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

Programme Management

Innovative and Healthy Practices

Programme Design and Development

Postgraduate Programme Review

Programme Evaluation

Human & Physical Resources and Learner Support

Student Assessment and Award of Qualifications

Teaching Learning and Research

University Grants Commission
August – 2021

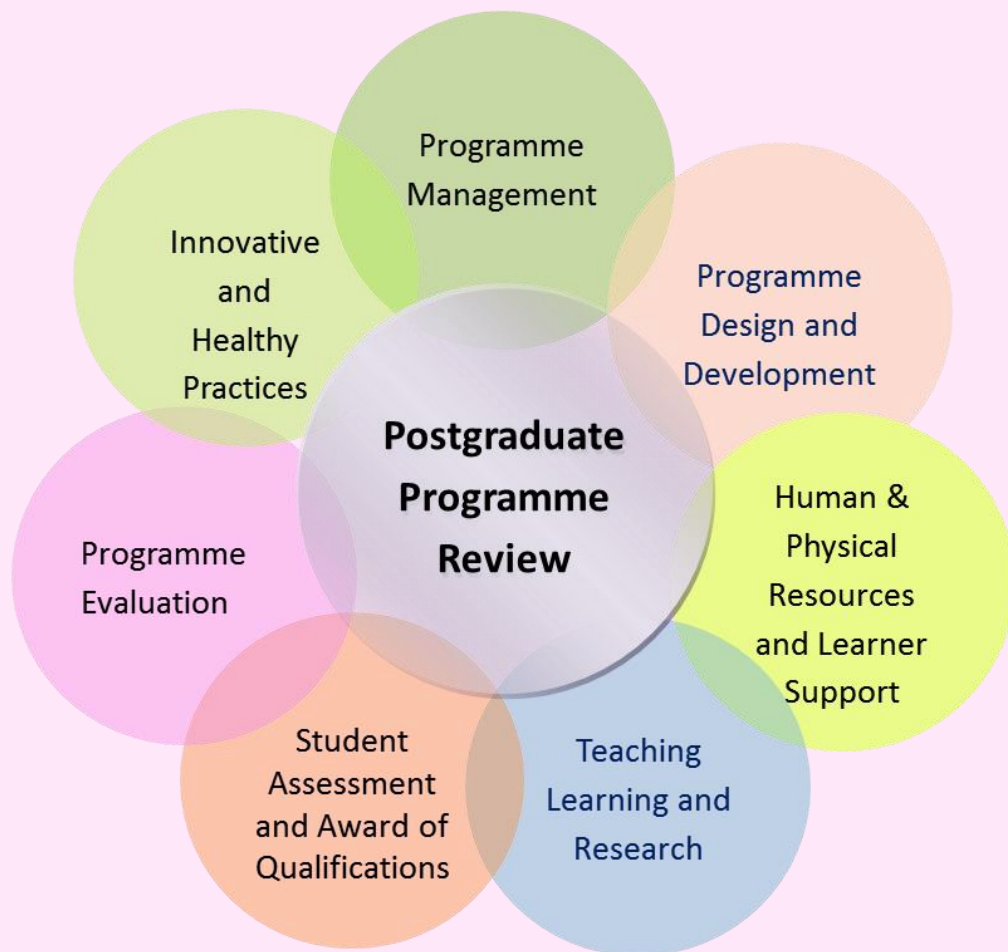# Manual for Review of Postgraduate Study Programmes of Sri Lankan Universities and Higher Education Institutions

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This publication is the outcome of an activity initiated by the Quality Assurance Council of the University Grants Commission and partially funded by the World Bank project on Accelerating Higher Education Enhancement (AHEAD) for the University Grants Commission.

