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QUALITY PROMOTION AND ASSURANCE REPORT

ON

**THE EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF
ACADEMIC MONITORING AND SUPPORT**

August 2013

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Executive Summary

External Evaluation of Academic Monitoring and Support

The University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), through its Senate, mandated Quality Promotion and Assurance (QPA) to conduct an external evaluation of its Academic Monitoring and Support systems (AMS). This task was undertaken as a follow-up to a review that had taken place in 2011. The University considers it critical to conduct an evaluating of the implementation of AMS programmes within its colleges as such evaluation had never taken place since the restructuring from the faculty to a system of colleges. QPA, through the University Teaching and Learning Office (UTLO), constituted a panel of senior leaders in higher education to conduct the evaluation.

The panel was mandated to conduct an evaluation of AMS activities at the University in order to establish how the colleges had responded to the policy and to establish the extent to which the recommendations of the 2011 QPA review were being implemented. In its Academic Monitoring and Exclusion Policy, the University of Kwazulu-Natal (UKZN) “acknowledges that academic monitoring and support is important to retain students through a wide range of student-focused support systems and learning environments that enable them to complete their studies successfully. Students will only be excluded on account of poor academic performance after all other avenues have failed” (UKZN Academic Monitoring and Exclusion Policy, 2009). Specifically, the Panel was expected to answer the following pertinent questions using both qualitative and quantitative data at its disposal:

- What is working well with regards to Academic Monitoring and Support Programmes at UKZN?
- What is not working well with regards to the Academic Monitoring and Support Programmes?
- How can these Academic Monitoring and Support Programmes at UKZN be improved?

Underlying these questions was a need to get a sense of the efficacy of the Academic Monitoring and Exclusion Policy at the University.

In addressing these questions, the Report highlights matters that the Panel would like to bring to the attention of the University the details of which are presented in the main report. Specifically, the report presents an evaluation of what is working based on evidence solicited from interviews and documents at the disposal of the panel. It points out areas that need focused attention so that they respond positively to interventions. It concludes by identifying important recommendations made by the AMS Review Panel and the degree to which they have been implemented by UKZN.

As part of the executive summary the panel herein presents identified areas of good practice as well as areas where focused attention and resources should be deployed to achieve the objectives and implementation of AMS policy.

Commendations

The panel was unanimous in acknowledging that UKZN has made strides in making AMS part of its core business. By developing a policy that guides academic monitoring and support and making AMS a governance matter, UKZN is far ahead of many higher education institutions in South Africa. Furthermore, the panel is pleased to note that University Senate is cognisant of the fact that the existence of a policy does not guarantee implementation. It is noted that within a short period of time, the University has implemented the recommendations that were made in internal and external studies that were conducted between 2005 and 2013. The panel felt gratified by the positive findings in some areas of Academic Monitoring and Support Programmes at the University. Furthermore, the panel identified certain features in the AMS programmes as strengths and innovative and would therefore like to commend the University for the following good practice:

Commendation 1

The panel commends the University for its successful implementation of the AMS Policy in regards to its reach to first year students and gradual inclusion of students at second year and higher levels.

Commendation 2

The panel commends the University for the uptake of AMS by each college which it considers a measure of success. It appears that AMS is taken seriously by all academics across the teaching and learning spectrum. There is evidence that AMS is making a significant and positive difference to students' efforts to succeed.

Commendation 3

The panel commends the University for its valuable and successful monitoring system such as the robot system and the associated advocacy that has led to the general acceptance of the system by students.

Commendation 4

The panel commends the University for creating an environment that fosters a strong sense of enthusiasm amongst those participating in the structured system of AMS especially the Academic Development Officers.

Commendation 5

The panel commends the University for creating an enabling environment that has led to active participation of the ADOs in research and publication thus helping in the professionalisation of academic development and support. This, in itself, is a lesson the University can share with other institutions.

Commendation 6

The panel commends the University for the effective implementation of three elements of AMS that stood out during the evaluation namely; the Supplementary Instruction, the Writing Place and Mentorship programmes.

Despite the above examples of good practices, there are contrastingly a number of areas that require the University's concerted attention. The Panel would like to point out shortcomings in the implementation of AMS Policy, procedures and/or practices. Addressing these concerns will contribute immensely to the functioning and implementation of AMS programmes at the University. Additionally, rectifying these shortcomings will ensure adherence to policy prescripts by all colleges. There are areas that need urgent attention and the panel would like to make these recommendations:

Recommendation 1

The panel recommends that the University enforce a minimum generic standard that all Colleges ought to adhere to in respect to implementation and reporting on AMS programmes. This might involve broadening the senate reporting criteria to include the gathering outcome-related data which would include student participation and progress as reflected by movement from one status to another. This collection of data ought to be viewed as process through which colleges can evaluate their AMS programmes rather than being seen as a compliance checklist.

Recommendation 2

The panel recommends that the University ensure that Colleges fully comply with Policy in terms of making AMS activities compulsory to underperforming students. This could be enforced by making sure that there is a common understanding that Policy prescripts are not optional but need to be complied with.

Recommendation 3

The panel recommends that the University engage colleges in exploring alternative funding models for their AMS programmes as the current funding regime is viewed by the panel as inadequate and unsustainable. The uncertainty regarding the continuation of the DHET Teaching Development Grant that is currently utilised to fund most of AMS activities is just one indication that there might be threats to the viability of AMS in certain Colleges.

Recommendation 4

The panel recommends that the University attend to staffing of AMS programmes as this seems to be a perennial problem for AMS at UKZN. There seems not to be sufficient stability and continuity in staffing; the 2011 Review raised the same concern. In addition, there is also a need to attend to role clarification particularly between ADOs, counsellors and mentors.

Recommendation 5

The panel recommends that the University institute appropriate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to ensure that students who are deemed underperforming or 'at risk' all receive supportive services in order to determine and address the cause of their poor performance. The panel is concerned that there are gaps in the monitoring and evaluation practices or procedures in place and that there is inconsistency in practices and implementation of policy, especially across the Colleges.

Recommendation 6

The panel recommends that the University create formal platforms to share experience and good practice in the implementation of AMS programmes, research data and best practices amongst Colleges.

Conclusion

The Panel believes that the University of KwaZulu-Natal has made great strides since Professor Africa's report in 2005. It now has a functional Academic Monitoring and Exclusions Policy which is supported by various programmes that are designed to improve student success. The panel is resolute that there are a number of areas that need urgent attention in order to ensure that the AMS policy of the University is fully realised. This would require decisive leadership on the part of senior leadership in the Teaching and Learning portfolio. The College Heads and Deputy Vice-Chancellors would need to seriously engage with the main streaming of AMS programmes, paying special attention to suitable funding regimes that take cognisance of the fact that external funding - especially the DHET allocations - should be supplementary to college allocations to AMS programmes.

1. Introduction

The University Teaching and Learning Office (UTLO) commissioned the QPA to undertake an evaluation of AMS programmes across all four UKZN colleges. As part of its terms of reference, the panel was given a task to evaluate successes and failures of the Academic Monitoring and Exclusions Policy implementation by Colleges in 2012. The purpose of the evaluation was to provide a descriptive report of the nature and characteristics of AMS in each college as well as the extent to which the Colleges further their intended goals and objectives. Secondly, the evaluation objective was to examine the extent to which each programme conforms to the Academic Monitoring and Exclusions Policy and Procedures. Lastly, the evaluation's aim was to identify existing strengths as well as areas that need to be strengthened in each programme. This evaluation also established the nature of interventions and support mechanisms that the Colleges put in place for AMS and whether those yielded the desired outcomes.

2. Process

The panel was tasked with conducting an evaluation by reviewing available documentation that details the history, practice and implementation of policy in respect to academic monitoring and support at the University.

