

Communicating about quality: External quality assurance

**Quality Assurance
Process in Sri Lankan
University System**

The Directorate of Quality Assurance

- A subsidiary body of the University Grants Commission (UGC) established in 2005 to implement activities to improve the quality of education in the country, share good practices and to inculcate quality culture in state universities.
- The main function of the Directorate of Quality Assurance is to review the standard and quality of the HEIs at institution level, the programs of study, and to publicize the outcomes to stakeholders in order to achieve accountability and further improvement.
- For this purpose, the QAAC periodically conducts External Quality Audits.

Quality Assurance in Higher Education in Sri Lanka

The University Grants Commission of Sri Lanka

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graph TD; A[The University Grants Commission of Sri Lanka] --- B[Standing Committee on Quality Assurance  
(Policy Decision Recommendation and Supervisory Role)]; B --- C[Directorate / Quality Assurance and Accreditation]; C --- D[Internal Quality Assurance Units (IQAUs) of Higher Educational Institutes];
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Standing Committee on Quality Assurance
(Policy Decision Recommendation and Supervisory Role)

Directorate / Quality Assurance and Accreditation

Internal Quality Assurance Units (IQAUs) of Higher Educational Institutes

Directorate of Quality Assurance

- Evaluation of new Degree Proposals submitted by the Universities to verify the adherence of all aspects with the Sri Lanka Qualifications Framework (SLQF)
- Conducting training programs for Institutional Reviewers and Program Reviewers
- Scheduling and conducting Institutional Reviews and Program Reviews
- Assist in the implementation of all activities in Internal Quality Assurance Units (IQAU) of Universities : Development of IQAU Score Card and reviewing the quarterly Progress Reports by IQAUs
- Evaluation of Recognition Items (Foreign Qualifications)
- Assist in Subject Benchmark Formulation
- Conducting workshops / training programs for the continuous advancement of the Quality of the Higher Education, i.e. Higher Education Curriculum Development, Innovative Teaching, Learning and Assessment in Sri Lankan Universities

Internal Quality Assurance Units (IQAU) of Higher Educational Institutes

- Preparation of SER for Institutional Reviews
- Provide support services write SERs for Program Reviews
- Provide necessary training and workshop for Self-Assessment Report (SER) preparation
- Motivate and support Study programs to showcase best practices in QA
- Develop relationships and liaise with international Agencies on QA activities
- Prepare manual on QA policy in University
- Conduct University and Faculty level awareness programs on QA
- Report at the UGC Standing Committee on QA the bimonthly progress of the IQAU
- Submit an annual report of the IQAU to the QAAC, UGC
- Development the Strategic Plan, annual work plan, and annual budget for the IQAU and obtain the University Senate and Council approval

Quality Assurance process of the Sri Lankan university system is guided by three manuals published by the UGC:

- ❑ *“Manual for Institutional Review of Sri Lankan Universities and Higher Education Institutions”* (IR Manual),
- ❑ *“Manual for Review of Undergraduate Study Programmes of Sri Lankan Universities and Higher Education Institutes”* (PR Manual), and
- ❑ *“Sri Lanka Qualifications Framework”* (SLQF).



Manual for Institutional Review of Sri Lankan Universities and Higher Education Institutions



University Grants Commission
April - 2015



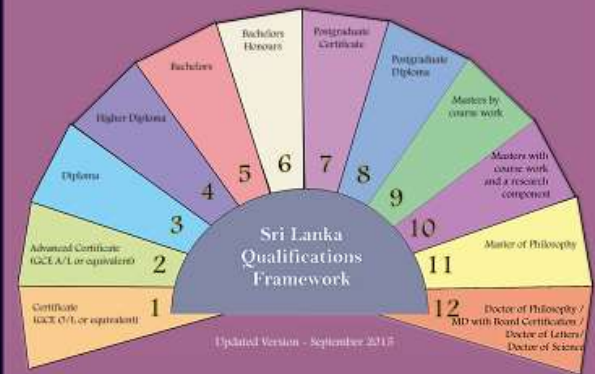
Manual for Review of Undergraduate Study Programmes of Sri Lankan Universities and Higher Education Institutions



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December - 2015



SRI LANKA QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK (SLQF)



External Quality Assurance (ERA) by Peer Review

Institutional Review (IR) –

- The focus of IR is on how the institution assures itself that course/programme approval procedures operated in faculties and departments are acted upon as required.
- IR analyses and tests the effectiveness of an institution's processes for managing and assuring the quality of academic activities undertaken by the institution.
- It evaluates the extent to which internal quality assurance schemes can be relied on to maintain the quality of provision over time.

The Ten Criteria for Institutional Review

1. Governance and Management.

2. Curriculum Design and Development.

3. Teaching and Learning.

4. Learning Resources, Student Support and Progression.

5. Student Assessment and Awards.

6. Strength and Quality of Staff.

7. Postgraduate Studies, Research, Innovation and Commercialization.

8. Community Engagement, Consultancy and Outreach.

9. Distance Education.

10. Quality Assurance.

External Quality Assurance (ERA) by Peer Review

Program Review (PR) -

- The PR focuses on how a specific course/program has been shaped and improved by a systematic process of considered design and review.
- PR evaluates the quality of the student learning experience at program level.
- It is about management and assurance of quality at program, rather than institutional level.

The Eight Criteria for Program Review

1. Programme Management
2. Human and Physical Resources
3. Programme Design and Development
4. Course/ Module Design and Development
5. Teaching and Learning
6. Learning Environment, Student Support and Progression
7. Student Assessment and Awards
8. Innovative and Healthy Practices

SLQF is a nationally consistent framework for all higher education qualifications offered in Sri Lanka

Key Characteristics of SLQF

- 1. Naming of Qualification**
- 2. Volume of Learning**
- 3. Qualification Descriptors**
- 4. Level Descriptors**
- 5. Comparable Levels of SLQF & NVQ**
- 6. Sri Lanka Qualifications Progression Pathways**

Different SLQF Levels with Higher Education Qualification Types

SLQF Level	Qualification Type Awarded
12	Doctor of Philosophy / MD with Board Certification/Doctor of Letters/Doctor of Science
11	Master of Philosophy
10	Masters with course work and a research component
9	Masters by course work
8	Postgraduate Diploma
7	Postgraduate Certificate
6	Bachelors Honours
5	Bachelors
4	Higher Diploma
3	Diploma
2	Advanced Certificate (GCE A/L or equivalent)
1	Certificate (GCE O/L or equivalent)