The Manual for Review of Postgraduate Study Programmes of Sri Lankan Universities and Higher Education Institutions was developed by the following senior academics:

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Foreword

Postgraduate education in Sri Lanka has expanded over time, and currently state universities functioning under the University Grants Commission (UGC) produce over 7500 postgraduates annually. Available data indicate that this amounts to around 30% of the annual graduate output (from undergraduate programmes) from state universities and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). The total annual postgraduate output is much higher as postgraduates are also produced by the non-state HEIs. With the continuing expansion of postgraduate education opportunities at different levels in diverse fields, it has become crucial that quality is ensured in their provision.
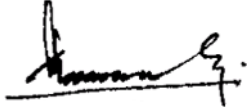
The well-established quality assurance (QA) framework of the UGC, comprising an administrative unit, internal and external QA divisions, nationally approved reference points and manuals to guide the QA process has thus far been confined to QA in undergraduate education. This is due to lack of a clear initiative to implement the QA process in postgraduate education. On the recommendation of the Quality Assurance Council and the Standing Committee on Quality Assurance of the UGC, a team of eight senior academics with extensive expertise and experience in QA, postgraduate education and QA manual formulation was, therefore, appointed by the UGC to address this need. The World Bank funded Accelerating Higher Education Expansion and Development (AHEAD) Operations of the Ministry of Education facilitated the formulation and printing of the manual. The UGC is grateful to the AHEAD operations for the assistance extended.

It is no easy task to formulate a manual for quality assurance in postgraduate education due to the diversity and complexity of the levels, structures, modes of delivery and the nature of assessments in the study programmes. The team has overcome this challenge by studying the nature of different postgraduate study programmes in the country, scrutinizing quality assurance guides and manuals published in Sri Lanka and overseas, and engaging in extensive discussions and stakeholder consultations, when formulating this manual which focuses on programme review based on a quality assessment structure. The draft version of the manual has been then subjected to pilot testing in postgraduate study programmes offered by all state universities, and appropriate feedback has been incorporated to ensure relevance and applicability.

The UGC is happy to present this *Manual for Review of Postgraduate Study Programmes in Sri Lankan Universities and Higher Education Institutions*, which provides useful guidance to academics and administrators of postgraduate study programmes in state universities and HEIs, reviewers and resource persons in training programmes. This manual will be used to assess the quality of postgraduate study programmes conducted by the Universities and Higher Education Institutions that wish to get their programmes reviewed under the Quality Assurance Framework of the UGC. The UGC expects all postgraduate programme providers in universities and HEIs under its purview to adapt and internalize the best practices to achieve

the desired standards that are specified in this manual as an integral part of the quality assurance process of their postgraduate study programmes.

The UGC and AHEAD operations wish to express sincere appreciation to the panel of authors of this manual for the valuable contribution made to enhance the quality of postgraduate education provision in Sri Lanka.

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Acknowledgements

List of Abbreviations / Acronyms

AHEAD	Accelerating Higher Education Expansion and Development
BoS	Board of Study
BoM	Board of Management
CEOs	Chief Executive Officers
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
CQA	Centre for Quality Assurance
CVCD	Committee of Vice Chancellors and Directors
DE	Distance Education
EQA	External Quality Assurance
ERC	Ethics Review Committee
FGS	Faculty of Graduate Studies
GEE	Gender Equity and Equality
GPA	Grade Point Average
HEI	Higher Education Institution
ICT	Information & Communication Technology
ILOs	Intended Learning Outcomes
IPR	Intellectual Property Rights
IQA	Internal Quality Assurance
IQAC	Internal Quality Assurance Cell
MIS	Management Information System
MoE	Ministry of Education
MOUs	Memoranda of Understandings
OBE	Outcome-Based Education
ODL	Open and Distance Learning
OER	Open Educational Resources
PG	Postgraduate
PGI	Postgraduate Institute
PGPMU	Postgraduate Programme Management Unit
PGPP	Postgraduate Programme Provider

PGPRR	Postgraduate Programme Review Report
PLOs	Programme Learning Outcomes
QA	Quality Assurance
QAC	Quality Assurance Council
R&D	Research and Development
SBS	Subject Benchmark Statements
SCL	Student-Centred Learning
SDC	Staff Development Centre
SER	Self-Evaluation Report
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-based Violence
SLMC	Sri Lanka Medical Council
SLQF	Sri Lanka Qualification Framework
SOP	Standard Operational Procedures
ToR	Terms of Reference
UGC	University Grants Commission
URL	Uniform Resource Locator

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Introduction

Purpose of the Manual

The *Manual for Review of Postgraduate Study Programmes of Sri Lankan Universities and Higher Education Institutions* has been formulated to provide guidance to the Postgraduate Programme Providers (PGPP) in state Universities and other Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), who wish to submit their postgraduate study programmes, for reviewing under the Quality Assurance Framework of the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the Ministry of Education (MoE) in Sri Lanka.

