

AQIP Category One: Helping Students Learn

Category One identifies the shared purpose of all higher education organizations and is accordingly the pivot of any institutional analysis. This Category focuses on the teaching–learning processes within a formal instructional context, yet also addresses how the entire organization contributes to student learning and overall student development. It examines processes and systems related to:

- Learning objectives
- Mission-driven student learning and development
- Intellectual climate
- Academic programs and courses'
- Student preparation
- Key issues such as technology and diversity
- Program and course delivery
- Faculty and staff roles
- Teaching and learning effectiveness
- Course sequencing and scheduling
- Learning and cocurricular support
- Student assessment
- Measures
- Analysis of results
- Improvement efforts

Context for Analysis (C)

- 1C1** What common student learning objectives do you hold for all students (regardless of their status or program of study), and what pattern of knowledge and skills do you expect them to possess upon completion of their general and specialized studies?
- 1C2** By what means do you ensure that student learning expectations, practices, and development objectives align with your mission, vision, and philosophy?
- 1C3** What are your key instructional programs? What delivery methods are used within these key programs? To what degree is technology used within the formal instructional context?
- 1C4** What practices do you use to ensure that the design and delivery of student learning options prepare students to live in a diverse world and accommodate a variety of student learning styles?
- 1C5** By what means do you create and maintain a climate that celebrates intellectual freedom, inquiry, reflection, respect for intellectual property, and respect for differing and diverse opinions?

Processes (P)

- 1P1** How do you determine your common student learning objectives as well as specific program learning objectives? Who is involved in setting these objectives?
- 1P2** How do you design new programs and courses to facilitate student learning? How do you balance educational market issues with student needs in designing responsive academic programming?
- 1P3** How do you determine the preparation required of students for the specific curricula, programs, courses, and learning they will pursue?
- 1P4** How do you communicate expectations regarding student preparation and student learning objectives (for programs, courses, and the awarding of specific degrees or credentials) to prospective and current students? How do admissions, student support, and registration services aid in this process?
- 1P5** How do you help students select programs of study that match their needs, interests, and abilities? In providing this help, how are discrepancies between the necessary and actual preparation of students and their learning styles detected and addressed?
- 1P6** How do you determine and document effective teaching and learning? How are these expectations communicated across the institution?
- 1P7** How do you build an effective and efficient course delivery system? How do delivery decisions balance student and institutional needs?
- 1P8** How do you monitor the currency and effectiveness of your curriculum? What process is in place for changing or discontinuing programs and courses?
- 1P9** How do you determine student and faculty needs relative to learning support? How are learning support areas involved in the student learning and development process?
- 1P10** How are cocurricular development goals aligned with curricular learning objectives
- 1P11** How do you determine the processes for student assessment?
- 1P12** How do you discover how well prepared the students who are completing programs, degrees, and certificates are for further education or employment?
- 1P13** What measures of student performance do you collect and analyze regularly?

Results (R)

- 1R1** What are your results for common student learning objectives as well as specific program learning objectives?
- 1R2** What is your evidence that students have acquired the knowledge and skills base required by the institution and its stakeholders (that is, other educational institutions and

employers) for the awarding of specific degrees or credentials?

Results might address perspectives of other higher education institutions, employers, and so on

1R3 What are your results for processes associated with helping students learn?

Results might include processes in designing and introducing new courses and programs, using technology and its impact, evidence of effective teaching, processes associated with scheduling, and so on.

1R4 Regarding 1R1 through 1R3, how do your results compare with the results of other higher education institutions and, if appropriate, organizations outside the education community

Improvement (I)

1I1 How do you improve your current processes and systems for helping students learn and develop?

1I2 With regard to your current results for student learning and development, how do you set targets for improvement? What specific improvement priorities are you targeting, and how will they be addressed? How do you communicate your current results and improvement priorities to students, faculty, staff, administrators, and appropriate stakeholders?

AQIP Category Two: Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives

Category Two addresses the processes that contribute to the achievement of the major objectives that complement student learning and fulfill other portions of the mission. Depending on the organization's character, the Category examines processes and systems related to:

- Identification of other distinctive objectives
- Alignment of other distinctive objectives
- Faculty and staff roles
- Assessment and review of objectives
- Measures
- Analysis of results

Context for Analysis (C)

2C1 What are your explicit institutional objectives in addition to helping students learn (Category One)?

