

## QUALITY ASSURANCE PRACTICES AND ETHICAL COMPLIANCE FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION IN NIGERIA

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A paper presented at the 1<sup>st</sup> International Conference of the Institute of Education, Management and Professional Studies (IEMPS) at the Rivers State University, Nkpolu-Oroworukwo - Port Harcourt, from the 14<sup>th</sup> -17<sup>th</sup> October, 2025

### Abstract

*School administration, just like every other field of endeavor is expected to operate under defined standards and principles. Without doubt, one of the ways school administration can achieve the goal of meeting its objectives in terms of input- process-output is through conscious quality assurance practices and ethical compliances. Therefore, this paper x-rayed quality assurance practices and ethical compliance in school administration in Nigeria, with the adoption of the targets enumerated by the Quality Assurance and Control Unit of the Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt, Nigeria. The paper corroborated specifically, implementing standards in the areas of Lectures/ Academic materials, Conduct and management of Examinations and Staff-Students' Relationship. The paper concluded that there is the need to put Quality Assurance measures in place for the purposes of discipline and maintaining standards, because any process void of standards can be compromised, and suggested among others that the mechanisms of*

*supervision, monitoring and evaluation, cost benefit analysis training and feedback be undertaken by school leadership to ensure an effective school administrative process.*

**Keywords:** *Quality Assurance Practices, Ethical Compliance, School Administration*

## Introduction

The importance of formal education for national development and international collaboration cannot be down played by government and all educational stakeholders. One major way of ensuring the stability and sustainability of formal education in Nigeria is through an effective administration. School administration, just like every other field of endeavor is expected to operate under defined standards and principles. Such prescribed standards are aimed at limiting defects, ensuring focus for the systematic implementation of set goals and aspirations which ensures the effective and efficient attainment of objectives. Administration doesn't refer to just a single process, but series of functions, activities and processes which must be carried out with utmost compliance with laid down norms guiding the specific field of operation. Without doubt, one of the ways school administration can achieve the goal of meeting its objectives in terms of input-process-output is through conscious quality assurance practices and ethical compliances which can be earned through a commitment to consistency, reliability and [quality management](#).

**Quality Assurance** is a systematic process aimed at ensuring that products and services meet defined quality standards and fulfil customers' expectations. It is often a planned and systematic activity laid out and implemented to provide confidence that a product or service will fulfill the requirements for quality, which is primarily aimed at preventing defects and ensuring that the process of production and service delivery is effective and efficient. **Ethical compliance** involves establishing and following organizational standards for appropriate conduct. It means going beyond what an organization does legally, but choosing to act with moral principles like honesty, respect, and integrity. This conceptual paper x-rayed quality assurance practices and ethical compliance in school administration in Nigeria. Specifically, implementing standards in the areas of Lectures/ Academic materials, Conduct and Management of Examinations and Staff-Students' Relationship was the focus.

## Quality Assurance (QA)

Quality Assurance (QA) is an offshoot of the concept of quality. The concept of **Quality** does not seem to have a universally accepted definition, but has an underlying notion of an agreeable standard. The simple dictionary meaning of quality is the standard of something as measured against other things; the degree of excellence of something. Yip (2023) stated that Quality is an essential ingredient in the recipe for success in any industry, not just the icing on the cake. This

connotes that quality is an integral part of any service, and also the expected end product. It underscores the place of satisfying and exceeding customers/ stakeholders' needs. According to Ahiauzu (1999), several early Greek philosophers and some more contemporary theorists like Crosby, Deming and Juran, define quality as excellence, value and reliability, conformance to specification, meeting and exceeding customer's expectation, and finally satisfying and delighting the customer.

**Quality Assurance** is a systematic process aimed at ensuring that products and services meet defined quality standards and fulfil customers' expectations. It is often a planned and systematic activity laid out and implemented to provide confidence that a product or service will fulfil the requirements for quality, which is primarily aimed at preventing defects and ensuring that the process of production and service delivery is effective and efficient. Gupta (2025) defined Quality assurance (QA) as a systematic way to make sure products and services meet quality standards. A comprehensive overview of this quality assurance definition reveals that it is a fundamental aspect of quality management that encompasses various sectors. QA plays a critical role in ensuring that products and services meet stakeholder expectations by implementing systematic processes to enhance quality and compliance while reducing costs and risks associated with defects. Similarly, Yip (2023) stated that QA is a systematic process that ensures products are not just meeting, but surpassing quality standards. This assertion corroborates the concept of continuous improvement as a tenet of Total Quality Management in organizations, which is the ultimate goal of QA practices (Asawo, 2022).

