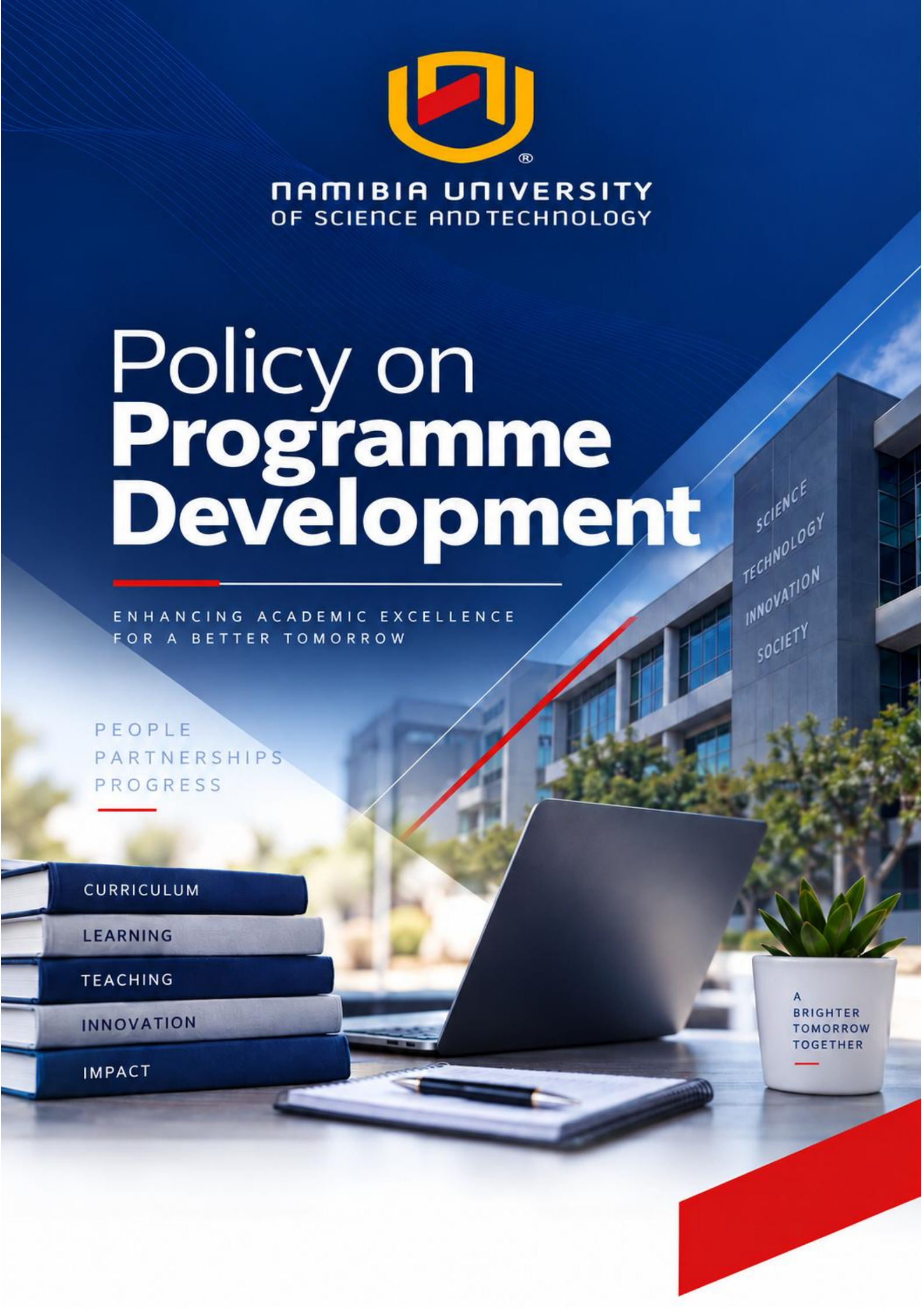
NAMIBIA UNIVERSITY
OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Policy on **Programme Development**

ENHANCING ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE
FOR A BETTER TOMORROW

PEOPLE
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PROGRESS



Academic Development and Support

POLICY ON PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT

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University Seal:



ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Abbreviation	Meaning
DVC	Deputy Vice-Chancellor
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NHRP	National Human Resources Plan
PQM	Programme Qualification Mix

Acronym	Meaning
NUST	Namibia University of Science and Technology

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DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Academic staff	All members of the University are actively engaged in teaching, assessing, or evaluating a specified learning program.
Assessment	A general term that embraces all methods used to evaluate the performance of students against a set of criteria. It is the process of collecting evidence of students' performance and effort to measure and assess the achievement or non-achievement of specified National Qualifications Framework (NQF) standards or qualification outcomes.
Course	A cohesive piece of learning in a subject or cognate area of learning designed to contribute to the student's achievement of the learning outcomes of the qualification enrolled for.
Curriculum	A set of courses with their content, set standards, delivery methods and assessment strategies as offered on a programme.
Programme	A learning pathway constructed by the institution to enable a student to achieve the outcomes of a specific qualification or set of qualifications. It consists of a comprehensive description of the outcomes to be achieved by a programme; the courses in that programme; the teaching, learning and assessment strategies to be used in the programme; and any special arrangements applicable to the programme. Programmes may be discipline-based, professional, career-focused or trans-, inter- or multi-disciplinary in nature. A programme has recognised entry and exit points.
Qualification	Any award that represents the attainment, following robust assessment processes, of a coherent cluster of specified outcomes of learning to prescribed standards of performance.
Stakeholders	**A**ny individual, organisation or statutory body that performs an active role within a specified academic programme.

1. PREAMBLE

The Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST) is a dynamic institution that delivers career-focused higher education through the development and delivery of innovative and high-quality academic programmes. Curriculum development and review at NUST is an ongoing, interactive and consultative process that involves industry and other stakeholders from the initial to implementation stages. The process is initiated, controlled, and implemented at the departmental level in consultation with relevant stakeholders and with support from other units within the Institution.

1.1 Purpose

This policy aims to provide the principles, guidelines and a consistent framework for developing, reviewing and approving academic programmes at the University. The policy is designed to:

1.1.1 Ensure that the University is responsive to current and future market opportunities through programme development and reviews, thus supporting its vision, mission, and strategic planning and objectives.

1.1.2 Ascertain that the University complies with all relevant legislation and standards related to programme development and review.

1.1.3 Support the design, development, implementation and review of programmes through efficient and effective consultation with relevant internal and external stakeholders to ensure the ongoing relevance of academic programmes.

1.1.4 Ensure that the institution takes ultimate responsibility for maintaining the quality of the programmes offered to students, thus providing them with employability and entrepreneurial skills and knowledge.

1.1.5 Promote the development of a futuristic technology-driven curriculum that has its origin in research, industry, and students' needs.

1.2 Background

NUST continuously strives to improve teaching, learning and assessment by designing, developing, implementing, monitoring, evaluating and reviewing academic programmes. This policy is therefore expected to draw its authority from the University Strategic Plan, the Regulations Setting up the National Qualifications Framework for Namibia, the Quality Assurance System for Higher Education in Namibia, the requirements of professional bodies and other relevant organisations, and aligned to the National Human Resources Plan (NHRP). This policy is designed to ensure coherent and consistent development and review of curricula, based on principles of academic, subject and research excellence, and considering relevant external and internal quality assurance reference points.

1.3 Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to ensure:

1.3.1 That programmes developed and reviewed are appropriate in terms of their level and content and align with the institution's strategic objectives, vision and mission.

1.3.2 Coordination, standardisation and monitoring of programme development, approval, and review activities.

1.3.3 Appropriate decision-making on the broad structure and framework of an academic programme, its main areas of teaching and learning, the sequencing of its main topics and its main methods of assessment.

1.3.4 All members of the University community are aware of and support the Institution's approach to programme development, approval and review.

1.3.5 That industry-specific, career-focused and demand-driven programmes are developed and implemented in line with regional and international best practices.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

In the effort to realise its vision, mission, values and objectives, NUST is committed to programme development, implementation and review processes that are inclusive, consultative and incorporate expertise from a range of stakeholders for continuous relevance and quality improvement.

Thus:

2.1 Curriculum development and review is undertaken by faculty members through their respective departments, under the authority of the Faculty Dean.