For the purpose of this manual, a programme of study is defined as a stand-alone, approved curriculum (which includes course work or research) followed by a student, which leads to a postgraduate qualification awarded by a university or HEI. A Postgraduate Programme Provider (PGPP) is defined as the administrative entity (Postgraduate Institute/ Faculty of Graduate Studies/ Faculty of Study) responsible for the registration of the relevant postgraduate students in the degree awarding entity (University/HEI). Postgraduate Programme Management Unit (PGPMU) is defined as the academic entity (Board of Study/ Faculty/Department of Study) responsible for the delivery of the postgraduate study programme.

Although this manual is meant for guiding the PGPPs in universities and other HEIs within the state sector, its content is sufficiently generic in nature to permit its use for PGPPs in non-state HEIs as well. Hence, this manual is intended for review of different types of postgraduate (PG) study programmes of different levels delivered through face-to-face or Open and Distance Learning (ODL) modes in both state and non-state universities and other HEIs in Sri Lanka.

This manual sets out important best practices to be adopted and respective standards to be achieved for quality assurance in postgraduate education. It is expected to serve as a guide for academics and administrators of PGPPs to adopt and internalize these good practices and achieve the expected standards in respect of quality assurance of the postgraduate study programmes offered. In addition, a brief overview of postgraduate education in Sri Lanka and the aspects pertaining to quality assurance in postgraduate education have been included for the information of those interested in quality assurance in postgraduate education.

Among those best practices and standards, 26 standards relating to the Sri Lanka Qualification Framework (SLQF) have been identified in this manual to guide the study programme designers when formulating or revising study programmes. This will enable designing of study programmes that are in compliance with this nationally approved reference point. These 26

standards will also enable certification of the SLQF level of the study programme as part of the Programme Review process.

Target Audience

This manual is primarily meant for academics and administrators involved in postgraduate education. It will help them to design the study programmes in compliance with the SLQF and other best practices approved by the UGC, periodically evaluate the quality of postgraduate education provision and standard of awards made by their respective institutions and take necessary action for continuous quality improvement. Furthermore, it will serve as a practical guide for them to prepare Self-Evaluation Report (SER) of the postgraduate study programme for external review.

The manual will be an essential tool for the members of the Teaching Panels, Boards of Study, Coordinating Committees, Boards of Management, Centres for Quality Assurance (CQA), Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) cells/ divisions, Registrars, Directors, Vice Chancellors and Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of the PGPPs. It will enable them to adopt, internalize, monitor and upgrade good practices and achieve standards in respect of quality assurance of the education provision at postgraduate level.

The manual will be useful as a resource base for intensive training programmes and workshops organized at national level as well as at institutional level, to train self-evaluation report writers, potential reviewers and other staff of PGPPs.

It will be a useful reference for other stakeholders such as students, parents, funding agencies in state or private sector, international agencies, employers of graduates, professional bodies, professional accreditation agencies and policy makers.

This manual will provide a useful guide for the external reviewers to objectively and effectively assess the quality of education provision and standard of awards of the assigned postgraduate study programmes within the given time frame and prepare a well-focused Postgraduate Programme Review Report (PGPRR).

The PGPRRs thus prepared by external Review Teams, along with the SLQF level certification (where applicable) will enter the public domain through the website of the Quality Assurance Council (QAC) of the University Grants Commission (UGC), following acceptance by the Review Team and the PGPP. All stakeholders mentioned above will be able to access those reports and provide feedback to the UGC or QAC, or to the specific PGPP or HEI on findings in the report.

