



REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE
Ministry of Education and Culture
National Council for Quality Assurance in Higher Education

**Student involvement in quality assurance in
higher education**





REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE

National Council for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (CNAQ)

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Context: What is the CNAQ? (1/3)

The CNAQ, created under Article 9 of Decree No. 63/2007 of December 31, revised by Decree 91/2023 of December 18, is the body that ensures the implementation and supervision of SINAQES, SNATCA, and QUANQES.

Implementing and supervisory body for:

- ▶ SINAQES – National System for the Evaluation, Accreditation, and Quality Assurance of Higher Education (Decree No. 91/2023, of December 29);
- ▶ SNATCA – National System for the Accumulation and Transfer of Academic Credits (Decree No. 72/2023, of December 18);
- ▶ QUANQES – National Sub-Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (Decree No. 61/2022, of November 23).



Context: What is the CNAQ? (2/3)

- ▶ Public law institution with legal personality and technical, administrative, and disciplinary autonomy.
- ▶ An autonomous body, supervised sectorally by the Minister who oversees the Higher Education Subsystem and financially by the Minister who oversees the area of finance (Decree No. 71/2023).
- ▶ Framework for activities carried out: Priority I of the Government's Five-Year Plan (PQG 2020-2024), which aims to develop human capital and social justice, specifically in strategic objective (1), which advocates ensuring higher education with national and international quality standards.



Context: Mission and Vision of the CNAQ (3/3)

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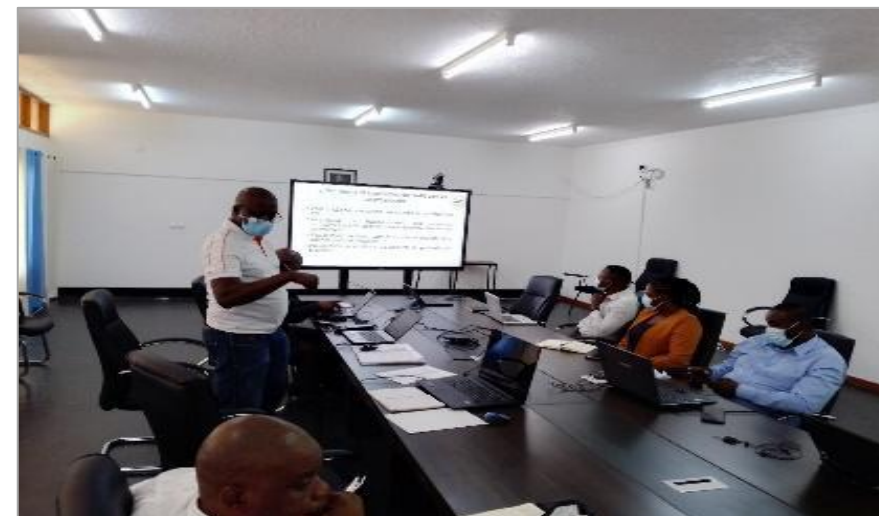
Mission

Promote the evaluation, accreditation, development, and registration of higher education qualifications as mechanisms for quality assurance in line with the country's development needs and in accordance with higher education quality standards in the country, the region, and worldwide.



Vision

To be a leading institution in the assessment, accreditation, development, and registration of higher education qualifications at the national, regional, and international levels.





Reasons for creating the CNAQ

Growing expansion of higher education institutions

- Between 1962 and 1992: 3 HEIs
- Between 1992 and 2007: 30 HEIs
- Between 2007 and 2022: 59 HEIs

Higher education requirements:

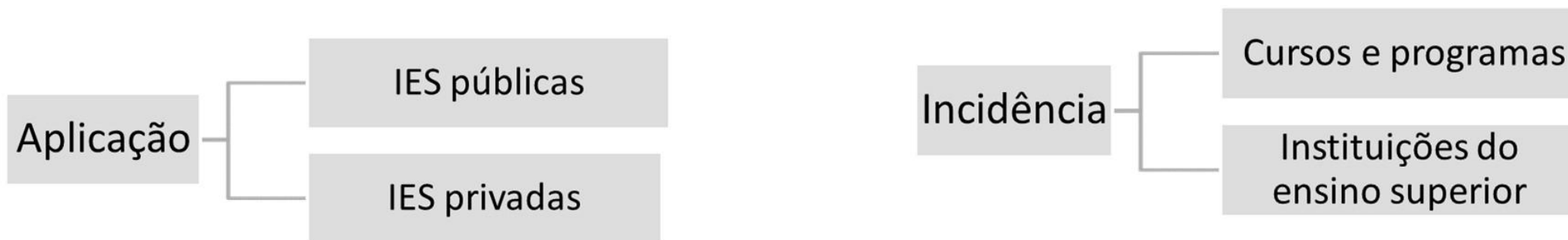
- Adequate to internal needs and regional and global quality standards
- Harmonized at the national, regional, and international levels

