



ASEAN UNIVERSITY NETWORK QUALITY ASSURANCE

GUIDE TO AUN ACTUAL QUALITY
ASSESSMENT AT PROGRAMME LEVEL



ASEAN
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NETWORK



AUN-QA
A Touch of Quality

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Foreword

The AUN-QA Guidelines and Manual have served well as a tool for AUN member universities to implement and assess their quality and quality assurance system since their publication in 2004-2006. The AUN-QA Manual has also been translated into Chinese and Vietnamese edition.

At the end of 2010, AUN had successfully completed ten actual quality assessments at programme level involving twenty-three undergraduate programmes in seven AUN member universities within a 3-year period. In the last two years, AUN has also trained nineteen new assessors, thereby, increasing the pool of AUN assessors to twenty-five. These accomplishments would not be possible without the commitment and active support of AUN Board of Trustees (AUN-BOT), Chief Quality Officers (CQOs) and assessors of AUN member universities.

To further enhance and sustain quality assurance practices and quality in higher education, AUN establishes an AUN-QA Documentation Review Committee and Procedure to keep its documents updated and relevant. This guidebook is the fruit of the documentation review coupled with the feedback from CQOs.

I would like to acknowledge and express my sincere gratitude to Assoc Prof. Tan Kay Chuan and Mr. Johnson Ong of the Editorial Team, members of the Documentation Review Committee, and CQOs for their contributions to the development of this guidebook.



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Preface

This guidebook is the first revision of the AUN-QA Manual for the Implementation of the Guidelines. It documents the criteria and assessment process of AUN Actual Quality Assessment at Programme Level and provides associated resources including templates and samples in the appendices.

The guidebook is divided into four main sections:

- 1. Introduction to AUN-QA Models.** This section gives an overview of the AUN-QA models.
- 2. AUN-QA Model for Programme Level.** This section describes the AUN-QA model and associated criteria for programme level.
- 3. Quality Assessment.** This section provides a step-by-step guide for conducting the AUN Actual Quality Assessment at programme level.
- 4. Appendices.** This section contains the additional resources including checklist, templates and sample reports.

The guidebook should be used with reference to the AUN-QA Guidelines and the Manual for the Implementation of the Guidelines.

1. Introduction to AUN-QA Models

1.1 Quality Assurance (QA) in Higher Education

Quality in higher education is not a simple one-dimensional notion about academic quality. It is a multi-dimensional concept in view of its varied stakeholders' needs and expectations.

The World Declaration on Higher Education for the Twenty First Century: Vision and Action (October 1998), Article 11, Qualitative Evaluation considers quality in higher education as “a multi-dimensional concept, which should embrace all its functions, and activities; teaching and academic programmes, research and scholarship, staffing, students, buildings, facilities, equipment, services to the community and the academic environment. Internal self-evaluation and external review, conducted openly by independent specialists, if possible with international expertise, are vital for enhancing quality.”

To develop, implement, maintain and improve the level of quality in higher education, a university needs to install a quality assurance system. The Regional Report of Asia and the Pacific (UNESCO, 2003b) defines quality assurance in higher education as “systematic management and assessment procedures to monitor performance of higher education institutions”.

1.2 AUN-QA Models

AUN recognises the importance of quality in higher education, and the need to develop a holistic quality assurance system to raise academic standards and enhance education, research and service among AUN member universities. In 1998, it mooted the AUN-QA initiative which led to the development of AUN-QA models. In the last decade, AUN-QA has been promoting, developing, and implementing quality assurance practices based on an empirical approach where quality assurance practices are shared, tested, evaluated, and improved. The AUN-QA timeline is depicted in Figure 1 below.

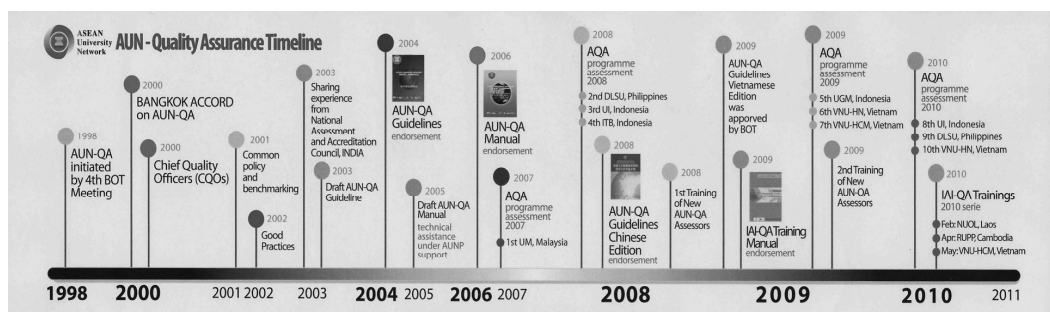


Figure 1 – AUN-QA Timeline

The AUN-QA Models comprise strategic, systemic and tactical dimensions (see Figure 2) and are subjected to both internal and external QA including accreditation.

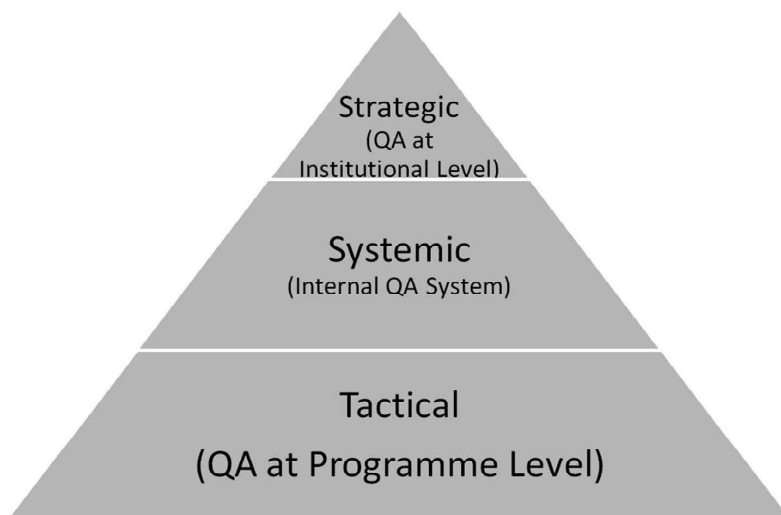


Figure 2 – AUN-QA Models for Higher Education

Internal QA ensures that an institution, system or programme has policies and mechanisms in place to make sure that it is meeting its own objectives and standards.

External QA is performed by an organisation or individuals outside the institution. The assessors evaluate the operation of the institution, system or programme in order to determine whether it meets the agreed upon or predetermined standards.

Accreditation is the process of external quality review used in higher education to scrutinise colleges, universities and higher education programmes for quality assurance and quality improvement in order to formally recognise it as having met certain predetermined criteria or standards and award a quality label or mark.

The AUN-QA models are applicable to the diverse universities of ASEAN and they are also aligned to both regional and international quality assurance frameworks.

1.2.1 AUN-QA Model for Institutional Level

The strategic QA at institutional level encompasses 11 criteria as illustrated in Figure 3.

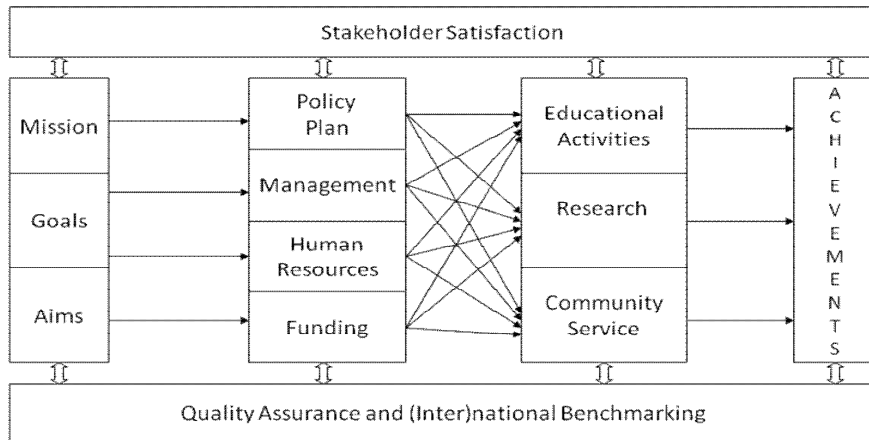


Figure 3 – AUN-QA Model for Institutional Level

Strategic QA at institutional level starts with the requirements of the stakeholders which are translated into the university's vision, mission, goals and aims or objectives. This means that quality assurance and quality assessment will always start with the question as to the mission and goals (Column 1) and end with the achievements (column 4) to fulfill stakeholder satisfaction.

The second column shows how the university is planning to achieve the goals:

- translation of the goals into a policy document and policy strategy;
- management structure and management style of the university
- human resource management: input of staff to achieve the goals
- funding to achieve the intended goals

The third column shows the core activities of a university:

- educational activities of teaching and learning
- research activities
- contribution to society and to the support and development of the community.

For continuous improvement, the institution should implement an effective QA system and benchmark its practices to achieve educational excellence.

1.2.2 AUN-QA Model for Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) System

The AUN-QA model for an IQA system (see Figure 4) consists of 11 criteria covering the following areas:

- internal quality assurance framework;
- monitoring instruments;
- evaluation instruments;
- special QA-processes to safeguard specific activities;
- specific QA-instruments; and
- follow-up activities for making improvements

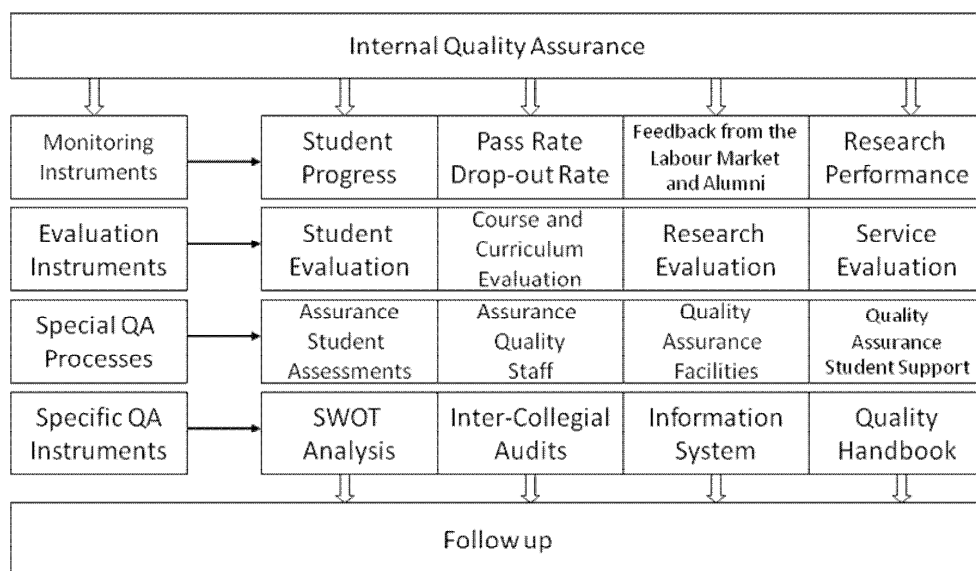


Figure 4 – AUN-QA Model for IQA System

An IQA system is the totality of systems, resources and information devoted to setting up, maintaining and improving the quality and standards of teaching, student learning experience, research, and service to the community. It is a system under which managers and staff satisfy themselves that control mechanisms are working to maintain and enhance the level of quality in higher education.

1.2.3 AUN-QA Model for Programme Level

The AUN-QA Model for programme level focuses on teaching and learning with regard to the following dimensions:

- quality of input
- quality of process
- quality of output

At the end of 2010, AUN had successfully completed ten actual quality assessments at programme level involving twenty-three undergraduate programmes in seven AUN member universities within a 3-year period. To further enhance and sustain quality assurance practices and quality in higher education, AUN established an AUN-QA Documentation Review Committee and Procedure to keep its documents updated and relevant. The original AUN-QA for programme level was revised to enhance implementation and assessment efficiency and effectiveness. The original and the revised AUN-QA model for programme level are illustrated in Figure 5 and Figure 6 respectively.

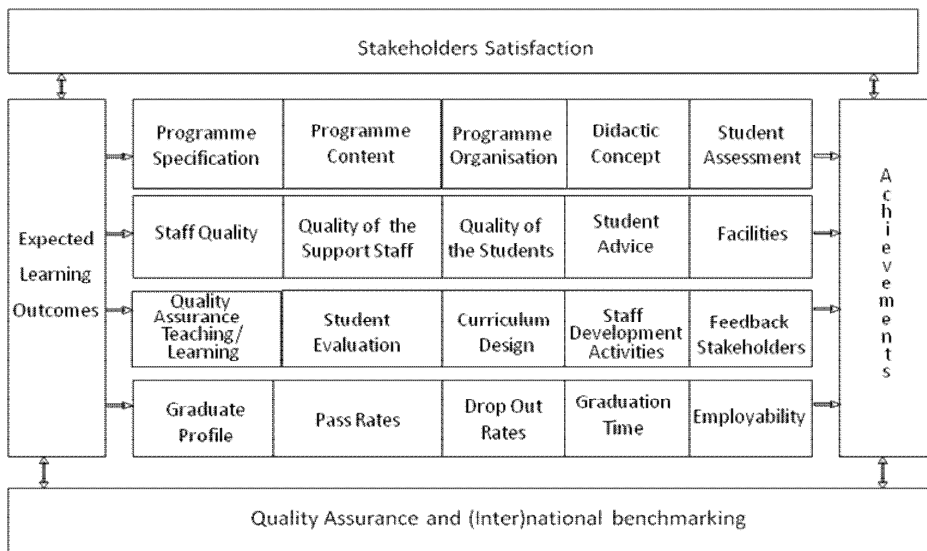


Figure 5 – Original AUN-QA Model for Programme Level

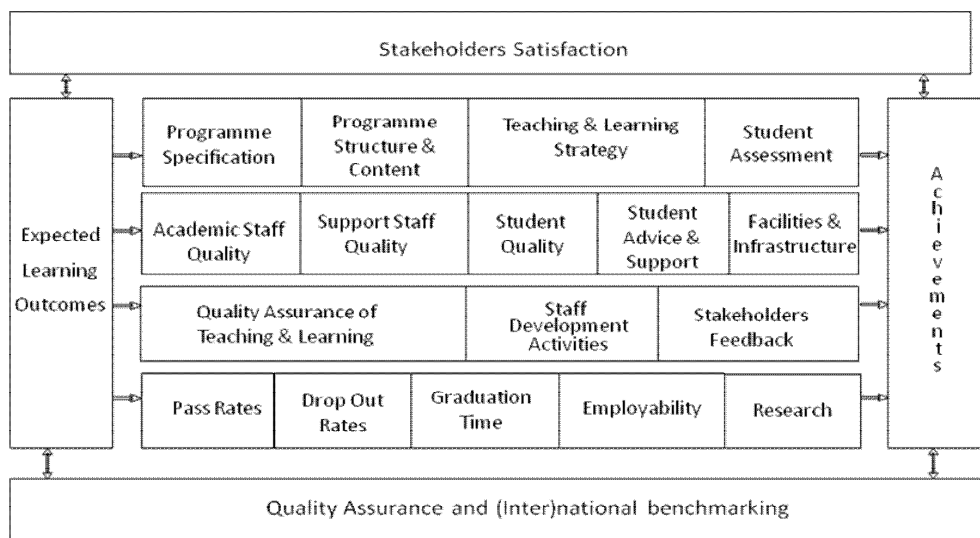


Figure 6 – Revised AUN-QA Model for Programme Level

A comparison of the criteria between the original and revised AUN-QA Model is tabulated in Figure 7.

Original Criteria	Revised Criteria
1. Goals and objectives; expected learning outcomes	1. Expected learning outcomes
2. Programme specification	2. Programme specification
3. Programme content	3. Programme structure and content
4. Programme organisation	
5. Didactic concept and teaching/ learning strategy	4. Teaching and learning strategy
6. Student assessment	5. Student assessment
7. Staff quality	6. Academic staff quality
8. Quality of support staff	7. Support staff quality
9. Student quality	8. Student quality
10. Student advice and support	9. Student advice and support
11. Facilities and infrastructure	10. Facilities and infrastructure
12. Quality assurance of teaching/ learning process	11. Quality assurance of teaching and learning process
13. Student evaluation	
14. Curriculum design	
15. Staff development activities	12. Staff development activities
16. Feedback stakeholders	13. Stakeholders feedback
17. Output	14. Output
18. Stakeholders satisfaction	15. Stakeholders satisfaction

Figure 7 – Comparison of AUN-QA Criteria at Programme Level

2. AUN-QA Model for Programme Level

The revised AUN-QA model for programme level (see Figure 8) starts with the expected learning outcomes (1st Column). There are four rows in the middle of the model and the first row addresses the question of how the expected learning outcomes are translated into the programme; and how they can be achieved via teaching and learning strategy and student assessment.

