UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

The Importance of the University Quality Management Systems

1. The University of Nairobi has an unwavering commitment to quality teaching and learning, research and scholarship, consultancy and community outreach service, good governance and management. To achieve these objectives, the University has developed, documented and maintains a Quality Management System (QMS) based on the international standard ISO 9001:2015 international standard in order to deliver quality and relevant educational services. All staff in the University are expected to learn, become responsive, anticipate, embrace and plan for quality.

2. The University QMS journey started with its first certification by KEBS in July 2008. Since then, the QMS has been recertified three times: April 2011, April 2014 and in August 2017. In addition, there have been xx major revisions to improve the QMS.

3. The adoption of the QMS is a strategic decision by the University with many potential benefits that include the ability to consistently provide products and services that meet customer and applicable statutory and regulatory requirements; opportunities to enhance customer satisfaction; addressing risks and opportunities associated with University processes; and demonstrate conformity to requirements.

4. The QMS complies with the provisions of Universities Act No. 42 (2012) and the Commission for University Education (CUE) regulations that ensure maintenance of standards, quality and relevance in all aspects of university education, training and research.

5. The QMS is based on seven quality management principles which collectively, form a basis for performance improvement and organizational excellence. The principles are: Customer Focus, Leadership, Engagement of People, Process Approach, Improvement, Evidence-Based Decision Making, and Relationship Management.

6. The key components of the QMS are

6.1   Scope

The scope identifies the educational and related services offered by the University to its customers in all Colleges and Campuses, SWA and Central Administration

6.2   Quality Policy Statement

6.3   Quality Objectives

The quality objectives have been established at relevant functions, levels and processes and are based on the University Strategic Plan

6.4   QMS Manual

The purpose of the QMS Manual is to provide comprehensive evidence to all interested parties of what specific controls are implemented to assure quality of the educational services provided by the University

6.5   Processes and Sub Processes

The QMS has adopted a process approach. The six top-level processes are:

- Teaching and Learning (UON/TL)
- Resources Management (UON/RM)
- Student Welfare Services (UON/SWS)
- Research Management (UON/RPE/RM)
- Collaboration and Partnership (UON/CP)
- Competitiveness and Image of the University (UON/CI)

Each Top-Level Process has Sub Processes and each Sub Processes has associated Procedures. The Risk Management Sub-Process (UON/OP/87) has been developed as the University moves towards a comprehensive Enterprise Risk Management Framework.The Change Management Sub-Process (UON/RM/CM) has been created to manage changes to processes and other aspects of the QMS a controlled manner.

6.6   Procedures

A total of 87 procedures that describes step-by-step instructions that implement the processes.

7. Benefits

Over the ten years the University has been certified under the ISO9001 Standard, significant achievements have been realized. They relate to institutionalization of quality into the university processes, work environment, documentation and record management, customer satisfaction, infrastructure and facilities, use of ICT as a prime mover of performance improvement, and ranking of the university.

8. Challenges facing the QMS

8.1 Quality Control: The objective of quality control is to ascertain compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements, compliance with management guidelines, and to assure management on the operational and business risks of the University. This is achieved through audits performed, opportunity for improvement identified, review meetings, and conformance to standards and regulations. Quality issues remain unchecked, internal audits are ineffective, failure to address non-conformities timely. We must ensure non-conforming educational services and their root causes are identified, and implement corrective action in order to prevent recurrence of nonconformities.

8.2 Risk Management: The risk management procedure has been created with the introduction of ISO9001: 2015 standard. The objective is to increase the likelihood of achieving University goals by identifying risks and addressing them using the most appropriate methods. Very few units are identifying potential risks and their consequences so that mitigation measures may be planned and invoked.

8.3 Records and Documents: Whereas the procedures for control of documents and control of records are intended to establish the origin, issuance and maintenance of documents and records, there is no proper control of records and document in many units.

8.4 Teaching and Learning: The teaching and learning process is not effectively monitored. Sessions delivered are not consistent with

the number of sessions scheduled. Specified timelines are not strictly followed. The required documented information is not maintained in the prescribed manner. Analysis of data is not undertaken.

8.5   Financial Services: Payments are not expeditiously made leading into delays in service delivery.

8.6   ICT: ICT support services are not promptly offered to users to enable them to productively exploit ICT resources and services. The security of ICT resources to ensure confidentiality, integrity and availability of electronic information and data is not guaranteed.

8.7   Human Resources: The HR process has documented activities that cover various aspects including establishment creation, job specification, job advertisements, recruitment, promotion, secondment, transfer, training, disciplinary, leave management, and exit management. Why then would there challenges in ensure staff who are contravene rules and regulations of the University face fair disciplinary system? Why are hiring and promotions not done expeditiously? Why is staff exiting not cleared in a timely manner? Why is induction of new staff not well conducted?

8.8   Procurement: The procedure for procurement of goods and services is to ensure that all goods and services required in the University are procured in accordance with the Public Procurement and Disposal Act 2005 and Regulations. However, there are inordinate delays in the procurement process.

8.9 Physical Facilities and Infrastructure: The maintenance and repair of the University physical facilities and equipment is not effectively done for timely delivery of services and achievement of state-of-the-art facilities. The University is not maintaining a clean and safe working and studying environment.

8.10 Library and Information Services: A key objective of the University library is to provide access to information for teaching, learning, research and consultancy, in a conducive environment.

8.11 Security and Safety: There is laxity in security enforcement in order to provide adequate security and safety to the university community and property. Maintenance of law and order within the university is not adequate at all time.

8.12 Student Welfare Services: It is the intention of the University to mainstream co-curricular activities into student academic life and provide quality students' welfare services. Student welfare services include Accommodation & Catering, Sports & Games, Counseling, Mentorship, Leadership, Placement, Students' Organizations, and Student Health. We must ensure provision of catering services to the satisfaction of our customers. We are not promoting mass participation in sports and games for wellness and recreation. We are not improving the students' social welfare and imparting practical skills.

8.13 Research Management: Research enhances the University's position as a leader in innovative research, strengthens collaboration with national regional and international

institutions, and enhances the profile of the University. The metrics specified in the research management process include number of journal publications, number of conference presentations, number of intellectual property protected, number of collaborative research projects, number of PhDs graduated, and value of University research portfolio.

9. The University has established structures and controls to ensure effective management of the QMS by ensuring that responsibilities and authorities are defined and communicated through statutes, organizational structure and job descriptions.

10. The University continually formulates and reviews its policies as required by the QMS. A number of new policies have recently been developed and implemented. They include the following: Academic Integrity, Admissions, Examinations, Curriculum Development, Quality Assurance, Benchmarking, Academic Integrity, Establishment of Campuses, Extension and Outreach Policy, Incubation Policy and Research Code of Conduct and Ethics.

11. MIS

12. The University leadership is committed the integration of the QMS into the University processes and the achievement of the intended results. This commitment is demonstrated through availing the necessary resources; communicating the importance of the QMS; monitoring, measuring, analysing and evaluating the QMS for continual improvement.

13. The ultimate achievement of the QMS will be realised through full compliance with Universities Standards and Guidelines as required by the Commission for University Education, Government Performance Contracting where the University has consistently achieved excellent performance over the last five years, favourable ranking by various bodies such as Time Higher Education and QS, setting up centres of excellence, attraction of attracted substantial infrastructure grants, mentorship of other universities in the country, and a diversity of accolades and recognitions.

CHRISTOPHER A MOTURI
DEPUTY MANAGEMENT REPRESENTATIVE
MAY 28, 2018