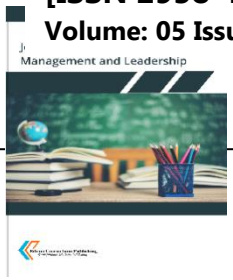
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Strengthening Higher Education Relevance Through Responsive Programmes and Innovation for Societal Development

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Abstract

This study examined how higher education institutions struggle to demonstrate societal contribution when curriculum updates, new technologies and partnership count substitute for evidence of learning and application. This article develops a framework explaining how programme responsiveness, innovation integration and stakeholder engagement can address that evaluation gap. A focused narrative review synthesises 16 English-language research and policy publications dated 2019–2026, identified through targeted public-source searches and reference checking and selected for conceptual relevance, programme-level evidence and contextual contrast. Three findings emerge: the institutional processes have distinct purposes and indicators; curriculum decisions must connect with learning experiences, assessed capabilities and opportunities for application; and implementation capacity and equitable participation condition each transition. The framework separates stakeholder perceptions from independently observed societal outcomes and proposes four relationships for future testing. No primary data were collected, and no causal effects were estimated. Institutions should use accountable review cycles, evidence from learner work, disaggregated access records and partner follow-up to examine successful, unsuccessful and conflicting outcomes. The contribution is a traceable, context-sensitive account of how needs become educational decisions and potentially public value, improving evaluation beyond counts of curriculum changes, technology adoption or partnerships.

Key terms: Higher education relevance, innovation integration, programme responsiveness, societal contribution, and stakeholder engagement.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Higher education faces an evaluation problem: visible reform can coexist with uncertain learning and unequal opportunities to apply knowledge. A Namibian public-health case involving 50 students reported perceived relevance benefits alongside digital-access or competency difficulties for 40 per cent and increased workload for 60 per cent (Katangolo-Nakashwa et al., 2026). These are descriptive reports from one cohort, not national prevalence or causal estimates. South African teacher-education evidence similarly concerns students' judgements of curriculum responsiveness rather than independently demonstrated societal outcomes (Osiesi & Blignaut, 2025). The practical risk is that institutions report successful activity while leaving implementation barriers or public benefits unexamined.

Relevance means a defensible relationship between educational purposes, the capabilities a programme develops and the needs and aspirations of those it serves. Employment preparation forms one component alongside ethical judgement, inclusion, public service and environmental responsibility. A qualitative analysis of one South African business subject illustrates why formal curricular access must be distinguished from meaningful engagement with knowledge (Harker, 2023). UNESCO (2026) situates teaching, research and community engagement within wider institutional transformation, but its policy direction does not establish that a particular reform produces public benefit.

Programme responsiveness concerns what a programme should enable learners to know and do, expressed in documented alignment between needs, outcomes and assessment. Innovation integration concerns whether an educational change is embedded in routine teaching, learning and assessment with adequate support. Stakeholder engagement concerns who inform priorities and decisions and how their input receives an accountable response. The constructs are analytically distinct but potentially correlated: a programme can change content without embedding a new practice, and can consult widely without changing content. They are therefore complementary processes rather than interchangeable measures of a single favourable institutional reputation.
problem

Existing work addresses curriculum alignment, educational innovation or institutional engagement, but offers an insufficiently specified account of how their distinct operations jointly become demonstrable contribution. Competence-assessment research connects outcomes to learning evidence, whereas whole-institution reviews identify strategic–operational gaps; neither alone establishes who influences programme decisions or whether assessed capabilities are subsequently applied (Kioupi & Voulvoulis, 2022; Christou et al., 2024). The knowledge gap is an operational bridge between these processes that avoids overlapping indicators and separates implementation, capability, application, perception and societal outcomes. This article clarifies that bridge, evaluates supporting evidence and formulates testable propositions. The sections that follow critically review the literature, explain the narrative synthesis, present its findings and framework, and develop recommendations and limits; the contribution is conceptual, not an estimate of institutional impact.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Programme Responsiveness and Educational Purpose

Programme responsiveness requires more than consultation: recognised needs must be translated into outcomes, learning tasks and assessment standards. Kioupi and Voulvoulis (2020, 2022) provide

programme-level approaches to sustainability alignment and competence assessment, offering a stronger evidential basis than counting revised module titles. Their strength is the connection to assessable learning; their scope does not establish whether every stakeholder influenced the priorities selected. Harker (2023) further shows how curriculum documentation can be interrogated for socio-cultural engagement, but one subject's documents cannot establish that learners achieved capabilities.