Manual Preparation Process

In order to prepare a single manual that can be used to review the quality of education provision of diverse types of postgraduate study programmes of different SLQF levels delivered through different modes by the PGPPs in Sri Lanka, information was collected from all state universities regarding the types of postgraduate qualifications offered, the structure of the study programmes, the modes of delivery, and the main forms of assessment. Collected data were

analysed. Quality assurance manuals/ guides published by the University Grants Commission (UGC) of Sri Lanka including the *Quality Assurance Handbook for Postgraduate Degrees in Sri Lanka (n.d.), Manual for Institutional Review of Sri Lankan Universities and HEIs (2015), Manual for Review of Undergraduate Study Programmes of Sri Lankan Universities and HEIs (2015), Manual for Review of Undergraduate Study Programmes of Sri Lankan Distance HEIs* (2019) as well as those published in other countries including the (indicate references) were considered. Six different 'Core aspects or 'Criteria' that determine the quality of postgraduate education provision and standard of awards were selected. 'Best practices' that would contribute to improve the quality of each selected criterion were identified through rigorous discussion. The 'Scope' of each criterion was established. The desired 'Standard' of each identified 'Best practice' and the examples of supporting evidence that a PGPP would possess if the best practice is internalized were identified. During this process it became evident that certain best practices may not be practiced in full by most of the PGPPs in Sri Lanka, but should be encouraged and promoted. Such best practices and respective standards were compiled under a new criterion titled 'Innovative and Healthy Practices'.

To enable readers to visualize the best practices, corresponding standards and examples of supporting evidence relevant to each standard of a criterion at the same time, it was decided to present them in alignment with each other in tabular format under relevant criterion. This type of tabular presentation is expected to help any reader to understand the relationship among these dimensions. It is also expected to help resource persons of awareness programmes and training programmes to make the participants aware of the relationships, PGPPs and PGPMUs to internalize the best practices and achieve expected standards as well as prepare 'Self-Evaluation Reports' with greater understanding, and to improve objectivity and efficiency of the external reviews. In addition, differential weightages to be assigned to the seven criteria, guide to scoring and grading and procedure for verification of SLQF level compliance of a study programme were formulated.

Draft best practices, standards, examples of evidence, differential weightages, procedure for grading and rating SLQF compliance were presented and explained to 169 nominees from PGPPs and Directors of Centres for Quality Assurance of state universities (see Appendices for the list of participants) through a webinar. The draft manual was circulated among all PGPPs of the state universities (including the Open University of Sri Lanka) for pilot testing the Best practices, Standards and Examples of evidence for the postgraduate programmes offered by them and to provide feedback through the Quality Assurance Council of the UGC. The received responses (see Appendices for the list) were closely scrutinized by the panel of authors and appropriate suggestions and comments were incorporated. The revised draft manual was presented again to 139 representatives of PGPPs of the state universities (see Appendices for the list of participants). Comments incorporated draft manual was circulated once again for checking by the PGPPs of all state universities. After considering the responses received, the manual was finalized.

Organization of the Manual

This manual consists of three Parts and an Appendices.

Part I consists of a single chapter, Chapter One. It presents an overview of postgraduate education in Sri Lanka, the importance of quality assurance in postgraduate education, the purpose and scope of Postgraduate Programme Review (PGPR), the pre-requisites for PGPR, and the process and outcomes of PGPPR. The theoretical concepts regarding quality assurance, its evolution in Sri Lanka and the Quality Assurance Framework have been dealt with extensively in the *Manual for Institutional Review of Sri Lankan Universities and Higher Education Institutions (2015)* and will not be duplicated in this manual.

