**BEST PRACTICES IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN NIGERIA: THE ROLE OF ACADEMIC PLANNING**

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The Nigerian Higher Education System is right from the beginning intended to address our National Development objectives. For this reason, the Education subject was contemplated to be both concurrent as well as exclusive according to our constitution.

## Functions of the Director of Academic Planning

The functions of the Director of Academic Planning shall be:

i. To assist in the development of new guidelines and criteria and the review of the existing ones;

ii. To annually update, analyze and project population data for planning and preparation of the university’s recurrent budget and resources allocation based on the approved budget;

iii. To collect data on trends in university activities such as enrolments, staffing, staff training, graduate output, etc. and make such data available for research;

iv. To collect, analyze and interpret relevant data from all university units;

v. To document and store information on all academic programmes;

vi. To ensure that the university complies with and maintains minimum academic standards;

vii. To make projections and advise the Vice-Chancellor on areas of major concern and vigilance;

viii. To provide data backed information on academic operations of the university;

ix. To publish university records, statistics, research reports, etc.;

x. To regularly update and evaluate data from relevant university units to analyze the performance of the university;

xi. To organize the drafting and review of University Academic Brief;

xii. To participate in curricula review activities and to ensure compliance with guidelines and procedures for establishment of new programmes;

xiii. To evaluate proposals for new academic programmes including departments and schools for submission to the Academic Development Committee, the Senate and the NUC;

xiv. To promote linkages with other institutions; and

xv. To monitor and maintain academic standards through periodic curriculum review, instituting course and teacher evaluation criteria and guidelines such as peer assessment, annual performance assessment and student opinion survey, amongst others.

* Concurrent legislative lists
* Establishment of higher institutions of learning
* Remunerations of staff
* Tenure of officer
* Exclusive lists (Item 60(b) of the 1999 Constitution)
* Power to regulate
* Minimum Standard of knowledge to guide the designed curricula
* Provisions of the Education (National Minimum Standards and establishment of Institutions) Act Cap E3
* Sec 10 Curricula
* Sec 20 (1/4)
* Sec 25 authority

The NUC Principal Act Cap N81 Sec 4(i)(b) i - iii

* Constitution with the National Manpower Board
* Curricula design with Units
* Nomenclatures
* Programmes and duration
* Approvals/disapprovals

Benchmark Minimum Academic Standards:

The cumulative efforts by the NUC to define and ensure Minimum Academic Standards in the Nigerian University System are based on the promise that Government expenditure on university education is high and there is therefore, the need to make these universities run efficiently and assure parents that their wards can progress in an orderly manner through the Nigerian University System.

But more importantly to evolve a uniform understanding of concepts and terms related to the adoption of the Course Credit System and providing a basis for comparing academic programmes in the various universities. This is the foundation upon which the NUC accreditation was founded.

Graduation Requirements/ Duration:

The Minimum number of years to be spent to be awarded a first degree in a programme of study in non-professional area shall be four years and shall not exceed an additional 50% of the duration of the programme if such a candidate fails to graduate within the minimum number of years.

Registration Requirements/Work load Registrations:

1. Every full-time student should be required to register for a minimum of 15 credit units per semester and a maximum of 24 except for those of IT
2. A full-time staff on the other hand should have a minimum teaching load of 8 Credit Units per semester including PG teaching. For Science based disciplines, it means minimum of 6 lecture hours and two 3 - hour laboratory work per week, and for Art based, it translates to a minimum of 6 lecture hours and two 1 hour tutorials per week.

Credit System:

1. It allows a thematic structuring of the programmes of study, i.e. ability to break courses into convenient and manageable modules;
2. It allows students within limits to move at their own pace;
3. It allows inter-departmental and inter-disciplinary collaborations in curriculum planning, formation and teaching, and minimises duplication of courses;
4. It permits a diagnostic approach to students’ learning as well as continuous examination of students in each subject area;
5. It provides students with greater flexibility in taking elective courses from outside their area of specialisation, thereby broadening their educational base;
6. It allows for the introduction of new degree programmes without necessarily creating new departments;
7. It facilitates inter-university transfers, thus enhancing student mobility.

Credit transfer:

Transfer of Credits denotes that a student may take courses outside his parent department which are required for the degree he/she is studying and the relevant Credits (workload) is transferred to his parent department for inclusion and computation of his /her CGPA.

It minimises unnecessary duplication of resources and has made programme operation more cost effective.

Probation/Withdrawals:

Probation is a status granted to a student whose academic performance falls below an acceptable standard. A student whose cumulative grade point average is below 1.00 at the end of a particular year of study earns a period of probation for one academic session.

A candidate whose cumulative GPA is below 1.00 at the end of a particular period of probation should be required to withdraw from the University. However, in order to minimise waste of human resources, consideration should be given to withdrawal from the programme of study and possible transfer to other programmes within the same university.

1. A two semester year should continue to be used by all universities
2. The 1st and 2nd semester should last 17-18 weeks (including registration, teaching, examination period), provided that not less than 13 weeks each are actually devoted to teaching.

Residency limits

Academic year

Semester Systems

Credit Units:

A Credit Unit consists of a specified number of students to teacher contact hours per week in a semester. Credit Units are used in two complementary ways: one as a measure of course weighing and the other as an indicator of student workload.

As a measure of Course weighting for each unit course, the credit unit to be earned for satisfactorily completing the course is specified as in Edu 101 etc., a two Credit Unit course may mean two hours of lecture or 1 hour of lecture and 3 hours of practicals per week per semester.

Curricula Review Efforts:

1. Circulation of draft 2018 for views and comments;
2. Current states and further efforts;
3. Conception framework for the review and the idea of 30:70 contributions by NUC and Universities.