

POLICY AND PROCEDURES: “A STEP TOWARDS ACHIEVING AND SUSTAINING QUALITY STANDARDS”

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Abstract

In this uncertain environmental status and the prevalence of constant change, every organization needs to maintain a certain level of a quality system that will lead to achieving institutional goals and objectives. The system is an integral part of the business operation, maintaining it is very important and comes as the primordial concern and priority. The development of every plan and strategy lies largely on the policy imposed and minor its effectiveness. The policy set for development matters a lot in the way it is translated to all concerns at the different levels. All areas that revolve around the system need to establish synchronized efforts since the aimed quality cannot be achieved overnight. The quality efforts can be as successful as it is if and when the review of every specific area is kept beyond the level set to ensure its attainment. Commitment from top management down to the lowest element in the organization counts as they are the backbone of the success of the operation. Management responsibility needs to firm on its implementation to every stake of quality to keep its level of standards adopted attune to the present trend and addresses the constant changes in terms of demand and environmental change. Part of the success contributor to achieving quality is to have a habitual effort in conducting a review process in a way, action and measurement can effectively take place to reinforce a corrective action to ensure the continuance of quality efforts. The quality standard system designed by management doesn't only focus on the mandated requirements, however, it is a quality way of life.

Keyword: *Policy and procedures: a step towards achieving and sustaining quality standards*

Introduction

For any business nature or institution surrounded by the different threats of competition, the establishment of a standard is vital as it provides every operation detail requirements, specifications, and various guidelines and characteristics in meeting the desired quality output either a process or services. The most widely accepted by the majority of the firm on establishing a standard are those patterns by the International Organization for Standards (ISO). Delivering quality to customers and stakeholders is a very profound challenge as it is deemed crucial if an institution fails to meet quality standards, it may end up losing stakeholders' trust and reduces popularity and patronage. In the present time, as we faced the environmental and health crisis, different types of mechanisms in discharging education where quality is measured depending on the learner's performance in the modern platform. The role of establishing a standard is to detect some defective procedures implemented that will create a variation of the significant desired

knowledge gained. The quality standards imply the imposition of features and specifications offered by product or services that is capable to meet the implied needed result.

For any developing country, improving the quality of higher education institutions is of paramount interest to the government agencies, especially the Commission on Higher Education (CHED). It points out that one initiative being done is rationalizing the structure of both public and private higher education and improving the support in terms of budgetary elements to ensure resources mobilization and cost-efficiency. In recent years, the study should pertain to quality service have been carried out and relatively few of these studies have addressed the specific context of higher education. Generally, policy and procedures are the elements that provide a clear direction towards achieving the organization/institution's stated goals and objectives to carry on. It is the degree to which it satisfies the need of the stakeholders and customers' satisfaction. The quality standard is a vague and complex concept as it requires to be inculcated in the mind and hearts of people involve in the implementation. Different views come from different looks of people just like the group of customers varies in their views however, even if they differ in many ways, one thing in common is they are searching for quality. In the institutional setting, the implementation of quality is inherent to top management and translates its purpose to action by the people around it. Technical knowledge is indeed a key element for success. Hence, to achieve total implementation of an initiative in achieving quality, quality procedures and policy manual is a tool that will lead to success.

Methods

The researcher design and defines the concept of a quality system implementation and utilizes the framework that dissects every element of the process. Every step in the structure leads to a roadmap of the concept leading towards implementing and understanding its background and usefulness as a guide and translating it into an actual practice beneficial to the firm in combatting the implementation of policy and procedures. The policies and procedures in terms of the implementation of quality standards require a thorough understanding of the value of quality and they give an impact on the environment and society as well as gaining the full trust of the client and thereby promote loyalty and patronage. The research sought to define and implement a procedure and policy guideline to achieve quality in tangible and intangible forms. The phase-in designing a quality system manual covers scope and application, management responsibility, planning development and preparation phase, operating phase, result phase, quality procedures, corrective actions, quality standards system, Document and data control, control of quality records, purchasing, service identification, and traceability, internal audit, training, student misconduct, quality procedures and instructions, educational program design and development, process control, control of the supplied product, Contract review, academic progress, statistical techniques, Inspection, and test status, and complaint procedure. The above-enumerated components in designing a quality system are supported by a diagram that helps in defining specific functions and roles played by different sub-components of the process.



