Revised Internal Quality Assurance Policy Manual

of

University of Sri Jayewardenepura

Prepared by

Centre for Quality Assurance (CQA)

University of Sri Jayewardenepura

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1. Introduction

This policy manual outlines the key aspects of the internal quality assurance approach of University of Sri Jayewardenepura (USJ) in compliance with the Circular No. 04/2015 issued on 05th May 2015 and the Circular No. 09/2019 on 'Further Strengthening Internal Quality Assurance Systems in Universities and Higher Educational Institutes' issued on 07th October 2019 by the University Grants Commission (UGC). It includes the aims of internal quality assurance, the details of the Senate Standing Committee on Quality Assurance (SSCQA) and the composition, the responsibilities and the functions of the Centre for Quality Assurance (CQA) of the University. It also includes the arrangements at the functional areas of the University for the implementation of quality assurance activities.

2. Aims of Internal Quality Assurance

The aims of the Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) of the University have been identified as follows in line with the policy framework in this regard of the Quality Assurance Council (QAC) of the University Grants Commission (UGC).

(a) To perform quality assurance (QA) of education provision of USJ

(b) To support sustainable quality enhancement within the USJ leading to a quality culture

(c) To present a clear and comprehensive profile of USJ, based on self-review and SWOT analysis concerning its study programmes, thus enabling continuous self-improvement

As prescribed in the Internal Quality Assurance Manual for Sri Lankan Universities (2013), the areas of particular importance in IQA at USJ include the following:

- Policy and procedures for higher education
- Approval, monitoring and periodic review of the study programmes and awards
- Teaching, learning and assessment of students
- Quality assurance of both academic and non-academic staff
- Learning resources and student support
- Information systems
- Public information

3. Senate Standing Committee on Quality Assurance (SSCQA)

The SSCQA is responsible for the overall management of the IQA of the University through the Centre for Quality Assurance (CQA) and the Internal Quality Assurance Cells (IQACs) of the institutes, faculties and units of USJ. This committee is chaired by the Vice Chancellor of the University. The SSCQA comprises representatives from all Institutes, Faculties of Study, Units and Divisions of Administration, Finance and Academic Support of USJ. Accordingly, the members of the SSCQA are as follows:

- Vice Chancellor (Chairperson)
- Director, Postgraduate Institute of Management (PIM)
- Deans of all Faculties of Study
- Director, CQA (Senior Academic)
- Deputy Director, CQA (Senior Academic)
- Coordinators of Institutes/Faculties/Units
- Registrar (or nominee)
- Bursar (or nominee)
- Librarian (or nominee)
- Director, Staff Development Centre (SDC)
- Director, External Degrees and Extension Courses Unit (EDECU)
- Convener/Secretary, CQA (DR/SAR/AR of the Academic Division)
- Any other member recommended by the Council of USJ

4. Centre for Quality Assurance (CQA) of the University

CQA is the apex body responsible for the IQA of USJ. Accordingly, it is responsible for coordinating and carrying out the QA activities of the USJ, promoting and sharing good practices, facilitating external quality assessment, and liaising with the QAC of UGC. The objectives and functions, composition, and reporting mechanism of CQA are given below.

4.1 Objectives and Functions

The objectives of the CQA of USJ have been identified as follows in accordance with the UGC Circular No. 09/2019 on 'Further Strengthening Internal Quality Assurance Systems in Universities and Higher Educational Institutes.'

- Institutionalize the culture of QA in line with the national education policy and international best practices
- Ensure that the QA procedures of the University are in line with national requirements and UGC regulations
- Develop and maintain a favourable perception of the University through improved quality of education based on the consistent practice of QA procedures

In accordance with these objectives, the CQA is expected to carry out the following functions.

- Support the university and programme offering entities within the university (i.e. departments of study, faculties, institutes and units) in preparation for external QA assessments and accreditation requirements.
- Offer guidance and assistance to program offering entities in defining program objectives and outcomes, graduate profiles, and course curricula, which are in accordance with national reference points such as Sri Lanka Qualifications Framework (SLQF) and Subject Benchmark Statements (SBSs).
- Support the establishment and effective functioning of IQACs of institutes/faculties/units.
- Promote and coordinate all QA related activities within the university through the conduct of workshops, seminars, development of manuals, and other appropriate capacity building activities.
- Liaise with the QAC of the UGC and other external quality assurance agencies as well as relevant international agencies.
- Develop, review and revise by-laws, manual of operations and standard operational procedures necessary for governance and management of the CQA.

