

BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

SUPPLEMENTARY INSPECTION CHANGE OF MANAGEMENT (Independent Higher Education)

INSTITUTION: Unicaf University

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7130 Larnaca
Cyprus

P.O. Box 42572
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Cyprus

HEAD OF INSTITUTION: Dr Nicos Nicolaou

ACCREDITATION STATUS: Probation Accreditation

DATE OF INSPECTION: 3 September 2020

ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION AND DATE: Continued probation accreditation, 26 November 2020

PART A – INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the institution

Unicaf University (UU/the Institution) is a privately owned, independent university that offers Bachelor's, Master's and Doctorate degrees via distance learning, as well as through a blended learning option. The administrative office of Unicaf University Federal is based in Larnaca, Cyprus, and all provision is centrally managed including the development of programmes. The Institution has teaching campuses in Malawi and Zambia, and learning centres offering enrolment advice and access to computer laboratories, internet and other student services in Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Uganda, Morocco, Nigeria and South Africa. A new campuses is being developed in Uganda and Rwanda. In addition, a new university licence has been awarded in Zimbabwe to support blended and online learning developments. BAC's accreditation and this inspection cover only the provision in Malawi and Zambia.

The vision of UU is to become a lead provider of higher education, combining e-learning with face-to-face instruction, and to contribute to relevant scientific research that serves the interests of local countries and communities across sub-Saharan Africa. The Institution aims to contribute to the educational and sustainable economic development of communities through the provision of accessible, internationally recognised education programmes that focus on developing professional and digital skills. Programmes are made accessible and affordable to low-income groups through scholarships.

The mission of UU is to assist students to become educated individuals, to achieve their academic and career goals, and to assume responsible roles in a changing world of international co-operation and interdependence.

Unicaf University is owned by Unicaf, with investment from the Commonwealth Development Corporation (CDC) Group, which is the United Kingdom (UK) Government's development finance institution, and from Goldman Sachs, EDEX and University Ventures in the United States of America (USA).

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Institution is supported by heads of academic, support and finance departments and the Vice-Chancellor of Unicaf University Federal. The CEO reports to the Unicaf Board of Directors. The Senate is the senior academic body and the University Council has oversight of administration and budgets across all centres. Governance and management links are clearly articulated within the organisation's structure.

The campuses in Malawi and Zambia have their own Vice-Chancellor and Pro-Vice-Chancellors, who operate in line with their local regulatory authority requirements, with oversight of standards and the administration functions provided through the administrative office of Unicaf University Federal in Cyprus. The staff at the administrative office include the Deans of Faculty, academic programme development teams, finance and administration departments, and online library management staff as well as student support services.

Unicaf was founded in 2012 as the e-learning extension of EDEX to specialise in online provision. Unicaf's university brand was established in Malawi in 2016, and in Zambia in 2017. The administrative office and the campuses work together to provide admissions services, online course access, student support services and administrative support.

Changes have been made to the senior management, with new Vice-Chancellors appointed for both the Malawi and Zambia campuses.

2. Brief description of the current provision

All UU programmes are offered online, with a blended learning option available for students enrolled on accredited programmes at Unicaf University in Malawi and Unicaf University in Zambia. The blended learning option includes face-to-face tutorials and some additional subject-based classes to support students' understanding of the module content.

In Malawi, seven undergraduate programmes are offered. These are a Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Business Administration, BA in Hospitality Management, BA in Economics and Business, and a Bachelor of Science (BSc) in Computer Science, BSc in Supply Chain Management and Logistics, BSc in Accounting and BSc in Finance. The postgraduate provision includes Master's degrees in Business Administration with seven specialisation streams including general, management information systems, oil, gas and energy management, management, health management, finance and marketing. The provision also includes Master's degrees in Education, Organisational Psychology and Public Administration.

In addition, the Institution offers Doctorate degrees. These are Doctor of Business Administration (DBA), Doctor of Education (EdD), and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Marketing Management, Information Technology (IT), Education, Business Administration, and Accounting and Finance.

Unicaf University in Zambia offers undergraduate programmes in Accounting and Finance, Hospitality Management, English Language and Literature, Law and Business Administration. Postgraduate programmes are offered in a wide range of subject areas including Business Administration, Business Administration in Management, Business Administration in Finance, Business Administration in Oil, Gas and Energy Management, Business Administration in Health Management, Business Administration in Management Information Systems, Law, Education, Educational Leadership and Management, English Language and Literature and Web Design and Development. Three Doctorates are offered in Philosophy, Business Administration and Education.

