

USB receives the highest international recognition from European accreditation body

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The University of Stellenbosch Business School (USB) has capped its 50th anniversary with yet another achievement by being awarded as the only business school in Africa to receive a five year accreditation from the EQUIS (European Quality Improvement System).

The five year period marks the highest level of accreditation bestowed by Europe's foremost business school accreditation body.

Two other African business schools were also accredited by EQUIS - UCT's Graduate School of Business and the American University in Cairo, both with an accreditation period of three years.

The accreditation means USB retains its coveted triple-crown accreditation with all three recognised international business school accreditation bodies, namely EQUIS, AACSB and AMBA. In 2012, USB became the first business school from an African university to be in possession of all three the international accreditations, held only by a small number of institutions in the world.

The fundamental objective of EQUIS is to raise the standard of management education worldwide. It sends an international panel of experts to assess institutions as a whole - not only its degree programmes but all the activities and sub-units of the institution, including research and outreach to society.

EQUIS also looks for a balance between high academic quality and the professional relevance provided by close interaction with the corporate world and alumni. Institutions that are accredited by EQUIS must demonstrate not only quality in all dimensions of their activities, but also a high degree of internationalisation.

Prof Piet Naudé, USB director, says: "This kind of achievement is not bestowed upon you by virtue of your membership of some sort of club. It is the result of extremely hard work by the USB staff to meet the expectations of EQUIS. The school also received excellent support from Stellenbosch University."

"The latest accreditation places us in a select group of global business schools that conform to the stringent peer-review processes. Our current and future partners can thus continue to rely on USB for top-class education and research."

Naudé says USB will use the new EQUIS accreditation as inspiration to increasingly become a place of life-changing hope in Africa. The school was started in 1964 with just a handful of part-time students, but through its

academic offering and accreditations it has grown into an African pioneer and an international role player.

Prof Eon Smit, who drives USB's accreditation programme, says: "All-round quality has always been part of USB's vision and strategic intent. Over the years, the School has successfully managed to satisfy the international quality criteria of the industry, the educational sector and alumni."