

Executive Summary of the North West university Business School: AABS Accreditation

In a world that is becoming increasingly competitive and is constantly pushing technological boundaries, business schools are under pressure to ensure that their graduates are critical thinkers, can adapt to frequent change, can turn innovative ideas into reality, can lead diverse teams, and have a thirst and capacity to make a positive impact in the society. To succeed in this regard, business schools need to remain responsive to ever-shifting market needs and adopt a holistic approach to knowledge and skills development, while also maintaining their financial integrity and sustainability.

STANDARD 1: RELEVANCE TO THE AFRICAN CONTEXT

The NWU Business School is accredited by the South African council for higher education (CHE). The School has received several awards and rankings over the past years. Other than being a member of AABS, the School is also a member of the South Africa Business Schools' Association (SABSA), the African Institute for Supply Chain Research Group (AISCR) and the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB). The School is accredited by the Association of MBAs (AMBA) and the Business Graduates Association (BGA).

The NWU BS is spread between two provinces in the North West (Potchefstroom and Mafikeng campuses) and Gauteng (Vanderbijlpark campus) which is close to Johannesburg. The target market for the School is both the private and public sectors in all the three sites of delivery. The following are our unique selling points

- With our new logo of the African footprint, we strive to become more relevant for Africa and its unique challenges. In this regard, issues of economic development and corruption are pertinent. The African Bon-Bon's is one initiative aimed at addressing these issues.
- We embrace the needs of the small business sector through an entrepreneurial focus in a developing country context.
- We have a strong emphasis on community engagement with numerous projects delivered over the past years.
- With our emphasis on strategic and critical thinking, our students are exposed to personal coaching, leadership programmes and Think Tanks.

We have relations with various stakeholders in a form of MoUs, training partners, public and private sector collaborations, community engagement, Small Business Advisory Bureau (SBAB), Unit for corruption and integrity studies (UCIS), Thinking Fusion, ITSI and the Advisory Board.

Standard 2: Mission, Vision, and Strategy

The Business School's new vision is **"Shaping Executive minds in Africa"**. Our mission is our **"commitment to integrity and excellence in business leadership"**.

We will accomplish our mission by:

- Equipping managers and leaders with critical competencies to address business challenges such as corruption and poor governance in a dynamic integrative manner;
- Providing relevant solutions that impact management and leadership challenges in our community, country, and continent, through ethical and innovative business education and research;
- Engaging relevant stakeholders in addressing socio-economic development challenges;
- Embracing innovation, technological advancement and forwarding-looking leadership in business.

The School values are excellence in our core business, integrity, ethical behaviour and good governance and Botho / Ubuntu.

In living up to our mission and value statements, the Business School demonstrates its commitment through incorporating the mission and values into its strategic goals which are also linked to all the School's core activities of teaching and learning and research.

Standard 3: Governance

The NWU Business School is an integral part of its parent institution, the North-West University (NWU), which is one of South Africa's largest, oldest and most well-established universities. The NWU was ranked by Times Higher Education as among the top six universities in South Africa. Thus, the Business School's strong position in the market is boosted by the good standing of the NWU as a whole. Although the school has operational autonomy, it has strong connection with the parent university. The Chief Director of the school reports to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor of the NWU. For academic status quo, the School is part of the Faculty of Economics and Management Sciences (F-EMS) with respect to both formal academic and non-formal continuing education programmes for purposes of academic integrity and quality assurance. The School's governance consists of the Advisory Board, School board and the EXCO. The Advisory Board consists of members of the University Management Committee, F-EMS and the School, along with a predetermined number of nominated members active in the public and private sector. The school also has various internal committees for management of different portfolios.

Standard 4: Resources

The Business School has demonstrated its financial sustainability throughout its existence for decades. Through its autonomy, the school is responsible for managing its finances such as budgeting, income generation and expenditure. The school has sufficient academic and administrative staff to help fulfil its mission and to be sustainable. The school also employ services of external industry and academic experts in its core business of teaching and learning and research. The school has an effective management team that ensures that its resources are appropriately managed and expanded where possible. Being part of the NWU, the Business School has various support departments such as library, IT, health service, disability unit, guidance and counselling, sports, centre for teaching and learning (CTL), research support, marketing and communications, etc.

