Teaching & Learning Quality Framework Policy

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1. Overview:

Excellence in teaching and learning is a cornerstone of FBSU's mission. To achieve this, the Teaching & Learning Quality Framework (TLQF) has been established to ensure continuous improvement in educational practices. This framework encompasses policies, processes, and guidelines designed to uphold standards across all academic programs.

The TLQF is built on an Outcome-Based Education (OBE) model. All academic activities—from curriculum design to student assessment—are aligned with clearly defined learning outcomes. It also establishes a structured reporting mechanism with Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to monitor quality and implement timely improvements.

2. Policy Statement

FBSU is committed to excellence in teaching and learning through a systematic quality assurance framework. The TLQF establishes standardized processes to ensure continuous improvement, alignment with institutional goals, and compliance with national/international standards.

3. Purpose

The TLQF aims to:

1. Provide a structured framework for delivering quality education at FBSU.

2. Promote best teaching and learning practices aligned with OBE principles.

3. Implement effective assessment methods to evaluate student knowledge and skills.

4. Support and offer professional development workshops for faculty and staff.

5. Ensure the quality of teaching practices through regular assessments.

6. Involve stakeholders (employers, faculty, students, and alumni) in quality assurance processes.

7. Establish reporting and documentation procedures/channels to track quality-related actions and issues.

8. Adhere to national and international documentation standards for planning and reporting.

9. Define KPIs and benchmarks to measure and enhance teaching and learning quality.

4. Teaching and Learning Quality Cycle (PIMRU Model)

FBSU's TLQF follows the PIMRU model: *Plan → Implement → Monitor → Review → Update (see Fig.1).* This well-known model ensures cyclical, continuous improvement across all academic functions. Academic programs and departments are required to develop 4- or 5-year assessment plans based on this model.

- **Planning:** Curriculum development considers societal needs, advancements in the field, and institutional goals.

- **Implementation:** Teaching strategies, assessments, and course delivery are aligned with learning outcomes.

- **Monitoring:** Course and program assessments, classroom observations, and feedback tools track progress.

- **Review:** Results from monitoring activities are analyzed, and reports are generated.

- **Update/Closing the Loop:** Findings lead to actionable improvements. "Closing the loop" ensures the feedback is translated into tangible changes that are evaluated for effectiveness.
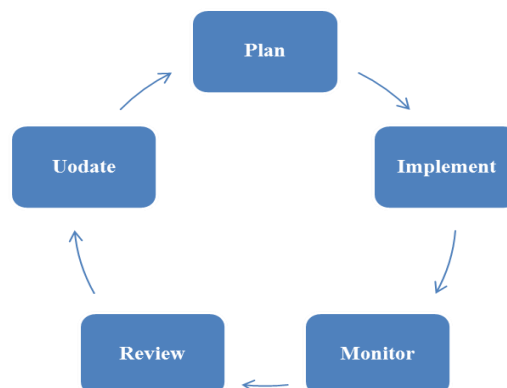

Figure 1: The PIMRU Model

FBSU provides programs designed using a curriculum development process that takes into consideration current developments and society's needs. All programs in FBSU are required to do the following:

- Each academic program must maintain up-to-date program specifications, revising them periodically to incorporate updates to the curriculum, institutional policies, program administration, goals, or learning outcomes.

- For every course offered within an academic year, detailed course specifications must be developed. These documents should align with the corresponding program specifications and include defined learning outcomes, course content, assessment methods, scheduling details, and the contribution of Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) to Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs).

- Instructors are required to submit course reports summarizing their teaching outcomes. These reports should include grade distributions, CLO achievement data, course evaluations, and proposed improvements for future semesters. For courses with multiple sections, the course coordinator must compile a consolidated report reflecting the findings from all sections.

- Academic programs must produce annual reports using standardized EEC-HES templates. These reports should present cohort demographics, alumni tracking data, survey results, and KPI metrics, incorporating insights from all submitted course reports.

- All academic units must prepare annual progress reports assessing the implementation of their 5-year strategic plans. These reports should highlight achieved KPIs, evaluate the current year's action plan, and outline improvement strategies for the upcoming academic year.

- Action plans for the following academic year must be developed based on the findings and recommendations outlined in the annual program reports.

- Faculty members undergo annual performance evaluations using established criteria to ensure adherence to high-quality teaching and learning standards.

- FBSU has implemented a structured quality assurance system to systematically evaluate and enhance teaching and learning standards across all academic departments. This comprehensive framework operates through clearly defined governance levels as detailed in Section 4.

