

Quality/Operational Manual



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1. Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to provide detailed information on how Magna Carta College-Extreme Commerce Karachi (MCC-EC) aims to uplift and maintain the quality and standard of its educational services. It is primarily governed by the MCC-EC and the awarding body's standards (where applicable). By writing this handbook, MCC-EC intends to demonstrate its accountability to all the stakeholders, the awarding bodies in particular.

The processes outlined in this manual are based on the incumbent organisational structure and committees of MCC-EC.

2. MCC-EC quality structure

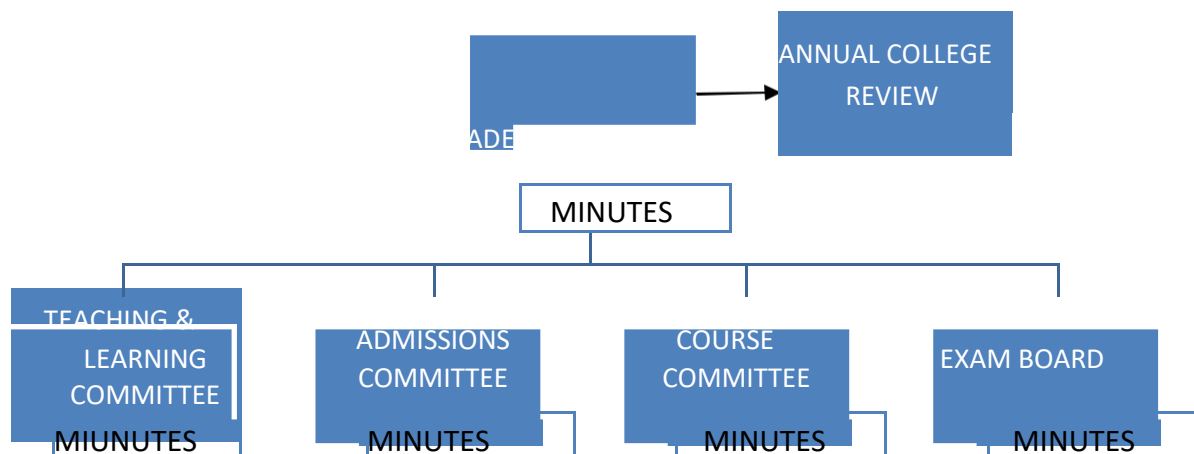
The responsibility for quality assurance at the point of delivery lies with the MCC-EC Academic Board. In order to enforce the highest standards of quality, the Academic Board holds regular meetings in line with the quality assurance mechanisms laid out by the relevant awarding bodies. Such meetings seek to update quality assurance staff on introduction or revocation of or update in any rule or regulation governing the quality assurance mechanisms.

A review of the minutes of the meetings of all external examination/assessment boards and operational committees and quality handbooks of the awarding bodies is part of the core agenda of such meetings.

The Academic Board at MCC-EC consists of the following:

- Head of the Centre
- Vice Dean
- Director Finance
- Director Operations
- Programme leaders
- External Advisor
- Student representative

The overall committee structure for MCC-EC is given below:



The terms of reference for each committee are appended with this document.

MCC-EC takes four intakes each year: January, April, July and October. MCC-EC is an online college and students can join at any point of time. However, each student is assigned a start date according to MCC-EC's intake schedule for administrative reasons. For instance, if a student joins in February, his course start date will be April for that academic year.

The Operational Management of MCC-EC programmes is executed by the Academics Team (AT), which consists of the following officials:

- Vice Dean
- Director Operations/Registrar
- Programme Leaders
- Student support team
- Online tutors (on need basis)

The AT meets regularly and performs the following key roles:

- Reviews the academic processes (outlined later in the handbook) as well as the regular feedback coming from them.
- Proactively incorporates new directions – in particular the policy initiatives resulting from updates to awarding bodies' rules and regulations – in teaching and learning methodologies.
- Manages progress of each student and ensures each student is handed over the progress report.
- Reports directly to the Academic Board and offers advice

Please see the organisational chart of MCC-EC, appended to this document, for the key stakeholders involved in the quality assurance processes.

As MCC-EC is a validated partner with various awarding bodies, all activities linked with course development and amendment are implemented according to the awarding body's quality management/assurance processes. The AT at MCC-EC considers partners' quality assurance guidelines as the benchmark for its own quality assurance processes.

