



College of Architecture and Planning

Quality Assurance Manual

1444-47 (H)/ 2022-25 (G)

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Ministry of Education
King Khalid University



المملكة العربية السعودية
وزارة التعليم
جامعة الملك خالد

College of Architecture
& Planning
King Khalid University
PO Box 394
Abha 61421

Document approved by

Dr. Mohammed Alshayeb (Chair, Department of Architecture)

Document reviewed by

Prof. Dr. Doua Abouelmagd (Head, Quality Assurance)

Original Document prepared by

Arch. Ghassan Alserayhi (Member, Quality Assurance)

For comments and/or suggestion, please, email to malshayeb@kku.edu.sa

Introduction

The College of Architecture and Planning (CAP) at King Khalid University is emerging as one of the leading architecture and planning colleges in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The College is committed to contributing significantly to the vision and mission of King Khalid University and the Saudi Vision 2030. Since its inception, CAP has been evolving as a hub of knowledge for the community. With ambitious leadership, state-of-the-art facilities, and highly qualified faculty from various parts of the world, it offers a diversified platform for the sharing and transfer of knowledge.

The architecture and planning programs are actively working toward achieving accreditation by relevant national and international accrediting bodies, such as the National Commission for Academic Accreditation and Assessment (NCAAA) and the National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB). CAP is dedicated to continuously enhancing its quality assurance (QA) system, which is twofold: internal QA and external QA. The internal QA system follows the guidelines set by the Deanship of Academic Development and Quality at King Khalid University, while the external QA system aligns the programs with the academic accreditation standards recommended by accrediting organizations including the NCAAA and the NAAB. This QA manual aims to guide the academic programs at CAP in developing, reviewing, and improving their QA systems to achieve national and international benchmarks.

Significance of Quality Assurance

Quality is often described as the totality of features and characteristics of a service or product measured against standards. In higher education, the evaluation of quality standards is based on the stated mission or purpose of the institution and how well its goals and objectives are achieved. Quality in higher education is a multi-dimensional concept that should embrace all its functions and activities: teaching and learning, learning resources, academic programs, research and development, faculty and staff development, facilities and equipment, and community service. Quality assurance should take the form of internal self-evaluation and external review, conducted openly by independent specialists, ideally with international expertise, which is crucial for enhancing quality.

Quality assurance is both a process and a framework that leads to the achievement of excellence and transparency. This process ensures quality in the attainment of the College's vision and mission, leading to college performance that aligns with its purpose. The goal is for all institutional functions to perform at an optimum level, including academics (teaching, learning, curricula), student support services, physical facilities (fabrication labs, studio environments), research, and service to the community and region. With continuous evaluation for quality in all areas, the College of Architecture and Planning will be well-positioned to adapt to changes and provide the highest quality education to students. Based on its commitment to achieving a unique status at regional, national, and international levels, the College of Architecture and Planning at King Khalid University strives to implement quality systems and processes across all its units.

Relationship of Quality Assurance to Accreditation

Quality assurance is a continuous process of monitoring outcomes and ensuring quality in all the College's endeavors. When done effectively, departments will continuously evolve and adapt to changing environmental, societal, and professional needs. Accreditation, on the other hand, is an evaluation conducted at a specific point in time, highlighting institutional quality and outcomes that demonstrate the alignment of purpose with performance. As such, quality assurance can be considered a prerequisite for accreditation—it is an ongoing process, whereas accreditation offers a snapshot of this activity.

Accreditation, whether at the institutional or program level through the National Commission for Academic Accreditation and Assessment (NCAAA), or through a specialized accreditor such as the National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB), typically leads to the awarding of certification or recognition, affirming that the institution or program meets specific standards. Once accredited, quality assurance should serve as the guarantee that the standards measured in the accreditation process are maintained over the long term. Therefore, accreditation is not truly complete unless steps are taken to ensure that the process remains continuous and ongoing, ensuring sustained excellence in all aspects of education and operations.