2.1. The Panel

The evaluation panel was selected by QPA through a process of consultation with the University Teaching and Learning Unit Panel members as well as the terms of reference of the evaluation were decided upon by QPA and communicated to the DVCs of Teaching and Learning. The panel comprised of the following external members: :

- Professor Peter Omara-Ojungu, Campus Principal: Vaal University of Technology; Kempton Park Campus (Chair)
- Dr Choice Makhetha, Deputy Vice Chancellor: External Relations. University of Free State
- Dr S Nyathi: Director; SEQUAM, University of Namibia

- Dr Ngoato Takalo, a Curriculum specialist who is now an Independent Higher Education Consultant and former Vice-Chancellor of the University of North West (Report writer)

The panel received the following documents to read in advance:

- The Academic Monitoring and Exclusions Policy of 2009 together with its flow chart;
- The QPA external review report on Academic Monitoring and Support of 2011 and; The 2012 Academic Monitoring and Support draft report.

In addition to the three documents the panel was provided with the following documents on site:

- The University of KwaZulu-Natal Audit of Student Failure -2005 report
- 2011 Senate Report on Academic Monitoring and Support in UKZN, 2009-2010
- Evaluation of UKZN Academic Monitoring and Support Programmes, UTLO, 2013
- QPA Report on the validation of AMS within Colleges
- QPA quantitative and qualitative report from Colleges
- Academic Monitoring and Support Reporting Template with Senate Approved norms

2.2. Evaluation Panel meetings and Interviews

The Panel met and worked together from 1 to 4 June, 2013.

2.3. Methodology

Prior to the external evaluation, QPA researchers conducted a compliance verification study in which they collected qualitative and quantitative data which was then used to evaluate AMS programmes. In conducting this study, QPA used the Simple Logic Model (W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 2004). A three-prong approach which included self-reports, site visits and unstructured interviews with staff members directed the evaluation. The interviews were conducted in order to verify information that had been submitted in self reports. To collect data, QPA formulated an instrument which was used to solicit statistical data related to input, outcome and the impact of AMS programmes as well as to ascertain compliance with Policy and Senate Minimum Requirements. The instrument was sent to Deans of Teaching

and Learning who were requested to distribute it in all schools within their colleges. The data that QPA collected was compiled in two reports which were submitted to panel members. These reports complemented the readings that were submitted to panel members and were triangulated with interviews and presentations by various key-players in the implementation, development and research on AMS practices. For the external evaluation, the unit of analysis was the Colleges. In total, panel members conducted 32 interviews with staff, students and senior University leaders. The interviews provided a wealth of data that enabled the panel to contextualise both qualitative and quantitative data and make rational judgements on the efficacy of AMS at UKZN.

In addition to the above, these pertinent presentations were made to the panel:

- Preliminary results of the year-on-year (2005-2012) data on student success, graduation and attrition by a researcher in the University Teaching and Learning Unit.
- Development of a tracking and monitoring system of student records.

The latter was presented by a senior academic while the former was presented by a UTLO researcher. The interviews, presentations, reports and submitted readings enabled panel members to ascertain successes and shortcomings of the AMS programmes.

3. Background to the Policy context and the Evaluation of Academic Monitoring and Support at UKZN

The genesis of AMS at UKZN could be traced back to students' proactive stance adopted by the student leadership in 2005. At that time, student leaders approached Professor H.P. Africa, the then chair of the Higher Education Quality Committee of the Council on Higher Education, requesting assistance in dealing with high student failure rates at the new University of KwaZulu-Natal. Thus, UKZN students have been in the forefront in the advocacy for the provision of supportive structures and services. The request and response that led to the current AMS project at the UKZN is articulated by the statement below:

“In mid February 2005 a group of three student leaders approached Professor H.P. Africa and enquired about his availability and willingness to conduct an audit of failure among black students at UKZN. The students had sought advice and counsel from the Higher Education (CHE), the centre for Higher Education Policy Development (CEPD). The students consulted with the Executive Dean, (Students)

and drew up tentative terms of reference for the assignment. The office of the Vice-Chancellor supported the thrust of the audit as it afforded UKZN the opportunity of a new beginning and would clear the air about student failure”.¹

It is the 2005 comprehensive report known as "the Audit of Student Failure Report" that led to the development of a policy on academic monitoring and exclusions and the subsequent funding of programmes and projects geared towards supporting students to succeed. The Audit of Student Failure Report of 2005 serves as bedrock of the current AMS practices at the University. It managed to change the discourse of failure to a discourse of support for success. In 2009 the University of KwaZulu-Natal refined academic development initiatives that existed in its legacy institutions by enacting a new policy that combined the monitoring aspects with support programmes that would promote academic success. The resultant Academic Monitoring and Exclusions Policy and Procedures was approved by Senate (4 November 2009) and Council (4 December 2009). It is a policy that:

“...acknowledges that academic monitoring and support is important to retain students through a wide range of student-focused support systems and learning environments that enable them to complete their studies successfully. Students will only be excluded on account of poor academic performance as a last resort after all other avenues have failed to restore their academic performance to the required level. The policy commits the university to identifying under-performing students timeously and providing the necessary academic support to assist students to graduate in the minimum time possible or redirect them and obligates the attend and participate in the range of support that is made available”.

The very existence of this policy affirms management’s commitment to fulfilling its objective of providing an improved system of academic support. It also presents a backdrop for various units within the university to enact academic monitoring and support systems in the schools and colleges. The 2010 report² presented by the Deputy Vice Chancellor: Teaching and Learning to Senate provided an opportunity to set minimum criteria for evaluating AMS practices across the Schools and Colleges. Thus it was ensured at

¹ Audit of Student Failure; Prof HP Africa; 2005

² Report on Academic Monitoring and Support 2009-2010; Dr R Dhunpath, et al.

management level that AMS is enshrined within UKZN's teaching and learning processes and continuous monitoring, evaluation and reporting to Senate was made an expectation.

The two studies have been undertaken in order to monitor the effectiveness of the AMS system demonstrate the high value that the institution attaches to AMS. The first study produced an internal report that, in compliance with the Senate approved recommendation, was tabled for Senate in 2011. The recommendation is that University Teaching and Learning Committee (UTLC) provide annual reports on AMS systems according to agreed minimum criteria. The report was derived from various academic entities' annual reports of their monitoring and support programmes. It assessed their levels of compliance with Senate approved minimum criteria, evaluated successes of the monitoring and support initiatives, highlighted the challenges encountered during that reporting period and concluded with a set of recommendations. Further, in accordance with a Senate approved recommendation from the previous report and in an attempt to provide deeper insights into drop out, exclusion and graduation rates and to track the efficacy of the monitoring and support initiative, the report undertook a cross sectional cohort analysis of student movement in different cohorts from each year of 2004 to 2007. It analysed trends in graduation, exclusions and dropouts for each of the different undergraduate cohorts in 3- and 4-year undergraduate degree programmes. It is a result of this commitment that Senate recommended that an independent Review of AMS by Quality Promotion and Assurance (QPA) be instituted, charging QPA with identifying effective interventions and strategies that have yielded the greatest successes as well as flagging areas that require improvement and related action plans.

4. EVALUATION OF COLLEGE AMS SYSTEMS

Inherent in the Academic Monitoring and Exclusions Policy is the expectation that each UKZN college provide supportive services and interventions that promote UKZN's endeavour and commitment to increase rigor and to improve retention and throughput rates, particularly amongst 'underperforming' students and students 'at risk'.

The panel would like to acknowledge that evaluating AMS within a reorganised university, from a model of faculties to that of Colleges has its challenges. The panel noted that most

of the systems still resemble the old architecture and have not changed from the pre-college dispensation. They need to be adapted a new organisational and academic architecture that drives teaching and learning, including the support provided to the core activities of the University.

The evaluation results are based on a number of instruments that included observations, interviews and collection of data from colleges to verify the existence and implementation of AMS projects with colleges. As part of this process a researcher undertook site visits to the Colleges and met with the Deans of Teaching and Learning. The researcher verified practices and observed facilities and technology used in the implementation of AMS programmes within the colleges against the Senate approved criteria for AMS.