At the time of the inspection 9,821 students were enrolled, with 3,055 studying at Unicaf University in Malawi and 6,766 registered with Unicaf University in Zambia. The significant majority of students are enrolled on postgraduate programmes. The majority of students are male and students are drawn from a wide range of countries, including Nigeria, Zambia, Malawi, Kenya, Ghana, Jamaica, Botswana, South Africa and Egypt, as well as further afield in Europe, Asia, the Caribbean and South America. No students under 18 years old are accepted.

Students are enrolled on a continuous basis for all provision, and the large majority of students are in employment. The entry requirements for all programmes are published on the Institution's website and are included in the clear and accessible programme descriptors, along with the English language requirements for both undergraduate and postgraduate provision.

3. Inspection process

The inspection was conducted online over one day, by a single inspector. Meetings were held with senior managers, academic staff, and administrative and student services staff. A wide range of documentation was provided electronically and scrutinised in advance of the meeting. The Institution co-operated very positively with the inspection.

4. Background to the supplementary inspection

New appointments have been made to the posts of Vice-Chancellor for both the Unicaf University in Malawi and the Unicaf University in Zambia, following the retirement of the previous post holders. The former Deputy Vice-Chancellor has been appointed as Vice-Chancellor for Unicaf University in Malawi, with the former Vice-Chancellor appointed as the Non-Executive President Emeritus. The former Vice-Chancellor of the Unicaf University in Zambia has been appointed as its Chancellor, and a new Vice-Chancellor has been appointed.

5. Inspection history

Inspection type	Date
Full Accreditation	7, 9 & 11 October 2019

PART B – JUDGEMENTS AND EVIDENCE

The following judgements and comments are based upon evidence seen by the inspector during the inspection and from documentation provided by the institution.

1. Compliance with BAC accreditation requirements

1.1 Governance, Strategy and Financial Management (full inspection)

The numbers below refer to the standards as presented in the Independent Higher Education scheme document and main full inspection report.

1. The institution is effectively and responsibly governed

- | | | | |
|-----|--|---|---|
| 1.1 | The overall organisational structure, including the role and extent of authority of any owners, directors or governing body, is clearly defined, documented and effectively communicated to stakeholders, including governors, management, staff and students. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 1.2 | There is an identified senior committee, with decision-making authority on academic matters, in order to protect the integrity of academic freedom. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 1.3 | The link between governance and management is clearly articulated and documented. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 1.4 | Internal stakeholders develop and implement policy through appropriate structures and processes while involving external stakeholders. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 1.5 | An explicit procedure for risk assessment is implemented, producing a risk assessment statement, which is regularly reviewed and updated. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 1.6 | Effective action is taken, by the governing body and senior managers, in response to the outcomes of regular risk assessments. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 1.7 | All relationships with other educational organisations are defined formally and are fully transparent with those organisations' requirements. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA |
| 1.8 | There are clear channels of communication between the governing body, the executive, academic management, staff, including those working remotely, students and other stakeholders. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The structure of the Institution is clearly set out in the organisation chart and is supported by clear job descriptions. The roles of the senior Directors are made available to all stakeholders through both the federal and the regional university websites. The clear committee structure supports academic standards and integrity effectively. The roles of senior committees are communicated to stakeholders through the website. All committee meetings are supported by formal minutes of meetings.

The links between governance and management are articulated in the organisation chart and through committee reports. Reports on academic performance are submitted to the Board of Directors by senior management.

Policies and procedures are appropriately developed to ensure the effective management of the provision. Policies are developed based on consultation with internal and external stakeholders, including country-based advisory boards. This process ensures compliance with the regional regulatory authority requirements within which the provision is delivered.

Clear and appropriate risk assessment policies and reports are in place. The reports are reviewed by senior managers on an ongoing basis and submitted for consideration to the University Council and the Board of

Directors. Actions are identified by the senior management team, evaluated and ratified by both the University Council and the Board of Directors, and overseen by Vice-Chancellors at federal and regional level.