Quality Assurance Committees at the College Level

The College of Architecture and Planning oversees quality assurance activities through the Vice Dean of Academic Development and Quality. Each program has a dedicated quality committee responsible for supervising and executing quality assurance activities within their respective departments. The Vice Deanship of Academic Development and Quality plays a pivotal role in ensuring consistency in the system and processes across all departments. The Vice Deanship receives reports, requirements, KPIs, and benchmarks from the quality assurance units, which are then reviewed by the relevant committees before further submission.

Purpose:

The QA committees aim to apply the principles and methods of continuous quality management and contribute to quality enhancement in a dynamic academic context within each department. All QA committees across the departments must adhere to the same guidelines and principles, regardless of whether they deliver programs accredited by the NCAAA and the NAAB.

The Scope of QA Committees Includes the Following:

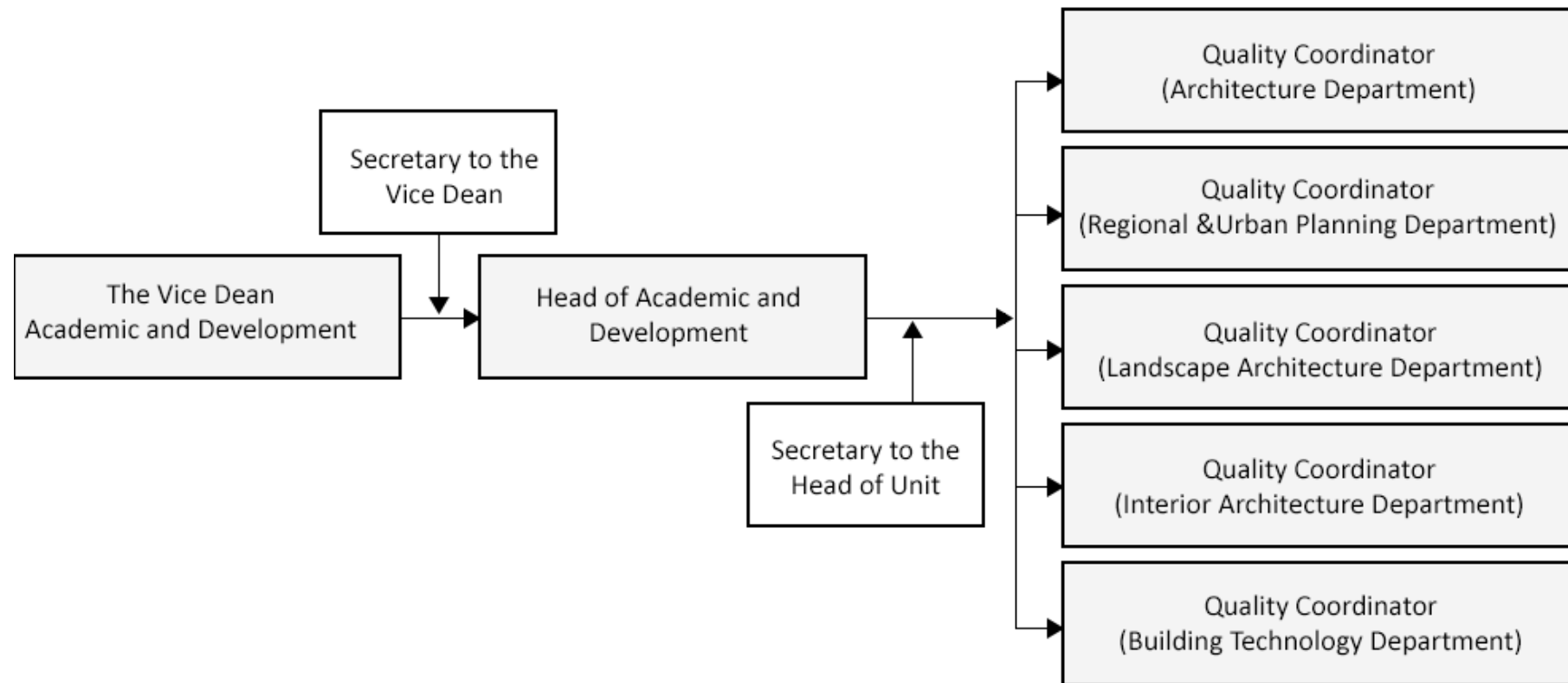
- Apply the principles of quality assurance based on the appropriate national accreditation bodies' standards (e.g., NCAAA, NAAB) in different academic programs.
- Ensure that the requirements for program accreditation are met in a timely manner.
- Assure a systematic implementation of the curriculum or programs, best utilization of learning resources, optimal educational management, and monitor the outcomes of the academic programs.
- Ensure the implementation of a quality program against the appropriate national and international accreditation standards.
- Prepare applications for accreditation.
- Identify gaps in the program, curriculum, assessment, and evaluation to suggest the necessary improvement plans to QA committee.
- Ensure and enforce the presence of quality culture.