From the compliance verification study done by the QPA, the panel took a sample of four (4) out of the 18 criteria approved by Senate and divided the analysis into these criteria as areas of concentration to analyse the efficacy of AMS implementation by Colleges. At the end of the analysis of every area the panels gave an overall evaluation in terms of whether the College has exceeded the minimum requirements, met minimum requirements, or needs to improve in that area.

4.1. COLLEGE: LAW AND MANAGEMENT STUDIES (LMS)

The LMS Teaching and Learning Unit (T&L unit) is headed by Dr A. James (acting), who reports to the Dean T&L. The T&L Unit comprises three sections:

- 1) Academic Literacies (AL)
- 2) Academic Monitoring and Support (AMS)
- 3) Access and Enriched Management Studies (A & EMS)

There are three Academic Programme Coordinators - for Academic Monitoring (AMS), Academic Literacies (AL) and Access & Enrichment Management Studies (AEMS). The AMS programme is staffed by Academic Development Officers (ADO), Academic Development Coordinators (ADC) and tutors. ADCs report to the Programme Coordinator who reports to the T&L unit head who then reports to the Dean of Teaching and Learning. Duties of the AMS Coordinator are defined as being responsible for the management and implementation

of initiatives for “at risk” students within the College. At this College, the AMS coordinator is not a senior academic. In regards to interventions, the QPA researcher was presented with the Teaching and Learning Unit Report which included evidence of some of the interventions used in the colleges AMS programmes. Furthermore, the researcher met with the College Manager, a counsellor and a lecturer who provided evidence of some of the AMS activities, the researcher was informed that more detailed reports can be obtained directly from ADCs. Additionally, the College Manager was able to explain the manner in which Monitoring and Evaluation was done, with evidence, and calling on administrators to provide more details. All files of “at risk” students were on hand. Some identity sensitive documents were shown, e.g. disciplinary hearings, actions taken on non-compliance with mandatory activities, etc. with identities blocked.

Area 1: Resources

Four criteria were analysed under the area of Resources:

1. Coordinator* (Senior Academic) assigned responsibility for interventions/monitoring
2. Clearly identified administrative support
3. Resources/space staff/funding available
4. Sustainable over a longer term

*The understanding of a Senior Academic is someone who holds a PhD and also is appointed at the rank of a Senior Lecturer.

Area 1	COMPLIANCE WITH SENATE CRITERIA FOR AMS System	Verification/ Observation
Resources	<p>ACADEMIC COORDINATOR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADC: Ms P.Naidoo; Dean: Professor K. Pillay, assisted by Dr A. James. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms Naidoo is an ADC at the college; Ms Naidoo is, however, not a senior academic. • Dr James, Head T&L Unit oversees the work of the ADC at the college and reports to Prof K Pillay, Dean Teaching and Learning.
	<p>ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 administrators in the CLMS T&L. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms Mshengu and Mr Ngcobo provide

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALT&L support the process. 	<p>administrative support to Academic Literacy. (AL), Access and Enriched Management Studies (A and MS) as well as AMS.</p>
	<p>SPACE, STAFF, FUNDING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AMS Coordinator in College: permanent capacity. • ALT&L within the Schools/Disciplines assist with academic counselling for 'at risk' students. • A part-time research assistant was appointed for 2012 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visited office of Ms Naidoo. • Shown example of a referral document by ADO (personal details blocked). • Organizational Structure shown on organogram. • Details of staffing included in T&L Report 2012.
	<p>SUSTAINABLE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AMS is supported with grant application funds • Academic counselling: ALT&L and senior academics as part of their teaching administrative workload • The AMS academic is a permanent • ADOs/ADCs, tutors are appointed annually. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed grant applications were seen. • Spoke to Tahier Valjith, an academic in this position. Showed me a report on student counselled. • Names and numbers of personnel as well as the 2013 budget with cost centres were included in the report.

Evaluation of Resources

EXCEEDS SENATE REQUIREMENTS	MEETS SENATE REQUIRMENTS	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
	X	

Comments by Evaluators:

There is sufficient leadership provided for AMS programmes in this college and the panel believes that the requirements in this area are being met. Although the College has met the requirements in this area, some clarity related to the credentials of the individual

overseeing the AMS programme is needed. Therefore, whether ADO's or ADC's or their supervisors are required to be a senior academic has to be clarified.

AREA 2: Interventions

There were seven Senate approved criteria that were summed up under Area 2.

1. There is a variety of interventions at the College and School level
2. Input of key stakeholders in design, delivery or evaluation
3. Compulsory for identified students
4. Intervention available to all students
5. Academic counselling available
6. Personal and career counselling included in intervention
7. Orientation, on-going progress reports, information given to students regularly

Area 2	COMPLIANCE WITH SENATE CRITERIA FOR AMS SYSTEM	Verification/ Observation
Intervention Activities	<p>SERVICES ACCESSIBLE TO ALL STUDENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADO's and ADC's support • Academic Orientation programme • Tutorial support • Demonstrators for practical/application -oriented disciplines • Provision of textbooks • Graduate assistants • Online learning support • Academic writing support and Academic literacy • Academic development seminars • Academic Skills tutorials • Student Counselling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching and Learning Unit Report, October 2012, was seen & discussed; most activities detailed. • Academic Orientation Programme is conducted at College level. • Details of interventions available from coordinator (who was not available at the time). • Textbook Project explained. Provided to indigent students, also some placed in designated discussion rooms in Main Library. • Does have a Writing place, Academic Literacy Sector headed by Dr Moodley. • Plans and reports on many AL activities were seen. • Academic and psychological counselling services exist.
	<p>ACTIVITIES COMPULSORY FOR AT RISK:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend the same activities as all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance compulsory. Shown student

	<p>students but are compulsory for at risk students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend mandatory consultations with ADOs/ADCs 	<p>file with records on warnings issued for non-compliance. At risk and underperforming students receive group counselling.</p>
	<p>STAKEHOLDER INPUT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student tracking of performance Evaluation of interventions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marion Kisten, College Manager (Student academic Services) performs this task. Discussed flaws and challenges Seen 2 types of evaluation forms.
	<p>ACADEMIC COUNSELING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AMS Coordinator facilitates & provides ALT&L, ADOs and ADCs also provide counselling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spoke to Tahier Valjith, an academic responsible for this role. Shown a record of a student that was counselled.
	<p>PERSONAL & CAREER COUNSELING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to Counsellors. Student referrals by staff of AMS Programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targets whole class or cohort of student; students divided to smaller groups. Saw documents reflecting referrals that were made. Met with Dr Alliya Vaid who explained protocol, process and role in AMS. Shown student contracts. Code of confidentiality limited evidence. E-filing system.
	<p>ORIENTATION, PROGRESS REPORTS, INFO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orientation activities at beginning of year. On-going and updated communication through the post, Student Central (SC), cell phone sms, e-mail, telephonic and face-to-face interactions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shown flyers of few Orientation Activities It was explained that various means of communication is working. Viewed a copy of email sent out

Evaluation of Interventions

EXCEEDS SENATE REQUIREMENTS	MEETS SENATE REQUIRMENTS	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
	X	

Comments by Evaluators:

The College seems to have a number of interventions that it provides to its students, and a large number of them were accessible to students on voluntary basis.

AREA 3: MONITORING AND EVALUATION

There were six Senate approved criteria that were summed up under area 3. These included the following:

1. Students monitor own progress
2. Tracking of student performance
3. Tracking of all referrals, especially outside units
4. Records and reports kept at school and college level
5. Evaluation/reviews by staff and students
6. Evaluation/reviews and action discussed at school and college level

Area 3	COMPLIANCE WITH SENATE CRITERIA FOR AMS System	Verification/ Observation
Monitoring and Evaluation	STUDENTS MONITOR OWN PROGRESS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students at risk submit progress reports • Submit activity logs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ADC was not available but office was accessible (Prim Naidoo's). No files or records were viewed.
	TRACKING STUDENT PERFORMANCE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADOs/ADCs keep records of student attendance and performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shown attendance registers & summaries. • Marion explained Tracking System that 3rd year ICS students presented to Dept of ICS.