Other distinctive objectives may include pure and applied research and scholarship, professional and public service, institutional citizenship, service learning, service to a religious order or philosophy, economic stimulation and development of the community, growth in organizational capital, participation in college athletics and other auxiliary or secondary activities, or any other major activities to which the institution commits substantial resources, energy, and attention. These objectives are distinctive because

they distinguish the institution's unique identity, while all higher education organizations share the objective of helping students learn.

2C2 By what means do you ensure that your other distinctive objectives align with your mission, vision, and philosophy?

2C3 How do your other distinctive objectives support or complement your processes and systems for helping students learn?

Processes (P)

2P1 How do you determine your other distinctive objectives? Who is involved in setting these objectives?

2P2 How do you communicate your expectations regarding these objectives?

2P3 How do you determine faculty and staff needs relative to these objectives?

2P4 How are these objectives assessed and reviewed? Who is involved, and how is their feedback incorporated in readjusting the objectives or the processes that support them?

2P5 What measures of accomplishing your other distinctive objectives do you collect and analyze regularly?

Results (R)

2R1 What are your results in accomplishing your other distinctive objectives?

2R2 How do the results in 2R1 compare with the results of peer institutions? How do they compare, if appropriate, with the results of other higher education institutions and of organizations outside the education community?

2R3 How do your results in accomplishing other distinctive objectives strengthen your overall institution? How do they enhance your relationship with the community and region you serve?

Improvement (I)

2I1 How do you improve your systems and processes for accomplishing your other distinctive objectives?

2I2 With regard to your current results for accomplishing your other distinctive objectives, how do you set targets for improvement? What specific improvement priorities are you targeting, and how will they be addressed? How do you communicate your current results and improvement priorities to students, faculty, staff, administrators, and appropriate stakeholders?

AQIP Category Three: Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs

Category Three examines how the organization works actively to understand student and other stakeholder needs. It examines processes and systems related to:

- Student and stakeholder identification
- Student and stakeholder requirements
- Analysis of student and stakeholder needs
- Relationship building with students and stakeholders
- Complaint collection, analysis, and resolution
- Determining satisfaction of students and stakeholders
- Measures
- Analysis of results
- Improvement efforts

Context for Analysis (C)

- 3C1** Into what key groups do you subcategorize your students and other stakeholders? How do you define and differentiate these student and other stakeholder groups?

*Students are any educational organization's primary stakeholders, but your organization may see its mission as serving other groups as well. For purposes of Category Three, other stakeholders refers to groups that have a major stake in the organization's success, such as, for example, parents, alumni, board members, local and regional communities, employers, and legislators. Internal groups (faculty and staff) are addressed in Category Four, **Valuing People**.*

- 3C2** What are the short-term and long-term requirements and expectations of your student and other stakeholder groups?

Processes (P)

- 3P1** How do you identify the changing needs of your student groups? How do you analyze and select a course of action regarding these needs?

Changing needs might address, for example, needs that will impact enrollment in programs and courses, services provided, and facilities required, as appropriate.

- 3P2** How do you build and maintain a relationship with your students?

- 3P3** How do you identify the changing needs of your key stakeholder groups? How do you analyze and select a course of action regarding these needs?

Changing needs might address, for example, needs of the communities and region that you serve and needs that will impact students upon entry into internship and service opportunities, the job market, and further educational opportunities, as appropriate.

- 3P4** How do you build and maintain a relationship with your key stakeholders?

Address both current and prospective stakeholders, as appropriate.

- 3P5** How do you determine whether new student and stakeholder groups should be addressed within your educational offerings and services?
- 3P6** How do you collect complaint information from students and other stakeholders? How do you analyze this feedback both in a formative and summative manner and select a course of action? How do you communicate your actions to students and stakeholders?
- 3P7** How do you determine student and other stakeholder satisfaction? What measures of student and other stakeholder satisfaction do you collect and analyze regularly?

Results (R)

- 3R1** What are your results for student satisfaction with your performance?

Results might include satisfaction with instructional and supporting institutional operations, as driven by the requirements identified in 3C2. Results might include complaint information as well.
- 3R2** What are your results for the building of relationships with your students?