Osiesi and Blignaut's (2025) quantitative case study of 411 pre-service teachers adds evidence about perceived responsiveness and implementation obstacles in South African teacher education. Its descriptive student perspective is useful for identifying priorities, but does not demonstrate programme effects or external societal benefit. The Namibian case of Katangolo-Nakashwa et al. (2026) links locally relevant content, pedagogy and blended learning, while its single-cohort design and shared participant sources constrain causal and transfer claims. Read together, the studies support collecting curriculum records and access evidence alongside perceptions. They leave unresolved how programme alignment, sustained implementation and stakeholder influence should be distinguished within one evaluation.

Skills-policy reports establish a broader rationale for adaptation: the OECD (2023) addresses green and digital transitions, while OECD (2024) examines training supply, relevance and access. Their comparative reach helps identify changing priorities, but national skills and adult-learning systems are not equivalent to individual university programmes. The present framework uses these reports to contextualise needs, not as empirical confirmation of a university-level coefficient. The unresolved task is to preserve disciplinary and public purposes when translating external demand into a programme's assessed capabilities.

A programme-level assessment should therefore trace an identified need to an approved outcome, an appropriate learning task and evidence of student performance. A reading-list update without assessment alignment may change representation while leaving the reasoning demand unchanged. A practical project without supervision or accessible participation may increase activity without demonstrating the intended learning. Responsiveness is consequently assessed through the rationale and coherence of curriculum decisions; delivery quality belongs to innovation integration, and the authority of contributors belongs to stakeholder engagement.

Innovation Integration and Its Conditions

Educational innovation integration is the sustained embedding of a new or improved practice in routine teaching, learning and assessment, with staff capability, accessible provision and continuing institutional support. Introducing a platform, project or placement scheme records adoption; successful integration requires evidence that the practice is delivered, used and educationally coherent across more than an initial pilot. The relevant innovation may be pedagogical or organisational rather than technological. A new practice can be implemented faithfully yet remain educationally ineffective, so delivery indicators and student outcomes must be reported separately.

UNESCO (2023) judges educational technology through appropriateness, equity, evidence and sustainability rather than novelty. Its cross-system policy synthesis provides useful evaluative questions, but it does not establish that any particular platform or low-technology alternative will improve university learning. The implementation constraints reported in the Namibian case qualify assumptions that blended access automatically creates inclusion (Katangolo-Nakashwa et al., 2026). The framework

extends this distinction by separating initial adoption, routine embedding and learning evidence rather than assigning all three the same innovation score.

Integration can be assessed through the proportion of planned learning and assessment activities delivered, staff completing a demonstration of the required practice, and participation or completion gaps across relevant student groups. Student work scored against a common rubric provides learning evidence; staff observations and support records test preparedness. Recurrent funding, maintenance responsibilities, workload allocation and use across successive cohorts indicate institutional sustainability. These indicators operationalise the purpose, access and support concerns in UNESCO (2023) and OECD (2024), while retaining the need for local targets and baseline comparisons.

Stakeholder Engagement and Institutional Accountability

Stakeholder engagement is a governed process through which students, graduates, staff, employers and community partners help identify priorities, evaluate choices and receive reasons for decisions. Its assessment concerns representation, opportunities for influence and a closed feedback loop, rather than agreement counts. Participation records should therefore be linked to proposals, documented responses and evidence of who could shape the agenda. Attendance without influence is possible, and a well-reasoned rejection of a proposal can still demonstrate accountable engagement.

