

INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE IN UNIVERSITIES

Different Approaches, Policies & Procedures



**QUALITY ASSURANCE AND
ACCREDITATION COUNCIL**
UGC/MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

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FORWARD

Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) is a generic term used to refer to the processes and procedures within institutions to review, evaluate, assess or otherwise check, examine or ensure the quality of the education provided and/or research undertaken. In this regard, different terms such as Internal Quality Monitoring, Internal Audit, Internal Quality Review, University Quality Audit etc. are used in different countries.

Internal Quality Assurance Units (IQAUs) have been established in all public universities in 2005 and a broad framework has been prepared with the involvement of all the stakeholders. It has to be emphasized that there should not be any strict directives or instructions as how to develop IQA mechanisms within the context of each institution. The idea is for each and every institution to develop their own system which is most appropriate to the institutional environment and uniqueness.

It is expected that the IQA mechanisms would bring the staff members in the same institution together to share and learn from each other, publicize the good practices and to appreciate the achievements and contributions of one another. Further, the implementation of IQA mechanisms would create a sense of responsibility and a new awareness of process approach throughout the institution.

The ultimate goal of the IQA mechanisms is to create (or inculcate) the '*Quality Culture*' within the institution, that would be based around an internal system of continuous quality which seeks to provide quality education through a holistic approach on a day to day basis.

In this book, compiled by the Quality Assurance & Accreditation Council of the UGC, different policies and procedures adopted by some foreign universities and organizations are presented along with the Working Paper on IQAU of the Post Study Tour Workshop held on 29.12.2005 at SLIDA, Colombo. It is hoped that this book will be of use to IQAUs in the development of their own IQA mechanisms.

**QAA Council of the UGC
Ministry of Education**

January 2007

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Internal Quality Assurance Units in Universities

Working Paper

on

Comparative Study Tour

to

Indonesia and Thailand

29th December 2005

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Introduction:

Quality assurance has been introduced to the higher education in Sri Lanka just recently, and only a small proportion of study programs in the public sector have been assessed. It will be gradually expanded to cover all sectors in Sri Lanka, public as well as private. A quality assurance system could be implemented in a variety of institutional arrangements. It could be implemented at least in 2 different ways at the same time, i.e. internally driven and externally driven. Internally is the best and the most ideal way. It is a mechanism within the institution itself to ensure quality that include among others, periodic self-evaluation, monitoring, good practices, good governance, and good management. In order to be effective, an internal quality assurance system needs a strong leadership and institutional commitment towards the quality improvement.

In this stage, more in depth information and deeper knowledge about systems already implemented in other countries are needed to enrich the process of expansion and building up its capacity. Therefore, a comparative study tour was arranged for 17 members, including Sri Lanka Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council members, Internal Quality Assurance Unit members, and selected members of the University Grants Commission to visit Indonesia and Thailand from 10 – 16th December 2005 in view of understanding Internal Quality Assurance systems already implemented in these two countries.

A post comparative study tour workshop was held on 29th December 2005 with the view of preparing a working paper to be distributed among Internal Quality Assurance Units (IQAU) of Universities as a guideline. All the IQAU members who took part in the comparative study tour, IQAU Secretaries and a few Vice-Chancellors have participated in this workshop.

Objectives:

The objectives of the proposed visit was to learn and study, among others the following aspects,

1. National strategy:

- a) Role of the central authority: providing more autonomy requires decentralizing the authority from the central to institutions. The role of the central authority, i.e. Ministry and UGC, should also be gradually reduced. The advantages, disadvantages, and risks of taking such strategy will greatly benefit the currently developed strategy in Sri Lanka.
- b) Regulatory framework: the decentralization process requires a carefully designed strategy and implementation plan. A set of regulatory framework, i.e. Law, Act, Presidential and Ministerial decree, is required to support the transition. The strategy and experiences will greatly benefit the currently developed strategy in Sri Lanka.

Places Visited and Discussions held:

The team visited and conducted discussion sessions with the following parties,

1. Indonesia (3 days)

- a) Director General of Higher Education - Jakarta: issues were discussed include, the importance of accreditation in the national strategy (autonomy and decentralization), the role of central authority, the required regulatory framework, and the provision of government funding;
- b) National Accreditation Board (Chairperson, members, and staff) – Jakarta: issues were discussed include, NAB's strategy in carrying out its task, program versus institutional assessment, dissemination of the result, cross nationals accreditation, and sources of funding (fee levy, subscription, or government subsidy), and possible further cooperation;
- c) Gajah Mada University (Rector, QA unit, and selected Faculty/Department) – Yogyakarta: issues were discussed include, statement of purpose, possible overlapping objective with NAB, assessment strategy, structure within the university organization, sources of funding, and recommendations as well as its follow up.

2. Thailand (2 days)

- d) AUN-QA initiative: issues were discussed include, statement of purpose, cross nationals accreditation, sources of funding, and possible further cooperation;
- e) Chulalongkorn University: issues were discussed include, statement of purpose, assessment strategy, structure within the university organization, cross nationals accreditation, sources of funding, and recommendations as well as its follow up.

Lessons Learnt:

1. Code of Ethics for Academic Staff

A Code of Ethics for Academic Staff has been introduced alone with the QA process in the visited countries, especially in the University of Chulalongkorn, Thailand. Hence, it is suggested to formulate a Code of Ethics for the Sri Lankan academic community.

2. Vice-Chancellor Vs Quality Assurance System

The enthusiasm and encouragement towards the QA activities by Rectors and Vice-Rectors of Universities were clearly evident during the study tour. Similarly, guidance of the Vice Chancellors of Sri Lankan Universities is a must for the successful implementation of the QA system.

- It is expected that IQAU will report to the Senate on a monthly basis.
- It was suggested that the **Responsibilities** of IQAU should include among others the following activities:
 - Co-ordinate all QA related activities within the University/Institution;
 - Liaise with UGC/QAA Council and other external QA agencies;
 - Implementing QA Reviews/Audits and implementing follow-up action;
 - Preparation of Institutional Self-evaluation report;
 - Preparation of Guidelines on QA for the University/Institution;
 - Provide advice on QA to all Faculties and Departments
 - Monitor and Guide Faculty Level QA activities;
 - Organize Awareness Programmes on QA for the staff members
 - Contribute Quality and QA aspects into the Corporate Plan;
 - Identification and sharing of good practices with other Departments;
 - Preparation of Manuals (e.g. Academic regulations, equipment manuals, laboratory manuals etc.)
 - Ensure the Academic Regulations/By-Laws are in place, if not make recommendations for remedial action.