Figure 1. The Quality Assurance Process

Results and Discussions

The presentation of different components of a quality system discusses the summarized items in the method of this study.

ON QUALITY POLICY

Section 1. Application and Certification

1.1 Scope and Application

1.1.1 Scope

The scope of the quality standard system of Tagoloan Community College includes all services by the school, either by the school itself or through subcontractors. The scope covers all programs of TCC and the objectives are to ensure that the offerings are properly designed, contain clear objectives as to results are carried out by qualified instructors and are evaluated and improved in line with the market demand, experience, and national and international mandatory rules and regulations.

The Tagoloan Community College includes quality objectives in addition to those covered by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the Association of Local Colleges and Universities Commission on Accreditation (ALCUA) and may then be used to verify that the achievement needed for the achievement of such objectives are implemented and maintained.

1.1.2 Application

The quality standard system of Tagoloan Community College applies all activities related to academic education and enriches all stakeholders.

Section 1.2 Certification

1.2.1 Certificates

The Tagoloan Community College shall comply with the requirements set forth by the Commission on Higher Education and the Association of Local Colleges and Universities Commission on Accreditation (ALCUCOA) complying with the requirements subject to a periodical audit.

Section 1.3. Certification Principles

1.3.1 General

The certification of programs of Tagoloan Community College will include:

- Assessment of the documentation of the management system
- Implementation Audit
- Annual periodical audits for retention of the certificate-renewal audit

1.3.2 Assessment of the documentation of the management system

An assessment of the documentation of the management system shall be performed to verify compliance with the applicable requirements of the governing bodies for the requirements needed to comply with the quality objectives. Corrective action shall be taken against possible non-conformities.

1.3.3 Implementation of Audit

Implementation of the audit shall be performed to verify compliance between the documented management system and the implemented management system. Possible non-conformities will be reported in writing to TCC's top management. Corrective actions shall be taken to possible non-conformities. When corrective actions are closed out or a plan for closing is available and accepted, the case is closed.

1.3.4 Periodical Audit for Retention of Certificate

Periodical audits shall be carried out annually. A Periodical audit should be satisfactorily completed in three months period.

Possible non-conformities shall be reported in writing to the top management of Tagoloan Community College. Corrective actions shall be taken to identify non-conformities with the agreed time.

Section 1.4. Definitions

1.4.1 General

The TCC refers to Tagoloan Community College. An institution offering a variety of programs and all activities organized by the institution shall transfer knowledge, skills, and attitude.

Learning plan curriculum: A learning curriculum may include different learning activities. It will also consist of educational elements such as objectives, contents, methods, and frame conditions.

Pre-program phase: The initial phase of the learning process. This phase consists of two parts:

Planning: Includes analysis of needs and production of a curriculum/learning plan/program.

Preparation: Include all necessary arrangements that must be made before the learning activity is put into operation, such as:

- Learning plans
- Course module
- Course documentation
- Presentation materials

Operation phase- The phase wherein the learning activity is implemented and carried out according to the learning plan.

The resulting phase- Begins immediately after the operation phase. When the operation completes, an evaluation report may be provided to any person for the administrative task.

Review: Activity to determine the suitability, adequacy, and effectiveness of the subject matter to achieve established objectives.

Verification: Confirmation through the provision of objective evidence that specified requirements are fulfilled.

Validation: Confirmation through the provision of objective evidence that the requirement for the specific intended use or application has been fulfilled.

Customer: The Tagoloan Community College customers are typically the students who are officially enrolled for the current school year.