<p>TRACKING REFERRALS OUTSIDE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students sign a waiver that allows the T&LU to ascertain if a student is receiving counselling support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saw a copy of waiver document; obtained one also.
<p>RECORDS AND REPORTS KEPT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview reports, • Interview waivers for student counselling services, • Student’s file in the College office. • progress reports, • Activity logs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T&L Unit Report incl. AMS - extensive review but report only includes relevant aspects. • Documents pertaining to counselling services not shown because of confidentiality policy but reported that they had. • Consultation records are kept by relevant ADOs who are dispersed across three campuses. It is very difficult at present to house all the records in one place for logistical reasons related to the availability of space. The risk and probation letters are submitted to the College Office and placed in student files and are available for audit reviews and CAECOM/AECOM meetings. • Shown a student’s file with progress report, referral reports, hearings, etc. • Shown files by Marion Kisten, T&L office. Manual system - kept from year 1 to Honours.
<p>EVALUATION BY STAFF & STUDENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students evaluate academic counselling, orientation sessions ADO consultations. • ADOs/ADCs self-reflective evaluations of the support they provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted at Discipline level but no physical records were shown or seen. • Obtained Learning Facilitation Questionnaire • Not seen. Kept with ADC
<p>EVALUATION AT SCHOOL & COLLEGE LEVEL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluations and reviews are discussed at the T&L unit staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific Meeting on Accounting Lectures, Oct 2012. Record of meeting seen.

	meetings, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T&L Evaluation workshops • College/School/Discipline Teaching & Learning Committees, • EXCO • College Board. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T&L Workshop dated 4 April 2012 • Monthly T&L meetings, 1st Tues of the month
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Evaluation of Monitoring and Evaluation

EXCEEDS SENATE REQUIREMENTS	MEETS SENATE REQUIRMENTS	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
		X

Comments by Evaluators:

Due to the nature and confidentiality of some of the records, the verifier could not have access to the actual records except to sample of the forms used. Record keeping is a challenge as various offices handle their own records and records-keeping is not centralized within the college. The difficulties encountered by the verifier in accessing records points to challenges in record-keeping. Based on similar experiences with challenges experienced with data collection by the researcher on a similar data gathering assignment, it is evident that colleges are struggling to keep records and data is not freely accessible at all times.

AREA 4: Research

There was one Senate approved criterion under area 4.

1. Research carried out on the intervention/monitoring

Area 4	COMPLIANCE WITH SENATE CRITERIA FOR AMS System	Verification/ Observation
Research	Educational research papers - 6 concerning ADO/ADC interventions 1 for the isiZulu language tutorials (Accounting and Economics) presented at the 2012 UTLO conference.	Researcher requested but was not shown any documents. Subsequently six records of publications were provided to QPA.

Evaluation of Research

EXCEEDS SENATE REQUIREMENTS	MEETS SENATE REQUIRMENTS	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
	X	

Comments by Evaluators:

There are claims that there have been some research papers presented at UTLO annual conferences and some based on grant provided by the unit to staff members. On site there was no evidence thus pointing to the challenges faced in accessing information at times. Later on six publications were presented to QPA to support the claims.

4.2. COLLEGE: HEALTH SCIENCES

Files were available and accessible at the office of the College Dean of Teaching and Learning. This was indicative of her hands-on approach to her role as Academic Development Coordinator. Evidence was available to the researcher and some documents were copied while others could only be viewed. The Dean pointed out that while the AMS program in her college is well-structured and effective, the demands of renning the programme require a full time ADC in order for it to yield even better results.

The following detailed reports including statistics were made available: Report on Student Support Services to UTLO; Supplemental Instruction Programme Report; College Report on AMS Highlights 2012. Research found far more information, evidence, activities and initiatives existed in this College than was enlisted on the checklist. The Reports that the college compiles on its AMS programmes are detailed, provide statistics, and include photographs of activities in progress. Modelling of the programme was evident as well.

Area 1: Resources

There were four criteria that were summed up under the area of resources

1. Coordinator* (Senior Academic) assigned responsibility for interventions/monitoring
2. Clearly identified administrative support
3. Resources/space staff/funding available
4. Sustainable over a longer term

*The understanding of a Senior Academics is someone who holds a PhD and is also appointed at the rank of a senior lecturer.

Area 1	COMPLIANCE WITH SENATE CRITERIA FOR AMS System	Verification/ Observation
Resources	<p>ACADEMIC COORDINATOR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADC: Dean Teaching and Learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prof Mtshali is ADC within the college and this role is executed over and above her duties as a College Dean of Teaching and Learning in Health Sciences. This does comply with the senate criteria.
	<p>ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 admin support staff in the CHS T&L Office • 1 assists Student Support Services on the College AMS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Met with the administrator responsible for AMS. This college also has an administrator from student support who was available. • There are two support staff for AMS in the college.
	<p>SPACE, STAFF, FUNDING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All ADOs have working space but the space is inadequate inadequate therefore some ADOs use PG students' cubicles; • Others have offices located away from the disciplines therefore they end up using available space in the school for consultation processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 ADOs at ratio of 1: 400 students. Details of staffing are available in Reports • Visited one cubicle used.
	<p>SUSTAINABLE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programmes are supported with funds sourced yearly through grant applications • Contract staff • ADO Contract 3 years. • The future plan: AMS integrated to day to day T&L by academics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An AMS detailed report that was presented to the researcher provided highlights, including challenges and projected plans.

Evaluation of Resources

EXCEEDS SENATE REQUIREMENTS	MEETS SENATE REQUIRMENTS	DOES NOT MEET SENATE REQUIREMENTS
	X	

Comments by Evaluators:

The Dean of Teaching and Learning oversees the AMS program and assumed this role on a part-time basis; she has the requisite skills and competencies to fulfil the role. The panel wondered if this model was the preferred use of available resources. Since there was no clarity on the university policy in this respect, the panel felt that this could be adequate arrangement for AMS requirements. There are indications that most of the criteria were met by the college in Area 1.

AREA 2: Interventions

There were seven Senate approved criteria that were summed up under area 2.

These included the following:

1. Variety of interventions at the College and School level
2. Input of key stakeholders in design, delivery or evaluation
3. Compulsory for identified students
4. Intervention available to all students
5. Academic counselling available
6. Personal and career counselling included in intervention
7. Orientation, on-going progress reports, information given to students regularly

Area 2	COMPLIANCE WITH SENATE CRITERIA FOR AMS System	Verification/ Observation
Intervention Activities	<p>SERVICES ACCESSIBLE TO ALL STUDENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADOs: tracking, monitoring and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtained Flow chart of psycho-social support and AMS showing activities from Pre-registration to completion/exclusion

	<p>supporting. Also provide appropriate referrals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer Mentoring for all first year students, • Tutors/Supplemental Instruction(SI Leaders) • Student Counselling • Structured skills development programme by Student Support Services • Preadmission orientation workshops for all first year students • Skills Development Workshops facilitated by Skills Development Officer • Peer mentoring with every first year student. The ratio used is 1:15 • ADO available at all times. ADO Student ratio is 1:400 • Tracking of students' performance after each test • Risk Profiling of all first year • Extra tutoring or supplemental instruction for modules with a low pass rate and traditionally difficult modules. Ratio used is 1:15 • Student Counselling services with focus on psychosocial needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details with ADOs • Handouts obtained on Mentoring workshops • Records of SI leaders, materials, reports seen • Records were kept at School level • Evident in Twinning project information seen • Obtained copies of flyers of many of the workshops. • Documentation of ratios; role of ADO, role of Mentor, peer mentoring, seen and some program info photocopied. ADC indicated major problem for College is that 3rd and 4th year, senior students are at clinical practices, limits pool of mentors to 2nd years • File on one Module was observed showing Performance record from test one. • A file for each of the identified Modules was available at Dean's office. • Records for these referrals were not available.
	<p>ACTIVITIES COMPULSORY FOR AT RISK:</p> <p>STAKEHOLDER INPUT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College is in a process of designing Service Level Agreements for AMS Team to clarify roles, responsibilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An AMS Guide for Facilitators obtained

	and expectations by stakeholders.	
	<p>COMPULSORY FOR IDENTIFIED STUDENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A learning contract tool has been developed. • Students generate a structured individualized support plan. ADOs use these contracts to monitor students' performance and progress. • Attendance of available interventions • A record is kept of all the students who do not comply, efforts made to contact them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtained student contract for academic success • Student's course of action plan seen (contract). Plan is revisited and amended in support of monitoring and evaluation • Copy of attendance register obtained. • Seen the comprehensive monthly register
	<p>ACADEMIC COUNSELING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available across all schools across all campuses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Leaders, academics, senior students counsel. Formal sessions are recorded. ADO has records
	<p>PERSONAL AND CAREER COUNSELING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have access to Counsellors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unavailable due to confidentiality code
	<p>ORIENTATION, PROG REPORTS, INFO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is room for improvement once the coordinator fully takes the AMS position 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various orientation-related activity notices seen. Record of attendance seen, very well attended. • Reports are done on SI; AMS Highlights 2012. Guideline handbooks seen