5. Organizational Structure and Responsibilities

- Department Quality Committees (DQAC) report to College Quality Committees (CQAC), which in turn report to the Deanship of Quality and Academic Accreditation (DQAA).

- The Institutional Quality Assurance Committee (IQAC) supports DQAA by reviewing and endorsing recommendations.

- The University Council ratifies major decisions related to quality improvements.

6. Core Components and Policies

The TLQF is an umbrella system encompassing the policies, procedures, and organizational structures in the field of Teaching and Learning. The main components of the system include:

6.1 Quality of Teaching

- **Faculty Orientation Policy:** At FBSU, this policy mandates that all faculty members participate in an orientation session prior to the start of each semester. This ensures that both new and returning faculty are familiar with the university's academic expectations, administrative procedures, and teaching resources, fostering a cohesive and prepared educational environment.

- **Course Design Policy:** This policy at FBSU ensures that all courses are structured in alignment with Outcome Based Education (OBE) principles. It emphasizes designing curricula with clear learning outcomes, focusing on measurable student achievements and skills that prepare graduates for professional success and societal contributions.

- **Professional Development & Training Policy:** FBSU's policy supports the continuous growth of its faculty by providing opportunities for professional development and training. This includes workshops, seminars, and courses aimed at enhancing teaching methodologies, research capabilities, and technological proficiency, ensuring faculty remain current in their fields.

- **Recruitment Policy:** The recruitment policy at FBSU establishes clear standards for hiring faculty, prioritizing qualifications, experience, and alignment with the university's mission. It outlines a systematic process to attract and select candidates who can contribute to academic excellence and the institution's strategic goals.

6.2 Program Assessment Quality

- **Program Assessment Policy:** Outlines program-level assessment practices using direct/indirect methods. It ensures academic programs meet high-quality standards and align with the university's educational goals. Managed by the Deanship of Quality and

Academic Accreditation (DQAA) and approved by the University Council, it involves evaluating learning outcomes, curriculum, and student performance to support continuous improvement and compliance with national accreditation standards, such as those from the National Commission for Academic Accreditation and Assessment (NCAAA). It reflects FBSU's commitment to effective education, particularly in technical fields.

- **Course Learning Outcomes Development Policy:** This policy ensures that course learning outcomes at FBSU are relevant, measurable, and up-to-date, aligning with the university's educational goals and program objectives. It involves a structured process where faculty collaborate to develop, review, and revise learning outcomes to reflect current industry standards and accreditation requirements. Periodic updates help maintain program relevance, especially in fields like computing and engineering, supporting student success and ensuring the quality of academic offerings.

- **Learning Outcomes Assessment Policy:** The Learning Outcomes Assessment Policy provides a systematic framework for evaluating whether students at FBSU are achieving the defined learning outcomes. It incorporates various methods—such as exams, projects, and surveys—to collect data on student performance. This data is analyzed to identify strengths and areas for improvement in teaching and curriculum, fostering continuous enhancement of educational quality. The policy supports FBSU's commitment to excellence and compliance with national accreditation standards.

- **Internship (COOP) Policy:** Provides students with industry experience, bridging academic and professional learning.

6.3 Student Assessment Quality

Exams and Assessments Policy: The Exams and Assessments Policy at FBSU is designed to ensure that all evaluations are conducted in a fair, consistent, and transparent manner, aligning with the university's educational objectives. This policy likely outlines the procedures for designing, administering, and grading exams and other forms of assessment, ensuring they reflect the intended learning outcomes of the university's programs. Key aspects of the policy probably include:

- Academic Integrity: Rules to uphold honesty and prevent cheating during assessments.

- Grading Standards: A clear grading scale to maintain consistency across courses.

- Grievance Procedures: Steps for students to address concerns or disputes related to their assessments.

6.4 Technological Support for Teaching and Learning

The E-Learning Management System (E-LMS) Policy at FBSU mandates the use of its centralized online platform to enhance teaching and learning by providing structured access to course materials (e.g., syllabi, handouts), interactive tools (e.g., forums, quizzes), and communication channels (e.g., announcements, calendars). All faculty must integrate E-LMS into their courses, adhering to minimum requirements such as posting a welcome message, syllabus, materials, and assessments, with support from the E-Learning Center and ITC. The policy enforces strict user access via institutional IT accounts, prohibits sharing illegal/pirated content, and outlines guidelines for assessments (e.g., scheduling during office hours, advance notice for testing). It emphasizes accountability for content accuracy and compliance with conduct policies, while granting FBSU rights to utilize platform content for non-identifiable publicity. Overall, the policy aims to standardize e-learning practices, foster collaboration, and ensure a secure, effective digital academic environment for all users.

