



## **NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR HIGHER EDUCATION**

### **ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR REGISTRATION OF OPEN, DISTANCE AND E-LEARNING (ODeL) HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAMMES**

**Name of Institution** :

**Date of Assessment** :

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) is mandated to register and accredit all higher education institutions and academic programmes in Malawi. The accreditation process involves several steps, one of which is assessment for registration of academic programmes.

The assessment for programme registration is informed by guidelines and standards including minimum requirements set up by the Council. This instrument or form is for assessing academic programmes for purposes of registration by assessing programme compliance with minimum standards and ODeL standards and guidelines. The instrument also assesses the suitability of the programme to be offered via open, distance and e-learning (ODeL) mode prior to registration.

The assessment focuses on institutional governance, policies and procedures; financial resources; infrastructure, equipment and other facilities; availability of water and sanitation; student support services; programme design; staff complement; students' recruitment and achievement; library resources and learning resources (specific to programme); requisite physical infrastructure and equipment (specific to programme); and quality enhancement systems.

## **AIM OF ASSESSMENT**

The aim of assessment is to assist reviewers make well-informed judgment on the readiness of an institution to offer academic programmes.

### **Specific objectives**

The specific objectives of this tool are to assess:

- a) the financial resources and sustainability of the programme
- b) the availability and suitability of the requisite infrastructure (Buildings, space and other physical facilities) to support the programme;
- c) student support services;
- d) proposed programme in terms of relevance and quality of design;
- e) the adequacy of an institution's academic and support staff complement for the delivery of the proposed programme and curriculum;
- f) the appropriateness of students' entry requirements for the proposed programmes;
- g) the capacity of the institution's library facilities and resources to support the proposed programmes;
- h) the suitability of other physical infrastructures (including the availability and suitability of classroom and laboratory space);
- i) the programme's quality assurance systems.

## **METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION FOR THE ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

- a) Review of curriculum document and other relevant documentary evidence in the form of policy documents, publications, etc.;
- b) Inspection of facilities and premises;

c) Interviews with staff, students and other stakeholders.

**DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION**

Reviewers will use appropriate quantitative and qualitative methods in conducting this assessment. All tables are to be accompanied by suitable qualitative descriptions.

**PROFILE OF REVIEWERS**

Name	Position	Qualifications	Signature

**INSTITUTION'S PROFILE**

Name of the Institution	
Chairperson of the Council/Board	
Secretary of the Council/ Board	
Members of the Council/Board	
Contact details	Postal Address:
	Fax Number:
	E-Mail Address:
	Website address:
	Telephone Lines:
	Mobile:
Location	
Registration and accreditation status (applicable to already registered or accredited institution )	

**1. Programmes currently registered / accredited programmes**

<b>Name of Programme</b>	<b>Mode of Delivery</b>	<b>Date Registered / Accredited</b>	<b>Accrediting Institution NCHE or other accrediting professional body</b>

**INSTRUCTIONS TO FOLLOW WHEN FILLING THE FORM**

- 1. Please fill in the appropriate blank spaces provided.
- 2. Should a specific document or policy be available regarding any aspect of this exercise, the team will ask for a copy for reference and attach as an annex.
- 3. Grading and interpretation of the assessment scores is indicated in the table below:

<b>Acceptable =2</b>	<b>Acceptable with conditions =1</b>	<b>Unacceptable = 0</b>
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## PROGRAMME ASSESSMENT