Results might address, for example, attrition and retention, transfer, loyalty, and overall value ratings.
- 3R3** What are your results for stakeholder satisfaction with your performance?

*Results regarding serving the communities and region that you serve should be addressed in Category Two, **Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives**.*
- 3R4** What are your results for the building of relationships with your key stakeholders?

Results might address, for example, retention, loyalty, and overall value ratings.
- 3R5** Regarding 3R1 through 3R4, how do your results compare with the results of other higher education institutions and, if appropriate, organizations outside the education community?

Improvement (I)

- 3I1** How do you improve your current processes and systems for understanding the needs of your key student and other stakeholder groups?
- 3I2** With regard to your current results for understanding the needs of your key student and other stakeholder groups, how do you set targets for improvement? What specific improvement priorities are you targeting, and how will they be addressed? How do you communicate your current results and improvement priorities to students, faculty, staff, administrators, and appropriate stakeholders?

AQIP Category Four: Valuing People

Category Four explores commitment to the development of faculty, staff, and administrators, since the efforts of all are required for success. It examines processes and systems related to:

- Work and job environment
- Workforce needs
- Training initiatives
- Job competencies and characteristics
- Recruitment, hiring, and retention practices
- Work processes and activities
- Training and development
- Personnel evaluation
- Recognition, reward, compensation, and benefits
- Motivation factors
- Satisfaction, health and safety, and well-being
- Measures
- Analysis of results
- Improvement efforts

Context for Analysis (C)

- 4C1** In what distinctive ways do you organize your work environment, work activities, and job classifications to strengthen your focus on student learning and development?
- 4C2** What key institutional and geographic factors determine how you address your work environment and job classification? In what ways do you use part-time employees?
- 4C3** What demographic trends do you analyze as you look at your workforce needs over the next decade?
- 4C4** What key faculty, staff, and administrative training initiatives are you currently undertaking or planning to implement in the near future?

Processes (P)

- 4P1** How do you identify the specific credentials, skills, and values required for faculty, staff, and administrators? How do your hiring processes make certain that you employ people who possess these characteristics?
- 4P2** How do you recruit, hire, and retain employees? How do you orient all employees to your organization? How do you plan for changes in personnel?
- 4P3** How do your work processes and activities contribute to communications, cooperation, high performance, innovation, empowerment, organizational learning, and skill sharing? How do you ensure the ethical practices of all employees?
- 4P4** How do you train and develop all faculty, staff, and administrators to contribute fully and effectively throughout their careers with your institution? How do you reinforce this training?

Training and development might include, for example, leadership training at all organizational levels, the use of technology, safety issues, the collection and use of tools associated with measuring effectiveness, and the key issues associated with educational changes.

4P5 How do you determine training needs? How is your training aligned with the plans addressed in Category Eight, **Planning Continuous Improvement**, and how does it augment your focus on helping students learn and accomplishing other distinctive objectives?

Include how you prepare all personnel to contribute to a culture of continuous improvement and an understanding of how their roles and responsibilities contribute to the success of your organization.

4P6 How do you design and use your personnel evaluation system? How does this system align with your objectives in One, **Helping Students Learn**, and in Category Two, **Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives**?

Include how you provide feedback to employees.

4P7 How do you design your recognition, reward, and compensation systems to align with your objectives in One, **Helping Students Learn**, and in Category Two, **Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives**? How do you support employees through benefits and services?

4P8 How do you determine key issues related to the motivation of faculty, staff, and administrators? How are these issues analyzed, and how is a course of action selected?

4P9 How do you provide for and evaluate employee satisfaction, health and safety, and well-being?

4P10 What measures of valuing people do you collect and analyze regularly?

Results (R)

4R1 What are your results in valuing people?

Include faculty, staff, and administrator satisfaction, health and safety, well-being, and your employees' impact on institutional development.

4R2 What are your results in processes associated with valuing people?

Results might include, for example, processes in designing, modifying, and delivering new recruitment and selection procedures, orientation and/or training sessions, retention of employees, and employee evaluation systems.

4R3 What evidence indicates the productivity and effectiveness of your faculty, staff, and administrators in helping you achieve your goals?

- 4R4** Regarding 4R1 and 4R3, how do your results compare with the results of other higher education institutions and, if appropriate, organizations outside the education community?