Section 1.5 Minimum requirement for learning activity

1.5.1 General

All learning activities provided by TCC are following the standards and they will be planned, operated, and evaluated by analyzing the interrelation of the following educational elements:

- purpose
- objective
- method/learning process
- Contents
- general conditions
- evaluations

Section 2. General

2.1 Management Responsibility

2.1.1 Policy and objectives

The Tagoloan Community College shall establish a quality policy and ensure that it:

- is appropriate to the purpose of effective learning
- include a commitment to comply with requirements and continually improve the effectiveness of the management system
- provide a framework for establishing and reviewing quality objectives.
- is communicated and understood within the organization
- is reviewed for continuing suitability

The Tagoloan Community College shall ensure that quality objectives are established and that objectives are measurable and consistent with the quality policy

Measurable objectives may be but are not limited to:

- Level of student satisfaction
- Passing scores (exam)
- Benchmarking against other institutions
- Actual time spent compared to schedules

The Tagoloan Community College management shall ensure those customer requirements are determined and met to enhance customer satisfaction.

The Tagoloan Community College shall ensure that planning of the quality management system is performed to:

- identify the needed processes
- determine the sequence and interaction of these processes
- ensure that the operation control of the process is effective
- ensure availability of resources
- monitor, measure, and analyze the different processes
- ensure continuous improvement of the processes
- maintain the integrity of the management system when modifications are planned and implemented

Typical output of planning might be the quality manual, documented procedures, instructions, and flow charts.

Planning of resources includes:

- who shall perform the verification
- who shall perform the work
- identification of training needs
- assures that appropriate types of equipment are available

2.1.2 Responsibility and Authority

The responsibility, authority, and interrelation of all personnel who manage, perform, and verify work affecting the quality of the Tagoloan Community College activities shall be defined, particularly for personnel with responsibility for:

- initiating to prevent the occurrence of non-conformities
- identifying and recording deficiencies related to learning
- initiating and recommending or providing solutions through designated channels
- verifying the implementation of solutions
- controlling the process until the deficiency has been corrected

The Tagoloan Community College shall determine and provide the resources needed to:

- implement and maintain the quality management system and continually improve its effectiveness
- enhance customer satisfaction by meeting their requirements

2.1.3 Management Representatives

The Tagoloan Community College shall appoint a member of the management who irrespectively of other duties, shall have responsibility and authority for:

- ensuring that the processes needed for a quality management system are established, implemented, and maintained

Reporting on the performance of the management system to the school management for review and as a basis for improvement of the management system

- ensuring the promotion of awareness of customer requirements throughout the organization.

2.1.4 Review

The Tagoloan Community College management shall review the management system at defined intervals to ensure its:

- continuing suitability
- effectiveness in satisfying the requirements of this standard
- adequacy
- effectiveness in satisfying the academic policy and objectives
- assessment of opportunities for improvement

Such reviews are to be performed at least annually and records to be maintained. The review is to consist of well-structured and comprehensive evaluations which include, but are not limited to:

- consideration for updating the management system concerning changes in current and new regulations, market demands among others
- internal and external audit reports
- recommending improvements
- feedback from students and other interested parties
- process the performance and conformity to learnings
- status of preventive and corrective actions
- follow-up actions from previews management reviews

Output from the management review shall include decisions and actions related to:

- improvement of the effectiveness of the quality system and its process
- improvement of teaching, curriculum, equipment, and facilities related to students and statutory requirements
- resources needed

Records of review shall be maintained.

Records of management review should include, but are not limited to:

- who performs the review
- date of the review
- what was reviewed
- the result of the review
- action points
- assignment of action points
- status of the previous action
- conclusion

2.1.5 Improvement

The Tagoloan Community College shall continually improve the effectiveness of the quality system through the use of objectives, audit results, data analysis, corrective and preventive actions, and management reviews.

The Tagoloan Community College shall establish procedures for reporting and dealings with non-conformities and unintended events.

Records to be maintained.

- who reports
- who should report
- what information to include in the report
- follow-up
- closing
- statistical use

The Tagoloan Community College shall initiate action to eliminate the cause of non-conformities to prevent a recurrence. A documented procedure shall be established for:

- review of non-conformities and complaint
- investigation to find the root cause
- evaluate action to prevent a recurrence
- determine the implementation of the needed actions
- records of action taken
- review of corrective action taken

2.1.6 Non-conforming Students

The Tagoloan Community College shall establish routines for handling students not performing as required. Actions to assist the students shall be taken at an early stage during the study.