There are four intakes every year. The cut-off for each intake is 2 weeks from the start date. For all online programmes, the Centre will enrol the student even after the cut-off date but his or her start date for the course will be the first date of the next term, but he or she can start studying the course on a self-study basis. The start dates for the four terms are as follows:

- 1 January
- 1 April
- 1 July
- 1 October

The last day of each term also is the date of submission of the final assignment.

3. Programme documentation

In order to ensure transparency in its education services, MCC-EC produces clear and succinct documentation to help existing and potential users (including students, prospective employers and external viewers) understand our courses and the admission process. The following documents are available for users' perusal:

- Programme specifications
- Module specifications/descriptors
- Student Handbook
- Assessment Handbook as per the rules defined by the awarding/validating partner
- Any other document which the awarding/validating body may require us to produce from time to time

All existing students have easy access to programme and course details, as well as the Student Handbook, Assessment Handbook and other relevant documents in the Moodle. In particular, each course has its own section, which is kept up to date by the Student Support Team. These sections include at a minimum:

- Course outline, which specifies all necessary audio lectures, tutorials/case studies and assessment information as applicable for the ongoing module.
- Lecture notes, further reading list and self-accessed activities along with feedback
- Links to live and recorded lectures
- Student/tutor forums
- Synchronous chat facility
- Interactive e-content

The Moodle also has an Induction section with detailed information:

- How to use the platform for distance learning
- Student Handbook
- Video and guide on how to use the VLE (Virtual Learning Environment) interface
- Effective learning handbooks
- Assessment Handbook
- Online library as provided by MCC-EC

The overall responsibility for ensuring the availability and quality of programme-wide documentation is held by the Vice Dean with assistance from Director Operations. Responsibility for ensuring availability and quality of individual courses lies with Program Leaders assisted by the Student Support Team.

4. Online support

Most of the programmes are delivered online using state-of-the-art VLE interface. Special emphasis is given on student motivation and support since learning experience through distance learning can be very isolating.

The same manual is applicable for the face-to-face courses.

4.1 Student motivation

All online programs begin with welcome videos, outlining the programme and what the online student should expect from it. It also provides a face and voice on the online interface.

This is followed by an online orientation course called the 'Induction Course', introducing all incoming students to the online learning dashboard.

Students are automatically enrolled into the Induction Course. This course is mandatory for students to proceed to the first academic course of the program.

The Induction course provides the students with all the material and information required to begin their online learning experience. For example, the Student Handbook is a concise document containing the course outline, useful contacts, addresses, telephone numbers, emails, support systems in place, etc. Following are some of the activities undertaken as part of the induction process:

- Welcome webinar with an introduction to the VLE



• Study skills pre-assessment with a plan and resources provided to fill in the gaps in study skills

- A survey to an online attitude with feedback provided to student
- Student Handbook
- Assessment Handbook
- IT Requirements
- Guide to MCC-EC
- Where should I start from?

For face-to-face students, an induction time table is issued.

The induction course has three objectives:

1. To familiarise students with the technology, the learning medium (customised e-learning), and MCC-EC's processes so that they can effectively engage with the online course material and their course colleagues
2. To provide students with time-management and organisational tools and techniques that will help them throughout the programme
3. To develop students' confidence in their ability to successfully complete the programme because there can be students who have concerns regarding their ability to keep up with 'younger and brighter' students or their own ability to study at this stage of life.

4.2 Technical support

The Student Handbook in the induction section provides details about technical support. Each student is provided with a welcome pack containing a welcome address, an email address to be used for all future correspondence with the college, and the login credentials for the e-learning portal. Contact details for technical help/support are also provided at this stage.

The student is assigned a tutor for each module. In addition, each student is assigned a student support contact and a personal tutor for the duration of the course.

5. Online personal tutors

Upon registration, students are allocated an online personal tutor. The online personal tutors will help students by facilitating their academic progress by setting tasks and activities in the relevant discussion areas of the VLE.

