

From Compliance to Continuous Improvement: A Systematic Review of Drivers of Quality Assurance Culture in Higher Education Institutions

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| Aisa Rupia^{1,*} | Frank Mwamakula² |

¹Mwanza Regional Education
Office, Tanzania.

²Department of Education
Foundations, St. Augustine
University of Tanzania,
Tanzania.

* aisarupia19@gmail.com



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ABSTRACT

Quality assurance (QA) has become a central concern in higher education institutions (HEIs) due to increasing demands for accountability, international competitiveness, stakeholder satisfaction, and improvement of teaching, learning, research, and community engagement. Although universities have established formal quality assurance frameworks, the effectiveness of these systems largely depends on institutional culture, which shapes behaviours, values, attitudes, and commitment toward quality improvement. This systematic empirical review paper examines the role of institutional culture in driving quality assurance practices in higher education institutions. Specifically, the paper explores how institutional and leadership culture influences QA implementation, assesses the contribution of communication and teamwork culture to QA effectiveness, and evaluates the role of accountability and continuous improvement culture in strengthening quality practices. The study reviews and analyses recent published studies. The findings indicate that leadership commitment, participatory communication, collaborative teamwork, accountability mechanisms, and continuous improvement orientations are essential elements for developing a sustainable quality culture in universities. The paper concludes that quality assurance should not be viewed only as a compliance requirement but as an institutional culture embedded in daily academic and administrative practices.

KEYWORDS

Culture; quality assurance; higher education; accountability; compliance.

INTRODUCTION

Higher education institutions (HEIs) operate in an increasingly competitive and rapidly changing environment characterised by globalisation, technological advancement, international ranking systems, increased student mobility, and growing expectations from employers and society. These changes have increased pressure on universities to demonstrate the quality and relevance of their academic programmes, research outputs, governance systems, and services. Consequently, quality assurance has become a significant management practice aimed at ensuring that higher education institutions maintain academic standards and continuously improve their performance (Mishra & Abhinav, 2022; Martin & Furiv, 2021).

Quality assurance in higher education refers to systematic policies, procedures, and activities designed to monitor, evaluate, and improve the quality of academic and

institutional processes. It includes internal quality mechanisms such as curriculum review, teaching evaluation, academic audits, student feedback systems, and external mechanisms such as accreditation and institutional assessments. However, recent studies indicate that the success of quality assurance systems does not depend only on formal policies and structures but also on the values, beliefs, and behaviours embedded within institutional culture (Harvey & Williams, 2021; Sarrico, 2022).

Institutional culture represents shared assumptions, values, norms, and practices that guide how members of an organisation perceive problems and perform their responsibilities. In higher education, culture influences how academic staff, administrators, and students respond to quality initiatives. Institutions with a strong quality-oriented culture are more likely to view quality assurance as a continuous improvement process rather than as an external requirement for accreditation. Conversely, institutions with weak quality cultures may perceive quality assurance activities as bureaucratic procedures aimed only at satisfying regulatory demands (Ali et al., 2023; Nguyen & Ta, 2024).

Institutional and leadership culture plays an important role in shaping quality assurance practices within higher education institutions. University leaders influence institutional priorities by developing quality policies, allocating resources, motivating staff, and creating an environment that supports innovation and improvement. Effective leaders promote shared responsibility for quality, encourage participation, and ensure that quality assurance becomes integrated into institutional decision-making processes (Alzafari & Kratzer, 2021; Othman et al., 2023).

Furthermore, communication and teamwork culture are critical components of effective quality assurance implementation. Quality improvement requires collaboration among academic departments, administrative units, students, and external stakeholders. Open communication channels enable information sharing, feedback exchange, and collective problem-solving. When teamwork is encouraged, university members develop ownership of quality initiatives and become actively involved in improving institutional performance (Musingafi & Hlatywayo, 2022; Savickienė & Pilkienė, 2026).

A culture of accountability and continuous improvement also contributes significantly to successful quality assurance practices. Accountability ensures that individuals and departments take responsibility for achieving institutional standards, while continuous improvement encourages regular evaluation and innovation. Universities that establish accountability systems and improvement-oriented cultures are better positioned to respond to changing educational demands and enhance institutional effectiveness (González Cardona et al., 2024; Obeng-Kyereh, 2026).

