

GLOSSARY (CURRENT HEQC USAGE OF TERMS)¹¹⁸

Academic development	A field of research and practice that aims to enhance the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning in higher education, and to enable institutions and the higher education system to meet key educational goals, particularly in relation to equity of access and outcomes. Academic development encompasses four interlinked areas of work: student development (particularly foundational and skills-oriented provision), staff development, curriculum development and institutional development.
Accreditation	Recognition status granted to a programme for a stipulated period of time after an evaluation indicates that it meets minimum standards of quality. Depending on the context, accreditation may be part of an internal accreditation system, or may be external (e.g. by the HEQC or a professional council).
Benchmarking	A process by which an institution, programme, faculty, school, department or other unit compares itself in chosen areas against internal and external, national and international reference points, for the purposes of monitoring and improvement.
Capacity development (CD)	The development and implementation of initiatives to build and strengthen capacity for high quality provision at multiple learning programme and individual) levels.
Community engagement	Initiatives and processes through which the expertise of the institution in the areas of teaching and learning, and research, are applied to address issues relevant to its community. Community engagement may find expression in informal and relatively unstructured activities, or in formal and structured academic programmes (service learning programmes – see: Service learning).
Evidence	Information provided by an institution to enable audit or accreditation judgements.
Fitness for purpose	Institutional fitness in terms of conditions at institutional level that enable and support the implementation of autonomously determined visions and missions.

118 The purpose of this research is to explore a range of concepts and terminologies. This glossary lists current HEQC usage of key terms (as well as other terms that appear in the text) for purposes of reference, and possibly comparison.

Fitness of purpose	Institutional fitness in terms of autonomously determined visions and missions that seek to align institutional purposes with national policy goals, priorities and targets for transformation.
Institutional audit	An improvement-orientated external evaluation (e.g. by the HEQC) of institutional arrangements for quality in teaching and learning, research and community engagement, based on a self-evaluation conducted by the institution.
Programme	Purposeful and structured set of learning experiences that leads to a qualification.
Quality assurance (QA)	Processes of ensuring that specified standards or requirements for quality have been met.
Quality management (QM)	Institutional arrangements for assuring, supporting, developing and enhancing, and monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, research and community engagement.
Quality promotion (QP)	The development of a programme of activities to institutionalise a quality culture in higher education and the commitment to continuous quality improvement.
Self-evaluation	The process by which an institution reviews the effectiveness of its QMS for assuring, developing and monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, research and community engagement. In the context of an institutional audit, self-evaluation would be against the requirements of audit criteria (e.g. HEQC audit criteria) and any other quality criteria that the institution deems relevant.
Service learning	Applied learning, which is directed at specific community, needs and is integrated into an academic programme and curriculum. It could be credit-bearing and assessed, and may or may not take place in a work environment.