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## Higher Education Systems and Institutions, Zimbabwe



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### Introduction

The Republic of Zimbabwe is a landlocked country situated in Southern Africa, 390,757km<sup>2</sup> in extent. It shares the southern, northern, western, and eastern boundaries with South Africa, Zambia, Botswana, and Mozambique, respectively. Harare is the capital and the official language is English. Zimbabwe is a former colony, initially under the realm of the South African Company (1890–1923) and later annexed by the UK Government (1923–1980). During its colonial history, Zimbabwe assumed varying names: Southern Rhodesia (1890–1965), Rhodesia (1966–1978), Zimbabwe-Rhodesia (1979), and Zimbabwe (1980 to present). According to the latest population census, the population of Zimbabwe stood at approximately 13 million constituting 41.9% below the age of 14 years, 54.3% in the age range 15–64 years, and 3.8% over 65 year olds (ZIMSTAT 2012).

There exist different understandings of higher education system (HES) in different countries. In

the context of Zimbabwe, this is legally defined by the Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education (ZIMCHE) Act (2006) as cohesion at the level of policy and planning with respect to but not limited to governance, institutions, funding and financing, staffing, facilities, and programs that support teaching and learning. In the same Act, higher education (HE) is defined as education provided by higher education institutions (HEIs), while HEI refers to:

- (a) A technical or polytechnic college offering degrees
- (b) A public or private university or university college and its associate or affiliate institutions
- (c) An arm of a foreign institution of higher education that awards degrees

It is important to note that this definition does not include other postsecondary training systems such as tertiary education and vocational education systems except when such institutions offer degree programs (which they can only do in association/affiliation with a registered university). This chapter will consistently adhere to the etymology and utility of the definitions in the Zimbabwean context.

### Historical Context

Higher education in Zimbabwe commenced with the establishment of the University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland (UCRN), an affiliate of

the University of London in 1955 (Gelfand 1978; Shizha 2011). This institution was later renamed the University of Rhodesia, the University of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia, and finally the University of Zimbabwe. The strategic relationship with the “parent” universities (the University of Birmingham for Medicine and the University of London for all other programs) ensured that quality was well regulated. The curricula and qualifications were modeled on British standards, thereby attracting high-caliber staff, technical assistance, and funding from Europe. Resultantly, the qualifications awarded were akin to those of British universities (Dande and Mujere 2015). Unlike universities in the region, which required lower entry level, the college’s entry qualifications required advanced (“A”) level passes.

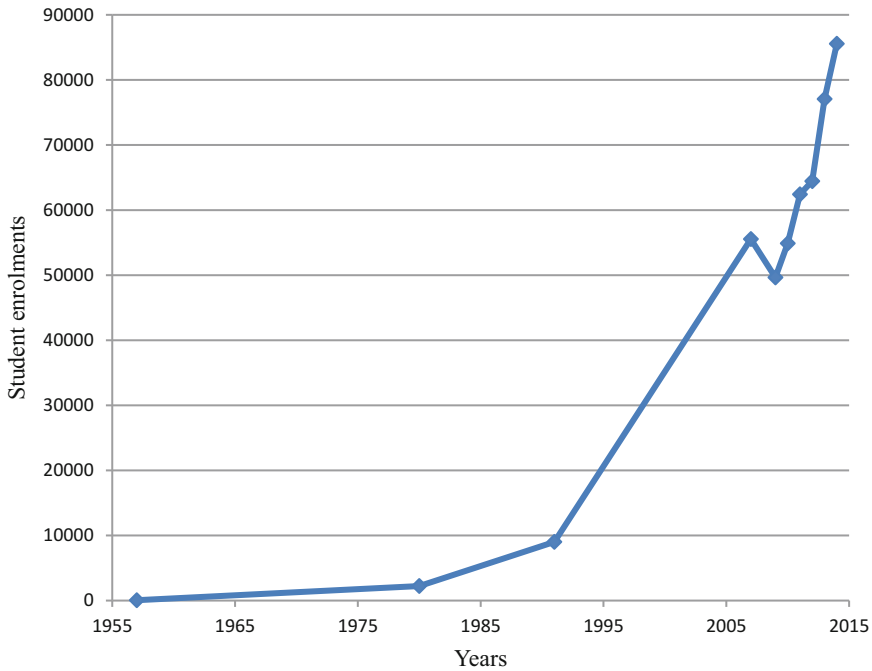
A constitution that favored “white” citizens (inclusive of Europeans, Asians, and Coloreds (people of mixed races) ahead of blacks was passed in 1961. Consequently, given the skewed policy context, the student body was predominantly white, with a mere 0.2% of black students having the opportunity for entry into university (O’Callaghan and Austin 1977; Nherera 2000; Shizha 2006). The colonial government argued that blacks needed practical-oriented education that prepared them for blue-collar jobs, while white-collar professions were the preserve of Europeans (Atkinson 1972; Dorsey 1975). Even the few blacks who received university education trained for lower status jobs compared to their white counterparts (Chung 1986; Zvobgo 1994).