The International Commission on the Futures of Education (2021) and UNESCO (2026) provide a normative basis for collective responsibility and participation in educational change. Their breadth supports attention to public purposes, but they are not programme-level causal evaluations. Ruiz-Mallén and Heras (2020) show why sustainability commitments may coexist with different institutional visions, qualifying any assumption of stakeholder consensus. The remaining issue is how to preserve legitimate disagreement while making the use of input visible and compatible with academic standards.

The framework addresses this issue through an explicit decision record: whose concerns were heard, what alternatives were considered, who decided and what response was returned. Accessible meetings, alternative contribution formats and disclosure of conflicts can reduce barriers, although they do not remove unequal power. Consultation quality is kept separate from curriculum alignment and teaching delivery, so institutions can identify where a plausible contribution pathway fails. Empirical testing must investigate whether documented influence predicts more credible perceptions and application, rather than assume that participation produces them.

Higher Education and Societal Development

Berchin et al. (2021) synthesise educational, research and outreach contributions to sustainable development, establishing why higher education relevance extends beyond employment. That breadth helps define possible pathways but cannot establish the effect of one programme. Ruiz-Mallén and Heras (2020) add a critical account of differing sustainability visions, showing why a universal aggregate score could conceal competing purposes. The proposed framework therefore requires an explicit, programme-specific account of which social, economic or environmental contribution is plausible and valued.

Christou et al. (2024) review sustainability integration through a whole-institution systems perspective and identify a gap between strategic importance and operational integration. This is valuable evidence

about organisational relationships, but the review is not a primary trial of the three constructs proposed here. The framework extends its reasoning by requiring distinct indicators and a trace from an approved decision to learning, application and follow-up. It also allows an institution to retain a sound practice when evidence does not justify change.

Nakad et al. (2024) review assessment approaches for sustainability integration in engineering curricula, showing the importance of selecting evidence appropriate to the assessment purpose. Their disciplinary scope cautions against assuming that one instrument can serve every programme. OECD (2025) similarly provides evidence on skills opportunities and unequal background conditions, without identifying university programme effects. These limits motivate separate measures of implementation, assessed capabilities, perceived contribution and independently observed societal outcomes, with no automatic inference from one to another.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

A focused narrative review was used for explanatory integration and framework development (Snyder, 2019). Unlike a systematic effect review or scoping map, it did not seek exhaustive retrieval or a pooled estimate; unlike a full integrative review, it did not claim protocol-led coverage and appraisal of all relevant evidence. The original 13 publications were retained, and three empirical African higher education studies were added during revision, giving 16 sources from 2019–2026: ten journal articles and six institutional reports.

English-language research on university curricula, learning, innovation, participation or contribution was eligible; official skills and education reports supplied context. Unrelated sectors and sources lacking a traceable record were excluded. Targeted web-search results were checked against publisher sites (MDPI, Wiley, Elsevier, Common Ground and the journals' sites), UNESCO Digital Library, OECD publications and Crossref on 11 November 2026. Representative searches were "higher education" AND "curriculum responsiveness", "programme relevance" AND assessment, and "Namibia" AND "curriculum reform". Citation tracing supplemented discovery; no subscription-database search yield or independent duplicate screening is claimed.

Sources were compared by context, evidence type, central argument, contribution and limitation in Table 1. African programme cases were contrasted with UK competence assessment and international policy; normative claims were not treated as tested effects. Three recurrent findings informed construct boundaries, pathway stages and propositions. Sixteen sources provided contrasting conceptual coverage, not statistical sufficiency or saturation. No participants were recruited, primary data generated or propositions tested; selective retrieval and interpretation constrain transferability.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Findings Of the Conceptual Synthesis

The synthesis yields three analytical findings. First, programme responsiveness, innovation integration and stakeholder engagement are distinct operations: alignment of educational purposes, embedding of practice, and accountable influence over decisions, respectively. Competence-assessment work addresses the first link, while implementation and access concerns address the second; participatory policy adds a normative account of the third (Kioupi & Voulvoulis, 2022; UNESCO, 2023; International

Commission on the Futures of Education, 2021). These processes can vary separately, so a single institutional-responsiveness score would conceal diagnostic differences. They are not assumed to be statistically independent.