The relationships with partner universities and regional regulatory authorities are formally defined in memoranda of understanding and regulatory documentation that clearly articulate responsibilities for programme development, delivery and facilities.

Clear channels of communication, through the committee structure, ensure that information is regularly and effectively shared across all levels of the Institution, including the Board of Directors and the University Council. Reports are drafted at programme, faculty, departmental and senior management level, and reviewed through the committee structure. Actions and areas for development, that are approved by the Board of Directors, are communicated to the senior management team. The senior management team passes the information to staff and students through managers at a programme or departmental level.

The Institution continues to operate appropriate systems for effective governance based on a range of policies and procedures and a clear committee structure.

2. **The institution has a clear and achievable strategy**

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|-----|---|---|-----------------------------|
| 2.1 | The institution has a clear strategy for the development of its higher education provision, which is supported by appropriate implementation plans and financial management and takes into account the quality of the student experience. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 2.2 | There is provision for stakeholder input, including governors, management, staff and students, to inform the strategic direction of the institution. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 2.3 | The strategy is well communicated to all stakeholders within and outside the institution. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 2.4 | The governing body and senior management conduct a regular and systematic review of their own performance and the institution's overall performance and each are measured against strategic targets. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

A clear institutional strategy for 2018 to 2023 has been developed by the senior management and is reviewed by senior committees and the Board of Directors. The strategic plan has been developed in consultation with internal and external stakeholders and reflects the primary mission of the Institution to provide accessible higher education provision for communities across sub-Saharan Africa. Implementation plans are developed, along with clear budgets and processes for financial management overseen by the senior management team. These support the provision of good-quality online learning resources to provide a positive student learning experience.

The development of new provision is informed by local and regional priorities, in line with the mission of the Institution, regional regulatory authority requirements and local stakeholder consultation. The use of country-based advisory boards to inform strategic priorities ensures that skills and knowledge requirements appropriately inform objectives. This represents good practice. Feedback from staff and students also informs the strategic direction of the Institution. Students and staff, as well as external stakeholders from all countries with Unicaf provision, are invited to participate in a number of events, including the annual Unicaf conference, where they have an opportunity to inform the future priorities.

The strategic priorities are clearly communicated to all stakeholders through their publication on the federal and regional websites and are accessible to all interested parties.

Regular reviews of performance are conducted at programme, departmental, faculty and institutional level. The reviews are measured against key performance indicators agreed by the Board of Directors, and which

include recruitment, retention and achievement rates. These are transparently linked to the strategic targets, and the Institution's overall mission of making higher education accessible to students across Africa.

The Institution's strategy has a clear focus on the development of high-quality, accessible provision that meets the skills and knowledge needs of the communities it serves, based on consultation with its stakeholders.

3. Financial management is open, honest and effective

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|-----|--|---|-----------------------------|
| 3.1 | The institution conducts its financial matters professionally, transparently and with appropriate probity. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 3.2 | The institution's finances are subject to regular independent external audit. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

Management of financial matters lies with the administrative office of Unicaf University Federal in Cyprus. The Chief Finance Officer maintains oversight of financial management, with all major spending and budgets approved by the University Council and by the Board of Directors. Appropriate reports are produced at departmental, faculty and campus level and reviewed centrally by senior management.

Annual accounts are externally audited and reports shared with the Board of Directors and senior management.

The financial management of the Institution is supported by clear and well-documented processes and procedures.

1.2 General and Academic Management and Administration (full inspection)

The numbers below refer to the standards as presented in the Independent Higher Education scheme document and main full inspection report.

4. The institution is effectively managed

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|-----|---|---|-----------------------------|
| 4.1 | The management structure is clearly defined, documented and understood by all stakeholder groups including governors, management, staff and students. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 4.2 | There are clearly delineated responsibilities and reporting arrangements at institutional, faculty, departmental, programme and course levels. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 4.3 | There is an appropriate and effective committee structure, with appropriate reporting lines to inform management decision making. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 4.4 | Committees have clear and appropriate terms of reference and meet regularly. The meetings are accurately recorded with clear action planning. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 4.5 | The institution has formal mechanisms to monitor the information it provides internally and externally and to make any enhancements deemed necessary to ensure that it is accurate and fit-for-purpose. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The management structure is clearly defined and documented through the website, and through job descriptions and the roles and remits of committees. Appropriate information on key roles and responsibilities is published on the website and accessible to all stakeholders, including information on key committees. However, information on the terms of reference for individual committees could be made more accessible through the website to promote a broader understanding of their responsibilities and decision making.

