REPUBLIC OF RWANDA

HIGHER EDUCATION COUNCIL
P.O.BOX 6311 KIGALI

NOTES OF GUIDANCE:

PROGRAMME PROPOSAL FORM

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NOTES OF GUIDANCE: PROGRAMME PROPOSAL FORM

This form covers the first stage of programme and module validation. Its purpose is to check that the programme fits in with Institution and Faculty plans, that there is a need for it and that it is properly resourced. The Notes below offer help in filling it in, question by question. They are addressed to Deans, Heads of Department and Programme Teams.

Please complete the form in Word on your computer if possible. (Where it asks you to 'tick' something, a capital X is acceptable.)

1. PROGRAMME DETAILS

This section sets out the basic details of the proposal:

1.1:   **Title of programme** − the title of the highest qualification obtainable from the programme (e.g. BSc with Honours, Forensic Agriculture). This is what will appear on the students' diplomas, so keep it short and make it sound both academically sound and useful for employment. (See the Appendix I of the *National Qualifications Framework* for a list of degree titles currently valid.

1.2: **Exit awards**. (See the *Qualifications Framework* if in doubt.) For most undergraduate programmes you would list the BA/BSc with Honours, the ordinary BA/BSc, the ADipHE, the DipHE and the CertHE. For most postgraduate programmes you would list the MA/MSc/MPhil/MLitt (see *Qualifications Framework* for the titles to be used for one- or two-year master's degrees), the PgDip and the PgCert. Other programmes (e.g. short courses) will be more selective. Where one of these stages might expected but is not offered, mention this here and explain why not in Section 3. If there is a concurrent 'licence to practice' qualification, as in teaching or medicine, mention it here also and say in Section 3 whether there is another, differently named degree that can be offered to those who pass the academic content but fail the practice component.

1.3: **Modes of attendance.** Tick all those you intend to run from Year 1 of the programme. (You can mention in Section 3 others that might be adopted later.)

1.4: **Resource Group**. This is to help us check, later in the form, that staffing is adequate. Tick one. (If your topic area is a mixture of these levels it probably belongs in category 3.) If your topic area is not listed below, write it in under 'other'.

For your information, the generally accepted ratios of staff to students are:

1 Classroom-based subject: e.g. social sciences, humanities, business studies, literature: 1: 25

2 High cost classroom subjects: mathematics, statistics, education (teacher training), languages, communication skills: 1: 21

3 Part classroom/part laboratory etc: computing, music, physical education/sport, dance, drama, built environment, creative arts, subjects allied to medicine, psychology: 1: 17.

4 Laboratory subjects: sciences, pre-clinical medicine: 1: 15.

5 High cost laboratory subjects: engineering, agriculture: 1: 14

6 Clinical medicine etc: clinical medicine, dentistry, veterinary practice. Conservatoire music and acting training would also fit in this band, as very resource-intensive. 1: 10.

(These ratios are a little more generous than would be the norm in e.g. the UK, to make up for our comparative lack of resource.) If you need to make the case that your particular programme is cheaper or more expensive than the typical one in its category and should therefore be in another category, make a brief note of the fact here and pick it up in Section 3.

1.5: **For Inclusion in the Forward Programme:** enter the year in which you intend to start teaching the programme. (If not from the beginning of the year, indicate this.)

2. PROGRAMME FUNDING AND ADMINISTRATION

2.1: **Programme Leader:** Name, Faculty and preferably email and/or telephone number. The Leader should be someone who is able to be present throughout the planning process, including the validation meetings.

2.2: **Programme Development Board**. The Chair is the Programme Leader. Virtually all teams should have a representative from the Library and ICT. (Where this is definitely not necessary, put 'n/a' on the form and explain why in Section 3.) Then list the remaining academic staff writing modules and/or contributing to the planning. A team should normally (a) cover all the specialist topics needed for the programme and (b)

contain at least three academics. Large and complex programmes will need larger teams. Teams may include expatriate/short-contract staff but these should not form a majority. Teams may include an external adviser from another Rwandan Institution or from outside the country, even if he or she comments on proposals only by email, and it would be good practice for vocationally oriented programmes to enrol an adviser from the relevant industry, branch of government etc. However, there is unlikely to be any fee available for taking this role.

2.3: **Faculty etc.** Tick <u>one</u>. If more than one Faculty etc. is involved, tick the one that will take administrative responsibility for the programme. (Where more than one Faculty is involved, outline the extent of collaboration in Section 3.)

2.4: **Projected student numbers – government-funded.** This question and the next enable us to check that the programme is (a) viable in terms of numbers and (b) adequately staffed. They are maximum numbers and assume no drop-out – so if for a full-time programme a number appears in Level 1 in 2007 it should be in Level 2 in 2008; half of it should be in Level 3 in 2009 and half in Level 4 (because each of these stages takes only half a year on a full-time programme), and the full number should be in Level 5 in 2010.

