



manual

for the Internal Quality Assurance
for Higher Education Institutions



Ministry of Education
Commission on Higher Education
Bureau of Standards and Evaluation



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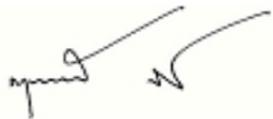
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PREFACE

The Higher Education Internal Quality Assurance Committee has the responsibilities of devising policies, criteria, and procedures to support, enhance, and develop the internal quality assurance process amongst higher education institutions. The Commission on Higher Education has witnessed the development of standards for practices in assuring educational quality in the past few years in response to the National Education Act 1999 (2nd amendment in 2002) such as the National Education Standards, the Higher Education Standards and the Standard Criteria of Higher Education Curriculum. Hence, the Commission on Higher Education has developed a comprehensive set of Education Quality Assurance Indicators that covers all quality components as mentioned in the Ministerial Regulation Regarding Internal Systems, Criteria, and Procedures for Higher Education Quality Assurance (2003). These indicators can assess all dimensions of the system, balance all administrative perspectives, and in accordance to all Standards established, including the External Quality Assurance Indicators specified by the Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (ONESQA, Thailand) and the Office of the Public Sector Development Commission (OPDC). The Commission on Higher Education has approved the implementation of these indicators to improve the effectiveness in education administration and to prepare for the external quality assessment.

Table of Contents

The Commission on Higher Education has prepared this Internal Quality Assurance Manual for higher education institutions as an objective guidance for the improvement of education administration. The Commission hopes this document can contribute to the producing of educated and qualified graduates as well as other outputs that match the needs of the society and contribute to the nation's sustained development.



Dr. Krisanapong Keeratikorn

Secretary - General of Commission on Higher Education

June,2007

	Page
Preface	
Table of Contents	
List of Figures	
List of Tables	
1. The Necessity for Internal Quality Assurance in Higher Education	1
2. The Relationship between Education Standards and Quality Assurance	2
3. The Internal Quality Assurance	5
3.1 The Ministerial Regulation regarding the Systems, Regulations, and Methods for Internal Quality Assurance 2003	6
3.2 Objectives of the Internal Quality Assurance	8
3.3 The Development of Systems and Mechanism for the Internal Quality Assurance	9
4. Indicators and Criteria Development Approaches for the Internal Quality Assessment of the Commission on Higher Education	11
4.1 Rationale	11
4.2 Methods for Indicators and Criteria Development	13
5. Indicators for the Internal Quality Assurance for Higher Education Institutions	18
6. The Relationship between the Internal Quality Assurance and the External Quality Assessment	23
7. The Process for Internal Quality Assessment of Higher Education Institutions	24
7.1 Methods in Managing the Internal Quality Assessment	24
7.2 Procedures for the Internal Quality Assessment	30

List of Figures

	Page
Figure 1 The Relationships between the Education Standards, Relevant Regulations and the Quality Assurance System	5
Figure 2 The Relationship between the Internal Quality Assurance and the External Quality Assessment	24

List of Tables

	Page
Table 1 A Summary of Indicators for Internal Quality Assurance in Higher Education Institutions Classified into 9 Quality Components	15
Table 2 A Summary of Indicators for Internal Quality Assurance in Higher Education Institutions Classified by Standards of Higher Education	16
Table 3 A Summary of Indicators for Internal Quality Assurance in Higher Education Institutions Classified by Management Perspectives	17
Table 4 The Cycle for the Organization of the Internal Quality Assessment for Higher Education Institutions	26

Internal Quality Assurance for Higher Education Institutions

1. The Necessity for Internal Quality Assurance in Higher Education

Higher education institutions in Thailand have 4 main missions: (a) to organize teaching and learning process, (b) to conduct research studies, (c) to provide academic services to the society, and (d) to preserve arts and culture. A quality assurance system is needed for higher education institutions to succeed in these missions and to meet both short-term and long-term objectives to develop the Nation. Moreover, there are many internal and external factors that accentuate the need for a higher education quality assurance system. These factors are as follow:

1. The quality levels of higher education institutions and graduates tend to be inequitable due to increasing numbers of newly established institutions.
2. The intense competition for quality of educational management and graduates among domestic and international higher education institutions.
3. Higher education institutions need to develop body of knowledge in order to gain recognition in the global educational community for future international cooperation and national development.
4. Higher education institutions need to establish confidence in the community that they can produce capable graduates to compete in the international context.
5. Higher education institutions have to provide public information for the benefits of students, employers, parents, government and the citizen.

6. The society demands for a transparent and accountable higher education system.

7. The National Educational Act 1999 (2nd amendment in 2002) requires all education institutions to establish internal quality assurance system. Moreover, the office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment to certify educational standards and assess institutions' quality is established.