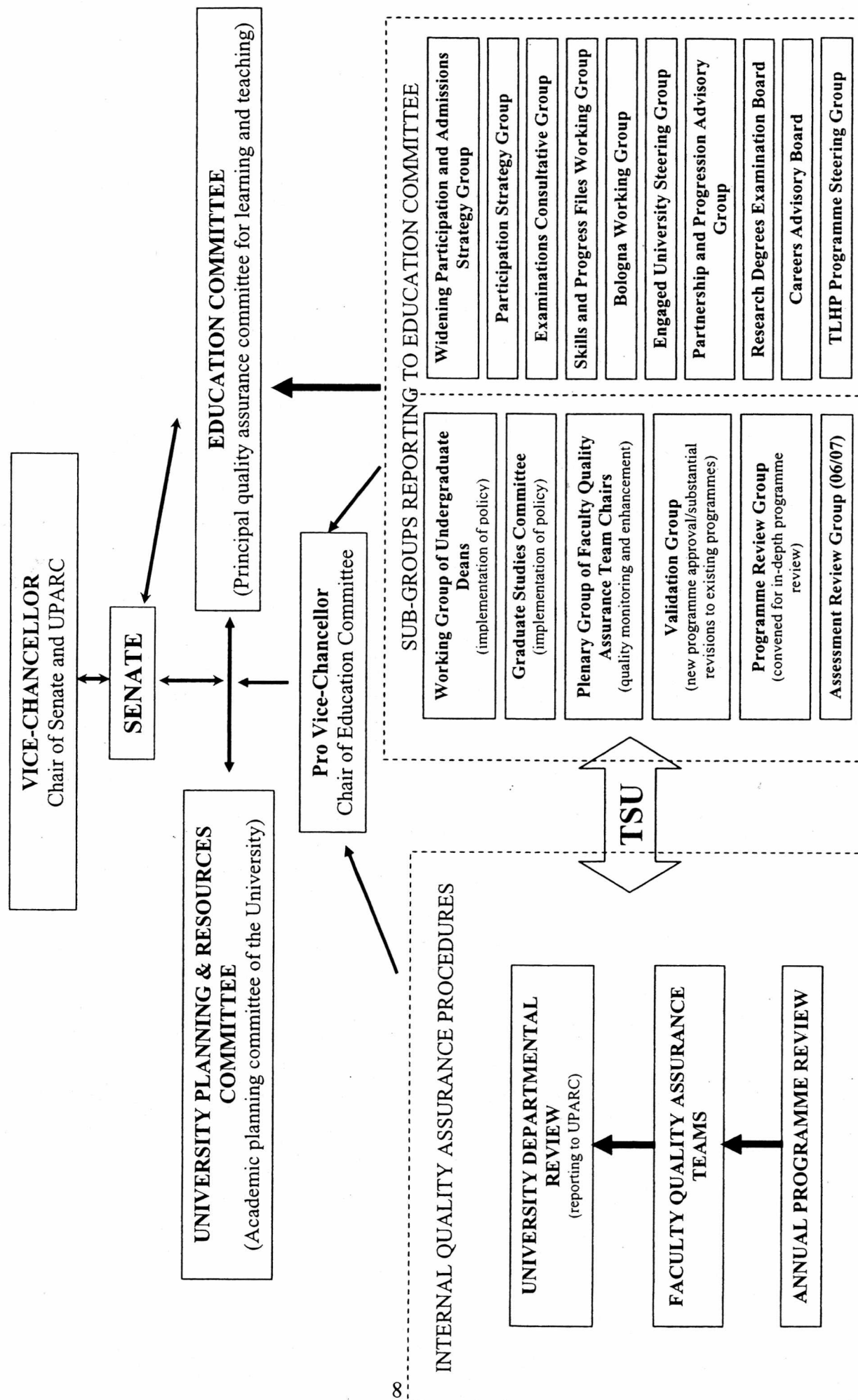
2) Suggested Activities of Internal Quality Assurance for the year 2006

- Establishment of a well equipped IQAU in Universities;
- Conduct Faculty level Awareness Programmes among staff members;
- Establishment of Faculty QA Cells, and defining their duties and responsibilities;
- Initiate preparation of SER for Institutional Reviews;
- Motivate as many Departments as possible to prepare SERs for Subject/Programme Reviews.

3) Awareness Programmes to be conducted by Internal Quality Assurance Units Collaboration with the UGC/QAA Council

- Preparation of an Information Leaflet about QA activities;
- Preparation of Pocket Guidelines;
- Awareness Programmes for Administrative and Finance Staff Members;
- Identify core areas of programmes along with the Faculty Level QA Cells(e.g. Training on the SR Process; Awareness on Subject Benchmarking etc.);
- Distribution of QA Handbook and the Newsletter – *QAA News*;
- Publishing IQAU Newsletter and IQAU Web Pages;
- Invite International QA experts for Awareness and Development of QA.

University of Bristol - Quality Assurance Framework for Learning and Teaching



UNIVERSITY OF DURHAM, UK

Internal Quality Assurance

Durham University's QA Policy and the processes which flow from it, seek to balance the following elements:

- overall university-level responsibility for assuring quality and standards to guarantee the integrity and consistency of all awards made in the name of the University of Durham;
- ownership of and responsibility for quality and standards at the point of delivery of teaching provision – the department or course team.

The **Academic Support Office** is responsible for administering the University's IQA processes, and for servicing the University and Faculty committees that oversee these processes.

Annual Review

The Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC) requires annual reports on all taught programmes from Boards of Studies. The principal aim of this process is to ensure that an overview is taken of all programmes on a more frequent basis than the University Review cycle.

All Annual Review documentation, including a revised Teaching and Learning Strategy, a narrative outlining strategic developments in teaching and learning at undergraduate and taught postgraduate levels and the reasons for them, and a completed copy of the Annual Review Report Form, should be sent directly to the Academic Support Office.

Enhancement-Led Review

Following consultation with Faculty Boards and Faculty TLCs, Senate has approved the introduction of the new Enhancement-Led Review (ELR) process. During the next three years (from 2006-07 until 2008-09 inclusive) each department in the University will undertake an ELR. The ELR is designed to build upon the robust University Reviews undertaken from 2000-2006, by: firstly, ensuring that the quality verified during that review cycle (and in the approval of new degree programmes during that period) remains high; and, secondly, providing 'consultancy' for the enhancement of that quality.

At the same time the University Strategy is to review the balance between teaching and research which articulates well with the developing national agenda of defining and articulating the links between the two. It is therefore our intention to introduce, from October 2009 joint reviews of teaching and research provision in academic departments to articulate with the annual planning process.

ELR is therefore a three-year process designed to foreground quality enhancement, and providing a secure basis from which to implement a forward-looking, holistic review process from 2009.

UNIVERSITY OF KENT, UK

Faculty Officer Support for Quality Assurance

Faculty Officers have always been involved in ensuring that academic staff are aware of requirements in connection with assurance of the quality of teaching and for ensuring that these requirements are met. Their role has however changed considerably over recent years as both University and external QA arrangements have developed. This paper sets out, in both general and specific terms, the ways in which Faculty Officers support QA as at February 1998. It should be noted that many other staff also provide administrative support for QA. In particular, Faculty Officers rely heavily on Departmental Officers to maintain detailed records relating to the teaching and assessment of students in their Department.

The aims of Faculty Officers in relation to QA are to:

- be familiar with internal and external QA and assessment requirements
- be aware of good practice in other Faculties and institutions
- advise their Faculty and its Departments on matters relating to QA
- ensure that their Faculty and its Departments comply with University and Faculty QA requirements
- liaise with the Secretaries to the Boards for Undergraduate Studies and for Research and Postgraduate Studies with regard to University QA requirements and their implementation
- provide administrative support in relation to QA requirements
- maintain records which will demonstrate to external auditors and assessors that the Faculty complies with University QA requirements and that such requirements are effective

Faculty Officers will be expected to:

Approval of new modules and new programmes of study

- Provide preliminary advice on QA requirements
- Check that proposals meet QA requirements, referring back or advising Faculty committees as necessary
- Ensure that records are kept which demonstrate that proposals have been subjected to rigorous scrutiny

Information to Students

- Ensure that students receive clear, comprehensive and timely information about their programme of study and about what is required of them.

