Call for Application

Training on Internal Quality Assurance (TrainIQA)

in the SADC Region 2023-2024

Deadline: November 4th 2022

The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), the German Rectors' Conference (HRK), the Southern African Regional Universities Association (SARUA) and the University of Potsdam (UP) are jointly offering the DIES Course "**Training on Internal Quality Assurance – TrainIQA**" in the SADC region.

TrainIQA is part of the DIES programme (Dialogue on Innovative Higher Education Strategies) which aims at strengthening higher education management structures in developing countries. DIES is jointly coordinated by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) and supported by funds of the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

TrainIQA Course Background and Objectives

Higher education systems in Southern Africa are characterized by dynamic changes in the last years. These changes relate in particular to an increasing demand for educational services and increasing student enrolment rates. Such developments as well as quickly changing environments and disruptions are a major challenge for maintaining quality in higher education. Effective internal and external quality assurance (QA) systems are needed in order to assure and develop the quality of higher education and to create trust and transparency for stakeholders. In this light, Southern African countries are harmonizing their higher education systems in line with continental and regional frameworks such as the Pan-African Quality Assurance and Accreditation Framework (PAQAF) or the Southern African Development Community Qualifications Framework (SADCQF). In the SADC integration process, regional QA plays a crucial role concerning the harmonization of higher education, especially with regards to the comparability of student performance and degrees, the promotion of recognition and the mobility of students and academics between different SADC countries and the

regional collaboration in educational delivery and cross-border education systems. Another aim of strengthening QA systems in the SADC region is to promote international competitiveness of Southern Africa's higher education systems.

Against this background, the **TrainIQA** course not only strengthens national capacities in the field of QA, it also promotes exchange and networking among higher education institutions (HEIs) and various stakeholders. At the same time, the course offers the opportunity for exchange and dialogue both within the SADC region and between European and African partners and institutions. More specifically, TrainIQA aims at professionalising quality managers at HEIs (see course target group below) who will have a multiplier effect by contributing to further capacity development in the field of internal quality assurance (IQA) at their home institutions as well as within their countries.

Content and Methodology of the Training

TrainIQA combines leadership and management topics in a holistic way in order to strengthen the structural development of higher education institutions (HEI) and to support the trainees in their endeavour to build up systematic QA structures. The course consists of five modules. Each module has accompanying self-study materials in the form of a course textbook[1] and online materials. The topics of the modules are:

Module 1:   Designing Effective Quality Management Systems

Module 2:   Tools and Procedures for Quality Assurance

Module 3:   Quality Assurance of Teaching and Learning

Module 4:   Information Management

Module 5:   Quality Management and its Linkages to Higher Education Management

TrainIQA is delivered in a **blended-learning** format. All topics of the different modules will be discussed during three inter-connected workshops, which shall be held in the SADC region and Germany.[2] Module 4 on data-based information management is mainly offered online.

The training will be hands-on with a strong practical focus. The workshops will include mixed and interactive methods as well as presentations by experts, peer-learning among the participants, case studies and individual feedback and mentoring.

The course teaching concept is based on a team-teaching approach. The trainer teams will consist of African and European QA experts. Further, the course is largely based on the exchange and presentation of personal

---

[1] The course material was developed jointly by the University of Duisburg-Essen and the University of Potsdam.

[2] The organisers reserve the right to make changes to the venue or opt for a virtual implementation on short notice.

experiences in QA between the participants. Peer-learning in small working groups and individual feedback provided by mentors are therefore important didactical elements of the training.

All training activities are supported via an online learning platform, which will provide the infrastructure for the online phases of the training; enable communication with the trainer team and enhance the exchange between the participants.