8. The cabinet agreed in the meeting held on October 26, 2004 to establish sets of National Education Standards proposed by the Ministry of Education. Every education institution in every level is subjected to use these standards as their guidelines for education administration.

9. The Ministry of Education later announced the Higher Education Standards on August 7, 2006 for use as the national framework to implement standard systems for all units in higher education institutions.

2. The Relationship between Education Standards and Quality Assurance

Section 5 in the National Education Act 1999 (2nd amendment in 2002) regarding the Educational Administration and Management states in article 31 that the Ministry of Education is authorized to promote and supervise education in all categories and levels as well as to set policy, plans and education standards. The cabinet approved the **National Education Standards** suggested by the Ministry on October 26, 2004 to specify the preferred qualifications and standards in all education institutions. These are used as the basis for promoting, supervising, auditing, assessing, and assuring the quality of education system. Article 34 in the Act determines that the Commission on Higher

Education, which is under the Ministry of Education, has the responsibility to device standards for higher education which should be in line with the National Economic and Social Development Plan and the National Education Standards. Therefore, to comply with the National Education Act, the Commission on Higher Education used the National Education Standards as the guideline to set policies and standards of practice for higher education institutions. **The Higher Education Standards** describes the purposes and principles of the education administration among higher education institutions in Thailand. It is created in such a way to support the diverse groups and categories of higher education institutions so that all institutions can utilize the Standards and set their own missions and standards of operations.

The Higher Education Standards published in the announcement of the Ministry of Education on August 7, 2006 consists of 3 standards which are (a) Standard for the Quality of Graduates, (b) Standard for Administration in Higher Education, and (c) Standard for Establishing and Developing Knowledge Based and Learning Based Society. Each Higher Education Standards is related to the National Education Standards so that it can fulfill the purposes and principles of the national education administration program.

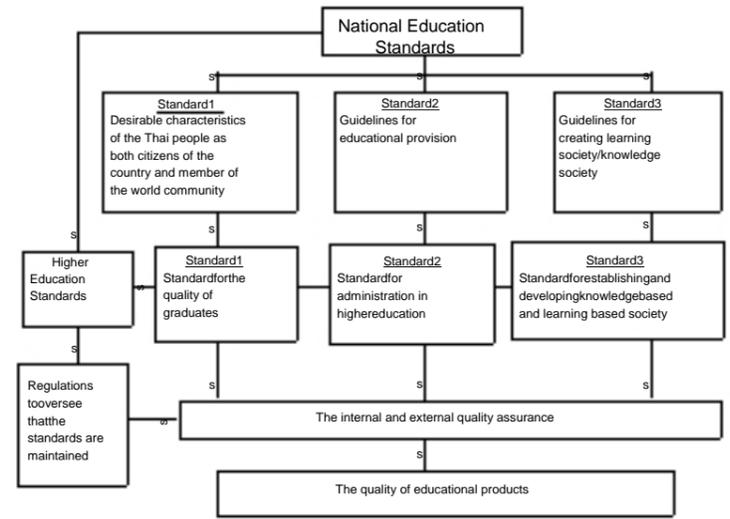
Furthermore, the Commission on Higher Education has set other standards that are extended to cover other areas such as standard criteria of higher education curriculum, standard criteria for student affairs, Criteria for Asking Permission to offer and manage Degree Program in the Distance Education System, and higher education qualification framework. These standards would assist higher education institutions to develop academic arena and

professions as well as to promote the quality and standards of the education administration in the higher education level to the global standard.

To maintain education quality and standards among all educational levels and categories, the National Education Act provides in section 6 to set up a system to assure the education quality. This system consists of two sub system, **internal and external quality assurance systems**. The internal quality assurance aims at creating a system and mechanism to control, audit and assess operations of institutions to comply with each institution's policies, purposes and levels of quality established by the institution and/or governing authorities. The internal quality assurance is a mandatory part of the education administration process that should be maintained on an ongoing basis. On the other hand, the external quality assurance is the assessment performed by the Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (Public Organization) or ONESQA. All education institutions are subjected to be assessed by external agents at least once every 5 years.

The relationships between the education standards, relevant regulations and the quality assurance system are shown in figure 1.

Figure 1: The Relationships between the Education Standards, Relevant Regulations and the Quality Assurance System



3. The Internal Quality Assurance

Before the National Education Act 1999, the Ministry of University Affairs (now known as the Commission on Higher Education) was aware of the importance of quality assurance system hence it stated policies and practices for higher education quality assurance since 1996 for use as the framework among higher education institutions. These policies and practices were drawn under three important pillars: Academic Freedom, Institutional Autonomy, and Accountability. But after the National Education Act 1999 (2nd amendment in 2002) was in effect, it identifies that the internal quality assurance should be practiced by education institutions along with relevant governing authorities. The Commission on Higher Education has to propose a ministerial

regulation for internal quality assurance in order to develop the quality and standards for both public and private higher education institutions.

