



This Activity is implemented by the Association of African Universities (AAU) as the African Union Commission (AUC)'s implementing Agency on Higher Education (HE) and Coordinator for the AUC's Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 2015-2025) Cluster on HE

OPEN CALL TO HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE AFRICAN QUALITY RATING MECHANISM (AQRM) INSTITUTIONAL EVALUATIONS

The ASSOCIATION OF AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES (AAU) is pleased to invite all African Higher Education Institutions to apply and take part in the African Quality Rating Mechanism (AQRM) Institutional Evaluations for Quality Improvement

PREAMBLE

The use of the AQRM instrument which supports the work of national, regional and continental Quality Assurance (QA) bodies was adopted by the Conference of the African Union Ministers of Education in 2007. The African Union Commission (AUC) was at the forefront in the development of this African QA improvement tool that will ensure that the performance of higher education institutions can be measured against a set of agreed criteria. This exercise is meant to help institutions carry out self-evaluations that support institutional quality culture development. Most African Higher Education Communities, including regional Quality Assurance agencies (QAAs), national and some individual institutions throughout all the 5 African regions took part in the development process of the The African Standards and Guidelines (ASG-QA) which will also be used in due course. This was out of a realization by African countries Higher Education Ministers that QA (Standards & Guidelines as well as Accreditation) is the most important tenet for revitalizing African higher education.

A pilot self-rating exercise was conducted in 2010 with 32 institutions. One of the results of this exercise was the 2014 revised version of the AQRM survey which came out of the experience and feedback from beneficiaries and the validation evaluation exercise that was done by QA expert teams in 9 universities. The same tool was also used in 15 selected African institutions in 2016/2017 by the HAQAA Initiative Consortium where AAU is one of the partners.

The implementation of the AQRM aims at fulfilling the main aim of the 2014, Addis Convention which is to enhance student and staff mobility through enabling the



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comparability of qualifications through the use of the same standards and improvement tool. AQRM supports African higher education institutions to take ownership of their own quality assurance processes and it is one means of supporting institutional quality. Secondly, this exercise enables individual institutions to improve their internal quality assurance systems in order to compete favourably at different levels of higher education ranking systems throughout the world.

This exercise, hopefully brings about the harmonization of African Higher Education QA and accreditation whose importance was noted by African countries higher education ministers during the then Organization of African Unity (OAU) in Arusha, Tanzania, 1981 when they came up with the **1981, Arusha Convention**. The importance of this convention which was not implemented for many years was clearly illustrated by its revival under the **2014, Addis Convention** which AAU as the African Union Commission's implementing arm will now execute through the AQRM on a larger scale in 2018. AAU is also the **"Voice of Higher Education in Africa"**.

ABOUT THE ASSOCIATION OF AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES

AAU was established in 1967 and is the current implementing agency of the AUC's initiatives and activities related to HE. It is also the coordinator of the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 2015-2025) cluster on HE. This activity seeks to fulfil some of CESA's 12 strategic objectives which are in line with revitalizing the quality of all aspects of Higher Education in Africa.

Vision

To be the leading advocate for higher education in Africa, with the capacity to provide support for its member institutions in meeting national, continental and global needs.

Mission

To enhance the quality and relevance of higher education in Africa and strengthen its contribution to Africa's development.

Core Values

- Transparency and Accountability
- Equity and Inclusiveness



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- Excellence and Professionalism
- Responsiveness
- Sustainability
- Teamwork and Collegiality

Objectives of the Association

- a. to promote interchange, contact and cooperation among universities and other institutions of higher education in Africa;
- b. to collect, classify and disseminate information on higher education and research, particularly in Africa;
- c. to promote cooperation among African higher education institutions in curriculum development, post graduate training, research, quality assurance, recognition of qualifications, the determination of equivalence of degrees, and other matters of special policy or practical interest to African higher education;
- d. to encourage and empower members of the Association to address developmental challenges and become an effective voice in national, regional and global institutions;
- e. to study and make known the educational and related needs of African universities and other institutions of higher education and, as far as practicable, co-ordinate the means whereby those needs may be met;
- f. to contribute to the improvement of leadership, institutional management and the policy environment of African higher education;
- g. to organise, encourage and support public fora for information dissemination and exchange and policy dialogue on issues of higher education;
- h. to promote gender and social equity in policies on higher education and in the delivery of higher education services; and
- i. to promote linkages with the international higher education community.

STEPS IN THE AAU AQRM APPLICATION PROCEDURE

1. Institutional Applications and payments are received. Payment details are found on the document entitled: *Steps to be followed during an institutional evaluation*.
2. The selected experts and 2 members of each university (Quality Assurance Director & one member of the Administration) that apply to participate in the AQRM institutional assessment process, attend a preparatory online Webinar.



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3. Universities complete the AQRM survey as part of the self-assessment process.
4. AAU allocates and sends the completed AQRM surveys to experts selected for the AQRM Evaluation visits. The experts read through the AQRM surveys and if necessary, they raise questions to seek clarification from the universities in question.
5. Experts do the verification/validation visits to institutions where at the end of their visit they give an oral report to the institutions and submit draft reports to AAU. The draft reports are sent to institutions for input in track changes. The institution returns the draft report to AAU which passes it on to experts who do the final report and send it to AAU. AAU then sends the final report to institutions.

HOW UNIVERSITIES CAN APPLY

1. Interested universities are asked to fill out this ONLINE APPLICATION FORM: <https://www.research.net/r/AAUEva>
2. Selection will be based on commitment (of the university leadership) as expressed in the application form and also preparedness to undertake the exercise.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF UNIVERSITIES

1. Selecting a contact person who will lead the evaluation team and process.
2. Attending the preparatory online Webinar.
3. Mobilising an AQRM team which will support the data collection procedure for the AQRM survey
4. Logistical arrangements for the assessment visit including airport transport and identifying suitable accommodation for experts that is secure and affordable. N/B: Experts will be given a per diem for accommodation and food.
5. Make provisions for local transportation of experts conducting the verification/validation visit.



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All institutions in all the 5 African Higher Education regions, regardless of language are encouraged to apply and take part. The tool is in the 4 AAU official languages which are English, French, Arabic and Portuguese. Expert teams may include one expert who speaks French, Arabic and/or Portuguese.

CONTACT INFORMATION

1. For any technical challenges contact Frank Asefuah on: fasefuah@aau.org [+233 548 880 855](tel:+233548880855)
2. For any other questions about the whole exercise contact Dr. Violet Makuku on vmakuku@aau.org vmakuku@gmail.com [+233 263 129 798](tel:+233263129798)

Read more about AAU from www.aau.org and www.blog.aau.org