



বাংলাদেশ  
বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় মঞ্জুরী কমিশন

# University Grants Commission of Bangladesh

## Quality Assurance Mechanism in Universities

Quality Assurance Unit (QAU)

The society we live in today is globalized and economic pursuits have become highly competitive. Productivity and growth today solely depends upon new knowledge generated in universities. Creativity and innovation are the basis of new knowledge and very critical for rapid development of the country. Higher education transforms the traditional society into knowledge society and forms the basis for creativity and innovation. Improving the quality of tertiary education is vitally important in this context. Currently, the scope of higher education in Bangladesh expanded remarkably with the increasing number of universities both in private and public sector. At the same time, it has drawn on many deep rooted and intertwined challenges. These problems can only be addressed by developing a quality culture and ensuring good practices in higher education institutions (HEIs).

Establishment of quality assurance system in higher education is a global concern. Many countries in the world developed quality assurance system internally with formal institutional approach. A well functioning quality assurance system could push higher education in Bangladesh forward to greater heights with peoples' confidence at national and international level. As such, there is an urgency of developing internal quality assurance system within the universities in Bangladesh.

### **Quality Assurance (QA) in Higher Education**

Quality comes out of a well structured process or a system. This system refers to institutional arrangements including infrastructure, evidence of good practices, and guiding principles for education. Quality assurance process determines whether the graduates achieved the predetermined standard in terms of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that meets the expectations of the stakeholders.

The responsibility of the HEIs is to maintain and improve quality of its academic programs. Quality assurance systems in higher education, however, comprises of two basic components: an internal component and an external component.

Internal quality assurance system is composed of the institutional arrangements within the institution to provide assurance of quality. Institutional QA Cell (IQAC) will be responsible to introduce the internal quality assurance system and QA culture at the University level.

In case of external quality assurance a credible body or agency external to a particular HEI will be assigned or given the responsibility to assess the effectiveness of the internal quality assurance system.

### **Institutional Arrangements for QA in Bangladesh**

University Grants Commission of Bangladesh (UGC) is responding positively to the QA issues in higher education and has already set up—a Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) within the organizational structure of UGC. The QAU would guide and

oversee the establishment of Institutional Quality Assurance Cells (IQAC) in all universities both public and private in Bangladesh. Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council of Bangladesh (QAACB) will be formed under an Act and upon its establishment shall take over the quality assurance activities of QAU. QAU will also be working for preparing the national qualifications framework and other quality assurance documents.

### **Mission of QAU**

To gain confidence of the stakeholders in the globalized world by ensuring efficient performance of higher education institutions in Bangladesh with transparency, accountability and credibility in accordance with internationally acceptable quality assurance practices.

### **Objectives of QAU**

The general objective of the QAU is to promote a quality assurance culture within the higher education institutions in Bangladesh. The specific objectives are to:

- guide the universities for establishing a functional institutional quality assurance cell (IQAC);
- improve the governance and management of academic programs by establishing QA mechanism;
- ensure good practices for quality assurance in higher education in Bangladesh;

### **Salient Features of QA System**

The salient features of the Quality Assurance System to be introduced are:

- The Institutional Quality Assurance Cells (IQACs) will manage the internal quality assurance system in individual universities;
- Universities will be responsible to maintain quality of their own academic programs and education;
- IQACs will be established and managed in conformity with the policy guidelines provided in the IQAC Operation Manual;
- The QA system is completely participatory and consultative approach;
- The QA system will not limit the ability of the Universities to provide quality education maintaining the standard practices in accordance with the QA principles;
- The QAU will develop and continue to upgrade the quality assurance framework and QA documents in consultation with the higher education community and other stakeholders; and since
- The development of Quality Assurance system is a continuous process, the system introduced will be reviewed and made responsive to the emerging needs.

### **Major Functions of IQAC**

The major functions of the IQAC are to:

- Facilitate to define the mission and objectives;
- Develop standards and benchmarks;

- Review existing procedures;
- Provide necessary supports to conduct the self assessment, external peer review;
- Develop a data base deliverable to all stakeholders;
- Developing Institutional QA Strategic Plan;
- Co-ordinate all QA related activities;
- Organize activities for capacity building and promoting QA culture; and
- Take initiative and lead to establish staff development center at the University;

### **Institutional Quality Assurance Cell Fund (IQACF)**

The quality assurance mechanism at the universities will be funded and made functional through the Institutional Quality Assurance Cell Fund (IQACF), a subcomponent of HEQEP. The IQACF will be made available to public and private universities that fulfill the eligibility criteria.

### **Eligibility for Accessing IQACF Fund**

Universities that have more than 1,000 students shall be eligible for accessing IQACF in a three-stage scaled approach. Based on the UGC Annual Report- 2012, out of a total of 109 universities currently operating 76 universities have more than 1,000 students which have put them on the eligibility list for accessing the fund. Of these, respectively 28 and 48 are public and private universities. Based on number of full-time teachers the 76 universities have been clustered into three groups of A, B and C. The IQACF will be made available to public and private universities that fulfill the eligibility criteria. The detailed eligibility criteria have been included in the IQACF Operations Manual.