Upon gaining independence, the new government introduced aggressive policy reforms to address colonial inequalities and anomalies, as well as to satisfy the growing need for workforce with high-level qualifications. According to the categories described by Riddell (1998), the reforms were of planning and efficiency, quality and relevance, and curricular nature. As a result, increased access to quality education at all levels by the general populace was made possible. Zimbabwe became a regional leader in education, earning the country a good reputation internationally. According to UNECA (2018), Zimbabwe is the best-educated country in Africa, with literacy levels in excess of 94%. The authors are not

oblivious of the fact that literacy rate is not necessarily the perfect indicator of achievement in education; however they posit that literacy is invaluable in raising awareness in issues affecting the quality of life. Zimbabwe’s policy reforms also resulted in the churning out of highly qualified professionals becoming a renowned source of manpower world over.

Socioeconomic, historical, and political policies and pronouncements, notably the Structural Adjustment Policy, the war veterans’ movement, and fast-track land reform program contributed to an economic downturn. In addition, the attempt to amend the Constitution as well as emerging political violence around the year 2000 saw the suspension of Zimbabwe from the Commonwealth as well as the imposition of sanctions from the European Union and United States of America inevitably increasing the isolation of the country’s HE sector. HEIs had to make the most of limited resources to meet the teaching and learning needs given a context where expenditure had been severely cut against a backdrop of HE expansion. This created push factors that accelerated brain drain, wherein highly qualified, experienced, and competent HE professionals were attracted by other countries (Chetsanga 2003; Nepachem Survey 2009). By 2010, in excess of 4 million Zimbabweans were living in the diaspora (UNDP 2010).

Notwithstanding the negative setbacks, positive developments were recorded. First, the diasporic explosion cultivated an expectation of migration, which led a push for internationalized university curricula with potential to better prepare students for international employability. Other notable developments included the expansion of HEIs in line with the country’s socioeconomic requirements and the heightened focus on quality (SARUA 2012). The expansion took the form of increased enrolments due to introduction of private HEIs, increased numbers of public HEIs, and the introduction of new faculties, departments, and programs as well as introduction of diverse and student-oriented modes of HE delivery inclusive of open and distance learning. Figure 1 shows the increase in student enrolments in Zimbabwe’s universities in 2009, 2013, and



**Higher Education Systems and Institutions, Zimbabwe, Fig. 1** Student enrolment trends (1957–2015)

2015 as 49,645, 77,228, and 85,943, respectively. In 2017 the total number of registered university students rose to 100,000.

Zimbabwe currently has 24 registered universities, 14 public and 10 private. In addition, and consistent with the Zimbabwean definition of HEIs, 5 of the 12 polytechnics, 3 of the 15 teachers colleges and in excess of 100 public and private colleges offer degree programs albeit in association with registered universities. Table 1 gives details of when the registered universities were established, the responsible authority, and the websites.