The primary means of support will be delivered online via the VLE. Where appropriate, tutors will also be able to give support by other means, e.g. email, telephone or Skype. The tutorial process is viewed as an essential aspect of development and support for students. It is informally based and designed to encourage two-way communication, whether peer-to-peer or student-to-tutor. As such, it includes the following:

- Channelling and dissemination of information
- Facilitation of discussion between peers on the programme



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- Giving and receiving of formative as well as summative assessment feedback
- Discussion regarding candidate's personal development needs
- Counselling, where appropriate
- Workshops; and
- Ensuring students attend the live seminars as and when done

The course tutors will provide academic advice and guidance and answer questions involving academic matters. For all other queries, students are encouraged to contact the student support team. Students can contact via:

- Online forums
- E-mail
- Telephone
- Chat
- Skype

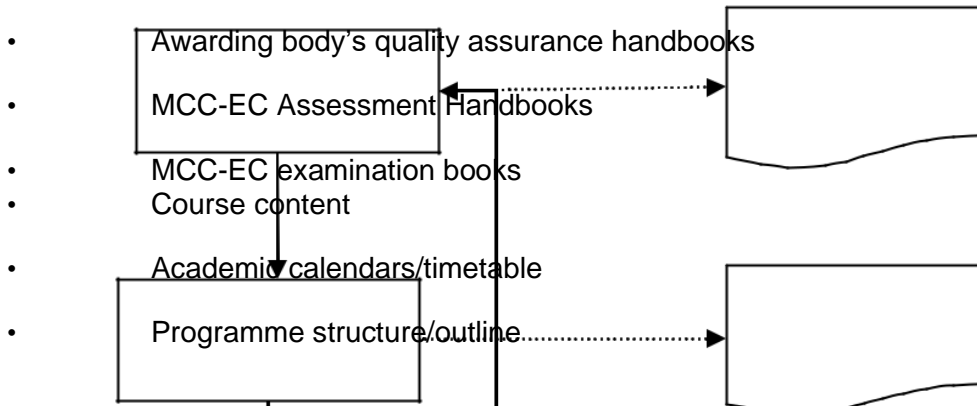
After registering with MCC-EC, the student is provided with an email address and a user name/password for the VLE. The help desk support provides assistance in case a student faces any problem accessing the email account or logging into the VLE account. The usual turnaround time is 24 hours.

MCC-EC also makes use of its outsourced solutions to assist students with maintaining the VLE account, and has contractual agreements with third parties for troubleshooting services.

8. Academic Processes (AP) for MCC-EC

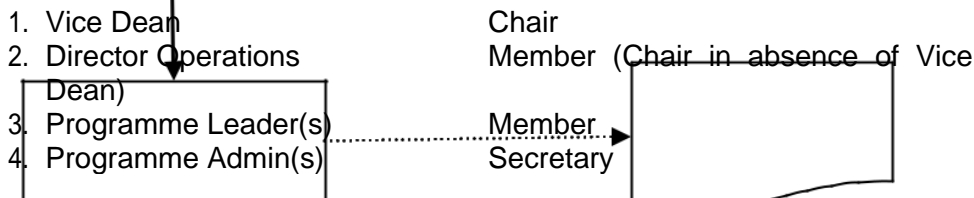
The quality of the MCC-EC programmes is maintained through the following academic processes which have been built in line with the rules and regulations provided by different awarding bodies. A termly meeting of the Course Committee is planned each term to reflect on the past term and to plan for the next term. For terms of reference, please see the committee structure.

The list of documents required for the implementation of these processes is given below:



8.1 Academic Resource Planning (AP-1)

The process is shown below in figure AP-1 as a flow chart. This process looks at all possible resources for program delivery and ensures that they are in line with the existing rules and regulations and the approved programme outlines of the relevant awarding bodies. The process is also the official start of each month and looks at all the possible eventualities for that month.