3.1 The Ministerial Regulation regarding the Systems, Regulations, and Methods for Internal Quality Assurance 2003

After the National Education Act 1999 was in effect, the Commission on Higher Education, as the governing authority of higher education institutions suggested a system for education quality assurance to the Cabinet for consideration. **The Ministry announced the required systems, regulations, and methods for the internal quality assurance among higher education institutions in 2002. In 2003, the announcement was supported as a ministerial regulation regarding the systems, regulations, and methods for the internal quality assurance among higher education institutions (2003).** Since then it was used as the basis for the internal quality assurance practice. The details are as follow:

3.1.1 Regulations for the internal quality assurance

Regulations for the internal quality assurance are considered from the following issues:

1. A system and mechanism of the education quality assurance for faculties and institutions is composed of 9 quality components (1) philosophy, commitments, objective(s) and implementation plan(s), (2) teaching and learning, (3) student development activities, (4) research, (5) academic services to the community, (6) preservation of arts and culture, (7) administration and management, (8) finance and budgeting, and (9) systems and mechanism for quality assurance.

All faculties and institutions in higher education level have to prepare a self-study report delineating the process of the education quality assurance that faculties and institutions established to comply with the internal and external quality assurance.

2. The performance results of all higher education faculties and institutions that meet the predetermined quality assurance system and mechanism.

3. The effectiveness and efficiency of the practice based on the quality assurance system and mechanism that reflects the educational quality exhibited by education quality indicators.

3.1.2 Methods for the internal quality assurance system

Methods for the internal quality assurance system should follow these procedures:

1. Faculties and institutions appoint units or committee who are responsible for the quality assurance system. This committee has the responsibility to develop, administer, and follow-up on the operations of the institution. This committee also has to coordinate with external offices to assure that the education administration in all levels is efficient.

2. Faculties and institutions develop an efficient system and mechanism for internal quality assurance in order to control, audit, and assess the educational quality in line with the policies and principles set by the Commission on Higher Education.

3. Faculties and institutions establish a system and mechanism to control qualities of all components used to produce graduates. This components cover (1) curriculum in all majors, (2) faculty members and faculty development system, (3) education media and teaching technique, (4) library and study resources, (5) other education equipment, (6) learning environment and

academic services, (7) students' evaluation and outcome, and (8) other relevant components that each institute considers appropriate.

Each faculty and institution may establish an appropriate internal system to audit and assess educational quality. The Commission on Higher Education would promote and support the development of the quality assurance system in the faculty level on an ongoing basis.

3.1.3 Report for the internal quality assurance

An internal quality assurance system is considered one part of the education administration process that faculties and institutions in higher education have to perform systematically and continuously. In addition, higher education institutions have to prepare an annual report that assess the educational quality internally and submit it to the Commission on Higher Education within 120 days starting from the last day of each academic year and make the report public.

3.2 Objectives of the Internal Quality Assurance

Objectives of the internal quality assurance are:

1. To audit and assess the practice of faculties, units and institutions according to the system and mechanism established by the institution by analyzing and comparing the results based on indicators of all quality components according to predetermined criteria and standards
2. To make faculties and educational units or equivalent aware of their status leading to the determination of methods to develop quality development programs to reach the established targets and goals.
3. To make faculties and educational units or equivalent realize their strengths and weaknesses, together with suggestions

received to develop their operations to enhance strengths and develop deficient areas continuously.

4. To provide public information to stakeholders to ensure that institutions could produce qualified educational products.

5. To provide necessary information for governing organizations to promote and enhance the higher education management in the appropriate ways.

3.3 The Development of Systems and Mechanism for the Internal Quality Assurance

Higher education institution may develop appropriate quality assurance system that is in accordance with the level of development in each institution. It may use a generally practiced quality assurance system well known in the national or international level or develop its own quality assurance system. Whatever system being used it must start with making plans, operation according to plans, assessment, and improvement in order to attain the institution's goal, as well as to ensure the public that it could produce quality educational products.

3.3.1 Standards, indicators and criteria for the internal quality assessment

The core standard which is used as the framework for the operations of higher education institutions is the Higher Education Standard. However, there are other standards that higher education institutions must comply with such as standard criteria of higher education curriculum, standards for the external quality assessment of ONESQA and standards of the Office of Public Sector Development Commission, in case of public universities.