Annual Monitoring

- Ensure that all concerned are aware of what is required
- Ensure that annual reports are submitted as required
- Ensure that annual reports are properly considered and that records are kept of the outcome of such consideration

UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

Accountability Framework: Quality Cycle

Overall, the aim is to provide University Council, the Vice-Chancellor, Deans, Heads of Department and senior managers with systematic feedback on the performance of the programs for which they are responsible, and to promote a culture of rigorous self-analysis and review from which continuous improvement initiatives are identified and implemented.

- Evaluation Cycle surveys - domestic and international students
- Vice-Chancellor's Operational Performance Reviews.
- Strategic risk management assessments.
- Academic Board Teaching and Learning Performance Review.
- Quality domestic and international self-audits
- Academic Department Audits.
- Administrative Department Reviews.

The University of Melbourne seeks to conduct a comprehensive, integrated program of QA that is both tailored to its own particular needs and satisfies the reasonable expectations of external quality review agencies. The University is committed to ensuring that its IQA programs are able to validate the extent of progress towards the fulfillment of its mission at University, Faculty, Department and Administrative unit levels. The University also undertakes its QA in a manner that obviates, to the greatest level possible, the need for rework or duplicated effort in order to meet external reporting obligations.

A key feature of the QA cycle is a systematic evaluation program through which key constituencies are surveyed to provide feedback on the quality of the University programs, services or outcomes in which they have a particular interest.

Through this matrix of evaluation:

- students enrolled in coursework programs are surveyed towards the end of each teaching period to provide feedback on their perceptions of the teaching and learning experience provided in each of the subjects in which they have been enrolled;
- students are also surveyed every two or three years to provide feedback on the quality of student administrative and support services provided at both University and Faculty levels; international students are surveyed every three years to ascertain perceptions of the quality of their 'Melbourne experience';
- postgraduate coursework students undertaking substantive research projects are, from 2004, to be surveyed to provide feedback on the quality of project supervision;
- research higher degree students are surveyed annually to provide feedback on the quality of research supervision and Departmental support from their research candidature. Feedback from this survey is supplemented by University of Melbourne participation in the Commonwealth-sponsored Postgraduate Research Experience Questionnaire;

outside Australia, making use of faculty specific data including feedback from student, graduate and employee surveys;

- The Operational Performance Review enables the Vice-Chancellor and other senior officers to audit the overall performance of faculties and the University Administration and, progressively over a four year cycle, their constituent departments; and
- The mid-year Taking Stock allows the Vice-Chancellor to report to Council and others on the effectiveness of the University and its processes in advancing the goals set out in the Strategic Plan. Through reliance on a rigorous application of the various components of its quality assurance cycle the University seeks both to be able to demonstrate continuing and sustained performance against the strategic objectives identified as part of the Melbourne Agenda and to secure, without the need for additional work, a favorable outcome at all levels of the University to the periodic external audit undertaken by the Australian Universities Quality Agency.



The University of Sydney

Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement Policy

Foreword

This policy specifies the University's approach to quality assurance and continuous improvement as well as its principles, features, structures and standards. The University wishes to assure quality learning, teaching, research, research training and service delivery through a regular review and improvement process. The University of Sydney is a dynamic community of students, scholars and staff committed to performing at the highest standards. The University's aim is to provide a stimulating and innovative environment for learning and teaching, student experience, research and innovation, community and alumni engagement, and to enhance staff, infrastructure and organisational capabilities. Its approach to quality assurance and continuous improvement is to learn from best practice, locally and internationally, and benchmark against leading research universities.

Purpose

The aim of the University's quality assurance policy is to enhance the effectiveness of its core activities of learning and teaching, research and innovation, student experience and community engagement and outreach. The policy addresses all areas of University activity focusing on their contribution to and alignment with the University's Strategic Goals.

Principles

1. Quality learning and teaching, student experience, research and innovation, community and alumni engagement are essential to the University's mission, goals and activities. The University's quality assurance processes are intrinsic to the work of all staff who are undertaking or supporting those core areas of the University.
2. Benchmarking and evidence-based approach. The University evaluates its achievements against appropriate national and international benchmarks. Its quality assurance methods are evidence-based, where outcomes and feedback from stakeholders (including students, staff, employers and the community) will provide the basis for analyses and conclusions on which improvements are planned.
3. Collegiality. The University's procedures reflect the principles of rigorous peer review, as we aim to identify areas for improvement, to foster collaboration and exchange of best practice, and to encourage an ethos of critical self-evaluation.

Features

1. A commitment to widespread involvement of staff, students and stakeholders in the QA process
 - critical self-evaluation and rigorous peer review of academic and administrative areas;
 - external assessment of professional courses through accreditation and international review;
 - multiple avenues for student and staff input to QA and improvement: College, Faculty, School, Services, Academic Board and committees, student associations; and
 - systematic use of user groups for collection of evidence on service delivery standards and student experience, including national and international benchmarking.
2. A focus on efficient management, planning and resource processes to achieve excellence and ensure continuous improvement
 - University-wide strategic goals linked to plans, priorities and the review system;
 - strong Academic Board and committee structure to develop, implement and oversee academic policies;
 - a regular cycle of reviews of academic and administrative performance ;
 - "holistic" peer reviews which integrates learning and teaching, research and innovation, community engagement and administration/management including profile, staffing and budget;

agencies, including AUQA, and other research-intensive universities nationally and internationally, for the purposes of quality assurance and improvement.

6. To coordinate strategic planning and develop strategic options indicated by SEG and others.
7. To coordinate and manage policy development, analysis and review.
8. To liaise with Academic Board and other key people responsible for academic and management policies to ensure appropriate coordination and consultation process for the University's policies, identify duplication and cross-links between the processes.
9. To ensure relevant, consistent and accurate management information is available for effective management of performance review and reporting.

The Group will report regularly to the Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Committee (VCAC), highlighting action that needs to be taken.

Responsibility

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic and International), the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching) and the Academic Board are leading the quality review process with regard to the University's Goals and provide for the monitoring, co-ordination and management of the University's Quality Assurance and Improvement Processes.

Internal Review

The Academic Board introduced a process of cyclical reviews (five years) of all the University's faculties. The purpose of the reviews is to assist the University in enhancing the quality of its core activities of learning, teaching, scholarship and research. The reviews are intended to: -

- support faculties in ensuring the effectiveness and sustainability of their quality assurance arrangements, through peer review of processes, outcomes and the evidence that demonstrates their effectiveness;
- assist faculties in identifying and evaluating strengths and weaknesses;
- support faculties in maintaining a systematic and continuous cycle of planning, monitoring and improvement;
- promote good practice throughout the University;
- assist Faculties in evaluating achievements in relation to the University's Strategic Plan and Goals;
- promote ownership of quality assurance activities throughout the University; and
- fulfil the University's requirements for both internal and external accountability.