The monthly update report is part of this process, and includes:

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1. Quantitative data on student's progress. Progress report of each student is also required to be sent.
2. Any change in:
 - a. Programme structure
 - b. Organisation
 3. Any other thing of import or relevance
 4. The minutes of this meeting are sent to the Course Committee

Programme (modules)

Action: Start of term

Check as per the

validating body

Program

OK

Course contents
approved/ Program

Action: Start of term

outline finalised

YES

Pre-Induction Process

Go to AP-2

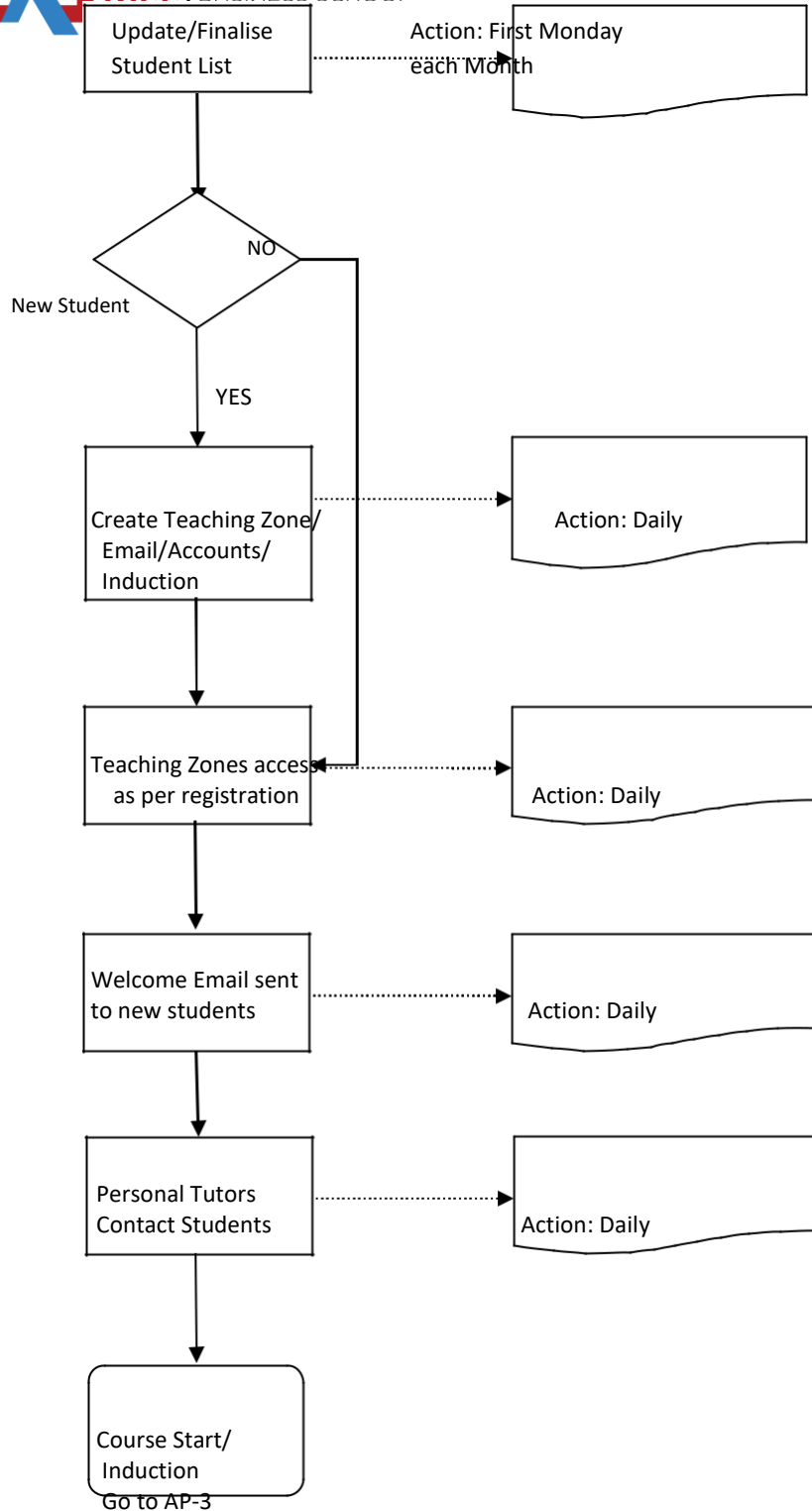
[AP 1](#)

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8.2 Monthly Process - Pre-Induction (AP-2)

This process is shown in the figure AP-2 as a flowchart below. This process looks at the pre-induction preparation for the course/programme. The students are enrolled throughout the year. An update report is generated every month.