In developing countries, quality assurance has gained increasing attention due to expansion of higher education systems and the need to maintain academic standards. Regulatory bodies such as the Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU) from Tanzania, have emphasised institutional quality assurance systems, programme accreditation, and compliance with national higher education standards. However, challenges such as limited resources, inadequate quality awareness, and weak institutional commitment continue to affect the effectiveness of quality assurance practices in some universities (TCU, 2023; Mtebe & Raisamo, 2022). Therefore, understanding the relationship between institutional culture and quality assurance practices is essential for improving the effectiveness and sustainability of quality management systems in higher education institutions. This paper examines how institutional culture influences quality assurance practices by focusing on leadership culture, communication and teamwork culture, and accountability and continuous improvement culture.

Despite the establishment of quality assurance frameworks in many higher education institutions, achieving sustainable quality improvement remains a challenge. Many universities have developed quality assurance offices, policies, and procedures; however, these mechanisms often focus more on compliance with accreditation requirements rather than promoting a genuine culture of quality improvement. This situation suggests that institutional culture remains a critical factor determining whether quality assurance systems become meaningful practices or merely administrative obligations (Harvey & Williams, 2021; Sarrico, 2022).

In many higher education institutions, limited leadership commitment, ineffective communication systems, weak collaboration among departments, and inadequate accountability mechanisms hinder the effective implementation of quality assurance practices. Where institutional leaders fail to prioritise quality, staff members may demonstrate limited commitment to quality initiatives. Similarly, where teamwork and communication are weak, quality improvement activities may become fragmented and ineffective (Ali et al., 2023; Abubakar et al., 2024).

In many developing countries, universities continue to experience challenges related to maintaining academic quality due to rapid expansion of enrolment, limited resources, and varying levels of institutional readiness. Although quality assurance agencies provide guidelines and standards, the internal culture of universities determines whether these standards are effectively implemented. Therefore, there is a need to examine how institutional culture is developed and influences quality assurance practices in higher education institutions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The conceptualization of this study was guided by Organizational Culture Theory developed by Edgar Schein. The theory explains that organisational culture consists of shared assumptions, values, beliefs, and behavioural practices that influence how members of an organisation understand and respond to different situations. Schein categorised organisational culture into three levels: artefacts, espoused values, and basic underlying assumptions. These levels determine how organisations operate and how employees respond to change and improvement initiatives. In higher education institutions, organisational culture influences how staff perceive and implement quality assurance activities. Institutions with strong quality cultures develop shared beliefs that quality is everyone's responsibility rather than the duty of quality assurance offices alone. Such institutions encourage collaboration, innovation, transparency, and continuous improvement among academic and administrative staff (Nguyen & Ta, 2024; Ali et al., 2023). The theory is relevant to this study because quality assurance requires cultural transformation rather than only structural changes. Establishing quality offices and developing policies may not achieve expected outcomes unless institutional members internalise quality values. Therefore, understanding institutional culture provides insight into why some universities successfully implement quality assurance systems while others struggle despite having similar policies.

Leadership culture is considered one of the most important institutional factors influencing the successful implementation of quality assurance practices in higher education. University leaders shape organisational priorities through their vision, decision-making approaches, resource allocation, and commitment to academic excellence. Globally, studies indicate that institutions with transformational and quality-oriented leadership cultures are more likely to develop effective internal quality assurance systems

because leaders encourage participation, innovation, and shared responsibility for quality improvement (Alzafari & Kratzer, 2021; Sarrico, 2022).

A study conducted in European higher education institutions revealed that leadership commitment significantly determines whether quality assurance becomes an embedded institutional practice or remains a compliance activity. The study found that university leaders who actively participate in quality processes, communicate quality expectations, and support staff development create a positive environment for continuous improvement. However, institutions where leaders consider quality assurance only as a regulatory requirement experience weak staff engagement and limited improvement outcomes (Martin & Furiv, 2021; Stensaker & Maassen, 2022).

Similarly, research from Asian higher education institutions demonstrated that leadership culture influences the effectiveness of quality management systems by establishing institutional values and behaviours that support quality enhancement. Effective leaders promote transparency, encourage evidence-based decision-making, and provide adequate resources for quality assurance activities. The study emphasised that leadership commitment is essential in transforming quality assurance from a technical process into a shared institutional culture (Nguyen & Ta, 2024; Othman et al., 2023).