Reporting arrangements for individual posts are articulated in the clear and detailed job descriptions and are understood by staff at all levels.

A clear committee structure is in place, with each committee's responsibilities set out in the terms of reference, which include committee membership, frequency of meetings and links to other committees. All committees have a schedule of meetings, which are formally recorded. Actions are monitored and evaluated at successive meetings as appropriate.

Information provided to staff, students and external stakeholders is regularly reviewed and updated. Where changes are made to qualifications, entry requirements, policies or procedures, the marketing and the academic teams produce updates that are reviewed at departmental and faculty level prior to being approved by the senior management. Any changes are uploaded to the website. The updates are made as needed and reflect the accreditation cycle and scheduled programme reviews.

The clearly documented responsibilities and committee structures support the management of the Institution and its regional campuses effectively.

5. The institution is administered effectively

5.1	The size of the administrative team is sufficient to ensure the effective day-to-day running of the institution.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.2	The administrative support available to the management is clearly defined, documented and understood and appropriately focused to support its activities.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.3	Administrative policies, procedures and systems are well documented and disseminated effectively across the institution.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.4	Classes are timetabled and rooms allocated appropriately for the courses offered.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.5	Data collection and collation systems are well documented, accurate and effectively disseminated.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.6	Comprehensive administrative records are organised and stored efficiently, easily accessed and used effectively.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.7	Students' records are sufficient, accurately maintained and up-to-date.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.8	Staff records are sufficient, accurately maintained and up-to-date.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.9	The institution has a robust security system and policies in place for protecting the data of its students and staff.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.10	The institution has processes, through which the institution verifies the student who registers on the programme is the same student who participates on and completes and receives the credit.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.11	There are secure and efficient procedures for the administration of examinations and other means of assessment.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.12	There are effective procedures for internal and external moderation at pre- and post-assessment stages.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.13	The institution makes student records and transcripts available to its students in a timely manner.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.14	There is a policy on the collection of and refund of students' fees which implemented effectively.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The administrative support provided both federally and at campus level supports the management of the Institution effectively. Administrative support is clearly set out in the organisation chart, and individual responsibilities are set out in detailed job descriptions and reporting lines. The administrative structure and functions are clearly understood by all staff and include student admissions, enrolment, student services and management of staff and student records.

Administrative policies and procedures are clearly documented and available to staff through an electronic central repository. They are reviewed and updated by senior managers as needed. The quality assurance department ensures that all policies are uploaded and accessible through the central repository. Staff are alerted through e-mails when policies have been updated.

The timetabling of classes, including seminars and blended learning sessions delivered in Malawi and Zambia, is centrally managed by the scheduling team in Cyprus, which maintains oversight of online and blended learning. The federal officers liaise with local administrators and academic managers to ensure timetabling fits with appropriate staff availability. Staff report that the system is clear and effective.

The data collection systems and procedures are clearly set out and the security systems are well understood and implemented to ensure the privacy and integrity of information collected. Campus staff check and forward information to the administrative office of Unicaf University Federal where all data is processed, checked and stored. The resulting information is effectively utilised in the production of programme, faculty and management reports.

Student and staff records are regularly updated. Dedicated officers are responsible for gathering student data and ensuring this is securely stored and only accessible to those with the appropriate login credentials. Checks are also undertaken when students complete their programmes to ensure that results and information are up to date and complete, and that the identity of graduating students is confirmed. The updating of staff records is informed by individual departments notifying the human resources team of any changes to the information held, including any Continuing Professional Development (CPD) undertaken. Changes are then uploaded to the central records database. The management of databases complies with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

Assessment scheduling and standards are effectively managed. The quality assurance department is responsible for the co-ordination of assessments in line with programme requirements and based on liaison with faculty staff. The quality assurance department also co-ordinates the marking of work, including second marking and further moderation to resolve any discrepancies. Assessed work is sampled to ensure that grading is supported by appropriate feedback and that standards are being maintained. External assessors are also used to sample assessed work to ensure that standards are appropriate.

Marked assessments are made available to students in a timely manner through the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), normally within two weeks of submission, in accordance with the assessment policy. Individual students can also request a record of all their grades.