AP 2

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8.3 Induction (AP-3)

MCC-EC programmes are offered both online and face to face. Since online study is flexible in terms of time and place, the induction course already explained earlier can take place immediately after registration—for which complete support and help is provided to the student. The web page for induction is available to students for the duration of the course.



Monthly webinars are planned as part of academic resource planning meeting to cover the following:

- Development of study skills based on the analysis of student's need gap for that month
- Further webinars on use of different tools in the VLE

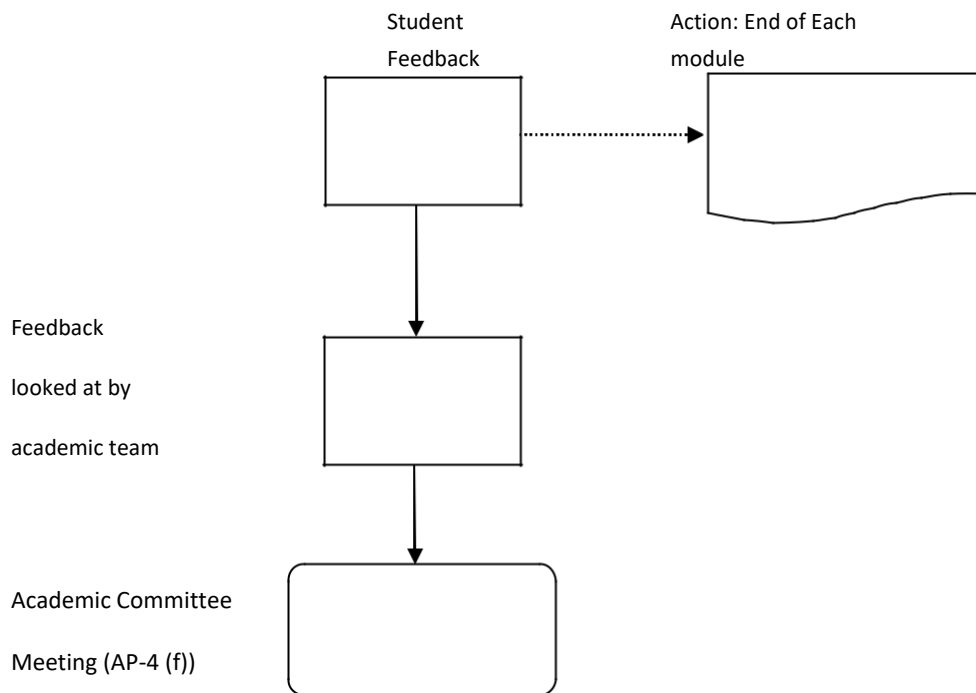
A time table for the Induction is prepared as part of the AP1.

8.4 Programme Quality Monitoring – Pedagogy (AP- 4)

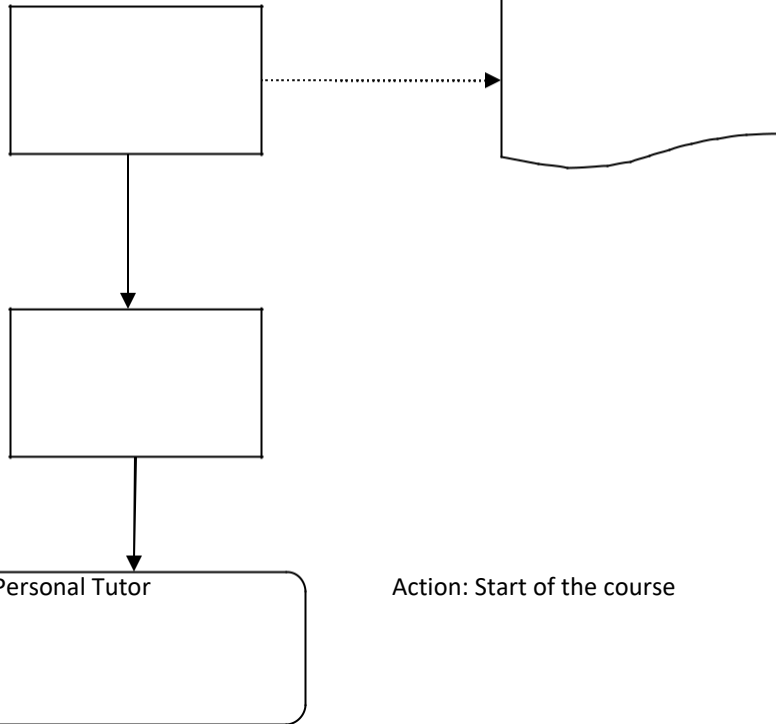
There are elaborate processes to monitor quality against the benchmarks, comprising the following:

1. **AP-4 (a) - Student feedback:** The student feedback is taken at the end of each course. The record is maintained for the same. Required steps are taken in light of this feedback under the guidance of the Head of the Centre and the student support team.
2. **AP-4 (b) - Peer review:** All faculty members are subject to peer review at least once every year. It is mandatory for the new faculty members and the feedback is reviewed during the Course Committee meeting AP – 3(e). This peer review is part of the faculty meeting.
3. **AP-4 (c) – Personal online tutors:** All students are assigned personal tutors at the start of the course. Personal tutors are scheduled to give a monthly feedback to each student as per the stated guidelines/format.
4. **AP-4 (d) – Online tutors:** All modules are assigned an online tutor per 100 students each year during the faculty meeting.
5. **AP-4 (f) - Academic team meeting:** This meeting is held first Monday of each month in conjunction with **academic resource planning meeting (AP -1—when this happens at the start of the term)**. Feedback is taken from all sources which allows for planning and implementing student progression plans in a constructive manner. The meeting is supervised either by the Head of the Centre or Vice Dean and the following are its members:
 - a) Programme Leaders
 - b) Student support team
 - c) Online Tutors
6. **Pedagogy:** This section covers the course design since courses can differ depending on their awarding bodies and face-to-face element, if any. Each course page will have following section:

- a. **Course header.** It will include the following:
 - i. **Communication cockpit**—to include all synchronous and asynchronous elements of communications.
 - ii. **Course outline and course handbooks**
 - iii. **Further reading lists**
 - iv. **Student progression tools**
 - v. **Resource and library links**
 - vi. **Academic timetable/important dates**
 - vii. **Other important information**
 - viii. **Course level announcements**
- b. **Assessments:** This section will include all information related to assessment for that module.
- c. **Each Session/Topic**
 - i. **Session plan**
 - ii. **Reading material with self-assessed activities**
 - iii. **Group activities**
 - iv. **Interactive content**
 - v. **Links to live lectures as and when they happen**
 - vi. **Link to the lecture repository**
 - vii. **Any other resource or activity**
- d. **Student feedback for the course.**
- e. **Blocks:** All standard blocks to be included



AP-4 (a)



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Action: Start of the course

Feedback to student
on Progression

Academic Committee Meeting
(AP-4(f))

AP-4 (c)

8.5 Assessment Approval (AP-5)

Assessments are approved according to the rules and regulations laid down by the awarding body. In most cases, the awarding body administers the assessment. This process will be reviewed when MCC-EC starts providing the academic courses.

The process for assessment approval and internal verification is explained in the Assessment Policy of the Centre.