After completion of the course, the participants are expected to be able to…

- understand theoretical concepts of quality, QA and quality enhancement and have the ability to evaluate them according to the different visions and missions of HEIs,

- design and carry out questionnaires and evaluations scientifically and to control the related processes,

- apply appropriate techniques and scientific methods to reflect upon the results of quality assurance and to establish a quality loop with follow-up-processes on all levels of a HEI,

- deal with the requirements of quality assurance of study programmes and their revision, including the linkage to external quality assurance,

- recognise cross connections between quality development, staff development and organisational development,

- formulate ideas about how quality culture can be developed at the institutional level,

- apply the basic principles of project management and structure a project in the form of a project action plan.

Institutional Change Projects

All participants of the training are expected to develop and implement an institutional change project during the training in order to put theory into practice with the help of a project action plan. The PAP is a project management tool and helps in planning and documenting the projects. An introduction to project management and tools such as the PAP will be an integrative part of the training starting in the initial online-phase. The projects should be aligned with the "bigger picture" of the institution (in line with goals, mission, vision etc.). During the entire timeframe of the training, participants receive coaching and mentoring by experts from Africa and Europe. The trainees' superiors, e.g. the Vice-Presidents (VPs) / Deputy Vice Chancellors (DVCs) in charge of QA are expected to support their staff in carrying out their projects.

Applicants must hand in a draft project proposal, which they are asked to describe according to a template (see Annex 1). The topics of the projects can vary, as long as they are connected to the field of quality assurance and QA systems at the own institution. Projects can be proposed jointly by two or more universities (i.e. networks/benchmarking etc.). The projects should be realistically planned and be implemented within the period of the training (approx. 1 year) based on defined milestones to be reached until the final conference.

Possible Project Topics in the Area of QA for Teaching and Learning

QA-System	Tools and Procedures	Study Programme and Curriculum Design/Revision
- Development of internal QA policy guidelines - Setting up a QA-Unit - Scheme for staff development - Developing a QA handbook - Developing a mission statement for teaching & learning	- Self-evaluation report for internal/external evaluation (e.g. programme or institutional accreditation) - Evaluation of teaching and learning on different levels - Interrelation between data collection and QA - Designing & conducting (tracer) studies - Setting up information systems	- Development of a guideline for teaching - Definition of learning outcomes and assessment scheme - Development of a handbook for teaching and learning

Involvement of University Leadership in Charge of QA

In order to establish sustainable and successful QA structures, both strong support and backup by institutional decision-makers as well as well-established linkages between the strategic and operational levels are needed. Therefore, the training will have formats to include the senior management (VPs / DVCs in charge of QA of the participating institutions) at different points in time. The Opening Conference marks the beginning of the institutional change projects, which will be implemented in the frame of **TrainIQA**. The participants will have the opportunity to present and discuss their proposed institutional change projects with the institutional decision makers on the last day of the workshop. Further, higher education leaders will have a platform for getting up to date on the latest developments in teaching and learning as well as quality assurance in the region and internationally.
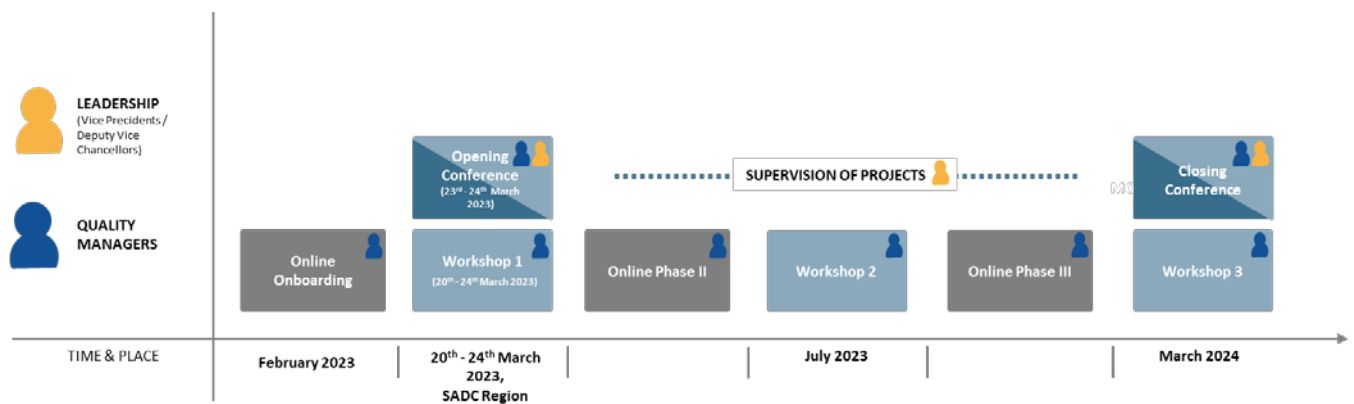
A **Closing Conference** will mark the end of the training with the presentation of the institutional projects and a discussion of the lessons learned, both among the trainees as well as with the leadership representatives who attended the kick-off event. Further ample time will be given to discuss current trends and directions of QA and strategic management and to explore possibilities to support regional exchange and cooperation.

