



Call for Application

DEADLINE: MAY 25, 2025

Training on Internal Quality Assurance (TrainIQA) in the SADC Region 2025-2026

The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), the German Rectors' Conference (HRK), the Southern African Regional Universities Association (SARUA) and the University of Potsdam (UP) are jointly offering the DIES Course "Training on Internal Quality Assurance – TrainIQA" in the SADC region.

TrainIQA is part of the DIES programme (Dialogue on Innovative Higher Education Strategies) which aims at strengthening higher education management structures in developing countries. DIES is jointly coordinated by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) and supported by funds of the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

TrainIQA Course Background and Objectives

Higher education systems in Southern Africa are characterized by dynamic changes that relate, in particular, to an increasing demand for educational services and increasing student enrolment rates. Such developments as well as rapidly changing environments and disruptions are a major challenge for maintaining quality in higher education. Effective internal and external quality assurance (QA) systems are needed in order to assure and develop the quality of higher education and to create trust and transparency for stakeholders. In this light, Southern African countries are harmonizing their higher education systems in line with continental and regional frameworks such as the Pan-African Quality Assurance and Accreditation Framework (PAQAF), and the Southern African Development Community Qualifications Framework (SADCQF). In the SADC integration process, regional QA plays a crucial role in the harmonization of higher education, especially with regard to: the comparability of qualifications and student performance; the promotion of recognition and the mobility of students and academics between

different SADC countries as well as regional collaboration in educational delivery and cross-border education systems. Another aim of strengthening QA systems in the SADC region is to promote international competitiveness of Southern Africa's higher education systems.

Against this background, the **TrainIQA** course not only strengthens national capacities in the field of QA, it also promotes exchange and networking among higher education institutions (HEIs) and various stakeholders. At the same time, the course offers the opportunity for exchange and dialogue both within the SADC region and between European and African partners and institutions. More specifically, TrainIQA aims at professionalising quality managers at HEIs (see course target group below) who will have a multiplier effect by contributing to further capacity development in the field of internal quality assurance (IQA) at their home institutions as well as within their countries.

Content and Methodology of the Training

TrainIQA combines leadership and management topics in a comprehensive way in order to strengthen the structural development of HEIs and to support the trainees in their endeavour to build systematic QA structures and processes. The course consists of five modules, each with accompanying self-study materials in the form of a course textbook¹ and online materials. The topics of the modules are:

- Module 1:** Designing Effective Quality Management Systems
- Module 2:** Tools and Procedures for Quality Assurance
- Module 3:** Quality Assurance of Teaching and Learning
- Module 4:** Information Management
- Module 5:** Quality Management and its Linkages to Higher Education Management

TrainIQA is delivered in a **blended-learning** format. All topics of the different modules will be discussed during three inter-connected workshops, which shall be held in the SADC region, Germany and online respectively.

The training will be hands-on with a strong practical focus. The workshops will include mixed and interactive methods such as presentations by experts, peer-learning among the participants, and case studies. Individual feedback and mentoring will also be provided.

The course teaching concept is based on a team-teaching approach. The trainer team will consist of African and European QA experts. Further, the course is largely based on the exchange of QA experiences among participants. Peer-learning in small working groups and individual feedback provided by mentors are therefore important didactic elements of the training.

All training activities are supported via an online learning platform, which will provide infrastructure for online phases, enable communication with trainers, and enhance participant exchange.

¹ The course material was developed jointly by the University of Duisburg-Essen and the University of Potsdam.

After completion of the course, the participants are expected to be able to...

- understand theoretical concepts of quality, QA and quality enhancement as well as quality culture in HEI and evaluate them according to the different visions and missions of HEIs,
- design questionnaires and evaluations scientifically and to manage data collection and analysis processes effectively,
- apply appropriate techniques and scientific methods to reflect upon the results of QA activities and to establish a quality loop with follow-up-processes at all levels of a HEI,
- address the QA requirements of study programmes and their revision, including the linkage to external quality assurance,
- recognise and evaluate cross connections between quality development, staff development and organisational development,
- formulate ideas and strategies about how quality culture can be developed at the institutional level,
- develop and organize a detailed project action plan with clear objectives and timelines.

