7

University for Development Studies

Establishing University in Northern Ghana

The establishment of the University for Development Studies (UDS) in May 1992 was to bring to a conclusion the long held view that the northern sector of Ghana needed an institution of higher education that could catalyse the development of human resources in the area. In many respects, northern Ghana lags behind the rest of the country, in terms of infrastructural development and access to education (Gasu & Akakpo 2011). The quest for higher education in this part of the country was meant to help in training human resources needed for bridging the development gap that exists between the south and north. The development gap was created by the colonial governance system; and was subsequently perpetuated by the postcolonial governance systems (Songsore & Denkabe 1995). The framers of the PNDC Law 279 which established the University clearly had in mind the notion that the institution would be of massive extrinsic value to the peoples of the north, especially as the mandate of the University identifies with the peculiar conditions of underdevelopment and pervasive poverty of the area.

The genealogy of the UDS can, however be traced to the early 1950s. On 13 November 1953, a concern was raised in the Gold Coast Legislative Assembly by Dr. Ansah Koi that it was necessary to speed up the development of not only secondary school education in the north; but more importantly that there should also be a consideration for the establishment of an institution of higher education (Bening 2005). A year later, on 9 November 1954, a representative from the Northern Territories, B.K. Adama asked a specific question in the Legislative Assembly pertaining to when a College of Technology (a replica of

what was in Kumasi) was going to the built in northern Ghana. But the response from government to his concern was that the Kumasi College of Technology was set up for the whole country and the need for an additional one had not arisen (Bening 2005). While these early calls for the establishment of higher education in northern Ghana may be legitimate, the reality on the ground was that colonial policy, which did not encourage education in the north, had impacted negatively on the establishment of formal educational institutions in this part of the country (Songsore & Denkabe 1995). For instance, it was not until January 1951 that the first public secondary school was founded in northern Ghana, in its administrative capital of Tamale. The lack of secondary schools that could serve as feeders for the envisaged university partly accounted for prolonged lukewarm attitudes towards the idea.

However, in the early 1960s, there were opportunities in the country for the establishment of new institutions of higher education that the promoters for such projects could exploit. There was evidence that Nkrumah, and his government, were dissatisfied with the nature of the existing universities and the programmes that were being run. One of such concerns raised by the government was about the duplication of programmes in Agriculture at University of Ghana and KNUST, which were respectively located in Accra and Kumasi. To address this problem, it was proposed by government that the two Agriculture faculties should be merged into one Central College of Agriculture (Bening 2005; Agbodeka 1998). As was the practice regarding the siting of higher education institutions in the country, the location of the proposed Agricultural College became a matter of controversy. Many locations were subsequently considered and these included Somanya in southern Ghana, Kwadaso in the Ashanti Region (central Ghana) and Nyankpala (northern Ghana). Even though Somanya was chosen as the site for the proposed institution, there had been an immense lobbying championed by the Regional Commissioner for the Northern Region, Mumuni Bawumia, to locate the institution in Tamale. This request from Mumuni Bawumia fell through though. But the failure to have the Agricultural College located in the north did not deter Bawumia from persisting thenceforward. The advocacy for the establishment of higher education in northern Ghana virtually became Bawumia's personal crusade on the governments that came after Nkrumah (Bening 2005).

The type of university that was demanded for northern Ghana had always been for an archetypal American Land Grant agriculture biased institution that would focus on developing that potential in its catchment area (NCHE, 1978). It was this narrow focus on agriculture that mainly stalled the early establishment of a university in the north, as similar demands for an agriculture- biased higher

education were made from the other ecological zones of the country. It is important to add that until the 1970s, the focus on the development of agriculture in the country was mainly directed at the tropical rain-forest zones of southern Ghana. As a result of the competition that emerged for an agriculture-based higher education, it turned out that the political muscle of the elite from the south clearly outmatched those from the north.

This situation was created by the late entry of the Northern Territories into mainstream national politics. The integration of the Northern Territories into the mainstream Ghanaian politics delayed until 1951. This resulted in weak bargaining power for the northern political elites, as compared with the more politically sophisticated class from the south. It was not until the mid-1970s that then military Head of State, Colonel (later General) Ignatius Acheampong, in his Operation Feed Yourself (OFY) agricultural policy, that they prioritised the production of grains and cereals; which the ecology and topography of the north was most suitable for. This brought into prominence the agricultural potential of the north.[29] An audience now existed to pay attention to the persistent demands for establishing an agriculture based university in northern Ghana. To set the plans rolling for such a university, a Committee was appointed by Gen. Acheampong to examine the feasibility of the northern Ghana university project. While an approval was given for its establishment, the project never saw the light of day. Political instability that jostled Gen. Acheampong, its principal architect, out of power botched its implementation. The period, 1970s and early 1980s, witnessed massive economic dislocation in Ghana; and the situation subdued any interest in the university project (Hutchful 2002).

It was only when some restoration of the economic health of the country occurred in the late 1980s, through the implementation of the SAPs, that a revisit to matters concerning the establishment of a university in northern Ghana was countenanced (Hutchful 2002; Nugent 1995). The URC that had examined the general state of higher education in the country made recommendations for the establishment of a university in northern Ghana (URC 1988). By 1990, it became apparent that the government was willing to finally push the agenda of a northern university to its logical completion. Thence, a Task Force was set up by the government to re-examine the nature of the proposed university. The blueprint of the Task Force provided the philosophy of the proposed university. This time around, the focus was shifted away from the narrow concept of an agriculture biased institution to a more generic notion of establishing a higher education with development focus of which agricultural programmes would only be a part (Bening 2005).

In placing development at the centre of the mandate of the proposed university, the name of the new institution was appropriately taken as the University for Development Studies (UDS). By its name and mandate, the extrinsic worth of the institution was to be emphasised so as to deal with the socioeconomic challenges of its locational area. This was to be realised through a positive interface between the university and the local communities. The UDS was envisaged to serve as a bridgehead between abstruse theoretical academic enterprise, which all universities are wont to; and a practical engagement of students and faculty through community service. The University would, thus in a practical way, help in erasing the backward tag of the north (UDS 2008).

The developmental role of the institution is espoused explicitly in the founding legal framework, which is the PNDC Law 279. The Law stipulates, among other things, that the UDS should 'blend the academic world with that of the community in order to provide constructive interaction between the two for the total development of Northern Ghana, in particular, and the country as a whole' (PNDC Law 279, Section 2). The essence of the institution is captured by its first Registrar, Paul Effah, that 'UDS was borne out of the new thinking in higher education which emphasises the need for universities to play a more active role in addressing problems of the society, particularly in the rural areas (Effah, 1998). It is this conviction about the new role of universities that is reflected in its vision as being the University that is envisaged to be a 'Home of World Class Pro-Poor Scholarship' (UDS 2008). Indeed the motto of the University 'Knowledge for Service' provides an apropos encapsulation of the whole import of the institution.