Challenge of ensuring the improvement of the quality and relevance of the services provided by higher education institutions



How is the quality of a course/program assessed? (1/2)

- ▶ National System for the Evaluation, Accreditation, and Quality Assurance of Higher Education (Decree 63/2007, of December 31, repealed by Decree No. 91/2023, of December 29)
- ▶ Consistent and coordinated **standards, mechanisms, and procedures** aimed at achieving the objectives of quality in higher education.

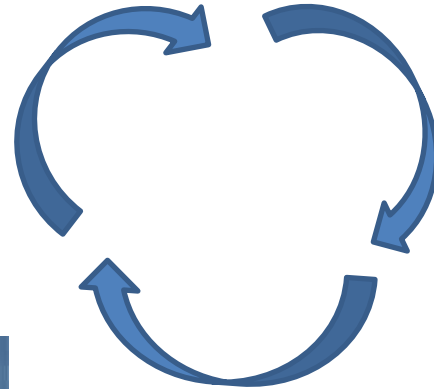




How is the quality of a course/program assessed? (2/2)



Self-assessment (IQA)



Accreditation



External evaluation (EQA)





Students as participants in quality assessment

CNAQ – directors, procedure managers, and faculty

IES – teachers, **students, and CTA**

Employers and socio-professional associations



Role of the student in quality assurance

- **Information provider** - feedback (mid-term or end-of-semester, year, or course) is the most common way to contribute to quality assurance.
- **Actor** - students design their own feedback questionnaires, collect and analyze data, and organize workshops for innovation- and problem-solving-oriented discussions.
- **Expert** - believing that the focus of QA is learning (not teaching), the role played by students is inevitably important.
 - Students, as experts in learning, know how they achieved their learning outcomes and how teaching helped them.
 - Teaching should be evaluated through their learning experiences.
- **Partner** – learning is teacher-student cooperation as an opportunity for authentic and constructive dialogue and more reflective feedback (shared coffee breaks, academic celebrations, events, and field trips).



Students as actors in quality assurance (1/2)

- Benefits of involvement – three perspectives: functional (for the university); developmental (for the student); and social (for society).
- Students: the most interested stakeholders in higher education, investing time and money in education: special interest in factors relevant to capitalizing on their investment.
- Students: partners in the academic community, have a balanced view of
 - the academic institution's objective;
 - Cultural, political, and historical aspects of the academic community;
 - The role of institutions in society.
- Students can bring a valuable perspective to quality improvement.



Students as actors in quality assurance (2/2)

- Students' main concern: a rewarding academic experience and achieving success. Their ability to control and influence their learning processes and environment is directly geared towards achieving these goals.
- *Student* capital—key resources for improving quality:
 - i. first-hand experience: ability to see the situation from a student's perspective and *insights* into learning processes and environments.
 - ii. ability to assess the situation from a unique point of view (which others may not be able to take into account)
 - iii. Transparency – visibility of results and subsequent changes
 - iv. source of raw data on experience, satisfaction, or behavior.
 - v. Involvement: important for legitimizing decision-making processes and results.



Student participation in QA (IQA)

Involvement at the SINAQES level

- ☐ **Individual** – responding to surveys (interviews and questionnaires).
- ☐ **Members of the Self-Assessment Committee (IQA)** – active participants in the entire process (planning, resource mobilization, implementation, and evaluation of the learning program, facilities, and policies).
- ☐ **Interlocutors with the External Evaluation committees.**



Student participation in QA (EQA)

Involvement at the SINAQES level

- ❑ Members of the External Evaluation Committee - active participants in the entire process (planning, resource mobilization, implementation, and evaluation of the learning program, facilities, and policies).
- ❑ Members of the External Evaluation Committee



Student Recruitment Process

- ☐ Recruitment through advertisements in the country's most widely circulated newspaper;
- ☐ CNAQ website and dissemination by HEIs through their organizational units;
- ☐ Applications must be submitted electronically to the address provided for this purpose.



