

Bridging the Partition between Quality Assurance Units and Educational Development Centres at University: Leverage Points for Quality Development and Enhancement

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ABSTRACT In efforts to develop, assure and enhance quality teaching and learning in universities two structures have emerged in higher education in South Africa namely Quality Assurance (QA) Units and Educational Development Centres (EDCs). The role clarity of these structures in this mandate are however sometimes not explicit resulting in tensions between the two. Using a social realist analytical framework this paper proposes strategies for enhancing synergy between educational development and quality assurance at one South African university named the University of Higher Learning to protect its identity. The paper argues that several leverage points between the two can be used to develop an understanding of their complementary roles, for example, ensuring that educational development expertise is integrated into quality-related work by structuring it into for example programme development, review, accreditation and institutional audit processes and leveraging on the second round of institutional audits with its focus on teaching and learning. The study recommends an integrated model in which quality assurance and educational development work together in developing and implementing both the teaching and learning and the quality assurance agenda in the university.