The Idea and Implementation of Multi-campus University

As indicated, the idea of setting up a university in northern Ghana that would be accessible to the people, and relevant in addressing the development challenges of the area had always been a persistent call. One other form that the demands took was that the existing agriculture institutions dotted across the savannah ecological zone of northern Ghana could be amalgamated on the basis of a multi-campus arrangement into one university. These prior demands for a development oriented university and the possibility of multi-campus federated university were to become the definitive character of the UDS when it started academic programmes in 1993. Even so, the implementation of the multi-campus arrangement, based on the foundation faculties was mired in politics and this, to some extent, invoked inter-regional altercations. The triggers for the contestations that emerged were largely out of the calculations of the perceived social and economic benefits that could accrue to the sites that hosted particular faculties.

As it turned out, the blueprint of the Task Force assigned the responsibility of working out the framework for the establishment of the University based its recommendations on the concept of a multi-campus institution. In this regard, campuses were to be set up in the four administrative regions that were to benefit from the multi-campus arrangement, namely: Brong Ahafo, Northern, Upper East and the Upper West. However, the Task Force did not provide definite sites for the founding faculties; but left its determination to the governing board of the institution. Aside from the common understanding that the University was to be headquartered in Tamale, which facilitated the siting of the Faculty of Agriculture in Tamale and later in Nyankpala, the location of the rest of the faculties became matters of controversy and politicking.[30] The expected benefits were not limited to economic issues alone but also the psychosomatic gratification that was associated with hosting a university campus. After going through a period of turbulence regarding where the original faculties were to be located, the UDS has largely transcended that phase and has currently settled with campuses located in Tamale (headquarters), Nyankpala, Navrongo and Wa.

The University started academic programmes in September 1993; when 39 students were admitted into the Bachelor of Technology programme in Agriculture (UDS, 2008; Manuh *et al.* 2007). The students were initially admitted into a borrowed premise that belonged to the Islamic Secondary School in Tamale. This was the situation until the students were moved to their destined campus at Nyankpala. The facility at Nyankpala was inherited from a defunct Agricultural College that had trained extension officers for the Ministry of Agriculture. Due to its proximity to the city of Tamale, Nyankpala was identified by the Task Force as one of the sites for the University; and was expected to be a key player in hosting the pioneering faculties. The Nyankpala campus was thus started in an inherited facility; as the University began without any edifice built for that purpose.

In 1994, the Faculty of Integrated Development Studies (FIDS) was also started as an additional faculty in Tamale. Again, the facility at Islamic Secondary School was available to be used for the start of the second faculty: the Faculty of Integrated Development Studies. But the facilities at the Islamic Secondary School were not particularly fit for higher education purposes. The students were as a result confronted with many challenges, which included the lack of basic municipal services. Meanwhile, the hosting of UDS students in the Islamic School started to spark apprehensions among the Islamic youth about whether the University was employing subtleness to dislodge them from their property. The anxieties that surfaced among the Islamic youth were expressed in the form of press conferences and demonstrations against the government and the management of the University (Bening 2005).

This necessitated the transfer of the pioneering students of the Faculty of Integrated Development Studies (FIDS) by the University's management to Navrongo where another facility, belonging to Integrated Field Communication for Agriculture Training (IFCAT), had been identified by the Task Force as one of the sites for a campus. Notwithstanding the agitations that arose in Tamale against the hosting of FIDS at the Islamic Secondary School, the transfer of the Faculty to Navrongo caused lots of discomfort within the Tamale metropolis. The protest in Tamale against the administrative solution that was taken by the UDS leadership was given negative spin. This was championed by those who were opposed to the relocation of the campus outside Tamale. Although protests and deputations to that effect were sent to the seat of national government against the relocation of FIDS to Navrongo, the Faculty remained in Navrongo until September 2002, when the Faculty was again moved from Navrongo to Wa. The movement of FIDS from Navrongo, in the Upper East Region to Wa in the Upper West Region, as should be expected, was greeted with protests.

This time around, the protest was from the Regional House of Chiefs in the Upper East Region that came to appreciate the contribution of the students to their immediate communities especially through the University's flagship programme of the Third Trimester Field Practical Programme (TTFPP). But just as the earlier protests against the movement of the Faculty from Tamale did not result in a reversal of the decision, so was it in 2002. The Faculty of Applied Sciences (FAS), which was initially in Tamale as a service faculty to the Faculty of Agriculture and the School of Health and Allied Sciences, came to replace FIDS in Navrongo. The hosting of FIDS in Wa was facilitated by two major stakeholders: the Upper West Regional Coordinating Council (RCC) and the Upper West House of Chiefs. In the absence of any suitable facility that the University could take advantage of, the Upper West RCC released its newly constructed office infrastructure to the University. In addition, the Regional House of Chiefs made available its auditorium to the University. The availability of these basic structures facilitated the start of FIDS in Wa, as students found accommodation in town.

The transfer of FAS to Navrongo paved the way for the Faculty to begin its own independent programmes, even as it continued to perform its other service responsibilities to the other science-based faculties. The successful transfer of FIDS to Wa and the movement of FAS to Navrongo has largely brought an end to the uproar that had been associated with the movement of the faculties. It also helped in getting over the conception that campuses at various locations were tied to single faculties. The later decisions by the leadership to expand the University by introducing new faculties and schools have helped in dispelling the initial fears.

The UDS currently has seven faculties, three Schools and a Centre for Continuing Education and Interdisciplinary Research that operate on four campuses located in Tamale, Wa, Nyankpala and Navrongo. The Wa campus hosts not only FIDS but also the Faculty of Planning and Land Management (FPLM) and the School of Business and Law (SBL). Tamale serves as the administrative nerve-centre and in addition are School of Medicine and Health Sciences (SMHS), Graduate School, Faculty of Education (FoE) and the Centre for Continuing Education and Interdisciplinary Research (CCEIR). At the Nyankpala campus are the following: Faculty of Renewable Natural Resources (FRNR), Faculty of Agriculture (FoA) and the Faculty of Agribusiness and Communication Sciences (FACS). At Navrongo in the Upper East Region are Faculty of Applied Sciences (FAS) and the Faculty of Mathematical Sciences (FMS). The administrative trauma of where to locate faculties had been destabilising but current developments within the UDS have come to establish the situation as a *fait accompli*.