Second, institutional activity requires intermediate evidence before it can support a societal-contribution claim. The pathway connects an identified need to an approved curriculum decision, a delivered learning experience, an assessed capability, and an opportunity to apply that capability. Kioupi and Voulvoulis (2020, 2022) support tracing outcomes and assessment; the bounded African cases show why perception and implementation evidence remain distinct (Harker, 2023; Osiesi & Blignaut, 2025). Application must then be documented in a workplace, community or public-service setting before longer-term outcomes are investigated. These links are a conceptual synthesis, not an observed causal sequence.

Third, capacity and equity condition every transition. Christou et al. (2024) connect institutional aspirations with operational arrangements, while UNESCO (2023) identifies support, governance and access as concerns for educational technology. The framework therefore records whether staff time, skills, recurring resources and accessible learning routes enable an approved change to operate. A favourable policy or average outcome cannot compensate for exclusion of a subgroup or a missing application opportunity. Table A1, in Appendix A, makes the source contributions and evidential limits explicit.

Table 1 distinguishes the assessment focus and data sources for each construct and subsequent pathway stage. Ratios require a defined denominator, period and target population; institutions should agree on baseline values and justified targets before review. The indicators are proposed operational definitions, not a validated scale.

Table 1: **Proposed Constructs and Illustrative Evidence for Programme Review**

Programme responsiveness	Alignment of educational purposes and assessed requirements with recognised needs; excludes delivery and consultation counts.	Percentage of priority needs mapped to approved outcomes; proportion of mapped outcomes assessed; agreed revisions completed by deadline.	Needs assessment; approved curriculum maps; assessment blueprints; decision/action register.
Innovation integration	Embedding an educational change in routine teaching, learning and assessment; adoption alone is insufficient.	Planned activities delivered (%); staff demonstrating readiness (%); access/completion gaps; continuation across cohorts and recurrent funding coverage.	Delivery audits; teaching observation; student work; support/access logs; staffing and budget records.
Stakeholder engagement	Representation and accountable	Representation by stakeholder group;	Invitation/participation records; accessible feedback;

	influence over decisions; separates consultation from curriculum content quality.	proposals receiving a reasoned response (%); response time; reported influence by group.	minutes; proposal-response and conflict registers.
Learner capabilities and application	Demonstrated performance and use of knowledge, rather than satisfaction or participation alone.	Learner's meeting prespecified rubric standards (%); performance change where comparable; verified application episodes and access gaps.	Moderated student work; baseline/follow-up tasks; placement records; partner verification.
Perceived societal contribution	Role-specific judgements of programme value; a perception outcome rather than objective impact.	Distribution of relevant perception ratings; response/attrition rates; differences by role and access group.	Separate student, graduate, staff and partner questionnaires/interviews; nonresponse records.
Observed societal outcomes	Changes plausibly connected with application over time; external causes remain possible.	Domain-specific indicators, such as graduate use of skills, verified service improvement or environmental practice, with dates and comparators where feasible.	Graduate tracer data; partner/administrative records; independent outcome measures and contextual evidence.

Note. Author-developed operational framework informed by the synthesis. Percentages, targets, instruments and comparison designs require local definition and validation; no scores or outcome estimates are reported.

An Integrative Framework and Research Propositions

Figure 1 presents the proposed relationship between three complementary institutional processes and the evidence stages needed to evaluate contribution. Programme responsiveness specifies the educational response; innovation integration makes it practicable in routine provision; stakeholder engagement informs priorities and accountable review. Learner capabilities and application mediate any plausible longer-term contribution, while capacity, equity and external conditions can interrupt the pathway. Perceived contribution is measured separately, since favourable judgements need not establish societal change.

