Performance Scorecard

Internal Quality Assurance Units (IQAU)

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Ministry of Higher Education

Quality Assurance and Accreditation Directorate

Introduction

The Constitution of Afghanistan mandates that the Government "establish and administer higher, general and specialized education institutions." The constitution calls for the development of education programs that are "effective" and "balanced." To achieve that effectiveness and balance the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) must establish mechanisms to assess and improve the quality of higher education. To that end, the *Afghanistan National Development Strategy* (ANDS) emphasizes the importance of "quality education" for all Afghans. It calls for "an increase in the quality and independence of the Higher Education system" among its "priority policies." In that vein, the *National Higher Education Strategic Plan: 2010-2014* (NHESP) spells out a vision for higher education as a "high quality public and private higher education system that responds to Afghanistan's growth and development needs." The NHESP includes plans to establish a quality assurance and accreditation agency. The MoHE gives quality improvement and quality assurance a very high priority placing them at the heart of the five year plan.

Under the direction of the MoHE Quality Assurance and Accreditation Directorate (QAAD), each public and private university in Afghanistan must establish a Quality Assurance Committee (IQC) as part of its accreditation process. Their primary responsibility relates to the implementation of an internal quality assurance mechanisms including self-assessments to continuously improve teaching and learning to the benefits of students based on the policies and procedures established by the QAAD. The primary purpose of the self-assessment process is to identify the strengths and weaknesses of (universities / faculties / departments / programs) and to improve student learning.

Currently, in Afghanistan, every university has its own rules and regulations relating to academic program management. There is, however, in many cases no functional quality assurance body at university level with specific responsibility for ensuring good quality assurance practices on a day to day basis.

The Quality Assurance and Accreditation Directorate (QAAD) at the Ministry of Higher Education has thus decided to establish Internal Quality Assurance Units (IQAUs) at the universities which will be the "implementation arm" of the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) at university level. The overall objective of the IQAUs is to promote and support a quality enhancement culture within the university by ensuring that the academic units adopt and implement the QA standards and benchmarked quality criteria. They will therefore have an important role in implementing the intentions of QAAD's Manual on Internal Quality Assurance.

The IQAU will be staffed by a Manager and a suitably qualified support staff. The Manager of the IQAU will be a suitably qualified university academic and shall be appointed by the Chancellor for a period of three years. He/she will on deputation as a full time Manager, and be exempted from their normal academic duties except for a teaching load of 4 hours per week.

Objectives of the IQAUs

The general objectives of the IQAU is to promote a quality assurance culture within the university. The specific objectives are to:

- Institutionalize the quality assurance culture in accordance with national quality assurance and accreditation guidelines and international practices;

- Ensure that the university's quality assurance procedures are designed following the QAAD guidelines and national requirements;
- Develop, maintain and enhance quality of education and people's perception in favor of the university through consistent quality assurance practice and performance;
- Build an image of the university with have the confidence of the stakeholders ensuring transparency, accountability, and good practices in all aspects of management; and
- Prepare the university to meet the external quality assurance assessment and accreditation requirements.

Functions of IQAU

In order to achieve the objectives the major functions of the IQAU will be to:

- Facilitate the mission and objectives of the university for enhancing the quality and relevance of teaching and learning and respond to global trends on quality education;

- Guide and assist the program offering entities i.e. departments, faculties and institutes of the university to define program objectives;

- Develop standards and benchmarks for various academic and administrative activities of the university;

- Organize workshops, seminars and appropriate training for capacity building and promoting QA culture at all levels of the university;

- Facilitating the creation of outcome-based education and a student-centered learning throughout the university using technology for a participatory teaching and learning process;

- Review existing procedures for further improvement of delivery of teaching and learning;

- Provide support to the study program offering academic units to conduct the self-assessment, external peer review and implement QA process at program level;

- Facilitate the approval of new program offering entity and new programs for existing entities using appropriate QA procedures;

- Develop a data base containing information regarding quality assurance, which will be available to all stakeholders;

- Develop an Institutional QA Strategic Plan for every 5 years and ensure its implementation and monitoring of achievements. The Plan will be discussed and approved by the QAC of the university and submitted to QAAD;

- Prepare and produce an annual Institutional Quality Assurance Monitoring Report (IQAMR) which will be discussed and approved by the university's QAC and subsequently submitted to the QAAD;

- Deliver input on quality enhancement of teaching and learning to the Strategic Institutional Development Plan of the university;

- Advise university management, faculty and departments on QA and related matters; and

- Prepare the detailed budget of the IQAU.

Scorecard for the IQAU

The progress made by each IQAU, related to the implementation of the self-assessment process is currently being made annually with the help of a scorecard developed specifically for the purpose. This performance based scorecard is assessing the functionality of the IQAU and its progress against assigned targets. Over time these targets may change. The scorecard consist of three main components:

1. Engagement / Establishment of the IQAU
2. Implementation / Continuation of the QA process
3. Promotion of IQAU at the university

1. Engagement / Establishment of the IQAU (15%)

The purpose and functioning of the Internal Quality Assurance Unit is detailed in the MoHE Quality Assurance Policy and Procedures manual. Establishment and engagement of the IQAU among its stakeholders is a prerequisite to success. Thus the establishment of a fully functional independent unit at the university is the primary requirement set forth by the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Directorate.