The University introduced cyclical reviews of administrative services to focus on how they contribute to the achievement of the University's strategic goals, and in particular how they enhance the University's learning, teaching, research and research training outcomes as well as the student and staff experience. The aims of the Administrative Service Review process are to:

- identify and appraise the quality (of deliverables) of services, programs and activities relative to purpose,
- examine how well services, programs and activities meet objectives specified in the University's strategic plan as well as objectives specified in operational plans at the divisional/departamental levels, and
- evaluate all processes currently undertaken which assure quality and improvements for services, programs and activities.

External Reviews

The regular internal reviews are the basis for external reporting and auditing.

Authority/Consultation: QACG, VCAC

Management Responsibility: Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic and International); Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching); Chair, Academic Board

Implementation Responsibility: QACG

Date Approved: July 2005

Andhra University, India

Prof. K. RAMA MOHANA RAO

Co-ordinator, IQAC

Office:0891-284 4818

To

The Principals of Affiliated Colleges of Andhra University

Sir/Madam

The Andhra University has been taking up several initiatives to ensure quality in all its dimensions to meet the expectations of stake holders including students, parents, employers and the society at large. The affiliated colleges are the branches of the University to provide higher education services in the University area. The quality of the services offered by affiliated colleges reflects the image of the University. In order to ensure internal quality in affiliated colleges, the University directs each and every college to develop a quality assurance system that takes care of the quality of the services offered by the Institution.

I am by direction of the Vice Chancellor, Andhra University inform you that your college is required to nominate one senior faculty, who is known for academic excellence, sincerity, commitment and integrity, as **Internal Quality Officer** with immediate effect. The Internal Quality Officer of the college is expected to perform the following functions.

- Development and application of quality benchmarks/parameters in various activities of the college
- Dissemination of information on quality aspects
- Organization of seminars, workshops, discussions and promotion of quality circles
- Recording and monitoring quality measures of the college
- Acting as **nodal agency** of the college for quality related activities, and
- Preparation of the **Annual Internal Quality Report** and submitting the same to the IQAC, Andhra University.

The affiliated colleges are required to submit **Self Study Report** and **Annual Internal Quality Report** to The Coordinator, Internal Quality Assurance Cell, Andhra University. Your college is required to submit the Self Study Report and Annual Internal Quality Report for the year 2005-06 before the end of August 2006.

QUALITY CULTURE - European Experience

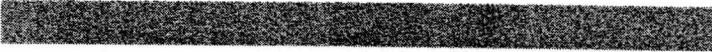
The term Quality Culture (QC) has recently gained considerable ground within Quality Assurance (QA) circles and is the focus of a joint EUA-European Commission project that is seeking to examine the establishment of QC within several Higher Education Institutions (HEI's) in a variety of countries. Indeed the emphasis that the EUA and European Commission are placing on QC can be seen in the Guidelines for the project, which states, "*The past decade has seen an explosion of national QA systems in Europe. These have been developed to assure stakeholders that HEIs are fulfilling their role and functions in society. As important as these external processes are, however, EUA considers essential that HEI's develop an internal QC to ensure and monitor enhancement of their activities and services in a way that is congruent to core academic values.*"

Definitions of Quality Culture:


- *QC is the creation of a high level of internal institutional quality assessment mechanisms and the ongoing implementation of the results. QC can be seen as the ability of the institution, program etc to develop QA implicitly in the day to day work of the institution and marks a move away from periodic assessment to ingrained QA.*
- *QC is an organic internal approach by institutions and departments towards dealing with the delivery of quality courses. QC is based around an internal system of continuous quality which seeks to establish quality HE through a holistic approach on a day to day basis.*

QC envisages methods of evaluating and establishing high levels of quality which can be undertaken by the institution or department itself and which, if correctly managed, can increase the quality of the education without requiring the over involvement of external QA procedures.

The EUA project clearly outlines some of the added advantages for institutions for establishing a strong organic and holistic QC as well as the growing importance that QC is viewed by HEI's. There is growing awareness of the need to strengthen an internal QC that has its origin in a range of factors that have prompted universities to become more pro-active in this area.



Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area



European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education

2 European Standards and Guidelines

The Ministers' mandate to develop 'an agreed set of standards, procedures and guidelines on quality assurance' raised a number of important questions. 'Quality assurance' is a generic term in higher education which lends itself to many interpretations: It is not possible to use one definition to cover all circumstances. Similarly, the word 'standards' is employed in a variety of ways across Europe, ranging from statements of narrowly defined regulatory requirements to more generalised descriptions of good practice. The words also have very different meanings in the local contexts of national higher education systems.

Moreover, the drafting process itself has made evident that, within the quality assurance community itself, there are some quite fundamental differences of view of the appropriate relationship that should be established between higher education institutions and their external evaluators. Some, mainly from agencies which accredit programmes or institutions, take the view that external quality assurance is essentially a matter of 'consumer protection', requiring a clear distance to be established between the quality assurance agency and the higher education institutions whose work they assess, while other agencies see the principal purpose of external quality assurance to be the provision of advice and guidance in pursuit of improvements in the standards and quality of programmes of study and associated qualifications. In the latter case a close relationship between the evaluators and the evaluated is a requirement. Yet others wish to adopt a position somewhere between the two, seeking to balance accountability and improvement.

Nor is it just the quality assurance agencies that have different views on these matters. The interests of the higher education institutions and student representative bodies are not always the same, the former seeking a high level of autonomy with a minimum of external regulation or evaluation (and that at the level of the whole institution), the latter wanting institutions to be publicly accountable through frequent inspection at the level of the programme or qualification.

Finally, the standards and guidelines relate only to the three cycles of higher education described in the Bologna Declaration and are not intended to cover the area of research or general institutional management.

Background of the standards and guidelines

This section of the report contains a set of proposed standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the EHEA. The standards and guidelines are designed to be applicable to all higher education institutions and quality assurance agencies in Europe, irrespective of their structure, function and size, and the national system in which they are located. As mentioned earlier, it has not been considered appropriate to include detailed 'procedures' in the recommendations of this chapter of the report, since institutional and agency

The purpose of these standards and guidelines is to provide a source of assistance and guidance to both higher education institutions in developing their own quality assurance systems and agencies undertaking external quality assurance, as well as to contribute to a common frame of reference, which can be used by institutions and agencies alike. It is not the intention that these standards and guidelines should dictate practice or be interpreted as prescriptive or unchangeable.

In some countries of the EHEA the ministry of education or an equivalent organisation has the responsibility for some of the areas covered by the standards and guidelines. Where this is the case, that ministry or organisation should ensure that appropriate quality assurance mechanisms are in place and subject to independent reviews.

Basic principles

The standards and guidelines are based on a number of basic principles about quality assurance, both internal in and external to higher education in the EHEA. These include:

- providers of higher education have the primary responsibility for the quality of their provision and its assurance;
- the interests of society in the quality and standards of higher education need to be safeguarded;
- the quality of academic programmes need to be developed and improved for students and other beneficiaries of higher education across the EHEA;
- there need to be efficient and effective organisational structures within which those academic programmes can be provided and supported;
- transparency and the use of external expertise in quality assurance processes are important;
- there should be encouragement of a culture of quality within higher education institutions;
- processes should be developed through which higher education institutions can demonstrate their accountability, including accountability for the investment of public and private money;
- quality assurance for accountability purposes is fully compatible with quality assurance for enhancement purposes;
- institutions should be able to demonstrate their quality at home and internationally;
- processes used should not stifle diversity and innovation.