The institution shall establish routines for re-visiting in case a student fails to pass the examination

2.1.7 Non-conforming Teaching

The Tagoloan Community College establish a routine for how to deal with non-conforming education and teaching

As a minimum, measures should be taken to assure learning objectives have been met.

2.2 Quality Manual, Document, and Data Control

2.2.1 Quality Manual

The Tagoloan Community College shall establish documents and maintain a management system as a means of ensuring the students achieve knowledge, skills, and attitudes in compliance with educational objectives.

A quality manual shall be prepared to cover and include those issues that have a bearing on all matters for the provision of the services offered, including backup and administrative services. The quality manual shall include or make reference to procedures affecting the overall quality and outline the structure of the documentation used in the management system. The following shall be included:

- documented procedures consistent with the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the Association of Local Colleges and Universities Commission on Accreditation (ALCUCA) as well as the institution standards citing objectives and policies

- a description of how to effectively implement the management system and its documentation procedures
- a description of the interaction between the processes of the management system

If the institution decides to outsource any of these processes, it shall ensure control of these processes.

The Tagoloan Community College management shall ensure that appropriate communication channels are established within the organization and that communication regarding the effectiveness of the management system takes place.

Examples might be

- notice boards
- websites
- meeting, briefings and orientations
- internal magazines
- suggestion forms

2.2.2 Document and Data Control Procedures

The Tagoloan Community College shall establish and maintain documented procedures for all control documents and data related to the requirement of this standard.

The document data shall be reviewed and approved for adequacy by authorized personnel before issue. A master list or equivalent documents control procedure identifying our current revision status of the document shall be established and be readily available to preclude the use of invalid and/or obsolete documents or data. The control is as a minimum to ensure that:

- pertinent issues of appropriate documentation/data are available at all relevant locations
- invalid and/or obsolete documents/data are promptly removed from all points of issue, or otherwise assured against unintended use
- changes to documents and data shall be reviewed and approved by the same functions that performed the original review and approval unless specifically designated otherwise.
- up-to-date documents are available as necessary to meet the requirements
- educational programs are delivered consistently
- document of external origin are identified and their distribution controlled
- documents remain legible and readily identifiable

The arrangement also includes:

- clear identification of which information is controlled
- clear responsibility for its upkeep
- relevant versions of applicable documents are available at the point of use

Controlled documents may be:

- quality manuals
- course manual
- time tables
- training records
- examination/assessment procedure documents

- programme information
- regulations and requirements which are implied that shall be met
- relevant legislation
- examining regulation and syllabi
- contracts

2.2.3 Record and Filing

Records shall be established and maintained to provide evidence of conformity to requirements and the effective operation of the quality management system. Records shall remain legible, readily identifiable, and retrievable.

The Tagoloan Community College shall establish documented procedures to define the controls needed for the identification, storage, protection, retrieval, retention, time, and disposition of records.

Examples could be:

- report from external validating bodies
- reports from external examiners
- awards of trainees
- approve specialist lecturers or advisers
- internal audit record
- management reviews and records
- evaluation results
- non-conformities
- student register
- personnel archives
- course work and examination answer archives

When relevant, electronic backup procedures shall be established.

The Tagoloan Community College shall establish procedures for maintaining trainee records. These documented procedures shall ensure the accuracy and confidentiality of these records at all times.

An example of student information to be maintained might be:

- prior learning experience
- previous experience and qualifications
- any information pertinent to a trainee's progress
- personal details

Procedures shall be established for maintaining personnel records

Details may include:

- qualification
- recruitment
- any course attended

Retention times for quality records are to be established and regulatory requirements shall be considered. Records may be kept in any media or format (electronically/hard copies)

2.3 Evaluation of Suppliers

2.3.1 Purchasing Process

The Tagoloan Community College shall ensure that purchase products/supplies conform to specified purchase requirements. The type and extent of control applied to the supplier and the purchased product shall be dependent upon the effect of the purchased product on the education provided.