Part II consists of two chapters, Chapter Two and Chapter Three. Chapter Two presents the 'Criteria', 'Best practices', and Standards' that provide the framework for determining the 'quality of a study programme' and 'Examples of relevant evidence'. These 'Criteria' are the key/core aspects that encompass the inputs, processes, outputs and outcomes of a postgraduate study programme and determine the quality of its education provision. These criteria have been selected after careful consideration of the nature of operation of postgraduate study programmes in Sri Lanka, the 'criteria' specified in the Quality Assurance (QA) manuals previously published by the UGC in Sri Lanka and the criteria indicated in published QA manuals for postgraduate education in other countries.

Under each criterion, various institutional and study programme approaches, policies, strategies and operational procedures which add value or contribute to enhance the quality of the respective study programme are listed as 'Best Practices'. PGPPs are expected to adopt and internalize these best practices to enhance the quality of the education provided through their postgraduate study programmes. For each best practice one or more specific and measurable indicators were identified as 'Standards'. These standards describe the expected manner in which the specified 'best practice' should be implemented and completed or the expected level of internalization or achievement. Alongside each standard, few 'Examples of relevant evidence' are indicated for the benefit of the PGPPs and reviewers.

Chapter Three of Part II explains the procedure for using the standards to assess the performance of a study programme. A score guide, weightages of criteria, method of assessing the SLQF level compliance of the reviewed degree programme, computation of the final score and assigning a grade for performance of the study programme are given. The PGPPs are expected to promote internalization of best practices to reach the standards and express their degree of internalization of the best practices in the Self Evaluation Report. The reviewers are expected to objectively scrutinize evidence provided and assess the performance of the programme of study by capturing the degree of internalization of best practices and the level of achievement of respective standard/s and assign a score for each standard. Thus, the standards and the scoring system will make the evaluation transparent because both the PGPPs and the reviewers can determine the degree of internalization of best practices and the level of achievement of respective standard/s based on available evidence and assign a score for each standard on a 0-3, four-point scale. In preparation of a Self-Evaluation Report and in assessing

the performance of a study programme, the PGPPs, PGPMUs and the Reviewers need to bear in mind that evidences may vary among the study programmes, and the evidences stated in this manual are only examples, but not prescriptions.

Part III describes the practical aspects of the PGPR process and Postgraduate Programme Review Report (PGPRR). It consists of three chapters; chapters Four, Five and Six.

Chapter Four provides detailed guidelines on preparation of the SER for the intended review of the PG programme of study, and the format to be used.

Chapter Five describes the procedure adopted in selection of peer reviewers, composition of the Review Team, desired profile, attributes and conduct of reviewers, pre-review arrangements, review visit (site visit) and the review process.

Chapter Six provides guidelines for writing the PGPRR, which include its purpose, structure, arriving at review judgments on the overall performance of the study programme including SLQF level certification, observations and recommendations. It also describes the procedure for submission of the report.

Appendices consist of Code of Conduct for Reviewers, Declaration of Interest of External Reviewers, Lists of Participants in Stakeholder Webinars, and the List of Stakeholders that provided feedback on applicability of the draft manual.

Appendices are followed by Bibliography, Glossary of Terms and Notes on Authors.

Part I

Quality Assurance in Postgraduate Education

Chapter One

Postgraduate Education in Sri Lanka and

External Quality Assurance

Any formal higher education undertaken after a Bachelor's degree is referred to as postgraduate education ('Graduate education' in the United States). The key difference between undergraduate and postgraduate education is the greater focus, deeper understanding, and more intensive and individualized learning experience that a postgraduate study programme offers in the chosen field of study. Postgraduate study programmes range from Postgraduate Certificate level to Doctoral level, and generally require a Bachelor's degree as a basic qualification for admission. Master's degree programmes may be based on course work, or research, or a combination of both course work and research, requiring extended (specialized/advanced) study, while Doctoral degree programmes are based on research or professional/practice format. The organization and the structure of postgraduate education programmes vary among countries, as well as among different institutions within a country.