The Quality Assurance System at College of Architecture and Planning

With the active support and commitment of the Dean of the College and the Vice Dean for Academic Development and Quality, the deanship operates as the center for quality assurance for the College of Architecture and Planning. As such, the deanship is tasked with leading the institution in quality assurance activities and embedding a culture of quality in all practices, based on the College's mission of providing high-quality learning environments, innovative research, and valuable community service.

To coordinate these processes across all college activities, quality centers have been established in all programs. This structure enables all college units, whether large or small, to participate in the planning, assessment, review, and improvement processes, and provide standardized reports to the Academic Development and Quality Unit. For the academic process, reporting is done through course specifications, course reports, surveys, and feedback. Academic programs utilize the National Qualifications Framework to identify significant learning outcomes by level and discipline. These outcomes are included in the course and program specifications, which become the basis for measuring the success of learning outcomes and the overall effectiveness of a course or program.

The quality assurance system at the College of Architecture and Planning, King Khalid University, conforms to the standards set by the National Commission for Academic Accreditation and Assessment (NCAAA), with an emphasis on a continuous cycle of planning, review, and implementation of changes for improvement, as illustrated in the figure below. With proper planning aligned with community needs or national strategic directions, new undergraduate and postgraduate programs, research centers, and community partnerships may be developed, or existing ones expanded.



Quality Assurance Framework at College of Architecture and Planning , King Khalid University

Background data and information gathered from the environmental scan enable the College and its academic programs to initiate a planning cycle by defining and reviewing goals and objectives. This process leads to the development of an operational plan at the unit level, which aligns with the strategies identified in the College's strategic plan. Once the unit plan is implemented, the goals and objectives are monitored based on agreed-upon metrics. The deanship plays an active role in this stage of the cycle by providing data and information for assessment based on stakeholder feedback, including surveys and evaluations. These results are summarized and shared with the College's departments for use in their planning processes. Academic units also rely on the deanship for key academic measures of quality, including student progress and success, time to degree completion, and student-to-faculty ratios. Both direct and indirect measures of quality are incorporated into key performance indicators (KPIs) and delivered to stakeholders. Many of these KPIs are defined by the National Commission for Academic Accreditation and Assessment (NCAAA), while others are developed by the College and its programs.

In addition to the internal use of KPIs for planning and outcomes measurement, the deanship utilizes these metrics to provide external data on the College's performance. Datasets are provided annually to university ranking organizations, such as QS World University Rankings, U.S. News & World Report, and Times Higher Education World University Rankings. The cycle of planning, setting goals and objectives, defining measurements, analyzing results, and making changes follows an annual rhythm. For NCAAA accreditation, programs must submit a self-study every five years and regularly engage in external reviews, including through advisory boards. As the central academic development and quality unit, the Vice Deanship actively guides the unit-level planning and assessment processes, leading to continuous improvement. Finally, the Vice Deanship adheres to NCAAA quality criteria, including commitment to quality improvement, achievement of quality standards, effectiveness of services provided, and consistency in applying best practices, all of which contribute to attaining the highest standards of quality.

