

KIU Quality Assurance Policy Manual



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Quality Assurance at KIU

1 Introduction

This document presents a comprehensive overview of the internal quality assurance framework adopted by KIU, in alignment with the directives outlined in Commission Circulars No. 04/2015 and No. 09/2019 issued by University Grants Commission (UGC) on Internal Quality Assurance Systems in Universities and Higher Educational Institutions. It elaborates on the primary objectives of internal quality assurance, the organizational structure, roles, and responsibilities of the Centre for Quality Assurance (CQA) at KIU. Furthermore, it details the operational mechanisms and functional arrangements established within KIU to ensure the effective implementation of quality assurance activities across all areas of its operations.

Expansion of higher education both globally and locally encountering greater intra and international competition, has made it essential to assure quality in the Sri Lankan higher education system. In keeping with the quality assurance framework in Sri Lanka, KIU has geared to ensure a high standard of quality and to meet the standards stipulated by the Quality Assurance Council (QAC), UGC and Nonstate Division, Ministry of Education. Peer reviewing of higher education institutes has now gained worldwide acceptance as an effective method to ensure quality and standards of quality. KIU appreciates that periodic external review provides a motivation for reflective behavior and self-appraisal which are both essential pre-requisites in the quest for excellence.

2 Aims of Internal Quality Assurance at KIU

The Centre for Quality Assurance (CQA) of KIU aims to align with the policy framework established by the Quality Assurance Council (QAC) of the University Grants Commission (UGC) and Nonstate Division, Ministry of Education.

The **key aims** are as follows:

- To establish and maintain strong Quality Assurance (QA) mechanisms that ensure the education system at KIU meets national and international standards
- To foster a culture of continuous quality improvement within KIU by promoting sustainable practices that support academic and institutional excellence

- To build a clear and detailed institutional profile informed by self-review and SWOT analysis of academic programs, facilitating targeted self-improvement initiatives and strategic development.

In accordance with the guidelines outlined in the *Internal Quality Assurance Manual for Sri Lankan Universities (2013)* and the relevant directives, CQA at KIU focusses particular importance on the following areas:

- **Policy and Procedures for Higher Education:** Establishing a framework to guide and sustain quality in higher education.
- **Approval, Monitoring, and Periodic Review of Programmes and Awards:** Ensuring that all academic qualification offerings and certifications meet established standards and remain relevant.
- **Teaching, Learning, and Assessment of Students:** Promoting effective pedagogical practices and fair, transparent assessment mechanisms.
- **Quality Assurance of Teaching Staff:** Enhancing the professional development and evaluation of academic staff to maintain high standards.
- **Learning Resources and Student Support:** Providing adequate resources and support services to facilitate an enriching learning experience.
- **Information Systems:** Maintaining efficient and reliable systems for managing and disseminating information.
- **Public Information:** Ensuring transparency by providing accurate and accessible information about the institution's offerings and performance.

These aims and areas collectively contribute to fostering a culture of excellence at KIU while ensuring compliance with national quality standards.

3 Centre for Quality Assurance (CQA) of KIU

The Centre for Quality Assurance (CQA) is the apex body responsible for managing and ensuring the quality assurance processes at KIU. The CQA plays a central role in the coordination and implementation of quality assurance activities across various academic departments, administrative divisions and academic activities. The CQA at KIU is tasked with implementing and maintaining internal quality assurance processes in alignment with the *Internal Quality Assurance Manual for Sri Lankan Universities (2013)* and relevant directives.