The second row considers the "input" into the process including academic and support staff; student quality; student advice and support; and facilities and infrastructure.

The third row addresses the quality assurance process of teaching and learning, staff development and stakeholders feedback.

The fourth row focuses on the outcomes of the learning process including pass rates and dropout rates, the average time to graduate, employability of the graduates, and research activities.

The final column addresses the achievements and ends with the fulfillment of stakeholders and the continuous improvement of the quality assurance and benchmarking.

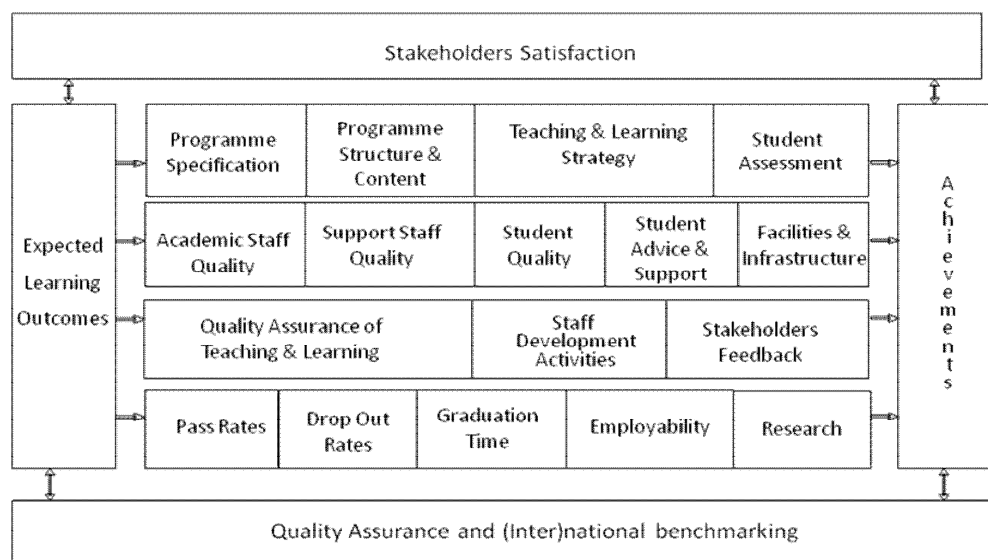


Figure 8 – Revised AUN-QA Model for Programme Level

The revised AUN-QA model for programme level encompasses the following 15 criteria:

1. Expected learning outcomes
2. Programme specification
3. Programme structure and content
4. Teaching and learning strategy
5. Student assessment
6. Academic staff quality
7. Support staff quality
8. Student quality
9. Student advice and support
10. Facilities and infrastructure
11. Quality assurance of teaching and learning process
12. Staff development activities
13. Stakeholders feedback
14. Output
15. Stakeholders satisfaction

The description of each criterion is given in a box and the number in parenthesis () shows the number in the list of statements in the AUN-QA Guidelines. To facilitate implementation and assessment of each criterion, the list of statements of each criterion is translated into sub-criterion listed in the checklist. The number in brackets [] in the sub-criterion indicates the corresponding statement(s) in the box. Explanation and interpretation of the criterion are given following the description, where applicable. Diagnostic questions and sources of evidence are given to help Chief Quality Officers (CQOs) and assessors to find evidences in meeting the criterion. The checklist for AUN-QA Assessment at programme level is documented in Appendix A.

2.1 Expected Learning Outcomes

AUN-QA Criterion 1

1. *The curriculum is developed to promote learning, learning how to learn and to instill in students a commitment of lifelong learning (e.g. commitment to critical inquiry, development of study and information-processing skills, a willingness to experiment with new ideas and practices).*
2. *The curriculum offers to graduates the ability to do advanced studies, to develop their own personality, to have an academic attitude and to be competent in their field of study. The graduates should also have transferable skills, leadership skills, and should be oriented to the job market and be able to develop their careers (1.9).*
3. *The curriculum has clearly formulated learning outcomes, reflecting the relevant demands and needs of all stakeholders.(1.2)*

AUN-QA Criterion 1 – Checklist

1	Expected Learning Outcomes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.1	The expected learning outcomes have been clearly formulated and translated into the programme [3]							
1.2	The programme promotes life-long learning [1]							
1.3	The expected learning outcomes cover both generic and specialised skills and knowledge [2]							
1.4	The expected learning outcomes clearly reflect the requirements of the stakeholders [3]							
	Overall opinion							

Explanation

Students come to the university to learn something. Therefore we have to formulate very clearly what we expect the student to learn and what we expect our graduates to have learnt in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes or competencies. We should also address professional ethics as part of the learning outcomes.

The expected learning outcomes form the starting point for the self-assessment. We have to distinguish between generic and specific knowledge and skills. Life-long learning embraces the pursuit of knowledge and continuing education throughout life. It takes place on an on-going basis from our daily interactions with others to the acquisition of formal qualifications.

Diagnostic questions

- Why are we educating?
- What is the educational philosophy behind the programme?
- What are the expected learning outcomes?
- How are the programme learning outcomes formulated?
- Do the learning outcomes reflect the department's goals?
- Does the labour market set any specific requirements for graduates to meet?
- To what extent and how do we try to tune the programme to the labour market?
- Is there a well-defined job profile?
- How are the learning outcomes made known to staff and students?
- To what extent do we think that the learning outcomes have been achieved?
- Do we review the learning outcomes?
- How are the learning outcomes translated into the concrete requirements of the graduate (i.e. knowledge, skills and attitudes; and professional ethics)?

Sources of Evidence

- Programme and module specification
- Course brochure and prospectus or bulletin
- Skills matrix
- Stakeholders' input
- University and faculty websites
- Communication media and plans to stakeholders
- Curriculum review minutes and documents
- Accreditation and benchmarking reports

2.2 Programme Specification

AUN-QA Criterion 2

1. *Universities are recommended to publish, for each programme they offer, a programme specification which identifies potential stopping off points and gives the intended outcomes of the programme in terms of:*
 - *The knowledge and understanding that the students will have upon completion*
 - *Key skills: communication, numeracy, the use of information technology and learning how to learn*
 - *Cognitive skills, such as an understanding of methodologies or ability in critical analysis*
 - *Subject specific skills, such as laboratory skills, clinical skills, etc.(1.10)*
2. *Programme specification is a concise description of the intended outcomes of learning from a higher education programme, and the means by which these outcomes can be achieved and demonstrated.(1.11)*

3. Programme specification makes explicit the intended outcomes in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes. They should help students to understand the teaching and learning method that enables the outcome to be achieved; the assessment method that enable achievement to be demonstrated; and the relationship of the programme and its study elements to the qualification frameworks in each member country and to any subsequent professional qualification or career path.(1.1)

AUN-QA Criterion 2 – Checklist

2	Programme Specification	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.1	The university uses programme specification [1]							
2.2	The programme specification shows the expected learning outcomes and how these can be achieved [1,2,3]							
2.3	The programme specification is informative, communicated, and made available to the stakeholders [1,3]							
	Overall opinion							

Explanation

The formulated learning outcomes should be translated into the programme. It is important that the learning outcomes are well known to everybody. Therefore universities are recommended to publish a programme specification for each programme they offer. The programme specification should be used:

- As a source of information for students and potential students seeking to understanding a programme.
- As a source of information for employers, particularly on the skills and other transferable intellectual abilities developed by the programme.
- By professional and statutory regulatory bodies that accredit higher education programmes which can lead to entry into a profession or other regulated occupations. Programme specification should identify those aspects of the programme that are designed to meet the requirements of the relevant bodies.
- By institutional and teaching teams to promote discussion and reflection on new and existing programmes and to ensure that there is common understanding on the intended learning outcomes of the programmes. Programme specification should enable institutions to satisfy themselves that the designers of the programme are clear about their intended outcomes and that these outcomes can be achieved and demonstrated. Programme specification can serve as a reference point for internal review and monitoring of a programme's performance.
- As a source of information for academic reviewers and external examiners who need to understand the aim and intended outcomes of a programme.
- As a basis for gaining feedback from students or recent graduates on the extent to which they perceived the opportunities for learning to be successful in promoting the intended outcomes. (1.13)

The following information should be included in the programme specification:

- Awarding body/institution.
- Teaching institution (if different)
- Details of the accreditation by a professional or statutory body
- Name of the final award
- Programme title
- Learning outcomes of the programme
- Admission criteria or requirements to the programme
- Relevant subject benchmark statements and other external and internal reference points used to provide information on programme outcomes
- Programme outcomes such as knowledge, skills and attitudes
- Teaching, learning and assessment strategies to enable outcomes to be achieved and demonstrated
- Programme structure and requirements including levels, modules, credits, etc.
- Date on which the programme specification was written or revised.

In addition, institutions might wish to include:

- Information on assessment regulations
 - Quality indicators
 - Particular learning support
 - Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of learning.
- (1.14)

Diagnostic questions

- Are the learning outcomes translated into the programme and its courses or modules?
- Does the university have a programme specification as formulated by the AUN-QA?
- Is the programme specification published and made available or known to stakeholders?
- What is the process for reviewing the programme specification?

Sources of Evidence

- Programme and module specification
- Course brochure and prospectus or bulletin
- Skills matrix
- Stakeholders' input
- University and faculty websites
- Communication media and plans to stakeholders
- Curriculum review minutes and documents
- Accreditation and benchmarking reports

2.3. Programme Structure and Content

AUN-QA Criterion 3

1. *The curriculum shows a balance between specialised contents, general knowledge and skills. The curriculum is designed to meet the needs of the stakeholders. (1.3)*
2. *The curriculum takes into account and reflects the vision, mission, aims and objectives of the institution. The vision, mission, aims and objectives are explicit and are known to staff and students.(1.1)*
3. *The curriculum shows the expected competences of the graduate. Each course should clearly be designed to show the expected outcomes of the course competencies. To obtain this, a curriculum map should be constructed.(1.5)*
4. *The curriculum is designed so that the subject matter is integrated and strengthens other courses in the curriculum (1.4)*
5. *The curriculum is structured to show range, depth, coherence and organisation of the courses (1.6)*
6. *The curriculum structure shows clearly the basic courses, the intermediate courses, the specialised courses and the final project, thesis or dissertation (1.7)*

AUN-QA Criterion 3 – Checklist

3	Programme Structure and Content	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.1	The programme content shows a good balance between generic and specialised skills and knowledge [1]							
3.2	The programme reflects the vision and mission of the university [2]							
3.3	The contribution made by each course to achieving the learning outcomes is clear [3]							
3.4	The programme is coherent and all subjects and courses have been integrated [4]							
3.5	The programme shows breadth and depth [5]							
3.6	The programme clearly shows the basic courses, intermediate courses, specialised courses and the final project, thesis or dissertation [6]							
3.7	The programme content is up-to-date [1]							
	Overall opinion							

Explanation

It is imperative to ask how the learning outcomes are translated into the programme and its courses. Is the programme coherent and up-to-date? How does each course contribute to the achievement of the learning outcomes?

Diagnostic questions

- Do the contents reflect the mission and vision of the university?
- Do the contents of the undergraduate programme reflect the expected outcomes and can they be considered capable of achieving the expected outcomes?
- Are the courses in the programme clearly related? Is the programme coherent?
- Has a proper balance been struck between specific and general courses?
- Is the programme content up-to-date?
- Why was this programme structure chosen?
- Has the educational programme been changed structurally over recent years? If so, why?
- Do the courses demonstrate growing complexity over the years?
- Were any requirements specified on the internal coherence of the courses? Who set these requirements?
- Does the first year of the programme provide sufficient insight into the remaining parts of the programme?
- Is the connection between basic programme and specialisation correct?
- Is the organisation of the various specialised courses satisfactory?
- Is the relation between basic courses, intermediate courses and specialised courses in the compulsory programme and the optional sections satisfactory?
- Are bottlenecks experienced within the programme?
- What organisational form does the university use (term, semester, modular, problem oriented)? What do those involved think of this?
-

Sources of Evidence

- Programme and module specification
- Course brochure and prospectus or bulletin
- Skills matrix
- Stakeholders' input
- University and faculty websites
- Communication media and plans to stakeholders
- Curriculum review minutes and documents
- Accreditation and benchmarking reports

2.4. Teaching and Learning Strategy

AUN-QA Criterion 4

1. *Staff are encouraged to employ action learning. Action learning is a continuous process of learning and reflection, supported by peers, with the intention of achieving quality student learning. Through action learning, university teachers learn with and from each other by working on real problems and reflecting on their own experiences. A programme of facilitated action learning is aimed at the improvement of student learning and the environment in which it occurs. (2.14)*
2. *Quality learning is understood as involving the active construction of meaning by the student, and not just something that is imparted by the teacher. It is a deep approach of learning that seeks to make meaning and achieve understanding. Hence, the conception of teaching is the facilitation of learning. (4.1)*
3. *It is the students who achieve the aims of higher education. Quality learning is largely dependent on the approach that the learner takes when learning. This in turn is dependent on the concepts that the learner holds of learning, what he or she knows about his or her own learning, and the strategies she or he chooses to use. (4.2)*
4. *Quality learning embraces the principles of adult learning. Adults learn best in a relaxed, supportive, cooperative and informal learning environment. Deep learning is likely to take place in environments which foster collaborative learning. (4.3)*
5. *In promoting responsibility in learning, teachers should:*
 - a. *create a teaching-learning environment that enables individuals to participate responsibly in the learning process*
 - b. *provide curricula that are flexible and enable learners to make meaningful choices in terms of subject content, programme routes, approaches to assessment and modes and duration of study (4.9)*
6. *In engaging with feelings and values as well as intellectual development, teachers provide learning opportunities and encounters which involve the whole person, feelings as well as intellect (4.10)*

AUN-QA Criterion 4 – Checklist

4	Teaching and Learning Strategy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.1	The faculty or department has a clear teaching and learning strategy [5]							
4.2	The teaching and learning strategy enables students to acquire and use knowledge academically [2,6]							
4.3	The teaching and learning strategy is student oriented and stimulates quality learning [3,4]							
4.4	The teaching and learning strategy stimulates action learning and facilitates learning to learn [1]							
	Overall opinion							

Explanation

The AUN-QA Guidelines describe how to look at the learning process, the requirements of good teaching and learning strategy. In line with the overarching purpose of higher education, namely to foster higher order intellectual capacities in students, the following represent the characteristics of quality learning:

- The ability to discover knowledge for oneself. Learners have research skills and the ability to analyse and synthesise the material they gather. Learners understand various learning strategies and can choose the most appropriate for the task at hand.
- The ability to retain knowledge long term. An approach to learning that emphasizes understanding rather than memorisation results in greater retention.
- The ability to perceive relations between old knowledge and new. Quality learning is always trying to bring information from various resources together.
- The ability to create new understanding. Quality learners discover what others have learnt and documented, perceiving the relations between that knowledge and their own experiences and previous learning to develop new insights.
- The ability to apply one's knowledge to solving problems.
- The ability to communicate one's knowledge to others. Quality learners form and substantiate independent thought and action in a coherent and articulate fashion.
- An eagerness to know more. Quality learners become lifelong learners.

Conditions necessary for quality learning are:

- Quality learning occurs when learners are ready – in cognitive and emotional terms – to meet the demands of the learning task
- Quality learning occurs when learners have a reason for learning
- Quality learning occurs when learners explicitly relate previous knowledge to new
- Quality learning occurs when learners are active in the learning process
- Quality learning occurs when the learning environment offers adequate support for learners.

Of course, no one single teaching and learning strategy is valid for all. Thought must at least be given to the teaching and learning strategy behind the curriculum.

Diagnostic questions

- Is there an explicit teaching and learning strategy shared by all staff members? Is this adequate?
- Is diversity of learning environment promoted including exchange programme?
- Is the instruction/teaching provided by other departments satisfactory?
- Are the instructional methods used (organisation of self-instruction for the students, size of classes, organisation of seminars, practical courses/internships, etc.) satisfactory?
- How is technology used in the instruction?
- How is the teaching and learning strategy evaluated? Do the chosen methods fit into the learning outcomes of the courses? Is there sufficient variety in the methods?
- Are there any circumstances that prevent these desired instructional methods from being used (number of students, material infrastructure, lecturer skills)?

