1.2 Management of quality assurance

Quality assurance procedures form part of a coherent system, which is central to the promotion of a quality assurance culture within the provider. The basic activities captured in the policies and procedures of the quality management system include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A description of processes.

- Identification of roles and positions responsible for the implementation of quality assurance policies and procedures, which are clearly described and designated.

- Self-monitoring of processes. Indicators are developed and data is collected which can be used to measure the effectiveness of policies and procedures.

- Systematic analysis of QA findings following self-evaluation involving stakeholders. Layers of moderating and supervisory processes, as appropriate, are in place to enable strategic and co-ordinated analysis of information at appropriate levels.

- Clear decision-making and follow-up. Systematic formal decision-making procedures are built into a provider's various evaluative mechanisms, including the procedures for oversight of such mechanisms by the governance system or equivalent. Management acts on the self-evaluation findings.

- A resource base which is sufficient to ensure sustainability. The corporate infrastructure, including financial solvency of the business, supports the sustainability of the teaching and learning environment and underpinning quality assurance system. The provider is adequately resourced to undertake and complete the education and training or research programmes proposed. Continuity planning procedures are developed to understand and anticipate events that could threaten the provider and to ensure that the provider remains viable.

Some examples of areas to be included in a provider's QA system include:

- The organisation's **Mission** to clarify its role as a provider of education and training programmes.

- **Policies** showing full understanding of the legislative obligations of the provider. The policies will inform:

  - management and staff as to the general approaches to follow in their work

  - learners and other stakeholders as to what they can expect of the provider

- The **procedures** designed to implement the policies.

- An **internal self-monitoring system** which will regularly check the effectiveness of the procedures and act as an early warning system in areas of provision requiring improvement. This includes the use of data collected and compared against indicators, for example, completion and progression rates for learners.

- **A self-evaluation system** through which the provider will review and report on the quality of its own programmes and related services. Each such evaluation will include the views of learners and independent evaluators who can make comparisons with other similar programmes offered elsewhere.

- A system for responding to the findings of self-monitoring and review which will address areas for **improvement** and build on areas of strength. The provider uses indicators/benchmarks against which programme data can be compared.