Governance Structure of the UDS

Even though the UDS shares many governance features with the rest of the public universities, the institution differs from the rest in respect of the fact that UDS has never been placed under the tutelage of any existing higher education institution. It is also the case that the UDS has never had a Chancellor to perform titular functions since its inception. The ultimate executive decision making authority in the University has therefore been performed by the Chairman of the University Council. It is worth indicating that the UDS, unlike the other public universities in this volume, is yet to start operating a collegiate system.[31] The governance structure of the UDS is shown in Figure 7.1
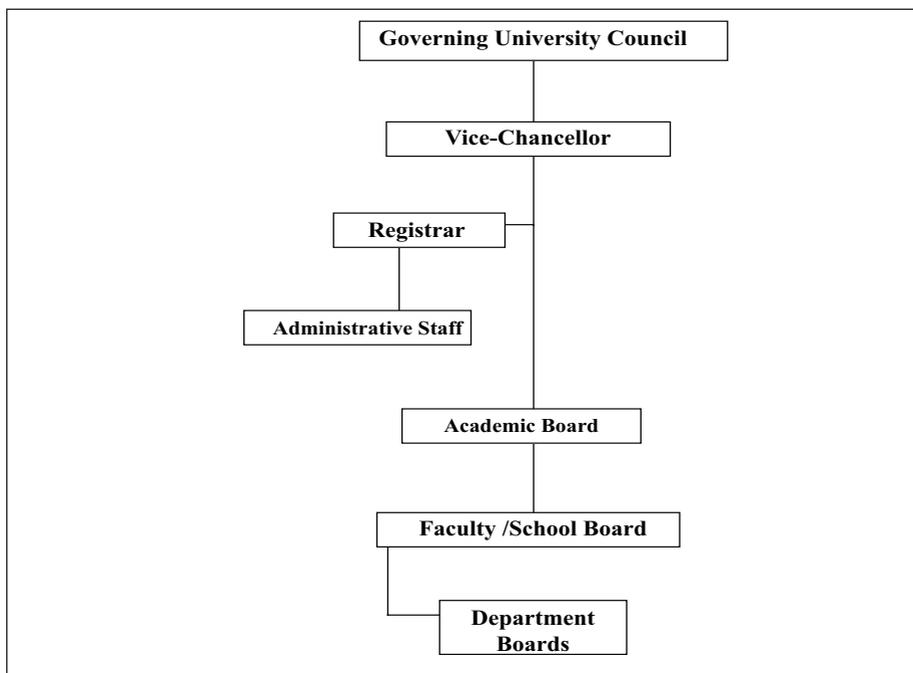
Figure 7.1: Governance Structure of UDS

The Governing University Council of UDS

The highest decision making body of the UDS is the University Council. The University Council has a Chairperson who presides over its meetings. In its peculiar case, where the University has never had a Chancellor, the Council's Chairperson has also been responsible for the traditional ceremonial duties of the University such as the award of degrees, diplomas and certificates.

Composition of the University Council

- Chairman (Appointed by Government)
- Three other Government Appointees
- Vice-Chancellor
- Representative of Convocation (Professorial)
- Representative of Convocation (Non-Professorial)
- Representative of National Council of Tertiary Education (NCTE)

- Representative of Conference of Heads of Assisted Secondary Schools (CHASS)
- Representative of University Teachers' Association of Ghana (UTAG)
- Representative of Teachers' and Education Workers Union (TEWU)
- Representative of Graduate Students Association of Ghana (GRASAG)
- Representative of Students Representative Council (SRC)
- Representative of Alumni

In attendance of the Council's meetings are the following office holders:

1. Pro Vice-Chancellor
2. Registrar (Secretary)
3. Finance Officer
4. Director of Works and Physical Development
5. Recorder

The Academic Board of UDS

The Academic Board is the most important decision making body in as much as the academic programmes in the University are concerned. Like the other public universities, the composition of the Academic Board is broad but is largely a club for the academic staff. The composition of the Academic Board of the UDS as indicated in Statute 22 of the University is as follows:

a. The Vice-Chancellor;
b. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor;
c. The University Librarian;
d. The Deans of Faculties and Schools;
e. The Dean of Students;
f. The Dean of Graduate Studies;
g. Director of Center of Interdisciplinary Research;
h. Director of Community Relations;
i. Heads of Department and Units;
j. Professors and persons with professorial status;
k. One other member not below the rank of lecturer of each Faculty/School provided that any Faculty, which is not divided into departments and any Institute or School may, on approval of the Academic Board, be represented by at least two members of the Academic Staff elected by such staff;

In attendance:
  a. Registrar, who is the Secretary to the Academic Board.
  b. Finance Officer.
  c. Director of Works and Physical Development
  d. Director of University Health Services
  e. All retired and visiting persons of Professorial status
  f. Faculty Examination Officers

Powers and Functions of the Academic Board of the UDS

The Academic Board of the University derives its powers from the PNDC Law 279 and this is stipulated in the Statute 24 of the institution. The following powers and responsibilities of the Academic Board, as stated in Statute 24 are:

  a. To establish the educational and extension policy of the University and generally to regulate the programmes of instruction and the examinations held by the University;
  b. To authorise and promote research within the University and to require reports from the Faculties, Institutes, Schools concerned from time to time on research being done;
  c. To approve the appointment of Internal and External Examiners on the recommendations of the Boards of Faculties, Institutes and Schools concerned;
  d. To approve the examination results submitted by Faculties, Institutes and Schools;
  e. To suspend or remove Examiners for negligence or other sufficient cause during their terms of office and in the case of death, illness or resignation of an Examiner or in the case of his or her suspension or removal to appoint a substitute;
  f. To establish regulations (after receiving reports from the Board of Faculties, Institutes and Schools concerned relating to courses of study, degrees and other academic distinctions;
  g. To make reports and the representations to Council, either on its own initiative or on the request of the Council, on matters affecting the University;
  h. To make appointments of Senior Members;
  i. To make recommendations to the Council on the creation, combination, abolition, changes of or division of any Faculty, Institute, School, Centre or Department;

j. To recommend to Council the affiliation of other institutions to the University on such terms and conditions as it may think fit;

k. To approve, amend or refer back the yearly estimates and accounts of the University prepared by the Finance Committee;

l. To determine, subject to any conditions made by donors which are accepted by Council and after report from the Board of the College, Faculty, Institute or School concerned, the mode and conditions of competition for fellowships, scholarships, exhibitions, bursaries, medals and prizes, and to examine for and award the same or to delegate to the College, Faculty, Department, Centre, Institute or School concerned to examine for and award the same;

m. To make regulation for the admission of persons to courses approved by the University;

n. To make regulations for the discipline of junior members of the University;[32]

o. To propose to Council names of persons for honorary degrees and to express its views on other persons proposed for such degrees by Council;

p. To refer proposals on any matter to Convocation for consideration;

q. To exercise all such powers as or as may be conferred on the Academic Board by law or by the statutes subject to the provisions of the Law;

r. To make such reports and recommendations to the Council within the scope of policy approved by the Council and to take such an action, the Academic Board may deem necessary for the development, welfare and good governance of the entire University community;

s. To determine the length of each academic year and divide the year into such terms or divisions as it may deem appropriate.

There is a provision in the Statutes that the Academic Board may delegate any of its functions to a Standing Committee or Officer of the University with or without conditions.

It is evident from the range of powers at the disposal of the Academic Board that it has the ultimate responsibility in deciding the academic direction of the University. In this role, all academic issues that emanate from the lower levels of the governance structure must be approved or be validated by the Academic Board. It is for this reason that the composition of the Academic Board is made broad enough to foster representation from all the academic components. In this way, the Academic Board of the UDS is a prototype of what obtains in the other public universities in Ghana. Underneath the Academic Board are lower tiers of boards that reflect the other levels of leadership in the University. We now turn to

examine some of the lower level boards in the University that are relevant to our discussion.

Faculty/School Boards in UDS

The Faculty and School Boards are the umbrella bodies for departments, centres and units that are placed under them. The faculties in UDS coordinate departments that share commonality in academic disciplinary focus. The composition of Faculty and School Boards in UDS as stated in Statute 35 of the University is as follows:

1. The Dean of Faculty or School (Chairperson);
2. Vice Dean;
3. The Faculty Examination Officer;
4. Heads of Department and other academic units in the Faculty;
5. One representative of cognate Faculty;
6. The University Librarian or his or her representative who shall be a Senior Member;
7. Such other persons as may be determined by the Faculty Board subject to the approval of the College Board and the Academic Board.