In buttressing the forgoing, the Hexaware Technologies (2025), noted that Quality Assurance (QA) is a systematic process used across various industries to ensure that products and services meet specific quality standards and are free of defects before they reach the customer. This involves the establishment of protocols and procedures to provide confidence that quality requirements will be fulfilled. There are basic practices underlying the implementation of QA principles which cannot be overlooked. The five most important quality assurance best practices helps in delivering better products and services. These key practices as identified by Gupta (2025) focus on documentation, training, reviews, feedback, and data:

### **Clear Documentation and Processes**

Good documentation helps everyone do quality work correctly. Organizations require documented information to support process operations and demonstrate effective quality management. Teams need easy-to-follow guides that explain exactly what to do and how to do it. When processes change, the documentation must change too. This keeps everyone on the same page and prevents mistakes that could affect quality.

## **Regular Training and Development**

Teams need training to maintain high quality standards. Regular workshops teach both technical skills and quality awareness. When team members understand quality processes well, they make fewer mistakes and spot problems early. Training keeps everyone sharp and ready to handle quality challenges.

## **Systematic Audits and Reviews**

Regular quality checks catch problems before they grow. Teams should review their work often and invite outside experts to look at their processes. These reviews show what's working well and what needs fixing. When teams fix problems found in audits, quality improves quickly.

## **Customer Feedback Integration**

Customer feedback shows if quality efforts are working. Teams should ask customers what they think and use their answers to make things better. Good feedback systems include surveys and interviews. When teams listen to customers, they know exactly what needs improvement.

## **Data-Driven Decision Making**

Numbers tell the true story about quality. Teams should track their quality performance and use real data to make decisions. When teams measure their work, they can spot trends and fix issues early. Data helps teams prove their quality is improving and shows where to focus next.

These best principles are supported by the ISO to also include:

- Strong leadership commitment and support, establishing a unity of purpose and direction
- Detailed quality planning in product design and process development
- Comprehensive training on QA principles and procedures
- Rigorous process documentation and control
- Extensive collaboration and communication across teams
- Ongoing audits and risk assessment
- Use of statistical quality control tools
- Validation of corrective/preventive actions

- Continual measurement and analysis of quality data
- Recognition and replication of best practices
- Customer Focus: Understanding and meeting customer needs
- Engagement of People: Involving all employees in the quality process
- Process Approach: Managing activities as processes to achieve desired results
- Improvement: Continually improving processes and systems

**Quality Assurance in Education** encompasses systematic management, monitoring and evaluation procedures adopted by school management to ensure the performance of school administrators, teachers and students against educational objectives, to ensure best practices in resource inputs, utilization and curriculum management to achieve set educational aim and objectives. In emphasizing the importance of QA in education, the European Education Area (2022) stated that Quality assurance involves the systematic review of educational provision to maintain and improve its quality, equity and efficiency. It encompasses school self-evaluation, external evaluation (including inspection), the evaluation of teachers and school leaders, and student assessments. It buttressed that developing a strong quality assurance systems is crucial to support high-quality, inclusive education. Quality assurance helps companies in three key ways. It prevents mistakes by catching errors early, it saves money by reducing waste and the need to redo work and makes customers happier by delivering better products.

### **Ethical Compliance**

In simple terms, ethics means doing what is right. Ethical compliance involves establishing and following organizational standards for appropriate conduct. It means going beyond what organizations do legally, and choosing to act with moral principles like honesty, respect, and integrity. According to Swin (2024), Ethical compliance refers to adherence to laws, regulations, and ethical standards in business operations. It involves ensuring that practices align with legal requirements and moral principles. In the view of Steinholtz and Wilberforce-Ritchie (2024), Compliance focuses on preventing and detecting breaches of laws and policies through rules, procedures, and monitoring while Ethics emphasizes critical thinking and equipping employees to navigate dilemmas by aligning actions with authentic corporate values.