In African higher education institutions, leadership challenges have been identified as among the major barriers affecting quality assurance implementation. Studies indicate that some universities establish quality assurance structures but fail to achieve meaningful improvement because institutional leaders provide insufficient support, limited funding, and inadequate motivation for staff participation. Strong leadership culture is therefore required to develop sustainable quality practices, particularly in expanding higher education systems where institutions face resource constraints (Obeng-Kyereh, 2026; Umbase, 2023).

In East Africa, evidence suggests that university leadership plays a significant role in strengthening internal quality assurance mechanisms. Institutions where leaders promote participatory governance, professional development, and accountability tend to demonstrate stronger quality outcomes compared to institutions characterised by centralised decision-making and weak stakeholder involvement. Example from Kenya and Uganda, it has been evidenced that, effective leadership encourages academic staff to view quality assurance as an opportunity for improvement rather than an external inspection process (Mtebe & Raisamo, 2022; Kasozi, 2023). Similarly, in Tanzania, quality assurance practices in higher education have expanded due to increased regulatory attention and the establishment of institutional quality assurance units. However, studies show that leadership commitment remains a key determinant of successful implementation. Universities with proactive leaders who allocate resources, support quality assurance offices, and integrate quality issues into strategic plans demonstrate stronger compliance and improvement practices (TCU, 2023; Mosha & Ndibalema, 2024).

Therefore, empirical evidence indicates that leadership culture influences quality assurance through vision development, resource provision, staff motivation, and creation of shared responsibility. A strong leadership culture provides the foundation upon which other quality assurance practices such as teamwork, communication, accountability, and continuous improvement can develop. Effective communication and teamwork are also fundamental elements of institutional culture that influence the success of quality assurance systems. Quality assurance requires cooperation among different stakeholders, including university management, academic staff, administrative employees, students, professional bodies, and regulatory authorities. Without effective communication, quality

policies and procedures may not be understood or implemented consistently across institutional units (Abubakar et al., 2024; Musingafi & Hlatywayo, 2022).

Global studies show that universities with strong communication cultures are more successful in implementing quality assurance because information about standards, expectations, evaluation results, and improvement strategies is shared openly among stakeholders. Transparent communication reduces resistance to change and encourages staff participation in quality improvement activities. Furthermore, regular feedback mechanisms enable institutions to identify weaknesses and develop appropriate interventions (Harvey & Williams, 2021; Mishra & Abhinav, 2022).

Research conducted in higher education institutions in the United Kingdom and other developed education systems found that teamwork among academic departments strengthens quality assurance effectiveness. Collaborative approaches encourage peer learning, curriculum improvement, joint research activities, and shared responsibility for academic standards. The findings indicate that quality assurance becomes more effective when departments work collectively rather than operating independently (Sarrico, 2022; Stensaker & Maassen, 2022).

Weak communication systems often limit the effectiveness of quality assurance initiatives. Some universities experience challenges such as inadequate dissemination of quality policies, limited interaction between quality assurance offices and academic departments, and minimal involvement of students in evaluation processes. These challenges reduce ownership and create perceptions that quality assurance is mainly an administrative responsibility rather than a collective institutional responsibility (Obeng-Kyereh, 2026; Umbase 2023).

Collaborative relationships between academic staff and university administrators promote knowledge sharing, professional support, and collective problem-solving. Institutions that encourage teamwork are better able to respond to challenges related to curriculum development, teaching effectiveness, student support services, and accreditation requirements (Kasozi, 2023; Abubakar et al., 2024). For example, in Tanzania, Niger and Malawi, communication and teamwork have remained important factors affecting quality assurance implementation. Research indicates that universities with effective internal communication systems experience improved coordination between quality assurance units, faculties, and departments. However, challenges such as limited feedback mechanisms and weak collaboration between stakeholders continue to affect quality improvement efforts in some institutions (Mtebe & Raisamo, 2022; Mosha & Ndibalema, 2024). Overall, empirical evidence demonstrates that communication and teamwork culture enhance quality assurance by promoting information sharing, stakeholder participation, coordination, and collective ownership of quality improvement activities.