Powers and Functions of the Faculty/School Boards

The Faculty and School Boards are given considerable powers and roles in the following areas:

a. To regulate within the general policy approved by the Academic Board, the teaching and study of subjects assigned the Faculty or School;
b. To ensure the provision of adequate instruction and facilities for research in programmes of the faculty or School;
c. To recommend to Examiners to the Academic Board for appointment;
d. To report to the Academic Board on regulations and syllabuses dealing with courses of study and other questions related to the work of the Faculty or School;
e. To deliberate and recommend to the Academic Board for approval all examination results of the Faculty or School;
f. To make recommendations to the Academic Board the award of degrees, diplomas, certificates, scholarships and prizes within the Faculty or School;

g. Subject to the approval by the Academic Board, to promote cooperation with other Faculties and Institutions within the University in matters relating to the academic work of the Faculty or School;

h. To deal with any matter referred or delegated to it by the Academic Board;

i. To discuss any matters relating to the Faculty.

Board of Graduate Studies in UDS

The UDS has a Board of Graduate Studies that is responsible for the coordination of graduate programmes. The membership of the Board of Graduate Studies is indicated in Statute 37 of the University as follows:

1. The Dean of School of Graduate Studies

2. Coordinators of Faculty Graduate Programmes

3. The Director of the Centre for Interdisciplinary Research

4. In attendance shall be a person not below the rank of Assistant Registrar who shall be Secretary

Functions of the UDS Board of Graduate Studies

As spelt out in Statute 38 of the University, the Graduate Board of the University is empowered to perform the following functions:

a. To approve on behalf of the Academic Board, candidates for higher degrees, supervisors, coursework, theses, topics, synopses based upon recommendations from the appropriate Faculty or School Boards;

b. To recommend the appointment of Internal and External Examiners in respect of written papers, dissertations or theses to the Academic Board based upon recommendations from Faculty or School Boards;

c. To give provisional approval to higher degree examination results upon recommendations from Faculty or School Boards;

d. To liaise with Deans in their various Faculties and Schools;

e. To request progress reports from supervisors at the end of each academic year;

f. To establish and maintain links with Graduate Schools in other universities or institutions and promote exchange of graduate students and staff engaged in graduate work between the University for Development Studies and other institutions.

Department Boards in UDS

The departments are the primary bodies in the University for organising academic programmes. The departments deliver courses for the programme(s) that they offer. The departments also ensure that contents of the courses and their modes of delivery meet the quality expectations.

The departments also provide students with academic guidance to enable them achieve their academic goals. In this respect, the departments exist not only for teaching but to also expose students to the relevant tools for social functionality, critical thinking and research. The conduct of examinations and the assessment of students lie with the departments.

The responsibility of managing departments is vested with Heads of Department. The Heads of Department have the responsibility of ensuring that academic staff carry out the duties of teaching, research and guidance. Department Boards, which are composed of all academic senior members, hold meetings that discuss issues that relate to examinations, assessment and approval of results.

The departments have the responsibility of reviewing the content of programmes as demanded by the Directorate of Academic Planning and Quality Assurance (DAPQA) of the University. In fact, the intrinsic quality issues that departments offer constitute the critical starting point of academic services upon which the reputation of the UDS actually depends.

The Directorate of Academic Planning and Quality Assurance (DAPQA) in UDS

An internal quality assurance mechanism in the UDS was started out of a stakeholders' workshop on 29 April 2008 that was held to institutionalise quality assurance in the UDS. The workshop led to the drafting of a policy document on quality assurance within the University, which led to the establishment of the Academic Quality Assurance Unit (AQAU). The AQUA was established with a Director and placed under the Office of the Vice-Chancellor. The UDS, in 2014, changed the name of this body to the Directorate of Academic Planning and Quality Assurance (DAPQA). The structure within, which the DAPQA works in the UDS, is shown in Figure 7.2
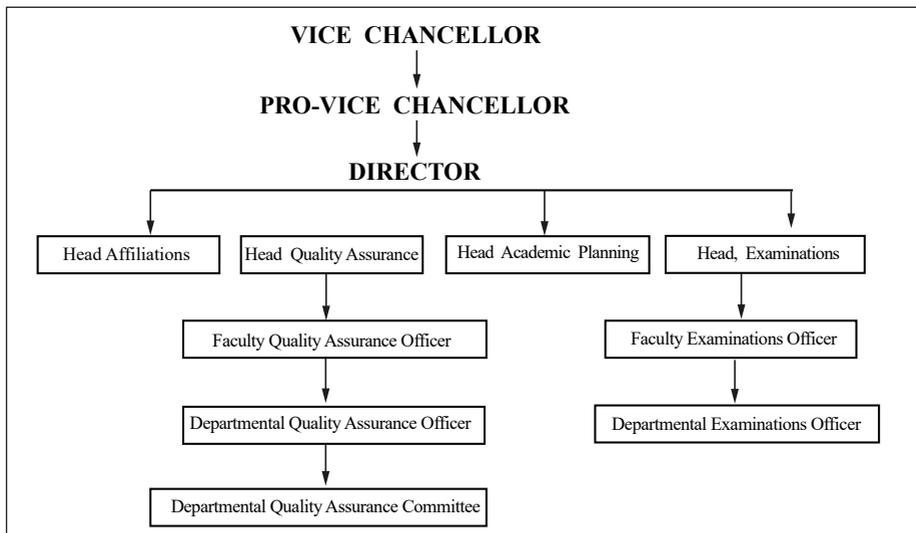
Figure 7.2: The Organisational Structure within which DAPQA works in UDS

The DAPQA in the UDS has the following aims:

1. To facilitate the achievement of academic excellence that would make UDS more competitive at the national, regional and international levels.
2. To promote high staff output, produce quality graduates; provide conducing teaching and learning environments for all the Faculties and to ensure efficient, transparent and accountable governance of the University.

The DAPQA is to perform the following functions:

a. Vetting of Examination results
b. Orientation of newly appointed Lecturers
c. Monitoring of beginning of lectures
d. Students' assessment of courses/lecturers
e. Vetting of programme proposals before submission to NCTE and NAB
f. Investigation of Appeals made by students for alleged involvement in Examination malpractices
g. Processing of applications for affiliation of other tertiary institutions to UDS, and
h. Any other duties assigned by the Vice-Chancellor

In carrying out of these responsibilities, Deans of Faculty and Schools provide vital intermediary roles. In the sphere of quality assurance the Deans in UDS perform the following roles:

1. Responsible for educational and administrative business of the Faculty and Departments

2. Management and delivery of teaching and learning in their Faculties.

3. Executing all policies of the Faculty and University for the programmes and courses within their scope, accountability for performance of individual teaching staff.

4. Responsible as the Chief Examiner of the Faculty.

5. Provide provisional results to students, as approved by the Faculty Board within first of the next trimester.

6. Forward to the Registrar before the first week of the next trimester results of the examination conducted in the previous trimester.

