

My Perspective on quality PSET and application

I believe that the quality of a program is only as good as the content being taught. Institutions themselves like NUS could determine what constitutes quality, and my view may or may not align with their interpretation. My assignment, given by SQA is to share my view about the quality of the program I've received from NUS and its application to my current job.

Because of the time, I will go straight to the point. I received my Bachelor of Education from the National University of Samoa in 2009. I can say that the courses I took for this degree were relevant and appropriate to the work I've been doing. In 2010 I started my teaching career at the Alofi o Taa Secondary school. After two years, I accepted a teaching position at Church College Vaiola and taught for 4 years. This is my fourth year as an administrator taking up the role of the deputy principal at the high school.

When attending the National University of Samoa from 2006-2009 as a matured student, I took 30 different courses and 14 of those are Educational courses, with the rest allotted for my major and minor and a few electives. As a teacher, I was nervous at the beginning of my career but I was not surprised or shocked with the amount of work, the type of work and the expectation required of me. I say this because my trainers prepared me well and the courses I took were applicable to my role as a Secondary School level teacher. My Classroom Management and Planning course allowed me to explore different methods of managing my classroom. I was blessed with multiple opportunities to do Teaching Practicums at the top high schools in the country, where I experienced first-hand knowledge of real classroom settings.

I remember learning from Epenesa, the Dean of Education at the time, about different theorists and their theories in my Human Development class. This shaped my understanding on how I can best accommodate and respect the learning needs of each unique student. I saw the struggle from teachers who had no prior training of the teaching/education pedagogy. They knew their content inside and out, however they lacked the skills to perform as a qualified teacher. Transferring what they know so much to the students was difficult, they lack delivery skills, they get distracted so easily with student behaviors, preparing assessment and applying the right type of measurement was out of their understanding until after few years in the job, they start to pick things from here and there as they experience and observe those skills and knowledge from others. Although I was inexperienced when I first started, the training I received from the Faculty of Education program at NUS gave me a better start than of those teachers from other faculties.

Since taking the role of a Vice Principal at Church College Vaiola, I have had a few grey hairs here and there and as you can see, my hairline is slowly receding. As a Deputy Principal, my role is to help the Principal with all his duties. My primary role is School Environment and Student Connectedness. Other responsibilities under my portfolio are TVET coordinator, Technology, Student life, Counselling and Academic programs.

With all these responsibilities I'm just grateful that I've got a sure foundation to help me with my calling as an administrator because of the courses I took. Some of these courses are Educational Planning and Administration, School Based Research, Measurement and Evaluation and Inclusive Education to name a few. I have learnt so much on the job but the fact that I had trainings these courses, has solidified my knowledge and skills about my various responsibilities. Competency and skill level mastery must be acceptable to the employer and so being educated in the right courses for the job is vital.

My time at NUS is one of those memories that will stay with me forever, that's of-course unless I get diagnosed with Alzheimer. The trainers were very helpful despite the limited resources they had at the time. Although they didn't have a whole lot of resources to select from like they do now, I hope. They were able to hit the target and achieve objectives. That reflects professionalism and dedication of trainers at NUS. Their commitment, methods of delivery, their passion and vision to what we can become is part of that quality that brought about the changes in my young mind at the time. I can say with confident that NUS, is a quality brand, that some people underestimate but as an NUS alumni, I can assure you that there is quality, and you can ask around and be amazed at how many NUS graduates are holding high positions in various organizations as evidence of that great quality they produce at our very own National University of Samoa.

Thank you.