Accountability and continuous improvement make and represent another essential dimensions of a strong quality culture in higher education institutions. Accountability ensures that individuals, departments, and institutional units take responsibility for maintaining academic standards and achieving expected performance outcomes. Continuous improvement, on the other hand, encourages universities to regularly evaluate their practices and introduce changes aimed at enhancing quality (González Cardona et al., 2024; Ali et al., 2023). International studies indicate that universities with strong accountability cultures develop effective monitoring and evaluation systems, performance indicators, and feedback mechanisms. These systems enable institutions to identify gaps in teaching, research, governance, and student services. Accountability encourages transparency because institutional members become aware of their responsibilities and

expected contributions toward quality improvement (Martin & Furiv, 2021; Nguyen & Ta, 2024).

Research from higher education institutions in Asia found that continuous improvement culture significantly influences quality assurance effectiveness. Institutions that encourage reflection, innovation, and evidence-based decision-making are more capable of adapting to changes in student needs, labour market demands, and technological developments. Continuous improvement transforms quality assurance from a periodic evaluation activity into an ongoing institutional practice (Othman et al., 2023; Abubakar et al., 2024). From Africa studies from Namibia and Ethiopia show that institutions that develop clear performance expectations, strengthen internal evaluation mechanisms, and encourage professional responsibility achieve better quality outcomes. Accountability creates commitment among staff members and ensures that quality standards are maintained consistently (Obeng-Kyereh, 2026; Umbase, 2023).

Within Tanzania's higher education context, accountability and continuous improvement have become increasingly important due to national efforts to strengthen academic standards. Universities are encouraged to establish internal quality assurance systems, conduct programme reviews, and use evaluation findings for improvement. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of these practices depends on whether institutional members perceive quality improvement as a shared value rather than merely a regulatory obligation (TCU, 2023; Mosha & Ndibalema, 2024). The reviewed literature demonstrates that accountability and continuous improvement culture contribute to sustainable quality assurance by encouraging responsibility, evaluation, innovation, and evidence-based improvement. Institutions that embed these values into their organisational culture are more likely to achieve long-term academic excellence.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study adopted a systematic literature review (SLR) design to examine the role of institutional culture in driving quality assurance practices in higher education institutions. A systematic review approach was selected because it enables the researcher to identify, evaluate, synthesise, and interpret findings from existing scholarly studies related to a specific research problem. Unlike traditional literature reviews, systematic reviews follow a structured and transparent procedure for searching, selecting, and analysing relevant studies to minimise bias and improve reliability of conclusions (Snyder, 2021; Xiao & Watson, 2022).

The systematic review approach was appropriate for this study because the relationship between institutional culture and quality assurance practices has been examined in different geographical contexts and from different perspectives. By reviewing existing empirical studies, the research was able to identify common patterns, differences, and knowledge gaps regarding how leadership culture, communication and teamwork culture, accountability, and continuous improvement influence quality assurance implementation in higher education institutions (Page et al., 2021; Donthu et al., 2021).

The literature search was conducted through electronic academic databases and online research platforms, including Google Scholar, ResearchGate, ScienceDirect, SpringerLink, Emerald Insight, and institutional repositories. The search focused on peer-reviewed journal articles, research reports, and academic publications published between 2021 and 2026. The extracted data were analysed using thematic analysis. This involved identifying recurring themes related to the three study objectives: leadership culture, communication and teamwork culture, and accountability and continuous improvement culture. Thematic analysis enabled the comparison of findings across different contexts and identify common

factors influencing quality assurance practices in higher education institutions (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Kiger & Varpio, 2022).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents, interprets and discusses the findings in accordance with the specific objectives of the study. The findings are organized into the following sub themes: Culture of excellence, employee professional development, research and community engagement, team work, coordination and compliance, academic integrity and social transformation. The findings are presented and discussed in the succeeding sections accordingly.

Excellence and Quality Assurance Practices

The findings indicate that a culture of excellence is one of the major drivers of effective quality assurance in higher education institutions. A culture of excellence refers to shared institutional values that encourage high performance, innovation, commitment to academic standards, and continuous pursuit of improvement. Universities that develop excellence-oriented cultures encourage staff and students to achieve higher levels of performance in teaching, learning, research, governance, and community engagement (Umbase, 2023).

The review shows that institutions with a strong culture of excellence do not perceive quality assurance as an external inspection mechanism but as an internal commitment to achieving superior outcomes. Such institutions establish high academic standards, promote innovation, reward outstanding performance, and encourage evidence-based improvement. This culture motivates academic staff to improve teaching effectiveness, develop relevant curricula, and produce research that contributes to societal development (Ali et al., 2023; Nguyen & Ta, 2024). Furthermore, excellence culture strengthens institutional reputation and competitiveness. Universities operating in highly competitive environments require a commitment to quality improvement to attract students, academic partners, funding opportunities, and international recognition. Therefore, embedding excellence as an institutional value enhances the sustainability of quality assurance practices.