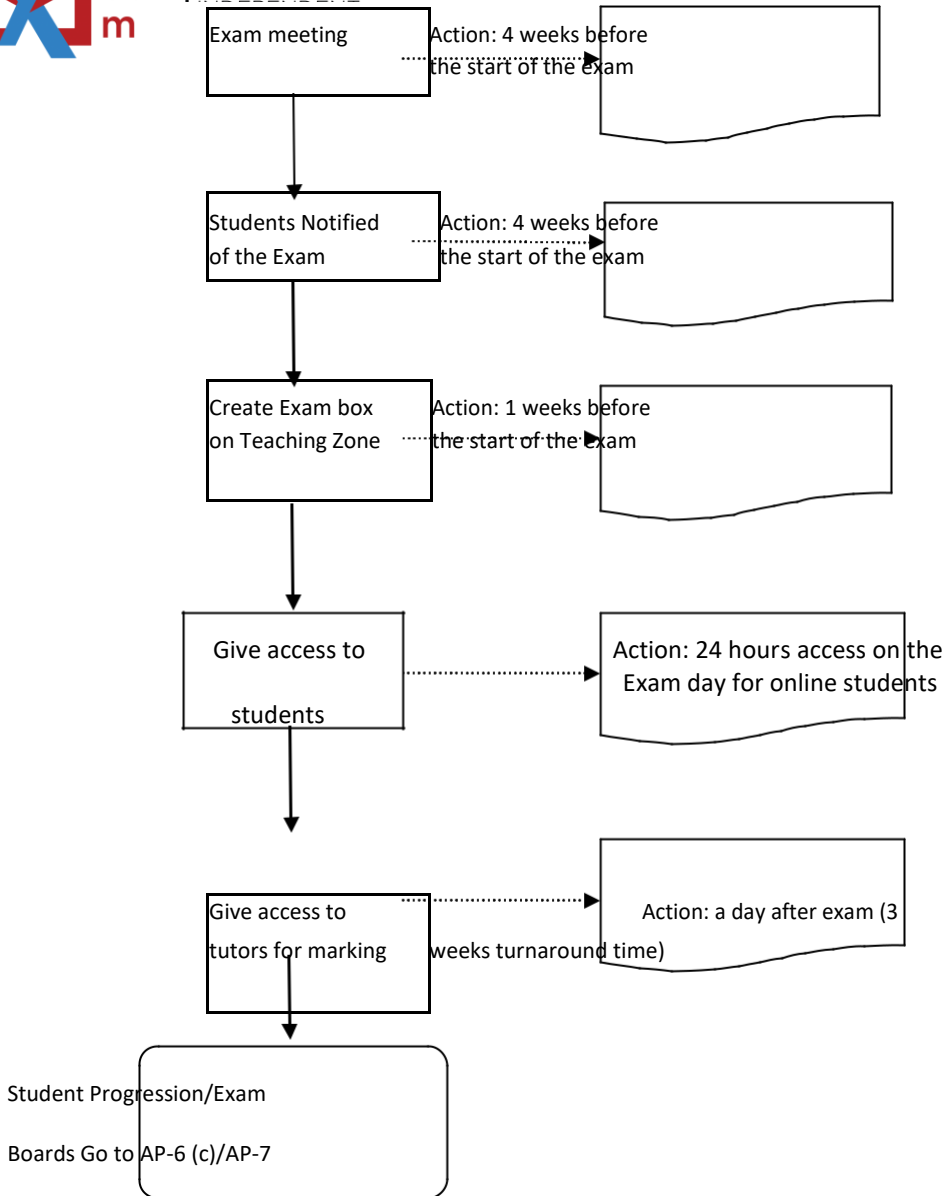
8.6 Examination and coursework (AP-6)

This process is explained in the flowchart AP-5. The awarding body's assessment and examination handbooks are used for the purpose of quality assurance.

1. **Exams:** AP-6 (a) – Currently, all modules are assessed through coursework
2. **Coursework:** AP-6 (b)
3. **Student feedback/progression:** AP-6 (c)



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8.7 Exam/Assessment Boards (AP-7)

The awarding body's quality handbook is used as guidance for both the internal and external examination boards. These processes are in place for the academic courses when they start.

8.8 Graduation/Award (AP-8)

This is managed as per the policy of the awarding body.

8.9 Annual Strategic Report (ASR) (AP-9)

The process of annual monitoring entails critical self-reflection and review that allows MCC-EC to reflect on the effectiveness of a scheme of study in achieving its stated objectives, and delivering the intended learning outcomes to students and allowing action planning for the next academic year.

All quality assurance procedures contribute to the ASR and allow MCC-EC to reflect on the following and inform its validating partners of the same. MCC-EC follows an in-house ASR template for this purpose:

- how different programmes of study have operated and delivered over the previous year(s)
- how the scheme of study/programme continues to remain valid academically and achieve its stated aims
- to identify and disseminate best practice across the scheme of study as a whole;
- to identify and comment on any changes that have been made to the scheme or to identify any changes that are intended to be made in the forthcoming academic session
- Any new changes to enhance the student experience