4.2 Composition of CQA

CQA is headed by a Director. The Director is assisted by a Deputy Director. The other officers of CQA are the Secretary, the Research Assistant, and the Management Assistant. An Office Assistant is also available. These appointments are made in compliance with the UGC Circular No. 09/2019 on 'Further Strengthening Internal Quality Assurance Systems in Universities and Higher Educational Institutes.' The terms of reference (TOR) developed for the officers of CQA of USJ are given from Annex I to Annex V.

4.3 Reporting Procedure of the CQA

The CQA should report the progress of its activities to the University Senate on monthly basis. Further, the IQACs of the Institutes/Faculties/Units are required to present the progress of their activities monthly to the respective Faculty Boards, which will be subsequently reported to the Senate with a copy to CQA. The Administration, Finance and Academic Support Divisions will present the progress of their activities monthly at the Deans, Heads of the Departments and Executive Officers' Meeting, which will be subsequently reported to the CQA.

5. Role of Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) at Institute/Faculty/Unit

The IQAC of an Institute/Faculty/Unit is responsible for developing the guidelines relating to the QA activities of the relevant Institute/Faculty/Unit and overseeing the implementation of such activities. These activities will revolve around the following aspects.

(i). Management and review of study programmes

(ii). Development of human and physical resources

(iii). Design and development of the curriculum of study programmes

(iv). Design and development of the courses/modules

(v). Improvement of teaching and learning mechanisms

(vi). Provision of student support services and facilitating their progression

(vii). Review of student assessment mechanism and awards relating to study programmes

(viii). Promotion of innovative and healthy practices in relation to aspects (i) to (vii)

An operating guideline has been prepared by the CQA to guide and facilitate the activities of IQACs.

6. Role of the Administrative, Finance and Academic Support Divisions

As Administrative, Finance and Academic Support Divisions of the University provide support services to carry out the academic activities of the various Institutes/Faculties of Study, the respective Heads of these divisions are responsible for carrying out the following activities.

- Develop the guidelines for the conduct of functions of the respective divisions
- Develop the relevant operating manuals required in carrying out the respective functions
- Oversee the implementation of these functions in the respective divisions in line with guidelines and procedures
- Take remedial action when required

In implementing these activities, it is expected that these divisions secure the support of the relevant administrative officers of the Institutes/Faculties/Units. Further, the progress of these activities should be reported at the Deans, Heads of the Departments and Executive Officers' Meeting of the University.

7. Conclusion

IQA is a continuous process. Everyone in the University is collectively responsible for the QA of its education provision and standard of awards. Hence, everyone is expected to improve the quality of activities that they are engaged in. In this context, the establishment of the stipulated internal processes would contribute to enhance the quality of the University as a whole leading to a quality culture.

8. Review and Approval

The CQA of USJ has the right to periodically revise this policy manual to suit the changes in the national level QA policies and procedures developed by the QAC of UGC. Thereafter, the approval of the Senate and the Council of the USJ is obtained for this policy manual. The revised policy manual is effective from the date it is approved by the Council and it will supersede the manual exited till then.

Annex I
Director, Centre for Quality Assurance (CQA)
Terms of Reference (TOR)