Purposes of the standards and guidelines

The purposes of the standards and guidelines are:

- to improve the education available to students in higher education institutions in the EHEA;
- to assist higher education institutions in managing and enhancing their quality and, thereby, to help to justify their institutional autonomy;
- to form a background for quality assurance agencies in their work;
- to make external quality assurance more transparent and simpler to understand for everybody involved.

- institutional autonomy should be respected;
- the interests of students and other stakeholders such as labour market representatives should be at the forefront of external quality assurance processes;
- use should be made, wherever possible, of the results of institutions' own internal quality assurance activities.

The 'guidelines' provide additional information about good practice and in some cases explain in more detail the meaning and importance of the standards. Although the guidelines are not part of the standards themselves, the standards should be considered in conjunction with them.

Part 1: European standards and guidelines for internal quality assurance within higher education institutions

1.1 Policy and procedures for quality assurance

Standard:

Institutions should have a policy and associated procedures for the assurance of the quality and standards of their programmes and awards. They should also commit themselves explicitly to the development of a culture which recognises the importance of quality, and quality assurance, in their work. To achieve this, institutions should develop and implement a strategy for the continuous enhancement of quality.

The strategy, policy and procedures should have a formal status and be publicly available. They should also include a role for students and other stakeholders.

Guidelines:

Formal policies and procedures provide a framework within which higher education institutions can develop and monitor the effectiveness of their quality assurance systems. They also help to provide public confidence in institutional autonomy. Policies contain the statements of intentions and the principal means by which these will be achieved. Procedural guidance can give more detailed information about the ways in which the policy is implemented and provides a useful reference point for those who need to know about the practical aspects of carrying out the procedures.

The policy statement is expected to include:

- the relationship between teaching and research in the institution;
- the institution's strategy for quality and standards;
- the organisation of the quality assurance system;
- the responsibilities of departments, schools, faculties and other organisational units and individuals for the assurance of quality;
- the involvement of students in quality assurance;
- the ways in which the policy is implemented, monitored and revised.

carried out professionally at all times and takes into account the extensive knowledge which exists about testing and examination processes. Assessment also provides valuable information for institutions about the effectiveness of teaching and learners' support.

Student assessment procedures are expected to:

- be designed to measure the achievement of the intended learning outcomes and other programme objectives;
- be appropriate for their purpose, whether diagnostic, formative or summative;
- have clear and published criteria for marking;
- be undertaken by people who understand the role of assessment in the progression of students towards the achievement of the knowledge and skills associated with their intended qualification;
- where possible, not rely on the judgements of single examiners;
- take account of all the possible consequences of examination regulations;
- have clear regulations covering student absence, illness and other mitigating circumstances;
- ensure that assessments are conducted securely in accordance with the institution's stated procedures;
- be subject to administrative verification checks to ensure the accuracy of the procedures.

In addition, students should be clearly informed about the assessment strategy being used for their programme, what examinations or other assessment methods they will be subject to, what will be expected of them, and the criteria that will be applied to the assessment of their performance.

1.4 Quality assurance of teaching staff

Standard:

Institutions should have ways of satisfying themselves that staff involved with the teaching of students are qualified and competent to do so. They should be available to those undertaking external reviews, and commented upon in reports.

Guidelines:

Teachers are the single most important learning resource available to most students. It is important that those who teach have a full knowledge and understanding of the subject they are teaching, have the necessary skills and experience to transmit their knowledge and understanding effectively to students in a range of teaching contexts, and can access feedback on their own performance. Institutions should ensure that their staff recruitment and appointment procedures include a means of making certain that all new staff have at least the minimum necessary level of competence. Teaching staff should be given opportunities to develop and extend their teaching capacity and should be encouraged to value their skills. Institutions should provide poor teachers with opportunities to improve their skills to an acceptable level and should have the means to remove them from their teaching duties if they continue to be demonstrably ineffective.

1.7 Public information

Standard:

Institutions should regularly publish up to date, impartial and objective information, both quantitative and qualitative, about the programmes and awards they are offering.

Guidelines:

In fulfilment of their public role, higher education institutions have a responsibility to provide information about the programmes they are offering, the intended learning outcomes of these, the qualifications they award, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures used, and the learning opportunities available to their students. Published information might also include the views and employment destinations of past students and the profile of the current student population. This information should be accurate, impartial, objective and readily accessible and should not be used simply as a marketing opportunity. The institution should verify that it meets its own expectations in respect of impartiality and objectivity.

Academic Affairs

**Quality Assurance
and Standards Division**

**INTERNAL
QUALITY
AUDIT
HANDBOOK**

2006 edition

KEELE UNIVERSITY INTERNAL QUALITY AUDIT

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KEELE UNIVERSITY INTERNAL QUALITY AUDIT

Foreword

1. Keele University has had processes for reviewing aspects of the quality of teaching in since the 1980s. Internal Quality Audit (IQA) was first approved by Senate in 1994-95 and the previous fundamental revision of the IQA process was in 1999. The IQA process in that era was strongly influenced by the methods for teaching quality assessment / subject review developed by HEFCE and subsequently the QAA for use in England in 1996 and 1998. Minor updates of the 1999 edition of the IQA Handbook were made from time to time.
2. This fundamental revision of Keele University's process of periodic Internal Quality Audit takes account of:

The aim, principles and framework of the university's quality assurance policy, set out in the Academic Quality and Standards Manual and related codes of practice and other documents, all available at <http://www.keele.ac.uk/depts/aa/qao/qamanual/index.htm>

The UK Higher Education code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education, comprising the framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ), subject benchmark statements and programme specifications, all available at <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/default.asp>

The repeated and explicit commendations of IQA in reports of external quality reviews, most recently in reports from Developmental Engagements, and Institutional Audit 2004.

3. This revision retains peer review as the basic approach to Internal Quality Audit and the School as the normal unit of audit.
4. This revision is gives effect to:

A more thematic approach to internal audit.

The expectation that Keele's policies and procedures for the assurance and enhancement of quality and standards (AQSM etc) are embedded in academic programmes throughout the university. It should be feasible to make more use of routine documentation, with less emphasis on specially commissioned lengthy documents such as a Self Evaluation Document.

The expectation that Schools' responses to the QAA academic infrastructure and other external points of reference are embedded in their academic programmes.

