

**ACADEMIC STAFF: Recruitment Policy**

**5.1 Recruitment and Management**

**Code of Practice for Programme Accreditation (COPPA)**

-Guidelines on Criteria and Standards for Programme Accreditation

**Code of Practice for Institutional Audit (COPIA)**

-Guidelines on Criteria and Standards for Higher Education Providers

**INTRODUCTION**

This advisory is issued pursuant to Standard 5.1 in COPIA and also similar standards in COPPA and more specific programme standards. The standard at the institutional level requires that HEPs “have clear and documented academic staff recruitment policy where the criteria for selection are based on academic merit”. (COPIA, p. 28).

**ISSUE**

In the course of programme audits, MQA has frequently encountered academic staff qualifications which have been obtained from institutions with no home country accreditation or are accredited by questionable or dubious accreditors. In some cases, there are serious allegations including investigation by authorities of the awarding institutions.

**RESPONSIBILITY OF HEP**

The onus is on the HEPs to have “... clear and documented policy...” in selecting academic staff on the basis of “academic merit”. This requires that HEPs select and appoint staff who have qualifications which are from credible institutions and therefore, have the depth of knowledge and skills expected from such qualifications. HEPs involved in awarding various accredited qualifications must themselves be sensitive to and be wary of dubious qualifications. Appointing staff with such qualifications leads one to question the commitment and also the diligence in providing good teaching and learning experience to students. The possession of a teaching permit should not be presented as legitimising the otherwise questionable qualifications.

**IMPACT ON QUALITY ASSURANCE**

Failure to have clear policy and practices to vet and select qualified staff on academic merit can be a basis for MQA to refuse accreditation until recommended measures are put in place and evidence produced.