1.1. Postgraduate Education in Sri Lanka: An Overview

Postgraduate (PG) education in Sri Lankan universities commenced several years after the establishment of the first university of the country, the University of Ceylon. During the initial period, PG education was limited to a few subject areas mainly in the disciplines of indigenous culture, languages and religion. Most postgraduate qualifications in other disciplines were obtained overseas. Escalation of course fees, restriction on overseas travel and limitation in openings for overseas PG study experienced in the 1970's prompted the state universities to expand PG education opportunities within the country, paving way for the establishment of the first discipline-based institute for PG education, the Postgraduate Institute of Agriculture (PGIA) at the University of Peradeniya in 1975. Since then, Sri Lanka witnessed a steady increase in PG education providers as well as PG study programmes. At present there are eight discipline-based Postgraduate Institutes (PGIs), six Faculties of Graduate Studies (FGSs), and several Departments of Study (DoSs) that offer PG study programmes within the state university system functioning under the purview of the University Grants Commission (UGC). The PGIs offer PG study programmes that are confined to the relevant discipline, while the FGSs offer PG programmes in a wider range of disciplines. The Departments of Study of (undergraduate) Faculties also offer discipline-specific PG study programmes.

The organizational structures of these postgraduate programme providers (PGPPs) are diverse. For example, a PGI is headed by a Director and governed by a Board of Management (BoM),

while discipline-specific Boards of Study (BoS) conduct the relevant study programmes with the assistance of study programme coordinators and course coordinators who are responsible for developing, revising and conducting the study programmes. However, each PGI is affiliated to a university, and the authority for final academic decisions pertaining to matters such as approval of curricula and award of qualifications lie with the Senate and the Council of the relevant University. A FGS is headed by a Dean supported by a Faculty Board of Graduate Studies and Boards of Study in specific disciplines, while the authority for final academic decisions pertaining to matters such as approval of curricula and award of qualifications lie with the Senate and the Council of the relevant University. This arrangement enables the FGSs to offer interfaculty interdisciplinary programmes as well as multidisciplinary programmes. In such PG programmes, different faculties may contribute different proportions of the study programme. Students are enrolled by the FGS while the degree is awarded following approval by the respective university Senate and the Council. In addition to PGIs and FGSs, in some universities, discipline-specific PG study programmes are also offered by Departments of study through Faculties other than the FGS, coordinated and administered by a Higher Degrees Committee or a similar entity in the Faculty.

Almost all these diverse PGPPs have established links with the industry, most have established links with foreign universities, while a few have established branches in Sri Lanka and overseas. These PGPPs use conventional, blended and distance learning modes to offer diverse study programmes ranging from PG Certificate level to Doctoral level. Notwithstanding differences in organizational structure, modes of delivery and levels of study, all PGPPs share several common features such as the ability to offer demand-driven courses on a fee-levying basis, and to manage their activities on a self-financing basis. While self-financing is a commendable feature, greater freedom enjoyed by the staff to introduce courses and study programmes at wish could lead to undesirable effects on the quality of the study programmes and ruin the reputation of the PGPP.

Available records (www.ugc.ac.lk) indicate that the PGPPs of the 15 older state universities functioning under the UGC offer 275 PG study programmes, while Kothalawela Defence University, Bhikshu University and Buddhist and Pali University (which function under other ministries) offer around 45 PG programmes. In addition, 8 non-governmental HEIs (NGHEI) recognized by the Ministry of Education offer 52 PG programmes. Accurate figures are not available on the number of PG study programmes offered by the numerous NGHEIs in Sri Lanka that are affiliated to foreign universities. However, it is evident that the opportunities for postgraduate education are steadily expanding in Sri Lanka, resulting in annually increasing numbers of postgraduate qualification holders. For example, the postgraduate output from PGPPs operating under the UGC has been 7501 in 2020 as compared to 3158 in 2010. The majority of the postgraduate output is in Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences disciplines, while Doctoral graduates account for about 2% of the postgraduate output (Sri Lanka University Statistics, 2010 and 2020). This brief overview of PG education system in Sri Lanka indicates that it is a complex system that produces large numbers of postgraduates diverse in subject discipline, research competencies and level of qualification.