Institutional Change Projects

All participants of the training are expected to develop and implement an institutional change project during the training in order to put theory into practice with the help of a project action plan (PAP). The PAP is a project management tool and helps in planning and documenting the projects. An introduction to project management and tools such as the PAP will be an integrative part of the training starting in the initial online-phase. The projects should be aligned with the bigger picture of the institution (in line with the participants' own context and needs). During the entire timeframe of the training, participants receive coaching and mentoring by experts from the SADC region and Europe. The participants' superiors, e.g. the Vice-Presidents (VPs) / Deputy Vice Chancellors (DVCs) in charge of QA, are expected to support their team in carrying out their projects.

Applicants must hand in a draft project proposal, which they are asked to describe according to a template (see Annex 1). The topics of the projects can vary, as long as they are connected to the field of QA and QA systems at the participants' own institutions. Projects can be proposed jointly by two or more universities (i.e. networks/benchmarking etc.). The projects should be realistically planned and be implemented within the period of the training (approx. 9 months) based on defined milestones to be reached until the final conference.

Possible project topics could be:

Examples on QA-Sys-tem	Examples on Tools and Proce-dures	Examples on Study Programme and Curriculum Design and Re-vision
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of internal QA policy guidelines • Setting up a QA-Unit • Scheme for staff development • Developing a QA handbook • Enhancing the quality culture at institutional level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Artificial Intelligence in quality assurance • Self-evaluation report for internal/external evaluation (e.g. programme or institutional accreditation) • Evaluation of teaching and learning • Interrelation between data collection and QA • Designing & conducting tracer studies • Setting up information systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and/or implement education for sustainable development • Development of guidelines or policies in the area of teaching and learning (e.g. online/hybrid learning, use of AI) • Introduction or further development of outcome based education • Development of a handbook for teaching and learning

Involvement of University Leadership in charge of QA

To establish sustainable and successful QA structures, strong support and commitment from institutional decision-makers are crucial, as are well-established linkages between strategic and operational levels. Therefore, this training program includes specific formats to engage senior management (Vice Presidents / Deputy Vice Chancellors in charge of QA) from participating institutions at various stages.

The **Opening Conference** will launch the institutional change projects, which will be implemented as part of TrainIQA. During the workshop's final day, participants will have the opportunity to present and discuss their proposed institutional change projects with senior institutional leaders. Additionally, higher education leaders will have a platform to stay updated on recent developments in teaching, learning, and quality assurance and enhancement, both regionally and internationally.

Two **online phases** will be held to further engage senior management. These online sessions will take place after Workshop I and Workshop II, respectively, and will invite the management to discuss current developments in the field of quality management in higher education as well as the progress of the institutional change projects at their respective universities.

A **Closing Conference** will be held online to conclude the training, consisting of a series of sessions featuring keynotes, expert panels focusing on emerging issues in Quality Assurance, and the presentation of the institutional change projects. This will allow both the trainees and the leadership representatives who attended the initial event to share lessons learned and insights. Furthermore, ample time

will be dedicated to discussing current trends and directions in QA and strategic management, as well as exploring opportunities to support regional exchange and cooperation.