Activities and Time Schedule

The training will start in **February 2023** with the **online onboarding** including the introduction of the trainer team and participants as well as the first learning activities. **Workshop I will take place from 20ᵗʰ of March until 24ᵗʰ of March 2023 presumably in the SADC region.**[3] Senior Management is asked to block **23ʳᵈ and 24ᵗʰ of March 2023** for the Opening Conference.

The programme will be sent out with ample time beforehand and show compulsory as well as optional sessions for senior management.

Workshop II will take place in July 2023. In between Workshop I and Workshop II and between Workshop II and Workshop III there will be an online phase. **Workshop III and the Final Conference will take place in March 2024.**

Target Group

TrainIQA will be open to up to 30 participants who are expected to attend all three parts of the training including the online phases and who should meet the following criteria:

- They should be current or designated quality managers or senior managers responsible for QA with proven knowledge and experience.
  (In case no such positions exist yet, universities can appoint a person and state this in the application).

- They should be in office for a minimum of 3 years / or should have at least 3 years experience in QA.

- They should hold at least a Bachelor's degree.

- They need to have fluent English skills, both written and spoken.

- They should be employed on long-term contracts that go beyond the project ending in March 2024.

---

[3] The organisers reserve the right to make changes to the venue or opt for a virtual implementation on short notice.

- They should preferably have at least 5 years until retirement.
- They have to be available to attend all parts of the course.

Eligible Countries, Institutions and Participants – Who Can Apply?

Higher Education Institutions from the SADC region (Angola, Botswana, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe) are eligible to apply.

Universities, which have already taken part in SADC-QA trainings before need to specifically outline the additional benefit they expect from the TrainIQA course in the commitment letter.

As the five modules of the **TrainIQA** are interconnected, participants need to confirm by statements of their institution's leadership that they will participate in all parts of the training in the application (see Annex 2, letter of commitment).

The university leadership in charge of QA should further confirm their attendance at the Opening Conference on 23rd and 24th of March 2023) and the Closing Conference (March 2024).

Both applicants and leadership should block the already set dates for Workshop I in 2023. Possible changes due to the current Covid-19 crisis will be communicated in due time.

Funding of the Training

TrainIQA is supported through funds of the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

The following expenses will be covered for financially eligible countries:

- International travel costs for training participants: flight to and from Germany and ground travel in Germany.
- Regional travel costs for training participants & leadership representatives: flight to and from the regional workshop venues and ground travel in the country.
- Accommodation, breakfast, catering and some joint meals during all contact phases in Germany and SADC region, including the opening and closing conference visits for VPs and DVCs (according to DAAD regulations).
- Training materials
- Emergency health insurance during the contact phase in Germany (according to DAAD regulations).

Co-funding from the participating universities:

- National transportation costs, i.e. from the participants' place of residence to the airport and back in case those workshops are carried out outside the home country.

Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development

- National transportation costs, i.e. from the participants' place of residence <u>to the course venue and back</u> in case those workshops are carried out <u>in the participants' home country</u>.
- Visa costs and such as airport taxes, if applicable.