About College of Architecture and Planning

The foundation of the College of Architecture and Planning at King Khalid University reflects the Kingdom's strategic focus on aligning higher education with national development goals and addressing the need for qualified professionals in the fields of architecture and urban planning, particularly in the southern and southwestern regions of Saudi Arabia. Architecture and planning are critical fields that combine science, design, and technology to create sustainable environments that serve society's needs and support the Kingdom's Vision 2030.

The College commenced its activities in the academic year 1445/1446 H with an initial intake of 158 students in the Department of Architecture. Over time, the College decided to expand its academic offerings to include specialized departments that cater to various aspects of architecture and urban planning. Recently, new programs were introduced to further enhance the College's ability to contribute to the nation's architectural and planning needs, producing highly skilled graduates who meet the demands of the evolving labor market. Today, the College continues to evolve, maintaining a commitment to quality education, innovative research, and community engagement, in alignment with national and international standards of academic excellence.

Vision

An advanced and specialized College of Architecture and Planning that contributes to sustainable development and the built environment locally and internationally.

Mission

Providing high-quality and accredited educational programs in the fields of architecture and planning to prepare students to be active contributors across the nation. The college also provides services and support in specialized applied research, advisory services that enhance national and international community cooperation and partnerships with high-quality standards by using the latest educational, administrative, and technical methods.

Goals

1. Conducting partnerships with international institutes to enhance teaching, research, and accreditations.
2. Providing advanced accredited academic programs according to the highest standards.
3. Enhancing students' competencies.
4. Motivating community services and applied research projects to contribute to local and national developments.
5. Enhancing the administrative, technical, and institutional performance.
6. Encouraging local, national, and international partnerships that support the College mission.

Mapping of University and College Mission

University and College Mission Mapping					
University Mission Keywords		High-quality Education	Scientific research	Community services	Knowledge techniques
College Mission Keywords	Academic Excellence	√			
	Scientific Research		√		
	Serve the Community			√	
	Adequate teaching-learning resources				√

The Dean, College of Architecture and Planning

The Dean of the College of Architecture and Planning will provide strategic direction, academic leadership, and administrative oversight to achieve the highest standards in architectural education and research. Reporting to the Vice President of Academic and Educational Affairs, the Dean will foster innovative approaches to program development and professional training, while increasing research output and securing funding support. The Dean will ensure sustainable growth and competitiveness, expand interdisciplinary research programs, and work collaboratively with academic, industry, and public sector partners to elevate the College's national and international stature.

Committed to the scholarly life of the faculty and to equity, excellence, and diversity, the Dean will play a key role in achieving the College's objectives. The Dean's responsibilities include:

- Stimulating and supporting excellence and integrity in teaching, learning, and research, while nurturing an environment that fosters innovation among faculty, staff, and students.
- Leading the academic planning process by initiating discussions, defining priorities, and articulating the College's vision.
- Supervising and promoting activities designed to improve teaching methods within the College, ensuring that state-of-the-art teaching practices are implemented.
- Providing leadership in the development of research activities, leveraging faculty expertise and resources in accordance with the University's research strategy.

- Playing an essential role in securing funding through government, industry, and other sources to support the College, while collaborating with external stakeholders to enhance the research profile and improve infrastructure.
- Ensuring effective communication and engagement with students, faculty, and staff.
- Overseeing the organization and assignment of faculty responsibilities, ensuring effective management, commitment to faculty development, and adherence to personnel policies.
- Ensuring recruitment processes are efficient and attract top-caliber faculty and staff, with a focus on equity, diversity, and University policy.
- Participating in the development of the College's strategy and policies.
- Supervising and overseeing all academic, curricular, co-curricular, research, and community service activities within the College.

Vice Dean for Academic Affairs

The Vice Dean for Academic Affairs is the appointed administrative officer responsible for the effective and efficient operation of the College of Architecture and Planning within the policies, directions, and strategic plans of the university. The Vice Dean fosters a collegial work environment and supports the academic units in enhancing productivity and relevance, ensuring academic integrity and the coherence of curricula across all programs within the College.