### Quality Assurance Framework

The phenomenal expansion of HE was properly planned to include a sharp focus on quality. Accordingly, in 1990, the government established the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE), a nonautonomous agency to process applications from prospective HEIs and to advise the Minister on HE matters. The increase in HEIs

from 1 in 1990 to 14 (9 public and 5 private) between 1999 and 2005 happened at a time where resources were dwindling resulting in fear of a possible decline in standards. In order to redress the situation, in 2006, a more robust semi-autonomous body with an expanded quality assurance mandate, the Zimbabwe Council for higher education (ZIMCHE), replaced the NCHE. ZIMCHE is the sole and competent agency charged with the responsibility to monitor and evaluate the performance of HEIs through registration, accreditation, and academic audits; harmonization of quality assurance systems and procedures; quality promotion; as well as advisory services.

ZIMCHE gives HEIs that meet the requirement certificates of institutional accreditation and reaccreditation every 5 years based on institutional assessments and audits. It also conducts evaluations for new programs prior to approval. This is important in ensuring relevance and compliance with the set standards of governance, infrastructure, teaching and learning facilities and resources, systems, and staff. The standards

**Higher Education Systems and Institutions, Zimbabwe, Table 1** Registered universities in Zimbabwe as of 2018

Name of university	Authority	Established	Website address
University of Zimbabwe (UZ)	Public	1955	<a href="http://www.uz.ac.zw">www.uz.ac.zw</a>
National University of Science and Technology (NUST)	Public	1991	<a href="http://www.nust.ac.zw">www.nust.ac.zw</a>
Africa University (AU)	Private	1992	<a href="http://www.africau.edu">www.africau.edu</a>
Solusi University (SU)	Private	1994	<a href="http://www.solusi.ac.zw">www.solusi.ac.zw</a>
Bindura University of Science Education (BUSE)	Public	1996	<a href="http://www.buse.ac.zw">www.buse.ac.zw</a>
Zimbabwe Open University (ZOU)	Public	1998	<a href="http://www.zou.ac.zw">www.zou.ac.zw</a>
Midlands State University (MSU)	Public	1999	<a href="http://www.msu.ac.zw">www.msu.ac.zw</a>
Catholic University in Zimbabwe (CUZ)	Private	2001	<a href="http://www.cuz.ac.zw">www.cuz.ac.zw</a>
Reformed Church University (RCU)	Private	2001	<a href="http://www.rcu.ac.zw">www.rcu.ac.zw</a>
Chinhoyi University of Technology (CUT)	Public	2001	<a href="http://www.cut.ac.zw">www.cut.ac.zw</a>
Great Zimbabwe University (GZU)	Public	2002	<a href="http://www.gzu.ac.zw">www.gzu.ac.zw</a>
Women's University in Africa (WUA)	Private	2004	<a href="http://www.wua.ac.zw">www.wua.ac.zw</a>
Lupane State University (LSU)	Public	2004	<a href="http://www.lsu.ac.zw">www.lsu.ac.zw</a>
Harare Institute of Technology (HIT)	Public	2005	<a href="http://www.hit.ac.zw">www.hit.ac.zw</a>
Zimbabwe Ezekiel Guti University (ZEGU)	Private	2010	<a href="http://www.zegu.ac.zw">www.zegu.ac.zw</a>
Marondera University of Agricultural Sciences & Technology (MUASt)	Public	2015	<a href="http://www.muast.ac.zw">www.muast.ac.zw</a>
Gwanda State University (GSU)	Public	2016	<a href="http://www.gsu.ac.zw">www.gsu.ac.zw</a>
Manicaland State University of Applied Sciences (MSUAS)	Public	2016	<a href="http://www.msuas.ac.zw">www.msuas.ac.zw</a>
Zimbabwe National Defence University (ZNDU)	Public	2016	<a href="http://www.defence.gov.zw">www.defence.gov.zw</a>
Pan African Minerals University of Science and Technology (PAMUST)	Public	2016	<a href="http://www.veritaszim.net/node/1586">www.veritaszim.net/node/1586</a>
<i>Southern Africa Methodist University (SAMU)</i>	<i>Private<sup>a</sup></i>	<i>2016</i>	<a href="http://Methodistchurchinzimbabwe.net/samu/">Methodistchurchinzimbabwe.net/samu/</a>
<i>Anglican University (ANU)</i>	<i>Private</i>	<i>2016</i>	No website yet
<i>Maranatha Christian University (MCU)</i>	<i>Private</i>	<i>2017</i>	<a href="http://www.mcu.ac.zw">www.mcu.ac.zw</a>
<i>Arrupe Jesuit University (AJU)</i>	<i>Private</i>	<i>2017</i>	<a href="http://www.aju.ac.zw">www.aju.ac.zw</a>