If research is a core activity for the university:

- When do students come into contact with research for the first time?
- How is the interrelationship between education and research expressed in the programme?
- How are the research findings included in the programme?

The practical training of students (trainees) is a specific aspect in the teaching and learning strategy. Describe the practical training in the programme:

- Is practical training a compulsory part?
- What is the size of practical training credit points?
- Have any criteria been formulated for the practical training to comply with?
- Preparation of practical training in the programme (concerning content, method and skills).
- Is the level of the practical training satisfactory?
- Are there any bottlenecks in the practical training? If so, what causes them?
- How are students coached?
- How is the assessment done?

Sources of Evidence

- Teaching and learning strategy
- Evidence of action learning such as project, practical training, assignment, industrial attachment, etc.
- Student feedback
- Online learning portal
- Module specification

2.5 Student Assessment

AUN-QA Criterion 5

1. Assessment covers:
 - New student entrance by means of input competency
 - Student's study progress by means of matrix/map/portfolio of the competency and outcome-based curriculum
 - Final/ Exit test of the graduates by means of Graduate Competency Checklist or comprehensive and integrated assessment
2. In line with principle of adult learning, adults prefer to be assessed by criterion-referenced methods and by a combination of peer, self- and teacher assessment.(3.1)
3. In fostering open, flexible, reflective and outcome-based assessment, the teachers should provide a variety of assessment methods of students' learning, through self-, peer and teacher assessment where the criteria are made explicit following negotiation with the course members. The assessment strategies adopted should be congruent with clearly defined learning outcomes.(3.2)
4. Assessment methods correspond to all the aims and aspects of the curriculum as taught (3.3)
5. A range of assessment methods is used in a planned manner to serve diagnostic, formative, and summative purposes. (3.4)
6. The scope and weighting of assessment schemes are clear and known to all concerned. (3.5)
7. Standards applied in assessment schemes are explicit and consistent across the curriculum. (3.6)
8. Procedures are regularly applied to ensure that, as far as possible, assessment schemes are valid, reliable and fairly administered. (3.7)
9. Students have ready access to reasonable appeal procedures.(3.9)
10. The reliability and validity of assessment methods should be documented and regularly evaluated and new assessment methods are developed and tested.(3.10)

AUN-QA Criterion 5 – Checklist

5	Student Assessment	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.1	Student assessment covers student entrance, student progress and exit tests [1]							
5.2	The assessment is criterion-referenced [2]							
5.3	Student assessment uses a variety of methods [3,5]							
5.4	Student assessment reflects the expected learning outcomes and the content of the programme [3]							
5.5	The criteria for assessment are explicit and well-known [3,6]							
5.6	The assessment methods cover the objectives of the curriculum [4]							
5.7	The standards applied in the assessment are explicit and consistent [7,8,9,10]							
	Overall opinion							

Explanation

Student assessment is one of the most important elements of higher education. The outcomes of such assessment have a profound effect on students' future careers. It is therefore important that assessment is carried out professionally at all times and takes into account the extensive knowledge that exists on testing and examination processes. Assessment also provides valuable information for institutions about the efficiency of teaching and learner support. Student assessment procedures are expected to:

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

Diagnostic questions:

- Is entry assessment done on new students?
- Is exit assessment done on departing (graduating) students?
- To what extent do the assessment and examinations cover the content of the courses and programme? To what extent do the assessment and examinations cover the objectives of the courses and of the programme as a whole?
- Is the assessment criterion-referenced (i.e. a specified set of criteria)?
- Is a variety of assessment methods used? What are they?
- Are the pass/fail criteria clear?
- Are the assessment/examination regulations clear?
- Are the procedures clear? Are they well known? Well followed?
- Are any safeguards in place to ensure objectivity?
- Are the students satisfied with the procedures? What about complaints from students?
- Do clear rules exist for re-assessment and are students satisfied with these?

A special form of student assessment is the final project (essay, thesis or assignment). This requires students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills and their ability to manipulate the knowledge in a new situation.

- Do clear regulations exist for the final project?
- Have criteria been formulated that the final project has to comply with?
- What does the preparation for producing the final project in the programme involve (in terms of content, methods, and skills)?
- Is the level of the final project satisfactory?
- Do any bottlenecks exist for producing final project? If so, why?
- How are students being coached?

Sources of Evidence

- Samples of in-course assessment, project work, final examination, etc.
- Marking scheme
- Moderation process
- Appeal procedure
- Programme and module specification
- Examination regulations

2.6 Academic Staff Quality

AUN-QA Criterion 6

1. *Competent university teaching staff are able to:*
 - *design and deliver a coherent teaching and learning programme*
 - *apply a range of teaching and learning methods and select methods most appropriate to desired learning outcomes*
 - *develop and use a variety of instructional media*
 - *employ a range of techniques to assess students' work and match these to intended learning outcomes*
 - *monitor and evaluate their own teaching performance and evaluate programmes they deliver*
 - *reflect upon their own teaching practices*
 - *identify needs and develop plans for continual development. (2.13)*
2. *The teaching staff establishment or staffing is sufficient to deliver the curriculum and suitable in terms of the mix of qualifications, experience, aptitudes, age, etc. (2.1)*
3. *Recruitment and promotion of academic staff are based on merit system, which includes teaching, research and service.(2.3)*
4. *Roles and relationship of staff members are well defined and understood (2.4)*
5. *Duties allocated are appropriate to qualifications, experience, and aptitude. (2.5)*
6. *Time management and incentive system are directed to support quality of teaching and learning.(2.6)*
7. *All staff is accountable to the Owner of the University (e.g. the Government, Board of Trustees, or the Foundation) through the Rector, President or Vice-Chancellor and to the stakeholders, taking into account their academic freedom and professional ethics. (2.9)*
8. *There are provisions for review, consultation, and redeployment.(2.10)*
9. *Termination, retirement and social benefits are planned and well implemented. (2.11)*
- 10 *There is a well-planned staff appraisal based on fair and objective measures in the spirit of enhancement which are carried out regularly (2.12)*

AUN-QA Criterion 6 – Checklist

6	Academic Staff Quality	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.1	The staff are competent for their tasks [1]							
6.2	The staff are sufficient to deliver the curriculum adequately [2]							
6.3	Recruitment and promotion are based on academic merits [3]							
6.4	The roles and relationship of staff members are well defined and understood [4]							
6.5	Duties allocated are appropriate to qualifications, experience and skills [5]							
6.6	Staff workload and incentive systems are designed to support the quality of teaching and learning [6]							
6.7	Accountability of the staff members is well regulated [7]							
6.8	There are provisions for review, consultation and redeployment [8]							
6.9	Termination and retirement are planned and well implemented [9]							
6.10	There is an efficient appraisal system [10]							
	Overall opinion							

Explanation

Teaching staff 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 communicate their knowledge and understanding effectively to students in a range of teaching contexts, and can access feedback on their own performance.

A department's quality not only depends on the programme but also the quality of the academic staff. The quality of academic staff encompasses qualification, subject matter expertise, experience, teaching skills and professional ethics. The academic staffing covers full-time and part-time professors, lecturers, and visiting teaching staff. The AUN-QA Guidelines give a set of criteria on the quality of the staff. We have to check how far the university meets those requirements. So, we have to look at the size of the staff and their qualifications

Size of the staff and their qualifications

Use Figure 9 to specify the number of staff. Mention possible vacancies separately, and specify the reference date of the data. Specify the staff/student ratio and the staff/graduate ratio as per Figure 10.

Category	M	F	Total		Percentage of PhDs
			People	FTEs*	
Professors					
Associate/ Assistant Professors					
Full time lecturers					
Part time lecturers					
Visiting professors/ lecturers					
Total					

Figure 9 - Number of staff (specify reference date)

* FTE stands for Full-Time Equivalent. This is a unit to calculate the investment of time. 1 FTE is equal to about 40 hours per week (full-time employment). A staff member with a weekly appointment of 8 hours is 0.2 FTE.

Total FTE of teaching staff*	Number of students	Number of graduates	Number of students per FTE of teaching staff	Number of graduates per FTE of teaching staff

Figure 10 - Staff/student ratio and staff/graduate ratio (please specify the year)

* Realistic estimate of the number of FTEs of teaching staff. The number of students enrolled in the programme at the beginning of the academic year. If this number is not considered to be representative, please specify what it should be.

Diagnostic questions

- Are the staff competent and qualified for their job?
- Are the competencies and expertise of the staff adequate for delivering this programme?
- Are there any problems with the human resources? Age structure? Vacancies difficult to fill? How many Master's and PhD degree holders are there among the staff? What difficulties are there in attracting qualified staff?
- What policy is pursued with regard to the employment of staff, both in teaching and research?
- Is conscious effort made to involve professors in mentoring and/or training junior/new academic staff?
- Is a policy in place with regard to the involvement in seminars, supervision of final papers, practical courses and/or practical training internships?
- What about teaching loads? The staff/student ratio? The staff/graduate ratio?
- How many contact hours service-instruction are given in other programmes and departments?
- What is the accountability of staff to their roles, responsibilities and professional ethics?

Staff Management

- Does the department have a clearly formulated staff management structure?
- Is staff recruitment based on experience in teaching and research?
- Is there a system of staff appraisal?
- What role do teaching qualifications and teaching activities play in the career of the staff members?
- How does the department think of its HR policy so far?
- What future developments are there?
- How are teachers prepared for the teaching task?
- Is the teaching delivered by the staff supervised and assessed?

Sources of Evidence

- Recruitment criteria
- Staff qualifications
- Training needs and plan
- Peer review and appraisal system
- Career plan
- Student feedback
- Award and recognition system
- Staff workload
- Allocation of roles and duties
- Termination, re-employment and retirement schemes

2.7 Support Staff Quality

AUN-QA Criterion 7

There is adequate support in term of staffing at the libraries, laboratories, administration and student services. (2.2)

AUN-QA Criterion 7 – Checklist

7	Support Staff Quality	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7.1	The library staff are competent and adequate in providing a satisfactory level of service							
7.2	The laboratory staff are competent and adequate in providing a satisfactory level of service							
7.3	The computer facility staff are competent and adequate in providing a satisfactory level of service							
7.4	The student services staff are competent and adequate in providing a satisfactory level of service							
	Overall opinion							

Explanation

Programme quality depends mostly on interaction between staff and students. However, academic staff cannot perform well without the quality of the support staff. This might be staff who support the library, laboratories, computer facilities and student services.

Diagnostic questions

- Are the support staff for the library competent and sufficient?
- Are the support staff for the laboratories competent and sufficient?
- Are the support staff for the computer facilities competent and sufficient?
- Are the support staff for the administration competent and sufficient?
- What is the ratio of academic staff to support staff? Is the support staff competent and sufficient in giving services to staff and students?

Sources of Evidence

- Recruitment criteria
- Staff qualifications
- Job descriptions
- Training needs and plan
- Peer review and appraisal system
- Career plan
- Student/faculty feedback
- Award and recognition system
- Staff workload
- Allocation of roles and duties
- Termination, re-employment and retirement schemes

2.8 Student Quality

AUN-QA Criterion 8

There is a clear student intake policy and the admission criteria to the programme are formulated and reviewed periodically.

AUN-QA Criterion 8 – Checklist

8	Student Quality	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8.1	There is a clear student intake policy							
8.2	The student admission process is adequate							
8.3	The actual study load is in line with the prescribed load							
	Overall opinion							

Explanation

The quality of the output depends a lot on the quality of the input. This means that the quality of the entering students is important.

The intake

- Give a summary of the intake of first year students using Figure 11.
- Give a summary of the total number of students enrolled in the programme using Figure 12.

Academic year	Full-time			Part-time		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total

Figure 11 - Intake of first-year students

Academic year	Full-time			Part-time		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total

Figure 12 - Total number of students (last 5 academic years)

Diagnostic questions:

- How do you analyse the development of the student intake: Reasons to worry? Causes of problems? Prospects for the future?
- Are students selected?
- If so, how are they selected? What are the requirements?
- What policy is pursued with regard to the intake of students? Does it aim to increase the intake or to stabilise it? Why?
- What measures are taken to affect the quality and the size of the intake?
- What effect do these measures have?
- How does the programme take into account the level of achievement of entering students? How are the programme and secondary education linked?

Student study load and performance

- Does the department have a credit points system? How are credits calculated?
- Does the programme's actual study load correspond with the prescribed study load?
- Is the study load divided equally over and within the academic years?
- What measures are taken in the field of programme development and/or student advice when parts of the programme deviate from the prescribed study load (too difficult/heavy or too easy)? Are these measures effective?
- Can an average student complete the programme in the planned time?
- What are the indicators used to monitor student progress and performance?

Sources of Evidence

- Student selection process and criteria
- Trend of student intakes
- Credit system
- Student workload
- Student performance reports
- Participation in academic and non-academic activities, extracurricular activities, competition, etc.

2.9 Student Advice and Support

AUN-QA Criterion 9

1. *Student progress is systematically recorded and monitored, feedback to students and corrective actions are made where necessary.(3.8)*
2. *In establishing a learning environment to support the achievement of quality student learning, teachers do all in their power to provide not only a physical and material environment which is supportive of learning and which is appropriate for the activities involved, but also a social or psychological one (5.1).*

AUN-QA Criterion 9 – Checklist

9	Student Advice and Support	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9.1	There is an adequate student progress monitoring system [1]							
9.2	Students get adequate academic advice, support and feedback on their performance [1]							
9.3	Mentoring for students is adequate [1]							
9.4	The physical, social and psychological environment for the student is satisfactory [2]							
	Overall opinion							

Explanation

How students are monitored and supported by staff is essential to a good career. The AUN-QA has defined that a university must ensure that a good physical, social and psychological environment is in place.

Diagnostic questions

- Does the department have a monitoring system for:
 - recording study progress
 - following graduates (for example, tracer surveys)
- How is the data of the monitoring system used?
- What role do staff members play in informing and coaching students?
- What role do they play in integrating students into the department?
- How is the information to potential students organised? Is sufficient attention paid to requirements of their educational background? Does the future student get a good impression of the education offered? Is the information evaluated? If so, what happens with the results?
- How are students informed about study facilities? How is the information provided with regard to the programme?
- Is student progress recorded? Does the recording lead to problems being pointed out in time? When is the first contact made with problematic cases? Does this result in remedial and/or preventive actions being introduced for the individual student or programme development?
- Is special attention paid to the coaching of first year students? If so, how does it work?
- Is attention paid to study progress?
- Are specific facilities available to provide study skills for students with problems? Are these available within the department, the faculty or centrally? How is information on these matters organised?
- Is separate attention paid to coaching of advanced students?
- Is assistance given in completing the final project? Where can students who get stuck with their practical training or final project get help?
- How are students advised on problems concerning course options, change of options, interruption or termination of studies?
- Is information provided on career prospects? Do students have the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the labour market by means of practical training, application courses and the like?
- If students wish to extend their course of study, are the reasons examined? If yes, what are usually the findings and what measures do they result in?
- To what extent do the structure and organisation of the programme contribute to students taking on an active study approach?
- To what extent does the programme challenge students to make a satisfactory investment in their studies/programme?
- Are you satisfied with the tools available to improve study progress?

Sources of Evidence

- Mechanisms to report and feedback on student progress
- Provision of student support services at university and faculty level
- Coaching, mentoring and counselling schemes
- Student feedback

2.10 Facilities and Infrastructure

AUN-QA Criterion 10

1. *The physical resources to deliver the curriculum, including equipment, materials and information technology are sufficient (6.1)*
2. *Equipment is up-to-date, readily available and effectively deployed (6.2)*
3. *Learning resources are selected, filtered, and synchronized with the objectives of the study programme (6.4)*
4. *A digital library is set up in keeping with progress in information and communication technology (6.5)*
5. *Information technology systems are set up or upgraded (6.7)*
6. *University computer centres provide continuously a highly accessible computer and network infrastructure that enables the campus community to fully exploit information technology for teaching, research and development, services and administration. (6.8)*
7. *Environmental Health and Safety Standards meet the local requirements in all aspects (5.2)*

AUN-QA Criterion 10 – Checklist

10	Facilities and Infrastructure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10.1	The lecture facilities (lecture halls, small course rooms) are adequate [1]							
10.2	The library is adequate and up-to-date [3,4]							
10.3	The laboratories are adequate and up-to-date [1,2]							
10.4	The computer facilities are adequate and up-to-date [1,5,6]							
10.5	Environmental health and safety standards meet requirements in all aspects [7]							
	Overall opinion							

Explanation

Facilities and resources should be in line with the formulated goals and aims, and with the designed programme. Facilities are also connected to the teaching and learning strategy. For example, if the philosophy is to teach in small working groups, small rooms must be available. Computer-aided instruction can only be realised with enough computers for the students. The main learning resources consist of books, brochures, magazines, journals, posters, information sheets, internet and intranet, CD-ROMs, maps, aerial photographs, satellite imagery and others.