- Liaise regularly and closely with the Vice Chancellor to ensure smooth functioning of the CQA.
- Liaise with the Quality Assurance Council (QAC) of the University Grants Commission (UGC), and the other internal and international external quality assurance (QA) agencies.
- Coordinate all QA related activities within the University and monthly report to the Senate.
- Conduct the meetings of the Senate Standing Committee on Quality Assurance (SSCQA), and review its minutes and related documents.
- Prepare a Strategic Plan for QA activities of the University for a five-year period and an Annual Work Plan for the CQA.
- Incorporate the QA Strategic Plan in the University Corporate Plan.
- Monitor QA activities of the University, implement QA reviews/audits, and carry out follow-up action.
- Coordinate the preparation of the Self-Evaluation Report (SER) of the University for the Institutional Review (IR).
- Guide the preparation of the SERs of study programmes of Institutes/Faculties/Units of the University for Programme Reviews.
- Review the revised curricular of existing and new study programmes of the University, and provide observations to the Curriculum Review Committee (CRC) of the University.
- Conduct the meetings of the CRC to make recommendations for the approval of curricular of study programmes by the Senate, and review the minutes of CRC and the compliance reports sent to the Institutes/Faculties/Unit as to the curricular of study programmes.
- Review the proposals prepared for the introduction of new study programmes/faculties/departments, and the revision of existing study programmes, which are sent for the approval of the QAC of UGC.
- Provide advice on QA to all Institutes/Faculties/Departments/Units, and monitor and guide their QA activities.
- Facilitate the identification and sharing of good practices in QA among the Institutes/Faculties/Departments/Units of the University.
- Guide the preparation of QA related guidelines and manuals for use within the University.
- Ensure the necessary academic regulations/By-Laws are in place, and if not, make recommendations for remedial action.
- Conduct awareness programs on QA among all categories of staff members, with the support of the Staff Development Centre (SDC) of the University.
- Establish QA Cells at the Institutes/Faculties/Unit of the University, and define their duties and responsibilities.
- Monitor the general administration of the CQA.
- Perform any other QA related activity assigned by the Vice Chancellor.

Annex II
Deputy Director, Centre for Quality Assurance (CQA)
Terms of Reference (TOR)

The Deputy Director should assist the functions of the Director, CQA stated below.

- Liaise regularly and closely with the Vice Chancellor to ensure smooth functioning of the CQA.
- Liaise with the Quality Assurance Council (QAC) of the University Grants Commission (UGC), and the other internal and international external quality assurance (QA) agencies.
- Coordinate all QA related activities within the University and monthly report to the Senate.
- Conduct the meetings of the Senate Standing Committee on Quality Assurance (SSCQA), and review its minutes and related documents.
- Prepare a Strategic Plan for QA activities of the University for a five-year period and an Annual Work Plan for the CQA.
- Incorporate the QA Strategic Plan in the University Corporate Plan.
- Monitor QA activities of the University, implement QA reviews/audits, and carry out follow-up action.
- Coordinate the preparation of the Self-Evaluation Report (SER) of the University for the Institutional Review (IR).
- Guide the preparation of the SERs of study programmes of Institutes/Faculties/Units of the University for Programme Reviews.
- Review the revised curricular of existing and new study programmes of the University, and provide observations to the Curriculum Review Committee (CRC) of the University.
- Conduct the meetings of the CRC to make recommendations for the approval of curricular of study programmes by the Senate, and review the minutes of CRC and the compliance reports sent to the Institutes/Faculties/Unit as to the curricular of study programmes.
- Review the proposals prepared for the introduction of new study programmes/faculties/departments, and the revision of existing study programmes, which are sent for the approval of the QAC of UGC.
- Provide advice on QA to all Institutes/Faculties/Departments/Units, and monitor and guide their QA activities.
- Facilitate the identification and sharing of good practices in QA among the Institutes/Faculties/Departments/Units of the University.
- Guide the preparation of QA related guidelines and manuals for use within the University.
- Ensure the necessary academic regulations/By-Laws are in place, and if not, make recommendations for remedial action.
- Conduct awareness programs on QA among all categories of staff members, with the support of the Staff Development Centre (SDC) of the University.
- Establish QA Cells at the Institutes/Faculties/Unit of the University, and define their duties and responsibilities.
- Monitor the general administration of the CQA.
- Perform any other QA related activity assigned by the Vice Chancellor.

Annex III
Secretary, Centre for Quality Assurance (CQA)
Terms of Reference (TOR)

The Secretary of CQA is expected to perform the following functions under the guidance of the Director, CQA and the Deputy Director, CQA.