Hence, indicators that the Commission on Higher Education developed from the 9 quality components for all

higher education institutions, as mentioned in 3.1.1, should reflect the preferred qualifications according to the Higher Education Standard and all other related standards and criteria. Higher education institutions can use these indicators for the internal and external quality assessment, especially the assessment by ONESQA and the Office of Public Sector Development Commission. Besides, the indicators suggested by the Commission on Higher Education also include recommended practices and examples of development approaches.

The assessment criteria of each indicator are set as the bottom line. Part of these was developed from good practice approach. Other parts are derived from the criteria set by the Commission on Higher Education and/or other related organizations such as ONESQA and the Office of Public Sector Development Commission in order that the education quality assessment moves in the same direction.

3.3.2 Mechanism for the internal quality assurance

The committee that makes policy and the top administrators are integral parts in moving the mechanism of continuous quality assurance. These administrators must be aware of the significance and determine policy of the education quality assurance to be commonly understood at all levels. They should appoint units or sub-committee to follow-up, audit, assess and stimulate the quality development continuously. An important responsibility of these sub-committees or units is to create a quality assurance system as well as indicators and quality assessment criteria which are suitable for each institution, in addition to the indicators and criteria which the Commission on Higher Education has established. These systems to improve quality must be linked among the individual, department, faculty and institutional levels.

It is necessary to create quality manual in each level to guide the practices. Most importantly, the committees or units should coordinate and push for efficient database and information systems.

3.3.3 Database and information systems for the internal quality assurance

An important part in the quality assurance system is the analysis and evaluation of the operational results. The analyses and evaluation of the operations would be inaccurate and inefficient in the absence of realistic database and information system in the individual, department, faculty and institutional level which can be timely retrieved. The efficient information system is an important factor affecting the education quality assurance. Moreover, it affects quality in every step starting from planning, operating, auditing and assessing, improvement and development.

4. Indicators and Criteria Development Approaches for the Internal Quality Assessment of the Commission on Higher Education

4.1 Rationale

The development of the indicators for quality assurance in higher education institutions follows these principles:

1. These indicators should cover all areas of quality components under the ministerial regulations regarding the education quality assurance in higher education institutions in 2003.
2. These indicators should reflect the objectives of the National Education Act 1999 (2nd amendment in 2002), the National Education Standards, Higher Education Standards, and other relevant standards. They must conform to ONESQA and the Office of the Public Sector Development Commission (OPDC)'s indicators for external quality assessment. An

important consideration is not to create duplication of tasks for higher education institutions.

3. These indicators should be able to assess all dimensions of quality assurance system, which are input, process, output and outcome. Indicators which are used for process assessment should be accompanied by good practices as well as examples of development approach.

4. These indicators should balance the 4 perspectives i.e. students and stakeholders; internal processes; finance; human resources, learning and innovation.

5. The numbers of indicators and criteria for each indicator developed serve as basic requirements only. Each institution may add other indicators and criteria according to the specific circumstance for the development of the institution.

6. Indicators and criteria developed include both generally applicable indicators and specific indicators for unique institutions that emphasize on different areas, for example, institutions which emphasize on producing graduates and research, producing graduates and social development, producing graduates and art & cultural development, and producing graduates only, according to definition given by the Office of National Education Standards and Quality Assessment.

4.2 Methods for Indicators and Criteria Development

1. Examination of relevant laws and documents including :

- 1.1 National Education Act 1999 (2nd amendment in 2002)
- 1.2 National Education Standards (2004)
- 1.3 Higher education Standards (2006)
- 1.4 Ministerial regulation regarding the systems regulations and method for internal quality assurance (2003)

- 1.5 Standard Criteria of Higher Education Curriculum (2005)
- 1.6 Standards and indicators for external assessment in Higher Education of the Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (Public Organization)
- 1.7 Framework for performance assessment according to the certification of public service delivery for higher education institutions of the Office of the Public Sector Development Commission
- 1.8 Research studies on the analysis, synthesis, and standards for higher education of the Commission on Higher Education
- 1.9 National Qualification Framework for Higher Education in Thailand of the Commission on Higher Education
- 1.10 Benchmarking: A manual for Australian Universities

2. Analyzing and compiling data from relevant documents mentioned in item 1 above to develop indicators categorized by dimensions of the system which are input, process, output and outcome. The 9 quality components suggested by the ministerial regulation were maintained to develop indicators. As a result 44 indicators were developed to cover all quality components, as well as to cover the higher education standards, and enabled the measurement of quality in all dimensions. (Table 1 and Table 2)

3. Monitoring the balancing of these indicators in 4 management perspectives, namely students and stakeholders ; internal processes; finance; human resources, learning and innovation. (Table 3)

4. Identifying a 3-point criteria to assess these indicators:

One point means that the implementation of the indicator is partial and it is below satisfactory level or the performance result is substandard.