Section 1: Overview of Internal Quality Audit

- 1.1 Internal Quality Audit is an important element in the University's strategy and procedures for assuring the quality of learning opportunities provided to students and the standards of programmes and awards. This strategy and procedures are set out in the Academic Quality and Standards Manual (AQSM). This manual forms part of the AQSM.
- 1.2 It is an explicit aspect of the University's quality assurance strategy that Schools take responsibility for assuring their quality and standards, as set out in section 5 of the AQSM. The university is required to have processes through which confidence is established at the level of the institution in the quality of learning and teaching provided by Schools, in the standards of achievement that are set and maintained by Schools, and in the carrying out of university policies directed to these ends. These processes include the approval of new courses and modules and changes to these, scrutiny of annual reports of external examiners, annual monitoring visits by the Quality Assurance Office to Schools, and periodic Internal Quality Audit.
- 1.3 Normally, each School has an Internal Quality Audit on a five yearly cycle, but Quality Assurance Committee may order an Audit at any time, for instance in response to concerns raised by another aspect of the University's quality assurance process. The five-year cycle for internal quality audit complements the three-year cycle of Programme Review (aka Triennial Course Review) carried out by Schools themselves and the annual cycles of external examiner reports and the annual monitoring visit.
- 1.4 Important aspects of internal quality audit are that it is transparent and that it is essentially a process of peer review, involving participants from within the Faculty of which the School is a part, from the wider University, and from the discipline(s) nationally.
- 1.5 The focus of the internal quality audit is to be
 - (1) the processes used by the School for the maintenance and enhancement of the quality of education and the standards of achievement, with sufficient examination of the product of these activities to establish confidence that the processes are effective and that the quality and standards are sustainable, and
 - (2) the response of Schools to the QAA codes of practice and compliance with Keele University policies and regulations, including the provisions of the Academic Quality and Standards Manual.
- 1.6 The normal unit of audit to be the School. If the breadth and complexity of the unit's educational provision require it, the Chair of Quality Assurance Committee and/or Director of Quality Assurance in consultation, may increase the size of the audit team, the number of External Advisers, the number of

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programmes, and research training schemes within the scope of the audit: Programme specification and course regulations, most recent triennial course review report, most recent annual course review report, most recent two years' reports from external examiners and Schools' responses to these, current student handbooks, and, where applicable, the most recent report from accreditation by Professional or Statutory Bodies.

- 1.9 Further to #1.8, where it is practicable, IQA's are to be scheduled so that use may be made of documentation prepared for accreditation by Professional and Statutory Bodies or for similar events.
- 1.10 Normally, if it is feasible, a meeting with a representative group of taught students will be held in advance of the audit event. When this is not possible, the students to be invited to make a written submission, preferably a collective one. Auditors will expect to meet with student academic representatives at lunch on audit day.
- 1.11 Having received the SEP and other documents, and guided by the Audit Secretary, the audit team (without the External Adviser) will agree their lines of enquiry. This may involve a meeting or communication by e-mail or both. The audit chair and audit secretary will formulate an agenda for the audit day, in consultation with the Head of School. The audit secretary will make arrangements for meeting rooms and refreshments in collaboration with the School.
- 1.12 On the day of the audit, the Audit Team (including the External Adviser) will have a series of meetings with appropriate staff and students from the School and private meetings in order to pursue their lines of enquiry and to gather and evaluate evidence.
- 1.13 The Auditors will prepare a draft report based on the Audit, summarising their analyses and conclusions and recommendations under the following aspect headings:
 - aims, intended learning outcomes and the curricula
 - teaching and learning
 - assessment
 - student progression and student support
 - learning resources
 - enhancement of quality and standards
- 1.14 Within four weeks of the audit event, the audit secretary will send the draft report and the summary for publication to the Head of School for correction of errors of fact or of interpretation. The School will have two weeks in which to notify the Quality Assurance Office of any errors of fact or of interpretation.
- 1.15 Within eight weeks of the audit event, the final version of the audit report and

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Assurance.

The written student submission (if any) will usually be made available both to the School and to the audit team. Exceptionally, the School's student academic representatives or an officer of the Students Union may request that the written student submission be withheld from the School; in such a case, the Director of Quality Assurance and the Chair of the Quality Assurance Committee will adjudicate.

The Audit Report and Summary Report will be written in such a way as to respect the confidentiality of the written or oral contributions of any individual staff member or student.

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Section 2: The audit team, their roles and responsibilities

- 2.1 There will be a panel of auditors, teaching staff of the university with experience of the management of teaching. The Director of Quality Assurance will appoint auditors to the panel on the advice of the Chair of Quality Assurance Committee, Deans of Faculties and Heads of School, as appropriate. It is expected that auditors will participate in a maximum of two audits per year.
- 2.2 Auditors designated as chairs of audit teams will be senior members of teaching staff of the university, with wide experience of teaching and the management of teaching* and, where possible, with prior experience of Internal Quality Audit.

**e.g. as Director of Study, Programme Leader, or Head of School*

- 2.3 Novice auditors will be trained through preparatory documentation, briefing sessions and observation at part of an audit event. Experienced auditors will be updated from time to time by means to be determined by the Director of Quality Assurance.
- 2.4 The team for the Internal Quality Audit of a School will be determined by the Director of Quality Assurance in consultation with the Chair of the Quality Assurance Committee and the Dean of the Faculty.
- 2.5 The normal unit of audit to be the School. If the breadth and complexity of the unit's educational provision require it, the Chair of Quality Assurance Committee and/or Director of Quality Assurance in consultation, may increase the size of the audit team, the number of External Advisers, the number of meetings, and the duration of the event.
- 2.6 The normal composition of an audit team is:

The audit chair (see 2.1)

Two auditors, both teaching staff of the university with experience of the management of teaching, one of these from the Faculty of which the School is a part but not from the School under audit.

An external adviser of national standing in one or more of the disciplines covered by the audit appointed by the Director of Quality Assurance having consulted the Head of School and Faculty Dean. (See also section 3).

The audit secretary, from the Quality Assurance Office, usually a Deputy Director of Quality Assurance.

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- to coordinate the allocation of duties between Auditors, and preparatory meeting(s) and/or discussions.
- to be responsible for arrangements on Audit day, including accommodation for and entertainment of the External Adviser as required.
- to make a written record of the meeting with students (if held), of meetings and discussions of the Audit Team, and of the Audit event.
- to collect, integrate and edit the contributions from individual auditors into the draft report and to be responsible for the format of the report and uniformity of style.
- to write the Summary Report
- to make arrangements with the Head of School for checking the Draft Audit Report and Draft Summary Report for factual accuracy, and to make appropriate alterations to these
- to send the Audit Report and Summary Report to the Chair of Quality Assurance Committee, the Director of Quality Assurance, the Dean of the Faculty and the Head of School.

2.7 All members will carefully observe the confidentiality of all documents and discussions.

Section 3: The External Adviser

- 3.1 The External Adviser is a practitioner of national standing in one or more of the disciplines covered by the audit and is appointed by the Director of Quality Assurance having consulted the Head of School and the Faculty Dean.
- 3.2 It is expected that between them the Head of School and Faculty Dean will nominate three possible External Advisers, ideally from Schools at other UK universities with comparable scope to the School under audit and who can provide an independent evaluation of the standards of achievement and of the quality of learning and teaching in the School under audit. Exceptionally, more than one External Adviser may be appointed if it is not possible for one to advise the audit team on the breadth of programmes under audit.
- 3.3 The criteria for appointment as External Adviser are
- wide experience and competence at a senior level in a teaching School at another UK university,
 - a practitioner in at least one of the subject areas under audit with national credibility within the general subject area,
 - familiarity with academic standards within UK universities,
 - sufficient standing within the at least one of the disciplines to speak authoritatively on standards, and on course design and content,
 - familiarity with the standards of achievement to be expected of students in the programmes under audit

Normally, then, an External Adviser is likely to be a senior academic, usually holding an appointments as Senior Lecturer or above in a School covering subjects identical with or similar to those being audited, in a UK university offering courses comparable to those offered at Keele.

It is a requirement that an External Adviser should not

- have been a student or a member of the academic staff at Keele in the previous six years;
- be subject to any reciprocal arrangement or conflict of interest.