The responsibilities of the Vice Dean include:

- Providing overall leadership, direction, advocacy, communication, coordination, and assessment for the academic unit as a whole, as well as for its departments and programs.
- Establishing and maintaining a cooperative and collegial work climate that enhances communication, trust, and productivity among faculty, administrative staff, secretarial staff, and students.
- Engaging in career counseling for faculty and staff, maintaining morale, recognizing and fostering competence, and effectively addressing issues that impact performance.
- Serving as a mediator to resolve conflicts that may arise among faculty, department chairs, staff, and students.
- Ensuring that efficient academic advising is provided to all students within their respective majors and departments.
- Overseeing an effective system for student observation and evaluation of faculty performance.

Vice Dean for Academic Development and Quality

The Vice Dean for Academic Development and Quality is responsible for overseeing and promoting a quality-integrated system that aligns with the university's mission, vision, and objectives. This role involves fostering a culture of quality and coordinating with departments and programs to ensure their adherence to quality principles.

The Vice Dean's typical duties include:

- Providing leadership for the College's quality assurance strategy, ensuring it aligns with the university's mission and vision.
- Inspiring a culture of quality throughout the College.
- Contributing to the achievement of College objectives related to quality and academic accreditation.
- Collaborating with teams to develop and refine KPIs at both the college and program levels.
- Supporting all College units in achieving high-quality outcomes in their academic and administrative activities.
- Reviewing progress and evaluating the performance of quality and development units in academic and administrative areas.
- Contributing to the development of strategies for performance evaluation and quality assurance.
- Reviewing quality standards to ensure continuous improvement across all levels of the College.
- Presenting proposals and offering consultation regarding strategies and priorities for quality enhancement.
- Forming committees and working groups to manage quality assurance efforts.

Consultants and External Reviewers

Consultants and External Reviewers/Experts are engaged in some subject areas to complement the staff in the deanship of academic quality and development. Experts may have experience in the field of design, implementation, and review of quality assurance systems. Others may have broad experience in learning outcomes assessment, KPIs, deployment, and analysis of surveys and evaluations, strategic and operational planning, performance evaluations, environmental scanning and reporting, and assessment of non-academic units. Consultants are usually hired on an annual basis, as and when required.

The Strategic Themes of the College of Architecture and Planning

Strategic Themes of the College of Architecture and Planning are:

- Academic Excellence
- Support innovative research
- Interaction with industries and communities
- Development of professional skills and ethics
- Collaboration and benchmarking
- Accreditation and certification

Tasks and Responsibilities of Development and Quality Unit

Implementation of Quality Assurance

1. Spreading the culture of quality in the college by organizing training and awareness workshops.
2. Assist in the functioning of External Advisory Boards.
3. Review of quality documents such as course reports, course specifications, annual program reports etc.
4. Prepare annual program reports.
5. Support the Deanship of Academic Development and Quality in articulating the quality culture in different programs.

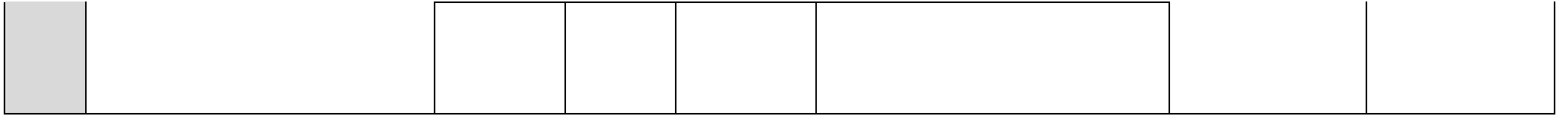
Accreditation

6. Apply the principles of quality assurance based on the standards of International/National Accreditation norms.
7. Prepare and submit applications for International/National Accreditations.
8. Ensure fulfillment of the requirements for the accreditation of programs.
9. Follow up pre and post accreditation communications with the Deanship of Quality.