For your information the stages are defined by the *National Qualifications Framework* as follows:

Level 1: the CertHE level – Year 1 of a full-time undergraduate programme;

Level 2: the DipHE level – Year 2

Level 3: the advanced diploma level – first semester of Year 3;

Level 4: the ordinary level – second semester of Year 3;

Level 5: honours level – Year 4.

Level 6: postgraduate taught programmes up to master's level.

2.5: **Projected student numbers – private.** Fill in as above. If what you are offering is a short course, enter it in the appropriate row of the table if it has a credit level, or under 'short courses' if it does not.

In both these questions, the figure you should be entering is <u>student/years</u>. So 12 students attending a full-time course for an *academic* year (2 semesters) would be entered as 12, but12 students attending for a *calendar* year – 3 semesters – would count as 18; 12 students

attending full-time for only three months, or 12 students attending for whole year but doing only a quarter of the full-time hours, would be entered as 3, and 12 students attending for three months and doing half the full-time hours would be entered as 1.5. (The credit to be awarded will help you with this; for example, a full-time student takes 120 credits in an academic year and 180 in a calendar year.) Check with Quality Office if you have any difficulty working this out, and remember that the calculations do not have to be precise – what we need is a *rough idea* of the number of student/years.

2.6 **Adequacy of resources.** In other words, is the normal provision of classrooms, laboratories etc adequate for this programme? Or does it, for example, need special rooms or types of laboratory to which you cannot guarantee access? (If you are saying you need rooms or laboratories, remember to say when in the year and perhaps at what time of the day - e.g. one evening a week only - you will need them.) You don't have to list every room you need at this point, but just to alert us to anything exceptional in the way of need for resources.

2.7 **Resource matrix:** give numbers of staff in each category working on the programme in each year. (You may well not be able to be precise at this point, or to forecast the future accurately, but use your plans for the first year of teaching as a guide. We need to have a rough idea of the numbers and level of staff (a) to be sure that the staff resource is adequate in terms of numbers and seniority for the proposed programme, and (b) to cost the programme in money terms. You leave the last three rows blank for Finance to fill in – but indicate in the previous section if your demands on resources will be heavier or lighter than the average programme, or else you will be awarded the average cost.

The staff figures are full-time equivalents. If four lecturers will each be carrying a quarter of a full-time teaching load on the programme, enter this as 1. Fractions are acceptable.

 In the final column, say where you expect the money to come from – the Government budget, income generation or a particular outside source. With staff, say also whether these staff are already in post or would have to be recruited.

2.8 Need for accommodation. We need to know roughly how many rooms (and of what size), how many laboratories, etc, you will need for each year of the programme, and for how

long. This figure will be corrected after you have done the detailed planning of the modules, but we need a rough idea now. You will already have a general idea of requirements from similar programmes you are running at present or have run in the past.

3. PROGRAMME BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

This is where you convince the Institution that we <u>want</u> to run the programme, give us an idea of what is in it and talk about any sharing or collaboration between Faculties etc. You can add pages here, but keep it brief; two or three pages would probably be an appropriate maximum.

You should cover (not necessarily in this order):

- Why we need this programme, how it relates to Faculty and Institution's plans, to what extent it will be attractive to students, what demand there will be for its graduates, what it teaches and what skills it delivers that Rwanda needs. (Remember the current Presidential challenge – to make our provision more relevant and more responsive to Rwanda's needs.)

- <u>Briefly</u>, the intended content of the course. (In some cases – e.g. 'Chemistry' - this may seem obvious, but still give us a brief list of the main topic headings.)

- What staff research and scholarship is going on that will underwrite the programme – in other words, why are we, as an HEI, entitled to teach a programme at this level in this topic area?

- The relationship with other Faculty and Institution programmes, and the extent to which modules are shared and/or jointly taught – and which Faculty and Programme will be responsible for the running of the shared/jointly taught modules.

- Anything else we definitely need to know – e.g. external accreditation of the programme, external funding and collaboration.

4. UNIT APPROVAL

1. Programme Proposal Forms should be sent to Quality Office (preferably electronically) for advice.

2. When comments have been received and taken into account, the Programme should go before a Faculty meeting - Head of Department (or another senior academic if the HoD is on the programme team), the Programme Team, and the Dean or his/her representative as Chair) and be discussed and approved in principle. The Dean will then 'sign it off'. If more than one Faculty is involved, then more than one Faculty will need to sign the form, and representatives from the other Faculties should attend the approval meeting.

3. At this stage the form also needs signatures from the Library and ICT (get them from their representatives on the Programme Team, or as soon as possible after the Dean has signed the form).

4. Send the form to Quality Office, who will collect them into Faculty 'batches' and prepare a briefing note on them for the Vice Rectors.

5. CENTRAL AUTHORISATION

Programme teams may begin to do the detailed planning of modules once the Dean has signed the form, but validation meetings for modules will not take place until the programme has been authorised by Vice Rector Administration and Finance (for the resources required) and Vice Rector Academic (that the programme looks likely to be academically acceptable and that the Institution agrees to it in principle).