Conditions across the pathway: implementation capacity and equitable participation

Programme responsiveness **What should change and why?**	**Innovation integration** **How is practice embedded?**	**Stakeholder engagement** **Who influences decisions?**
↓	↓	↓
Approved curriculum decisions → delivered learning experiences → assessed learner capabilities		
↓ Accessible opportunities for application and verified use of knowledge		
↓ Longer-term societal contributions, investigated with independent outcome evidence		
Separate evidence: role-specific perceptions of contribution at each review stage		
Feedback from learning, application and outcomes informs renewed needs assessment and programme review		

Figure 1: **Proposed Pathway from Institutional Processes to Societal Contribution**

Note. Arrows show proposed relationships and temporal stages, not tested causal effects. Funding, governance, labour-market opportunities and partner capacity can alter the pathway.

P1: Better documented alignment between priority needs, programme outcomes and assessment is expected to be associated with stronger assessed learner capabilities and, where application is available, more credible perceived contribution. Alignment makes the relevant capabilities explicit and assessable (Kioupi & Voulvoulis, 2020, 2022). Student perceptions offer a complementary test rather than a substitute for performance evidence (Osiesi & Blignaut, 2025). Misidentified needs or external barriers can weaken the relationship.

P2: Innovation embedded in routine delivery is expected to support capability development more strongly than adoption without continuing support, conditional on staff readiness, recurrent resources and equitable access. The mechanism is a usable opportunity to practise and receive assessment feedback, rather than exposure to novelty alone (UNESCO, 2023; Christou et al., 2024). Unequal access or unsustainable workload can prevent this mechanism from operating. Delivery fidelity and learning outcomes must therefore be tested separately.

P3: Stakeholder engagement with representative participation and a documented response to input is expected to improve the fit of programme decisions and credibility of perceived contribution. Its proposed mechanism is better identification and scrutiny of priorities, not automatic consensus or deference to powerful employers (International Commission on the Futures of Education, 2021; Ruiz-Mallén & Heras, 2020). The link requires empirical testing with decision records and role-specific accounts, including excluded or dissenting participants.

P4: The combination of aligned curriculum decisions, embedded innovation and accountable engagement is expected to support capability and application more strongly than isolated attention to one process. This complementarity extends the whole-institution reasoning of Christou et al. (2024) by identifying distinct operations and intermediate tests. Comparative or longitudinal designs and prespecified interaction contrasts are needed; the additive specification below cannot itself test synergy. None of P1–P4 is accepted, rejected or assigned an effect size in this article.

Implications of the Conceptual Findings

Assessment should identify the programme, cohort, review period and intended contribution. University strategy, delivery records, student work and partner reports concern different levels and should not be treated as interchangeable. Combining them can distinguish lack of implementation from disagreement about educational purposes. Table 1 supplies operational evidence for those distinctions.

The proposed sequence begins when a review team validates a need using disciplinary evidence and accessible stakeholder input. It then records a curriculum decision, specifies an observable capability, selects a learning task and approves assessment criteria. Innovation integration supplies supervision, staff preparation and accessible resources so the task can be delivered. Moderated student work tests capability, and later partner or graduate records test application (Kioupi & Voulvoulis, 2022). Each transition can fail and requires its own evidence.

For example, a community concern about water use could lead to an approved analysis task, supervised field or desk-based alternatives, and a rubric assessing evidence and justified recommendations. Records would establish whether the activity occurred and who could participate; learner work would establish the performance demonstrated. A partner's documented use of recommendations would indicate application, while subsequent water-use records could inform a longer-term contribution enquiry. This is an illustrative scenario, not a case or result generated by this review.

