

2 GENERAL CRITERIA FOR ACCEPTABILITY OF DEGREE PROGRAMMES

The following criteria for acceptability of degree programmes are general guidelines and not absolute requirements

Factors influencing the quality of the final product of a programme are:

- Programme objectives, structure and content
- Quality, of teaching and learning, standard of examinations and exit standards achieved
- Quality of the departmental leadership
- Quality, numbers and commitment of the academic staff
- Qualities acquired by the students
- Adequacy of resources to support the programme
- Environment in the faculty
- Environment in the department

The foregoing are general criteria only. A detailed list of criteria is provided in Annexure A at the end of this policy document.

2.1 Standards

Quantity surveying is an international activity, therefore the AAQS expects quantity surveying graduates from accredited programmes to meet internationally recognised standards of excellence for professionally recognised quantity surveying degrees

The AAQS acknowledges that the practice of quantity surveying in Africa may require consultants to respond to particular regional or local problems which demand appropriate skills, knowledge and attitudes but believes that vocational education and skills training should be underpinned by a sound scientific foundation

Furthermore, the AAQS recognises that in certain regions there are educationally disadvantaged students who have the potential to acquire a degree in quantity surveying and to succeed as professional consultants

While special measures may be required on the part of an institution to assist such students, exit standards of accredited quantity surveying degree programmes must nevertheless meet international standards of excellence

The AAQS will endeavor to maintain close ties with international quantity surveying bodies whose expertise and accreditation of local degree programmes will serve to enhance the status and reputation of African qualifications worldwide

2.2 Degree programme objectives, structure and content

2.2.1 General

A degree programme must have

- clear objectives
- a rational structure

It is impossible to anticipate and teach all the detailed knowledge which quantity surveying graduates will require in their future careers

It is essential, therefore, to ensure that a degree programme provides students with

- basic, applied scientific education
- quantity surveying *core knowledge*
- problem-solving ability
- knowledge of developments in the field of quantity surveying that will allow them to continue to learn and develop throughout their careers

2.2.2 Support (service) courses

- Essential support courses for example the social sciences, economics, law, accounting, statistics, business and financial management are included in degree programmes to provide
- a scientific base to a curriculum
- domain skills
- cognate skills
- knowledge of cross-field disciplines
- broadened perspective beyond the limits of quantity surveying core courses

It is desirable that the content and method of teaching of service courses are consistent with the objectives of a particular quantity surveying degree course

2.2.3 Communication skills

Quantity surveying students are expected to develop excellent written and oral communication skills and the development of proficiency in report writing and oral expression is vital

Evidence should be presented that staff members evaluate submissions by students, give adequate attention to these aspects of vocational education and encourage students to devote time and effort to their personal development and ability to deliver reports and addresses

This does not imply that a formal course in communication is required, but the objective could be achieved by including public speaking opportunities and report-writing in all undergraduate courses

2.2.4 Research / laboratory work and site visits

Courses must be supported by meaningful research and laboratory work, well co-ordinated with the lecture material and performed using suitable up-to-date equipment as appropriate

Experimental work may be done by computer and the use of video material may replace some practical tuition, students should, nevertheless gain significant on-site, first-hand experience

2.2.5 The role of electronic data processing

The development of skills in end user data processing, practical application of specialised computer systems and integration of this knowledge in all aspects of

- an inter-active, learning teaching / process
- professional practice

are essential to efficient use of a quantity surveyor's time and resources

Departmental resources should include

- an in-house dedicated laboratory with sufficient work stations to satisfy needs in terms of student numbers
- secured state-of-the-art facilities supported and managed by technically qualified staff
- unrestricted access to those facilities for students
- expert tuition by appropriately skilled consultants in the application of specialised , licensed systems designed for use in the construction / property development industry

Wherever possible, tasks, tutorials and examinations should employ the use of electronic data processing techniques

2.2.6 Interdisciplinary projects

Commencing during the first year of study, teamwork amongst undergraduate groups of