Two points means that the implementation of the indicator is acceptable and close to standards or the performance result close to the standards

Three points means that the implementation covers all aspects of the indicator or the performance result passes the standard requirements.

In case of non-performance or the performance is below one point of the assessment criteria, the score is zero

Table 1 A Summary of Indicators for Internal Quality Assurance in Higher Education Institutions Classified into 9 Quality Components

Component	Numbers of Indicator			
	Input	Process	Output	Total
1. Philosophy, Commitments, Objectives and Implementation Plans	-	1 Indicator 1.1	1 Indicator 1.2	2
2. Teaching and Learning	3 + (1) Indicators 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, (2.13)	5 Indicators 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.7, 2.8 2.10	4 Indicators 2.9, 2.11, 2.12	12 + (1)
3. Student Development Activities	-	2 Indicator 3.1, 3.2	-	2
4. Research	1 Indicator 4.3	2 Indicators 4.1, 4.2	1 + (1) Indicator(s) 4.4, (4.5)	4 + (1)
5. Academic Services to the Community	1 Indicator 5.2	1 Indicator 5.1	2 + (1) Indicators 5.3, 5.4, (5.5)	4 + (1)
6. Preservation of Arts and Culture	-	1 Indicator 6.1	(2) Indicator(s) (6.2), (6.3)	1 + (2)
7. Administration and Management	1 Indicator 7.5	5 Indicators 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, 7.8	3 Indicators 7.6, 7.7, 7.9	9
8. Finance and Budgeting	-	2 Indicators 8.1, 8.2	-	2
9. Systems and Mechanism for Quality Assurance	-	2 Indicators 9.1, 9.2	1 Indicator 9.3	3
Total	6 + (1)	21	12 + (4)	39 + (5)

() specific indicators only for unique institutions

Table 2 A Summary of Indicators for Internal Quality Assurance in Higher Education Institutions Classified by Standards of Higher Education

Standards	Input	Process	Output	Total
1. Standard for the Quality of Graduates	-	-	4 Indicators 2.9, 2.10, 2.11, 2.12	4
2. Standard for Administration in Higher Education				
A. Corporate Governance of Administration in Higher Education	1 Indicator 7.5	10 Indicators 1.1, 2.7, 7.1, 7.2, 7.4, 7.8, 8.1, 8.2, 9.1, 9.2	5 Indicators 1.2, 7.6, 7.7, 7.9, 9.3	16
B. Mission of Administration in Higher Education	5 + (1) Indicators 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, (2.13), 4.3, 5.2	9 Indicators 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.8, 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 5.1, 6.1	3 + (4) Indicators 4.4, (4.5), 5.3, 5.4, (5.5), (6.2), (6.3)	17 + (5)
3. Standard for Establishing and Developing Knowledge Based and Learning Based Society	-	2 Indicators 4.2, 7.3	-	2
Total	6 + (1)	21	12 + (4)	39 + (5)

() specific indicators only for unique institutions

Table 3 A Summary of Indicators for Internal Quality Assurance in Higher Education Institutions Classified by Management Perspectives

Management Perspectives	Input	Process	Output or Outcome	Total
1. Students and Stakeholders	2 Indicators 2.4, 5.2	6 Indicators 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, 5.1, 9.2	7 + (1) Indicators 2.9, 2.10, 2.11, 2.12, 5.3, 5.4 (5.5), 7.6	15 + (1)
2. Internal Processes	(1) Indicator (2.13)	7 Indicators 1.1, 2.1, 6.1, 7.1, 7.2, 7.8, 9.1	3 Indicators 1.2, 7.9, 9.3	10 + (1)
3. Finance	1 Indicator 4.3	2 Indicators 8.1, 8.2	-	3
4. Human Resources Learning and Innovations	3 Indicators 2.5, 2.6, 7.5	6 Indicators 2.7, 2.8, 4.1, 4.2, 7.3, 7.4	2 + (3) Indicators 4.4, (4.5), (6.2), (6.3), 7.7	11 + (3)
Total	6 + (1)	21	12 + (4)	39 + (5)

() specific indicators only for unique institutions

5. Indicators for the Internal Quality Assurance for Higher Education Institutions

Component 1: Philosophy, Commitments, Objectives and Implementation plans This component has 2 indicators:

- 1.1 An identification of philosophy or vision followed by strategies and implementation plans. Indicators should be set up to observe the progress of these plans.
- 1.2 The percentage of attaining indicators stated for each plan.