The Heads of Department, in their capacity as the overseers of the primary units of academic service delivery, have important roles to play in the chain of quality service provisioning. In the UDS, Heads of Department contribute in the following ways to the business of quality assurance:

a. Organise and superintend the teaching, research and service programmes of the Department

b. Maintain acceptable standards of teaching and other academic work

c. Provide for the examination of students

d. Liaise with the Dean of Faculty in matters affecting the Department.

e. Convene a meeting of members of the Department at least twice a trimester for the purpose of planning and evaluating the activities of the Department.

f. Be responsible for the general administration of the Department in respect of human, financial and material resources of the Department within the general framework of University policy.

g. Serve as the Chief Examiner of the Department by ensuring that

   i. Question papers are moderated and coordinated internally

   ii. Final moderated examination question papers are forwarded to the Dean in sealed envelopes not later than two weeks prior to the commencement of the examinations.

   iii. Examination materials for practical examination are secured before the examination.

The Faculty Examination Officer is an important player in the value chain for quality assurance in the University. The Faculty Examination Officer is assigned duties to:

1. Arrange and organise the main examination of the Faculty
2. Distribute question papers, answer booklets, attendance sheets, among others, to invigilators before examinations.
3. Communicate to the Dean any matters relating to examinations which require disciplinary action.
4. Present examination reports to the Dean.

With the structures in place and the roles of the various actors defined for guaranteeing quality service, we turn to examine the capacity and capabilities of academic human resources that are available in the University.

Capacity of Academic Staff in UDS

The ability of the University to deliver on its mandate and to bring into fruition its strategic vision of being the 'Home of World Class Pro-Poor Scholarship' is influenced largely by the capacity of its academic staff. This capacity is derived from many sources and we would want to examine the nature of this to enable us have a perspective on the capabilities of the University in the delivery of its services.

The highest academic qualification of the teaching staffs of the University is a convenient starting point for this discussion. Figure 7.3 provides us with some idea about the highest qualification of the UDS teaching staff.
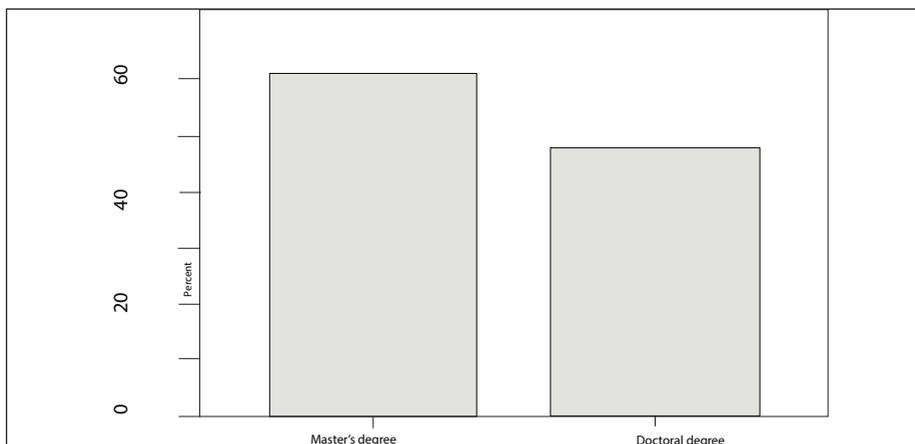

Figure 7.3: Highest Academic Qualifications of Teaching Staff in UDS

The requirements of lectureship in universities in Ghana have been raised by the NCTE from a Master of Philosophy (MPhil) degree to Doctoral degree. However, as a young University, realising this has remained a huge challenge. The evidence, as depicted in Figure 7.3, shows that close to 62 per cent of the respondents have not met the minimum requirement of Doctoral degree for teaching. It is just about 38 per cent of the academic staff of the University that has this requirement.

While the attainment of high academic qualification of teaching staff may be a good indicator of the capacity of staff, it is also important to look at the professional attainment of the teaching staff. Professional ranking of teaching staff is closely tied to amount of research that an individual lecturer carries out and the extent of publications in peer reviewed journals and books. Figure 7.4 provides us an overview of the professional ranking of UDS lecturing staff as shown in the field.
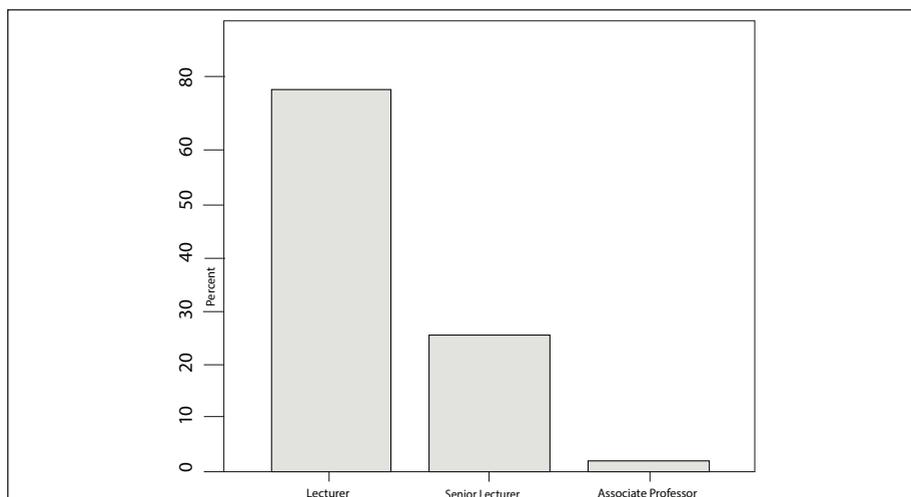

Figure 7.4: Professional Ranking of UDS Academic Staff

As shown in Figure 7.4 the UDS academic staff has 72.7 per cent classified as Lecturers. Senior Lecturers constitute 25.5 per cent and Associate Professors among the respondents consist only 1.8 per cent. This shows that most of the lecturers in the University have not developed adequate research capacity and/or published sufficiently to warrant promotion.

The length of teaching can be another source of capacity endowment for a lecturer in meeting the challenges of the classroom situation. Figure 7.5 indicates the length of teaching experience of lecturers.
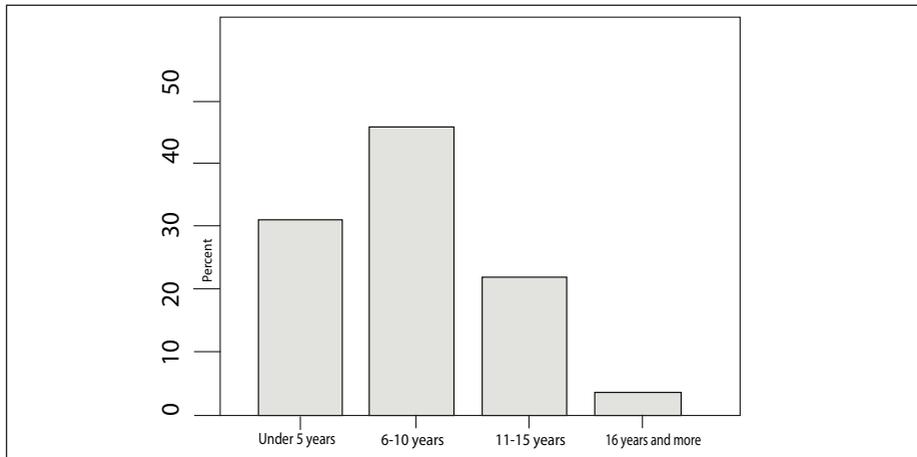
Figure 7.5: Length of Teaching of Academic Staff in UDS

As indicated in Figure 7.5 most of the lecturers fall within the range of 6-10 years of teaching and this cohort constitutes 46 per cent. Those who have been teaching for five years and/or less represent 31 per cent of the lecturers. Those who have taught for 11-15 years constitute 22 per cent, while those who have been around for more than 16 years are just two per cent.