Please note that the organisers <u>do not pay out any per diems</u> in addition to the expenses which are already covered (breakfast, lunch and coffee breaks and joint dinners in the programme).

Course Fees

Thanks to the financial support of the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and support by the SADC-QA Partners, only a contribution of **600 Euro** will be raised. Applicants[4] are eligible for special financial support upon justification and can apply for a reduction of the course fees. Respective applicants are requested to submit an additional letter signed by the institution's leadership, which indicates the need for financial support. Please find the possibilities for financial support for selected SADC countries in the table below.

Country Band	Eligible SADC Countries	Possible financial support
Band 3	Botswana, Mauritius, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa	-
Band 2	Angola, Comoros, Eswatini, Lesotho, Tanzania, Zimbabwe	up to 200€ course fees can be deducted
Band 1	Democratic Republic of Congo, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia	up to 400€ course fees can be deducted

The procedure for transferring the course fees will be communicated to the selected participants after the selection process.

Training Coordination

The University of Potsdam functions as the academic coordinator of the course and hosts the SADC-QA Secretariat. The Centre for Quality Development of the University of Potsdam has in-depth experience in the field of IQA of teaching and learning, international cooperation and capacity building in the area of higher education management since 2011.

---

[4] Only for applicants from the following countries (Angola, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe). The selection of countries is based on a classification of countries following the method used by the World Bank, which identifies four country bands according to the Gross National Income per Capita. Countries within Band 1 and 2 are eligible to apply for special financial support.

Application and Selection Procedure

Please fill in your application online until **November 4th 2022**. You need to complete the following steps:

1. Register at https://sadc-qa.org/s/registr/en.html with your name and e-mail

2. You will then receive an e-mail with the link to the application form and a password

3. Follow the link in the e-mail and input your e-mail address and password to access the form and fill out the survey.

4. Follow the survey

5. Please make sure you hand in a full application including annexes (see below, what a full application includes)

6. When the application is final, click on "hand in application" on the last page.

You can access your online application multiple times and continue filling in the missing data. Once you have clicked on **"hand in application"**, the application is perceived to be final and you will not be able to access it anymore. Please make sure to save all your application data, especially the information about your planned institutional change project, in a separate file. Should you have clicked by mistake, please contact us.

Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact the SADC-QA Secretariat at University of Potsdam via **sadc-qa@uni-potsdam.de**.

In order to be considered for selection you need to hand in a full application that consists of:

1. **Filled out online application (see contents in Annex 1)** which includes data on the candidate, his/her motivation, the proposed project and the contact data of the senior management who will attend the Leadership Summit and the Opening Conference.

2. **Uploaded letter of commitment (as PDF)** signed by the institution's leadership (see example letter in Annex 2), including:

   - a statement that the leadership supports the project and its implementation in the candidates working time

   - a description of the relevance of the project proposal and its objectives for the institution as seen by the senior management

   - a confirmation regarding the availability of the VP / DVCs in charge of QA and/or Academic Affairs to attend the Opening Conference 23rd and 24th of March 2023.

   - a statement that the candidate will participate in all parts of the training and that he/she is supported

   - a confirmation of the function of the candidate

3. **Uploaded short (3 minute) personal introduction video in MP4 format of the applicant in English** including:

- Name

- Scientific Background

- country of origin

- University / Institution

- Role and experiences in Quality Management

- Motivation for applying for the training

- A personal interest or hobby

A how-to for recording the video can be found here.

Applications that do not include all components will not be considered. All applicants will be informed about the result of the selection process approximately in December 2022**.** DAAD, HRK, SARUA and University of Potsdam will jointly select the TrainIQA participants along the eligibility, the target group match, the motivation and commitment as well as the proposed project proposal. The diversity of countries and gender will be further considered in the selection process.

Contact details

Website: www.sadc-qa.org

E-Mail: sadc-qa@uni-potsdam.de

Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development