

Non - State Higher Education Circular No. 04/2023

My No. HE/NS/MU/AHEAD/I
Monitoring Unit
Non-State Higher Education Division
Ministry of Education
11.11.2023

The Chief Executive Officers,
Non-State Higher Education Institutes.

Establishment of a Center for Quality assurance (CQA) and Development of a Performance Score Card for Degree Awarding Institutions

The Ministry of Education is primarily responsible in ensuring the proper national and international quality standards are being maintained by the Degree Awarding Institutions (DAIs) which have been recognized by the section 25A of the Universities Act No.16 of 1978.

02. Accordingly, it was decided to issue circulars directing (DAIs) to adhere to Sri Lanka Qualification Framework (SLQF) guidelines and to introduce an Internal Quality Assurance system within the institute with the aim of enhancing the quality of education provided by DAIs. Accordingly, Non-State Higher Education Circular No. 01/2022 was issued.

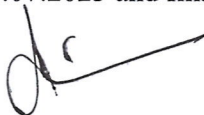
03. As a further step to establish the Centre for Quality Assurance (CQA) in DAIs, the operational guidelines for the proper functioning of these units, was prepared and has been circulated among DAIs by the Circular No. 01/2023.

04. Consequently in monitoring the progress and operations of the CQA, it has been decided to request all DAIs to report to the Ministry regarding their performance in relation to Quality Assurance activities.

05. Therefore, a ‘‘Performance Score Card’’ is hereby introduced for the DAIs , which is annexed as Annexure I to report their progress in Quality Assurance (QA) related activities to the Ministry of Education, bi-annually.

06. Accordingly, every DAI should furnish the completed Performance Score Cards (PSC) bi-annually on June 30th and 31st of December every year. After the inspection of the PSCs the institute representatives may summon to the ministry if further clarifications on scoring of the components of PSC or any other related matter is needed.

07. This Circular is issued as per the recommendations of the Standing Committee on Accreditation and Quality Assurance (SCAQA) with recommendation of an amendment at 89th SCAQA held on 19.07.2023 and final recommendation given on 23.08.2023 at its 90th meeting.



M. N. Ranasinghe
Secretary/Specified Authority

Annexure

I

Component 01 - Establishment of a CQA (weightage 10%)

	Criteria	Score	Action
01	Appointment of a Head for the CQA	01	<p>Parameters to be determined: Terms of Reference/Job Description, qualifications, seniority, and prior experience in QA activities.</p> <p>External/internal announcements are made*.</p> <p>Appointment to be made by the Head of Administration based on the recommendations of the highest academic governance body**.</p> <p>*Undertake external recruitment exceptionally when no suitable internal candidate can be found. The relevant advertisements are made via institute website and newspapers.</p> <p>** The received applications are evaluated by the relevant committee comprising at least 3 senior members of the DAI. The selected profile will be sent to the Head of Administration.</p>
02	Appointment of other members of CQA	01	<p>Deans of all Faculties/Head of Schools/Departments/Programs or permanent representative from each academic unit recommended by the relevant highest Academic Board.</p> <p>Registrar or permanent nominee</p> <p>Bursar/Head of Finance or permanent nominee</p> <p>Librarian or permanent nominee</p> <p>Director-Staff Development Center(SDC)/Head of Human Resource (HR)</p>

			<p>Director/CDCE (eg. Center for Distance and Continuous Education)</p> <p>Convener/secretary to be elected by the Unit from among its members or Assistant Registrar who would be a permanent member</p> <p>Head of Marketing</p> <p>Two other relevant Academic and Administrative staff members (e.g., QA consultants, etc.)</p>
03	Availability of permanent office space for CQA	01	Location: Separate division at the central administrative building.
04	Availability of furniture for CQA	01	Minimum Requirement: Small discussion table with 4 chairs, 2 office tables and 2 chairs, 1 filing Cupboard
05	Availability of office equipment	01	Computers/Laptops, printer, scanner, and copier
06	Availability of internet and telephone facilities	01	Dedicated phone no. and internet facility.
07	Availability of permanent support staff	01	Permanent administrative executive*, Support of office assistant**
08	Establishment of Faculty/School/Department/Programme internal quality assurance (IQA) Committee (IQAC) to liaise with CQA	01	<p>Upon receiving the approvals from the highest Academic Authority, a committee (odd no. not less than 3) will be appointed.</p> <p>No separate physical location would be allocated.</p>
09	Appointment of IQAC Coordinators	01	Appoint QA Committee Chair as the Coordinator at the Faculty/ School/ Department/ Program level.
10	Define mode of liaison of Faculty/School/Department/Program Coordinators with Head/CQA.	01	QA Committee Chair at the Faculty/School/Department/Program level are supposed to submit as meeting minutes to Head of CQA at the monthly review meeting. Template to report for NSHE could be developed by DAIs

Component 02

Institutionalization/Operationalization of the CQA and Empowering and Promotion of the CQA (40%)