<sup>a</sup>Under provisional registration, hence no students enrolled yet and charter still not granted

for academic staff require that a lecturer should possess qualifications that are pitched at least one level higher than the exit level of the programs (e.g., a master's holder can only teach programs at bachelor's level) with the minimum lecturer qualification pegged at master's level. Institutional/program accreditation is a legal expectation and a quality endorsement symbol that every HEI aspires to get since it ensures public confidence. In addition to the ZIMCHE accreditation, HEIs are free to engage other external (non-Zimbabwean) accreditation agencies as part of their quality management endeavors. In the same vein, ZIMCHE also accredits foreign HEIs, which receive and train students from Zimbabwe.

ZIMCHE's quality assessments are based on self-evaluation reports submitted by HEIs followed by assessment by external peer review teams. While shortcomings may lead to suspension of a program or withdrawal of the HEI's right to award degrees (de-registration), the academic and institutional audits are, in the first instance, improvement-oriented. HEIs are given ample time to rectify the anomalies identified before punitive measures are taken. All HEIs are obliged to establish internal/institutional quality assurance units. This gives ZIMCHE a pivotal role in the HES in that it operates at a macro-level and can add value to the system. Furthermore, it represents Zimbabwe in regional and international quality assurance networks and fora.

Various quality assurance standards and criteria are specified by ZIMCHE including minimum bodies of knowledge (MBK) for each study program within the Zimbabwe National Qualifications Framework. In addition to the said standards, approval of new programs is done in line with the HEI's mandate, adherence to the national critical skills requirements, needs analysis, and benchmarking evidence. ZIMCHE carries out the evaluation using expertise from peer reviewers and relevant professional bodies.

## Governance

The HES evolved from a state-supervised one prior to independence to a state-controlled one post-independence. Mlambo (2005) makes the distinction between the two positing that in the latter, government controls the policies, council and senior management appointments, remuneration, and related issues, while in the former HEIs are relatively autonomous except with respect to general government policy issues on HE. The highest authority, the Government of Zimbabwe, assumes the said control through the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Higher Education, Science and Technology, which in turn oversees other authorities, organizations, and statutory bodies in the HE sector as shown in Table 2.

In addition to the legal frameworks in Table 2, each HEI is governed in accordance to the provisions of an Act of parliament for public universities and a Charter for private universities. Although largely similar, the various Acts/Charters differ in some respects. MHTESTD is in the process of harmonizing the legal instruments into one Higher and Tertiary Education Act. The Act/Charter is the legal document that pronounces the establishment, governance, structure, operations, and authority to award qualifications of an HEI. The Act/Charter guides and empowers the HEI to make statutes and ordinances that ensures orderly conduct of day-to-day operations and activities. The Act anoints the president of the state as the chancellor of all public universities, while the responsible authorities for private HEIs are free to appoint a chancellor of their choice.

The legal instruments also provide for a council which assumes executive authority on policy issues. Council operates through specialist committees that deliberate and make recommendations. Upon the recommendation of the university council, the chancellor appoints the head of the university (vice chancellor).

The vice chancellor (VC) is the chief executive officer of the HEI who is responsible for providing academic, administrative, and disciplinary oversight. The VC is assisted by pro-VCs charged with different portfolios as well as other executives. The VC chairs the senate, which oversees the execution of academic policies. Senate consists of senior academics and administrators. The senate executes its mandate through a plethora of committees to ensure democratic and optimum participation of all students and staff. Executive Deans provide academic leadership in faculties/schools/centers. Chairpersons are appointed by the VCs in consultation with the dean and academic members from relevant departments.