2.2 Courses will be developed by faculty members or, where external expertise is required, by non-faculty practitioners or academic specialists working under the authority of the faculty.

2.3 Academic departments and faculties must ensure that appropriate consultation has occurred throughout the process of programme development and before approval.

3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

This Programme Development and Review Policy are based on the following guiding principles:

3.1 Relevance: Programme development or review is consistent with the University mission, vision and relevant to the current and future needs of industry and thereby being cognizant of the broader intents outlined by the National Human Resources Plan in Namibia. The

relevance of the curriculum is enhanced through collaboration and consultation with key stakeholders. Stakeholders should include current and former students, academics, professional bodies, and employers in the public and private sectors. The curriculum should be future focused to enable students to develop their employability and career readiness and to develop the knowledge, skills and qualities needed to make a positive contribution to sustainability in local and global communities

3.2 Alignment and coherence: Programmes and curricula are coherently designed and aligned at macro, meso, and micro levels. The programme design process adopts a constructive alignment framework to design learning and teaching activities that optimise students' chances of achieving the course learning outcomes and assessment tasks that enable clear judgment on how well those outcomes have been attained.

The University's programmes are responsive to the discipline/field, to the students' learning needs, and to the social context, taking into account our position as a public university in Namibia. The approach to curriculum design should be relevant, up to date, and address the national developmental needs and imperatives.

3.3 Learning-centredness in teaching and learning: The design and development of curricula should advocate for an environment where students learn by doing, are engaged in the manipulation of study materials, practice, and develop discipline-specific skills. A learning-centred approach is an emerging teaching and learning method that involves active student participation in creating and contributing to their own learning.

3.4 Multidisciplinary: Where applicable, the curriculum should promote cooperation between faculty and across the university in terms of Programme Qualification Mix (PQM).

3.5 Flexibility: Curricula should be designed such that it promotes flexibility of learning to the various types of prospective students. A flexible curriculum will ensure that students can progressively attain the learning outcomes, which include cognitive, general and professional practices and skills of the discipline/field.

3.6 Internationalisation: The development or review should take cognisance of international dimensions in terms of delivery and outcomes of programme study

3.7 Technology enhances learning: The curriculum should integrate existing and emerging technologies institutionally and beyond to support teaching and learning methods as described in the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Framework.

3.8 Quality Assurance of Curriculum Design and Review: The quality assurance of academic courses is assured through academic course approval (Programme Advisory Committee; Board of Studies, Academic Planning Committee, Senate and national/international quality assurance bodies), annual programme course evaluation, exposure to the Programme Quality Assurance Tool, regular student feedback, and student evaluation of courses and lecturers.

4. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The Programme Development Policy is underpinned by the following legislative, regulatory, national and institutional instruments:

4.1 Constitution of the Republic of Namibia: Provides the constitutional foundation for education in Namibia and supports NUST's mandate to provide accessible, relevant and quality higher education.

4.2 Namibia University of Science and Technology Act, 2015 (Act No. 7 of 2015): Establishes NUST and provides the statutory mandate and authority for the University to develop, approve and offer academic programmes and qualifications.

4.3 Higher Education Act, 2003 (Act No. 26 of 2003): Provides the overarching legislative framework for higher education in Namibia and establishes requirements relating to institutional quality assurance, academic standards and the regulation of higher education.

4.4 Namibia Qualifications Authority Act, 1996 (Act No. 29 of 1996): Provides the statutory basis for the development, registration, accreditation and quality assurance of qualifications within Namibia.

4.5 Regulations Setting Up the National Qualifications Framework for Namibia, Government Notice No. 125 of 2006: Provides the framework for determining qualification levels, credits, learning outcomes and other requirements that must inform the design and development of NUST programmes and qualifications.

4.6 Regulations for the Accreditation of Persons, Institutions or Organisations, Government Notice No. 124 of 2006: Establishes accreditation requirements that guide NUST in designing programmes that meet prescribed national quality and accreditation standards.

4.7 Quality Assurance System for Higher Education in Namibia: Provides the national quality assurance principles and processes that guide the development, approval, accreditation, implementation and review of NUST academic programmes.

4.8 Minimum Standards for Higher Education Institutions in Namibia: Establishes minimum institutional and academic standards that NUST must consider when developing and delivering academic programmes.