Student Selection Criteria (1/2)

- ☐ Be attending the final years of education (penultimate or final year of education) or have completed higher education but not yet be employed;
- ☐ Have an overall grade point average of 16 or higher. For this purpose, applicants must submit a copy of their recognized academic qualifications or certificate of equivalence if they have obtained their degree abroad, and in the case of students currently enrolled, a transcript of grades;



Student Selection Criteria (2/2)

- ☐ Be a student on an accredited course;
- ☐ Be enrolled in a higher education institution with a valid license;
- ☐ Be enrolled in an accredited higher education institution;
- ☐ Be available to participate in assessment activities; and
- ☐ Have been positively evaluated in the training to become a member of *the CNAQ pool* of external evaluators.



Student training (content)

Student training (content)

- 1. Legal Framework of ES and CNAQ:** Law No. 1/2023, of March 17; Decree No. 61/2023 (QNQ), of November 23; Decree No. 72/2023, of December 18 (SNATCA); Decree No. 91/2023, of December 29 (SINAQES).
- 2. Competencies of the CNAQ:** body that ensures the implementation and supervision of SINAQES (establishes parameters and deliberates on quality matters).
- 3. Evaluation Dimensions:** (e.g., Institutional Mission and Policy; Organization and Management; Curriculum and Instructional Materials; Faculty; Student Body; Technical and Administrative Staff (CTA); Research and Innovation; Facilities and Technological Infrastructure; University Extension, Employability, and Student Entrepreneurship; Internationalization, Cooperation, and Mobility).
- 4. Training:** *general* (all) and *specific* in the Evaluation Committees (selected students).

Student Rights



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- ☐ Right to training that will result in a certificate of participation;
- ☐ Right to a certificate of participation in the external evaluation process;
- ☐ Receive a subsidy deducted and fixed on the basis of the minimum wage for each mission you participate in;
- ☐ Phone top-ups to ensure connectivity;
- ☐ Access to all information necessary for the performance of your duties; and
- ☐ Freedom to express your opinion on the aspects analyzed during the evaluation.



Forms of student participation in GQ

Three distinct modes of student action leading to improved quality in higher education:

- ☐ **Personal** - individual actions aimed at changing their own circumstances or those of others.
- ☐ **Proxy** - representatives act on their behalf to solve a specific problem or ensure a specific outcome. E.g., student associations in decision-making bodies (Faculty Councils, University, etc.).
- ☐ **Collective** - all or part of the students act together when they believe in the effectiveness of the group to ensure a mutually desired outcome. E.g., student strikes.



Lessons learned: Benefits of student involvement

- Student evaluators: encourage other students to speak more and freely.
- Greater commitment to a culture of quality: students, teachers, CTA members, and coordinators work toward a unifying goal.
- Development of a sense of ownership of quality.
- Fostering positive relationships with the institution by submitting student feedback as a platform where students can give a summary assessment of their university life.
- Elevation of the student's status from customer (consumer) to partner (co-producer).
- Occurrence of 'quick fixes' such as changing the library's opening hours.
- Mobilization for innovation and curricular relevance.



Challenges of student involvement in EQA

- Students accustomed to being consumers who may not give their opinion VS Teachers who find it difficult to recognize the legitimacy of students as evaluators.
- Inaccessible jargon and language, and the amount and depth of reading required limit students' active involvement in the course evaluation process.
- Students feeling obligated (or coerced) to say what they think people want to hear.
- Students in constant change.
- Students lacking experience, interest, and skills.
- Availability of time and resources.
- Administrative limitations to effective student involvement.



Final considerations

- Full student participation in quality assurance in Mozambique remains a challenge.
 - Course evaluation questionnaires
 - Self-evaluation committees
 - External evaluation committees (yet to be established)
- Several gains are envisaged with student participation
 - Sense of shared responsibility and ownership
 - Recognition of students as a source of knowledge
 - Fostering positive relationships with the institution
- Many constraints
 - Constantly changing students
 - Students lacking experience, interest, and skills
 - Availability of time and resources

Thank you for your attention.