Prior to the establishment of ZIMCHE, HEIs established their own programs and curricula, research, and internationalization initiatives independently. With the advent of ZIMCHE, HEIs seek approval for new programs. New institutions must be assessed by ZIMCHE and recommended to MHTESTD for approval and granting of Act/Charter by the President of the Republic.

## Funding and Financing of University Education

Funding for universities includes the fiscal allocations, student fees and levies, donations, and income generated from the institutions' resource mobilization initiatives. Universities account for their finances through use of internal and external auditors.

The government was once the major source (82.4%) of public university funding, the then highest figure in the region which averaged 65.3% (SARUA 2010). Between the years 1980 and 2000, the education sector received the biggest share of the national budget, for example, in 2002; it received 26.6%. The fiscal contribution to

**Higher Education Systems and Institutions, Zimbabwe, Table 2** Mandates and websites of the HE authorities, organizations, and statutory bodies

Authority	Legal framework	Mandate	Website
MHTESTD	Manpower Planning & Development Act, Chapter 25:02 of 1996	Provides an effective HE system through formulation and implementation of appropriate policies and guidelines	<a href="http://www.mhtestd.gov.zw">www.mhtestd.gov.zw</a>
ZIMCHE	ZIMCHE Act, Chapter 25:27 of 2006	Developing and implementing a HE quality assurance framework	<a href="http://www.zimche.ac.zw">www.zimche.ac.zw</a>
National Manpower Advisory Council (NAMACO)	Manpower Planning & Development Act, Chapter 25:02 of 1996	Provides policy advice on Human Resources Development to MHTESTD. It acts as a go-between industry and MHTESTD and supervises industrial committees which identify determine and monitor the training needs	
Zimbabwe Manpower Development Fund (ZIMDEF)	Manpower Planning & Development Act, Chapter 28:02 of 1996, Section 23	Collects a 1% levy of profits from industry to support higher and tertiary education training programs and projects	<a href="http://www.zimdef.org.zw">www.zimdef.org.zw</a>
College Lecturers Association of Zimbabwe (COLAZ)	Voluntary body	Democratizes HE through cooperating with local, regional, and international partners. It also represents lecturers in collective bargaining	<a href="http://www.colaz.org">www.colaz.org</a>
National Economic Consultative Forum	Established on 17 July, 1997, as a voluntary organization	Facilitates dialogue and consensus among the Zimbabwean stakeholders: Government, business, labor, academia, and civil society in recommending economic priority programs and human capital development	<a href="http://www.necf.org.zw">www.necf.org.zw</a>
The Zimbabwe University Vice-Chancellors Association (ZUVCA)	Voluntary	Promotes the interests of the universities, through collective and collaborative strategies	

HEI funding has declined substantially and is now limited mostly to public HEI remuneration and a few capital projects. The procedure requires that every year public HEIs submit budget estimates for capital and recurrent expenditure for the following year to Treasury through MHTESTD. In allocating the funds to HEIs, Treasury considers the estimates presented against its projected revenue as well as other national priorities. Unlike best practices elsewhere, Zimbabwe has not yet implemented a scientific funding formula for public HEIs and has to rely on unclear and perhaps unfair allocation methods. The state funding is solely reserved for state institutions while private HEIs resort to other means of raising capital and operational funds.