Compliance and ethics are essential aspects of any organization's operations. Compliance refers to the adherence to laws, regulations, and internal policies, while ethics involves conducting business in a morally responsible manner. Together, compliance and ethics create a framework that guides the behavior of employees towards responsible and lawful actions. Compliance ensures

that organizations operate within the boundaries set by external regulators and internal policies. Compliance programs are designed to identify potential risks, implement control measures, and monitor ongoing compliance. Ethics, on the other hand, go beyond legal compliance and focus on doing what is right and ethical. Organizations with strong ethical cultures prioritize honesty, integrity, fairness, and respect in all their dealings. Ethical behavior not only contributes to a positive work environment but also builds trust and credibility with stakeholders. Compliance and ethics are interconnected, as ethics form the foundation for compliance. Furthermore, compliance programs often include ethical guidelines to ensure that employees make decisions that align with the organization's values. Compliance and ethics are crucial for organizations to operate responsibly and sustainably. By adhering to laws and ethical standards, organizations can protect their reputation, mitigate risks, and build trust with stakeholders. The Compyl Notes (2025) summarized that ethical compliance involves establishing and following organizational standards for appropriate conduct. It means going beyond what an organization must do legally, and choosing to act with moral principles like honesty, respect, and integrity. It emphasized that ethics and compliance start with an organization's brand identity, core values, and governance approach. Therefore, corporate ethics programmes should reflect principles that an organization should follow from top to bottom. It establishes how the organization acts as a whole, as well as the behavior expected from executives, staff members and all stakeholders. It summarized focus on ethical issues in organizations to be related to: **Company Culture** where ethical compliance is closely related to fostering a [healthy company culture](#). A positive atmosphere at the office tends to spill over into productivity, customer service, motivation, and work quality and **Internal Rules Instead of External Obligations**: Similar to adopting a healthy lifestyle, ethical compliance is a proactive choice that brings long-term benefits. Ethics-based compliance means [enforcing company policies](#) primarily because they align with business values. Therefore, organizations regulates itself voluntarily. For ethics and compliance to have the desired effect in organizations, leadership must show among other things: Compliance Oversight and Management, Ethical Decisions Integration, Not Substitution and engage in Corporate Social Responsibility. The Benefits of Ethics and Compliance for Modern organizations include, but not limited to: improved customer relations, a culture of professional behavior and an improved reputation with consumers. Organizations establish compliance programs to prevent misconduct and promote integrity. Ethical compliance enhances corporate reputation and stakeholder trust. It includes training, monitoring, and reporting mechanisms to ensure adherence. By prioritizing ethical compliance, organizations demonstrate their commitment to responsible business practices.

### **Corroborating the Need for Quality Assurance & Ethical Compliance for Effective School Administration in Nigeria**

The daily running of the school organization mainly involves numerous processes such as planning, organizing, directing, coordinating, controlling, staffing, budgeting and evaluating performance. The totality of these processes which are directed towards realizing or achieving the



purposes or goals of the school/college/university is called educational administration. There must be a conscious implementation of all of these processes aimed at achieving educational purposes and goals. In order to achieve these goals, the head of the educational organization at different levels must plan carefully to ensure an effective administration of the system, and this may not be possible if quality assurance practices and ethics are not spelt out, and put in place to ensure compliance. Over time, scholars and educational stakeholders have advocated the need to put Quality Assurance measures in place for the purposes of discipline and maintaining standards. This is because any process void of standards can be compromised. Though the concept of quality assurance is used both in manufacturing and service industries to describe systematic efforts taken to ensure that products delivered to customers meet expectations and terms of agreement, it has in recent times being topical even in school administration (Ndoye 2002), and buttressed by Gupta (2025) that in education QA maintains academic standards and program quality.