NQF Domains and Mapping Between NAAB Student Performance Criteria (SPC) and NCAAA Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

ABET SO#	NAAB SO Statement	NQF Domain	Mapped NCAAA PLO #	Mapped NCAAA OLD PLOs	Mapped NCAAA PLO Statement	Teaching Strategy	Assessment Method
1	Apply architectural theories, principles, and concepts to design solutions, addressing a variety of cultural, environmental, and contextual challenges within the field of architecture.	S	s1	b1	Apply integrated theories, principles, and concepts in various contexts, related to a discipline, profession, or field of work	Lecture Tutorials Practical (lab)	Assignment Exams
2	Analyze and solve complex architectural design problems, considering contextual, environmental, and technical factors to develop innovative architectural solutions.	S	s2	b3	Solve problems in various complex contexts in one or more disciplines or fields of work	Tutorials Lectures Group Discussion Lectures Group Tasks Project	Quizzes Assignments Exams Models Project Reports Assignments
	Demonstrate critical thinking and creativity in architectural design, formulating solutions that address contemporary societal, environmental, and technological challenges.	S	s3	b5	Use critical thinking and develop creative solutions to current issues and problems, in various complex contexts, in a discipline, profession or field of work		
3	Communicate architectural concepts effectively to a wide range of audiences through visual, oral, and written formats, demonstrating a clear understanding of design and technical knowledge.	S	S6	d1 and d2	Communicate effectively to demonstrate theoretical knowledge comprehension and specialized transfer of knowledge, skills, and complex ideas to a variety of audiences	Demonstration Presentations	Seminars Presentations Viva Voce
4	Uphold ethical standards in architectural practice, demonstrating responsibility in design choices and a commitment to societal and professional values.	V	v1	c3	Demonstrate commitment to professional and academic values, standards, and ethical codes of conduct, and represent responsible	Lecture Demonstration Field visits Discussions Case Studies	Project Report Posters Models Assignments

ABET SO#	ABET SO Statement	NQF Domain	Mapped NCAAA PLO #	Mapped NCAAA OLD PLOs	Mapped NCAAA PLO Statement	Teaching Strategy	Assessment Method
5	Demonstrate self-assessment and continuous professional development, identifying areas for improvement and making informed decisions to enhance architectural skills and knowledge. Lead and collaborate effectively in interdisciplinary teams, coordinating with other professionals to plan, design, and evaluate architectural projects.	V	v2	c2	Effectively plan for and achieve academic and/or professional self-development, assess own learning and performance, and autonomously make decisions regarding self-development and/or tasks based on convincing evidence	Group tasks Laboratory Experiments Audio-Video Presentations	Senior Design project Summer Training Report Practical Work
		V	v3	c1	Collaborate responsibly and constructively on leading diverse teams to perform a wide range of tasks while playing a major role in planning and evaluating joint work		
	Execute complex design and construction tasks in architectural practice, applying technical knowledge and skills to develop and implement architectural projects. Utilize digital tools and advanced technologies to support architectural design, research, and project development, effectively analyzing and visualizing complex data.				Carry out various complex practical tasks and procedures related to a discipline, professional practice, or field of work		
		S	S5	b2			
		S	s7	b4	Select, use, and adapt various standard and specialized digital technological and ICT tools and applications to process and analyze data and information to support and enhance research and/or projects		
7	Demonstrate an integrated body of knowledge in architectural theory, design, and technology, including advanced comprehension of architectural systems and concepts. Demonstrate in-depth knowledge of architectural processes, materials, construction techniques, and terminology relevant to the practice of architecture.	K	k1	a1	Broad in-depth integrated body of knowledge and comprehension of the underlying theories, principles, and concepts in architecture and planning and related discipline	Lectures Demonstration Tutorials	Exams Quiz
		K	k2	a2	In-depth knowledge and comprehension of processes, materials, techniques, practices,		