It is noticed that the number of courses that lecturers handle per term have bearing on the research output. It is important to understand that the UDS is the only higher education institution that operates a trimester system in the country. The first two trimesters are devoted to classroom academic work, while the third trimester is done in the field for practical training.

An inquiry was made into the number of courses that lecturers teach in the first two trimesters of classroom work. In UDS, all lecturers are expected to take part in the third trimester field practical training programme as well. Figure 7.6 gives us information about the number of courses lecturers handle with regards to classroom work.
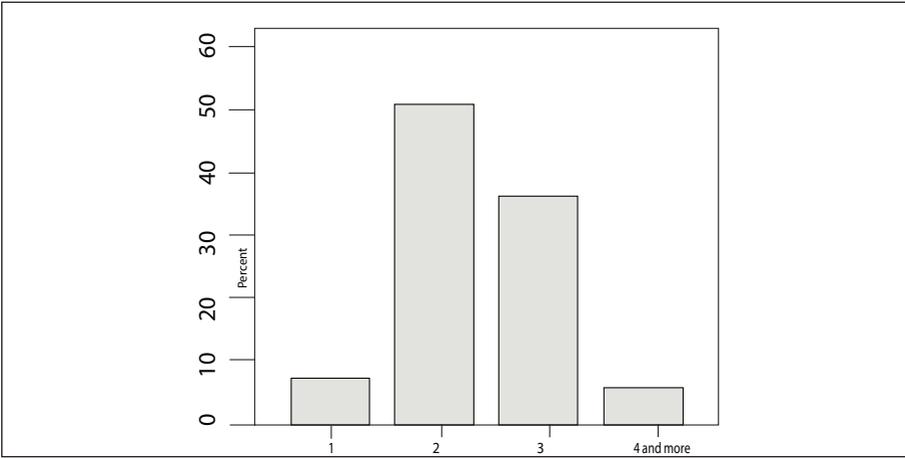
Figure 7.6: Number of Courses Taught per Trimester

The evidence from Figure 7.6 shows that while about 51 per cent of the lecturers teach two courses per trimester, 36 per cent of lecturers teach three courses per trimester. The outlier cases pertain to those who teach a single course (seven per cent) and those who teach four or more courses that constitute six percent.

Lecturers in public universities in Ghana are also confronted with the challenge of dealing with large class sizes, an issue we examined in UDS. Figure 7.7 shows the average size of core classes. Core courses are the focus because they are taken by all students who pursue a given programme.
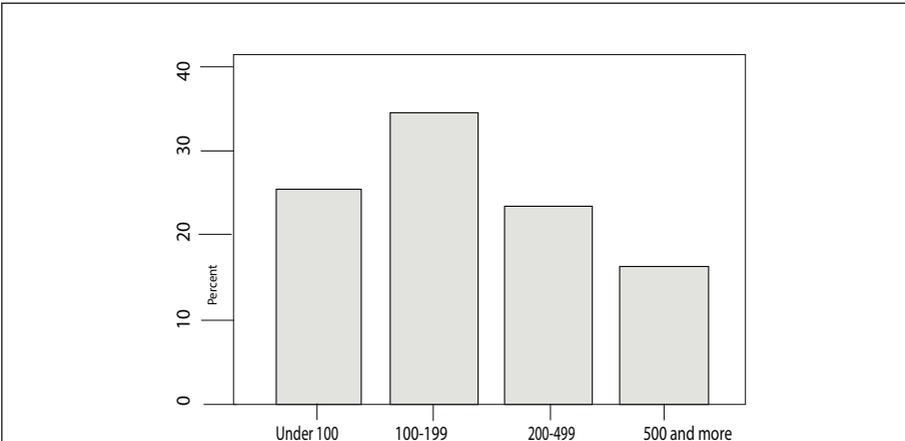

Figure 7.7: Average Size of Core Courses in UDS

It is shown in Figure 7.7 that the lecturers who handle core classes with student population of 100-199 constitute 35 per cent. While those who handle class sizes that are under 100 students constitute 26 per cent, those who teach classes that range between 200-499 students comprise 24 percent. Class sizes that exceed 500 students consist 16 per cent.

The responses from students as to whether their classrooms get overcrowded especially when they have core courses are shown in Table 7.1

Table 7.1: Whether Class Sizes Result into Overcrowding

	Frequency	Per cent	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
Yes	73	44.8	44.8	44.8
No	90	55.2	55.2	100.0
Total	**163**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

It is shown in Table 7.1 that 55.2 per cent of the students indicated that their classes do not get overcrowded. However, 44.8 per cent of the students checked 'yes' to indicate that their classes get overcrowded.

To find out about the extent to which the conditions in the classrooms interfere with interactive teaching, we posed a question regarding whether the class size of core courses affect interactive teaching and learning. It is acknowledged by experts that interactive teaching enhances knowledge impartation better than the banking approach. In a multimedia environment, interactive teaching processes are enhanced by the deployment of electronic media which creates the appropriate connectivity between teachers and students. As said, the desired impact of these techniques depends on a number of factors that include the appropriateness of class sizes. It is for this reason that we sought to find out from the students whether class sizes affect interactive teaching processes. This is shown in Table 7.2

Table 7.2: Whether Class Size of Core Courses Affects Interactive Teaching and Learning

	Frequency	Percent	Valid %	Cumulative Percent
Yes	76	46.6	46.6	46.6
No	61	37.4	37.4	84.0
Do not know	26	16.0	16.0	100.0
Total	**163**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

The indications from Table 7.2 is that while 46 per cent of the students checked 'yes' to suggest that class sizes of compulsory courses affect interactive teaching and learning, 37.4 per cent responded 'no' to suggest that there are no interferences in interactive teachings. We recorded 16 percent of the students with no idea regarding the issue being investigated.

Effects of Classroom Situations on Lecturers' Output in UDS

The conditions in the classroom without it being gainsaid can have various effects on teaching and research output of lecturers. In this section, we examine the various ways in which the outputs of lecturers are affected by classroom situations.

Time Spent on Marking and Processing of Examination Scripts

The time spent on marking examination papers and the processing of the results is largely influenced by the size of classes. While quality assurance requirements for the UDS are that examination results are released timeously, it is also expected that the lecturer conducts multiple continuous assessment tests in addition to the end-of-trimester examinations. The challenge of meeting four weeks of script marking deadlines becomes real. Table 7.3 provides an indication of the time UDS lecturers spend marking scripts and processing results.