Examples of the product might be:

- learning materials (in soft or hard copy form)
- sub-contracted training
- sub-contracted tutors, lecturers, learning organizations
- learning equipment

The Tagoloan Community College shall evaluate and select suppliers based on their ability to supply products following the institution's requirements. Criteria for selection, evaluation, and re-evaluation shall be established.

Records of evaluation and re-evaluation of suppliers shall be maintained.

Purchasing information shall describe the product to be purchased, including where appropriate.

- approval requirements
- a requirement for qualification of personnel
- a requirement for the management system

Adequacy of the requirement shall be considered before suppliers are contracted.

The Tagoloan Community College shall establish the inspection or other activities necessary for ensuring that the purchase meets the specified purchase requirements.

2.4 Identification and Traceability

2.4.1 General

The Tagoloan Community College shall establish procedures for identifying program elements during all stages of development, delivery, and updating. This might be solved by ordinary document control using heading with name or number, of course, pagination, and version among others. Establishing suitable means to ensure traceability of student's education from time to time of application and the examination.

2.5. Internal Audit

2.5 General

The institution shall carry out an internal audit to verify the implementation of the management system and to determine its effectiveness. This will include confirming that the courses or programs of learning are achieved through specific objectives. The audit and follow-up action shall be carried out following documented procedures. Audit frequency shall be established ensuring minimum annual audits.

The result of the audit shall be brought to the attention of the personnel having the responsibility of the area audited. The management is responsible for the areas that shall take timely corrective action on the deficiencies found during the audit. The audit shall be carried out by qualified personnel. The auditor shall as far as possible, not be directly involved in the area being audited. Records of internal audit shall be maintained.

2.5.2 Audit Plan

An audit plan shall be established. The plan is to cover the following points.

- specific areas/ courses/programs to be audited
- qualifications of personnel carrying out the audit

2.6 Staff Competency and Training

2.6.1 General

The Tagoloan Community College shall:

- determine the necessary competence for personnel performing work affecting the quality of education
- provide learnings or take other forms to satisfy these needs
- evaluate the effectiveness of the action taken
- ensure that personnel are aware of the importance of their work and how they contribute to the quality objectives

Records of training to be maintained:

- training needs might be identified through appraisal interviews
- action taken might be verified through the evaluation of instruments

Planning, Development, and Preparation Stage 3.1 Planning

3.1.1 General

The Tagoloan Community College shall plan and control the development of the education and training program

Maintain the interfaces between different groups involved in the development to ensure effective communication and clear assignment of responsibility.

Example of stages in development:

- project plan
- establish input requirements
- curriculum plan
- course plan and descriptions
- teaching and learning materials
- Hand-outs
- evaluation materials
- assessment materials
- verifications
- test run validation
- completion and documentations

3.2 Development

3.2.1 Input requirements for Training Programmes

Inputs relating to education/training programs requirements shall be determined and records

are maintained

3.2.2 Output Education/learning Programmes

The education/learning programs shall be provided in a form that enables verification against the design and development requirements and shall be approved before release

3.2.3 Development Review

All suitable reviews of development shall be performed following the established procedures

Conclusion and Recommendation

In this uncertain environmental status and the prevalence of constant change, every organization needs to maintain a certain level of a quality system that will lead to achieving institutional goals and objectives. The system is an integral part of the business operation, maintaining it is very important and comes as the primordial concern and priority. The development of every plan and strategy lies largely on the policy imposed and minor its effectiveness. The policy set for development matters a lot in the way it is translated to all concerns at the different levels. All areas that revolve around the system need to establish synchronized efforts since the aimed quality cannot be achieved overnight. The quality efforts can be as successful as it is if and when the review of every specific area is kept beyond the level set to ensure its attainment. Commitment from top management down to the lowest element in the organization counts as they are the backbone of the success of the operation. Management responsibility needs to firm on its implementation to every stake of quality to keep its level of standards adopted attune to the present trend and addresses the constant changes in terms of demand and environmental change. Part of the success contributor to achieving quality is to have a habitual effort in conducting a review process in a way, action and measurement can effectively take place to reinforce a corrective action to ensure the continuance of quality efforts. The quality standard system designed by management doesn't only focus on the mandated requirements, however, it is a quality way of life.

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