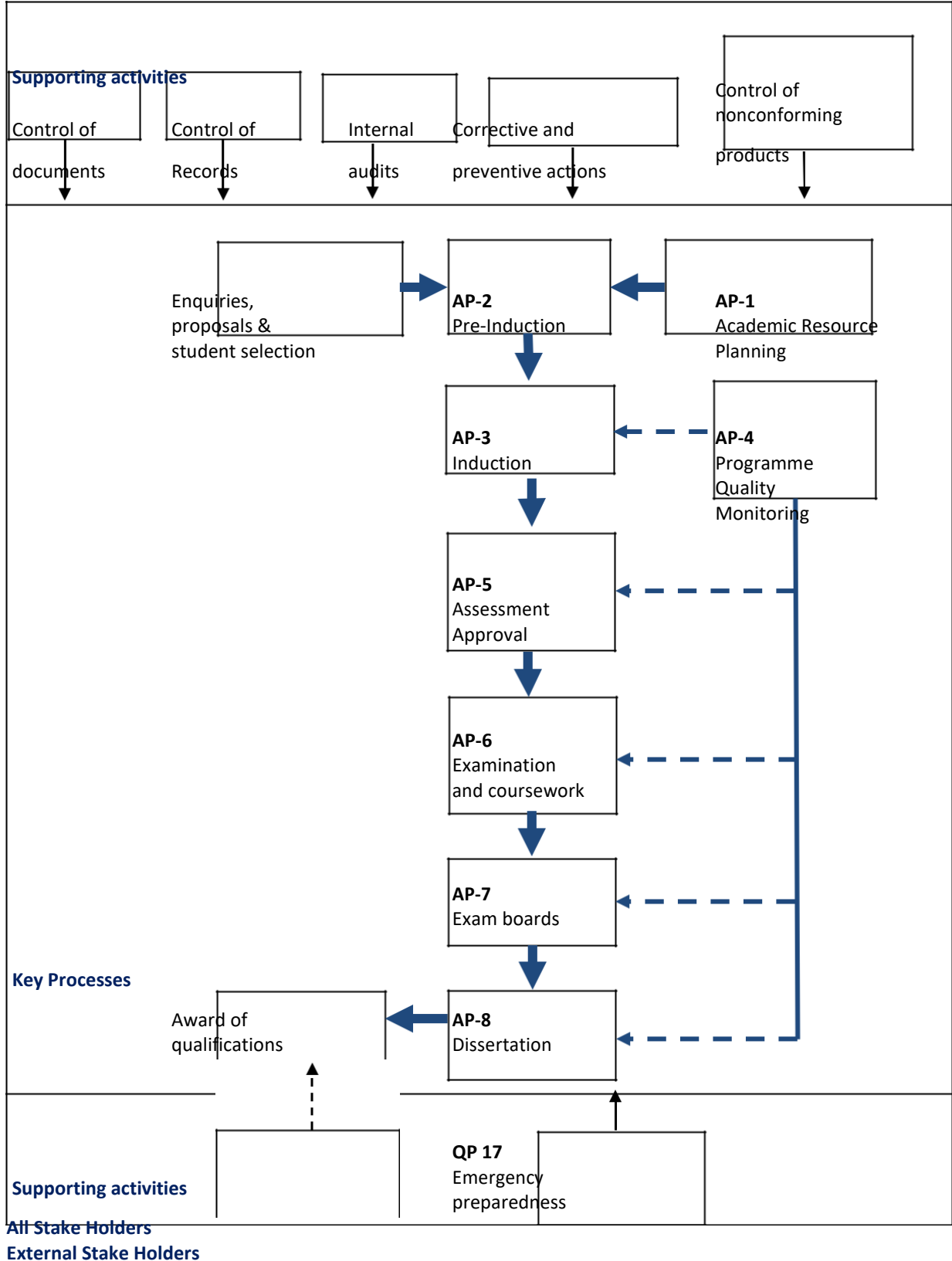
8.10 Annual Technology Report (ATR) (AP-10)

This report is a domain of the Operations Director (CTO), who, jointly with the IT team, reviews the latest developments in the field of IT, and creates the plan of structural changes in the IT platform and next-year upgrades. This report also reviews at the efficacy of the e-learning content and the pedagogy in backdrop of the technology in use. Following are the key components of this report:

- Review of the key competitors' technology
- Implementation and upgrade plans
- Review of the content and assistance required in updating it
- Review of the content writing policy
- Review of the policy on online tutors' training

Appendix A

Overview of Key Processes



Appendix B

Annual Strategic Report (ASR) & Annual Technology Report (ATR)