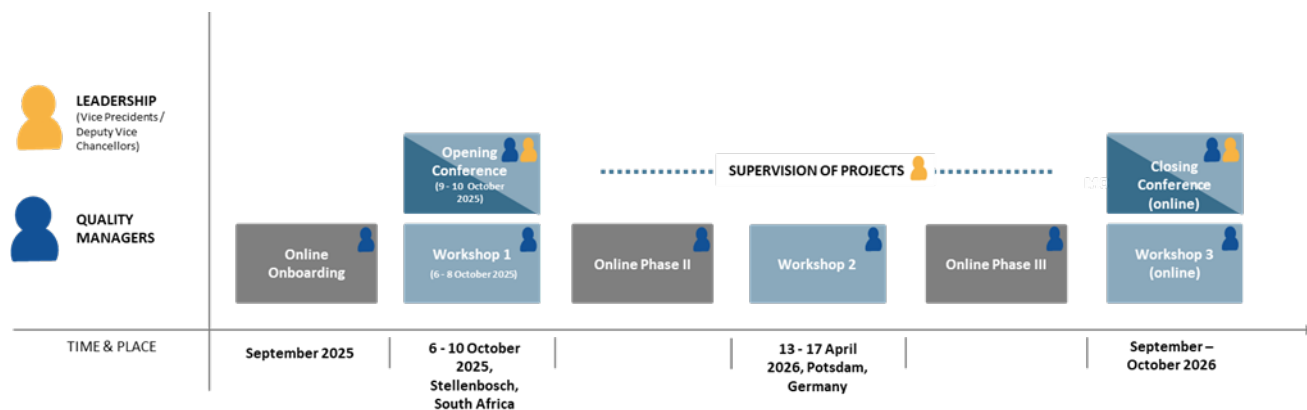
Activities and Time Schedule

The training will start in **September 2025** with an online onboarding, including the introduction of the trainer team and participants as well as the first learning activities. **Workshop I** will take place **from 6 to 8 October 2025 in Stellenbosch, South Africa**. The **Opening Conference** will take place immediately following Workshop I from **9 to 10 October 2025 in Stellenbosch, South Africa**. Senior Management is asked to block the relevant dates for the **Opening Conference**.

The **Opening Conference** will launch the **institutional change projects**, which will be implemented as part of TrainIQA. During the final day of the workshop, participants will have the opportunity to present and discuss their proposed institutional change projects with senior institutional leaders. Additionally, higher education leaders will have a platform to stay updated on recent developments in teaching, learning, and quality assurance and enhancement, both regionally and internationally.

Workshop II will take place from **13 to 17 April 2026 in Potsdam, Germany**. Between Workshop I and Workshop II and between Workshop II and Workshop III, there will be online phases. These online phases will include regular meetings with mentors to discuss project progress, as well as events on Quality Management topics in a blended learning format.

Workshop III will begin as a series of online events starting in September 2026. The training course will conclude at the end of October 2026 with the online Closing Conference.



Target Group

TrainIQA will be open to up to 30 participants who are expected to attend all three parts of the training including the online phases and who should meet the following criteria:

- They should be current or designated quality managers or senior managers responsible for QA with proven knowledge and experience. (In case no such positions exist yet, HEIs can appoint an appropriate person and state this in the application).

- They should be in office for a minimum of 3 years / or should have at least 3 years' experience in QA.
- They should hold at least a Bachelor's degree.
- They need to demonstrate fluent English skills, both written and spoken.
- They should be employed on long-term contracts that go beyond the end of the training in October 2026.
- They should preferably have at least 5 years until retirement.
- They must be available to attend all parts of the course.

Eligible Countries, Institutions and Participants – Who Can Apply?

HEIs from the SADC region (Angola, Botswana, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe) are eligible to apply.

HEIs that have previously participated in SADC-QA training must specify the additional benefits they expect from the TrainIQA course in their commitment letter. Individuals who have already participated in TrainIQA, are not eligible to apply again.

As the five modules of **TrainIQA** are interconnected, in their application participants need to confirm through statements from their institution's leadership that they will participate in all parts of the training (see Annex 2, letter of commitment).

The **institution's top-level leadership** responsible for Quality Assurance (QA) is requested to confirm their attendance and **save the dates for the Opening Conference**, scheduled for **October 9–10, 2025**, as well as the intermediate **online meetings** and the **Closing Conference** in October 2026.

Applicants are asked to save the dates for both **Workshop I** and the **Opening Conference**, which will take place from **October 6–10, 2025**, and for **Workshop II**, which will take place from **April 13–17, 2026**.

Funding of the Training

TrainIQA is supported through funds of the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

The following expenses will be covered for financially eligible countries:

- General training implementation costs
- Regional travel costs for the participants to join the first Workshop I and Opening Conference: Flight to and from South Africa (economy class) and ground travel in South Africa.
- Regional travel costs for the VPs/DVCs to join the Opening Conference: Flight to and from South Africa (economy class) and ground travel in South Africa.
- International travel costs for the training participants to Workshop II: Flight to and from Germany (economy class) and ground travel in Germany.