### AREA 1: PROGRAMME DESIGN

Assessed area	2	1	0	Score	Comments
Relevance of the programme to the vision of the institution	The design of the programme is appropriate and it advances the vision and mission of the institution.	The design of the programme is appropriate but it may not advance the vision and mission of the institution.	The design of the programme is inappropriate		
*Appropriateness of content for higher education	The content is well-selected and it is appropriate for the level and target group.	The content is well-selected but it is not appropriate for the level and target.	The content is not well selected and it is inappropriate for the level and target group.		
*Learning outcomes	Overall, learning outcomes are well stated.	Overall, learning outcomes are fairly well stated .	Overall, learning outcomes are not well stated.		
	Learning outcomes are relevant and well related to selected content	Learning outcomes are fairly relevant and somehow aligned to selected content	Learning outcomes are irrelevant and not aligned to selected content		
Content is appropriate to the Level of HEQF	Content is appropriate to the Level of HEQF	Content is somewhat appropriate to the Level of HEQF	Content is not appropriate to the Level of HEQF		
Admission requirements	Admission requirements are clearly stated and are appropriate.	Admission requirements are fairly stated and are appropriate.	Admission requirements are not specified.		
*Benchmarking with similar higher education programmes	The programme is benchmarked with similar	The benchmarking of the programme is	The programme is not benchmarked		

	programmes offered by other HEIs nationally regionally and internationally	not clear.	with other similar programmes.		
Involvement of professional body (Attach evidence e.g. meeting minutes, input report, programme certificate of approval by relevant professional body)	Relevant professional body was involved and the curriculum meets job requirements of the profession(s)	Relevant professional body was involved but the curriculum does not adequately meet job requirements of the profession(s)	Relevant professional body/ was not involved.		
Involvement of industry (Attach evidence e.g. meeting minutes, input report)	Relevant industry was involved and it provides knowledge, skills and attitudes relevant to current and future industry needs.	Relevant industry was involved but the curriculum does not adequately address industry knowledge, skills and attitude gaps.	Relevant industry was not involved.		
Planned programme delivery	There is provision for resources to adequately support the delivery	There is somewhat provision for resources to adequately support the delivery	There is no provision for resources to adequately support the delivery		
	Teaching and learning methods are well defined and are suitable for the level of learning and outcomes.	Teaching and learning methods are somewhat defined but not very suitable for the level of learning and outcomes.	Teaching and learning methods are not defined.		
	Assessment	Assessment	Assessment		



	methods and criteria are well defined and are suitable for the level of learning and outcomes.	criteria are defined but are not suitable for the level of learning or for intended outcomes.	criteria are not well-defined.		
Review and approval of the curriculum by the University Senate	Programme/curriculum has been reviewed and approved by the University Senate and it is well resourced.	Programme/curriculum has been reviewed and approved by the University Senate but it is not well resourced.	The programme/curriculum has not been reviewed and approved by the University Senate.		
Learning Management System(LMS) Supporting methodology that encourages self-directed learning, self-regulated learning)	LMS is available (appropriate technology consistent with requirements, the nature and objectives of the programme or courses	An LMS Platform available but not fully functional	LMS not available		
<b>Total score</b>	<b>Total score/Total observed</b>		<b>%</b>		

**Strengths**

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**Areas for improvement**

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**AREA 2: ACADEMIC AND SUPPORT STAFF COMPLEMENT**

Name of the programme being assessed (E.g. BSc. in Public Health)					
Area of interest	2	1	0	Score	Comment
Staff recruitment procedures	Staff recruitment procedures and requirements for various positions are clear and followed	Staff recruitment procedures and requirements for various positions are clear but not followed	Staff recruitment procedures and requirements are not defined		
Staff development plans for all categories of staff	There is a staff development plan (SDP) with a budget line for training in the institutional budget and supported by both internal and external sources of funding.	There is a staff development plan (SDP) but funding opportunities are severely limited.	There is no staff development plan (SDP)		
Continuous professional development (CPD) plans (With specific focus on ODeL)	There is a continuous professional development plan (CPD) with both clear activities and targets	There is a continuous professional development plan (CPD) but there are no clear activities or targets	There is no a continuous professional development plan (CPD)		
*Specific academic requirements	Academic staff positions filled by persons (full-time and part-time) possessing qualifications appropriate to programme requirements.	A majority of academic staff positions filled by persons without appropriate qualifications to programme requirements.	All academic staff positions are filled with persons whose qualifications are not appropriate to programme requirements.		
Staff	*There is a	There is less	There is no		