Component 2: Teaching and Learning

This component has 13 indicators:

- 2.1 A system and mechanism for curriculum development and management.
- 2.2 A learning process that emphasizes on learner.
- 2.3 Projects or activities to support the curriculum development and learning process that allows individual, organization and external community to participate.
- 2.4 The Proportion of the number of full-time equivalent students to the number of full-time faculty.
- 2.5 The proportion of the number of full-time faculty holding bachelor, master and doctoral degrees or equivalent to the number of full-time faculty.
- 2.6 The proportion of the number of full-time faculty holding the position of instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, and professor to the number of full-time faculty.
- 2.7 A mechanism to promote the ethical professional practices among faculty.

- 2.8 A mechanism to promote research for teaching and learning development among full-time faculty.
- 2.9 Percentage of bachelor graduates who can secure jobs and who can be self-employed within one year.
- 2.10 Percentage of bachelor graduates receiving starting salaries in accord with the standardized scale.
- 2.11 Level of satisfaction of employers business operators and graduate users.
- 2.12 The percentage of students or alumni who have graduated within 5 years who are granted award in term of academic, professional, morality, ethics, sport, health, art and culture, or environment at the national or international level.
- 2.13 The percentage of full-time faculties who are really function as thesis advisors in proportion to the number of those who are qualified. (only for institutions that emphasize on producing graduates and research).

Component 3: Student Development Activities

This component has 2 indicators:

- 3.1 Services offered to students and alumni.
- 3.2 Supports for student activities that are complete and conform to preferred characteristics of graduates.

Component 4: Research

This component has 5 indicators:

- 4.1 A development of systems and mechanisms to support the conduct of research and innovations.

- 4.2 A knowledge management system for research and innovations.
- 4.3 The amount of internal and external grants for research and innovations in proportion to the number of full-time faculty.
- 4.4 The percentage of research and innovations published or registered as intellectual property or patented or utilized at the national or international level in proportion to the number of full-time faculty.
- 4.5 The Percentage of research articles cited in the refereed journals or the national or international databases in proportion to the number of full-time faculty. (only for institutions that emphasize on producing graduates and research).

Component 5: Academic Services to the Community

This component has 5 indicators:

- 5.1 Processes and mechanisms to provide academic services to the society mentioned in the objectives of the institution.
- 5.2 The percentage of full-time faculty who are involved in providing academic services as consultants, thesis committees outside the institution, academic or professional committees at the national or international level in proportion to the number of full-time faculty.
- 5.3 The Percentage of academic and professional service activities/projects responding to the needs for development

and strengthening the society, community, nation and the international community in proportion to the number of full-time faculty.

- 5.4 The percentage of satisfaction levels of those who receive services from the institution.
- 5.5 The number of academic and professional service centers nationally or internationally recognized. (only for institutions that emphasize on producing graduates and social development).

Component 6: Preservation of Arts and Culture

This component has 3 indicators:

- 6.1 A process and mechanism for the preservation of arts and culture.
- 6.2 Pieces of work/accomplishments resulting from knowledge-building and standard-setting for art and culture. (only for institutions that emphasize on producing graduates and developing and promoting arts and culture).
- 6.3 Effectiveness in the preservation, enhancement and promotion of artistic and cultural identity. (only for institutions that emphasize on producing graduates and developing and promoting arts and culture).

Component 7: Administration and Management

This component has 9 indicators:

- 7.1 The institution council exhibits good governance and drive the institution to compete in international level.

- 7.2 The exhibition of leadership among administrators in all levels.
- 7.3 Institution development for transformation into a learning organization.
- 7.4 A human resources system and mechanism to develop and maintain qualify and efficient human resources.
- 7.5 Effectiveness of the database system for teaching and learning and research activities
- 7.6 The level of achievement in allowing external individual to participate in the institution's development.
- 7.7 The percentage of full-time faculty who received academic or professional awards at the national and international level.
- 7.8 An implementation of risk management programs in the education management.
- 7.9 The level of achievement to convey organizational indicators and targets to the individual level.

Component 8: Finance and Budgeting

This component has 2 indicators:

- 8.1 A system and mechanism to allocate and analyze expenses and audit finance and budgeting efficiently.
- 8.2 Internal and external sharing of resources.

Component 9: Systems and Mechanism for Quality Assurance

This component has 3 indicators:

- 9.1 A system and mechanism for internal quality assurance infused as one part of the education management process.

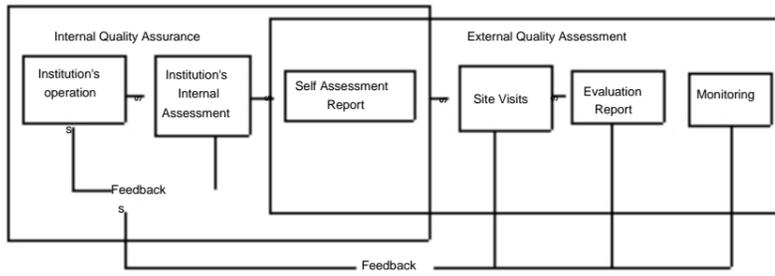
- 9.2 A system and mechanism to share knowledge and skills relevant to quality assurance to the students.
- 9.3 The level of achievement of the internal quality assurance program.