Key Responsibilities:

- **Coordination of QA Activities:** The CQA manages and oversees all QA-related initiatives within KIU, ensuring they align with the institution's standards and objectives. Ensuring the integration of QA aspects into KIU's Corporate Plan.
- **Monitoring and Guiding Faculty QA Activities:** Provide directions for faculty-level QA activities, including curriculum development and review, teaching, learning, assessment, and staff development.
- **External Quality Review:** The CQA facilitates the process of external quality reviews; Institutional review, programme review and accreditation reviews to ensure that KIU meets national and international standards.
- **Ensuring Compliance with Academic Regulations:** Verify the presence of necessary academic regulations and by-laws, addressing any gaps with appropriate remedial actions.
- **Liaising with External Agencies:** Collaborate with the Quality Assurance Council (QAC), Nonstate Division, Ministry of Education and other relevant external bodies in Higher Education that monitor the operations and quality frameworks for improvements.
- **Implementing and Following up QA Reviews:** Facilitate QA reviews and ensure effective follow-up actions.
- **Preparing Reports and Guidelines:** Prepare guidelines and frameworks on QA for KIU. Develop Self-Evaluation Reports (SERs).
- **Organizing Awareness Programmes:** Conducting awareness programmes on QA processes for staff members to promote understanding and engagement.
- **Sharing Good Practices:** The CQA promotes the sharing and adoption of best practices across the institution to ensure continual improvement in academic and administrative functions.

4 Internal Quality Assurance Cells (IQACs) at Faculty level

1. **Establishing Faculty Quality Assurance Cells (FQACs):** Set up a Faculty Quality Assurance Cell (FQAC) within each Faculty to ensure the systematic implementation of quality assurance practices at the faculty level.

2. **Conducting Faculty-Level Awareness Programmes:** Organize and deliver comprehensive awareness programmes to all categories of staff members to enhance understanding and engagement with quality assurance processes and their importance.
3. **Supporting Institutional Reviews:** Assisting in the preparation of the Self-Evaluation Reports (SERs) required for institutional reviews, ensuring compliance with established standards.
4. **Programme Reviews:** Collaborate with Departments to prepare SERs for programme reviews, offering technical and strategic support to maintain quality benchmarks.

5 Senate Standing Committee on Quality Assurance (SSCQA) at KIU

5.1 Composition of Senate Standing Committee on Quality Assurance (SSCQA)

The members of the SSCQA are as follows:

1. Vice Chancellor
2. Director, CQA
3. Deans
4. FQAC Coordinators
5. Registrar
6. Bursar
7. Librarian
8. Director, Staff Development Committee
9. Director, Research Unit
10. IQAC Coordinator/s of administrative divisions, Finance and Academic Divisions
11. QA Secretary
12. QA Coordinator

5.2 Reporting Procedure of SSCQA

The CQA reports the progress of its activities to the Senate and BOM, KIU once in three months in an academic year. Further, the FQACs of the Faculties of Study will present the progress of their activities monthly to the respective Faculty Boards, which will be subsequently reported to the Senate with a copy to SSCQA. IQACs of the administration,

finance and academic support divisions will present the progress of their activities monthly at the BOM meeting, which will be subsequently reported to the SSCQA.

5.3 Director, CQA

General terms and conditions:

1. **Strategic Planning:** Develop a comprehensive strategic plan for the Centre for Quality Assurance that promotes, coordinates, and sustains an internal quality assurance system, fostering a culture of transformation across the institution.
2. **Comprehensive Monitoring:** Facilitate and monitor institutional activities, including academic, research, scholarship, welfare, and community service functions.
3. **Coordination of QA Activities:** Monitor and coordinate all QA-related activities to promote a culture of quality and implement systems and procedures for quality assurance across the institution.
4. **Establishment and Monitoring of Standards:** Define, establish, and monitor quality standards and practices. Regularly review and evaluate QA systems and procedures while addressing specific recommendations from faculties.
5. **Consistent Assessment:** Ensure the consistent evaluation of learning design, content, and pedagogy to maintain high academic standards.
6. **Fostering Academic Value:** Emphasize the value and intellectual property in academia, focusing on the quality of contributions, character, faculty-student interaction, and overall performance.
7. **Transformative and Accountable Attributes:** Promote quality, purposeful, transformative, exceptional, and accountable attributes as critical targets for quality assurance.
8. **Standard Setting Across Key Areas:** Establish standards in key areas such as faculty, administration, curriculum, student services, and financial well-being to uphold institutional excellence.
9. **Research and Networking:** Enhance internal research capacity, ensure effective peer review processes, support accreditation efforts, and expand networking opportunities.
10. **Focus on Academic Practices:** Address aspects of academic work, including teaching practices, curriculum development, power dynamics between faculty and students, and faculty workloads in relation to quality assurance.