Employee Professional Development

The findings reveal that employee development culture significantly contributes to quality assurance by strengthening the capacity and competence of academic and administrative staff. Higher education institutions depend on qualified human resources; therefore, continuous professional development is essential for maintaining academic standards. Institutions with strong employee development cultures provide opportunities for training, mentorship, research development, conferences, workshops, and professional advancement (Savickienė & Pilkienė, 2026). The review further indicates that staff learning culture enables universities to adapt to emerging educational challenges such as digital transformation, changing labour market demands, and new teaching methodologies.

Continuous learning encourages academic staff to reflect on their practices, improve pedagogical approaches, update disciplinary knowledge, and adopt innovative strategies for enhancing student learning outcomes (González Cardona et al., 2024; Othman et al., 2023). Moreover, employee development promotes staff motivation and commitment toward institutional goals. When employees perceive that institutions invest in their professional growth, they develop greater ownership of quality improvement initiatives. Therefore, staff learning culture transforms quality assurance from an administrative requirement into a collective process of professional improvement.

Research and Community Engagement for Institutional Sustainability

The findings demonstrate that research culture is a critical component of institutional quality assurance because universities are expected not only to transmit knowledge but also to generate solutions to societal challenges. A strong research culture encourages academic staff and students to conduct innovative research addressing economic, social, environmental, and technological problems affecting communities. The reviewed studies indicate that universities with strong research cultures contribute significantly to community transformation through knowledge creation, innovation, consultancy services, and evidence-based interventions (Sarrico, 2022).

Research outputs enable institutions to support policy development, improve community livelihoods, and provide practical solutions to societal problems. Through community-based research, universities strengthen their relevance and demonstrate their contribution beyond academic boundaries. Additionally, research culture can serve as an important source of institutional sustainability and income generation. Universities can generate resources through research grants, consultancy activities, partnerships with industries, and externally funded projects. Therefore, strengthening research capacity contributes to both academic quality improvement and financial sustainability of higher education institutions (Kasozi, 2023).

Teamwork and Coordination of Departments

The findings reveal that teamwork culture and effective coordination among departments are essential for successful quality assurance implementation. Higher education institutions consist of interconnected units including faculties, departments, administrative offices, research centres, and student support services. Effective quality assurance requires coordination and collaboration among these units. The review indicates that institutions with strong teamwork cultures encourage collective responsibility, knowledge sharing, and joint problem-solving. Academic departments that collaborate effectively are more capable of improving curriculum quality, coordinating teaching activities, sharing resources, and responding to stakeholder expectations. Furthermore, effective departmental coordination reduces duplication of activities, improves communication flow, and strengthens institutional efficiency. When quality assurance offices work closely with academic departments and administrative units, quality standards become integrated into everyday institutional operations rather than remaining the responsibility of a single office (Savickienė & Pilkienė, 2026; Musingafi & Hlatywayo, 2022).

Compliance for Institutional Quality Standards

The findings indicate that compliance culture remains an important dimension of quality assurance, particularly in higher education systems where institutions operate under regulatory frameworks. Compliance culture involves adherence to institutional policies, national standards, accreditation requirements, ethical guidelines, and professional expectations. The review shows that compliance ensures universities maintain minimum academic standards related to curriculum development, staff qualifications, assessment procedures, infrastructure, governance, and student support services (OECD, 2024). Regulatory bodies such as quality assurance agencies provide frameworks that guide institutions in maintaining consistency and accountability.

However, the findings also indicate that excessive dependence on compliance alone may limit innovation. Institutions that focus only on satisfying accreditation requirements may develop a superficial approach to quality assurance. Therefore, effective universities combine compliance culture with improvement-oriented values, ensuring that standards are

used as a foundation for innovation and excellence rather than merely administrative obligations (Harvey & Williams, 2021; TCU, 2023).