6. The Relationship between the Internal Quality Assurance and the External Quality Assessment

Section 48 of the National Education Act 1999 (2nd amendment in 2002) identifies that "parent organizations with jurisdiction over educational institutions and the institutions internal quality assurance shall be regarded as part of educational administration which must be a continuous process." Section 49 of the same Act suggests about the external quality assessment that "An Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment shall be established as a public organization, responsible for development of criteria and methods of external evaluation, conducting evaluation of educational achievements in order to assess the quality of institutions."

The aforementioned Sections support that **the internal quality assurance system** is one part of the education administration process which should be practiced all the time. There must be a control of components related to quality, an audit, a follow-up, and an assessment of performance to regularly improve quality. Hence, the internal quality assurance should monitor the inputs, process, and outputs/outcomes of the system while **the external quality assessment** focuses on the outputs/outcomes. Therefore, the connection between the internal and the external quality assurance is necessary. The prevailing system connects these programs through an annual report that details the internal quality assessment of each institution. The relationship between the internal quality assurance and the external quality assessment is shown in figure 2.

Figure 2: The Relationship between the Internal Quality Assurance and the External Quality Assessment



7. The Process for Internal Quality Assessment of Higher Education Institutions

7.1 Methods in Managing the Internal Quality Assessment

The purposes of the internal quality assurance are to control, audit, and assess the operations of higher education institutions so that the institutions would be aware of their real performances. This paves the way towards the establishment of directions and continuous development of quality according to the preset criteria and standards. For an effective quality assurance, institutions should set proper roles and duties which must be in accordance to the ministerial regulation regarding the systems, regulations, and methods for internal quality assurance among higher education institution (2003). Institutions must plan and organize the internal quality assessment to yield the following benefits from the quality promotion of the institution:

1. To use the assessment results and suggestions to improve and develop the education process in the following academic year and prepare budgets within October (in case of public university).

2. To prepare annual report of quality assessment and submit to the Commission on Higher Education and release to the public within 120 days after the end of academic year.

To maintain the above-mentioned benefits, the organization of quality assessment process should be established as suggested in Table 4. This table can be divided in to 4 steps according to the PDCA quality development system: Plan, Do, Check, and Act. The details are as follow:

P = The first activity starts from the beginning of the academic year. Use the previous year's assessment as an input for planning.

D = The second activity involves operating and collecting performance results starting from the beginning of the academic year or the 1st month throughout the 12th month of the academic year (June - May).

C = The third through the eighth activities are the assessment according to the quality assurance system in the department, faculty, and institutional levels during June - August of the next academic year.

A = The ninth activity is the planning and improvement according to the assessment. Use the recommendations and results from the internal quality assessment committees to plan for operation improvement.

In case of changes in the quality assurance system or indicators, there must be an announcement to all units throughout the institution to realize and implement the changes because there must be backdated data collection from the previous June.

The tenth activity in the table is the activity that all education institutions are required by law to practice for the benefit of the institution to improve quality and for the Commission on Higher Education and other parent organizations to utilize the information to improve the nation's education system.

7.2 Procedures for the Internal Quality Assessment

7.2.1 Preparation of the institution before the internal assessors' visit.

7.2.1.1 Document preparation

A. Prepare self assessment report (SAR) that details the internal quality assessment. The format for such report for internal quality assessment should include the following points:

1) Introduction, table of contents, list of topics, list of tables, and/or list of figures (if any).

2) Background information of the institution consisting of history, philosophy, commitments, characters and challenges, system and mechanism for quality assurance, a summary of improvement based on previous year's assessment, and the current year's major objectives.

3) Results of performance and results of quality assessment in comparison to the criteria and objectives of the current year according to indicators for each quality component.

4) A conclusion of self-assessment for each quality component and each higher education standard as well as strengths and weakness for improvement, plans and objectives for following year's improvement.

B. Prepare refereed document for each quality component

1) Refereed document should contain information of the same period as the self assessment report. Details in the document should match the name, number, and details in the self assessment report.

2) If the refereed document is one part of larger set of document, provide some methods to cite the location of the document or statement such as identify the page(s), use color tabs, or highlight marker, and etc.

3) For brochures or flyers, staple them or put them in a file so they will not be lost or mixed up with other document.

4) If the document is on a website or other information system, prepare a complete computer and network connection.