Table 7.3: Duration of Making and Processing of Examination Results

	Frequency	Per cent	Valid %	Cumulative Per cent
1-2 weeks	10	18.2	18.2	18.2
3-4 weeks	23	41.8	41.8	60.0
5-6 weeks	19	34.5	34.5	94.5
6 weeks and more	3	5.5	5.5	100.0
Total	**55**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

It is shown in Table 7.3 that 41.8 per cent of the lecturers checked 3-4 weeks as the time they spend in marking of papers and processing examination results. While 34.5 per cent indicated spending 5-6 weeks as the time that they spend for the task, 18.2 per cent however did check 1-2 weeks. An outlier situation, where the time spent is more than six weeks comprises 5.5 per cent of the lecturers.

The implications of spending up to six weeks dealing with examination results can take various forms. One of such form is about the time available to the

lecturer to research so as to contribute to knowledge through publications. The outputs of research within academic community are best captured in peer review journals or books. Table 7.4 therefore seeks to provide insight into the number of publications credited to lecturers in UDS in peer review volumes.

Table 7.4: Number of Peer Review Publications Credited

	Frequency	Per cent	Valid %	Cumulative Per cent
0-2	19	34.5	34.5	34.5
3-5	16	29.1	29.1	63.6
6-10	12	21.8	21.8	85.5
11 and more	8	14.5	14.5	100.0
Total	**55**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

It is shown in Table 7.4 that 34.5 per cent of the lecturers have only 0-2 peer review publications. And those who have 3-5 of such publications constitute 29.1 per cent. Those who checked that they have 6-10 peer review publications comprise 21.8 per cent while 14.5 per cent of the lecturers indicated that they have 11 or more of peer reviewed publications.

While peer reviewed publications may be an end product of research effort that goes through rigorous assessment processes, we also sought to find out what other research efforts the lecturers in UDS make. The Vice-Chancellor's Annual Report routinely shows the research efforts and outputs of lecturers in various departments. The study sought to establish the average number of research papers that are written in a year. In Table 7.5 and Table 7.6, we respectively show the data on the 'Average Number of Research papers written per year' and 'Average Number of papers published in peer reviewed journals in a year.'

Table 7.5: Average Number of Research Papers Written per Year

	Frequency	Per cent	Valid %	Cumulative Per cent
0-1	23	41.8	41.8	41.8
2-4	20	36.4	36.4	78.2
5 and above	12	21.8	21.8	100.0
Total	**55**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

As captured in Table 7.5, 41.8 per cent of the lecturers indicated that on the average they write 0-1 paper a year. And those who checked that they write two-four papers, on the average, constitute 36.4 per cent. It is also shown that 21.8 per cent of the lecturers indicated that they write five papers or more per year.

In finding out the rate of success in publishing the papers that are written, the following results as depicted in Table 7.6 are indicative of the situation.

Table 7.6: Average Number of Papers Published in Peer Reviewed Journals in a year

	Frequency	Per cent	Valid %	Cumulative Per cent
0-1	38	69.1	69.1	69.1
2-4	13	23.6	23.6	92.7
5 and above	4	7.3	7.3	100.0
Total	**55**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

The evidence as shown in Table 7.6 is that 69.1 per cent of the lecturers fall within the average annual publication range of 0-1 paper. Those who are able to publish 2-4 papers constitute 23.6 per cent and a category consisting 7.3 per cent checked '5 and above' as the average number of papers published in year.

Some of the reasons given by the lecturers for impeding their ability to write and to publish adequately are captured in Box 7.1

Box 7.1: Suggested Reasons that inhibit Rate of Publication

1. The task of coordinating the Third Trimester Field Practical Programme takes away available time for me to engage in continuous thought process (Faculty TTFPP Coordinator).
2. Limited avenues for publication in local journals and the cost involved in publishing in external journals are prohibitive (Senior Lecturer).
3. Inadequate facilities for continuous laboratory experiments for a meaningful research output (Lecturer).

Administrative Responsibilities and Impact on Academic Work in UDS

Lecturers take up administrative responsibilities in various forms that take up part of their time, thereby impacting on their core classroom and research tasks. In this section, we examine how administrative responsibilities affect the academic output of those involved in such administrative duties.

The average number of hours that respective lecturers indicated that they spend on administrative duties per day is shown in Figure 7. 8
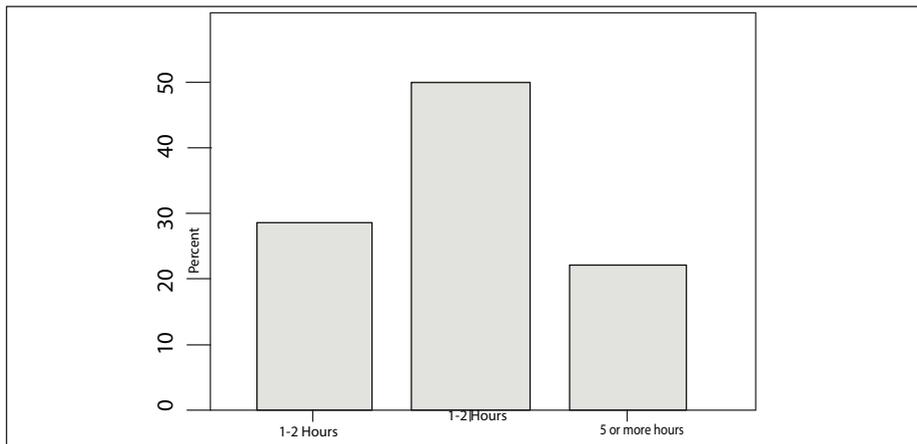

Figure 7.8: Number of Hours per Day Spent for Administrative Responsibility

It is shown in Figure 7.8 that 50 per cent of those who have administrative responsibilities spend 3-5 hours a day on such responsibilities. It is also indicated that 28 per cent of the lecturers who bear administrative responsibilities spend 1-2 hours a day. The category of lecturers who spend '6 hours and more' per day to carry out those tasks constitute 22 per cent.

Findings, as to whether the time spent on administrative responsibilities affects the academic output of such duty bearers in the University, are captured in Figure 7.9 below.
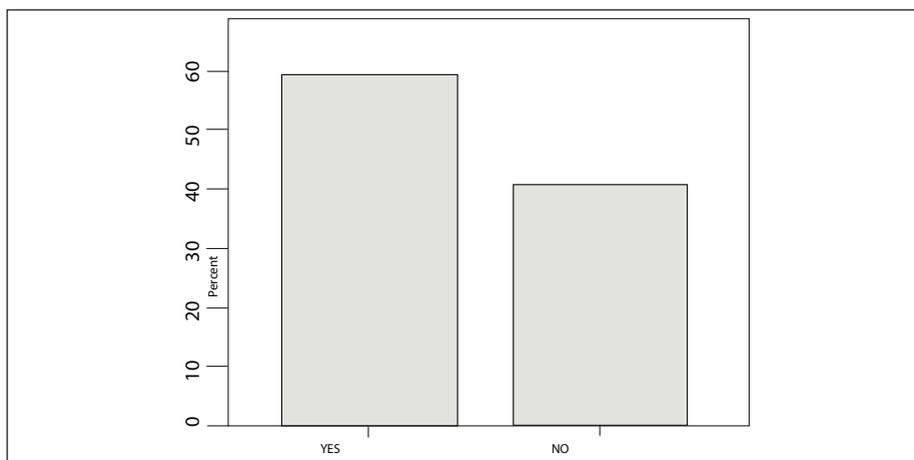
Figure 7.9: Effect of Responsibility on Teaching/Academic Outputs

Figure 7.9 shows that while 59 per cent of the respondents stated 'yes' to suggest that the administrative responsibilities affect their teaching and research output, 41per cent indicated otherwise.