A clear policy on the collection and refund of students' fees is made available to students at enrolment. Fee levels are clearly specified, along with the procedures for the payment of fees at programme and module registration. The policy also clearly sets out the circumstances under which fees may be refunded.

The clear administrative policies and procedures are accessible and appropriate to the effective management of the organisation.

6. The institution employs and continues to support appropriately qualified and experienced staff

- 6.1 There are appropriate policies and effective procedures for the recruitment and continuing employment of suitably qualified and experienced staff, which is designed to ensure the safety of the learners. Yes No

6.2	All staff are suitably qualified and experienced, understand their specific responsibilities and are effective in carrying them out.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
6.3	There are clear and appropriate job specifications for all staff.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
6.4	There are effective procedures for the induction of all staff.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
6.5	All staff are treated fairly and according to a published equality and diversity policy.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
6.6	Staff have access to an appropriate complaints and appeals procedure.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
6.7	Management monitors and reviews the performance of all staff, through a clearly documented and transparent appraisal system which includes regular classroom observations of teaching staff.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
6.8	The professional development needs of staff are identified through appraisal and other means, and measures taken to support staff to address these and gain additional qualifications, where relevant.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

Clear and appropriate policies and procedures are in place for the recruitment of suitably qualified and experienced staff. Qualifications and references are checked by the human resources staff prior to any offer of employment, and criminal records checks are conducted with local authorities to ensure the safety of students.

All staff hold suitable qualifications, and in the case of academic staff, academic qualifications are generally at postgraduate level. Subject knowledge and experience of teaching delivery are assessed to ensure teachers are able to carry out their responsibilities effectively. All staff have clear and detailed job descriptions that are produced at faculty level, setting out key duties and responsibilities, along with designated line management. In most cases, staff are required to hold a qualification above the level of the programme on which they teach, and all staff involved in doctoral delivery must hold a Doctorate.

All staff undergo a clear and effective induction at departmental level. The induction of academic staff includes the mandatory successful completion of a comprehensive online induction programme, namely the Tutor Orientation Course (TOC), which includes modules on how to use the online software. New information on strategies for supporting students with learning difficulties and disabilities has recently been added, which assists staff to understand a range of common learning support needs and to make reasonable adjustments and provide tailored support. This represents good practice.

The policy on equality and diversity is appropriate and available to all staff through the VLE, along with a clear complaints procedure. Staff confirmed that they are made aware of the policies to avoid any form of discrimination and that they are able to raise a formal complaint without prejudice, should the need arise.

Appraisal systems enable the Institution to monitor the performance of all staff. A paper-based appraisal system has been introduced for all staff and can be customised to the needs of departments and to meet the requirements of the regional regulatory authorities. The appraisal of teaching staff includes teaching observations. An online appraisal system is being introduced and will be managed through the human resources department. This will allow for more central oversight of outcomes and professional development needs.

The clear appraisal system helps identify the CPD development needs of individual staff, who are provided with access to appropriate training or qualifications, co-ordinated through the federal administrative office of Unicaf University Federal in Cyprus. However, there is limited sharing of outcomes across the whole Institution to better inform a broader staff development programme.

The effective policies and procedures for the recruitment of staff ensure that all appropriate background checks are made and that all staff have suitable experience and qualifications.

7. Academic management is effective

7.1	There are appropriate procedures for the proposal, design and validation of programmes of study, which take account of the mission of the institution.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
7.2	Intended learning outcomes for all programmes are clearly articulated, understood by students and are publicly available.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
7.3	There are regularly scheduled and recorded meetings of academic staff where academic programmes are reviewed.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
7.4	There is an appropriate policy and effective procedures for the acquisition of academic resources to support programmes.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
7.5	Commissioning of course materials is managed effectively and materials and the budget are checked to ensure standardisation and consistency across the provision.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
7.6	Students are encouraged to take an active role in the development of the academic provision to ensure student-centered learning.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

The Institution has clear procedures for the development of new programmes. A range of stakeholders are involved in identifying potential subjects and sectors for new provision. These include local business representatives and external academics who are members of the advisory boards in both Malawi and Zambia, students and the regulatory authorities. The validation process includes approval and accreditation by local higher education regulatory authorities.