Diagnostic questions

Teaching rooms

- Are enough lecture-halls, seminar rooms, laboratories, reading rooms, and computer rooms available? Do these meet the relevant requirements?
- Is the library sufficiently equipped for education?
- Is the library within easy reach (location, opening hours)?
- Do you have sufficient laboratory facilities? Including support staff?
- Do the laboratories meet the relevant requirements?

Teaching aids and tools

- Are sufficient audio-visual aids available?
- Are there enough computers? Appropriate and enough computer programmes (computer-aided education, maths programmes, design programmes, etc)?
- To what extent do the facilities/infrastructure promote or obstruct delivery of the programme?
- Is the total budget for aids and tools sufficient?

Sources of Evidence

- List of facilities, equipment, computer hardware and software, etc.
- Facilities booking, utilisation rates, downtime/uptime, operating hours
- Maintenance plan
- New facilities and upgrading plans
- Safety, health and environmental policy
- Emergency plan
- Student and staff feedback

2.11 Quality Assurance of Teaching and Learning Process

AUN-QA Criterion 11

1. *The curriculum is developed as a group to ensure the representation from the faculty Quality Committee, the faculty Teaching and Learning Committee, the programme team, students and stakeholders from industry, government and professional organisations (page 22 Introduction)*
2. *The curriculum is periodically reviewed and evaluated as to its effectiveness. Adjustments are made after reasonable time periods.(1.8)*
3. *A prime condition for constantly improving teaching and learning is a planned and regular process of evaluation. In this regard, teachers should foster a climate which values student involvement in the evaluation of teaching and the assessment of learning outcomes (end of page 30).*

AUN-QA Criterion 11 – Checklist

11	Quality Assurance of Teaching and Learning Process	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11.1	The curriculum is developed by all teaching staff members [1]							
11.2	The curriculum development involves students [1]							
11.3	The curriculum development involves the labour market [1]							
11.4	The curriculum is regularly evaluated at reasonable time periods [2]							
11.5	Courses and curriculum are subject to structured student evaluation [3]							
11.6	Feedback from various stakeholders is used for improvement [3]							
11.7	The teaching and learning process, assessment schemes, the assessment methods and the assessment itself are always subject to quality assurance and continuous improvement [3]							
	Overall opinion							

Explanation

Curriculum design should start with the formulation of the expected learning outcomes. The next question will be what courses are needed to achieve the learning outcomes and finally who will teach the courses? It is important that a curriculum development is seen as a joint undertaking.

The confidence of students and other stakeholders in higher education is more likely to be established and maintained through effective and efficient quality assurance activities which ensure that programmes are well-designed, regularly monitored and periodically reviewed, thereby securing their continuing relevance and currency.

The quality assurance of programmes and the degrees awarded are expected to include:

- development and publication of explicit expected learning outcomes;
- careful attention to curriculum and programme design and content;
- specific needs for different modes of delivery (e.g. full-time, part-time, distance-learning, e-learning) and types of higher education (e.g. academic, vocational, professional);
- availability of appropriate learning resources;
- formal programme approval procedures by a body other than that teaching the programme;
- monitoring of student progress and achievements;
- regular periodic reviews of programmes (including external panel members);

Students are the first to judge the quality of teaching and learning. They experience the delivery methods. They have an opinion about the facilities. Of course, the information given by students has to be counter-balanced by other opinions. Nevertheless, the university is expected to carry out student evaluation and to use the outcomes for improvement.

Diagnostic questions

Curriculum design

- Who is responsible for designing of the curriculum?
- How are academic staff and students involved in the curriculum design?
- What are the roles of the stakeholders in the design and review of the curriculum?
- How do curriculum innovations come about? Who takes the initiative? On the basis of what signals?
- Who is responsible for implementation?
- When designing curricula, is there any benchmarking with other institutions?
- In which international networks does the department participate?
- With which institution abroad does exchange take place?
- Has the programme been recognised abroad?

Briefly outline how the department tries to guarantee quality. Is a structured quality assurance in place? If so, please describe it and how it works?

- Which boards and/or committees are involved in internal quality assurance?
- Is there a curriculum committee? What is its role?
- Is there an examination committee? What is its role? Does it work?
- Are the functions and responsibilities of the committees and administrators clear to everyone? Are there any problems with the division of responsibilities?

Course and curriculum evaluation

- How is the programme (curriculum) evaluated? At course level? At curriculum level?
- Is the evaluation done systematically?
- How are the students involved in evaluating the education and training?
- How and to whom the results are made known?
- Is anything done with the results? How this is made transparent?

Student evaluation

- Does the university use student evaluations in a structured manner?
- Who is responsible for the evaluations?
- What is done with the outcome of the evaluations? Are there any examples of this contributing to improvements?
- What input do the students give to those who are in the committees involved in the internal quality assurance process?

Sources of Evidence

- Curriculum design, review and approval process and minutes
- Stakeholders input
- QA of assessment and examination
- External examiners
- Local and international benchmarking
- Results of programme and module feedback
- Uses of feedback for improvement
- Percentage of students providing feedback
- Sample of feedback questionnaire

2.12 Staff Development Activities

AUN-QA Criterion 12

1. *Training and development needs for academic and support staff are systematically identified, in relation to individual aspirations, the curriculum and institutional requirements.(2.7)*
2. *Academic and support staff undertake appropriate staff development programmes related to the identified needs (2.8)*

AUN-QA Criterion 12 – Checklist

12	Staff Development Activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12.1	There is a clear plan on the needs for training and development of both academic and support staff [1]							
12.2	The training and development activities for both academic and support staff are adequate to the identified needs [2]							
	Overall opinion							

Explanation

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 ability and should be encouraged to value their skills. Institutions should provide 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.

Diagnostic questions

- Who is responsible for both academic and support staff training and development activities?
- What are the training and development process and plan? How are training needs identified?
- Does the training and development plan reflect the university and faculty mission and objectives?
- Is there a system to develop strategic and technical competencies of support staff?
- What are the training hours and number of training places for academic and support staff per year?
- What percentage of payroll or budget is allocated for training of academic and support staff?

Sources of Evidence

- Education, training and development policy and plan
- Training places and hours
- Scholarships
- Job rotation and deployment scheme

2.13 Stakeholders Feedback

AUN-QA Criterion 13

Universities are encouraged to have a built-in regular curriculum evaluation and course appraisal, involving all stakeholders (decision makers, employers, students, alumni, etc). (1.15)

AUN-QA Criterion 13 – Checklist

13	Stakeholders Feedback	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13.1	There is adequate structured feedback from the labour market							
13.2	There is adequate structured feedback from the students and alumni							
13.3	There is adequate structured feedback from the staff							
	Overall opinion							

Explanation

We have defined quality as "achieving the goals and objectives". Formulating our objectives we have to take into account the requirements set by the stakeholders. To learn more about this, we need to have an efficient feedback system.

Diagnostic questions

Does the university have an efficient monitoring system, including:

- structured feedback from the labour market
- structured feedback from staff
- structured feedback from the students
- structured feedback from the alumni

Contact with graduates.

- Does the department maintain contact with its graduates after graduation? Is there an association of graduates/alumni?
- What do graduates think about the programme?
- Is information from graduates used (feedback about their programme, information about developments in the labour market) to adjust the programme, if necessary?

Sources of Evidence

- Regular and ad-hoc formal and informal surveys and feedback mechanisms
- Response rates
- Uses of feedback for improvement

2.14 Output

AUN-QA Criterion 14

The quality of the graduates should achieve the expected learning outcomes and the needs of the stakeholders. Research activities carried out by academic staff and students should meet the requirements of the stakeholders.

AUN-QA Criterion 14 – Checklist

14	Output	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14.1	The pass rate is satisfactory and dropout rate is of acceptable level							
14.2	Average time to graduate is satisfactory							
14.3	Employability of graduates is satisfactory							
14.4	The level of research activities by academic staff and students is satisfactory							
	Overall opinion							

Explanation

In assessing the quality assurance system, we have to look not only at the process quality, but also take into account the output. First of all, we must look at our graduates. Did they achieve the expected standards? Are the achieved outcomes equal to the expected outcomes? Have the graduates acquired the expected knowledge, skills and attitudes?

Because the output quality has to be evaluated within the framework of the process, we have also to look at the efficiency of our provisions, among other things we have to look at the pass rates and the dropout rates, the average time to graduation and the employability of graduates.

Research is another important output from the process. The level of research activities carried by academic staff and students, research funding and research publications should meet the requirements of the stakeholders.

Diagnostic questions

Achieved Outcomes (the graduates)

- Is the average standard of the graduate satisfactory?
- Do the achieved standards match the expected standards?
- Do graduates get jobs easily? Are the jobs that the graduates get in accordance with their graduate degree?
- Have any changes been signalled in the labour market prospects of graduates over the last few years? What are the prospects?

Pass rate and dropout rate

Provide information on the pass rate and dropout of the various years (cohorts) according to Figure 13.

Academic year	Size cohort *	% first degree after			% dropout after			
		3 year	4 years	>4years	1 years	2 years	3 years	>3 years
			**			**		

Figure 13: Students performance (last 8 to 10 cohorts)

* number must be the same as in the intake in Figure 12

** percentages are cumulative.

Diagnostic questions:

- Does the university have an efficient monitoring system including:
 - a system to follow student progress?
 - a system to register pass rates and dropout rates?
- What does the department think of the pass rate? If not satisfactory, what measures have been taken to improve the pass rate?
- Have any fluctuations in the success rate been seen over the last five years?
- How high is the dropout rate? Are there explanations for the dropout rate?
- Does the department know where the dropout students are going?

Average time to graduation

Indicate the average number of years a student spends on a programme. If necessary, categorise the students in groups.

- What does the department think of the average time to graduate?
- What measures have been taken to promote graduation and to shorten the average time to graduate?
- What effect do these measures have?

Graduate Employability

- What percentage of graduates found a job within six months of graduation over the past five years? What percentage of graduates found a job within a year?
- What percentage of graduates are still unemployed 2 years after graduation?

Research

- *What types of research activities are carried out by academic staff and students? Are these activities aligned to the vision and mission of the university and faculty?*
- *What is the level of research funding and how it is utilised?*
- *What is the volume of research papers? Are the research papers published in local, regional and international journals?*

Sources of Evidence

- Graduates and employment surveys
- Employment statistics
- Entry level salary
- Employers feedback
- Press reports

2.15 Stakeholders Satisfaction

AUN-QA Criterion 15

Stakeholders are satisfied with the programme and the quality of the graduates.

AUN-QA Criterion 15 – Checklist

15	Stakeholders Satisfaction	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15.1	The feedback from stakeholders is satisfactory							
	Overall opinion							

Explanation

After the analysing the input, the process and the output, we have to analyse the satisfaction of all stakeholders. What do they think about our performance? How do we know that? There should be a system to collect and measure stakeholders satisfaction. The information collected should be analysed for making improvements to the programme, quality practices and quality assurance system.

Diagnostic questions

Students

- Does the department know what students think about the courses, programme, teaching, examinations, etc?
- How does the department cope with complaints from students?

Alumni (graduates)

- What is the opinion and feedback of the graduates about the competencies that they acquired?
- Are the complaints or positive feedback of the alumni used to improve the programme?

Labour market

- Do employers appreciate the graduates?
- Are there any specific complaints about the graduates?
- Are specific strengths of the graduates appreciated by the employers?

Sources of Evidence

- Process and indicators for measuring stakeholders satisfaction
- Stakeholders satisfaction trends
- Graduates, alumni and employers surveys
- Press reports

Quality Assessment

3.1 Introduction to Quality Assessment

Assessment can be defined as a general term that embraces all methods used to judge the performance of an individual, group or organisation.

Self-assessment is the process of critically reviewing the quality of one's own performance at institutional, system or programme level.

Quality assessment in higher education, therefore, can be defined as a diagnostic review and evaluation of teaching, learning, and outcomes based on a detailed examination of curricula, structure, resources and effectiveness of the institution, system or programme. It aims to determine if the institution, system or programme meets generally accepted standards of excellence.

3.2 Function and Principles of Quality Assessment

Self-assessment is introduced in higher education together with external assessment, accreditation or quality audits. In many cases, self-assessment serves as preparation for a site visit by external experts and the self-assessment report (SAR) provides the external experts with basic information. However, a self assessment has specific value for the university itself. It provides an opportunity for discovering quality. The following key questions are important:

- Why do we do what we are doing? Do we indeed do the right things?
- Do we do the right things in the right way?
- Do we have a thorough command of the process to actually realise what we want?
- Do we really achieve what we want to?

An effective self-assessment is time-consuming. It asks for some effort by staff and students. Often, it will ask for an investment of time that has to be taken away from other activities. However, the return and the profit of a good self-assessment are high.

The self-assessment will provide information not known to everyone: the information often exists, but only a small group knows it; the facts will have another dimension when they are connected to one another. It involves co-workers and students in the discussion on the quality of education: the discussion will be raised beyond the level of the individual who is active in the curriculum committee or administration, the views on quality of individual co-workers and students will be examined together in order to establish or review a policy for the institution.

The fundamental principles describe in the ISO 19011 standard are relevant to AUN-QA assessment: Three of the principles relate to the conduct of the assessors are:

- Ethical conduct – the foundation of professionalism
- Fair presentation – the obligation to report truthfully and accurately
- Due professional care – the application of diligence and judgment to assessment.

Two other principles relate to the assessment process are:

- Independence – the basis for the impartiality and objectivity of the assessment conclusions
- Evidence – the rational basis for reaching reliable and reproducible assessment conclusions in a systematic assessment process. Evidences are based on records and statements of fact or information which are relevant to the assessment criteria and verifiable.

Adherence to these fundamental principles is a prerequisite for providing a reliable and relevant assessment process and outcome.

The basic principles of an effective self-assessment are:

- Primarily, the management of the institution must support the self-assessment completely. Relevant information is needed for an effective policy and good management. The self-assessment serves to acquire structural insight into the operation and performance of the university;
- However, it is not sufficient if management merely endorses the idea of self-assessment. It is necessary to create a broad basis. The whole organisation has to prepare itself for this. Looking at quality is more than testing the performance. It also means organisational development and shaping the institution. Staff member should be made responsible for the quality. Everybody has to be involved for real self-assessment.
- Writing a critical self-evaluation demands a good organisation. Primarily, someone has to coordinate the self-assessment process. The coordinator has to meet some requirements:
 - it is very important that the coordinator has good contacts within the university, with the central management as well with the faculties and the staff members;
 - to obtain the required information, it is important that the coordinator has access to all levels of the institution;
 - the coordinator must have the authority to make appointments.
- It is desirable to install a working group in charge of the self-assessment. It is important that the group is structured in such a way that the involvement of all sections is assured. The CQO will chair the working group. The working group is in charge of the self-assessment, gathering data, analysing materials and drawing conclusions.

- It is assumed that a self-assessment is an analysis supported by the whole institution. Therefore, it is important that everyone should be at least acquainted with the contents of the self-assessment and should recognise it as a document from his or her own institution. The working group might organise a workshop or seminar to discuss the draft SAR.
- Not everyone has to agree with all the points in the text of the self-assessment report. For there may be disagreement as to what are seen as weaknesses and strengths and what are to be considered as the causes of the weaknesses. Should there be very big differences of opinion between certain groups or bodies, the SAR should report on it.

3.3 Organisation of Quality Assessment

In organising self-assessment, the following factors should be taken into consideration:

- Self-assessment should never be the work of one single person.
- Make a group responsible for the self-assessment.
- This group should consist of some three to five people, chaired by a coordinator appointed by the faculty or university.
- A clear timetable should be set up, assuming a total amount of time available of some five to six months between the moment of the formal announcement and the actual visit.
- The criteria that have to be considered in the self-evaluation should be distributed among the committee members and each member should be made responsible for collecting information, and for analysing and evaluating the situation. Each member must have a good understanding of the AUN-QA criteria.
- The draft results should be discussed on the largest scale possible. It is not necessary for there to be consensus concerning the report; it is, however, necessary for as many people as possible to be aware of its contents.
- Do involve students and other stakeholders (such as employers and alumni) in the self-assessment as much as possible.