1.2. Importance of Quality Assurance in Postgraduate Education in Sri Lanka

'Quality' is a concept that has its roots in the manufacturing industry and made inroads to many other fields including higher education. It has grown from being an attribute of a commodity to a way of managing an organization and making the organization effective to create the products of value for customers. The term 'quality' in higher education has been attributed to a number of meanings such as *exceptional, perfection (zero defects), value for money, fitness for purpose and transformation* depending on the perceptions and expectations of diverse stakeholders (Harvey and Green, 1993). Being cognizant about the futility of any attempt to improve higher education quality in the absence of a universally accepted definition for quality in higher education, the Commonwealth of Learning (2006) adopted the definition of quality as 'fitness for purpose'. The National Policy Framework on Higher Education and Technical & Vocational Education in Sri Lanka (2009) adopted this definition and the Article 11 of World Declaration on Higher Education, which states *'Quality in higher education is a multi-dimensional concept which embraces all its functions and activities including teaching and academic programmes, research and scholarship, staffing, students, buildings, equipment, facilities, services provided to the community and academic environment'* in its policy recommendations for higher education in Sri Lanka. In 2002, the Committee of Vice Chancellors and Directors in collaboration with the UGC formulated a comprehensive futuristic quality assurance framework for undergraduate education based on the model of the quality assurance framework of the United Kingdom, under the guidance of a team of international QA experts. The main objectives of this QA framework were to support academic standards and furtherance and dissemination of good practices in Universities in Sri Lanka (CVCD/UGC, 2002). The QA framework consisted of four components, namely, Subject Benchmarks Statements (SBS), Codes of Practice (CP), Credit and Qualification Framework (CQF) and External Quality Assessment (EQA).

This framework expanded over time, incorporating the internal quality assurance units (IQAU) of the universities that were established to facilitate internalization of best practices and quality assessment, and an administrative entity which was established to guide and facilitate overall quality assurance activities in state universities and undergraduate study programmes. The quality assurance framework for undergraduate education in Sri Lanka now comprises the following:

a). Administrative entity for overall administration and guidance of QA activities in state universities:

Quality Assurance Council (QAC) of the UGC guided by the Standing Committee on Quality Assurance of the UGC.

b). Dual-arm quality assurance system for internal and external Quality Assessment:

Internal QA: Centres for Quality Assurance in universities supported by Internal Quality Assurance Units in faculties of study for monitoring routine operations and ensuring compliance with national policy framework and

guidelines on Internal quality assurance of the university and of the study programmes.

External QA: External Quality Assurance unit comprised of a pool of trained reviewers for periodic assessment of the quality of education provision of universities.

c). National Policy Framework of Higher Education:

Universities Act No. 16 of 1978 and its subsequent amendments; Relevant Statutes and Ordinances made under the Universities Act to make provision for establishment of HEIs; Government Establishments Code; Financial regulations.

Progressive legislation or circular instructions issued by the regulatory agencies such as the Ministry of Education, UGC, and Quality Assurance Council (QAC) of the UGC to ensure compliance by the universities and HEIs.

d). UGC approved nationally developed reference points that stipulate the best practices and standards to be complied by the universities and study programmes for quality assurance in education provision:

Sri Lanka Qualification Framework (2015)

Codes of Practice published in Academic Procedures Handbook (n.d) and in subsequent years

Subject Benchmark Statements (2004-2020)

e). UGC approved nationally developed Quality Assurance Manuals to guide quality assessment activities pertaining to undergraduate education:

Manual for Quality Assurance of External Degree Programmes and Extension Courses offered by Universities (Coomaraswamy et al., 2014)

Manual of Good Practices, Standards and Guidelines for External Training Institutions (State and Non-State) (Abeygunawardena and Coomaraswamy, 2014)

Manual for Institutional Review of Sri Lankan Universities and Higher Education Institutions (Warnasuriya et al., 2015)

Manual for Review of Undergraduate Study Programmes of Sri Lankan Universities and HEIs (Warnasuriya et al., 2015)

Manual for Review of Undergraduate Study Programmes of Sri Lankan Distance Higher Education Institutions (Coomaraswamy, 2019)