Scorecard Criteria*:

	Criteria	Score	Comments
1.	IQAU budget incorporated in the university's recurrent budget. 3 Points Possible		Achieved: 3 points

	Criteria	Score	Comments
2	IQAU Manager appointed 3 Points Possible		The appointed IQAU Director must have experience in managing QA processes. Achieved: 6 points
3	Fully equipped IQAU permanently established		Must have Internet access and necessary administrative support Achieved: 3 points
4	IQAU established on university web-site		Must provide clear explanation of roles of IQAC and IQAU and an overview of university self-assessment action plan Achieved: 3 points

*Assign a score based on the six criteria to a maximum score of 15 points.

2. Implementation (continuation) of the QA process (50%)

The IQAU will be the day-to-day responsible for promoting a culture of quality assurance at all levels of the university as well as the initial and or continuing planning stage of the Self-Assessment Process . The procedure is detailed in the policy and procedures manual and outlined in the flow chart illustrated at the end of this document. The scorecard makes accommodations for universities at different stages of the quality assurance process.

In addition, since differences in defining and understanding the notion of quality assurance still exists among the universities of Afghanistan, continuous informational sessions for stakeholders through awareness seminars/trainings, workshops is considered an essential activity and given as the most important measure in the scorecard. Also, each IQAU is required to develop an Institutional QA Strategic Plan and an annual monitoring report to the QAAD.

Scorecard Criteria*:

	Criteria	Score	Comments
1	Develop an Institutional QA strategic Plan over five years and submit it to QAAD 12 Points Possible		QAAD will make available a template for an Institutional QA Strategic Plan. The Plan must be for minimum 5 years, be linked to the university Self-Assessment Action Plan (SAAP) if available and be approved by MoHE Achieved: 12 points
2	IQAU manages the process of generating the SAAP12 Points Possible		Must produce an effective action plan with achievable actions, timescales and accountabilities. Must also manage tracking of progress against action plan. Achieved: 12 points
3	IQAU develops an institutional QA Policy Manual5 Points Possible		Must capture key QA policies, processes and procedures in a QA Policy Manual Achieved: 5 Points

	Criteria	Score	Comments
4	Develop an Institutional QA Strategic Monitoring Report (annual) and submit it to QAAD. 12 Points Possible		Must detail progress against SAAP as well as development in quality assurance culture and performance. To be submitted to MoHE annually. Achieved: 12 points
5	IQAU administrates meeting of IQAU and FQAC 3 Points Possible		Must ensure that QAC meetings are minuted and monitor progress against agreed actions Achieved: 3 points
6	IQAU develops institutional understanding of international best practice in QA 6 Points Possible		Must develop relationships with QA experts outside of Afghanistan to support the development of QA within the institution Achieved: 46 points

*Assign a score based on the five criteria to a maximum score of 50 points.

3. Promotion of the Internal Quality Assurance Unit (35%)

Included in this section are criteria that are considered to be creating visibility to the role and purpose of the IQAU both within and outside the university. Gaining acceptance for the IQAU and IAC and the quality assurance processes within the universities is still an on-going process. Therefore, universities are encouraged to appoint professional and distinguished members of the faculty and administration to the QAC, as well as having those members serve on statutory committees like Academic Councils, etc. Furthermore, it is important that the university is appointing a competent Director for the IQAU with solid experience in carrying out quality assurance activities at universities. At the same time, the QAAD is continuously engaged in capacity building and will organize regular trainings, workshops, etc. in which participation will be required. The inclusion of the two criteria mentioned below in this section are designed to encourage and strengthen the role of the IQAU and the growth of the concept of quality assurance.

Scorecard Criteria*:

	Criteria	Score	Comments
1	IQAU delivers an orientation session on the role of IQAU3 Points Possible		Must be delivered to all staff – academic and administrative and form part of induction for new hires Achieved: 3 points

2	IQAU actively promotes a QA culture throughout the institution. 5 Points Possible		Must deliver regular programme of information sessions focused on staff engagement in QA activities. Achieved: 5 points
3	IQAU develops QA capabilities through-out the institution 10 Points Possible		Must deliver training workshops to develop the skills required to implement key QA Policy Manual Achieved: 10 points
4	IQAU makes all information about QA policy, processes, and procedures available to all staff 7 Points Possible		Must ensure that the QA Policy Manual plus all other information relating to QA within the institution is available online plus ensure that hard copies are available in Faculty and Departmental Offices Achieved: 7 points
5	IQAU publishes results of QA activities online at the university web-site 10 Points Possible		Must ensure that results of external and internal reviews, including student surveys, are made available to all staff and to external stakeholders Achieved: 10 points

*Assign a score based on the two criteria to a maximum score of 35 points.

Rating / Scoring Criteria

The following chart has been used to define scoring of the IQAU:

A = 80 to 100 Points	80%-100%
B= 60 to 79 Points	60%-79%
C= 40 to 59 Points	40%-59%
D= 0 to 40 Points	Up to 40%

In order for MoHE to successfully meet the DLIs on the number of public universities with Internal Quality Assurance Units (IQAUs) functioning in accordance with scorecard, the following scores should be obtained:

- By December 21 2017, at least 8 universities need to score at least 65 points or above to meet the Disbursement-Linked Indicator for the functionality of the IQAU;
- By December 21 2018, at least 12 universities need to score at least 70 points or above to meet the Disbursement-Linked Indicator for the functionality of the IQAU;

- By December 21 2019, at least 16 universities need to score at least 75 points or above to meet the Disbursement-Linked Indicator for the functionality of the IQAU.