Evaluation of Intervention Activities

EXCEEDS SENATE REQUIREMENTS	MEETS SENATE REQUIRMENTS	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
X		

Comments by Evaluators:

The Health Sciences College has an efficient AMS system that is tailored to their needs and provides adequate support to students who need it in order to succeed. All records and processes were verified except those protected by the confidentiality clauses. This College had exceeded expectations by being creative and innovative in tailoring a system that works for it.

AREA 3: MONITORING AND EVALUATION

There were six Senate approved criteria that were summed up under area 3. These included the following:

1. Students monitor own progress
2. Tracking of student performance
3. Tracking of all referrals, especially outside units
4. Records and reports kept at school and college level
5. Evaluation/reviews by staff and students
6. Evaluation/reviews and action discussed at school and college level

Area 3	COMPLIANCE WITH SENATE CRITERIA FOR AMS System	Verification/ Observation
Monitoring and Evaluation	STUDENTS MONITOR OWN PROGRESS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under the guidance of the ADOs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students have access to monitoring database, which was shown to researcher.
	TRACKING OF STUDENTS	

	<p>PERFORMANCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports generated by all schools used to improve quality of targeted interventions available to students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not seen by researcher; available at each School. • School reports feed College AMS report. A copy was received.
	<p>RECORDS AND REPORTS KEPT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared electronic data base with students' info, accessible to all in AMS. • They undergo special training to familiarize themselves with the database. • ADO uses a standardized reporting template every month • Report template for end of the semester reporting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADC showed database on PC. • Workshop details were viewed; these included content, facilitator, attendance, evaluation. Monthly report seen. • Made a copy of the end of semester reporting template
	<p>EVALUATION BY STAFF AND STUDENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted mainly by students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A copy was not available at the time.

Evaluation of Monitoring and Evaluation

EXCEEDS SENATE REQUIREMENTS	MEETS SENATE REQUIRMENTS	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
	X	

Comments by Evaluators:

The ADC ,who is the Dean of Teaching and Learning, had files in her office to support their claims and the verifier was provided access to databases on the Deans PC to verification purposes. This seems to be one of the areas that are working well in the college of Health Sciences. Also provided were AMS reports that detailed relevant information.

AREA 4: Research

There was one Senate approved criterion under area 4.

2. Research carried out on the intervention/monitoring

Area 4	COMPLIANCE WITH SENATE CRITERIA FOR AMS System	Verification/ Observation
Research	Some schools have research and abstracts have been accepted in conferences College has a TL Research Group across disciplines. One research theme is AMS.	Dr Saloshini Pillay presented at a Conference in Cyprus on Organizational Change and Culture at UKZN. Accepted for publication. Many papers presented at UTLO conferences

Evaluation of Research

EXCEEDS SENATE REQUIREMENTS	MEETS SENATE REQUIRMENTS	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
		X

Comments by Evaluators:

There is a need to intensify college-level engagement with matters emanating from AMS interventions at a college level and academics should be encouraged to consider AMS as one of the areas of research. Although there was information shared on a paper presented at a conference, as at institutional level, there is still a need to improve research on AMS practices within this College.

4.3. COLLEGE: HUMANITIES

The researcher visited Edgewood Campus Coordinator, who was available and accommodated site visitation. It was noted that the Programme was referred to as STAR – Students At Risk to counteract the stigma and negativity associated with being an “at risk” student and also to protect the privacy of programme participants. The programme supports four categories of undergraduate students:

- 1) **Students at “risk”** (unsatisfactory academic performance);
- 2) **Transfer students** (from other faculties with poor performance from previous faculty);
- 3) **Funza Lushaka recipients** (students at risk of losing bursaries because of unsatisfactory performance) and
- 4) **First year students** who experience academic difficulties.

AREA 1: Resources

There were four Senate approved criteria that were summed up under area 3. These included the following:

1. Coordinator* (Senior Academic) assigned responsibility for interventions/monitoring
2. Clearly identified administrative support
3. Resources/space staff/funding available
4. Sustainable over a longer term

**The understanding of a Senior Academic is someone who holds a PhD and is also appointed at the rank of a senior lecturer or higher.*

Area 1	COMPLIANCE WITH SENATE CRITERIA FOR AMS System	Verification/ Observation
Resources	<p>ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADC - 3: Howard College, Edgewood & Pietermaritzburg and they all report to College Dean Teaching and Learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visited ADC in Edgewood, Ms Samu Mngomezulu
	<p>ADMINISTRATORS</p> <p>2 in Edgewood and PMB.</p> <p>1 in H/C appointed for 2013.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrator numbers affirmed.
	<p>SPACE, STAFF, FUNDING</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of staffing in terms of structure and numbers presented in an organogram. Available on Website as well. • More information was presented by ADC on these issues but kept to checklist.
	<p>SUSTAINABLE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relies on annual funding from Department of Higher Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussed challenges that impinge on sustainability of programme, although

	Transformation and the College. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are on hired on contractual basis due to reliance on soft money. 	the programme has run from year to year.
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Evaluation of Resources

EXCEEDS CRITERIA	SENATE	MEETS CRITERIA	SENATE	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
		X		

Comments by Evaluators:

The ADC in the College is not a senior academic and reports to the Dean of Teaching and Learning. This context is similar to that of LMS College but differs in that there were two senior academics that the ADC reports to instead of one overseer. This does meet the expectations and is adequate.

AREA 2: Interventions

There were seven Senate approved criteria that were summed up under area 2. These included the following.

1. Variety of interventions at the College and School level
2. Input of key stakeholders in design, delivery or evaluation
3. Compulsory for identified students
4. Intervention available to all students
5. Academic counselling available
6. Personal and career counselling included in intervention
7. Orientation, on-going progress reports, information given to students regularly

Area 2	COMPLIANCE WITH SENATE CRITERIA FOR AMS System	Verification/ Observation
Intervention Activities	SERVICES ACCESSIBLE TO ALL STUDENTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentors appointed • Group and Peer Mentoring • Workshops conducted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shown files of Mentors, contracts, Mentor workshop details. Mentors also run programmes known as "Food Drive" for needy students. Shown scheme related records.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentors address personal issues individually • Tutorials twice a month. • Student counselling • Residence mentoring • At school level: • ADOs in different Schools. • Individual consultations • Group workshops - skills. ADOs. • Training and capacity development after assessment • The referral system in place • ADOs foster and maintain communication with academic staff, tutors and mentors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tutorial plan obtained. Notification which is put up in advance, obtained. • Visited the Student Counsellor that serves entire campus • Strong academic volunteers at residence • Shown file with ADO information. • Records of consultations kept with ADO. • Counsellor showed documents outlining her role in capacity development • All referrals are documented. • Shown a student's file with letter of recommendation/referral. • It was reported that communication is done mostly via email and SMS, however there was no evidence
	<p>INPUT OF STAKEHOLDERS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No comment on this criterion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is not information on this criterion
	<p>ALL STUDENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Info by SMS, email at the beginning of each semester of the support available. • The writing place: academic literacy and writing • Student Counselling: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtained copies of notices that were available. • Visited the facility. Discussed services available • Academic and personal counselling discussed.
	<p>COMPULSORY FOR IDENTIFIED STUDENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letters of warning sent by the College Office no compelling measure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No measures in place to ensure attendance. • Shown a letter sent to student. Identified attend all Intervention activities
	<p>ACADEMIC COUNSELING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beginning of every semester, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Viewed one example of a record kept of