Unsuccessful implementation should be recorded as a finding rather than absorbed into an overall satisfaction score. An approved task that was not delivered identifies a delivery gap; strong learner work without external uptake indicates a possible application barrier. Unequal access requires disaggregated participation and completion evidence, while conflicting outcomes may include stronger professional preparation alongside higher workload or exclusion. The review process should investigate causes, protect affected students, and decide whether to redesign, resource, pause or discontinue the practice. It should not retrofit an explanation or suppress an unfavourable outcome (Nakad et al., 2024).

Discussion

The distinctive contribution is a diagnostic bridge between institutional reform and claims of public value. Broad sustainability literature establishes multiple institutional roles, but this framework requires a traceable sequence and separate operational indicators before a contribution is inferred (Berchin et al., 2021). It extends competence-assessment work beyond outcome alignment to decision authority, routine delivery and application. It also challenges the assumption that more change, technology or partnerships necessarily indicates more relevance.

Different conceptions of public value can produce legitimate conflict, as the sustainability visions compared by Ruiz-Mallén and Heras (2020) suggest. Programme committees should specify non-negotiable academic, accreditation and ethical requirements before considering external requests. They should assess alternatives against published criteria, record reasons and conflicts of interest, and retain student and community representation. Senate or its delegated academic board should decide unresolved academic-standard questions, with an appeal or reconsideration route. Engagement informs academic judgement rather than transferring curricular control to the loudest participant.

OECD (2025), OECD Skills Outlook 2025: Building the Skills of the 21st Century for All, examines differences in skills development, use and opportunity across background groups. Its relevance is to the fairness of the evaluation, not proof of an effect of programme reform. Reviewers should disaggregate access, completion and application indicators where ethically and statistically appropriate, and report the uncertainty of small groups. Success among already advantaged graduates cannot establish that the programme offers equitable opportunities.

The framework is intended as an analytical proposal for higher education systems generally, with Namibia used as a relevant application setting rather than the population of a completed study. The added Namibian and South African cases improve contextual grounding but do not establish national validity. Funding, languages, governance, disciplinary purposes and the availability of placements can change how each indicator is interpreted. Institutions should adapt the proposed review questions and validate measures locally before making cross-institutional comparisons.

Feedback joins the three processes without eliminating their boundaries. Stakeholder evidence can trigger a curriculum decision, review can select a suitable innovation, and evaluation can expose new questions for stakeholders. Retaining an established practice is legitimate when the evidence and academic purpose justify it. The assessment focus is the quality and follow-through of the decision rather than the frequency of change.

Sustaining improvement requires recurrent responsibility and resources. After a time-limited pilot, a programme board should examine learning evidence, subgroup access, staff workload, costs and partner commitments before deciding whether to institutionalise, redesign or stop the practice. Approved continuation should be reflected in routine workload plans, staff induction, budgets, maintenance and assessment moderation. Successive-cohort delivery and scheduled follow-up provide stronger evidence of integration than a pilot launch (UNESCO, 2023; Christou et al., 2024).

Perceived contribution remains useful when respondents judge matters, they can observe and their roles are distinguished. It cannot by itself establish reduced inequality, improved public services or environmental change. Longer-term claims require independent outcome records, a plausible contribution pathway and examination of alternative explanations. Conversely, no detectable regional change does not erase educational value where the programme's scale, timeframe or opportunity to influence that outcome is limited.

This framework thus extends alignment and whole-institution arguments through three additions: non-overlapping process indicators, explicit intermediate evidence and accountable responses to failure or disagreement. It supports comparison between intended practice, enacted learning and documented application without treating them as one outcome. Its value depends on whether this diagnostic structure survives empirical scrutiny, including cases where processes are weakly related, or benefits are uneven.

Implications for Future Empirical Evaluation

Future evaluation should first define the programmes, cohort, stakeholder groups and inference sought. Cognitive interviews and piloting should test whether each indicator captures its intended construct and whether respondents can judge the item. The ethics process should address consent, confidentiality,

power differences and safe participation by students and partners. Sampling and sample size should match the planned comparisons, clustering, attrition and analysis rather than a generic survey rule.