4.9 NUST Curriculum Framework: Provides the institutional framework for curriculum design and ensures that programme development aligns with NUST's academic vision, graduate attributes, qualification requirements and curriculum principles.

4.10 National Human Resources Plan: Provides national human resource development priorities that inform the relevance, responsiveness and alignment of NUST academic programmes with Namibia's skills and development needs.

4.11 Programme Development

Development of programmes should align with the Institution's mission and vision. The development process must promote consultation with relevant stakeholders to ensure that programmes are demand-driven, industry-specific, and global-focused.

4.12 Programme Review

Programmes shall be regularly reviewed in accordance with the NQF requirements.

5. POLICY CONTEXT AND SCOPE

This policy provides a general guide to the process of developing and reviewing undergraduate and postgraduate programmes at NUST. It is intended for use by all permanent and part-time academic staff and administrators from all faculties, centres, units, institutes and departments involved in the development, review and approval of academic programmes at NUST.

6. STRUCTURES GOVERNING THE POLICY

The following structures are responsible for the governance of the policy:

6.1 NUST Council
6.2 Office of the DVC – Teaching, Learning and Technology
6.3 Director: Academic Development and Support
6.4 Faculties/ Departments

7. IMPLEMENTATION

7.1 NUST Council

The Council shall:

7.1.1 Approve new academic programmes and major amendments to existing programmes in accordance with the University's governance requirements and applicable national regulatory standards.

7.1.2 Provide strategic oversight to ensure that programme development supports NUST's mandate, strategic priorities, institutional mission and national development needs.

7.1.3 Exercise oversight over the quality, sustainability and compliance of academic programmes, including ensuring that programmes meet applicable accreditation and qualification requirements.

7.2 Office of the DVC, Teaching, Learning and Technology

Office of the DVC, Teaching, Learning and Technology shall:

7.2.1 Provide strategic academic leadership and oversight for the development, review, approval and implementation of academic programmes across the University.

7.2.2 Ensure that programme development aligns with the NUST Curriculum Framework, Teaching, Learning and Assessment Framework, quality assurance requirements, NQF requirements and the University's strategic priorities.

7.2.3 Coordinate academic stakeholder input and ensure that programme proposals are subjected to appropriate academic scrutiny, quality assurance, resource assessment and approval processes before submission to the relevant governance structures.

7.3 Director: Academic Development and Support

Director: Academic Development and Support shall:

7.3.1 Coordinate and provide technical guidance on the design, development, review and revision of academic programmes in accordance with approved NUST frameworks, policies, procedures and national requirements.

7.3.2 Facilitate quality assurance and academic development processes, including curriculum design, programme benchmarking, learning outcomes, qualification alignment, stakeholder consultation and preparation of programme documentation for approval and accreditation.

7.3.3 Provide capacity development, advice and support to Faculties and Departments on programme development, curriculum innovation, accreditation requirements and continuous programme improvement.

7.4 Faculties/Departments

Faculties/Departments shall:

7.4.1 Identify academic, professional, industry and societal needs and initiate proposals for new programmes or revisions to existing programmes in accordance with the University's strategic priorities and programme development requirements.

7.4.2 Develop and review programme curricula, including programme objectives, learning outcomes, course structures, assessment approaches, resources and qualification requirements, in consultation with relevant stakeholders.

7.4.3 Implement, monitor and periodically review approved programmes to ensure academic quality, relevance, compliance with accreditation requirements and continuous improvement.

7.2 Support and Advice

Support and advice regarding this policy and its implementation will be provided by the unit responsible for programme development.

7.3 Communication

This policy shall be made available on the NUST Intranet upon approval.

7.4 Procedures and Forms

The following forms and documents shall be made available for the programme development, review and approval process:

a. Guidelines for conducting needs assessments/market surveys
b. Quick reference guide to the curriculum development and approval process
c. Programme documentation template
d. Checklist for Adhering to Programme Development

8. COMMENTS

Complaints, objections, and concerns regarding this policy and its application should be addressed with the unit responsible for program development.

9. REVIEW

This policy must be reviewed every five (5) years or as needed. Any major amendment to this policy that implies substantial changes to its objectives is subject to the approval of the University Council.



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