	<p>Academic Advising or Counselling to all 'At Risk'/first year students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior mentors trained as academic advisors • ADOs: address the needs of students. • Academic leaders: address students' academic needs 	<p>a formal consultation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hand-out obtained on training workshop of Mentors. • Viewed record of referral for academic counselling
	<p>PERSONAL AND CAREER COUNSELING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students referred to the Counsellors • Students referred Counselling Centre. • P.G students were trained to advice students in academic work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visited Edgewood Counselling Centre. • Spoke to Counsellor. • Only pamphlets on services offered, material on career counselling workshops and skills development were obtained. • PG advisor evidence not obtained
	<p>ORIENTATION, ONGOING REPORTS, INFO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation beginning of each semester. • Meetings with a group of 'At Risk' students • An official launch of the Program is conducted. • Flyers and information is distributed • Mentors write regular reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtained 1st year orientation programme (amended very slightly from 2012). A few flyers were available. Workshop programmes obtained • Launch not done at Edgewood • Social was hosted for "at risk" students to bond, photos shown. • Monthly reports on template. Obtained two.

Evaluation of Interventions

EXCEEDS SENATE REQUIREMENTS	MEETS SENATE REQUIRMENTS	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
	X	

Comments by Evaluators:

There are a variety of activities within the College; all other criteria were met except in the area of involvement of stakeholders in intervention activities.

AREA 3: MONITORING AND EVALUATION

There were six Senate approved criteria that were summed up under area 3. These included the following:

1. Students monitor own progress
2. Tracking of student performance
3. Tracking of all referrals, especially outside units
4. Records and reports kept at school and college level
5. Evaluation/reviews by staff and students
6. Evaluation/reviews and action discussed at school and college level

Area 3	COMPLIANCE WITH SENATE CRITERIA FOR AMS System	Verification/ Observation
Monitoring and Evaluation	<p>STUDENTS MONITOR OWN PROGRESS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students keep a dialogue journal • Consult with Academic Monitoring Counsellors and discuss their progress and intervention strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looked through a journal. • Journals given to Academic Monitoring Counsellors at intervals. • Not all keep journals as it is not compulsory for student to do so. • Academic Monitoring Counsellors showed a student file which was left in preparation for consultation with student.
	<p>TRACKING OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The researcher in the office of the College Dean of T&L and other evaluators, track students • Data provided through DMI. • ‘Mentee Monitoring Form’ • Student Management System (SMS) verification of student performance • Reporting at School board meetings and School committee meetings by ADOs and School leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was not able to meet researcher, Mr Hlopane, at time of visit. All records were kept at that office • Obtained a copy of Monitoring form • Could not verify SMS which provides data on request. • Looked at the minutes of one available ADO meeting. Many items on agenda regarded specific student academic issues.
	<p>TRACKING OF REFERRALS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students referred to Counselling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counsellor restricted by Code to divulge records. • Record keeping not as detailed unless

	and Clinic. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tracking informal. 	requested because of overload. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tracked on request if there is a case.
	RECORDS AND REPORTS KEPT AT COLL/SCL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Records kept in the AMP offices Records also kept in student's files at School level. Records and reports also kept at the College admin Office. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly Reports done by Mentors on templates Looked at a Student file in ADC office. Not available.
	EVALUATION/REVIEWS BY STAF/STUDENTS Students evaluations end of each semester	Shown a copy of this evaluation form.
	EVALUATION/REVIEWS AT COLLEGE LEVEL Discussions: within schools. Annual Report discussed at the College executive committee and the Teaching and Learning Strategy committee.	Copy of Annual report was not available

Evaluation of Monitoring and Evaluation

EXCEEDS SENATE REQUIREMENTS	MEETS SENATE REQUIRMENTS	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
		X

Comments by Evaluators:

Not all records were available on site and journal-keeping for students was not compulsory and therefore some tracking measures were not adhered to. There is no method of tracking referrals outside the college. The college's over reliance on DMI data for the capturing of student status at the end of the semester poses a challenge. The College needs to keep its own data and track its students' progress and the related movement from one category to the other. Data interpretation was noted as problematic in some cases as reflected in the report submitted to UTLO.

AREA 4: Research

There was one Senate approved criterion under area 4: RESEARCH

1. Research carried out on the intervention/monitoring

Area 4	Comments on status in AMS System	Verification/ Observation
Research		Ms Mngomezulu: Paper written on Psychological Impact and Challenges on Students, being considered as a book chapter: Mass Access in Higher Education. Dr Ntombela in progress: Paper on Failure Related Funding

Evaluation of Research

EXCEEDS SENATE REQUIREMENTS	MEETS SENATE REQUIRMENTS	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
	X	

Comments by Evaluators:

There is a critical mass of individuals interested in conducting research in this area and there are indications that a number of staff will contribute chapters to a book on AMS that is being compiled within the College.

4.4. COLLEGE: AGRICULTURE, ENGINEERING AND SCIENCE

On the visit to this College, the researcher was met by the College Dean, Teaching and Learning, Prof Bala Pillay and Dr Neil Koorbanally, Interim Director, CAES Access Programmes. With both Prof Pillay and Dr Koorbanally in their positions since June 2013, they were not able to comment on the 2012 AMS system in the College, and provide evidence to verify the items on the checklist which was derived from AES Senate Approved Criteria Report. They did explain that the Science Access Foundation and Augmented Programmes were used in the College for Access by disadvantaged students, who did not meet the normal entry requirements, into the BSc degree. The verification process on AMS therefore was within the context of these two programmes.

Information on Science Access Foundation and Augmented Programmes

The two programmes being offered are the BSc-4 Augmented and the BSc-4 Foundation students.

The BSc-4 Augmented curriculum, where students just missed the entry requirements for the normal route into the Faculty, places students with the mainstream cohort. They are given a lighter than normal load and achieve their first year modules over two years, supplementing the first year curriculum with additional tutorials and practical sessions.

The BSc-4 Foundation programme (students that fell below the entrance requirements into the faculty, but have qualified to enter a University) register for modules in Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry and Biology as well as either Science Communication or Scientific Writing. These students have a set curriculum in each of the disciplines.

Academic Development Officers were appointed at lecturer level, and included 20% of research done.

AREA 1: Resources

There were four criteria that were summed up under area 1:

1. Coordinator* (Senior academic) assigned responsibility for interventions/monitoring
2. Clearly identified administrative support
3. Resources/space staff/funding available
4. Sustainable over a longer term

* Senior Academic is someone holding a PhD and is also appointed at the rank of a senior lecturer or higher.

Area 1	COMPLIANCE WITH SENATE CRITERIA FOR AMS System	Verification/ Observation
Resources	ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR <ul style="list-style-type: none">• This position was eliminated in this College; The Dean Teaching and Learning has taken over this	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is a Dean of Teaching and Learning Prof Bala Pillay who has 4 ADO's that reports to him and one school does not have an ADO assigned to it due to a recent vacancy.

	responsibility.	
	ADMIN SUPPORT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two administrative staff to support the Science Access Programme. • Within Schools administrative staff support process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Dean of Teaching and Learning confirmed that there are two Administrative Staff to support the Science Access Programme in the college.
	SPACE STAFF FUNDING Excellent. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support from Office of the DVC, T&L, and the College Strategic Funds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The College Dean of Teaching and Learning confirmed that the facilities are excellent but under threat as there are increasing numbers of students
	SUSTAINABLE OVER LONG TIME <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current Plan is sustainable, but heavily dependent on annual financial support. • Sustainability can be improved with a commitment for longer term funding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Dean indicated that they have a plan for Academic Development and is decedent on funding • A director for the college access programmes has been employed

Evaluation of Resources

EXCEEDS SENATE REQUIREMENTS	MEETS SENATE REQUIREMENTS	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
	X	

Comments by Evaluators:

Based on the Dean Teaching and Learning's explanations there are adequate resources to rollout the Academic Monitoring and Support programmes. The college has provided appropriate resources to support students and has to deal with growing numbers and staff vacancies that could be a threat to continued provision of necessary services.

