The institution ensures that all students, regardless of mode of study, have access to one or more contact people who can respond to queries in a timely manner and has effective arrangements to actively maintain contact with and support students who are remote from or away from its locations.*

3.10 **Standard: Risk Management and Assessment**

Standard Statement:

The institution must ensure that it has qualified staff, policies and procedures to ensure that function of risk management and assessment can be effectively addressed in accordance with the registration Criterions.

3.10.1 **CRITERION: Institution should document risk management strategy**

Quality Elements:

1) *The institution's corporate governing body regularly monitors potential risk to the institution's*
2) *operations and ensures the institution has strategies to mitigate risks that may eventuate.*
3) *The institution should have a robust process of risk assessment outlining steps to be taken in assessing, monitoring and evaluating potential risk.*
4) *The institution should include in its staff development programme, training in risk assessment and management, especially for members of its executive and management teams.*

5) A culture of risk assessment and management should be present in the institution and embodied in the corporate strategy of the institution.
6) Risk assessment and management should include contingencies and plans for areas of technology and other related infrastructure to ensure the security of persons, procedures, personnel and information and record management

3.11 Standard: Non- Discrimination
Standard Statement:

The institution's policies should not discriminate on the basis of disability, age, gender, political affiliation, social class, religion or any other characteristics protected by the Jamaican Constitution in the administration of its procedures, physical and electronic infrastructures, scholarship and other institutional administered programmes.

3.11.1 CRITERION: Institution must provide equal opportunity to all stakeholders

Quality Elements:

1) There should be no presence of preferential treatment to any one class, group or team of persons; this applies to staff, faculty and students.
2) There should be no presence of bias in any selection process of students, faculty or staff members.
3) Policies and guidelines within the institution should reflect equity among persons of different gender and varied abilities.
4) The institution should ensure that the labs, workshops, library, bathroom and physical facilities imperative to the learning experience are accessible to the disabled community.
5) Where necessary, the institution must ensure that space, facility and or equipment are reserved and identified for use by the disabled community.