Improvement (I)

- 4I1** How do you improve your current processes and systems for valuing people?
- 4I2** With regard to your current results for valuing people, how do you set targets for improvement? What specific improvement priorities are you targeting, and how will these be addressed? How do you communicate your current results and improvement priorities to students, faculty, staff, administrators, and appropriate stakeholders?

AQIP Category Five: Leading and Communicating

Category Five addresses how the leadership and communication structures, networks, and processes guide the organization in setting directions, making decisions, seeking future opportunities, and building and sustaining a learning environment. It examines processes and systems related to:

- Leading activities
- Communicating activities
- Alignment of leadership system practices
- Institutional values and expectations
- Direction setting
- Future opportunity seeking
- Decision making
- Use of data
- Leadership development and sharing
- Succession planning
- Measures
- Analysis of results
- Improvement efforts

Context for Analysis (C)

- 5C1** Describe your leadership and communication systems. (A brief chart or summary of groups, committees, or teams and their functions may be useful.)

Your leadership system includes not only individuals who have day-to-day supervisory or decision-making responsibility, but also leadership groups within the organization and oversight entities such as institutional or state boards or trustees.

- 5C2** In what ways do you ensure that the practices of your leadership system—at all institutional levels—align with the practices and views of your board, senior leaders, and (if applicable) oversight entities?
- 5C3** What are your institutional values and expectations regarding ethics and equity, social responsibilities, and community service and involvement?

Processes (P)

5P1 How do your leaders set directions in alignment with your mission, vision, and values that are conducive to high performance, individual development and initiative, organizational learning, and innovation? How do these directions take into account the needs and expectations of students and key stakeholder groups and create a strong focus on students and learning?

5P2 How do your leaders guide your institution in seeking future opportunities and building and sustaining a learning environment?

5P3 How are decisions made in your institution? How do you use teams, task forces, groups, or committees to recommend or make decisions and to carry them out?

Describe how decisions are actually made and implemented, even if this differs from your theoretical or procedural governance guidelines.

5P4 How do your leaders use information and results in their decision-making process?

By specific group, describe the key results reviewed and indicate the frequency. Key results are those results, from all organizational areas, that are critical to understanding whether the organization is succeeding—the kind of results described in the nine AQIP Categories.

5P5 How does communication occur between and among institutional levels?

Address downward, upward, and two-way communication, as well as how leaders and leadership groups communicate with one another.

5P6 How do your leaders communicate a shared mission, vision, values, and high performance expectations regarding institutional directions and opportunities, learning, continuous improvement, ethics and equity, social responsibilities, and community service and involvement?

5P7 How are leadership abilities encouraged, developed, and strengthened among faculty, staff, and administrators? How are leadership best practices, knowledge, and skills communicated and shared throughout your institution?

5P8 How do your leaders and board members ensure that your mission, vision, and values are passed on during leadership succession? How is your leadership succession plan developed?

Describe your leadership succession plan.

5P9 What measures of leading and communicating do you collect and analyze regularly?

Results (R)

5R1 What are your results for leading and communicating processes and systems?

Results might include, for example, leadership effectiveness, satisfaction with leadership, leadership communication effectiveness, and value of decisions made.

5R2 Regarding 5R1, how do your results compare with the results of other higher education institutions and, if appropriate, organizations outside the education community?

Improvement (I)

5I1 How do you improve your current processes and systems for leading and communicating?

Address how you use student, faculty, staff, administrator, and key stakeholder feedback, as appropriate.

5I2 With regard to your current results for leading and communicating, how do you set targets for improvement? What specific improvement priorities are you targeting, and how will these be addressed? How do you communicate your current results and improvement priorities to students, faculty, staff, administrators, and appropriate stakeholders?

AQIP Category Six: Supporting Institutional Operations

Category Six addresses the support processes that help provide an environment in which learning can thrive. It examines processes and systems related to:

- Student support
- Administrative support
- Identification of needs
- Contribution to student learning and accomplishing other distinctive objectives
- Day-to-day operations
- Use of data
- Measures
- Analysis of results
- Improvement efforts

Context for Analysis (C)

6C1 What are your key student and administrative support service processes? What are the support service process needs of students and other stakeholder groups?