5) The presentation of the document can be performed in two methods. The first is to store the document in its usual places and specifically state the individuals, units, names or numbers of document to retrieve from. The second method is to pool the document in the same place in the assessors' office arranged in easy to retrieve manner. The second method is more popular because of the timeliness in retrieving document and cross-checking documents.

7.2.1.2 Personnel preparation

A. The preparation of all personnel should cover the following issues:

1) To clarify the understanding in quality assessment issues such as the meaning of quality assessment, its importance, steps in quality assessment, and etc.

2) Emphasize the need for cooperation in answering or interviewing and to provide only the real information from operations and results.

3) Provide opportunity for discussion, questions, and reflection so the personnel would have clear and correct understanding in all issues regarding the operations of all units.

4) Make the personnel realize that the quality assurance is a regular and continuous mission of everybody.

B. Prepare a group of personnel so that they can coordinate during the visits. There should be 1-3 people to coordinate between the assessors and relevant units. The coordinators should prepare as follow:

1) Seek thorough understanding in all activities of the assessment.

2) Seek understanding in the operation of the faculty and institution so as to provide information to the assessors.

They also need to know the individuals or units to contact to when the assessors require information they do not possess.

3) Possess name list, locations, and telephone numbers of people who shall be invited to provide information to the assessors.

4) Coordinate with the internal and external informants beforehand. Arrange for the timing, locations, and interviewers.

5) Able to facilitate the assessors and prompt coordination to offer services.

7.2.1.3 Location preparation for internal assessors

A. Office of the assessors

1) Prepare an office and tables to place large amount of document. The office should be free from interruption during the work for the privacy of the assessors.

2) Prepare computers and stationary in the office together with all other necessary equipment for the assessors.

3) Prepare telephone and important numbers in the office or nearby.

4) The office should be close to areas to serve snack or lunch and other infrastructure.

5) Coordinate with assessors for any other requirements

B. Prepare separate and suitable room(s) for interviewing administrator, faculty, personnel, student, and others.

7.2.1.4 The appointment of internal committee for assessment (assessors) and coordination

A. The higher education institution should prepare appointment orders and inform the internal assessment committees. The guideline for appointing committees is as follow:

1) Committees for the department or equivalent unit

- There should be at least 3 members in each committee depending on the size of the department or equivalent unit.

assessor training program offered by the Commission on Higher Education or the institution.

- These internal assessors should pass the

Education or the institution.

- The chairman of the committee should not be a member of the assessed department.

2) Committees for the faculty or equivalent unit

- There should be at least 3 members in each committee depending on the size of the faculty or equivalent unit.

- There should be at least one external assessor who has passed the assessor training program offered by the Commission on Higher Education and other internal assessors may pass the training program either of the Commission on Higher Education or the institution.

- The chairman of the committee should come from outside of the institution and has passed the assessor training program offered by the Commission on Higher Education.

3) Committees for the institution level

- There should be at least 5 members in each committee depending on the size of the institution.

- At least 50% of the committee members should be outsiders who have passed the assessor training program offered by the Commission on Higher Education and other internal assessors may pass the training program either of the Commission on Higher Education or the institution.

- The chairman of the committee should come from outside of the institution and has passed the assessor training program offered by the Commission on Higher Education.

B. Submit self assessment report on internal quality assessment and other relevant document (if any) to the committee at least 2 weeks before the visit. Inform names of the coordinators in the institution, faculty, or unit to the committees together with telephone numbers and e-mail addresses.

C. Coordinate with the chairman or representative of the committee to prepare plans for internal quality assessment such as scheduling for visits, additional information that assessors request before visits, make appointments, and etc.

7.2.2 The process for the institution during the visit for internal assessment

1) Provide opportunities for all personnel at all levels to hear the assessors' explanations of objectives and methods for assessment on the first day of visit.

2) All personnel should work normally during the visit but prepare for the visit or answer questions or be interviewed by the assessors.

3) Provide a coordinator throughout the visit to coordinate with individual or unit that the assessors need information from and to lead the internal visit as well as other facilitation.

4) In case the assessors work overtime, some coordinators should remain for facilitation.

5) All personnel should have the opportunity to listen to feed-back from assessors after the visit and an open forum for questions or comments.

7.2.3 Procedures for the institution after the internal assessment

1) Department, faculty, or institution administrators together with relevant personnel should bring the assessment results to meetings or conferences at various levels to make plans for objective performance development or improvement.

This might be operation plans to correct weaknesses and enhance strengths including the activities to perform, timing of activities, budgets for each activity, and responsible individual to enable continuous follow-up of the development.

2) Plan for activity to enhance morale by illustrating that the institution admires the success and realize that it is the result from the contributions of everybody.

3) Department, faculty, and institution may provide feedback to the assessors for the development of assessors. q

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