complement for New programme	minimum of three suitably qualified full-time academic staff with qualifications that are relevant to the programme	than three suitably qualified full-time academic staff with qualifications that are relevant to the programme	qualified full-time academic staff		
	There is at least one member of staff with a doctoral degree	There is at least a member of staff who is bonded and pursuing doctoral studies	There is no member of staff with a doctoral degree nor pursuing a doctoral degree		
	There is one senior academic member of staff at the rank of Senior Lecturer or above who will provide leadership in the programme	There is no academic member of staff at the rank of senior lecturer or above but there are well qualified and experienced academic staff who will give leadership in the programme	There is no academic member of staff at the level of senior lecturer or above who will give leadership in the programme		
*Ratio of part time staff to full time staff	Ratio of part time staff to full time staff is not more than 3:1 ( $\leq 75\%$ )	Ratio of part time staff to full time staff is between 3:1 and 5:1 (75 % - 83%)	Ratio of part time staff to full time staff is higher than 5:1 or high ( $>83\%$ )		
Staff : student ratio (includes tutors and teaching assistants)	Staff : student ratio is 1:50 or better <sup>1</sup>	Staff: student ratio is between 1:51 and 1:100	Staff: student ratio is over 1:100		
Short-term staff exchange programmes	Staff are allowed to participate in	Staff are allowed to participate in	Staff are not allowed to participate in		

<sup>1</sup> Recommended ration for lecturer: student as defined in the National Education Sector Plan (NESP) 2008 -2017.

	short-term staff exchange programmes and the institution regularly facilitates staff exchange	short-term staff exchange programmes but the institution places barriers to staff exchange	short-term staff exchange programmes		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Total score/Total observed</b>				<b>%</b>

**Strengths**

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**Areas for improvement**

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**AREA 3: STUDENT RECRUITMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT**

<b>Area of interest</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Admission requirements and expected duration of Programme(s)	Programme admission requirements are clearly spelt out	Programme admission requirements are somewhat spelt out	Programme admission requirements are not defined		
	Programme duration is clearly spelt out	Programme duration is not clearly spelt out	Programme duration is not stated		
	Entry qualifications are defined clearly	Entry qualifications are defined but not clearly articulated	Entry qualifications are not defined		
Assessment guidelines and criteria	Assessment guidelines and criteria are well documented	Assessment guidelines and criteria are not well documented	Assessment guidelines and criteria not provided.		
Industrial	Industrial	Industrial	Industrial		

attachment arrangements	attachment arrangements are well structured, include graded assessment and they clearly complement the curriculum	attachment arrangements are well structured, but are not provisions for assessment and do not adequately complement the curriculum	attachment arrangements are not spelt out but are required to enhance the curriculum, or are totally absent		
Curriculum requirements for graduation align with the HEQF	Curriculum requirements for graduation adequately meet HEQF standards	Curriculum requirements for graduation are simply consistent with HEQF standards	Curriculum requirements for graduation are not consistent with HEQF standards		
Handling of academic complaints	Guidelines for handling of academic complaints are well-documented and consistent with good academic practice	Guidelines for handling of academic complaints are available but are not consistent with good practice	Guidelines for handling of academic complaints not available		
<b>Total score</b>	<b>Total score/Total observed</b>			<b>%</b>	

**Strengths**

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**Areas for improvement**

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**AREA 4: E-LIBRARY RESOURCES**

<b>Name of programme being assessed</b> (e.g. BSc. in Public	
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Health)					
Area of interest	2	1	0	Score	Comments
*The library collection	Prescribed and recommended readings and/textbooks and the total print and/or e-collection are generally sufficient and appropriate to support educational, research, and public service requirements of the programme	Prescribed and recommended readings/textbooks and total print and/or e-collection are marginally sufficient to support educational, research, and public service requirements of the programme	Lacks prescribed and recommended readings/textbooks to support educational, research, and public service requirements of the programme		
Current books (books published not more than <u>10</u> years before the date of the assessment), and supplementary reading materials	Library has adequate current prescribed books for the programme, and supplementary reading materials	Library has fewer current prescribed books, and supplementary reading materials for the programme	Library does not have adequate current books, and supplementary reading materials for the programme		
Access to internet	Sufficient access to internet to support the programme	Insufficient access to internet	No access to internet		
Access to E-resources	Sufficient access to E-resources to support the programme	Insufficient access to E-resources	No access to E-resources	Access to E-resources	Sufficient access to E-resources to support the programme
*Copyright of study materials.	Ownership of materials, copyright of	Ownership of materials is well defined but	Ownership of materials and copyright are		

