

UNAM TO UNDERGO EXTERNAL QUALITY AUDIT



From left to right standing: Dr. Maria Mostert, Mr. Bethold Kaurivi, Mr. Ngepathimo Kadhila, Dr. Francis Sifiso Nyathi, Ms. Irene van Wyk, Mr. Edwin Tjiramba, Mr. Chenjerai Mabhiza, Dr. Adedayo Ogunmokun and Ms. Helena Taapopi. From left to right seated: Mr. Reginald Izaks, Ms. Yvonne Dausab, Ms. Johanna Aipanda, and Mr. Ralph van Rooi

By Moses Magadza

The University of Namibia will for the first time this week undergo an external quality audit through a project called Europe-Africa Quality Connect in keeping with international best practices. An external quality audit not only highlights an institution's strengths and areas that need improvement, but also assures stakeholders that quality assurance processes are in place, which says a lot about the quality of an institution's products, according to Mr. Ngepathimo Kadhila, the Quality Assurance Coordinator with the Centre for Quality Assurance & Management (CEQUAM) at the University of Namibia.

Kadhila said UNAM Vice Chancellor Prof Lazarus Hangula has appointed a team of UNAM-based professionals and a student to serve on the Institutional Self-Evaluation Panel to produce a Self-Evaluation Report (Portfolio) that will serve as a basis for the external audit. The team is comprised of Dr. Maria Mostert (Faculty of Education); Mr. Bethold Kaurivi (CEQUAM); Mr. Ngepathimo Kadhila (CEQUAM); Dr. Francis Sifiso Nyathi (CEQUAM); Ms. Irene van Wyk (Estate Services); Mr. Edwin Tjiramba (Marketing and Communication); Mr. Chenjerai Mabhiza (Library); Dr. Adedayo Ogunmokun (Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology); Ms. Helena Taapopi (SRC member in charge of Academic Affairs); Dr. Erika Maass (Academic Affairs); Mr. Alois Fledersbacher (Registrar); and Mr. Kennedy Mbangwa (Physical and Strategic Planning).

"This project is a joint venture between the Association of African Universities (AAU) and European University Association (AUA). Five African universities are evaluated through this project. Interested universities submitted proposals to AAU and UNAM happened to be among the five universities whose proposals were selected," Kadhila told Forum Online.

The quality assurance project is funded by the European Commission (EU) through a programme called ERASMUS MUNDUS. A panel of experts, comprising of five members (three from Africa and two from Europe) will visit UNAM to conduct the audit. The audit will be conducted in two rounds: first round 5-7 September 2011, second round 26-29 February 2012. The final report (with recommendations for improvement) will be issued in March 2012.

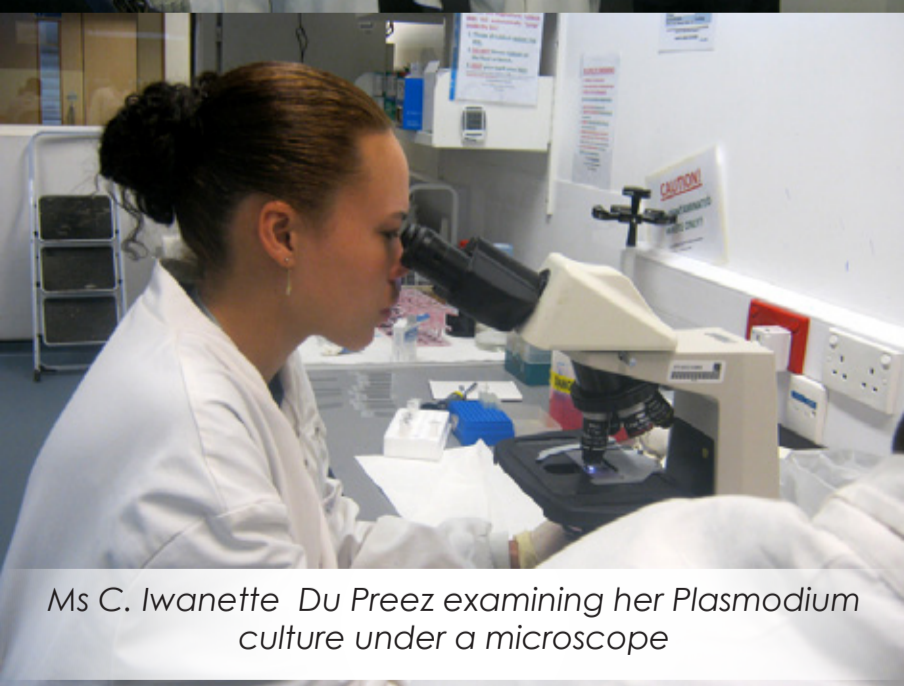
"The purpose of the audit is purely for continuous quality improvement, not for comparison with other institutions or ranking. It is important for participants to be honest, self-analytic and self-critical to get the best from the audit. Hiding weaknesses will not help the institution," Kadhila said.

UNAM TO ESTABLISH LAB BASED MODEL OF MALARIA INFECTION

By Moses Magadza



C. Iwanette Du Preez with Michael Opiyo of the KEMRI-Wellcome Research Program, Immunology Lab, where she received training on culturing malaria parasites (*Plasmodium falciparum*)



Ms C. Iwanette Du Preez examining her *Plasmodium* culture under a microscope

Ms Charwan Iwanette Du Preez, a junior researcher at the MRC in the Pharmaceuticals programme, was awarded a grant last month to receive training at the (Kenya Medical Research Institute) KEMRI-Wellcome Trust Research Programme in Kenya, for two weeks. The programme is a partnership between KEMRI, Oxford University and the Wellcome Trust and it is well known and respected internationally, for its work tackling malaria and other infectious diseases. The training covered preparing red blood cells, infecting them with malaria parasites (plasmodium) then growing and maintaining the infection model for experiments whilst observing biosafety guidelines. Ms Du Preez who is also a post graduate Research Fellow intends to use these skills to finish her MSc on the validation of ethnomedicinal plants as complementary medicines for malaria under the supervision of Dr Davis Mumbengegwi and Dr Ronnie Bock. She has already analyzed extracts from seven medicinal plants and presented this work at the National Research Symposium, and evaluation in an infection model of malaria will be the last piece of the puzzle. Cell culture

is a powerful tool as it not only allows assessment of the efficacy of current malaria medicines but also the evaluation of potentially new medicines. This will be the only such set up in Namibia and will be a great resource to UNAM researchers, as well as to the Ministry of Health and Social Services and the Namibia Institute of Pathology.

STAFF URGED TO CONTRIBUTE TO NEWSLETTER

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