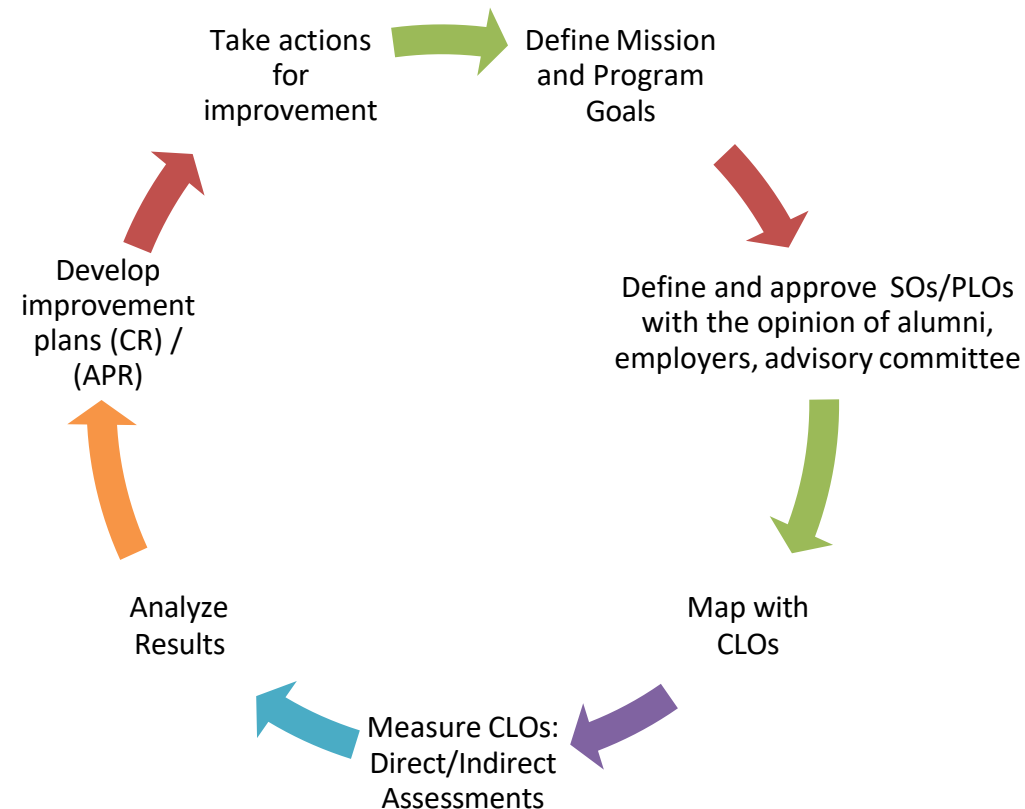


	Demonstrate specialized knowledge and understanding of contemporary architectural developments, including innovations in materials, sustainability, and construction technologies.	K	k3	a1	conventions, and/or terminology in architecture and planning A broad range of specialized knowledge and understanding informed by current developments in Architecture and planning, profession, and related discipline		
--	Apply research methodologies and inquiry techniques to advance architectural knowledge, inform design decisions, and contribute to the broader field of architecture.	K	k4	c4	Knowledge and comprehension of research and inquiry methodologies		
--	Utilize critical thinking and creative design strategies to address complex architectural challenges, incorporating diverse cultural, environmental, and technological considerations into innovative solutions.	S	s3	c1	Use critical thinking and develop creative solutions to current issues and problems, in various complex contexts, in a discipline, profession or field of work		

K Knowledge and Understanding; S Skills; V Values, Autonomy and Responsibility

Student Outcomes (SOs) / Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) Assessment

College faculty and staff work together to teach students how to think critically, communicate clearly and improve their lives and communities through the attainment of their educational goals. Student Outcomes (SOs) / Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) Assessment is a central element in the overall quality of teaching. The above figure shows the process of development and assessment of the learning outcomes.



The measurement cycle of the learning outcomes is at least once in the duration of one cycle of the postgraduate programs and twice in the duration of the undergraduate programs. However, the assessment of the learning outcomes once in an academic year is recommended as good practice.

Glossary

In any discussion about quality assurance in higher education it is useful to define the terms and phrases that will be used. The following definitions are the commonly accepted ones and should be a useful point of reference for the manual.