Quality Assurance practices are established and run by organizational leadership because it is a management process which consist of establishing standards, guidelines and procedures to prevent quality issues, while maintaining the integrity of the services. Therefore, this paper adopted the targets enumerated by the Quality Assurance and Control Unit of the Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port-Harcourt, Nigeria as shown below:



**Fig 1- Source: Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port-Harcourt, Nigeria- Quality Assurance and Control Unit “Roll Up Stand”, 2025.**

For the purpose of this paper, three of the targets of the QA unit as outlined by the Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt, which can be adopted by any institution and level, from pre-primary to tertiary education to be discussed are: Lectures/ Academic Materials, Conduct of Examinations and Staff-Students’ Relationship.

### **Corroborating the Need for Quality Assurance & Ethical Compliance in Lectures/ Academic Materials**

In school administration at all levels, adequate lecture, academic and instructional materials are very vital for students’ performance because they provide the necessary resources for effective teaching and learning. These materials encompass a wide range of resources, including textbooks, workbooks, multimedia tools, and hands-on materials, all of which play a critical role in enhancing students’ understanding and retention of concepts. Research has consistently shown that the availability and use of adequate materials can positively impact students’ academic performance in several ways. Academic materials can cater for different learning styles and preferences, helping to accommodate the diverse needs of students. For example, auditory learners may benefit from audio recordings or podcasts, while kinesthetic learners may benefit from hands-on activities and experiments (Felder & Silverman, 1988). By providing a variety of educational materials, educators can ensure that all students have access to resources that suit their learning styles, leading to improved academic performance. Additionally, instructional materials can help enhance students’ motivation and engagement in learning. Interactive multimedia tools, for example, can make learning more interactive and engaging, capturing students’ interest and attention (Moreno & Mayer, 2007). Similarly, incorporating real-world examples and applications into instructional materials can help students see the relevance and importance of what they are learning and motivating them to succeed academically (Gee, 2003). Furthermore, instructional materials can support differentiated instruction, allowing educators to tailor their teaching to meet the individual needs of students. For example, educators can use supplemental materials to provide additional support for struggling students or to challenge advanced learners (Tomlinson, 1999). By using instructional materials effectively, educators can ensure that all students are able to access and benefit from the curriculum, leading to improved academic performance for all.

Haven enumerated the importance and place of academic materials of different types and purposes, it is very pertinent that school managers set standards for the type of academic materials in relation with the curriculum. This will be with different considerations such as age of the student, level of instruction, type of school, and quality of the material in relation to the curriculum. The view of Gupta (2025) who defined Quality assurance (QA) as a systematic way to make sure products and services meet quality standards should be taken into consideration in the use of academic materials



by ensuring that quality management is put in place in schools to ascertain that products and services, in terms of materials meet stakeholders expectations through a systematic processes that enhances quality and compliance while reducing costs.

Furthermore, school leaders should ensure that organizational members, especially the teachers who are responsible for using educational materials comply with laid down standards. This will corroborate the assertion of Swin (2024) that Ethical compliance refers to adherence to laws, regulations, and ethical standards in business operations. It involves ensuring that practices align with legal requirements and moral principles. Since educational materials can help promote active learning, conscious quality control measures should be put in place to ensure that educational materials presented to students meet the anticipated standard for a given unit of instruction, and ultimately produces quality education.

### **Corroborating the Need for Quality Assurance & Ethical Compliance in Conduct and Management of Examinations**

Examinations are an important part of the students' academic assessment (Asawo, 2023). Examinations play an important role within the educational system (Bua, 2020). This is buttressed by the Track2training (2020) that exams have an important role in the process of learning, and in the whole educational institution. Exams and tests are a great way to assess what the students have learnt with regards to particular subjects and courses. It shows the aspects of a lesson each student seems to have taken the most interest in and has remembered. It also reiterates that exam is necessary because it develops confidence which increases a student's personality in a hard-working manner, brings about enthusiasm for competition, promotes self-analysis of own skill, rewards achievement with awards and brings about learning the lessons of patience, discipline, and leadership through exams. Exams help to introduce own skills by developing thinking, logic and makes quick decision-making, as well as give opportunity for certain types of student scholarship for further higher education.