AREA 2: Interventions

There were seven Senate approved criteria that were summed up under area 2.

These included the following:

1. Variety of interventions at the College and School level

2. Input of key stakeholders in design, delivery or evaluation
3. Compulsory for identified students
4. Intervention available to all students
5. Academic counselling available
6. Personal and career counselling included in intervention
7. Orientation, on-going progress reports, information given to students regularly

Area 2	COMPLIANCE WITH SENATE CRITERIA FOR AMS System	Verification/ Observation
Intervention Activities	<p>SERVICES ACCESSIBLE TO ALL STUDENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supported with a comprehensive AMS Plan. • Support by ADOs, Tutors, Student Counsellors, and Graduate Assistants. • All mainstream students can make use of the services offered. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No plan was available at the time of the visit. • No plan sent as indicated. • Discussed and confirmed roles and distribution of ADOs, Tutors, counsellors and graduate assistants. No documentary evidence. • Attendance is overwhelming. • Shown one SI attendance of 260 students.
	<p>ACTIVITIES COMPULSORY FOR “AT RISK”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundation and Augmented students have independent student support services. • Presently most interventions are voluntary • At-risk and probation students expected to visit the T&L Leader and/or ADO on a regular basis for on-going academic support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shown the structure of the program by Dr Koorbanally. • Looked at a register also indicating total numbers in attendance. These numbers are monitored
	<p>INPUT OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students and staff consulted as part of all initiatives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are committees that interact on an ongoing basis but no evidence was shown.
	<p>ACADEMIC COUNSELING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One on one counselling available to all students within College • Students encouraged to consult an ADO or T&L Leader 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADO and Academics kept their own records of these sessions, if formal. Therefore no records were viewed with the Dean.
	<p>PERSONAL AND CAREER COUNSELING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Counsellors are present on all three campuses. • Additional funding made available for appointment of Counsellors on an on-going basis. • Fundamental personal counselling (e.g. Nutrition) is included in the services of ADOs. • Students in need of emotional counselling referred to Student Counselling Services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sherry Barnsley, head of Counselling for mainstream Access. Each campus does have a counsellor. • Not funding related evidence shown. • Emphasized that restructuring allowed the College its own counsellors.
	<p>ORIENTATION, ONGOING REPORTS, INFO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation at beginning of academic year. • Regular information flow to students: e-mails, Mobile SMS, Student Central, and interactions with individual students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2013 Orientation program shown. 2012 not available. • The information flow was affirmed and described as effective

Evaluation of Intervention Activities

EXCEEDS SENATE REQUIREMENTS	MEETS SENATE REQUIREMENTS	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
	X	

Comments by Evaluators:

The panel believes that there is a variety of programmes that are working and also providing tailored support to most students who require support in their academic and social challenges. There is a need to ensure that the College keeps records and evidence of some of the claims they make as the verification process did find gaps in the area also.

AREA 3: MONITORING AND EVALUATION

There were six Senate approved criteria that were summed up under area 3: Monitoring and Evaluation . These included the following:

1. Students monitor own progress
2. Tracking of student performance
3. Tracking of all referrals, especially outside units
4. Records and reports kept at school and college level
5. Evaluation/reviews by staff and students
6. Evaluation/reviews and action discussed at school and college level

Area 3	COMPLIANCE WITH SENATE CRITERIA FOR AMS System	Verification/ Observation
Monitoring and Evaluation	STUDENTS MONITOR OWN PROGRESS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently it is promoted by ADOs • Also a major point of focus for the Learning Communities Initiative. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because students are committed, they take the initiative in this regard. Information is accessed by students
	TRACKING OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good systems are in place. • Additional staff that monitor student progress during the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No evidence available. Prof Pillay indicated there is room for improvement in the system that is

	semester (directly via the SMS) provide a good monitoring and support service to students.	used.
	TRACKING OF REFERRALS • Not currently done by College.	• No evidence required
	RECORDS/REPORTS KEPT AT COLLEGE/SCHOOL LEVEL • All files kept at College and School's individual programmes and disciplines have student files available). • Unsure of extent to which files are kept by all disciplines though.	• Not available at the time. • Visits made to schools will be able to produce evidence. School visits not made.
	EVALUATION/REVIEW BY STAFF • Comprehensive	• Not shown any evidence of this
	EVALUATION/REVIEW DISCUSSED AT COLLEGE/SCHOOL • Requires attention. • College level: actions discussed at each Strategic College Management Committee meeting once a month. • Each School has an independent T&L Committee: is appropriate forum for issues such as these to be discussed.	• Confirmed this information but no evidence provided at the time • CMS- College Management Committee • T&L Strategy at Institutional level and school level monthly

Evaluation of Monitoring and Evaluation

EXCEEDS SENATE REQUIREMENTS	MEETS SENATE REQUIRMENTS	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
		X

Comments by Evaluators:

The Panel learned that the researchers struggled to find information on some of the practices around AMS within the College. The incumbent Dean of Teaching and Learning, who was new at the time of the evaluation, did not have readily available data and records that were claimed to be available, and those were availed could not be verified. This is an area for focused attention for the College.

AREA 4: Research

There was one Senate approved criterion under area 4.

3. Research carried out on the intervention/monitoring

Area 4	COMPLIANCE WITH SENATE CRITERIA FOR AMS System	Verification/ Observation
Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results from the different interventions are used for both qualification and non-qualification purposes. • These findings are presented at Conferences or in the form of publications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This information was not available. If enquiry is made from schools, information would be provided

Evaluation of Research

EXCEEDS SENATE REQUIREMENTS	MEETS SENATE REQUIREMENTS	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
		X

Comments by Evaluators:

There were no records to support the claims made by the College due to poor record keeping on the part of the College and also there are no indications that there is prolific writing and research in this area as required by the Senate criterion on Research.

5. Overall Findings

Based on the analysis of AMS at the Colleges and through the process of verifying information that was submitted by the Coordinators of this programme as well as the process of information gathering by the Panel, the following are some of the general findings

- The AMS Coordinator assigned is not always a Senior Academic, as per Senate Criteria. But all Colleges did have the Dean, Teaching and Learning overseeing the AMS Program.
- Administrative support for AMS is limited and is often a function shared with other Teaching and Learning functions.
- All Colleges are able to substantiate the intervention activities with some form of documentation. Activities are discipline-specific and therefore reporting at College level does not do justice to the descriptions of these activities with regard to variety and details.
- The understanding of the term “stakeholders” in AMS varied, but focus is on students, mentors, counsellors and ADOs. Academics and Academic leaders featured only in LMS.
- Information is disseminated to students in various ways, namely emails, bulk sms, University LAN, notices and announcements in Mentoring sessions and lectures.
- Personal counselling was carried out by Student Counselling Centre (SCC) and often this service is detached from the AMS program after a referral has been made. The Code of Confidentiality posed restrictions, except in cases where students provided consent for counsellors to consult and/or liaise with college personnel.
- Career counselling was conducted by ADOs and Academic Leaders of Teaching and Learning.
- Tracking of students performance was a significant problem . This was largely due to the inadequate, fragmented and inconsistent record-keeping methods. Some had the filing system while others captured information on electronic systems.
- Evaluations were done mainly by students, on mentors, workshops, etc.
- Work-space was very limited across all Colleges. Spaces were shared or borrowed. All AMS staff is hired on contractual basis. Only Health Sciences offered a 3-year contract to their ADOs.
- Resources and funds were the source of most of the challenges faced in all the Colleges.
- Research emanating from the AMS program is growing as papers are being produced, abstracts being accepted at Conferences, and internal Conference presentations are made.