Figure 14 shows a typical project timeline for organising a self-assessment.

Date	Activity
8 months before a planned assessment	Appoint the leader of the assessment process Compose the assessment team, including students dividing up the subjects to be dealt with
The following 6 months	Each person responsible for collecting information and data collects that information Writing drafts of the subjects
4 months after the start	Discussion on the drafts in the group Second draft
About 5 months after the start	Discussion of the 2nd draft with all faculty staff and students during an open hearing
6 months after the start	Edit the comments of the hearing for the final draft
8 months after the start	Carry out an (inter-collegial) assessment

Figure 14 – Typical project timelines

3.4 Self-Assessment Report (SAR)

A typical self assessment project would take about 8 months to prepare. However, the duration depends on the stage of development, availability of data/information and the maturity of the university, faculty or school. At the start of the project, it is important that the sponsor, project team and staff have a common comprehension and understanding of the AUN-QA guidelines and criteria. Training and communications should be set up to ensure this. The self-assessment report (SAR) is the product of the self-assessment exercise and it should be written in an objective, factual and complete manner and follow the AUN-QA criteria self-assessment checklist.

The self-assessment must be finalised with a self-assessment report (SAR). Writing an effective SAR requires skills and time. Some guidelines for writing an effective SAR are:

- The report is the account of the self-assessment. That is to say, the SAR is not just descriptive but it is also analytical. It includes an evaluation of the problems. At the same time, it provides an indication of how the problems identified will be dealt with. Use the diagnostic questions provided in each of the AUN-QA criteria to do this.

- Since it is a self-assessment, which is of the utmost importance for an external audit team, it is important for the SAR to follow a specific format based on the AUN-QA criteria and checklist.
- Illustrate clearly what, where, when, who and how the QA mechanisms or instruments are implemented and managed to fulfill the criteria. This will help you to piece all related information together.
- Focus on information and data (objective evidences) that directly address the criteria. The report has to be concise and factual. Provide trends and statistics to show achievements and performance. The quantitative data requires special attention. The manner in which data is presented is important for the right interpretation of the data. There is a clear need for standardisation of data such as student numbers, appointment of teaching staff, staff/student ratios, pass rates, etc.
- Self-assessment forms the starting point for improvement between the review committee and the faculty as well as a document for inter-collegial assessment. When conducting a self-assessment, it is important to draw up an institution own standards and criteria, but it is also essential to take account of the criteria formulated by outsiders, such as an accrediting body. When analysing an institution's own quality, it is important to look for evidence on how far the criteria have been met. If there are no formally formulated standards in the country or region, the standards as formulated in this manual may be used and taken as benchmarks.
- The SAR should be written or translated into a language (i.e. English) that is easy for external assessors to comprehend. Provide a glossary of abbreviations and terminologies used in the report.

The SAR is the final document that will play a role in formulating a quality plan for the years to come. It might also provide the input for accreditation or for inter-collegial assessment

The content of the SAR should consist of:

Part 1: Introduction

- Executive summary of the SAR
- Organisation of the self-assessment – how is the self-assessment carried out and who are involved?
- Brief description of the university, faculty and department – outline the history of quality assurance, mission, vision, objectives and quality policy of the university followed by a brief description of the faculty and department.

Part 2: AUN-QA Criteria Requirements

This section contains the write-up on how the university, faculty or department addresses the requirements of the AUN-QA criteria. Follow the criteria listed in the self-assessment checklist.

Part 3: Strengths and Weaknesses Analysis

- Summary of strengths - Summarise the points that the department considers to be its strengths and mark the points that you are proud of.
- Summary of Weaknesses - Indicate which points the department considers to be weak and in need of improvement.
- Completed checklist
- Improvement plan – recommendations to close the gaps identified in the self-assessment and the action plan to implement them.

Part 4: Appendices

Glossary and supporting documents and evidences

3.5 Preparation of Quality Assessment

Conducting a quality assessment requires good preparation. It is important that the university considers its resources and prepares its people before proceeding with the assessment. The preparation includes communication intent, SAR and other documentation, host team, interviewees, assessment team, logistics and other administrative arrangements, etc.

Before requesting for the quality assessment, it is important that management or project initiator communicates the intent to all stakeholders concerned. This is to ensure that those involved understand the reasons and objectives behind the assessment and at the same time to get commitment and approval for the assessment project. Sufficient time should be given for criteria owners to prepare the SAR and other documentations.

The purpose of the assessment is not about the assessment ratings but rather on the continuous improvement of the QA system implemented. As the assessment will be based mostly on objective evidences, it is important that the university has prepared a well written SAR and get ready all key documents and records for assessment. Information about the university and programme should be prepared and presented to the assessment team. This would allow them to have an overview of the university history, policies, vision and mission and programmes. SAR and key documents should be translated to a language that is understood by the assessment team. An interpreter may be present during the actual assessment, if necessary. The translated copy of the SAR should be sent to the assessment team in advance – at least 1½ to 2 months before the actual assessment.

The university should assemble key management representatives, SAR team and guides or interpreter to host the assessment. The key management representatives could give the commitment and support for the assessment and giving the presentation of the university, faculty or programme. The SAR team should be present for clarification of the SAR and serve as contact person for the exercise.

Guides should be available to bring the assessors to the site as well as making documents and records available; and serve as a liaison between the assessor and the staff of the faculty or university. Interpreter may be engaged to translate documents, interview questions or answers.

Prepare and notify the interviewees in advance about the assessment. It is important to share with them the intent and purpose of the assessment. Key office holders and fair representation from staff and students should be invited for the assessment exercise. External parties such as alumni, employers and other stakeholders may be invited if sources of gathering feedback from them are inadequate or not available.

For internal assessment, experts from adjacent faculties may be considered. However, there are some conditions that members have to meet:

- they should act independently
- there should be no conflicts of interest. Members should have no advantage through their verdict
- they must be accepted by the faculty to be assessed.

It is also possible to invite retired staff on the grounds that they are more independent (and have more time available). However, it is also important to have members still working in the field and with a knowledge of recent developments.

An effective expert team appointed to carry out an external assessment has 3 to 5 members.

Membership may include:

- a chairperson, totally independent and unconnected with the programme to be assessed. The chair does not need to be an expert in the field, but should have the confidence of those who are. If possible, the chair should have experience with management structures in higher education institutions and with the developments that have taken place over the last few years
- two experts on the subject area/discipline in question
- an expert from the labour market area taking up graduates and/or from the professional association
- an expert from abroad (but because the visit will be done in the local language, this member must be proficient in the language)
- an expert on education/learning processes.

In selecting the assessor, consideration should be given to the assessor's competence and personal attributes in addition to education and work experience. Knowledge and skills specific to quality management system are those related to:

- quality and quality assurance in general
- AUN-QA guidelines and criteria
- other QA education models and frameworks

As far as assessment team leaders are concerned, they should have the knowledge and leadership skills necessary to enable the team to conduct the assessment efficiently and effectively. In addition to the above, the assessor should possess a number of personal attributes that contribute to the successful performance of assessment. An assessor should be ethical, open minded, diplomatic, observant, perceptive, versatile, tenacious, decisive and self reliant. The necessary knowledge and skills and the personal attributes to apply them effectively can be acquired by an appropriate combination of education, work experience, assessor training and assessment experience. These “building blocks” are quantified by, for example, specifying the minimum level of education, the necessary number of years’ work experience and the minimum amount of audit or assessment experience.

The appointed assessors should have the required knowledge and skills on quality, quality assurance, AUN-QA guidelines and criteria and assessment techniques and skills. If not, training should be conducted for them.

The training should include:

- What is quality?
- How can quality be measured?
- How to use the quality model?
- The AUN-QA criteria and standards
- How to formulate a frame of reference for the assessment (mission of the faculty, programme objectives and standards, etc)?
- How to read the self-assessment report?
- How to formulate questions?
- How to organise the interviews?
- How to behave during the assessment?
- How to write the report?

Staff organising the assessment should take care of the following logistics and other administrative arrangements:

- Meeting/interviewing rooms:
 - Opening/closing meeting which normally would require a bigger room in consideration of the number of people involved.
 - Interview room for the conduct of the assessment with the interviewees
 - Assessors would need room for discussion and report writing.
- Observers who wish to learn about the conduct of the assessment
- Site tour – arrangement for the assessors to visit places such as library, lab, lecture halls, etc as part of the assessment
- Computer equipment/facilities for presentation on opening and closing meeting
- Photocopying/printing services
- Refreshments/meals
- Transport arrangements/airport transfers
- Accommodation

3.6 Quality Assessment Process

The Plan-Do-Check-Action (PDCA) or Deming Cycle illustrated in Figure 15 is adopted for quality assessment at the programme level, as well as for both institutional level and IQA system.

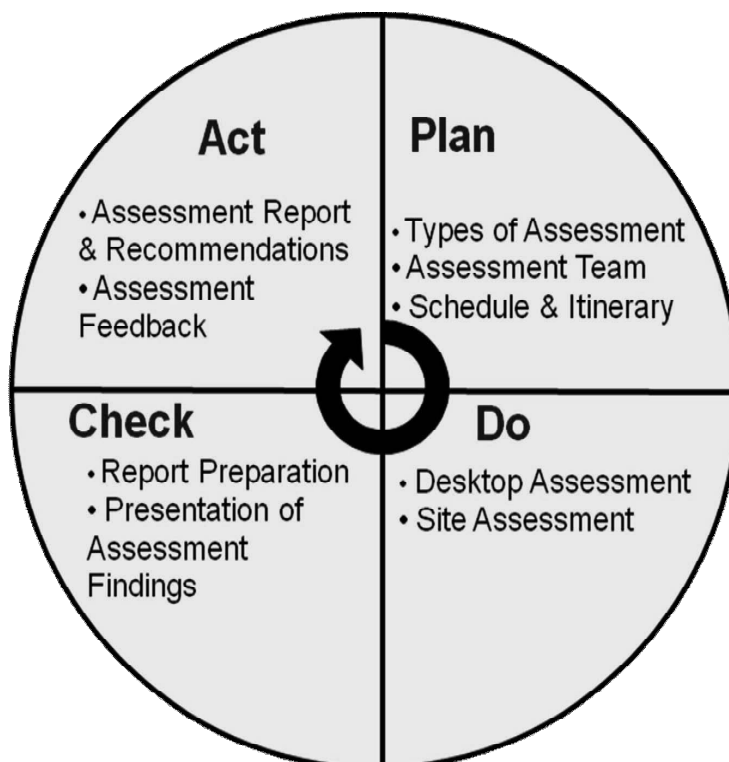


Figure 15 – PDCA cycle

3.6.1 Plan Phase

The plan phase consists of:

- Types of Assessment
- Assessment Team
- Schedule & Itinerary

At the start of the planning, the university has to decide which quality assessment that they want to conduct as each serves a different purpose and requires a different level of expertise. The 3 types of quality assessment in AUN-QA are institutional, IQA system and programme level.

The assessment team(s) will be appointed by the AUN Secretariat in advance based on assessor's background, experience and language ability. Each team should comprise at least 2 members from different universities. The assessors in each team should decide on their roles and assignment before, during and after the assessment.

The chairperson or the lead assessor will provide leadership to the assessment team, setup preliminary meetings/discussions, assigning of roles and assessment areas/criteria and moderating the final assessment results. In general, an assessor should perform the following roles:

- Preparing assessment plan & checklist
- Communicating and clarifying assessment requirements
- Planning & carrying out assigned responsibilities effectively & efficiently
- Making observations on curriculum, process and quality improvements
- Reporting the assessment results
- Retaining & safeguarding documents pertaining to the assessment

As an assessor, you need to check the date, time, location and venue of the assessment to be carried out for each programme. Check the location of the campus to be assessed. For venue, it is normally held at the university which facilitates the access to documents, site tour, faculty members and supporting staff. Interviews are best held in round table arrangement and avoid using a room that is too large or in a lecture-style. When interviewing staff, it is preferably that the room also holds the relevant documents to facilitate easy verification.

Get the details of the contact person(s) of the university and AUN Secretariat so that prior communication can be established, if necessary. Know who is in your assessment team and agree on the roles. Make sure that the SAR is submitted at least 1½ to 2 months before the assessment to allow for the preparation of desktop assessment.

A typical Itinerary will spread over 3 days and it will normally consists of:

- Opening meeting
 - Presentation on the overview of the unit to be assessed
- Interviews (Dean, Department Head, Programme Chair, faculty members, supporting staff, students, alumni or graduates and employers)
- Site tour (teaching facilities, laboratories, workshops, libraries, general facilities)
- Assessment and report preparation
- Breaks, lunches and dinners
- Closing meeting
 - Presentation of assessment results

A typical itinerary is shown in Figure 16.

Date/ Time	Programme
Day 1	
09.00 – 09.30	Opening Session
09.30 - 09.45	Coffee break
09.45 – 10.00	Transferred to Faculty of Engineering
10.00 – 10.30	Briefing by Dean of Respective Programmes
10.30 – 10.45	Transferred to respective department
10.45 – 11.30	Meeting with Key Faculty Members: Head of Department and Programme Chair
11.30 – 12.30	Meeting with Faculty Members
12.30 – 13.15	Site Visit to Laboratories, Workshops, Libraries
13.15 – 14.15	Working lunch
14.15 – 15.15	Meeting with Support Staff
15.15 – 15.30	Coffee break
15.30 – 17.30	Campus Site Visit
17.30 – 18.30	Departure to dinner venue
18.30 – 21.00	Welcoming dinner
21.00	Departure to hotel
Day 2	
07.30	Departure to Campus
08.30 – 10.15	Meeting with Students
10.15 – 11.15	Meeting with Alumni
11.15 – 12.30	Meeting with Employers
12.30 – 14.00	Working Lunch
14.00 – 18.00	Conclusion & Preparation of the Actual Assessment by Assessors
18.00 – 21.00	Dinner (Free & Easy)
Day 3	
07.30	Departure to Campus
09.00 - 11.00	Presentation of Key Results of the Actual Assessment by Assessors
11.00 – 11.30	Closing Session
11.30 – 13.00	Lunch

Figure 16 – Typical AUN Actual Quality Assessment Itinerary

3.6.2 Do Phase

After the plan phase is the Do phase where most of work will be done involving desktop and site assessment.

Desktop Assessment

Desktop assessment is the first initial step before the site assessment. It is a document review exercise which involves a preliminary assessment of the quality assurance system based on the self-assessment report and available documentation. The desktop assessment facilitates the development of an assessment plan. The AUN-QA Assessment Planning Template is used for this purpose. The desktop assessment allows preparatory work to be made by asking the following questions:

- Is the report sufficiently critical and analytical?
- Have the problems that face the faculty been clearly formulated? Has the faculty indicated clearly how it will cope with the problems?
- Are you able to form a picture of the content of the curriculum, given the description in the report?
- Have the objectives (expected learning outcomes) been satisfactorily operationalised?
- Do you think the objectives and goals have been satisfactorily translated into the programme?
- Do you think the curriculum can be considered an academic curriculum?
- Is the curriculum well balanced?
- Can the programme, as described in the report, be done in the set time?
- Do you think it is possible to produce good graduates with this curriculum?

The purpose of assessment planning is to gather evidence of practices that meet AUN-QA guidelines and criteria. The plan should include:

- Sources of information and evidence
- Strategy employed to gather the evidence as well as identifying documents and records for review. Strategy may include interview, site visit, document review, website access, etc.
- Identify individuals to be interviewed and plan schedule of interviews and site tour
- Prepare questions needed to gather the evidence

The SAR is the most critical document for desktop assessment and it should be given to the assessors in advance before the actual assessment. It should give an overview of the university, faculty, department and programme being assessed. The SAR should cover all the criteria listed under the AUN-QA framework. If any of the criteria are not documented, the assessors should clarify with the contact person of the university. Identify information and documents mentioned in the report and verify them against the physical documents during the site assessment.

Using the diagnostic questions outlined in the AUN-QA framework to develop questions and identify evidences for verification. Request for language translation of certain documents before the actual assessment, if necessary. This will help to increase the level of objectivity in the findings and assessment.

The PDCA approach is a good tool to apply in assessment planning. Questions can be formulated at each stage of the PDCA (see Figure 17).