- Send the notices of the Curriculum Review Committee (CRC) meeting and the Senate Standing Committee on Quality Assurance (SSCQA) meeting to the members of these committees.
- Prepare the minutes of the CRC and SSCQA meetings.
- Prepare the quarterly progress reports and annual reports of CQA to submit to the Quality Assurance Council (QAC) of the University Grants Commission (UGC).
- Prepare the monthly progress report of CQA to submit to the University Senate meeting
- Prepare the annual progress report of CQA to include in the University Annual Report
- Prepare the appointment letters of Director and Deputy Director of CQA, and the QA Cell Coordinators of Institutes/Faculties/Units of the University
- Prepare the memos to obtain approval for the appointments of the administrative staff of CQAs (i.e., Secretary, Research Assistant and Management Assistant) and the payment vouchers for their salaries.
- Prepare the appointment letters of the Research Assistant and the Management Assistant
- Assist the Director and Deputy Director/CQA to prepare the Self Evaluation Report (SER) for the Institutional Review (IR)
- Monitor the collection of documents required for the IR and maintain a documentary management system consisting of these documents
- Prepare the Annual Procurement Plan of the CQA
- Maintain the Inventory of the CQA
- Examine all furniture and the equipment in the CQA physically, prepare the Board of Survey Report of the CQA, and assist the Board of Survey Team of the University
- Prepare the letters to send to the University administration as and when required.
- Maintain the documents of the CQA.
- Carry out the general administration of the CQA.
- Perform any other QA related matter assigned by the Director/Deputy Director of the CQA.

The Secretary is expected to do these tasks with the assistance of the Management Assistant of CQA.

Annex IV
Research Assistant, Centre for Quality Assurance (CQA)
Terms of Reference (TOR)

The Research Assistant is expected to perform the following functions under the guidance of the Director and the Deputy Director of CQA.

- Evaluate the proposals for the introduction of new study programmes (undergraduate, postgraduate, and programmes placed below SLQF Level 5) as to their compliance with the Sri Lanka Qualification Framework (SLQF) and other regulations of the Quality Assurance Council (QAC) of the University Grants Commission (UGC).
- Evaluate the proposals for the revision of existing study programmes (undergraduate, postgraduate, and programmes placed below SLQF Level 5) as to their compliance with the SLQF and other regulations of the QAC of the UGC.
- Submit the proposals for the introduction of new study programmes and revised curricular of existing study programs to the consideration of the Curriculum Review Committee (CRC) of the University.
- Prepare a compliance report for each study programme submitted to the CRC and send it to the relevant Institute/Faculty/Unit of the University.
- Assist the academic and administrative staff of the relevant Institute/Faculty/Unit to complete the proposals as to the introduction of new study programmes/faculties/departments, and revision of curricular of existing study programmes.
- Assist the preparation of policies, manuals of operations and standard operating procedures for the University.
- Assist the organization of workshops, seminars and appropriate training for capacity building of staff, and promote a quality assurance (QA) culture within the University.
- Assist the Director, Deputy Director and the Secretary of the CQA to prepare the Self Evaluation Report (SER) for the Institutional Review (IR).
- Collect and organise the documents required for the IR and include them in the documentary management system.
- Assist the Coordinators of Internal Quality Assurance Cells (IQACs) of Institutes/Faculty/Units of the University to conduct QA activities and in external reviews.
- Maintain a repository of minutes and progress reports of IQACs of Institutes/Faculty/Units of the University.
- Maintain the CQA website up-to-date.
- Respond to the letters sent by the Registrar or any other relevant official of the University as to the SLQF level certifications of study programmes.
- Perform any other QA related matter assigned by the Director/Deputy Director of the CQA

Annex V
Management Assistant, Centre for Quality Assurance (CQA)
Terms of Reference (TOR)

The Management Assistant should support the Secretary, CQA in the conduct of the following activities:

- Preparation of the progress reports submitted to the Quality Assurance Council (QAC) of the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the University Senate.
- Preparation of the annual progress report of the CQA to include in the University Annual Report.
- Assist to prepare the Self Evaluation Report (SER) for the Institutional Review (IR).
- Collect and organise the documents required for IR and include them in the documentary management system.
- Prepare the Annual Procurement Plan of the CQA.
- Maintain the Inventory of the CQA.
- Examine physically the furniture and the equipment in the CQA, prepare the Board of Survey Report of the CQA, and assist the Board of Survey Team of the University.
- Preparation of the letters, memos and vouchers of the CQA.
- Maintain the documents of the CQA.
- Carrying out the general administration of the CQA.
- Perform any other QA related matter assigned to the Secretary by the Director/Deputy Director of the CQA.