



The Mico University College
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PROTOCOL FOR DEPARTMENT MONITORING VISITS

EFFECTIVE: SEPT/OCT 2019

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The Mico University College

DEPARTMENT MONITORING VISIT

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For more information about policy development, consult the Policy Formulation and Management Policy on The Mico website at themico.edu.jm/policies.

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1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this protocol is to allow for objectivity, consistency and fairness in implementing the Department Monitoring Visits (DMV); an initiative coordinated through the Office of Quality Assurance (OQA). The DMV work in tandem with The Mico Quality Assurance Mechanism; supporting the routinizing of processes and continuous improvement of the institution's programmes, services and products.

2. RATIONALE

One of the primary roles of the OQA is the monitoring of operations within The Mico as represented in the QA Mechanism (Fig. 1). An important strategy in monitoring the quality of programmes, products, processes, and services in institutions is the on-site visit. This site visit allows for direct observation of infrastructure, records, data gathering, teaching and learning materials, safety observance, aesthetics and the general working environment. It also facilitates interaction among members of the community in a purposeful manner geared towards the attainment of standards, problem-solving and improvement. For the purpose of quality assurance, site visits may be conducted by external or internal observers. This protocol seeks to guide the process through which academic and non-academic departments and other entities are engaged and visited on-site (by internal personnel) in a systematic and harmonious manner, in the quality assurance process. All participants are reminded that quality enhancement is the ultimate aim of the monitoring process.

This protocol is consistent with the Institutional Quality Assurance Framework and the Institutional Research Policies of this institution. The quality assurance framework indicates the importance of internal quality assurance incorporating every institutional activity and the collection of evidence and information about mission fulfilment, efficiency of activities, and ways of ensuring quality within the institution. The Institutional Research Policy guides the process of data collection and evidence across the institution, and addresses the approaches that may be applicable.

3. DEFINITION

Department monitoring visit refers to the scheduled on campus visit(s) of OQA members to the institution's Units (including Departments, Faculties, Schools or Institute) of this institution; facilitating systematic observation and review processes for supporting institutional effectiveness and quality enhancement.

4. PROTOCOL

Each visit shall be guided by the following activities before, during and after the DMV.

THE MICO QUALITY ASSURANCE MECHANISM

Establishing, Routinizing and Monitoring Standards to Improve Institutional Effectiveness



Fig.1. The Mico Quality Assurance Mechanism

4.1. BEFORE

- i) Each visit shall be well planned: The Head (Team Leader) of the visiting team shall advise the Head of the unit/area to be visited and provide information on the expected time and duration of visit. An interoffice memo through the institution's email system is prescribed. The composition of the team is determined by the nature of the visit. Two (2) to four (4) persons will form a visiting team, with no more than three members (group leader, observer and scribe) of the OQA on each visit.
- ii) A pre-visit team meeting shall agree on how the visit will be conducted giving attention to fairness and consistency: The issues to be observed will be NO more than three (3) that are examined in-depth. For each visit, there will be a reference – a policy, procedure, etc. of which that unit/area is fully aware and has had reasonable time to address.
- iii) The need for notifications to each unit/area shall be decided and scheduled beforehand. On occasions, the OQA may invite other members of the community (internal persons) who have



been authorized to join the visiting team. Such members may have relevant experience and/or expertise that can complement those of the team.

- iv) Each unit/area shall be visited by the OQA no more than twice per semester, and at least once per year. In addition, units/areas may in writing request visits from the OQA based on their perceived needs.
- v) The purpose and general procedure, resources needed and objectives for the visit should be provided to the person responsible for the department or entity to be visited. The procedure may involve completion of a “form” by the appropriate person(s). Such a form will be sent in advance of the visit.

4.2. DURING

- i) Safety in the use of facilities, adequacy of resources, and organization of materials are among the areas that may be observed during an on-site visit.
- ii) The OQA team shall prepare a report and send officially, within 7 – 10 work days. After a team meeting, the consensus of the team shall be placed in a report and signed. Where the team cannot agree on an interpretation, the OQA will make a recommendation.
- iii) Internal site visits should be scheduled based on the need. In cases where the scheduling process is not practical, the OQA may conduct site visit(s) without prior notice for that specific visit.
- iv) The report on the visit shall be done after the visit; members of the monitoring team will complete the Department Monitoring Visit Report, DMVR within three weeks of the visit (see Appendix).

4.3. AFTER

- i) The opportunity shall be provided to allow for discussion by unit/area members with members of the visiting team, and for feedback on the observations within the specified duration of the visit. A written response to related queries or recommendations may be requested from the department or entity visited; including plans for improvement or enhancement.
- ii) Information from the site visit shall be treated with confidentiality especially when private or confidential information is being processed.

5. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- Internal Quality Assurance Strategy
- Internal Quality Assurance Framework Policy
- Institutional Research Policy

6. THE MICO STANDARDS

- Quality Assurance



- Design and Approval of Programmes
- Student Learning Teaching and Assessment
- Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification
- Student Support Services
- Teaching Staff
- Learning Resources and Student Support
- Research
- Information Management
- Public Information
- On-Going Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes
- Community involvement
- External Quality Assurance

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