Standard 5: Students

The NWU BS has three sites of delivery; namely Potchefstroom, Vanderbijlpark and Mafikeng. The School generates steady income from formal academic programmes and executive education. The fact that the Business School operates from three geographically dispersed sites of delivery means that it has an advantage to attract students from three different areas in both urban and rural regions. The School offers various accredited programmes, each with its admission requirements and administration. The student numbers for MBA and PGDM have been increasing significantly over the past years. The School embrace diversity in terms of gender, origin, age and ethnicity. The school is committed to enhance equal opportunities for all people everywhere around the world. The school makes provision for credit recognition for students accepted with another degree from other institutions. The school put a great emphasis in ethical and responsible conduct for all its stakeholders. Which is incorporated in the curriculum of various programmes.

Standard 6: Faculty

The school's faculty strategy is to ensure that we have a good mix between well-qualified academic staff with industry experience and research capabilities. The school boast an academically qualified and experienced faculty with most in possession of a relevant PhD. The school developed a workload model to ensure equal and fair distribution between faculty. Apart from full time faculty, the school uses services of adjunct staff, visiting faculty, extraordinary professors and professors of practice.

The recruitment of new staff is done in conjunction with NWU's People and Culture Department which drives the formal processes. The People and Culture Department is responsible for HR policies and practices, but the line managers are responsible to implement these policies and practices.

Standard 7: External Relations

The school believes in continuous engagement with its various stakeholders. The school has appointed dedicated staff for managing the alumni relations. There are various activities that the school organises to maintain continuous engagement with alumni. The business School reach out to alumni through various platforms such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and Graduway, as well as electronic media such as emails and the School's website. Our alumni receive all publications and events invitations. From the Executive Education unit, we have collaborations with other academic institutions, private and public sectors, and training partners.

Standard 8: Programs

The School offers MBA, PGDM and PhD programmes as part of its formal degree programs. The PGDM is offered both full time and part time and through distance mode of delivery. Before Covid, the MBA was offered part-time through block release and bi-monthly attendance, which has changed to a blended approach after Covid. The PhD programme is offered part-time. In ensuring academic quality, the curriculum of different programmes is reviewed through internal and external programme evaluations through processes coordinated by the NWU Quality Enhancement Office. The school established a Curriculum panel which comprise academic staff and industry experts. The school reports to the F-EMS for its academic quality control. For research-related matters the School adheres to the rules and regulations of the faculty, the faculty's Ethics Committee and the faculty's Research and Innovation Committee.

Standard 9: Research

The Business School has a dedicated research unit responsible for all its research related activities. This unit adhere to the F-EMS for quality control and approvals such as the ethics process. The school has its own Research and Innovation Committee that monitors and promotes the quality of postgraduate research programmes and provides guidelines for quality research outputs. Faculty and students are encouraged to participate in a wide range of research activities such as research days and workshops.

Standard 10: Impact on Africa

The business school has introduced new initiatives such as the Think Tanks, Business in Africa webinars, and African Bon-Bon's to stimulate critical thinking and reasoning, foster reflexivity, debate and possible solutions to challenges, and identify research areas pertaining to the AU Agenda 2063 and UN Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) in Africa. The school also uses its unit for corruption and integrity studies, the SBAB and Executive education units to make a positive impact in Africa. The impact is also demonstrated through our MBA Company Project, Community engagement, and research in African context.

Standard 11: Sustainability

The NWU BS perceives itself as a business school committed to continuous improvement and sustainability. This is visible in different approaches and perspectives in our teaching and learning, research and community engagement activities. We collaborate with various stakeholders in addressing socio-economic development challenges. The has a strong financial position and generates income from formal academic programmes (main income stream) and executive programmes (external funding).