Experiences of higher education institutions of quality assurance and the NCHE accreditation assessment exercise: The Case of College of Medicine

Dr Emma Thomson
Chair of College of Medicine Education Training Office

NCHE 1st National Quality Assurance Conference 7-10th August 2017
Overview

- What is COMETO?
- What is Quality?
- Who are our Stakeholders?
- Strategies for enhancing Quality Assurance
- NCHE accreditation process – the COM experience
‘The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man listens to advice’

Proverbs 12:15

‘Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser’

Proverbs 9:9
What is COMETO?

- College of Medicine Education and Training Office
- Quality Assurance Directorate
- Responsible for Quality Assurance and Enhancement

‘Excellence Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow’
Pedagogical skills teaching

- Basic certificate in medical and health science education
- Based on needs assessment
Basic Certificate in Medical and Health Science Education

- Qualities of a good health science educator / clinical teacher
- Learning theory
- Planning a teaching session
- Teaching large groups
- Teaching small groups
- Curriculum development and evaluation
- Assessment of learning
- Setting and marking MCQ
- Blue printing and Standard setting
- Evaluating your teaching
Pedagogical skills teaching

- Workshops
What is QUALITY?
What is QUALITY?

‘The standard of something as measured against other things of a similar kind;

The degree of excellence of something’

Google dictionary
• Who are the stakeholders in quality assurance?

• What strategies are available for enhancing quality assurance?
Who are the stakeholders in COM quality assurance?

- Students (inc SADC)
- Faculty
- Members of staff

- UNIMA
- NCHE
- Research affiliates

- Ministry of Health
- Malawi Medical Council
- Pharmacy and Poisons Board
- Developmental partners
- General public
What is Quality Assurance?

‘Evolving mechanism that ensures that continuous improvement on educational standards to meet or exceed the expectations of educational stakeholders’

All-Africa Students Union (AASU) 2012
‘Not everything that matters can be measured, and not everything that is measured matters’

Elliot Eisner

What is Quality Assurance?

Measure Performance

Compare performance with standards

Decide if corrective action is needed

Take action to correct performance

Revise the standards

Continue unchanged if no corrective action needed

Quality Assurance

- The COM perspective:
  - Internal review (Self-assessment)
  - External review
  - Accreditation
Internal review

• Curriculum review and development

• Facilitate student feedback process

• Peer assessment of teaching

• Self assessment of teaching
• Research in adult education
• Policy Development eg QUAEF
• Changing the ‘quality’ culture
External review

- External review of exams
- Review of programmes (and TLAs) by external ‘examiners’ still needed
- Informal feedback
- Medical Council of Malawi
- Pharmacy and Poisons Board
‘A known mistake is better than an unknown truth’

Arabic Proverb
Accreditation Process

- Self evaluation using NCHE minimum standards
- NCHE visited COM August 2016
- 1 week visit
- Entry meeting and exit meeting
- Briefing by NCHE team leader
- Presentation by the Principal
Accreditation Process

- Site visits
  - Inc Registry, Teaching Spaces, Laboratories, Library, Sports complex, Hostels, Cafeteria, Hospital annexe

- Curricula

- UNIMA policies

- Human resources – academic and administration staff qualifications
Accreditation Process

- Student issues...
  - Availability of guiding principles
  - Resources for students
  - Support services
  - Conformity of academic programmes
  - Support towards teaching and learning
  - Admissions and recruitment procedure
  - Assessment of examinations
Accreditation Process

• Met with ……
• Senior lecturers and Dean of Students
• Students
• Registry staff
• Hostel supervisor
• Estate development officer

• Separate visits to Lilongwe and Mangochi campuses
Accreditation Process

- Completion…
- Exit meeting
- Some areas of self evaluation scored low when actually high and vice versa
- Some immediate action points
- Written feedback within 3 months
COM experience

- Preparations need support of highest office
- Process needs a team inc AR academic, Estate development officer and Deans looking at different aspects

- Lack of advance formal agenda
  - Need for clear information to prepare institution and staff

- Site visit teams include local and international experts
  - Orientation to Malawi’s standards needed
COM experience

- Draft findings not provided prior to publication
- Programmes omitted
- Clarity sought on outcome
- One programme accredited with conditions
- COM improvement plans accepted by NCHE
COM experience

• Overall highly beneficial process

• Each programme outlined
  • Strengths
  • Areas for improvement
  • Recommendations

• Allowed us to implement improvements
• Aiming for excellence – we are already benefitting!
Thankyou NCHE!
Never a failure, always a lesson