Total Quality Management (TQM)

The findings demonstrate that Total Quality Management (TQM) culture provides an effective framework for strengthening quality assurance practices in higher education institutions. TQM emphasises continuous improvement, stakeholder satisfaction, teamwork, leadership commitment, employee involvement, and evidence-based decision-making. The review indicates that universities adopting TQM principles develop stronger quality cultures because every institutional member becomes responsible for maintaining and improving quality. Students, academic staff, administrators, and external stakeholders participate in identifying problems and developing solutions. TQM culture also encourages universities to use feedback mechanisms, performance evaluation, benchmarking, and continuous monitoring to improve institutional outcomes. Therefore, integrating TQM principles into university management enhances the effectiveness of quality assurance systems and supports sustainable institutional improvement (Mishra & Abhinav, 2022; Sarrico, 2022).

Academic Integrity and Competence Development

The findings reveal that academic integrity and competence culture are central elements of quality assurance in higher education. Academic integrity involves commitment to honesty, ethical behaviour, responsible research practices, fairness in assessment, and respect for academic standards (Dube & Hendricks, 2023; Saidi & Boti, 2023). The review indicates that institutions with strong academic integrity cultures produce graduates with professional competence and ethical responsibility. Such institutions establish clear policies against academic misconduct, promote ethical research practices, and encourage responsible knowledge creation. Additionally, competence culture ensures that academic staff possess appropriate knowledge, skills, and professional abilities required for effective teaching, research, and community service. Continuous competence development enhances teaching quality, student achievement, and institutional reputation. Therefore, academic integrity and competence are essential foundations for maintaining trust and credibility in higher education.

Institutional and Social Transformation

The findings further demonstrate that institutional culture influences the ability of universities to contribute to social change. Higher education institutions play a significant role in developing skilled human resources, generating knowledge, and solving community problems through research and innovation. Universities with strong community engagement cultures actively collaborate with industries, government institutions, and local communities to address social challenges (Bayuo et al., 2020; Compagnucci & Spigarelli, 2020). Through research, extension services, and professional training, universities contribute to economic development, poverty reduction, environmental sustainability, and improved quality of life (Carl & Menter, 2021). The findings suggest that quality assurance should therefore consider not only internal academic processes but also the broader social impact of universities. Institutions that successfully integrate community engagement into their quality culture become more relevant, responsive, and sustainable.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that institutional culture is a fundamental driver of effective quality assurance practices in higher education institutions. Quality assurance cannot be achieved through policies, accreditation frameworks, and administrative structures alone; rather, it requires the development of a strong quality-oriented institutional culture where excellence, accountability, integrity, competence, and continuous improvement are embedded in daily academic and administrative practices. The findings demonstrate that cultures of excellence, employee development, research innovation, teamwork, effective departmental coordination, compliance, and Total Quality Management contribute significantly to strengthening institutional performance. Universities that promote continuous staff learning, professional development, and academic integrity are more capable of maintaining high academic standards, producing competent graduates, and responding effectively to changing educational and societal demands.

Furthermore, the study concludes that higher education institutions with strong research and community engagement cultures play an important role in social transformation by generating knowledge, solving community problems, supporting innovation, and creating opportunities for institutional sustainability through research grants, consultancy services, and partnerships. A collaborative and learning-oriented institutional culture enables universities to move beyond viewing quality assurance as a regulatory requirement toward embracing it as a continuous improvement process. Therefore, sustainable quality assurance requires a holistic institutional culture where leadership commitment, staff participation, research productivity, ethical practices, stakeholder involvement, and continuous improvement are integrated into the overall mission and operations of higher education institutions.

Recommendation

Higher education institutions should deliberately develop and strengthen a comprehensive quality culture by integrating excellence, Total Quality Management principles, academic integrity, accountability, and continuous improvement into institutional policies and strategic plans. University leaders should demonstrate strong commitment to quality by providing resources, supporting employee development programmes, encouraging teamwork, and ensuring effective coordination between quality assurance units, academic departments, and administrative offices. Institutions should also establish continuous professional development programmes that enhance staff competence, promote lifelong learning, and enable academic and administrative employees to respond effectively to emerging challenges in higher education.

Moreover, universities should strengthen research and community engagement cultures by creating supportive environments for innovation, interdisciplinary research, consultancy activities, and partnerships with government, industries, and communities. Research activities should focus on addressing real societal challenges and generating solutions that contribute to social and economic development. Higher education institutions should also promote collaborative practices among departments, encourage knowledge sharing, and establish mechanisms for using research findings and quality assurance feedback to improve teaching, learning, governance, and institutional services. By embedding these cultural values into institutional operations, universities can achieve sustainable quality improvement and enhance their contribution to society.

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