Student support services could include, for example, admissions, advising, athletics, bookstore, campus activities, campus safety, career services, computing, disability services, financial aid, food services, health, library, registration, residential life, and tutoring. Administrative support services could include, for example, accounting, business office, cashiering, custodial services, facilities planning and management, financing, maintenance, purchasing, and risk management. Address which services, if any, are outsourced

- 6C2** How do your key student and administrative support services reinforce processes and systems described in Category One, Helping Students Learn, and Category Two, **Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives**?

Processes (P)

- 6P1** How do you identify the support service needs of your students?
- 6P2** How do you identify the administrative support service needs of your faculty, staff, and administrators, as well as other key stakeholder groups (e.g., oversight board, alumni)?
- 6P3** How are your key student and administrative support service processes managed on a day-to-day basis to ensure that they are meeting the needs of students and key stakeholder groups? How do you document your processes and encourage knowledge sharing, innovation, and empowerment?
- Address how feedback from students and key stakeholder groups (including faculty and staff) is used to change processes.*
- 6P4** How do your key student and administrative support areas use information and results to improve their services?
- Address how information and results are used on a day-to-day and summative basis.*
- 6P5** What measures of student and administrative support service processes do you collect and analyze regularly?

Results (R)

- 6R1** What are your results for student support service processes?
- 6R2** What are your results for administrative support service processes?
- Address patterns of financial capacity as well as other indicators of institutional health and viability.*
- 6R3** Regarding 6R1 and 6R2, how do your results compare with the results of other higher education institutions and, if appropriate, organizations outside the education community?

Improvement (I)

- 6I1** How do you improve your current processes and systems for supporting institutional operations?

- 6I2** With regard to your current results for student and administrative support processes, how do you set targets for improvement? What specific improvement priorities are you targeting, and how will these be addressed? How do you communicate your current results and improvement priorities to students, faculty, staff, administrators, and appropriate stakeholders?

AQIP Category Seven: Measuring Effectiveness

Category Seven examines how the organization collects, analyzes, and uses information to manage itself and to drive performance improvement. It examines processes and systems related to:

- Collection, storage, management, and use of information and data at the institutional and departmental/unit levels
- Institutional measures of effectiveness
- Information and data alignment with institutional needs and directions
- Comparative information and data
- Analysis of information and data
- Effectiveness of information system and processes
- Measures
- Analysis of results
- Improvement efforts

Context for Analysis (C)

- 7C1** In what ways do you collect and store information and data, both in centralized and decentralized circumstances? In what ways is this information made accessible to those who need it?
- 7C2** What are your key institutional measures for tracking effectiveness?

Processes (P)

- 7P1** How do you select, manage, and use information and data (including current performance information) to support student learning (Category One), overall institutional objectives (Category Two), strategies (Category Eight), and improvement efforts (all Categories)?
- 7P2** How do you determine the needs of your departments and units related to information and data collection, storage, and accessibility? How are these needs met?
- 7P3** How do you determine the needs and priorities for comparative information and data? What are your criteria and methods for selecting sources of comparative information and data within and outside the education community?

Address determination of needs at both the institutional and department or unit levels.

- 7P4** How, at the institutional level, do you analyze information and data regarding overall

performance? How is this analysis shared throughout the organization?

Analysis of performance information should span measures you determine to be key from across the nine AQIP Categories.

- 7P5** How do you ensure that department and unit analysis of information and data aligns with your institutional goals regarding student learning (Category One) and overall institutional objectives? How is this analysis shared?
- 7P6** How do you ensure the effectiveness of your information system(s) and related processes?
- 7P7** What measures of the effectiveness of your system for measuring effectiveness do you collect and analyze regularly?

Results (R)

- 7R1** What is the evidence that your system for measuring effectiveness meets your institution's needs in accomplishing its mission and goals?
- 7R2** Regarding 7R1, how do your results compare with the results of other higher education institutions and, if appropriate, organizations outside the education community?

Improvement (I)

- 7I1** How do you improve your current processes and systems for measuring effectiveness?
- 7I2** With regard to your current results for measuring effectiveness, how do you set targets for improvement? What specific improvement priorities are you targeting, and how will these be addressed? How do you communicate your current results and improvement priorities to students, faculty, staff, administrators, and appropriate stakeholders?