The importance of examinations as a traditional method of student evaluation cannot be over emphasized because even advanced societies recognize its benefits for both students and instructors. No doubt, examination is one of the methods of the evaluation of the students in the education system, and remains the best way of assessing students of all levels in helping them to achieve academic excellence, and assessing the suitability of students who seek admission to study various academic courses and programmes. One reason why exams are important is because it instills discipline, gives the ability to stay focused under pressure, give opportunity to earn qualifications needed in life, helps with time management and improve learning. Furthermore, given individual differences, exams are also a great way for teachers to find out more about the students themselves. The exam environment in some cases come with anxiety and added stress, which allows teachers to work out how their students argue and how they think individually by

their presentations, which is a great attribute for them to keep in mind for future class activities. The examination process is beneficial to the school as it enables the institution to pay attention to where faculties and particular classes need more focus and resources. Schools need to ensure that they are offering students the best that they are able to, and exams are a great technique to use to monitor the progress and effectiveness of that particular class. School administrators can see where improvement may be needed within the school, college or university based on the students' grades.

The Edgearticles (2020) highlighted some importance of examinations to include that: exams encourage students to learn, they are vital in testing our knowledge and skills. An exam tests whether people are knowledgeable or not, students concentrate due to the existence of examinations. They pay attention to their teachers and their work, examinations help to motivate students. This happens when they succeed and get good results, they are one of the ways to abilities and knowledge in written form. Examinations train students how to be punctual, through timing each paper or session, a student tries to manage time before it is too late. Another importance of examination is its effect on the expression of opinions and thoughts. You can determine a person's level of knowledge in certain areas or subjects when you administer an exam to them. The purpose of examinations can also be buttressed in its relevance. This is emphasized by Edu-Quip (2016) that examinations are relevant for both students and instructors. Some of the reasons emphasized are:

- Examinations help instructors to know the particular areas of a course or subject that students have learnt and the areas where the students have not learnt.
- Examinations force students to study hard because they know they are going to be put to a test at the end of the day. Just imagine what would happen if there were no examinations in schools! In the absence of examinations, it is obvious many students would not take their studies seriously. But thanks to examinations, students are forced to study hard because they know that if they fail to do so, they are going to be tested. And no one wants to fail a test.
- Examinations help the teacher or instructor to know the performance of his students. This is very important because it will tell the teacher how much more effort he or she needs to put to help the students.
- Examinations help to promote healthy competitions among students. Without examinations students would not be forced to compete academically among themselves. And of course such competitions among students in school are very important. For example, John sees that his friend Jerry had a higher score than him in an examination. This motivates John to study hard so that he can beat Jerry's score in the next examination.

- The last but not least importance of examination is the fact that it helps the instructor or teacher to grade his or her students with a great deal of fairness and impartiality since the teacher marks exactly what the student writes in his or her answer booklet and nothing more.

Given the importance of examinations as outlined above, it becomes clear that it is an aspect of school administration that should be undertaken with utmost quality from the planning to implementation stages. All organizational members through clear communication by the school leadership ought to be conscious of the importance of complying with standards set by management for the conduct of examinations. This is corroborated by Yip (2023) that strong leadership commitment and support, establishing a unity of purpose and direction, detailed quality planning in product design and process development, comprehensive training on QA principles and procedures need to be undertaken to ensure quality examination exercises are carried out. Managing school examinations will always be a huge responsibility for school leaders because examinations remain the best way of assessing students of all levels and helping them to achieve academic excellence. Therefore, school administrators must understand various strategies in handling examinations to give it credibility and a true reflection of students' progress. Quality assurance principles should be put in place for examinations management especially in the areas of students' eligibility, supervision & monitoring and automation, which will in no small way change the outlook of examination conduct and management in the school system (Asawo, 2023).

Also, ethical behavior and compliance during examinations should be mandated by school leadership for all stakeholders. This is because the compliance will focus on preventing and detecting breaches of laws and policies through rules, procedures, and monitoring while ethics emphasizes critical thinking and equipping employees to navigate dilemmas by aligning actions with authentic corporate values (Steinholtz and Wilberforce-Ritchie, 2024). Together, compliance and ethics create a framework that guides the behavior of employees towards responsible and lawful actions. Compliance ensures that organizations operate within the boundaries set by external regulators and internal policies. This cannot be over stated in examinations conduct and management. By adhering to laws and ethical standards, schools can protect their reputation, mitigate risks, and build trust with all stakeholders.