Students enrolled in HEIs pay fees and levies directly to the institution, which has the express

right to utilize the funds without any state interference. Government, however, approves the fees (which are highly subsidized) for public institutions; as a result, all public HEIs charge uniform fees for similar disciplines. The fees, however, vary according to disciplines with science programs attracting higher fees. Unlike other countries in Africa that instituted policies favoring free HE at independence, Zimbabwe went for various cost-sharing models (refer to Table 3). Public university fees are substantially lower than those of private HEIs, which are pitched at full cost levels. Although access to HE has increased significantly post-independence, it remains limited to a privileged few, whose families manage to pay the fees. Consequently, the gross HE enrolment rate remains at 8% despite the record literacy

**Higher Education Systems and Institutions, Zimbabwe, Table 3** Cost-sharing models in Zimbabwean universities (1957–2014)

Period	Year	Student enrolment	Grants (%)	Loans (%)	No. of universities
Colonial (1957–1979)	1957	57	50	50	1
	1968	Not given	25	75	1
Postcolonial 1980–2005	1980	2240	50	50	1
	1991	9017	25	75	2
	1992	Introduction of private universities			3
	1998		20	80	6
	2002		0	100	11
2006–2014	2006		Introduction of the cadetship scheme		14
	2007	55548			14
	2009	49645			14
	2010	54888			15
	2011	62427			15
	2012	64449			15
	2013	77074	Cadetship scheme operating below optimum levels		15
	2014	85556			15
	2015–2017		No government support		18

Source: Adapted from Chihombori (2013)

levels, compared with, for example, 18% for South Africa.

In 2018, the government introduced the Pay as you Learn Concept wherein students would receive flexible and affordable loans for tuition fees and educational equipment. This was facilitated by a leading private concern in South Africa through synergies with the Zimbabwean government.

HEIs are also funded through donations from sources including but not limited to churches and religious groups, trusts, partners, corporate bodies (as corporate social responsibility), charitable organizations, and individuals. Such organizations/groups/individuals support the growth and development of HEIs through scholarships and specific funding earmarked for provision of teaching and learning infrastructure and resources, capacity building of staff and students, sporting and health initiatives, and other forms of institutional development. HEIs also raise funds through hiring out equipment and facilities, research, consultancies, and other specialist services as well as interest on investments.

## University Entry Requirements

Admission to HEIs requires applicants to fulfill minimum eligibility requirements as well as the specific requirements stipulated for a study program. Zimbabwe is one of the few countries in Southern Africa that offers advanced (“A”) level and that insists on prospective candidates for university studies to have at least two passes and a minimum of two points at “A” level for “normal” entry including at least five ordinary (“O”) level passes inclusive of English and Mathematics. In addition to these minimum entry requirements, program regulations for different degree programs stipulate the minimum requirements in terms of courses and passes required for admission. Candidates meeting the minimum entry requirements for specific programs may be offered a place, although this is not guaranteed in cases where the number of applicants exceeds the number of places on offer. Admission is usually competitive, with variations across HEIs and programs, for example, for some highly oversubscribed and limited offer programs, such as medicine and law, entrance is extremely selective and requires higher standards. This has prompted a craze that

has seen students sitting for up to seven (instead of the required three) subjects at “A” level.

To allow for flexibility and articulation within the Zimbabwe National Qualifications Framework, alternative university entry routes exist for technical and vocational graduates, adult learners, and those who have practical experience. These include special entry, which requires candidates to have a minimum of five “O” level passes and relevant certificates and/or diplomas. Graduates from polytechnics holding higher national diplomas are exempted from taking some courses and enter university programs at second or third year level. The other admission route is by mature entry which requires applicants to have passed at least five “O” level subjects and to have relevant professional/practical experience.

## **Degree Structure**

HEIs offer undergraduate (bachelor) and post-graduate (master and doctoral) accredited study programs. At the bachelor level, the duration of study programs ranges from 3 (for general degrees) to 5 years depending on discipline. The distinction between general and honor degree programs is the inclusion in the latter, of an additional year of work-related learning, more optional courses or a practical or research project. General degrees have largely lost their luster, with most HEIs upgrading them to straight honor degrees.

At the master’s level, study programs are targeted at providing advanced knowledge in special areas as well as developing creative and research skills of students. Master’s degrees are awarded to students who have an undergraduate degree or equivalent upon completion of taught courses and/or programs of research. The minimum duration is 18 months for Master’s and 36 months for Master of Philosophy (MPhil) which involves a more substantial research or equivalent enquiry.