	the resources is well defined	copyright of the resources is not defined	not defined		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Total Score/Total observed</b>				<b>%</b>

**Strengths**

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**Areas for improvement**

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**AREA 5: REQUISITE PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND EQUIPMENT #**

<b>Area of interest</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Comments</b>
* Classrooms/ Lecture theatres	Adequate considering the projected student enrollment.	Fairly adequate considering the projected student enrollment.	Inadequate considering consideration of the projected student enrollment.		
	Well ventilated classrooms and lecture theatres	Fairly adequate classroom and lecture theatre ventilation.	Inadequate ventilated classrooms and lecture theatres		
	Adequate natural and artificial lighting.	Fairly adequate natural and artificial lighting.	Inadequate natural and artificial lighting.		
	At least 2.6m ceiling height	2m to 2.6m.Ceiling height	Less than 2m. ceiling height		
Natural science Laboratories	Available, well-furnished and accessible	Available but require furnishing	Not available or grossly insufficient		

Computer science Laboratories	Available, well-furnished and accessible with a student: computer ratio of 1:5	Available but require proper furnishing to meet the recommended 1:5 standard student: computer ratio	Not available or grossly insufficient to meet the recommended 1:5 standard student: computer ratio		
Language Laboratories	Available, well-furnished and accessible	Available but require proper furnishing	Not available or grossly insufficient		
Equipment and other learning resources	Sufficient quantities and of suitable quality	Insufficient and lacking in quality	Not available		
Students' access to learning resources	Accessible when required	Accessible with severe limitations	Not accessible		
<b>Total score</b>	<b>Total score/Total observed</b>			<b>%</b>	

**Note:** # This is applicable to Blended ODeL mode

**Strengths**

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**Areas for improvement**

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**AREA 6: LABORATORIES, RESOURCE ROOMS AND WORKSHOPS #**

**6.1: Rating on Laboratories, Workshops, and studios**

Assessed area	2	1	0	Score	Comment
*Teaching Laboratories, skills laboratories, workshops, performance	Available and in good condition	Available but not in good condition	Not available		



theatres and studios, etc. where appropriate					
Laboratory facilities for different subject areas: a) Provision of room for instructional work stations	Available and in good condition	Available but not in good condition	Not available		
b) Provision of storage, preparatory rooms, and a laboratory office(s);	Available and in good condition	Available but not in good condition	Not available		
c) Proper location in relation to other facilities so that the laboratory is easily accessible	Well-located in relation to other facilities and is easily accessible	Not well-located in relation to other facilities but fairly accessible	Not well-located in relation to other facilities and not easily accessible		
d) Ventilation	Available and in good condition	Available but not in good condition	Not available		
e) Fume cupboards and fume hoods in preparation and storage rooms	Available and in good condition	Available but not in good condition	Not available		
f) Standard table top electrical service outlets for the instructor's table and for each pair	Available and in good condition	Available but not in good condition	Not available		
g) Water supply system for firefighting.	Available and in good condition	Available but not in good condition	Not available		
h) Surface treatment of floors, walls and ceiling	Well-treated and reduces noise	Well-treated but allows some noise	Not well-treated		

i) Protective clothing for laboratory and workshop staff (gowns, shoes and gloves)	Sufficient and of good quality	Insufficient but of fairly good quality	Not available, or available but of poor quality		
<b>Total score</b>	<b>Total scores / Total observed</b>			<b>%</b>	

**Note:** # This is applicable to Blended ODeL mode

**Strengths**

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**Areas for improvement**

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**AREA 7: QUALITY ENHANCEMENT**