- quantity surveying students
- students representing cross-field disciplines

is considered a prerequisite to the academic and professional development of quantity surveyors and should be introduced as widely as possible as a practical tool in tertiary education

2.2.7 Teaching and learning

As teaching / learning is based on theory and practice, all tuition should include

- up-to-date, well-presented study material in a medium which is appropriate to a particular module or course, for example printed notes, digital data, audio-visual units
- experiential learning in an environment which is conducive to investigation, research, data gathering, -analysis, -synthesis and -application
- optimal personal growth / development of each individual quantity surveying student

2.2.8 Practical training within an academic programme

Day-to-day quantity surveying professional practice includes the application of technical skills and while individual courses may include the execution of tasks and tutorials to demonstrate specific competence, there is no acceptable substitute for practical experience gained under qualified professional mentorship or supervision

While the majority of undergraduate quantity surveying courses comprise full-time study, undergraduates should be encouraged to seek and derive maximum benefit from part-time employment opportunities offered in the construction industry or in the offices of registered quantity surveyors

2.3 Academic staff

While it is accepted that an institution is accountable and responsible for providing all human and physical resources to support quantity surveying tertiary education, the quantity surveying profession, by virtue of internationally accepted standards of quality assurance and monitoring of education, actively supports and encourages institutions to

- seek
- retain / maintain the highest possible levels of global recognition at both under- and postgraduate levels

Consequently, it is considered highly desirable that a close relationship is established between an institution and the local quantity surveying fraternity.

In any Department of Quantity Surveying, academic staff members (both quantity surveyors and those representing other disciplines) should ideally

- be registered professionals
- have demonstrated
 - the caliber of their experience (rather than simply by the duration) in private practice / industry
 - their suitability as role models for the youth and for undergraduate quantity surveyors in particular
 - research capacity through appropriate peer-reviewed academic / scientific publications
 - their skills as
 - professional practitioners
 - teachers

2.4 Students

2.4.1 Desirable qualities

Personal attributes of an aspirant quantity surveyor should include

- creativity (problem-solving / analytical skills)
- positive attitude (fellow-students, team members; work and studying)
- competent memory
- listening ability
- a disciplined lifestyle

2.4.2 Standards of admission

2.4.2.1 Universities

Regardless of statutory requirements or the admission rules of an individual university, at entry level to a quantity surveying degree programme, a Grade 12 / Matric (or equivalent in the opinion of the AAQS ETC) pass mark in the following are *prerequisites*:

- Mathematics
- English

2.4.2.2 Universities of technology

Regardless of statutory requirements or the admission rules of an individual university of technology, at entry level to a quantity surveying degree programme, a Grade 12 / Matric (or equivalent in the opinion of the AAQS ETC) pass mark in the following are *recommended*:

- Mathematics
- English

2.4.2.3 General

Prior learning at Grade12 / Matric (or equivalent in the opinion of the AAQS ETC) level in the following subjects is highly recommended at entry level to a quantity surveying degree programme at both universities and university of technology:

- commercial arithmetic
- accounting
- economics
- computer science
- technical drawing

Selection criteria should take into consideration

- academic performance standards required to complete a three-year (minimum) degree programme within a reasonable period
- potential standards demanded by international monitors of quantity surveying education

Tertiary institutions are encouraged to offer compensatory support / supplemental instruction to enable potential students who are educationally ill-prepared for entry to a quantity surveying degree programme to reach the required standards

Furthermore, all institutions should be prepared to facilitate admission to students who may be classified within special categories, such as mature candidates, students wishing to transfer their registration from another faculty, institution or a university of technology, or any other unusual category

2.5 Resources

A successful academic programme relies on

- amenities, including an accessible, comprehensive library
- facilities
- equipment
- personnel, including teaching assistants and secretarial / administrative staff
- quality
- general management
- finance

all of which combine to ensure the delivery of quantity surveying education and research at under- and postgraduate levels