### **Corroborating the Need for Quality Assurance & Ethical Compliance in Staff-Students' Relationship**

Teacher-Student Relationship involves a conducive atmosphere or mutual understanding between the student and teacher. The relationship between teachers and students is a critical factor that can significantly impact students' academic and social performance. A positive teacher-student relationship is characterized by mutual respect, trust, and support, and has been linked to a variety of positive outcomes for students, including higher academic achievement, increased motivation,

and improved social-emotional well-being (Roorda et al., 2011; Hamre & Pianta, 2001). Teacher-student relationships can impact students' social-emotional development, which in turn can affect their academic performance. Research has shown that students who have positive relationships with their teachers are more likely to develop strong social-emotional skills, such as empathy, self-regulation, and conflict resolution, which are essential for academic success (Jones & Bouffard, 2012). These skills can help students navigate the complexities of the classroom environment and build positive relationships with their peers, leading to improved academic performance overall. Positive teacher-student relationships can foster this sense of belonging by creating a supportive and inclusive classroom environment where all students feel valued and respected (Deci & Ryan, 2000). This sense of belonging can have a positive impact on students' academic performance, as they are more likely to be motivated to learn and achieve their academic goals. The quality of the teacher-student relationship is a crucial factor that can significantly impact students' academic performance. Positive teacher-student relationships are associated with increased student engagement, motivation, self-efficacy beliefs, and social-emotional development, all of which contribute to improved academic performance. Educators should therefore prioritize building and maintaining positive relationships with their students, as these relationships can have a lasting impact on students' academic and personal development.

Additionally, teacher-student relationships can influence students' behavior and classroom dynamics. A positive relationship between a teacher and a student can create a supportive and respectful classroom environment where students feel safe to express their opinions, take risks, and make mistakes (Roorda et al., 2011). This type of environment can enhance students' academic performance by reducing anxiety and promoting a growth mindset, where students are more willing to persevere through challenges and setbacks (Dweck, 2006). With the positives associated with staff-student relationship as noted above, especially in relation to its impact on student engagement, it is imperative for school management to set up control measures to guide against unethical organizational behaviours. Ethics and compliance in staff-student relationship should be emphasized by school leadership in the core areas of classroom engagement, counseling, teacher's classroom communication and teacher's disciplinary actions. This relationship should be solely professional. Furthermore, this emphasis is important as it gives an image to what the culture of the organization is, because compliance and ethics are essential aspects of any organization's operations. Compliance refers to the adherence to laws, regulations, and internal policies, while ethics involves conducting business in a morally responsible manner. This is stressed by The Compyl Notes (2025) which summarized that ethical compliance involves establishing and following organizational standards for appropriate conduct. It means going beyond what an organization must do legally, and choosing to act with moral principles like honesty, respect, and integrity. It emphasized that ethics and compliance start with an organization's brand identity, core values, and governance approach. Therefore, corporate ethics programmes should reflect principles that an organization should follow from top to bottom. It establishes how the

organization acts as a whole, as well as the behavior expected from all stakeholders. In the view of Steinholtz and Wilberforce-Ritchie (2024), compliance focuses on preventing and detecting breaches of laws and policies through rules, procedures, and monitoring while ethics emphasizes critical thinking and equipping employees to navigate dilemmas by aligning actions with authentic corporate values. This cannot not be expected less in staff-student relationship in schools, with the sole aim of producing quality outputs.

## Conclusion

Any process void of standards in an organization can be compromised. Therefore, there is the need to put Quality Assurance, with ethics and compliance measures in place for the purposes of discipline and maintaining standards in school administration in Nigeria. This paper focused on QA and ethical compliance in the areas of lecture/academic materials, conduct and management of examinations and staff-student relationship, and concluded that these measures championed by leadership will ensure an effective school administrative process.

## Suggestions

In line with the discussions above, the following suggestions were made:

1. School leadership should always employ the strategy of supervision, monitoring and evaluation, cost benefit analysis training and feedback to ensure an effective school administrative process that will promote quality outcomes
2. The art of evaluating and updating strategies should be a continuous process to be undertaken by school leadership for continuous improvement which requires foresight and precision.
3. Focus should also be placed on other areas of school administration for quality assurance practices other than learning materials, examination management and teacher -student relationship

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