All of these criteria may be relaxed, with the agreement of the Director of Quality Assurance, but only in exceptional circumstances (e.g. in cases of extreme urgency or extreme difficulty in finding an External Adviser with a suitable breadth of expertise or in a subject area where there is a very limited number of potential External Advisors).

- 3.4 A fee and expenses are paid to the External Adviser.
- 3.5 The university has included External Advisers in Internal Quality Audit teams since 1997. Before then, audit teams had had recourse to External

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Section 4: The roles and responsibilities of committees and officers of the University including executive Deans of Faculties

4.1 Quality Assurance Committee

Quality Assurance Committee approves

- the rolling programme of periodic Internal Quality Audit,
- receives and considers audit reports,
- decides on actions following audit,
- authorises publication of reports and summary reports, and
- submits its findings from Internal Quality Audit to the Senate.

4.2 Chair of Quality Assurance Committee

The Chair of Quality Assurance Committee

- is consulted on the composition of audit teams
- receives a copy of each Internal Quality Audit report as soon as it has been checked for factual accuracy
- if required and with the Director of Quality Assurance, adjudicates on applications to restrict the Student Submission to the audit team,
- if required and with the Director of Quality Assurance, adjudicates on applications to withhold or restrict publication of the Summary Report or Audit Report, and
- following consideration of an audit report by Quality Assurance Committee, determination of actions to be taken (if any) following audit.

4.3 Director of Quality Assurance

The Director of Quality Assurance has operational responsibility for the planning and conduct of Internal Quality Audits, including

- the appointment and training of the panel of auditors,
- the appointment of auditors to teams in consultation with the Faculty Dean,
- liaison with Schools under audit,
- if required and with the Chair of Quality Assurance Committee, adjudicates on applications to restrict the Student Submission to the audit team,
- reporting of audit outcomes to Quality Assurance Committee,
- if required and with the Chair of Quality Assurance Committee, adjudicates on applications to withhold or restrict publication of the Summary Report or Audit Report, and
- actions following audit (if any).

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Section 5: The time line

The time line is as follows

- 12 weeks before event:** Nomination and appointment of External Adviser
Appointment of audit team
Designation of audit chair
Designation of audit secretary
- 5 weeks before event:** Submission of Self Evaluation Portfolio to the
Quality Assurance Office
- 4 weeks before event:** Auditors meet (or have virtual meeting) to agree
lines of enquiry and to identify additional
documents (if any) to be requested from the School
or to be provided by the School on the day of the
audit event.
- 3 weeks before event:** Audit chair and audit secretary agree agenda for
the audit event and liaise with the Head of School
over this and staff to meet auditors (see section 9).
- 2/3 weeks before event:** Auditors' meeting with students (if practicable)
- 3/2/1 weeks before event:** Audit secretary liaises with Head of School
or representative over logistical
arrangements (rooms, refreshments, etc)

The sequence of events following the audit event will be as follows:

Event + 4: Draft report and summary for publication sent to School for
correction of factual errors.

Event + 6 weeks: Factual errors submitted to Quality Assurance Office.

Event + 8 weeks: Final version of report to Head of School, Dean of Faculty,
and Chair of Quality Assurance Committee

Event + 12 weeks: Action plan agreed by School and Dean of Faculty
submitted to Quality Assurance Committee.

The Audit Secretary will check the Action Plan and Follow-up Report for
completeness, raising any necessary questions with the School/School
concerned, before submission to Quality Assurance Committee in the
interests of efficient use of the Committee's time.

As soon as possible thereafter, Audit Report and Action Plan and summary for

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Section 6: Preparing for Internal Quality Audit - requirements and advice

The following is a suggested brief checklist for Schools preparing for Internal Quality Audit. But note that it is not exhaustive. It is expected that key staff in Schools preparing for Audit will develop a detailed knowledge of this Handbook.

See also the Time line for Internal Quality Audit (section 5)

6.1 It is generally helpful if a member of staff of the School has prior experience as an Internal Quality Auditor or as an auditor/reviewer for the Quality Assurance Agency. Such a colleague will be able to advise on the development of the Self Evaluation Portfolio and on other matters related to the Audit.

6.2 Clarification of the scope of the Internal Quality Audit with the Director of Quality Assurance.

6.3 Nomination of candidates for appointment as External Adviser (see section 3)

6.4 Development and submission of the Self Evaluation Portfolio (see section 7), seeking advice from the Audit Secretary as required.

6.5 Nomination of students to meet Auditors prior to audit event

6.6 Selection of Student Academic Representatives to meet auditors and External Adviser on the day of the audit

6.7 Liaison with the Audit Secretary on the agenda and timetable for the audit event, and the selection of staff to meet auditors at the various times/meetings

6.8 Liaison with the Audit Secretary on logistical arrangements: room(s) for meetings and viewing documents, tour of facilities, and room for working lunch and other refreshments. Note that usually the Audit Secretary will make arrangements with KFM for the supply of lunch and other refreshments.

6.9 Selection of supporting documentation / wider resources to be available to the auditors in the School on or before audit day. These are dependent on the lines of enquiry developed by the Audit Team but are likely to include routine documentation from the School's quality assurance processes including reports from annual and triennial course reviews, minutes from Learning and Teaching Committee or equivalent, from course committees or equivalent, from Boards of Examiners and from Staff-Student Liaison Committees, reports from External Examiners and responses, and where applicable from accreditation by Professional or Statutory Bodies.

6.10 Designation of a member of staff of the School (academic or support staff as appropriate) to liaise with the Audit Secretary before, during and after the Audit Event.

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Section 7: The self-evaluation portfolio (SEP)

- 7.1 Schools are strongly encouraged where it is practicable to do so to use existing documents as components of the self-evaluation portfolio (SEP).
- 7.2 Audit teams will respect the confidentiality of the documentation provided by the School, and will use information derived from the portfolio only for the purposes of Internal Quality Audit.
- 7.3 The Self-Evaluation Portfolio will comprise:

- (1) A contents list.

If validation or accreditation submissions or other such documents are used in the portfolio, the contents list should highlight the relevant sections of these.

- (2) A framework summary listing the programmes and free-standing modules offered by the school, including research-training, and giving quantitative data on the human and physical resources available to the School for this provision, student numbers and projections, and data on retention, completion and progression to employment or further study, and, for post-experience courses, enhancement of careers.

It is recognised that the quantitative data available to Schools in some of these areas may in parts be incomplete. The framework should contain or refer to such data as the School uses in its own evaluations of the effectiveness of its programmes.

- (3) An evaluation of the Strengths and Weaknesses of the School and its academic programmes, and the Opportunities and Threats facing it.

- (4) A statement from the Dean of the Faculty (Optional)

The purpose of this item is to enable the Dean, if she or he wishes, to help set the context for the Internal Quality Audit in relation to the Faculty's mission, to comment on the School's self evaluation, or to highlight particular matters for the attention of the audit team. It is expected that this statement will have been made available to the School.

- (5) A written submission, preferably a collective one, from students of the School, either in addition to or in place of a face-to-face meeting with students before the audit event. (Optional)

It is expected that the Head of School and the Director of Quality Assurance will draw this opportunity to the attention of students and to facilitate the creation of a representative submission

- (6) The School's current statement of Learning and Teaching Strategy

- (7) The reports from the two most recent Annual Monitoring Visits.