Clear programme descriptions, including learning outcomes, are published on the federal and Malawi and Zambia websites, and are accessible to all relevant stakeholders. More detailed module information is available to students and staff through the VLE and includes details of assessments and marking schemes.

The Institution operates a regular schedule of module reviews and ensures that all programmes are updated as appropriate. On completion of a full cycle of delivery, every programme is formally reviewed by a committee that includes teaching staff, industry professionals, external academics and students. All meetings are clearly recorded.

The provision of resources and appropriate academic materials forms part of the programme development and review process. Staff can also request additional resources through a clear resource acquisitions procedure, based on their own research and on feedback from students.

Budgets for the development of course materials and resources are approved by senior managers and reflect the requirements of programme teams. Course materials are centrally developed by the programme teams based at the administrative office of Unicaf University Federal in Cyprus to ensure materials are developed to a consistent standard across all provision and for all locations.

Students are encouraged to provide feedback formally through end-of-module questionnaires, as well as through their students' union and, less formally, through feedback to tutors and other staff. Feedback is reviewed by the programme teams and senior management and used to inform module reviews and programme development as part of student-centered learning.

Academic management is effective and based on clear policies and procedures, including the regular review of programmes and input from a range of stakeholders.

8. The institution takes reasonable care to recruit and enrol suitable students for its courses

8.1	Entry requirements for each programme are set at an appropriate level and are clearly stated in the programme descriptions seen by prospective students.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
8.2	Students are informed as to the necessary language requirements for entry on to programmes.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
8.3	A formal application process ensures that students meet the entry requirements and any claimed qualifications are verified.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
8.4	All students' application enquiries are responded to promptly and appropriately.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
8.5	Prospective students are properly briefed on the nature and requirements of the programme(s) in which they are interested and provided with advice on choosing their programme.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
8.6	Students receive a proper initial assessment, which includes language ability, to confirm their capability to complete the programmes on which they are enrolling.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
8.7	The institution makes it clear to applicants that they are responsible for checking that they have the skills and knowledge required to study on the chosen course.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
8.8	The institution has a clear policy on the accreditation of prior learning and prior experiential learning, which is brought to the attention of prospective students.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA
8.9	Any recruitment agents are properly selected, briefed, monitored and evaluated.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> NA

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

Entry requirements for all programmes are clearly set out on the UU website, alongside the accessible programme descriptors. In addition, prospective students are able to contact student advisors either online or in person to gain additional information.

The English language proficiency requirements for undergraduate and postgraduate programmes are clearly specified on the website and also confirmed under the admissions criteria. Applicants are required to provide evidence of their language skills through an International English Language Testing System (IELTS) certificate or a high school certificate in the event that their secondary education was taught in English. Where students do not have any certification, they are able to take an English language test.

Applicants can apply for their chosen programme using the clear online application system. All applications are scrutinised by admissions officers who ensure that applications meet the published entry requirements. They also verify previous qualifications submitted in support of the application with the awarding institutions. Where applicants require additional information or guidance, they can approach trained student advisors either for face-to-face advice and guidance through the Malawi and Zambia campuses, or online to discuss their options. Student advisors and enrolment advisors are able to help students with making an application and guiding them through the whole process. The accessible personal advice and guidance that inform applicants' decisions represent good practice.

Application enquiries are responded to very promptly. Student enrolment officers are available to provide guidance on course content and entry requirements, as well as clarifying criteria and procedures for applying for scholarships and methods for the payment of fees. Language skills are also assessed through the interview process and through written personal statements that form part of the application process.

The admissions process and programme descriptors, along with the advice available to individual prospective students, ensure effectively that the skills and knowledge requirements of programmes are transparent. Advisors also make clear to students that they must assure themselves that they have the skills

and knowledge to enable them to engage with their chosen programme as part of the admissions procedure.

The accreditation of prior learning policy is clear and made available to prospective students. Students may refer to prior experiential learning as part of the applications process, as well as to previous certificated learning. Where a student does not meet the experience requirements, for example in not having sufficient workplace experience for study at Master's level at the point of enquiry, enrolment advisors contact the applicant at a later point to check whether they have gained the required experience to meet the entry requirements.

Recruitment agents are provided with clear information about the programmes, entry requirements and the online admissions process, and their performance is monitored by central admissions staff. All applicants are then directed to talk to enrolment advisors to ensure that they fully understand the programme and its requirements.

