



**NATIONAL COUNCIL
FOR HIGHER EDUCATION**

**Executive Summary
Of the
Institutional Audit
of
Namibia Evangelical Theological
Seminary (NETS)
Windhoek Campus**

FEBRUARY 2024

1. Introduction

Namibia Evangelical Theological Seminary (NETS) provides ministry and theological training at various levels for 16 local Christian denominations and para-church organisations, aiming to equip individuals for effective ministry. The institution was registered as a private higher education institution by the Ministry of Higher Education, Technology, and Innovation (MHETI) in June 2016 and gazetted as per Government 6024 No.116 f. The institutional audit of NETS was conducted from 24 to 26 July 2023, following a quality audit request by NCHE.

The audit panel consisted of:

1. Dr Rose A. Otieno, Chairperson, Kisii University, Management/Governance;
2. Mr Nathan L. Odede, Member, Stellenbosch Theological Institute, South Africa, Management/Governance;
3. Dr Caswell J. Ntseno, Member, South African Theological Seminary-Sandton, South Africa, Quality Assurance;
4. Ms Johanna Rulien Nortje, Member, International University of Management, Finance;
5. Ms Victoria Verner, Member, NCHE Secretariat, Quality Assurance; and
6. Rev. Dilford Isaak, final-year student.

2. Commendations

NETS is commended for:

Theme 1: Institutional Vision, Mission and Goals, and General Management Processes

- (i) The organisation has strong values and are well articulated.
- (ii) The management team demonstrated a healthy working relationship.
- (iii) The appointment of the new Academic Dean, the first Namibian woman for the institution, and a new local Director's position signify excellent foresight.
- (iv) The culture of the institution is built around unity amidst diversity and strong relationships across the various departments and the students.
- (v) The Director of Management is a highly competent leader and administrator in ensuring quality in operations.
- (vi) Financial management practices and procedures are considered adequate.
- (vii) The donor funds are managed and reported separately from other funds.

(viii) Completion of renovations and upgrades on one classroom is commendable.

Theme 2: Teaching and Learning

- (i) There is a family environment on campus for students. NETS student composition comprises different denominations and local and foreign groups; this has been identified as a strength rather than a challenge (unity amidst diversity).
- (ii) The institution has a committed faculty with a passion for teaching and ministry.
- (iii) All faculty members are in possession of at least Master degree qualifications in a relevant theological field while the principal holds a doctorate qualification.

Theme 3: Research

None

Theme 4: Community Engagement

There are diverse community outreach activities such as annual mission trips, weekly community devotions, community evangelism and cleaning campaigns. The institution also provides training to churches upon request.

3. Audit Recommendations

The following recommendations are for quality improvement:

Theme 1: Institutional Vision, Mission and Goals, and General Management Processes

- (i) The vision and mission should focus on what NETS intends to see itself in future.
- (ii) The institution must demonstrate strong links between the vision, mission, and national strategic initiatives.
- (iii) The institution must present clear, timeous, and measurable goals that flow from the vision and mission. This will ensure accountability and be used to evaluate whether the institution is heading in the right direction and meeting its targets.
- (iv) The draft strategic plan should be revised to reflect thorough stakeholders' engagement and needs analysis appropriate to the educational institution.

- (v) A quality assurance management system should be developed and existing policies should be reviewed, following best practices on policy formulation, management.
- (vi) Internal control policies and procedures governing proper monitoring and accurate reporting should be developed.
- (vii) The institution should adopt a progressive view on the role of government in theological education and training through the standard set by NCHE.
- (viii) The leadership team should ideally be on full-time employment basis.
- (ix) Document management should be enhanced to monitor, improve, and encourage a quality culture.
- (x) There is a need to develop internal control policies and procedures for proper monitoring and accurate reporting.
- (xi) The institution should consider recruiting a qualified and experienced staff member in accounting or, alternatively, invest in training and capacity building in financial management.
- (xii) A safety health and environment policy and maintenance plan should be developed and safety officers should be recruited for the personal and property safety of students.
- (xiii) Additional institutional workers should be recruited.

Theme 2: Teaching and learning

- (i) An enrolment plan should be developed each year.
- (ii) A programme planning and design policy should be developed.
- (iii) The institution should establish a structure for academic planning and approval.
- (iv) Enrolments should be within enrolment guidelines, such as recognition of prior learning, especially in the second semester of the first year.
- (v) The learning management system and student information system should be fully utilised for faculty and student access and analytical reporting.
- (vi) The learning management system should be benchmarked with other learning management system platforms and institutions.
- (vii) The institution should review and benchmark the marketing strategy and explore how the data on the system may be used to help in developing the marketing plan.
- (viii) Controls that limit access to the learning management system should be ensured to avoid unauthorised access, data breaches and manipulation.

- (ix) A comprehensive information, communication and technology, and records management policy, which includes the administration of the learning management system platform need to be developed. Other relevant policies include assessment, certification, and teaching and learning.
- (x) Student support between spiritual, mental and academic wellness from entry to exit, should be balanced.
- (xi) The institution should develop comprehensive student support, and teaching and learning policies.
- (xii) There should be a permanent Student Dean.
- (xiii) Faculty involvement in strategic academic decision-making should be increased.
- (xiv) There is a need for a skills development plan to train lecturers as teachers and assessors, including online facilitation.
- (xv) All programmes should be reviewed with external peer involvement, especially in matters such as curriculum structure, progression and articulation, as well as the four-hour class model against current research on effective teaching and learning principles and methods.
- (xvi) Best practices in assessing programme and course learning outcomes should be explored and utilised to improve assessments.
- (xvii) Student-lecturer forums should be introduced for information and feedback to students (one per semester).
- (xviii) A risk register and customer satisfaction and feedback for the student's services should be established.
- (xix) The institution should activate/ initiate the student portal interface on the student information and learning management systems to allow access to academic records and learning materials.
- (xx) Annual Graduation Ceremonies must be held at each exit level even if students opt to articulate to the next qualification level, as this promotes the institution and increases its visibility.
- (xxi) A framework for postgraduate studies must be developed. Faculty capacity for postgraduate studies should also be enhanced.

Theme 3: Research

- (i) A contextually relevant research framework should be developed and the faculty capacity and competence for research should be enhanced.
- (ii) The institution should institute incentives for research output.

Theme 4: Community Engagement

None



CONTACTS

National Council for Higher Education

P. O. Box 90890

Klein Windhoek

NAMIBIA

TEL: +264 61 287 1500

info@nche.org.na

www.nche.org.na