	Criteria	Score	Action
01	CQA will have its' By-laws	04	By-laws would be developed and approved by the highest Governing Body of the DAI (i.e., HEI Council, Governing Council, Board of Governors, Management Council, etc.)
02	CQA will have Operational Guidelines	04	The CQA will prepare their operational guidelines (by adopting the general guidelines

			developed by the Monitoring Unit for NSHED and customized for the DAI's governance structure/organogram and specific implementation arrangement)
03	Will have a strategic development plan for internal quality assurance activities for 3 years	08	The Strategic Plan should be approved by the highest Academic Body and the highest Governing Body of the DAI and sent to the Monitoring Unit of NSHED for information
04	Will have annual work plan	05	Submitted to the DAI's highest Academic Body and the DAI's highest Governing Body for approval before commencing a calendar/financial year
05	Will have CQA annual budget	05	Will develop and have it incorporated into DAI's budget (recurrent & capital) and review the utilization of the budget at the end of every financial/calendar year
06	CQA will be established on DAIs website and maintained	02	Regular updating will take place- dedicated service from DAI's Information and Technology (IT) Centre
07	Permanent agenda item in Senate meetings/highest academic body	03	Availability of a time slot for Head of CQA to report at the DAI's Senate/highest academic body of the DAI at every regular meeting. (Discuss the frequency of meetings) Head of CQA should be a permanent member of the Senate/highest Academic Body of the DAI.
08	CQA (Head and Faculty Coordinators) will present the DAI's QA strategy to the entire DAI community every year	07	Will occur annually as a series of seminars to academic, administrative, non- academic and support staff
09	Head/CQA permitted to circulate notices of QA activities in the DAI	02	Notices of meetings, workshops, seminars etc. regarding quality assurance of other State and Non-State Universities to be circulated among staff members- academic, administrative, non-academic and support staff so that the DAI could be abreast of QA activities which enhance the educational experience of students

Component 03

Implementation of QA Mechanism at DAI (Including preparation of Self-Assessment) (50%)

	Criteria	Score	Action
01	CQA to initiate and support preparation of SER (Self Evaluation Report) for External Institutional Reviews which could occur every 5- 6 years	05	Appointment of SER preparation team by the CQA committee, maintain repository of evidence for criteria and standards, development of a timeline and checklist, monitor progress of report development, adherence to the Minimum Standards for IR (Institutional Review) for DAIs (Hardcopies/ Softcopies)

02	CQA to initiate and support preparation of SER (Self Evaluation Report) for Internal Institutional Reviews which could occur annually as a mini review culminating as a full Internal Institutional Review (IIR) before the external review every 5- 6 years	04	Appointment of SER preparation team by the CQA committee, maintain repository of evidence for criteria and standards, development of a timeline and checklist, monitor progress of report development, adherence to the Minimum Standards for IR (Institutional Review) for DAIs, conduct a mock IR annually and a full IIR before the external review (Hardcopies/ Softcopies).
03	CQA to motivate and support Study Programs to prepare SERs for External Program Reviews which could occur every 4-5 years	05	Appointment of SER preparation team by the CQA committee in consultation with IQAC of Faculty/School/College, maintain repository of evidence for criteria and standards, development of a timeline and checklist, monitor progress of report development, adherence to the Minimum Standards for PR for DAIs (Hardcopies /Softcopies)
04	CQA to motivate and support Study Programs to prepare SERs for Internal Program Reviews which could occur annually as a mini review culminating as a full Internal Program Review (IPR) before the external PR every 4-5 years	04	Appointment of SER preparation team by the CQA committee in consultation with IQAC of Faculty/School/College, maintain repository of evidence for criteria and standards, development of a timeline and checklist, monitor progress of report development, adherence to the Minimum Standards for Program Reviews (PR) for DAIs, conduct mock PR annually and a full IPR before the external program review. (Hardcopies /Softcopies)
05	CQA to provide necessary training and workshop	04	CQA will provide necessary training and workshops for the Self-Assessment Report preparation teams as well as other interested academics on the establishment of a QA mechanism in DAIs, carrying out Self-assessment, and preparation of Self-Assessment Reports. List of Trainings and workshops
06	Motivate and support Study programs to showcase best practices in QA.	04	Develop mechanism to follow the best practices of QA. Provide assistance with presentation at national and international events/fora.
07	Develop relationships and liaise with international Agencies and Universities on QA activities.	04	Introduce such best practices and assist regarding adapting and adoption of such practices in QA where relevant. Eg. APQR and APQL, INQAAHE
08	Report to the Additional Secretary of the NSHED the bi-annual progress of the CQA	04	Template to be generated by the NSHED to report on initiated and progressing activities – especially on the alignment of degree programs with the SLQF, new proposals (degree programs, Centers/Institutes) submitted for evaluation and innovative practices on QA adopted.
09	Submit an annual report of the CQA to Additional Secretary of the NSHED, Ministry of Education	04	This should be according to the strategic plan developed by the CQA.
10	The CQA will administer/facilitate all meetings of the CQA and IQACs	04	Set up dates annually, invite members for meetings, keep minutes, take necessary action

			on proceedings. Collect and archive minutes of IQACs of Faculties and CQA (softcopies and if necessary, hardcopies)
11	CQA to assist manual preparation on QA aspects in Faculties/Schools/Colleges	04	Topics for manual preparation to be identified and accept other recognized institutional manual/s of international accredited bodies - laboratory equipment use and safety, reporting procedures of questionnaires/surveys- student feedback on courses, teacher evaluations, feed- back by staff and students on services – health, maintenance, landscaping, cleanliness etc.
12	The results of Institutional Review and Program Reviews and internal reviews, including student surveys, are made available to all staff and external stakeholders on the DAI website.	04	CQA will liaise with IQACs of Faculties/Schools/Colleges to administer student surveys/feedback (semester based), stakeholder meeting proceedings and other such surveys and maintain in repository