Measurement should combine programme-level records with role-specific accounts and moderated performance evidence. Review actions and curriculum maps assess responsiveness; delivery, access, staff-readiness and resource records assess integration; participation and proposal-response records assess engagement. Capability rubrics, graduate follow-up and verified partner use address later stages. Common respondents and overlapping items should not be allowed to create circular evidence of association.

Cross-sectional regression can estimate adjusted associations with perceived contribution, subject to measurement quality and confounding. Testing the proposed pathway requires longitudinal or comparative programme designs, assessment of construct separation, and appropriate treatment of repeated or clustered observations. Reporting should include missingness, attrition, coefficients, uncertainty and diagnostics, with outcomes and subgroup contrasts prespecified where feasible. Interaction contrasts, or suitable comparisons, are needed for P4; a favourable additive coefficient is not evidence of complementarity.

Limitations

The purposive English-language corpus is selective and cannot establish exhaustive coverage, thematic saturation or a pooled effect. It may privilege readily available publications and international policy vocabulary while omitting local-language scholarship, unsuccessful reforms and less visible African institutions. Adding three African empirical studies reduces one contextual omission but does not make the corpus representative. The six policy reports reflect governance and resource assumptions that may not fit underfunded or differently regulated institutions; normative agreement is not empirical confirmation.

No primary data were collected to validate construct boundaries, indicators, mediation or complementarity. The propositions remain untested, and the framework cannot rank predictors, estimate institutional performance or support causal or national generalisations. Funding, disciplinary cultures, labour markets and stakeholder power may alter or reverse the expected relationships. Transfer should therefore be treated as an analytical question for locally adapted pilots and contrasting institutional cases, followed by appropriate measurement and longitudinal evaluation. A broader multilingual systematic or integrative review could test how the source selection influenced these proposed relationships.

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion: The review establishes a conceptual distinction between deciding what education should address, embedding the selected practice and governing who influences those decisions. Their proposed interaction links recognised needs with curriculum choices, accessible learning experiences, assessed capabilities and opportunities for application, under conditions of capacity and equity. Its contribution is an operational framework that separates those stages from perceived contribution and independently observed societal outcomes. This makes failed delivery, unequal participation and conflicting benefits visible instead of treating reform activity as public value. Institutions should use accountable review structures, evidence from student work and partner follow-up to decide whether practices should

continue, change or stop. The framework and four propositions remain unvalidated; future locally adapted, comparative and longitudinal research must establish their measurement quality, transferability and explanatory value.

Recommendations: Academic boards or senate should approve programme-review policy and protect disciplinary standards; faculty curriculum committees and programme boards should conduct the reviews, supported by quality-assurance staff. As a proposed cycle, annual monitoring should examine implementation and equity, with a comprehensive review every three years or sooner after a major accreditation, disciplinary or societal change. These intervals are recommendations, not findings or universal regulatory requirements. Each agreed action should have an owner, deadline, resource commitment and evidence requirement; the quality-assurance office should review progress each semester and report unresolved matters to the academic board.

Programme teams should test a proposed innovation against a defined problem before expansion. The review should examine completion of agreed actions, delivery of planned tasks, staff demonstration of readiness, recurrent resource coverage, access and completion by student group, and moderated learner performance. Targets and denominators should be agreed locally in advance, with comparable baseline or earlier-cohort evidence where available. Workload, student accounts and partner feedback should inform a documented continue, revise, pause or stop decision after the pilot and across later cohorts.

Quality-assurance staff should coordinate annual stakeholder feedback and a proposal-response register, reporting representation, response rates, perceived influence and unresolved disagreement separately. Graduate tracer enquiries at approximately 12 and 36 months, where feasible, and partner records should examine use of capabilities and agreed domain-specific outcomes. External conditions, nonresponse and uncertain attribution must be reported alongside favourable findings. The academic board should review the resulting evidence annually, commission corrective action and communicate reasons to stakeholders, keeping perceptions, verified application and longer-term outcomes distinct.

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