



2020 Quality Promotion Conference

First Announcement

Following the successful hosting of third Southern African Regional Quality Assurance Conference under the auspices of the Southern African Quality Assurance Network (SAQAN) in 2016, the Southern African Regional Quality Assurance Workshop with the funding from the German Academic Exchange Services (DAAD) in 2017, and Quality Promotion Conference in 2019, the CHE is pleased to release its first announcement of the 2020 Quality Promotion Conference which is scheduled to take place from 26 to 28 February 2020. The theme of the conference is: ***Enhancing Academic Success through the Involvement of Students in Quality Assurance and Promotion in Higher Education.***

Background and motivation for the theme

Higher education plays a critical role in the socio-economic development of countries and is a central pillar of knowledge societies in the contemporary world. It is for these reasons that the quality, effectiveness and efficiency of higher education have been subject to constant scrutiny, particularly from the point of view of public accountability. The quality of higher education is not just a concern for quality assurance agencies and academics in institutions, but also for all stakeholders within the higher education sector, including students. After all, the primary objective of quality assurance and promotion is to create conditions for 'academic success', which is defined as the attainment, by students, of the learning objectives, the

desired skills and competencies, satisfaction, persistence, and acceptable post-qualification performance in the work environment.¹

Quality assurance and promotion are therefore primarily about the success of students in their academic pursuits. To this end, the involvement of students in quality matters is of paramount importance, since students are at the receiving end of the teaching and learning experience. Students need to have a good understanding of issues of quality and the processes thereof, as such understanding enables them to make informed decisions on how they can be part of the quality assurance and promotion initiatives, and thus influence these initiatives to facilitate the creation of conditions for their academic success. Quality literacy does not only enhance the involvement of students, but it also empowers them to define and shape quality in academic programmes and institutional arrangements, in ways that they contribute to success in their academic pursuits. The ability to do so should be central to quality assurance and promotion in institutions.

Although there is general acceptance of the importance of involving students in quality assurance and promotion initiatives, the actual practice has been both sporadic and *ad hoc*. It would appear from the literature, that in most higher education institutions, there is minimal, if any, involvement of students in quality assurance and promotion initiatives. Furthermore, in those institutions where there is some semblance of involvement in quality assurance and promotion initiatives, the roles of the students in such initiatives are not clearly defined.

The conference on '*Enhancing Academic Success through the Involvement of Students in Quality Assurance and Promotion in Higher Education*' is intended to provide a platform for critical discourses on the need for, and approaches to enhancing academic success by upscaling the involvement of students in quality assurance activities within higher education in South Africa; the international trends thereof; and challenges that hinder achievement of optimal levels of the involvement of students in quality assurance and promotion programmes. It is further envisaged that the conference participants will deliberate on strategies for

¹ York, T. T., Gibson, C., & Rankin, S. (2015) Defining and measuring academic success, *Practical Assessment, Research and Evaluation*, 20(5): 1 - 21

upscaling the involvement of students in quality assurance and promotion initiatives with a view towards improving academic success.

Conference aim and objectives

The aim of the conference is to explore mechanisms for upscaling the involvement of students in quality assurance and promotion in higher education as a means to enhancing academic success.

The objectives are:

- To deconstruct the 'academic success' concept and draw links to quality assurance and promotion in higher education;
- To examine the possible contribution of 'student involvement' in quality assurance and promotion, towards enhancing academic success;
- To examine the different models of, and approaches to student involvement in quality assurance and promotion;
- To explore local and international trends in student involvement in quality assurance and promotion in a changing higher education environment;
- To identify institutional structures that could be employed to foster student involvement in quality assurance and promotion; and
- To assess the common challenges of upscaling student involvement in quality assurance and promotion, and to identify possible strategies for overcoming them.

Participants

The conference intends to bring together about 200 participants from across the African continent. The participants should ideally be affiliated to:

- Public and private higher education institutions;
- National and institutional-level student bodies;
- Quality assurance agencies;
- Professional bodies;
- Research institutions;
- Ministries and/or Departments of Higher Education; and
- Non-governmental organisations operating within the higher education sector.