### **IQACF Disbursement Rounds**

There will be three rounds of IQACF. The utilization of the scales will provide a gradual increase to the number of recipients thus providing the QAU capacity building opportunities. Each round will continue for three years. The three rounds are shown in Table 1 below:

**Table 1: Three Rounds of IQACF**

<b>Rounds</b>	<b>Total Fulltime Teaching Staff</b>	<b>No of Public Universities</b>	<b>No. of Private Universities</b>	<b>Total</b>
Round 1 for Group A in 2014	> 200	11	10	21
Round 2 for Group B in 2015	100 $\geq$ 200	6	21	27
Round 3 for Group C in 2016	< 100	11	17	28
Total		28	48	76

## IQACF Mode of Funding

The IQACF allocation will be made in a mode where the total cost of the IQAC will be shared equally between the project and the proposal submitting entity. The allocation of funds to the three groups of universities will be as follows:

Years	IQACF funding				University Funding			
	%	Funding Amount to Groups (BDT in Lakh)			%	Funding Amount to Groups (BDT in Lakh)		
		A	B	C		A	B	C
1 <sup>st</sup> year	75	60.0	37.5	30.0	0	0.0	0	0
2 <sup>nd</sup> year	15	12.0	7.5	6.0	40	32.0	20.0	16.0
3 <sup>rd</sup> year	10	8.0	5.0	4.0	60	48.0	30.0	24.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>80.0</b>	<b>50.0</b>	<b>40.0</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>80.0</b>	<b>50.0</b>	<b>40.0</b>

## Block Allocation to Departments/Faculties/Institutes

In addition to the project cost for establishing IQAC there will be separate block allocation to each program offering entity i.e. department, faculty and institute for SA Committee and conducting self-assessment. Each program offering entity of eligible universities would receive a maximum allocations amounting to BDT 958,800.00 depending on size and number of programs.

## Proposal Submission Procedure

**Drafting of Proposals:** The proposals for establishing the IQAC shall be known as Quality Assurance Proposal (QAP) and originate from the Vice Chancellor's office. The Vice Chancellor may appoint the Director and Additional Director(s) of the IQAC who shall prepare the QA proposal following the QAP format in consultation with the Deans and concerned officers of the university. The proposal shall include provisions for establishing IQAC at the central level and cells at each department/faculty and at each institute. Therefore the proposal shall cover the QA process to be instituted for the entire university, i.e., all faculties, departments and institutes. The deans of each faculty and directors of each Institute shall provide inputs in preparing the proposal.

## Proposal Call

The proposal call for Round 1 of IQACF will be announced in August 2014 and will be only for 21 universities listed under Group A. Round 2 and 3 will be announced respectively in 2015 and 2016 and for the universities listed under group B and C. The proposal call will be published in the national dailies and be posted on UGC and HEQEP websites. Copies of proposal call will also be sent to the eligible 76 universities by QAU. The universities shall get four weeks to prepare and submit them to QAU.

## Proposal Format

QAPs shall be prepared in specific format annexed to this OM. The proposal shall have to be submitted in five hard copies (in 80 grams A4 size offset paper and in one soft copy in CD in MS Word (12 pt

Times New Roman) and excel files, not in pdf). Only hard copies will be accepted for review. The proposal format is given in Annex 1 of the IQACFOM.

**Proposal Submission:** The Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) headed by the Vice Chancellor shall review the draft proposal and approve it for submission.

**Proposal Scrutiny:** The QAU shall check each received QAP to verify whether (i) it has been drafted according to the format annexed to this OM; (ii) includes all the required information, e.g., detailed budget, work plan, milestones and performance indicators, financing and procurement plans, training plan and organogram of the IQAC and (iii) names and designations of the academics constituting the IQAC with the resume of the Director and Additional Director(s). If found severely deficient and full of critical lapses, QAU shall point out the errors and request the institution to resubmit the proposal.

### **Proposal Review**

**Non-competitive nature of IQACF:** The IQACF will not be a competitive funding mechanism. All 76 listed universities are eligible to submit the proposal for establishing the IQAC and receive IQACF funding. Therefore, the proposal review will be only to assess that the QAP has been drafted correctly following the guidelines and reflects the will of the university to establish the IQAC.

**Panel of Experts:** QAU shall select a Panel of Experts (PoE) for review of the QAPs. The panel members shall be in-service senior teachers from public and private universities covering the five broad types of institutions, e.g., general, engineering, medical, science and agricultural, and shall not exceed 14 in number. The panel members shall possess experience in participating in SA of programs in any university of Bangladesh or in a foreign university.

**Proposal Review:** Two panel members shall review a proposal jointly and provide their remarks on the proposal in the review checklist which follows the QAP format.

All relevant information on IQACF is available in the IQACFOM and university management are advised to consult it for establishing the QA mechanism in their institutions. Both IQAC Om and IQACF Om will be hosted on HEQEP website: <http://www.heqep-ugc.gov.bd/>

*For Further details please contact:*

**Quality Assurance Unit (QAU)**

**University Grants Commission of Bangladesh**

Agargaon Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207, Bangladesh

Professor Dr Mesbahuddin Ahmed, Head

email: netproj2003@yahoo.com; mobile: 01711 521 466

Dr Sanjoy Kumar Adhikary

email: skadhikary\_bd@yahoo.com; mobile: 01914 066 281

Professor Dr S M Kabir

email: smkabir2001@yahoo.com; mobile: 01711 839 532