Assessed area	2	1	0	Score	Comments
Diversity of student learning opportunities, teaching methods and modes of assessment	Diverse, adequate and well documented teaching methods and modes of assessment	Diverse but not well documented teaching methods and modes of assessment	Not diversified		
Planned activities for teaching and learning	Available and well documented.	Available, but not well documented	Not available		
Continuous upgrading of ODeL technologies, e-learning platform and interactive student learning.	There is an effective plan of upgrading of ODeL technologies, e-learning platform and interactive student learning.	There is lack of a plan of ODeL technologies, e-learning and interactive student learning.	There is no plan of continuous upgrading of ODeL technologies, e-learning and interactive student		

			learning.		
Clear system of submitting students' assessments with clear quality control checks	Available and well documented.	Available, but not well documented	Not available		
Guidelines on internal moderation of assessments and grading system	Available and well documented.	Available, but not well documented	Not available		
Guidelines on external moderation of assessments	Available and well documented.	Available, but not well documented	Not available		
Capacity for carrying out institutional quality assessment	Available and quality assessments are done timely	Available but quality assessments are not done timely	Not available		
Student Involvement in evaluation of courses/modules and the quality of teaching	Provisions are made for student involvement in evaluation of courses and quality teaching and there is measures for extracting the feedback to inform curriculum review and improvements in teaching	Provisions are made for student' involvement in evaluation of courses and quality of teaching, however, there are no measures for extracting the feedback to inform curriculum review and improvements in teaching.	There are no provisions for student involvement in evaluation of courses and quality teaching and for use of their feedback to inform curriculum review and improvements in teaching		
Annual evaluation of programmes	Available and well documented.	Available, but not well documented.	Not available		
Performance appraisal of support and academic staff	Available and well documented.	Available, but not well documented.	Not available		
Commitment of resources	Adequate commitment of financial resources to achieve	Fairly adequate commitment of resources to	No commitment of resources to achieve		

	effective teaching.	achieve effective teaching.	effective teaching.		
Allocations of financial resources to research	Adequate allocation and utilization of financial resources for research	Fairly adequate allocation and utilization of financial resources for research	No allocation of financial resources for research or no utilization of allocated financial resources for research		
Evidence of research based teaching at postgraduate levels	Strong link between research taking place in the institution and postgraduate level teaching	A weak link between research taking place in the institution with postgraduate level teaching	No link between teaching and research activities		
Information sharing with students and the public	Excellent information flow	Good information flow is	Poor information flow		
Rewarding system for outstanding student academic performance	Available, well-documented and used appropriately	Available, well document but not followed or available, followed by not well-documented	Not available		
Use of learning analytics (data) to improve teaching & learning, and the learning environment	Learning analytics employed robustly to improve teaching & learning, and the learning environment	Learning analytics employed but do not improve teaching & learning, and the learning environment	No Learning analytics are employed		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Total score/Total observed</b>				<b>%</b>

**Strengths**

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**Areas for improvement**

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**OVERALL OBSERVATION (S) AND RECOMMENDATION (S)**

**Critical observation(s) for areas with (\*)**

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**Recommendations**

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### CRITERIA FOR REGISTRATION OF INSTITUTION/PROGRAMMES

Outcome of assessment	Reviewers' recommendation to the council
a) Minimum score of <b>50%</b> and above on each area. b) Items with (*) should attain a maximum score of 2 on each of those areas.	Registration of a programme

### REFERENCES

1. Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (2008) *National Education Sector Plan, 2008 – 2017*.
2. National Council for Higher Education Act (Act No. 15 of 2011).
3. National Council for Higher Education (2014) *Standards for Accreditation of Malawi Higher Education Institutions*.
4. National Council for Higher Education (Uganda) *Application for a certificate of classified and Registration for a Private Tertiary Institution*.
5. New England association of schools and Colleges, Commission on Institutions of Higher Education.

6. Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions (Quality Assurance) Regulations, (Uganda) 2008.