- Accommodation, breakfast, catering and selected group meals as indicated in the workshop/conference programmes during the contact phases (in Germany and in the SADC region), including the Opening Conference visit for VPs and DVCs, in accordance with DAAD regulations.
- Emergency health insurance during the contact phase in Germany (according to DAAD regulations).

Co-funding from the participating home institutions:

- As a contribution to the training costs, a course fee of 600 EUR is required to be covered by the participant's institution.
- National transportation costs, i.e. from the participants' place of residence to the airport and back.
- National transportation costs, including travel from the participants' place of residence to the course venue and back, in cases where the travel is within South Africa to Stellenbosch.
- Visa costs and airport taxes, if applicable.

Please note that the organizers do not provide per diems. While breakfast, catering, and selected group meals to be announced in the programmes are included, not all meals will be covered by the organizers.

Course Fees

The programme costs will be covered mainly by the DAAD through funds of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), and only a contribution of 600 Euro will be raised. The course fees are due after admission to the course and are a prerequisite for participation in the opening workshop and conference in South Africa as well as for further participation in the training course. The procedure for transferring the course fees will be communicated to the selected participants after the selection process.

Training Coordination

The University of Potsdam functions as the academic coordinator of the course and hosts the TrainIQA Secretariat. The Centre for Quality Development of the University of Potsdam has in-depth experience in the field of IQA of teaching and learning, international cooperation and capacity building in the area of higher education management since 2011.

Application and Selection Procedure

Please hand in your application online until **May 25, 2025 (midnight)**. You need to complete the following steps:

1. Register at <https://sadc-qa.org/s/registr/en.html> with name and e-mail.
2. You will then receive an e-mail with the link to the application form and a password.
3. Follow the link in the e-mail and input your e-mail address and password to access the form and fill out the survey.
4. Follow the survey.
5. Please make sure you hand in a full application including annexes (see below, what a full application includes).
6. When the application is final, click on "hand in application" on the last page.

You can access your online application multiple times and continue filling in the missing data. Once you have clicked on "**hand in application**", the application is perceived to be final and you will not be able to access it anymore. Please make sure to save all your application data, especially the information about your planned institutional change project, in a separate file. Should you have handed in by mistake, please contact us. You can find information and an explanation concerning the application process on <https://www.sadc-qa.org/>.

Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact the TrainIQA Secretariat at University of Potsdam via sadc-qa@uni-potsdam.de.

In order to be considered you need to hand in a full application that consists of:

1. **A completed online application (see contents in Annex 1)** which includes data on the candidate, his/her motivation, the proposed project and the contact data of the senior management who will join the Opening Conference and intermediate sessions and Closing Conference.
2. **Upload letter of commitment (as PDF)** submitted and signed by the institution's leadership (see example letter in Annex 2), including:
 - a statement that the candidate will participate in all parts of the training and that he/she is supported;
 - a confirmation of the function of the candidate;
 - a statement that the leadership supports the project and its implementation in the candidates working time;
 - a description of the relevance of the project proposal and its objectives for the institution as seen by the senior management;
 - a confirmation that the contribution of 600 will be covered by the institution;
 - a confirmation regarding the availability of the VP / DVC in charge of QA and/or Academic Affairs to attend the Opening Conference on October 9-10, 2025.



Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst
German Academic Exchange Service



HRK German Rectors' Conference
The Voice of the Universities

Upload a short personal introduction video or audio file of the applicant in English including:

- Name
- Scientific Background
- Country of origin
- University / Institution
- Role and experiences in Quality Management
- Motivation for applying for the training
- A personal interest or hobby

Applications that do not include all components will not be considered. All applicants will be informed about the result of the selection process by approximately end of June 2025. DAAD, HRK, and University of Potsdam will jointly select the TrainIQA participants along the eligibility, the target group match, the motivation and commitment as well as the proposed project proposal. The diversity of countries and gender will be further considered in the selection process.

Contact details

Website: www.sadc-qa.org E-Mail: sadc-qa@uni-potsdam.de