The doctoral level is targeted at developing specialist knowledge and research skills following individualized student study plans as guided by supervisors. Although one requires a master’s degree to be admitted into doctoral study, it is

not uncommon for one to upgrade an MPhil into a straight Doctor of Philosophy (DPhil) depending on merit as assessed by the awarding HEI. The duration of doctoral programs varies from a minimum of 3 years up to a time when the candidate demonstrates original knowledge or artistic creativity as well as depth, breadth, and independence in research. Traditionally, these programs were entirely research based (with training courses that did not contribute to the final assessment) leading to the award of a DPhil. Recently, ZIMCHE has approved the “cohort” model that allows HEIs to offer professional doctorates with a substantial taught component to more than one student simultaneously. Although HEIs are allowed to award honorary doctorates, which are increasingly becoming popular especially with high-profile figures, these are not considered as academic qualifications.

## **Modes of Study**

In a bid to satisfy the needs of the diverse student clientele, HEIs have developed various modes of delivery ranging from full residency to bringing education to the doorstep of students. Prior to independence and up until 1998 when the Zimbabwe Open University (ZOU) was established, only the conventional mode of delivery was prevalent, wherein students undertook face-to-face studies during a residency period at the HEI. The introduction of ZOU was meant to cater for the needs of disadvantaged mature candidates who, due to their work commitments, would not be able to undertake conventional university studies, hence the introduction of open and distance learning (ODL). ODL requires students to have minimum contact with their lecturers. The major tutor is the module in its online or printed form, which they access away from the HEI. Student mentorship and guidance is achieved through use of telephone, limited face-to-face tutorials, and study guides. Currently, additional modes of learning have evolved. To begin with, some HEIs have modified the conventional mode to include the delivery of lectures in the places where students reside or work. This way, the

university moves to the students as opposed to students moving to the university. Other modes in use include block release and evening and weekend classes.

The block release mode is popular with students who want to engage in lifelong learning in improving their skills at the work place. Block release students pursuing bachelor's programs are normally exempt from attending work related attachments on the assumption that they are already working. Face-to-face delivery and interaction with the lecturers is not spread out over a semester but is restricted to a very condensed period "block," usually 1 to 2 weeks. The rest of the time, they are given assignments to complete at their work places. Final examinations are written at the HEI at the end of each semester. The evening and weekend class mode of delivery mimic the block release mode only differing in that face-to-face interactions are limited to evenings and weekends. Both the block and the evening and weekend modes are subtle blends of the conventional and ODL philosophy.

### Student Assessment

Assessment rules and procedures are stipulated in the regulations of each degree program as guided by the minimum bodies of knowledge and the competencies required for the level of study. Evaluation is performed through use of continuous assessment, examinations, supervised projects, and work-related learning achievements. Examinations may be written, oral, practical, or a combination of these. External examiners provide quality assurance and a tried and tested way for achieving fairness as well as maintaining nationally and internationally comparable standards. External examiners are drawn from senior academics from local or foreign sister HEIs.

Following the harmonization of credit systems and the introduction of the Zimbabwe Credit Accumulation and Transfer System (ZIMCATS) in 2016, all HEIs migrated to the notional hour credit system in the design and management of curricula. The use of ZIMCATS and MBKS allows for horizontal and vertical articulation as

well as intra- and inter-learner mobility within the national qualifications framework. Generally, 120 credits represent the minimum volume of learning required to achieve the specified learning outcomes in each academic year.

### University Mandates, Types of Degrees, and Locations

The 24 universities in Zimbabwe have specific mandates or niche areas as shown in Table 4.

