

Discussion-8 University SQA

Discussion Topic:

Imagine that you are preparing to apply to a university. Create a checklist of criteria you would use to assess the quality of the university. Base this checklist on the quality assurance concepts presented in this module. Designate some of the criteria as "critical" and others as "important." Explain your reasoning.

My Post:

Hello class,

To reply to this discussion topic, I think that it is important to define the university as the system and its educational services as the product. Based on these definitions, Software Quality Assurance (SQA) concepts from this module can be applied to a checklist of criteria used to assess the quality of the university.

Here is a checklist designed to evaluate a university:

Critical Criteria are a Non-Negotiable quality attribute of a product; in the context of a university, it is the Non-Negotiable quality of its educational services.

- SQA's Standards Compliance concept in the context of a university can be defined as the Accreditation status of the university. In other words, does the university meet established academic standards? This can be compared to the SQA ensuring that a product conforms to industry standards like ISO 9001, as an accreditation is the certification that the university's processes/programs are valid.
- SQA's Correctness/Value-Added concept in the context of a university can be defined as the Graduate Employment Rate. In other words, does the university diploma produce the desired output, in this scenario, a career? This can be compared to SQA ensuring the correctness of a software product, that is, whether the software performs the expected function. For a student, this translates into a university diploma providing measurable value in the form of employment/career.
- SQA's Software Safety concept in the context of a university can be defined as the university's Infrastructure and Safety. In other words, does the university identify and handle potential safety concerns for student well-being? This can be compared to SQA, ensuring software safety by preventing catastrophic failures. For a university, this translates to providing a safe environment for its students that promotes students' well-being.

Important Criteria are High-Value requirements that ensure the quality of a product; in the context of a university, they are the requirements that make the university's educational services highly valuable.

- SQA's Adaptability/Maintainability concept in the context of a university can be defined as Curriculum Currency. In other words, does the university regularly update its curriculum (programs) to reflect modern industry/researchers/innovation trends? This can be compared to SQA providing maintainable and flexible software that can handle

change. For a university, this translates to teaching up-to-date material and providing adaptable educational programs.

- SQA's Quality Control concept in the context of a university can be defined as Student Support and Feedback Loops. In other words, does the university provide or perform technical reviews or surveys where students can report issues, concerns, or wants based on their experiences, and does the university act on them? This can be compared to the SQA providing data-driven tests that identify problem areas and take actions to improve. For a university, this translates to measuring indicators of student satisfaction to improve its educational or administrative processes
- SQA's Reusability/Interoperability concept in the context of a university can be defined as an Alumni Network Strength. In other words, can the university's graduates/alumni effectively interoperate with external professional entities and industries, providing a network that is influential in promoting job and career opportunities for its students? For students, a strong alumni network shows that the university has lasting value that will help them post graduation to find a job and build a career.

The Good Enough concept is a middle ground where the product is good enough to not be rejected, but also it is not too perfectionism that it costs too much or takes too long to complete. In other words, as a student, I would have to decide if a university is good enough. While I might tolerate a few known "bugs" (e.g., a small library or an old cafeteria) as long as the application functionality is high-quality, I would not compromise on the Critical Criteria, as the "external failure cost", aka a worthless degree, is too high to ignore

-Alex