Accreditation: Accreditation in higher education is defined as a collegial process based on self- and peer assessment for public accountability and improvement of academic quality. Peers assess the quality of an institution or academic program and assist the faculty and staff, leading to quality enhancement.

Key Performance Indicator (KPI): A key performance indicator (KPI) is a metric used to evaluate the success of an institution or one of its units in a particular activity in which it engages.

Quality: In higher education, this is an ongoing process ensuring the delivery of agreed standards. These agreed standards should ensure that every educational institution where quality is assured has the potential to achieve a high level of quality.

Quality Assessment: The process of evaluating the quality of educational experience in institutions, in particular, the quality of student learning.

Quality Assurance: The means by which an institution can guarantee with confidence and certainty that the standards and quality of its educational mission and vision are being achieved and enhanced.

Quality Culture: The creation of a high level of internal institutional quality assessment mechanisms and the ongoing

implementation of the results. Quality culture can be seen as the ability of the institution and program to develop quality assurance implicitly in the day-to-day work and marks a shift from periodic assessment to embedded quality assurance.

Quality Improvement: The process of positively changing activities to provide for a continuous improvement in the quality of institutional provision.

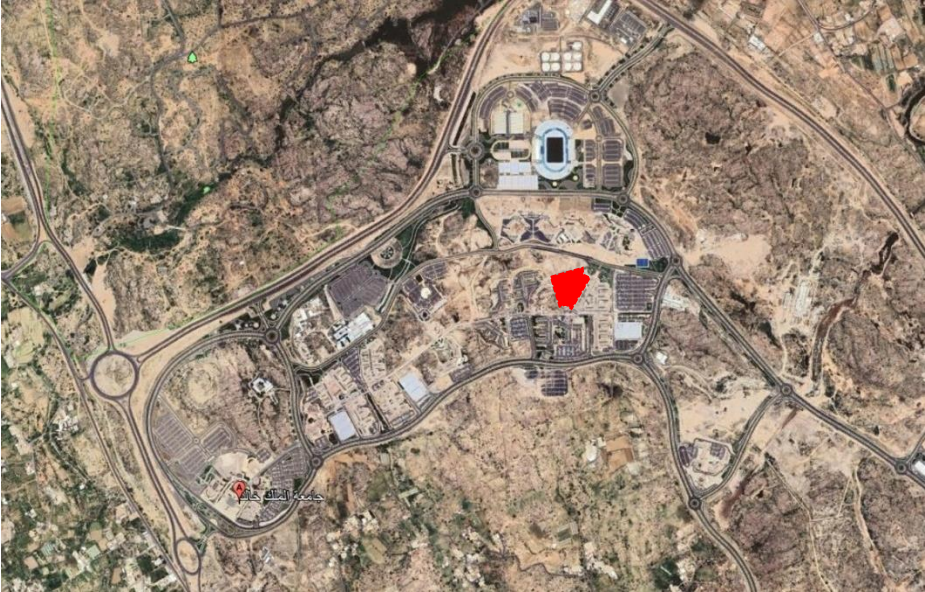
Standards These describe levels of attainment against which performance may be measured. Attainment of a standard usually implies a measure of fitness for a defined purpose.

References

The Quality Assurance Manual of College of Architecture and Planning has been prepared as per requirements and standards of NCAAA, NAAB, and NQF. The following references have been used.

- Vision 2030, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
- National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education in Saudi Arabia, 2022
- NCAAA Forms 2022
- College of Architecture and Planning, KKU Strategic Plan.
- Handbook, College of Architecture and Planning, KKU, 2022.
- Quality Assurance Manual, King Khalid University.

College of Architecture and Planning Map



King Khalid University Campus
الحرم الجامعي



College of Architecture and Planning Building
مبنى كلية العمارة والتخطيط

Contact us:

Quality Assurance Unit
College of Architecture
and Planning
PO Box 395, Abha 61421
Saudi Arabia
+966172417242