### Internationalization of HE

The education system in Zimbabwe is arguably among the strongest in Africa with Zimbabwe's graduates being found to be highly competitive on the global labor market (UNICEF 2011; Tevera and Crush 2003). It has already been demonstrated how, since attaining its independence in 1980 and building on a colonial legacy of best practice, Zimbabwe has sought to strengthen and sustain its quality education delivery in diverse ways. These include widening participation to make higher education accessible to all its populace and empowering its quality assurance body to lead quality delivery through harmonization efforts and a strict regime of monitoring, supporting, and overseeing quality delivery of all its HEIs as already shown. In its quest to ensure sustainable growth of HEIs, therefore ZIMCHE recently led a systematic and rigorous process of the internationalization of higher education (IHE) which culminated in the development of a national IHE policy framework for Zimbabwe which guides all HEIs in formulating their own IHE policies, strategies, and agendas. The process was a collaboration involving ZIMCHE and its external partner, the University of Nottingham; all HEIs; the Ministry of Higher Education; and related Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Home Affairs, and Tourism.

IHE was seen as imperative for the Zimbabwe education system to maintain its competitiveness on the global market and foster sustainable national economic development. In this regard

**Higher Education Systems and Institutions, Zimbabwe, Table 4** Mandates and locations of Zimbabwean universities

Mandate	University	Location
Science and technology, sciences, technology	NUST	Bulawayo
	HIT	Harare
	CUT	Chinhoyi
	LSU	Lupane
	BUSE	Bindura
	GSU	Filabusi
	MUAST	Marondera
	MSUAS	Mutare
	<i>PAMUST</i>	<i>Harare</i>
Comprehensive	UZ	Harare
	MSU	Gweru and Zvishavane
Pan African	AU	Mutare
	WUA	Harare and Marondera
	<i>PAMUST</i>	<i>Harare</i>
Church, church-related	AJU	
	CUZ	Harare
	SU	Solusi
	RCU	Masvingo
	AU	Mutare
	ZEGU	Bindura
	<i>SAMU</i>	<i>Marondera</i>
	<i>ANU</i>	<i>Marondera</i>
<i>MCU</i>	<i>Chegutu</i>	
Culture and heritage	GZU	Masvingo
Security studies	<i>ZNDU</i>	Harare
Open and distance learning	ZOU	Headquarters in Harare

the role of higher education in national development has been underscored. This can be achieved through the production of graduates that have a broader worldview, who are creative and innovative and are able to develop themselves and contribute to the development of their societies. To achieve this, the policy framework was developed around the following seven outcomes of IHE revealed by the process:

- Increase in the presence of international students and staff
- Active memoranda of understandings (research, teaching, and exchanges)
- Increased impact of research and publications
- Increased innovations and patents
- Increased harmonized programs

- Relevant curricula and favorable international rankings
- Institutional capability, culture, and awareness

The framework clearly articulates policy goals in relation to Zimbabwe's transformative agenda of an industrialized and modernized nation and the contribution of the higher education sector to that agenda. The national policy framework enables HEIs to adopt a unified approach to tackle common IHE challenges such as restrictive immigration requirements, language barriers, and entry requirement disparities in relation to the rest of the region, while maintaining their uniqueness. It also ensures that HEIs' IHE initiatives and activities continue to receive the support of the Ministry and ZIMCHE through funding and capacity building activities.

## Conclusion

This chapter has provided a synopsis of the Zimbabwe HES and institutions. It goes back into history to show how the system has evolved and the role of historical colonial factors in constructing and shaping it. It demonstrates how independent Zimbabwe endeavored to counter the colonial legacy of a repressive system which limited blacks' access to HE. In doing so it shows how paradoxically the sustained drive for academic excellence through a vibrant quality assurance mechanism which has played a significant role in keeping the system afloat in the context of crippling socioeconomic challenges in recent times can also be traced to the colonial education system. During this period Zimbabwe HE has evidently experienced phenomenal growth from 1 HEI to 24. As noted above the hardships have presented opportunities that have also pushed Zimbabwe HEIs to internationalize. For example, funding shortages resulting from imposition of sanctions have led HEIs to seek funding for its academic activities such as research through forging partnerships with international institutions to access funding. Also there has been a strong drive to recruit international students to boost their fee base. The benefits of this IHE initiative are yet to be realized, but the passion with which all stakeholders have taken to the process is a positive indicator of the expected outcome.

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