11. **Adapting External QA Procedures:** Learn and adapt relevant external QA procedures in the higher education sector, enhance stakeholder involvement, improve infrastructure, and strengthen resources.
12. **Student Engagement:** Introduce students to QA processes, gather their feedback as learners and investors, and create opportunities for them to enhance their analytical and leadership skills.

Duties and responsibilities

1. **Overall Guidance:** Provide strategic guidance to the Centre for Quality Assurance to ensure that procedures and systems for educational provision are maintained, including staff development initiatives.
2. **Documentation and Transparency:** Develop and implement proper documentation systems for teaching, learning, and assessment processes. Create instruments to gather feedback from students and staff to ensure transparency and accountability in institutional operations.
3. **Planning for Industry and Community Alignment:** Prepare plans to align faculties and departments with industry demands, government policies, community needs, and organizational strengths, facilitating necessary internal changes.
4. **Implementation of QA Activities:** Formulate, obtain approvals for, and execute all quality assurance (QA) activities within the institution effectively.
5. **Faculty and Departmental Support:** Provide advice, monitor progress, and guide faculties and departments on QA processes. Maintain documentation, conduct reviews and audits, and ensure follow-up actions are implemented.
6. **Awareness and Good Practices:** Develop strategies to raise awareness and promote the sharing of good practices between academic departments.
7. **Peer Observation:** Plan and facilitate peer observation processes for academic staff to enhance teaching and learning quality.
8. **Feedback Analysis and Action:** Analyze student feedback and peer observation results, guiding, monitoring, and taking remedial actions to address identified concerns.
9. **Staff Development and Research Monitoring:**
Schedule and facilitate staff development workshops, monitor research activities of both students and academics, and standardize academic profiles and responsibilities.

10. **Participation in Academic Meetings:** Attend academic meetings, providing feedback and recommendations on QA matters to support continuous improvement.
11. **Monitoring Examination Process:** Ensure the establishment and adherence to guiding principles for examination processes. Monitor examination functions and provide feedback as necessary.
12. **Policy and By-Law Review:** Verify the presence of necessary by-laws; recommend and implement remedial actions if gaps are identified.
13. **Reporting:** Update and report QA progress and activities regularly to the Vice-Chancellor and the Senate.
14. **Comprehensive QA Manual:** Develop a detailed QA manual for programme reviews and institutional reviews, focusing on achieving future QA certifications such as ISO standards.

5.4. Faculty Quality Assurance Cells (FQACs)

Roles and Responsibilities of the Faculty Quality Assurance Cell (FQACs)

The Faculty Quality Assurance Cell (FQAC) is responsible for developing guidelines for quality assurance activities and overseeing their effective implementation. These activities focus on the following key aspects:

1. **Curriculum Development, Management, and Review:** Ensure the faculty's curriculum is designed, implemented, and updated to meet academic and industry standards.
2. **Teaching, Learning, and Assessment Methods:** Promote effective teaching strategies, innovative learning techniques, and fair assessment practices.
3. **Learning Environment:** Enhance learning opportunities by providing adequate resources, facilities, and diverse learning locations.
4. **Academic Staff Development:** Facilitate staff training, continuous knowledge and skill enhancement, student and peer observations, and reflective practices to improve academic performance.
5. **Administrative Staff Operations:** Support efficient general administration and proper documentation practices within the faculty.
6. **Student Support Services:** Provide academic guidance, counselling, and additional support to help students succeed academically and personally.

7. **Student Progress and Achievements:** Monitor and support student progress, ensuring they achieve academic and professional milestones