6. Commendations on what is working

After carefully studying all the reports related to the implementation of AMS and complimented the data with interviews with stakeholders, it became evident that it was prudent for the panel to make the following commendations:

6.1. The panel commends the University for its successful implementation of the AMS policy in terms of its reach to first year students and gradual inclusion of students at second year and higher levels. Part of this success can be attributed to the compulsory nature of the policy with regards to 'at risk' students. The panel would like to urge the university to look at areas where practice is at odds with policy.

For example:
One college reported: <i>"There were no formal AMS programmes in 2012, there were piecemeal attempts to deal with AMS, 2012 was problematic in that the support available seemed very fragmented and diverse and it was not clear whose responsibility it was to do certain things"</i> . Other reports pointed to a need for better coordination between the school and college in relation to referrals. There is also a need to have a consolidated integrated approach as referrals out of the schools and out of the college AMS system are difficult to monitor.

6.2. The panel commends the University for the uptake of AMS by each college - which is a measure of success as it is taken seriously across the spectrum of teaching and learning. There is overwhelming evidence that AMS is making a significant and positive difference in students efforts to success. The 2010-2012 year on year data from the 2013 enrolment plan of UKZN indicates that there is a 7% increase in student success that could be attributed to a number of interventions, including AMS. The interviews also revealed participation of "non-at risk" students in the green band of the robot system in AMS activities.

6.3. The panel commends the University for its valuable and successful monitoring system such as the robot system and the associated advocacy that has led to the general acceptance of the system by students. The students interviewed acknowledged that initially the system generates trauma and stigma but with time the trauma propels the student to work harder in order to succeed. The success of the robot system can be attributed to strict adherence to policy and the fact that it is a non-punitive approach

that affords students an opportunity to improve their performance before they can be excluded.

- 6.4. The panel commends the University for creating an environment that fosters a strong sense of enthusiasm amongst those participating in the structured system of AMS especially the ADOs.
- 6.5. The panel commends the University for creating an enabling environment that has led to active participation of the ADOs in research and publication thus helping in the professionalization of academic development and support. This in itself is a lesson the University can share with other sister institutions. For example staff presented and published papers in conferences in 2011-2012.
- 6.6. The panel commends the University for successfully implementing three elements of AMS which stood out during the evaluation namely; the Supplementary Instruction, the Writing Place and Mentorship programmes. These elements were clearly recognised and appreciated by the Deans, counsellors, ADOs, students and the SRC president. Unfortunately, however, the panel note that IS cannot be made compulsory because of contractual obligations that guide its use internationally.

7. Recommendations on what is not working

- 7.1. While the diverse approaches by colleges are to be encouraged, the panel recommends that the University enforce a minimum generic standard that all colleges should adhere to in respect to implementation and reporting on AMS programmes in order to underline the institutional character of AMS programmes. This might involve broadening the senate reporting criteria to include gathering useful data on student participation and movement from one status and another within programmes. i.e. tracking of students' performance subsequent to participating in AMS activities. Tracking performance will compel colleges to engage more meaningfully with the data and use it as a self-assessment tool rather than being a mere compliance checklist.

In this respect, the panel would like to urge the colleges to take the self-evaluation exercise seriously; while all colleges were able to catalogue a variety of interventions, they were not able to provide a reflection on possible impact on the interventions that were being provided. The panel would like to suggest a review of the self-evaluation instrument to make it more self-reflective (instead of a checklist) and inculcate a stronger sense and understanding of the notion of self-evaluation. For example, tracking of student performance is rated as working well but the panel

found that this is an area that needs focused attention. There are a number of discrepancies between what the rating in the instrument reflects and what prevails on the ground. This cast some doubt on the accuracy of the claims made on the efficacy of the AMS regime within certain colleges.

7.2. The panel recommends that the University ensures that Colleges fully comply with policy in terms of making AMS activities compulsory to underperforming students. This could be enforced by ensuring that there is a common understanding that policy prescriptions are not optional but need to be complied with. For example, a response received in one of the questionnaires sent to all colleges by QPA indicated that different interpretations of AMS as a programme are impacting on practice: "*There is no formal record keeping of enrolment and attendance (of at risk students) in each school AMS programme. The nature of a support programme in and of itself negates the use of compliance processes as it is perceived as a nurturing, welcoming, student-focused support initiative that wishes to encourage rather than force student to attend through the use of compliance measures*" This implementers view is at odds with the policy.

7.3. The panel recommends that the University engage colleges in looking at alternative funding models for their AMS programmes as the current funding regime is viewed by the panel as inadequate and unsustainable. The uncertainty regarding the continuation of the DHET Teaching Development Grant that is currently utilised to fund most of AMS activities is just one indication that there might be threats to viability of AMS in certain Colleges. The current funding model has relegated AMS activities to the periphery, and it is not viewed by many as part of the core activities in teaching and learning. AMS interventions are currently seen as add-ons to the main curricular activities within the colleges. While some funding is available through the Teaching and Development Grant, this grant is dispensed on a year-to-year basis, which creates challenges for the appointment of senior staff such as ADO's and is at odds with senate criteria on sustainability of the programmes.

The panel recommends that the University attend to Staffing of AMS programmes: This seems to be a perennial problem for AMS at UKZN. The 2011 Review raised the same concern. There seems not to be sufficient stability and continuity in staffing and there is also a need to attend to role clarification particularly between ADOs, Counsellors and Mentors.

7.4 The panel recommends that the University create formal platforms to share experience and good practice in the implementation of AMS programmes, research

data and best practices amongst colleges. The panel acknowledges that there are common services offered in each college, these include academic counselling, peer mentorship, supplemental instruction and tutoring. While these commonalities exist, the panel noted that there is insufficient inter- or intra college collaboration or platforms within the University and in colleges to share good practices. In interviews Academic Development Officers expressed their desire to have more formal sessions that are university wide to promote a dialogue amongst all those that are involved in AMS to share practices and to learn from each other.

7.5. The panel recommends that the University institute appropriate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to ensure that students who are deemed underperforming or 'at risk' all receive supportive services in order to determine and address the cause of their poor performance. The panel is concerned that there are gaps in the current monitoring and evaluation practice across Colleges. There were cases where certain colleges struggled to provide vital statistics on their services. This pointed to a cardinal challenge in the management of data. Most colleges solely rely on the Department of Management of Information (DMI) for their data management of 'at risk' students. Colleges do not seem to be tracking their students' participation in AMS activities as well as the outcome thereof.

Conclusion

While great strides have been made by the University in this area or function of academic monitoring and support, the evaluators are adamant that there are a number of areas that need urgent attention in order to ensure that the AMS policy of the University is fully realised. This would require decisive leadership on the part of senior leadership in the Teaching and Learning portfolio and from their counterparts in research when it comes to academic support at postgraduate level, which was not considered as part of this brief. The College Heads and Deputy Vice-Chancellor would need to seriously engage with the main streaming of AMS, especially when it comes to funding of its activities. It is the Panel's view that the University must desist funding tutorials through soft money as this creates an impression that tutorials should be viewed as projects rather than mainstream activities

that are linked to teaching or facilitation of modules that should come from the main fund. The Panel's evaluation is that AMS programmes at the University of KwaZulu-Natal are amongst the best coordinated and monitored programmes in the country. Over the short period of their being rolled out, huge successes have been achieved and the retention rates are higher and this could be attributed to a variety of support programmes available to students. The 2% increase in graduation rates can be attributed to a number of interventions which AMS also can make a modest claim to. It is from this premise that the panel believes that with some concerted efforts and commitment by all stakeholders, University of KwaZulu-Natal students will continue to receive academic monitoring and support services that look holistically at a student and continue to be available beyond the intended 'at risk' students.