Figure 17 – PDCA Approach in Formulating Questions

For example at the plan stage, questions on what, when and why can be used to establish objectives and processes that deliver results based on AUN-QA guidelines and criteria and organisation policies. At the Do stage, questions can revolve around implementation and who are involved. At the check stage, questions on monitoring and measuring performance and processes can be formulated. Lastly, at the Act stage, assessors can plan questions on actions to continually improve performance. Adopt the 5Ws (why, what, where, who and when) and 1H (How) questioning technique to help you in your planning of the questions for the interview.

To facilitate the desktop assessment and planning, AUN has formulated planning templates for the different types of assessment. A copy of the template for programme level assessment planning is documented in Appendix B. A sample of the desktop planning is documented in Appendix C.

Site Visit

Actual assessment or site visit consists of an opening meeting with key management representatives of the university. The opening meeting is normally followed by a presentation of the university and programme. After which, interviews would be held with the various stakeholders. Site tour may be arranged between the interviews or after the interviews. The assessment will conclude with a closing meeting.

An opening meeting with the host university management representatives should be held prior to the commencement of the actual assessment. The purpose of the brief opening meeting is to:

- Introduce the members of the assessment team to the host university's management representatives
- Establish official communication links between the assessment team and the host university
- Review scope and objectives of the assessment
- Clarify details of the assessment plan and schedule
- Allow the host university to introduce the university and its programme normally done through a presentation

Typical opening statements by the chairperson of the assessment team are as follows:

“Good morning ladies and gentlemen. My name is XXX and I am from ZZZZZ University and I am the chairperson of the assessment team. The other members in my team are Mr XXX and Ms XXX.

At the request of your university, we are glad to make a quality assessment at the programme level under the AUN-QA guidelines and criteria. The scope of the assessment will cover the XXX programme at the faculty of ABC. We will be looking at the activities that are relevant to these areas. We will be following a schedule as agreed earlier. Should any change be required, we will coordinate with your representative XXX. If all things proceed as planned, the assessment will take between 2 and 3 days.

A final closing meeting will be held on the final day of the assessment where we will be presenting the summary of our findings.

Before we proceed, is there anything that you would like to ask? (Pause for a second).

Thank you for your kind attention. We will now proceed with a presentation by the university.”

Interviews

Interviews with various stakeholders are normally pre-arranged by the host university prior to the actual assessment. The interviews may start with a discussion involving the writers of the self-assessment report before and during the actual assessment. In this interview, the team can ask for clarification of any obscurities and explanation of any topics that are not totally clear.

The interviews with the students provide a very rich source of information, but the information needs to be checked and tested against the ideas of the staff members. Student interviews are important to get an insight into the study load, the teaching qualifications of the academic staff, the coherency of the programme, to find out if they are acquainted with the goals and objectives, the organisation of the curricula and the facilities. These student interviews should be held in the absence of staff members, so that they can speak freely. The size of the student groups is ideally about 5 - 10 in each cohort. It's best to talk to about 5 - 10 students from the first year, 5 - 10 from say the second and third years, and 5 - 10 who are nearly at the end of their studies. The composition of the student panels requires special attention. It is important that the group is as far as possible representative of the whole student population in that field, i.e. that it not only includes the good students, but also the less gifted ones. It is better not to leave the invitation of students to the faculty or the staff. The best way is to ask a student organisation (if there is any) to nominate the students. If there is no such organisation, the expert team may invite students at random. The assessors should have a list of the students and their details such as year of study, study pathway, etc being interviewed.

Interviews with staff members will be used for discussion on the content of the curriculum, the goals and objectives: "Why and how did you choose this programme?" Other topics to be discussed include the examinations, the final paper (if any), the final research projects, etc. It is advisable to talk with groups of about 10 staff members.

Other interviews will be held with members of a curriculum committee and with members of the committee responsible for examinations. During the interview with the curriculum committee, the question of how the curriculum is kept up to date will be discussed as will the question of how innovations are planned and realised, etc. The interview with the examination committee must clearly show how the quality of the examinations and degree is assured.

Interviews with employers and alumni provide a good indication of the graduates' quality and the relevancy of the curriculum. They can provide a good source for the university to improve its processes, systems, facilities, curriculum, etc.

In each interview, the assessor will usually go through several steps including informing the interviewees about the purpose of the interview, gather background information about the interviewees and conducting the actual interview.

Objectives of Interview are to:

- Gather information and evidences
- Clarify and verify SAR and practices
- Give interviewees opportunity to present the full picture

It is important for the assessors to talk less and listen more as the purpose of the interview is to ensure a fair and objective view of the assessment.

In preparing the interview, the assessor should consider the followings:

- Know the interviewees
 - Language
 - Education
 - Specialisation or area of interests
- Plan the questions
 - Focus on the criteria
 - Phrase questions as neutrally as possible to avoid bias
 - Use open-ended questioning technique (5Ws and 1H) to probe for information
 - Use close-ended questions to confirm information
 - Manage time to cover different criteria and interviewees

An interviewing process consists of 3 phases as follows:

- Introduction
- Questioning
- Conclusion

At the introduction phase, the following items should be carried out:

- Introduce the assessment team
- Explain purpose of the interview
- Put interviewees at ease
- Get to know background of interviewees if necessary e.g. years of service or study, current position, scope of work, etc.

During questioning, do take note of the following factors:

- Use reassuring tones and approach in a respectful manner
- Assure interviewees that the session is strictly confidential and no information will be attributed to any one individual
- Lead the discussion
- Take note
- Keep to the agenda
- Watch your time

Use effective questioning techniques:

- Ask one question at a time. Give interviewees ample time to respond before moving to the next question.
- Use open-ended questions to probe for information. E.g. How are students being assessed for their project works?
- Use close-ended questions to confirm information. Is there feedback gathered from stakeholders?
- Avoid leading questions. Do you think the curriculum is adequate and relevant? Leading interviewees to the answer of the question asked.
- Try to use neutral language. Avoid words like never, bad, good, always, weak, etc.

Before concluding the interview, do the followings:

- Ask if interviewees have anything else to add. This gives them some control over the interview and a chance to tell you something important that might not be on the list.
- Thank the interviewees for their time

Four basic techniques in active listening are:

1. Mirroring. Restating what the interviewee says using different words. Restate in such a way as to encourage the interviewee to go on.
2. Using silences. Silence may make people feel uncomfortable in a conversation. However, not every gap in a conversation needs to be filled. Distinguish between positive and negative silences where the interviewee is thinking. During a negative silence where the interviewee is not able to respond, provide help.
3. Acknowledging. Remind the interviewee periodically that you are listening with words like "Yes", "I see", "Um..m". Use body language like nodding and eye contact without interrupting the interviewee unnecessarily.
4. Open-ended questioning. Use questions that encourage your interviewees to think further rather than give a straight "Yes" or "No" answer. Close ended questions often cut the natural flow of your interviewee's thoughts, make them feel interrogated and put them on the defensive. Unless you are sure a close ended question would help, you should use open ended questions.

Objective Evidence

Evidence should be collected on all matters related to the assessment objectives and scope. Checklist can be used to aid the collection of evidence. Evidence should be collected through:

- Interviews
- Examination of documents/records (physical and electronic)
- Observation of activities and facilities
- Site tour
- Use of statistical methods such as sampling can be used to increase efficiency during assessment. However, the sample should be a fair representation of the area under examination.

Site tour can be planned between interviews or at the end of the interview. The site tour normally includes visit to lecture halls, tutorial rooms, laboratories, workshops or practical rooms, libraries and computer labs. Special attention should be paid to the environment in the facilities, condition of the equipment and tools, cleanliness and maintenance of the facilities. Site tour also provides the assessors an opportunity to clarify the findings or SAR with the staff.

3.6.3 Check Phase

The check phase involves report preparation and presentation of the assessment findings.

At the end of the assessment, prior to preparing the final report, the assessment team should hold a meeting with the host university's management representatives and those responsible for the functions concerned. The purpose of the meeting is to:

- present the preliminary results of the assessment to the management representatives and those responsible for the functions
- ensure that the results of the assessment are clearly understood
- provide an opportunity for clarification
- conclude the assessment

The meeting is part of the Check phase and it helps the assessors to prepare an objective and factual report. It gives the assessors and assessees an opportunity to clarify doubts and to seek a better understanding of the QA processes and how the AUN-QA criteria are being fulfilled. It helps to identify and agree on the areas for improvement and provides the motivational force for the university to improve its QA system. The 2-way communication in the Check phase would make the university more receptive to the findings and help to build a closer and enduring relationship between the assessors and the university.

Assessment Report

The objectives of assessment report are:

- Level of performance based on AUN-QA guidelines and criteria
- Key strengths of university/faculty/programme
- Areas for improvement

The steps to prepare assessment report are illustrated in Figure 18.

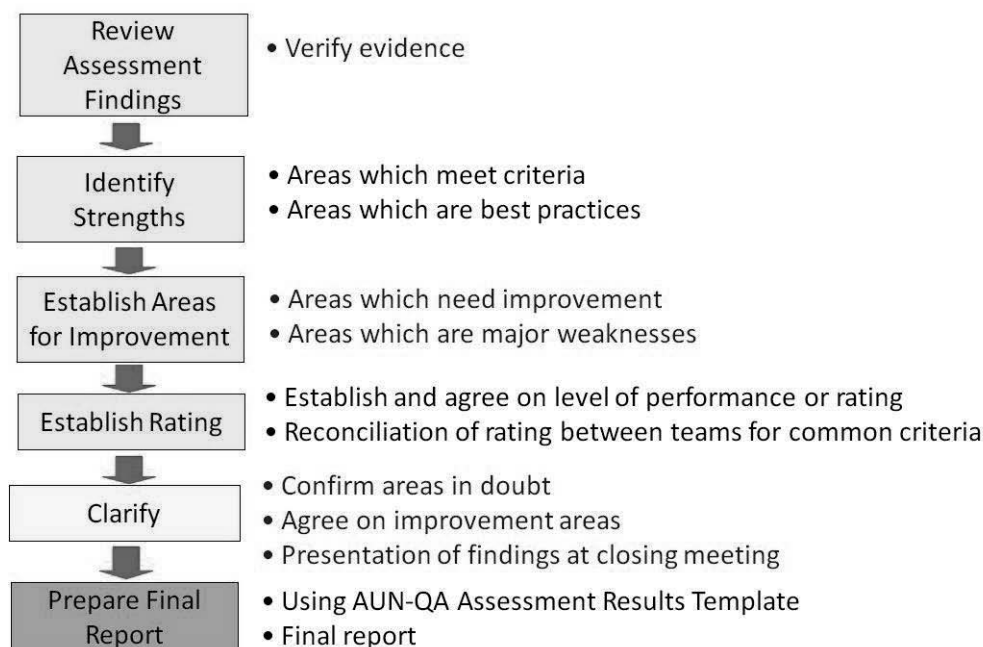


Figure 18 – Steps in Preparing Assessment Report

To prepare a creditable and objective report, the assessment team has to verify the evidences gathered and agree on the strengths and weaknesses of the QA practices adopted by the university. Next is to establish the gaps against the AUN-QA criteria and suggest areas for improvement. Based on the findings, the assessment team has to establish and agree on the level of performance or rating. Any differences should be resolved through factual and objective evidences against the best known practices. Reconciliation of ratings of common criteria across programmes should be carried out to ensure consistency of results.

AUN adopted a 7-point rating scale for its quality assessment. The scaling aims to offer the universities and external assessors an instrument for scaling their verdicts and to see how far they have progressed on the way to meeting the criteria and to see how far quality is assured. The meaning of the value in the 7-point scoring scale is as follows:

- 1= nothing (no documents, no plans, no evidence) present
- 2= this subject is in the planning stage
- 3= documents available, but no clear evidence that they are used
- 4= documents available and evidence that they are used
- 5= clear evidence on the efficiency of the aspect
- 6= example of best practices
- 7= excellent (world-class or leading practices)

For assessing the quality of teaching and learning, the numbers have a different wording, but more or less the same meaning. The assessment of the quality of a programme is also done on a 7-point scale. For looking at the quality and improvement activities, the 7-point scale could also be read as follows:

- 1= absolutely inadequate; immediate improvements must be made
- 2= inadequate, improvements necessary
- 3= inadequate, but minor improvements will make it adequate
- 4= adequate as expected (meeting the AUN-QA guidelines and criteria)
- 5= better than adequate (exceeding the AUN-QA guidelines and criteria)
- 6= example of best practices
- 7= excellent (world-class or leading practices)

As weight is not allocated to each criterion, the overall opinion should be based on the achievement or fulfillment of the criterion as a whole. It should not be computed based on the average score of the statements under each criterion.

Before making the final presentation to the university management, the assessment team should clarify any doubts and agree on the areas for improvement with the key staff of the faculty or department. The report should not be judgemental such as using the word “frequently”. Instead state your comment factually and indicate the importance of having the practice or process. The final report should be prepared using the AUN-QA Template in Appendix D.

In writing feedback report, do follow the following guidelines:

- Feedback must be:
 - Objective
 - Based on evidence
 - Encouraging
 - Part of a “learning” process
- Feedback must not:
 - Ridicule
 - Mandate solution
 - Be insensitive to the overall effort
 - Ignore the achievement made

Good comments are fundamental to an effective assessment. Your comments would help the university determine its readiness in meeting AUN-QA guidelines and criteria. It also provides the basis for feedback on areas that the university needs to improve. Good feedback should:

- Use clear, simple, grammatically correct and complete sentences. They help to reduce the time needed to clarify points.
- Avoid jargons or acronyms
- Be constructive – use positive tone, be specific to guide improvement and comment only on areas contained in the criteria.
- Be non-prescriptive – state observations and evaluations

A closing meeting is usually done by the chairperson of the assessment team. Typical closing meeting statements include:

“Good morning ladies and gentlemen. On behalf of the assessment team, I would like to thank you and your staff for the hospitality and assistance which you have given us throughout the assessment. We have enjoyed the friendly atmosphere during the assessment.

First, I would like to reiterate the purpose and scope of this assessment under the AUN-QA guidelines and criteria at programme level. The assessment has been carried out on the basis of a prepared plan which involved examining a representative sample of the activities relevant to the AUN-QA framework. With your kind consent, I will present the preliminary results and findings from the team.

A final report will be sent to your university by the AUN secretariat at a later date.”

3.6.4 Act Phase

The Act phase involves preparing the final report and the assessment feedback. The final report consists of a summary (Appendix E) and the assessment results (Appendix F). A typical summary report is documented below.

Introduction

This report documents the findings on the quality assessment at programme level for the Bachelor of XXX programme at the Faculty of ABC, University of XYZ on 3 October 2010. The quality assessment was carried out by Prof YYY from DEF University and Prof GHI from SSS University. The report is based on the information provided in the self-assessment report, on-site verification of the documentation and interviews with selected stakeholders including faculty staff, students, alumni and employers.

Results of Assessment

The assessment framework is based on the AUN Actual Quality Assessment at Programme Level. The assessment covers 15 criteria and each criterion was assessed based on a 7-point scale. A summary of the assessment results is as follows:

Listing the criteria and their scores.

The Department of ABC has put in place quality assurance approaches to address the criteria spelt out in the AUN-QA guidelines. Of the 15 criteria, 9 criteria were rated “better than adequate” especially in programme outcomes, specification and structure & content; student assessment; staff and student quality; facilities & infrastructure; quality assurance of teaching & learning and output. 5 criteria were rated “adequate as expected” and 1 criterion on stakeholders feedback was rated as “inadequate but minor improvements will make it adequate”.

A summary of the key strengths and areas for improvement is tabulated below.

A detailed report of the quality assessment at programme level for the Bachelor of XXX is attached.

Conclusion

Based on the self-assessment report, evidences and interviews, the Bachelor of XXX fulfilled all except one criterion. Overall the quality assurance implemented for the programme is between adequate as expected and better than adequate.

Report prepared by:
Date

Enc. Assessment Results

After the assessment team has completed and sent a copy of the report to AUN Secretariat, they will forward it together with a copy of the feedback report (Appendix G) to the university being assessed. The purpose of the feedback report is to help in improving the assessment process. Please do not take the feedback as a personal assessment of your performance at the quality assessment. The feedback is meant for improvement in AUN-QA assessment process and as a platform for learning.

