

## **Identifying Key Performance Indicators for Academic Departments in a Comprehensive University through a Consensus-based Approach: A South African Case Study**

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**ABSTRACT** The main objectives of this paper were to formulate consensus-based Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for academic departments in a university and to identify the concerns in achieving them. The research involved both a quantitative (questionnaires) and a qualitative design (interviews). The sample consisted of 243 academics and 12 members of the university management from one South African public higher education institution. The analysed data served as pointers to optimum KPIs for departments. They included graduation rates recommended for certificates, diplomas and degrees, throughput rates; departmental evaluations and programme reviews; and minimum levels of staff qualifications per programme (one qualification higher than what he/she is teaching). However, the following concerns need to be addressed if the KPIs suggested could be realised: under-qualified staff, underprepared students, too lax entrance requirements, lack of quality tutorials, lack of resources and high workloads. Recommendations include short- medium- and long-term measures to achieve the KPIs.