The admissions process is clear and well managed and ensures that students are enrolled onto appropriate programmes, based on their existing qualifications and skills and career aspirations.

9. The institution encourages and supports its staff to undertake research and other forms of scholarship and to engage in other professional activities

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|-----|--|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 9.1 | The institution encourages academic staff to undertake research in relevant fields and to publish their findings. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> NA |
| 9.2 | Academic staff are encouraged to engage in research and/or scholarship which informs their teaching. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> NA |
| 9.3 | There is a fair and transparent procedure for staff to seek financial support for their research and other professional development activities. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> NA |
| 9.4 | The institution provides time for staff to meet regularly to share and discuss current research activities and, if appropriate, invites external speakers. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> NA |

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met NA

Comments

Staff are encouraged to undertake research and, where staff do not hold qualifications at Doctorate level, opportunities for further study are offered. Staff are also encouraged to participate in research, training and conferences that inform their teaching practice. Staff development activities help support the sharing of good pedagogical practices.

Good pedagogical practices are shared through the VLE and through staff development activities. Staff are also encouraged to publish their own research in online journals

Staff can apply for financial support for this research and training activity. A clear formal application process is in place to enable staff to seek financial support to gain additional qualifications to support their teaching and research, and to attend conferences and professional development activities. A new Research Officer role has been established to enhance information for staff on local and international research projects, including developing bids for engagement and funding for broader European Union research opportunities.

Guest lectures are organised on both the Malawi and Zambia campuses. These are open to staff, students and the public. Staff are able to share their own research and participate in discussions using the Institution's VLE and online communication systems. Staff can engage in discussions around current research. However, no research groups or formal forums are in place to enable staff with common research interests to share information and to support collaboration, or to promote peer review of individual research.

10. Publicity material, both printed and electronic, gives a comprehensive, up-to-date and accurate description of the institution and its curriculum

10.1	Text and images provide an accurate depiction of the institution's location, premises, facilities and the range and nature of resources and services offered.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
10.2	Information on the programmes available, their assessment and progression is comprehensive, accurate, readily accessible and up-to-date.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
10.3	There are effective procedures to update information on a regular basis to ensure its relevance and accuracy.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
10.4	The information provided ensures students are well informed of the status of the qualifications offered, including the awarding body and level of award.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
10.5	Students are informed of the full cost of all programmes, including costs of assessments, activities and any required materials.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

This standard is judged to be:

Met Partially Met Not Met

Comments

Images and information published about Unicaf University and its campuses on its website are clear and accurate. Information includes details of programmes offered, fees and scholarships, as well as the online learning resources and modes of study. The location of campuses is clear, along with the online facilities and blended learning support available to students.

The programme information includes core modules to be studied each year and learning outcomes. There is also a good range of information about the curriculum content and module credits. Information on assessment requirements is included in programme and module handbooks, which are published on the VLE. All programme information is updated at least once a year and major updates are informed by the accreditation and review cycle of the programmes.

The accuracy and completeness of information are checked by the programme and faculty teams, with changes approved at programme, faculty and senior management level prior to gaining final authorisation by the Vice-Chancellor of Unicaf University Federal in Cyprus. The status of all provision is clear and accurate, including the accreditation of programmes offered in Malawi and Zambia and awarding body information. Qualification levels are included in the title of every programme.

Clear information on the costs of all provision is published on the website. Student advisors and enrolment officers are available to provide additional information and explanation to students about any associated costs. This is carried out through face-to-face meetings, online correspondence or telephone meetings.

Information about the Institution, campuses and programmes is clear and regularly updated to ensure its continuing accuracy.

1.3 Compliance Declaration

Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated.

Yes No

PART C – SUMMARY OF ACTION POINTS

ACTIONS REQUIRED

None

High

Medium

Low

RECOMMENDED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT *(to be reviewed at the next inspection)*

It is recommended that the federal committee diagram is supported by information about the terms of reference of individual committees to enhance the transparency of the decision-making processes.

It is recommended that the outcomes of performance review and appraisal systems are shared and used to inform professional development themes, as well as individual needs.

The Institution should continue to develop systems for sharing research outcomes, including research forums to promote a research culture and collaborative initiatives.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS – FURTHER COMMENTS, IF APPLICABLE