Appendices

- Appendix A – Checklist for AUN Quality Assessment at Programme Level
- Appendix B – AUN-QA Assessment Planning for Programme Level Template
- Appendix C – Sample of Desktop Assessment Planning
- Appendix D – AUN-QA Assessment Results for Programme Level Template
- Appendix E – Assessment Report Template
- Appendix F – Sample of Assessment Results
- Appendix G – Assessment Feedback Report

Checklist for AUN Quality Assessment at Programme Level

1	Expected Learning Outcomes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.1	The expected learning outcomes have been clearly formulated and translated into the programme							
1.2	The programme promotes life-long learning							
1.3	The expected learning outcomes cover both generic and specialised skills and knowledge							
1.4	The expected learning outcomes clearly reflect the requirements of the stakeholders							
	Overall opinion							
2	Programme Specification							
2.1	The university uses programme specification							
2.2	The programme specification shows the expected learning outcomes and how these can be achieved							
2.3	The programme specification is informative, communicated, and made available to the stakeholders							
	Overall opinion							
3	Programme Structure and Content							
3.1	The programme content shows a good balance between generic and specialised skills and knowledge							
3.2	The programme reflects the vision and mission of the university							
3.3	The contribution made by each course to achieving the learning outcomes is clear							
3.4	The programme is coherent and all subjects and courses have been integrated							
3.5	The programme shows breadth and depth							
3.6	The programme clearly shows the basic courses, intermediate courses, specialised courses and the final project, thesis or dissertation							
3.7	The programme content is up-to-date							
	Overall opinion							
4	Teaching and Learning Strategy							
4.1	The faculty or department has a clear teaching and learning strategy							
4.2	The teaching and learning strategy enables students to acquire and use knowledge academically							
4.3	The teaching and learning strategy is student oriented and stimulates quality learning							
4.4	The teaching and learning strategy stimulates action learning and facilitates learning to learn							
	Overall opinion							

5	Student Assessment	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.1	Student assessment covers student entrance, student progress and exit tests							
5.2	The assessment is criterion-referenced							
5.3	Student assessment uses a variety of methods							
5.4	Student assessment reflects the expected learning outcomes and the content of the programme							
5.5	The criteria for assessment are explicit and well-known							
5.6	The assessment methods cover the objectives of the curriculum							
5.7	The standards applied in the assessment are explicit and consistent							
	Overall opinion							
6	Academic Staff Quality							
6.1	The staff are competent for their tasks							
6.2	The staff are sufficient to deliver the curriculum adequately							
6.3	Recruitment and promotion are based on academic merits							
6.4	The roles and relationship of staff members are well defined and understood							
6.5	Duties allocated are appropriate to qualifications, experience and skills							
6.6	Staff workload and incentive systems are designed to support the quality of teaching and learning							
6.7	Accountability of the staff members is well regulated							
6.8	There are provisions for review, consultation and redeployment							
6.9	Termination and retirement are planned and well implemented							
6.10	There is an efficient appraisal system							
	Overall opinion							
7	Support Staff Quality							
7.1	The library staff are competent and adequate in providing a satisfactory level of service							
7.2	The laboratory staff are competent and adequate in providing a satisfactory level of service							
7.3	The computer facility staff are competent and adequate in providing a satisfactory level of service							
7.4	The student services staff are competent and adequate in providing a satisfactory level of service							
	Overall opinion							

8	Student Quality	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8.1	There is a clear student intake policy							
8.2	The student admission process is adequate							
8.3	The actual study load is in line with the prescribed load							
	Overall opinion							
9	Student Advice and Support							
9.1	There is an adequate student progress monitoring system							
9.2	Students get adequate academic advice, support and feedback on their performance							
9.3	Mentoring for students is adequate							
9.4	The physical, social and psychological environment for the student is satisfactory							
	Overall opinion							
10	Facilities and Infrastructure							
10.1	The lecture facilities (lecture halls, small course rooms) are adequate							
10.2	The library is adequate and up-to-date							
10.3	The laboratories are adequate and up-to-date							
10.4	The computer facilities are adequate and up-to-date							
10.5	Environmental health and safety standards meet requirements in all aspects							
	Overall opinion							
11	Quality Assurance of Teaching and Learning Process							
11.1	The curriculum is developed by all teaching staff members							
11.2	The curriculum development involves students							
11.3	The curriculum development involves the labour market							
11.4	The curriculum is regularly evaluated at reasonable time periods							
11.5	Courses and curriculum are subject to structured student evaluation							
11.6	Feedback from various stakeholders is used for improvement							
11.7	The teaching and learning process, assessment schemes, the assessment methods and the assessment itself are always subject to quality assurance and continuous improvement							
	Overall opinion							

12	Staff Development Activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12.1	There is a clear plan on the needs for training and development of both academic and support staff							
12.2	The training and development activities for both academic and support staff are adequate to the identified needs							
	Overall opinion							
13	Stakeholders Feedback							
13.1	There is adequate structured feedback from the labour market							
13.2	There is adequate structured feedback from the students and alumni							
13.3	There is adequate structured feedback from the staff							
	Overall opinion							
14	Output							
14.1	The pass rate is satisfactory and dropout rate is of acceptable level							
14.2	Average time to graduate is satisfactory							
14.3	Employability of graduates is satisfactory							
14.4	The level of research activities by academic staff and students is satisfactory							
	Overall opinion							
15	Stakeholders Satisfaction							
15.1	The feedback from stakeholders is satisfactory							
	Overall opinion							
Overall verdict								

As weight is not allocated to each criterion, the overall opinion should be based on the achievement or fulfillment of the criterion as a whole. It should not be computed based on the average score of the statements under each criterion.



ASSESSMENT PLANNING (PROGRAMME LEVEL)

Name of University/Address		Faculty/School	
Management Representative/Designation	Email	Telephone	Fax
Programme Title		Date	
Assessor(s):			
Criteria			Score
1. Expected Learning Outcomes			
2. Programme Specification			
3. Programme Structure and Content			
4. Teaching and Learning Strategy			
5. Student Assessment			

Criteria	Score
6. Academic Staff Quality	
7. Support Staff Quality	
8. Student Quality	
9. Student Advice and Support	
10. Facilities and Infrastructure	
11. Quality Assurance of Teaching and Learning Process	
12. Staff Development Activities	
13. Stakeholders Feedback	
14. Output	
15. Stakeholders Satisfaction	
Overall Verdict	

Criteria		Observations (Desktop Assessment)	Interview Questions (Clarification/Verification)	Supporting Evidences Audited	Findings (Strengths and Areas for Improvement)	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
1. Expected Learning Outcomes	1.1 The expected learning outcomes have been clearly formulated and translated into the programme						
1. Expected Learning Outcomes	1.2 The programme promotes life- long learning						

Criteria		Observations (Desktop Assessment)	Interview Questions (Clarification/Verification)	Supporting Evidences Audited	Findings (Strengths and Areas for Improvement)	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
1. Expected Learning Outcomes							
	1.3 The expected learning outcomes cover both generic and specialised skills and knowledge						
1. Expected Learning Outcomes							
	1.4 The expected learning outcomes clearly reflect the requirements of the stakeholders						

Criteria		Observations (Desktop Assessment)	Interview Questions (Clarification/Verification)	Supporting Evidences Audited	Findings (Strengths and Areas for Improvement)	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
2. Programme Specification	2.1 The university uses programme specification						
	2.2 The programme specification shows the expected learning outcomes and how these can be achieved						

Criteria		Observations (Desktop Assessment)	Interview Questions (Clarification/Verification)	Supporting Evidences Audited	Findings (Strengths and Areas for Improvement)	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
2. Programme Specification							
	2.3 The programme specification is informative, communicated, and made available to the stakeholders						
3. Programme Structure and Content							
	3.1 The programme content shows a good balance between generic and specialised skills and knowledge						

Criteria		Observations (Desktop Assessment)	Interview Questions (Clarification/Verification)	Supporting Evidences Audited	Findings (Strengths and Areas for Improvement)	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
3. Programme Structure and Content	3.2 The programme reflects the vision and mission of the university						
	3.3 The contribution made by each course to achieving the learning outcomes is clear						

Criteria		Observations (Desktop Assessment)	Interview Questions (Clarification/Verification)	Supporting Evidences Audited	Findings (Strengths and Areas for Improvement)	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
3. Programme Structure and Content	3.4 The programme is coherent and all subjects and courses have been integrated						
	3.5 The programme shows breadth and depth						

Criteria		Observations (Desktop Assessment)	Interview Questions (Clarification/Verification)	Supporting Evidences Audited	Findings (Strengths and Areas for Improvement)	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
3. Programme Structure and Content	3.6 The programme clearly shows the basic courses, intermediate courses, specialised courses and the final project ,thesis or dissertation						
	3.7 The programme content is up- to-date						

Criteria		Observations (Desktop Assessment)	Interview Questions (Clarification/Verification)	Supporting Evidences Audited	Findings (Strengths and Areas for Improvement)	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
4. Teaching and Learning Strategy	4.1 The faculty or department has a clear teaching and learning strategy						
	4.2 The teaching and learning strategy enables students to acquire and use knowledge academically						

Criteria		Observations (Desktop Assessment)	Interview Questions (Clarification/Verification)	Supporting Evidences Audited	Findings (Strengths and Areas for Improvement)	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
4. Teaching and Learning Strategy	4.3 The teaching and learning strategy is student oriented and stimulates quality learning						
	4.4 The teaching and learning strategy stimulates active learning and facilitates learning to learn						

Criteria		Observations (Desktop Assessment)	Interview Questions (Clarification/Verification)	Supporting Evidences Audited	Findings (Strengths and Areas for Improvement)	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
5. Student Assessment	5.1 Student assessment covers student entrance, student progress and exit tests						
5. Student Assessment	5.2 The assessment is criterion- referenced						

Criteria		Observations (Desktop Assessment)	Interview Questions (Clarification/Verification)	Supporting Evidences Audited	Findings (Strengths and Areas for Improvement)	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
5. Student Assessment		5.3 Student assessment uses a variety of methods					
		5.4 The assessment reflects the expected learning outcomes and the content of the programme					

Criteria		Observations (Desktop Assessment)	Interview Questions (Clarification/Verification)	Supporting Evidences Audited	Findings (Strengths and Areas for Improvement)	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
5. Student Assessment	5.5 The criteria for assessment are explicit and well-known						
5. Student Assessment	5.6 The assessment methods cover the objectives of the curriculum						

Criteria		Observations (Desktop Assessment)	Interview Questions (Clarification/Verification)	Supporting Evidences Audited	Findings (Strengths and Areas for Improvement)	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
5. Student Assessment	5.7 The standards applied in the assessment are explicit and consistent						
6. Academic Staff Quality	6.1 The staff are competent for their tasks						

Criteria		Observations (Desktop Assessment)	Interview Questions (Clarification/Verification)	Supporting Evidences Audited	Findings (Strengths and Areas for Improvement)	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
6. Academic Staff Quality	6.2 The staff are sufficient to deliver the curriculum adequately						
	6.3 Recruitment and promotion are based on academic merits						

Criteria		Observations (Desktop Assessment)	Interview Questions (Clarification/Verification)	Supporting Evidences Audited	Findings (Strengths and Areas for Improvement)	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
6. Academic Staff Quality	6.4 The roles and relationship of staff members are well defined and understood						
	6.5 Duties allocated are appropriate to qualifications, experience and skills						

Criteria		Observations (Desktop Assessment)	Interview Questions (Clarification/Verification)	Supporting Evidences Audited	Findings (Strengths and Areas for Improvement)	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
6. Academic Staff Quality	6.6 Staff workload and incentive systems are designed to support the quality of teaching and learning						
	6.7 Accountability of the staff members is well regulated						

Criteria		Observations (Desktop Assessment)	Interview Questions (Clarification/Verification)	Supporting Evidences Audited	Findings (Strengths and Areas for Improvement)	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
6. Academic Staff Quality	6.8 There are provisions for review, consultation, and redeployment						
	6.9 Termination and retirement are planned and well implemented						

Criteria		Observations (Desktop Assessment)	Interview Questions (Clarification/Verification)	Supporting Evidences Audited	Findings (Strengths and Areas for Improvement)	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
6. Academic Staff Quality	6.10 There is an efficient appraisal system						
	7. Support Staff Quality						
7.1 The library staff are competent and adequate in providing a satisfactory level of service							

Criteria		Observations (Desktop Assessment)	Interview Questions (Clarification/Verification)	Supporting Evidences Audited	Findings (Strengths and Areas for Improvement)	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
7. Support Staff Quality	7.2 The laboratory staff are competent and adequate in providing a satisfactory level of service						
	7.3 The computer facility staff are competent and adequate in providing a satisfactory level of service						

Criteria		Observations (Desktop Assessment)	Interview Questions (Clarification/Verification)	Supporting Evidences Audited	Findings (Strengths and Areas for Improvement)	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
7. Support Staff Quality	7.4 The student services staff are competent and adequate in providing a satisfactory level of service						
8. Student Quality							
8.1 There is a clear student intake policy							

Criteria		Observations (Desktop Assessment)	Interview Questions (Clarification/Verification)	Supporting Evidences Audited	Findings (Strengths and Areas for Improvement)	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
8.Student Quality	8.2 The student admission process is adequate						
	8.3 The actual study load is in line with the prescribed load						

Criteria		Observations (Desktop Assessment)	Interview Questions (Clarification/Verification)	Supporting Evidences Audited	Findings (Strengths and Areas for Improvement)	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
9. Student Advice and Support	9.1 There is an adequate student progress monitoring system						
	9.2 Students get adequate academic advice, support and feedback on their performance						

Criteria		Observations (Desktop Assessment)	Interview Questions (Clarification/Verification)	Supporting Evidences Audited	Findings (Strengths and Areas for Improvement)	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
9. Student Advice and Support	9.3 Mentoring for students is adequate						
9. Student Advice and Support	9.4 The physical, social and psychological environment for the student is satisfactory						

Criteria		Observations (Desktop Assessment)	Interview Questions (Clarification/Verification)	Supporting Evidences Audited	Findings (Strengths and Areas for Improvement)	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
10. Facilities and Infrastructure	10.1 The lecture facilities (lecture halls, small course rooms) are adequate						
	10.2 The library is adequate and up-to-date						

Criteria		Observations (Desktop Assessment)	Interview Questions (Clarification/Verification)	Supporting Evidences Audited	Findings (Strengths and Areas for Improvement)	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
10. Facilities and Infrastructure	10.3 The laboratories are adequate and up-to-date						
	10.4 The computer facilities are adequate and up-to-date						

Criteria		Observations (Desktop Assessment)	Interview Questions (Clarification/Verification)	Supporting Evidences Audited	Findings (Strengths and Areas for Improvement)	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
10. Facilities and Infrastructure	10.5 Environmental health and safety standards meet requirements in all aspects						
11. Quality Assurance of Teaching and Learning Process	11.1 The curriculum is developed by all teaching staff members						

Criteria		Observations (Desktop Assessment)	Interview Questions (Clarification/Verification)	Supporting Evidences Audited	Findings (Strengths and Areas for Improvement)	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
11. Quality Assurance of Teaching and Learning Process	11.2 The curriculum development involves students						
11. Quality Assurance of Teaching and Learning Process	11.3 The curriculum development involves the labour market						

Criteria		Observations (Desktop Assessment)	Interview Questions (Clarification/Verification)	Supporting Evidences Audited	Findings (Strengths and Areas for Improvement)	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
11. Quality Assurance of Teaching and Learning Process	11.4 The curriculum is regularly evaluated at reasonable time periods						
11. Quality Assurance of Teaching and Learning Process	11.5 Courses and curriculum are subject to structured student evaluation						

Criteria		Observations (Desktop Assessment)	Interview Questions (Clarification/Verification)	Supporting Evidences Audited	Findings (Strengths and Areas for Improvement)	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
11. Quality Assurance of Teaching and Learning Process	11.6 Feedback from various stakeholders is used for improvement						
	11.7 The teaching and learning process, assessment schemes, the assessment methods and the assessment itself are always subject to quality assurance and continuous improvement						

Criteria		Observations (Desktop Assessment)	Interview Questions (Clarification/Verification)	Supporting Evidences Audited	Findings (Strengths and Areas for Improvement)	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
12. Staff Development Activities	12.1 There is a clear plan on the needs for training and development of both academic and support staff						
	12.2 The training and development activities for both academic and support staff are adequate to the identified needs						

Criteria		Observations (Desktop Assessment)	Interview Questions (Clarification/Verification)	Supporting Evidences Audited	Findings (Strengths and Areas for Improvement)	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
13. Stakeholders Feedback	13.1 There is adequate structured feedback from the labour market						
	13.2 There is adequate structured feedback from the students and alumni						