The nature of the effects as mentioned by those who indicated that their administrative responsibilities affect their core academic output is captured in Box 7.2.

Box 7.2: Nature of the Effects on those who have Administrative Responsibilities

1. The responsibility of dealing with individual student complaints and dealing with their leadership get so demanding that it interrupts my teaching schedules (Vice-Dean)
2. Unscheduled meetings often coincide with teaching time table (Head of Department)
3. The long hours spent dealing with students' residential matters is enervating (Senior Hall Tutor)

Commercialised Academic Programmes in UDS and Implications

The UDS has become an active participant in the marketplace of sandwich academic programmes. The commercialisation drive via sandwich programmes is emerging as an important source of Internal Generated Funds (IGFs) for the UDS.

It is for this reason that the UDS have rolled out about 25 accredited fee paying graduate sandwich programmes that mainly targets those already in employment. The sandwich programmes in UDS run from June to August. This is the period during which the regular students are engaged in Third Trimester Field Practical Program (TTFPP) in communities across the country. The commercial interest for both lecturers and the University converge in the running of the sandwich programmes, thereby creating a burgeoning interest in the programmes, as it is perceived to be economically rewarding. For the lecturers, it is important source for income add-on whilst the University managers view it as an important source of IGF.

It is for this reason that Faculties and Schools on the various campuses of the University seem to be competing with each other in rolling out sandwich programmes. The simultaneous running of the sandwich programmes and TTFPP for the regular students creates its own dynamics. Some of the lecturers actually shuttle between supervisory assignments in the field, and their teaching commitments for the sandwich programmes. The implication of physical and mental stress on the lecturers is bemoaned by a lecturer at Wa campus who stated that it is the 'financial factor that makes me to be part of the sandwich programme and field work at the same time and this does a lot of damage to my health.' If this is an indication of the stress during the vacation period, and given the fact that University resumes its formal academic year immediately the sandwich programmes end, then one can reasonably guess the toll on lecturers.

Capacity Building in UDS

As a relatively young public university, the UDS since its inception has pursued policies for building the capacity of staff for the purposes of enhancing the credentials of faculty. The support from government, especially through the Ghana Education Trust Fund (GETFund), became the major avenue for staff development programmes. The essence of accelerating staff development is captured in the Statutes of the University and the procedures for sponsorship spelt out. Academic staff who are yet to attain Doctoral degrees, therefore, anticipate that the University would provide those opportunities to pursue their desired academic goals. The implementation of the policy according to laid down rules and procedures is often a matter of concern for those who have such interests. To examine whether the procedures for staff development are being adhered to in UDS, the responses as captured in Figure 7.10 indicate the responses.
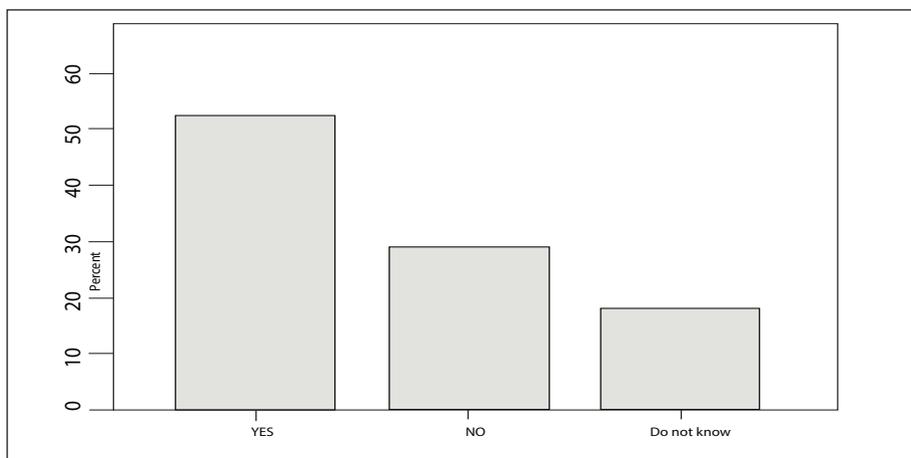
Figure 7.10: Whether Procedures are followed

It is seen from Figure 7.10 that about 53 per cent of the respondents checked that the procedures for staff development are being followed. However, 29 per cent of the respondents believe that the procedures are not being followed. There are also 18 per cent of the respondents who checked that they 'do not know.' Perhaps the last category of the respondents who 'do not know' could be staff for whom opportunities for further studies is no longer of consequence.

In-service Capacity Building Programmes in UDS

The Directorate of Academic Planning and Quality Assurance (DAPQA) of the UDS takes keen interest in ensuring that regular in-service training programmes, for both newly recruited staff and for those already on the job, are organised to meet identified needs. This is done to enhance quality academic service in the UDS, and to also provide the required capacities for leveraging the challenges of the academia. Since the major responsibilities of faculty have to do with teaching, research and dissemination of findings, we sought to find out how lecturers have benefited from in-service capacity building programme(s) attended. The findings are shown in Table 7.7

Table 7.7: Mode of Benefit from In-Service Capacity Building

	Frequency	Per cent	Valid %	Cumulative Per cent
Improved teaching and research skills	28	50.9	50.9	50.9
improved research skills only	16	29.1	29.1	80.0
improved teaching skills only	11	20.0	20.0	100.0
Total	**55**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

The evidence in Table 7.7 is that all the respondents indicated that they benefited in one form or the other from the in-service programmes they had ever attended. In this case, 50.9 per cent of the respondents did check that their benefit took the form of 'improved teaching and research skills.' However, 29.1 per cent of the lecturers indicated their benefit was in the form of 'improved research skills only.' And those who checked that their benefit was in the form of 'improved teaching skills only' constitute 20 per cent.

Prospects and Challenges of UDS

The UDS has developed its programmes and academic calendar to meet its mandate of blending academic with community knowledge in order to provide constructive interaction between the two for the total development of northern Ghana. The content of the programmes is therefore designed with a problem-solving focus to enable them contribute effectively to dealing with the development needs of communities. The students of the University, while engaging in the Third Trimester Field Practical training programme, assist rural communities to develop bottom-up solutions to the challenges that face them. It is for this reason that the UDS sees itself as the home for 'World-Class Pro-Poor scholarship.

The efforts to meet the demands of its mandate are however beset with challenges that tend to erode the effectiveness of the academic staff. The UDS *qua* a higher education institution is expected to be at the forefront of knowledge production and transmission, much the same way as it is the standard elsewhere. Nonetheless, the extension of the academic calendar of the institution to accommodate a trimester system has placed constraints on available time for staff to pay adequate attention to research and publications. The limitation on the available time is aggravated by the full engagement of the University in the sandwich programmes, which has become a competitive ground for IGFs mobilisation for the University and a source of accumulation for the participating lecturers.

Challenges of this sort if not problematised for solution would undermine the very developmental agenda of the institution. As research academic publications from lecturers in the UDS do not come forth, the resultant situation would be a recycling of knowledge that may not be relevant for local situations.