6.5 Academic Support Services

- **Academic Advising Policy:** The Academic Advising Policy at FBSU is designed to guide students through their academic journey, helping them make informed decisions and achieve their educational goals. This policy provides a structured framework to support students in navigating their academic programs, ensuring they meet graduation requirements and succeed in their chosen fields. Key Features of the Policy:

- **Role of Academic Advisors:** Academic advisors, typically faculty members, play a central role in the advising process. They offer personalized guidance to students on matters such as course selection, academic planning, and career options.

- **Regular Advising Sessions:** The policy emphasizes the importance of regular meetings between advisors and students. These sessions help ensure that students remain on track with their studies and address any challenges promptly.

- **Student Progress Monitoring:** Advisors are likely tasked with monitoring student progress, identifying those at risk of academic difficulties, and providing tailored support to help them succeed.

- **Integration with Academic Processes:** Advising is integrated into key academic activities, such as course registration, ensuring students make choices aligned with their degree plans and long-term goals.

- **Support for Student Success:** Reflecting FBSU's commitment to quality education, the policy likely includes provisions for additional resources or interventions for students needing extra assistance.

6.6 Student Services and Code of Conduct

- **Student Orientation Policy:** This Policy at FBSU is a structured program designed to welcome and integrate new students into the university community. It introduces incoming students to the academic environment, campus facilities, and essential support services, including academic advising, libraries, and IT resources. The policy also covers key university expectations, such as academic integrity and student conduct. Given FBSU's location in Saudi Arabia, the orientation likely incorporates guidance on cultural norms, prayer facilities, and local customs. This program aims to ensure a smooth transition into university life, fostering a sense of belonging and laying the groundwork for academic success.

- **Student Special Needs Policy:** The Students with Special Needs Policy FBSU ensures equitable educational access for students with disabilities, disorders, or impairments by identifying their needs during admission through medical documentation and collaboration between the Deanship of Admissions and Registration, academic departments, and instructors. Support measures include tailored academic advising, enrollment assistance, adapted assessments, physical accessibility accommodations, progress monitoring, specialized learning programs, and alternative evaluation methods, all coordinated by the Deanship of Student Affairs and academic advisers to foster inclusion, address individual challenges, and enhance learning outcomes, reflecting FBSU's commitment to an accessible and supportive academic environment for all students.

- **Academic Misconduct Policy:** The Academic Misconduct Policy at FBSU is a vital framework aimed at upholding academic integrity and ensuring a fair educational environment. It addresses various forms of dishonesty—like plagiarism, cheating, and data fabrication—by defining them clearly and providing a structured process for reporting, investigating, and resolving violations. Penalties range from warnings to expulsion, depending on the offense's severity, while the policy also promotes prevention through student education and resources. Overseen by the Deanship of Student Affairs, it reflects FBSU's dedication to high academic standards, aligning with national regulations and international accreditation requirements (e.g., ABET), fostering a culture of honesty and accountability.

- **Faculty Disciplinary Policy:** The Faculty Disciplinary Policy at FBSU provides a framework for addressing faculty misconduct, such as plagiarism, harassment, or neglect of professional duties. It outlines a structured process for reporting, investigating, and resolving allegations, with potential sanctions ranging from warnings to termination based on the severity of the violation. This policy ensures fairness, upholds academic integrity, and aligns with FBSU's internal standards as well as Saudi Arabian higher education regulations.

- **Code of Conduct Policy:** The Code of Conduct Policy at FBSU establishes behavioral guidelines for all university members, including faculty, staff, and students, emphasizing values like respect, integrity, and professionalism. It covers expectations for academic integrity and respectful interactions, while likely incorporating Saudi cultural norms such as dress codes and gender interaction rules. The policy aims to create an ethical and harmonious academic environment, ensuring compliance with both university policies and national standards.

7. Documentation and Reporting

- **Course Specifications**: Created annually and aligned with program outcomes.

- **Course Reports:** Document outcomes, evaluations, and improvement plans.

- **Annual Program Reports:** Compile data from course reports, surveys, KPIs, and alumni feedback.

- **Strategic Progress Reports:** Assess strategic plan execution annually.

- **Action Plans:** Developed annually based on assessment findings to close the loop.

- **Faculty Evaluations:** Conducted using defined criteria.