Criteria		Observations (Desktop Assessment)	Interview Questions (Clarification/Verification)	Supporting Evidences Audited	Findings (Strengths and Areas for Improvement)	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
13. Stakeholders Feedback	13.3 There is adequate structured feedback from the staff						
14. Output	14.1 The pass rate is satisfactory and dropout rate is of acceptable level						

Criteria		Observations (Desktop Assessment)	Interview Questions (Clarification/Verification)	Supporting Evidences Audited	Findings (Strengths and Areas for Improvement)	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
14. Output	14.2 Average time to graduate is satisfactory						
14. Output	14.3 Employability of graduates is satisfactory						

Criteria		Observations (Desktop Assessment)	Interview Questions (Clarification/Verification)	Supporting Evidences Audited	Findings (Strengths and Areas for Improvement)	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
14. Output		14.4 The level of research activities by academic staff and students is satisfactory					
	15. Stakeholders Satisfaction	15.1 The feedback from stakeholders is satisfactory					
Overall Verdict							



SAMPLE of ASSESSMENT PLANNING (PROGRAMME LEVEL)

Name of University/Address AUN University		Faculty/School Faculty of Engineering	
Management Representative/Designation Dr. Ali Ahmad/Head of Department	Email ahmad@aun.com	Telephone (60) 6668888	Fax (60) 6669999
Programme Title Bachelor Degree in Manufacturing Engineering		Date 1 – 3 October 2010	
Assessor(s): Dr. Tommy Lee, University of SEA Dr. Amir Hamzeh, University of Northeast SAMPLE			
Criteria			Score
1. Expected Learning Outcomes			
2. Programme Specification			
3. Programme Structure and Content			
4. Teaching and Learning Strategy			

Criteria	Score
5. Student Assessment	
6. Academic Staff Quality	
7. Support Staff Quality	
8. Student Quality	
9. Student Advice and Support	
10. Facilities and Infrastructure	
11. Quality Assurance of Teaching and Learning Process	
12. Staff Development Activities	
13. Stakeholders Feedback	
14. Output	
15. Stakeholders Satisfaction	
Overall Verdict	

SAMPLE

Criteria		Observations (Desktop Assessment)	Interview Questions (Clarification/Verification)	Supporting Evidences Audited	Findings (Strengths and Areas for Improvement)	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
1. Expected Learning Outcomes	1.1 The expected learning outcomes have been clearly formulated and translated into the programme	Learning outcomes for both generic and specialised knowledge and skills are established via the department curriculum committee.	Who are represented in the department curriculum committee? How often do they meet? SAMPLE	Programme specification Course brochure and prospectus or bulletin Skills matrix University and faculty websites Curriculum review minutes and documents			
	1.2 The programme promotes life- long learning	Continuing education on professional and post-graduate courses are available to students.	How is lifelong learning promoted? What is the percentage of graduates enrolled for post- graduate programme?	Programme specification Course brochure and prospectus or bulletin Skills matrix University and faculty websites			

Criteria		Observations (Desktop Assessment)	Interview Questions (Clarification/Verification)	Supporting Evidences Audited	Findings (Strengths and Areas for Improvement)	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
1. Expected Learning Outcomes	1.3 The expected learning outcomes cover both generic and specialised skills and knowledge	Besides the specialised skills and knowledge, soft skills in communication, critical thinking & problem solving, information management, ethics & professional values are incorporated in the programme.	Is comparison or benchmark used for formulating the learning outcomes for both generic and specialised courses? SAMPLE	Programme specification Course brochure and prospectus or bulletin Skills matrix University and faculty websites Curriculum review minutes and documents Benchmark- ing reports			
1. Expected Learning Outcomes	1.4 The expected learning outcomes clearly reflect the requirements of the stakeholders	Not stated in report	How are learning outcomes formulated? Who are involved? How are learning outcomes communicated to stakeholders?	Stakeholders' input Communica- tion media and plans to stakeholders Curriculum review minutes and documents			



ASSESSMENT RESULTS (PROGRAMME LEVEL)

Name of University/Address		Faculty/School	
Management Representative/Designation	Email	Telephone	Fax
Programme Title			
Assessor(s):			
Criteria			Score
1. Expected Learning Outcomes			
2. Programme Specification			
3. Programme Structure and Content			
4. Teaching and Learning Strategy			

Criteria	Score
5. Student Assessment	
6. Academic Staff Quality	
7. Support Staff Quality	
8. Student Quality	
9. Student Advice and Support	
10. Facilities and Infrastructure	
11. Quality Assurance of Teaching and Learning Process	
12. Staff Development Activities	
13. Stakeholders Feedback	
14. Output	
15. Stakeholders Satisfaction	
Overall Verdict	

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
1. Expected Learning Outcomes	1.1 The expected learning outcomes have been clearly formulated and translated into the programme				
1. Expected Learning Outcomes	1.2 The programme promotes life-long learning				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
1. Expected Learning Outcomes	1.3 The expected learning outcomes cover both generic and specialised skills and knowledge				
1. Expected Learning Outcomes	1.4 The expected learning outcomes clearly reflect the requirements of the stakeholders				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
2. Programme Specification	2.1 The university uses programme specification				
2. Programme Specification	2.2 The programme specification shows the expected learning outcomes and how these can be achieved				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
2. Programme Specification	2.3 The programme specification is informative, communicated, and made available to the stakeholders				
3. Programme Structure and Content	3.1 The programme content shows a good balance between generic and specialised skills and knowledge				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
3. Programme Structure and Content	3.2 The programme reflects the vision and mission of the university				
3. Programme Structure and Content	3.3 The contribution made by each course to achieving the learning outcomes is clear				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
3. Programme Structure and Content	3.4 The programme is coherent and all subjects and courses have been integrated				
3. Programme Structure and Content	3.5 The programme shows breadth and depth				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
3. Programme Structure and Content	3.6 The programme clearly shows the basic courses, intermediate courses, specialised courses and the final project, thesis or dissertation				
3. Programme Structure and Content	3.7 The programme content is up-to-date				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
4. Teaching and Learning Strategy	4.1 The faculty or department has a clear teaching and learning strategy				
4. Teaching and Learning Strategy	4.2 The teaching and learning strategy enables students to acquire and use knowledge academically				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
4. Teaching and Learning Strategy	4.3 The teaching and learning strategy is student oriented and stimulates quality learning				
4. Teaching and Learning Strategy	4.4 The teaching and learning strategy stimulates active learning and facilitates learning to learn				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
5. Student Assessment	5.1 Student assessment covers student entrance, student progress and exit tests				
5. Student Assessment	5.2 The assessment is criterion- referenced				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
5. Student Assessment	5.3 Student assessment uses a variety of methods				
5. Student Assessment	5.4 The assessment reflects the expected learning outcomes and the content of the programme				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
5. Student Assessment	5.5 The criteria for assessment are explicit and well- known				
5. Student Assessment	5.6 The assessment methods cover the objectives of the curriculum				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
5. Student Assessment	5.7 The standards applied in the assessment are explicit and consistent				
6. Academic Staff Quality	6.1 The staff are competent for their tasks				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
6. Academic Staff Quality	6.2 The staff are sufficient to deliver the curriculum adequately				
6. Academic Staff Quality	6.3 Recruitment and promotion are based on academic merits				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
6. Academic Staff Quality	6.4 The roles and relationship of staff members are well defined and understood				
6. Academic Staff Quality	6.5 Duties allocated are appropriate to qualifications, experience and skills				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
6. Academic Staff Quality	6.6 Staff workload and incentive systems are designed to support the quality of teaching and learning				
6. Academic Staff Quality	6.7 Accountability of the staff members is well regulated				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
6. Academic Staff Quality	6.8 There are provisions for review, consultation, and redeployment				
6. Academic Staff Quality	6.9 Termination and retirement are planned and well implemented				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
6. Academic Staff Quality	6.10 There is an efficient appraisal system				
7. Support Staff Quality	7.1 The library staff are competent and adequate in providing a satisfactory level of service				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
7. Support Staff Quality	7.2 The laboratory staff are competent and adequate in providing a satisfactory level of service				
7. Support Staff Quality	7.3 The computer facility staff are competent and adequate in providing a satisfactory level of service				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
7. Support Staff Quality	7.4 The student services staff are competent and adequate in providing a satisfactory level of service				
8. Student Quality	8.1 There is a clear student intake policy				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
8. Student Quality	8.2 The student admission process is adequate				
8. Student Quality	8.3 The actual study load is in line with the prescribed load				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
9. Student Advice and Support	9.1 There is an adequate student progress monitoring system				
9. Student Advice and Support	9.2 Students get adequate academic advice, support and feedback on their performance				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
9. Student Advice and Support	9.3 Mentoring for students is adequate				
9. Student Advice and Support	9.4 The physical, social and psychological environment for the student is satisfactory				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
10. Facilities and Infrastructure	10.1 The lecture facilities (lecture halls, small course rooms) are adequate				
10 Facilities and Infrastructure	10.2 The library is adequate and up-to-date				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
10. Facilities and Infrastructure	10.3 The laboratories are adequate and up-to-date				
	10.4 The computer facilities are adequate and up-to-date				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
10. Facilities and Infrastructure	10.5 Environmental health and safety standards meet requirements in all aspects				
11. Quality Assurance of Teaching and Learning Process	11.1 The curriculum is developed by all teaching staff members				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
11. Quality Assurance of Teaching and Learning Process	11.2 The curriculum development involves students				
11. Quality Assurance of Teaching and Learning Process	11.3 The curriculum development involves the labour market				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
11. Quality Assurance of Teaching and Learning Process	11.4 The curriculum is regularly evaluated at reasonable time periods				
11. Quality Assurance of Teaching and Learning Process	11.5 Courses and curriculum are subject to structured student evaluation				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
11. Quality Assurance of Teaching and Learning Process	11.6 Feedback from various stakeholders is used for improvement				
11. Quality Assurance of Teaching and Learning Process	11.7 The teaching and learning process, assessment schemes, the assessment methods and the assessment itself are always subject to quality assurance and continuous improvement				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
12. Staff Development Activities	12.1 There is a clear plan on the needs for training and development of both academic and support staff				
12. Staff Development Activities	12.2 The training and development activities for both academic and support staff are adequate to the identified needs				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
13. Stakeholders Feedback	13.1 There is adequate structured feedback from the labour market				
13. Stakeholders Feedback	13.2 There is adequate structured feedback from the students and alumni				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
13. Stakeholders Feedback	13.3 There is adequate structured feedback from the staff				
14. Output	14.1 The pass rate is satisfactory and dropout rate is of acceptable level				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
14. Output	14.2 Average time to graduate is satisfactory				
14. Output	14.3 Employability of graduates is satisfactory				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
14. Output	14.4 The level of research activities by academic staff and students is satisfactory				
15. Stakeholders Satisfaction	15.1 The feedback from stakeholders is satisfactory				
Overall Verdict					

Report on the Quality Assessment at Programme Level for Bachelor of _____ at the Faculty of _____, University of _____

Introduction

This report documents the findings on the quality assessment at programme level for the Bachelor of _____ at the Faculty of _____, University of _____ on _____. The quality assessment was carried out by _____ from _____ and _____ from _____.

The report is based on the information provided in the self-assessment report, on-site verification of the documentation and interviews with selected stakeholders including faculty staff, students, alumni and employers.

Results of Assessment

The assessment framework is based on the AUN Actual Quality Assessment at Programmed Level. The assessment covers 15 criteria and each criterion was assessed based on a 7-point scale. A summary of the assessment results is as follows:

Criteria	Score
1. Expected Learning Outcomes	
2. Programme Specification	
3. Programme Structure and Content	
4. Teaching and Learning Strategy	
5. Student Assessment	
6. Academic Staff Quality	
7. Support Staff Quality	
8. Student Quality	
9. Student Advice and Support	
10. Facilities and Infrastructure	
11. Quality Assurance of Teaching and Learning Process	
12. Staff Development Activities	
13. Stakeholders Feedback	
14. Output	
15. Stakeholders Satisfaction	
Overall Verdict	

The Department of _____ has put in place quality assurance approaches to address the criteria spelt out in the AUN-QA guidelines. Of the 15 criteria, 9 criteria were rated “better than adequate” especially in programme outcomes, specification and structure & content; student assessment; staff and student quality; facilities & infrastructure; quality assurance of teaching & learning and output. 5 criteria were rated “adequate as expected” and 1 criterion on stakeholders feedback was rated as “inadequate but minor improvements will make it adequate”.

A summary of the key strengths and areas for improvement is tabulated below

Criteria	Strengths
Criteria	Areas for Improvement

A detailed report of the quality assessment at programme level for the Bachelor of _____ is attached.

Conclusion

Based on the self-assessment report, evidences and interviews, the Bachelor of _____ fulfilled all except one criterion. Overall the quality assurance implemented for the programme is between adequate as expected and better than adequate.

Report prepared by:

Date

Enc. Assessment Results



SAMPLE of ASSESSMENT RESULTS (PROGRAMME LEVEL)

Name of University/Address			Faculty/School	
AUN University			Faculty of Engineering	
Management Representative/Designation	Email	Telephone	Fax	
Dr. Ali Ahmad/Head of Department	ahmad@aun.com	(60) 6668888	(60) 6669999	
Programme Title		Date		
Bachelor Degree in Manufacturing Engineering		1 – 3 October 2010		
Assessor(s):				
Dr. Tommy Lee, University of SEA				
Dr. Amir Hamzeh, University of Northeast				
SAMPLE				
Criteria			Score	
1. Expected Learning Outcomes			5	
2. Programme Specification			5	
3. Programme Structure and Content			3	
4. Teaching and Learning Strategy			5	

Criteria	Score
5. Student Assessment	
6. Academic Staff Quality	4
7. Support Staff Quality	4
8. Student Quality	3
9. Student Advice and Support	5
10. Facilities and Infrastructure	5
11. Quality Assurance of Teaching and Learning Process	4
12. Staff Development Activities	4
13. Stakeholders Feedback	5
14. Output	4
15. Stakeholders Satisfaction	4
Overall Verdict	4

SAMPLE

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
1. Expected Learning Outcomes	1.1 The expected learning outcomes have been clearly formulated and translated into the programme	The established learning outcomes are aligned to the requirements of the National Accreditation Board as well as reference to ABET and prominent university in USA, UK, Australia and Singapore. The expected learning outcomes are revised every 4 years with the latest revision in 2009. These are formulated with the consideration of the regional and national needs and global trend of scientific progress, which are part of the university, faculty and department mission statements. <u>SAMPLE</u>		5	5
1. Expected Learning Outcomes	1.2 The programme promotes life-long learning	Various specialised and professional pathways are available to both students and graduates to upgrade themselves through continuing education. Students, alumni and employers acknowledged the importance of these pathways to keep their knowledge and skills relevant to the marketplace.		5	

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
1. Expected Learning Outcomes	1.3 The expected learning outcomes cover both generic and specialised skills and knowledge	The expected learning outcomes are well established and integrated for both specific and generic skills and knowledge using matrix of competencies as documented in the new curriculum 2009. <u><u>SAMPLE</u></u>		5	
1. Expected Learning Outcomes	1.4 The expected learning outcomes clearly reflect the requirements of the stakeholders	Stakeholder's inputs (meeting with stakeholders on 28 August 2008) are gathered and reflected in the expected learning outcome documented in the new curriculum 2009.	The existing network of stakeholders like alumni and employers is based on the faculty members' contacts and relationship. These contacts and relationship which take years to build might be lost if the faculty member leaves the university. It is proposed that a structured approach be setup to establish and build stakeholders' relationship together with a database of employers and alumni. An employer survey to gather the market and industry needs is proposed on a regular basis in line with the curriculum review.	4	



ASEAN University Network

AUN-QA ASSESSMENT FEEDBACK REPORT (PROGRAMME LEVEL)

Name of University/Address		Faculty/School	
Management Representative/Designation	Email	Telephone	Fax
Programme Title			
Name of Assessor(s):		Date(s) Assessed	
Feedback on SAR Preparation (interpretation of criteria, writing of SAR, gathering of evidences and other problems faced in preparing the SAR)			
Feedback on Assessment Process (Process: pre-assessment preparation, actual assessment and final assessment results and presentation; Assessment: objectivity, independence, evidence-based, Programme: itinerary, activities and duration)			
Feedback on Usefulness of Assessment Reports (improvement, planning, benchmarking purposes)			
Other comments and suggestions to improve the AUN-QA Assessment			



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