Academics, students, quality assurance and promotion staff in higher education institutions, quality assurance and promotion staff in councils or commissions of

higher education, quality assurance and promotion staff in professional bodies, researchers, policy developers, and policy analysts are particularly encouraged to attend the conference.

Date, venue and structure of the conference

The conference is scheduled to take place from 26 to 28 February 2020 in Pretoria, South Africa, at a venue to be announced in a few weeks' time.

The conference is planned to comprise plenary sessions, paper presentation sessions, poster session, panel discussion, session for special interest groups, a conference cocktail/dinner, and an excursion. It will run for two-and-half days.

Call for Abstracts

Academics, researchers, practitioners and all others who are interested in presenting their research or poster presentations are invited to submit abstracts for presentations at the conference. The abstracts should address any of the following subthemes:

The **subthemes** of the Conference are as follows:

- Perspectives on academic success;
- Contribution of student involvement in quality assurance and promotion towards academic success;
- Models of, and approaches to student involvement in quality assurance and promotion;
- Trends in student involvement in a changing higher education environment;
- Institutional structures for fostering student involvement in quality assurance and promotion; and
- Challenges of upscaling student involvement in quality assurance and promotion, and their possible solutions.

Abstracts submitted should adhere to the following requirements:

- Not more than 350 words long;
- Reflect titles, names of authors and their institutional or organisational affiliations;
- Bear email addresses of the corresponding authors;

- List the five (5) key words;
- Typed using 11-point Century Gothic font type; and
- Text lines justified and spaced at one-and-half line spacing.

Submission should be by email to the following email address: Mokatsane.S@che.ac.za (cc Moyo.C@che.ac.za). The **deadline for the submission of abstracts is 30 November 2019**. Those authors whose abstracts would have been accepted would be notified by 13 December 2019.

Publication of Conference Papers

Up to fifteen (15) selected full papers presented at the conference will be published in a special issue of the *South African Journal of Higher Education (SAJHE)*. Authors will be allowed two months after the conference to revise their papers in line with the inputs received at the conference. The revised papers will further undergo a peer review process before being published and only the papers that the peer reviewers will recommend will eventually be published in the special issue on the SAJHE in 2020. The SAJHE is a journal recognised by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) for the purposes of research output subsidy in public universities.

Registration for the Conference

All those who intend to be part of the conference should each complete and submit an official registration form which can be accessed by clicking here: [Registration](#). Please follow the submission instructions on the form after completing it in full.

Registration for the conference will close on **8 February 2020**. However, in the event that the target number of registered participants is reached before the planned closing date, the Organising Committee reserves the right to close registration earlier than the date reflected above.

Registration Fees

Early bird Registration: **up to 13 December 2019**

- Delegates based in South Africa: R4 800 per delegate

- Delegates based outside South Africa: 360 US Dollars per delegate

Registration: **From 14 December 2019 onwards**

- Delegates based in South Africa: R5 600 per delegate
- Delegates based outside South Africa: 415 US Dollars per delegate

Payment details will be sent with the invoice once the registration has been received and confirmed.

Registration fee waiver for presenters

The requirement to pay registration fees will be waived for authors whose abstracts get accepted for presentation at the conference. This means that the presenters will need not pay the registration fees to attend and present at the conference.

Enquiries

Enquiries should be **emailed** to the following members of the Organising Committee:

- Dr Christabelle Moyo – Email: Moyo.C@che.ac.za Tel: +27 (0) 12 349 3937
- Mr Ntokozo Bhengu – Email: Bhengu.N@che.ac.za; Tel: +27 (0) 12 349 3885
- Ms Selina Mokatsane –Email: Mokatsane.S@che.ac.za; Tel: +27 (0) 12 349 3897
- Ms Sindisiwe Mbhele- Email: Mbhele.S@che.ac.za; Tel: +27 (0) 12 349 3863

More details about the conference and information updates can also be accessed from the conference website: [2020 Quality Promotion Conference Website](#)