AQIP Category Eight: Planning Continuous Improvement

Category Eight examines the planning processes and how strategies and action plans are helping achieve the mission and vision. It examines processes and systems related to:

- Institutional vision
- Planning
- Strategies and action plans
- Coordination and alignment of strategies and action plans
- Measures and performance projections
- Resource needs
- Faculty, staff, and administrator capabilities
- Measures
- Analysis of performance projections and results
- Improvement efforts

Context for Analysis (C)

- 8C1** What is your institution's vision of what your institution will be like in the next five to ten years?

- 8C2** What are your institution's short-term and long-term strategies? How are these strategies aligned with your mission and vision?

Processes (P)

- 8P1** What is your planning process?

- 8P2** How do you select short-term and long-term strategies?

- 8P3** How do you develop key action plans to support your institutional strategies?

- 8P4** How do you coordinate and align your planning processes and overall institutional strategies and action plans with your varying institutional levels? .

- 8P5** How do you select measures and set performance projections for your institutional strategies and action plans?

- 8P6** How do you account for appropriate resource needs within your strategy selection and action plan implementation processes?

- 8P7** How do you ensure that faculty, staff, and administrator capabilities will be developed and nurtured to address requirements regarding changing institutional strategies and action plans?

- 8P8** What measures of the effectiveness of your system for planning continuous improvement do you collect and analyze regularly?

Results (R)

- 8R1** What are your results for accomplishing institutional strategies and action plans?

- 8R2** Regarding 8R1, what are your projections of performance for your strategies and action plans over the next one to three years?

- 8R3** Regarding 8R2, how do your projections for your strategies and action plans compare with those of other higher education institutions and, if appropriate, organizations outside the education community?

- 8R4** What is the evidence that your system for planning continuous improvement is effective?

Improvement (I)

- 8I1** How do you improve your current processes and systems for planning continuous

improvement?

- 812** With regard to your current results for planning continuous improvement, how do you set targets for improvement? What specific improvement priorities are you targeting, and how will these be addressed? How do you communicate your current results and improvement priorities as well as performance projections to students, faculty, staff, administrators, and appropriate stakeholders?

AQIP Category Nine: Building Collaborative Relationships

Category Nine examines the organization's relationships-current and potential-to analyze how they contribute to accomplishing the mission. It examines processes and systems related to:

- Identification of key internal and external collaborative relationships
- Alignment of key collaborative relationships
- Relationship creation, prioritization, and building
- Needs identification
- Internal relationships
- Measures
- Analysis of results
- Improvement efforts

Context for Analysis (C)

- 9C1** What are your institution's key collaborative relationships?

External collaborative partners might include organizations that are the sources of entering students (high schools, community colleges, places of work); organizations that are the destination of exiting students (four-year institutions, graduate schools, places of work); suppliers such as food services, book suppliers, and student recruiting services; external agencies such as state coordinating boards or state, local, or national governments; religious organizations; and other institutions or consortia of institutions.

- 9C2** In what ways do these collaborative relationships reinforce your institutional mission? If applicable, how do the relationships support changes in your institutional directions as addressed in Category Eight, Planning Continuous Improvement?

Processes (P)

- 9P1** How do you create, prioritize, and build relationships with the following?

- Educational institutions and other organizations from which you receive your students
- Educational institutions and employers that depend on a supply of your students and

graduates who meet their requirements

— Organizations that provide services to your students

— Education associations, external agencies, consortia partners, and the general community with which you interact

9P2 How do you ensure that the varying needs of those involved in these relationships are being met?

9P3 How do you create and build relationships within your institution? How do you assure integration and communication across these relationships?

9P4 What measures of building collaborative relationships do you collect and analyze regularly?

Results (R)

9R1 What are your results in building your key collaborative relationships?

9R2 Regarding 9R1, how do your results compare with the results of other higher education institutions and, if appropriate, organizations outside the education community?

Improvement (I)

9I1 How do you improve your current processes and systems for building collaborative relationships?

9I2 With regard to your current results for student learning and development, how do you set targets for improvement? What specific improvement priorities are you targeting, and how will these be addressed? How do you communicate your current results and improvement priorities to relationship partners, faculty, staff, administrators, and appropriate students and stakeholders?