Section 8: The Internal Quality Audit Report and Summary

8.1 The Auditors will prepare a draft report based on the Audit, summarising their analyses and conclusions and recommendations under the following aspect headings:

aims, intended learning outcomes and the curricula
teaching and learning
assessment
student progression and student support
learning resources
enhancement of quality and standards

- 8.2 Each auditor will take responsibility for drafting an account of two of the aspects, including the evidence, analysis and judgement, and for identifying good practices or weaknesses that are to be highlighted in the report summary. Auditors should make use of the Aide Memoire (section 10)
- 8.3 The audit secretary will integrate the various contributions into the draft report and will be responsible for the format of the report and uniformity of style. Auditors will comment on the first draft and the audit chair will sign off the draft report as an accurate reflection of the findings of the audit team.
- 8.4 The Audit Report and Summary Report will be written in such a way as to respect the confidentiality of the written or oral contributions of any individual staff member or student.
- 8.5 Within four weeks of the audit event, the audit secretary will send the draft report and the summary for publication to the Head of School for correction of errors of fact or of interpretation. The School will have two weeks in which to notify the Quality Assurance Office of any errors of fact or of interpretation.
- 8.6 Within eight weeks of the audit event, the final version of the audit report and of the summary for publication will be sent to the Head of School, the Dean of Faculty, and the Chair of Quality Assurance Committee.
- 8.7 The School will have a period of four weeks to develop an action plan in response to the Audit Report, to sustain strengths and remedy weaknesses. By the end of this period, the School must seek and gain the approval of the Dean of the Faculty for this action plan and submit the action plan to the Quality Assurance Committee so that it can be considered by Quality Assurance Committee.
- 8.8 The Audit Secretary will check the action plan for completeness, raising any necessary questions with the School and Dean concerned, before submission to Quality Assurance Committee in the interests of efficient use of the Committee's time. As soon as possible thereafter, the audit report, action plan

Section 9:

Sample timetable and agenda for an internal quality audit event

External Adviser is invited to stay overnight before the Audit event as guest of the Director of Quality Assurance. At discretion of Chair of QAC, External Advisor is invited to dine with one or more of: a Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Dean of the Faculty which includes the School, Director of Quality Assurance (or Deputy), Chair of the Audit Team.

8.30 a.m. Audit Team assemblies

9.15 a.m. Meeting with Head of School

Present: Audit team and Head of School

9.30 a.m. Strategy, Planning & Resources

Present: Audit team, Head of School, Directors of Study, Quality Assurance Coordinator, and other relevant senior staff

10.15 a.m. Student Support:

Present: Audit team, Directors of Study, Admissions Officer, Year Tutors, Learning Support Officers, Office Manager, and other relevant academic and support staff.

11.15 a.m. Coffee and Private Team Meeting

11.30 a.m. Learning and Teaching:

Present: Audit team, Directors of Study, Examinations Officer, IT coordinator, Quality Assurance Coordinator, representative academic and support staff.

12.30 p.m. Lunch and meeting with current and former undergraduate students, including student members of the SSLC

Present: Audit team and students.

Where appropriate to the programmes under audit and where feasible, auditors may wish to meet separately representatives of Public, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies (PSRB), commissioning agencies or employers

1.30 p.m. Private Team Meeting

Section 10: Aspects of provision - an aide-memoire for Schools and auditors

(adapted from on Annex E of the Handbook for Academic Review © QAA 2004)

10.1 The aspects of provision for Internal Quality Audit are:

aims, intended learning outcomes and the curricula
teaching and learning
assessment
student progression and student support
learning resources
enhancement of quality and standards

10.2 The following series of prompts is intended to assist Schools in evaluating their programmes and arrangements and auditors in the analysis of the self-evaluation prior to the audit, collection of evidence during the audit, and preparation and compilation of the audit report.

10.2.1 Aims, intended learning outcomes and the curricula

Evaluation of the intended learning outcomes in relation to external reference points and to the broad aims of the programmes

- What are the intended learning outcomes for a programme and are they stated clearly?
- How do they relate to external reference points including relevant subject benchmark statements, the qualifications framework and any professional body requirements?
- How do they relate to and are they appropriate to the overall programme aims?

The effectiveness with which the curricula are planned, designed and approved to facilitate achievement of the intended outcomes

- How does the School ensure that curriculum content enables students to achieve the intended learning outcomes?
- How does the School ensure that the design and organisation of the curriculum is effective in promoting student learning and achievement of the intended learning outcomes?

The means by which the intended outcomes are communicated to students, staff and external examiners

10.2.3 Assessment

Evaluation of the assessment process and the standards of achievement of intended programme outcomes that it demonstrates, and of the extent to which student achievement meets appropriate expectations.

- Do the assessment process overall and the particular assessment instruments chosen enable learners to demonstrate achievement of the intended outcomes?
- Are there criteria that enable internal and external examiners to distinguish between different categories of achievement?
- Can there be full confidence in the security and integrity of assessment procedures?
- Does the assessment strategy have an adequate formative function in developing student abilities?
- Do the assessment processes comply with university policy and regulations on assessment and on external examining (regulations 8, 8a and 9)?
- What evidence is there that the standards achieved by learners meet the minimum expectations for the award, as measured against the relevant subject benchmarks and the qualifications framework (FHEQ)?

10.2.4 Student progression and student support

Evaluation of the School's arrangements for recruitment and induction of students and the strategy for supporting students, and their effectiveness in facilitating student progression towards successful completion of their programmes.

- Is there an appropriate overall strategy for academic support, including handbooks and other written guidance, which is consistent with the student profile and the overall aims of the programmes?
- Are there effective arrangements for admission and induction which are generally understood by staff and applicants?
- How effectively is learning facilitated by academic guidance, formative and summative feedback and supervisory arrangements?
- Are the School's arrangements for academic and personal tutorial support consistent with university policy and clear and generally understood by staff and students?

Section 11: Report form for use by External Adviser

Academic Affairs

Quality Assurance and Standards Division

Internal Quality Audit: External Adviser's Report

School:

External Adviser:

Date of audit event:

Date of this report:

Notes

External Advisers are invited to use this form to record their judgements and comments, if possible, on the day of the audit. The completed form should be given or sent to the Audit Secretary.

External Advisers may separately bring any serious concern about academic standards to the attention of Professor JV Finch, Vice-Chancellor.

1. Are the academic standards of the educational programmes covered by the audit appropriate to the qualifications awarded?

a) Undergraduate programmes **YES/NO**

b) Taught postgraduate programmes **YES/NO**

c) Research training for postgraduate research students **YES/NO**

Further comments:

Continued overleaf

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4. With reference to the programmes audited, are there major gaps in the coverage of the subject?

YES/NO

Further comments:

5. Is there satisfactory provision for student support and guidance?

- a) Undergraduate students **YES/NO**
- b) Postgraduates on taught courses **YES/NO**
- c) Research students **YES/NO**

Further comments:

Continued overleaf

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8. Are there any matters of concern which the audit team and the School should consider?

Please specify:

9. Comment on Keele's internal quality audit process will be welcomed. Please offer your advice in the space below.

Thank you for your assistance.

Professor R C J Cocks
Pro Vice-Chancellor

Qao/cp/bm/k:mydocs/iqa/adviser/advisrep2006

15th December 2005