However, this well-established quality assurance framework for higher education in Sri Lanka operating under the UGC has been hitherto confined to assessment of quality of education provision of the undergraduate programmes offered by the state universities. In spite of continuous expansion in the postgraduate education system, resulting in the production of continuously increasing numbers of postgraduate qualification holders, Sri Lanka is yet to establish a quality assurance system for postgraduate education. A QA Handbook for PG degrees in Sri Lanka was formulated in early 2000 but was never used and has now become obsolete. At present, the UGC's Standing Committee on Postgraduate Studies and Research is the only national level mechanism available to monitor the quality of graduate programs offered by the state universities. However, the continuously increasing number of postgraduate study programmes make it nearly impossible for this Standing Committee to monitor and assure the quality of each of these programmes.

Since the higher education system of Sri Lanka has adopted 'fitness for purpose' definition of quality, it is important to identify the purpose of postgraduate education. Any level of postgraduate education offered by any PGPP at present is expected to generate new knowledge, strengthen intellectual capital and technology capable of accelerating national and international economic and social development to be fit for the emerging knowledge-based society. Furthermore, in a century characterised by globalization, it has become important for postgraduate education provision to be internationally recognized. The degree to which these expectations are realized by postgraduate education in Sri Lanka at present remains obscure. In this context, the importance of establishing an effective quality assurance system for postgraduate education in Sri Lanka needs no further explanation.

1.3. Establishing a Quality Assurance System for Postgraduate Education in Sri Lanka

External quality assurance by peer review, commissioned by the national quality assurance system has now gained worldwide acceptance as an effective method to ensure quality and standards of education. Since the country already has a well-established national quality assurance framework for undergraduate education, it is prudent to establish a quality assurance system that fits into the existing framework, for postgraduate education. Most of the main components that drive the currently operating QA framework such as the Quality Assurance Council, the Standing Committee for Quality Assurance of the UGC, the Centres for Quality Assurance in universities, several nationally approved reference points including the SLQF and relevant Codes of practice, existing government regulations and institutional regulations as well as some of the trained reviewers can be utilized by establishing such a complementary quality assurance system for postgraduate education. What is required is to create the missing components.

One of the required components that is not available at present for establishing a quality assurance system for PG education in Sri Lanka is a Quality Assurance Manual to guide the administrators and academics of the PGPPs, PGPMUs and the members of the Review Team on the best practices to be internalized to improve and assure quality of postgraduate education provision.

The unit of assessment for external review of postgraduate education could be the PGPP as a whole or individual study programmes offered by the PGPP/PGPMU. Institutional review analyses and tests the effectiveness of an institution's processes for managing and assuring the quality of academic activities undertaken by the university/HEIs and the PGPP. It evaluates the extent to which the internal quality assurance schemes can be relied upon to maintain the quality of provision of educational programmes over time. Programme review evaluates the quality of a student's learning experience at programme level, effectiveness of PGPP/PGPMU's processes for managing and assuring quality of study programmes, student learning experience and standards of awards within a programme of study. It is about management and assuring quality at programme level. The criteria and associated best practices which will be assessed would differ based on the unit of assessment.

This *Manual for Review of Postgraduate Study Programmes of Sri Lankan Universities and Higher Education Institutions* focusses on Programme Review, to produce the missing component in postgraduate education quality assessment required to guide members of the PGPPs, PGPMUs and external Review Teams.

A separate manual for Institutional Review of PGPPs is not envisaged, since many best practices that should be internalized by the PGPP and PGPMU to improve the quality of their education provision and the standard of their awards have been included under several criteria in this manual, and certain other best practices are assessed under the criterion on Postgraduate Studies, Research, Innovation and Commercialization in the *Manual for Institutional Review of Sri Lankan Universities and Higher Education Institutions* (*Warnasuriya et al., 2015*).

1.4. Quality Assessment Structure

Objectivity and transparency of the assessment process and comparability among institutions or study programmes of the same level are internationally recognized desired attributes of a quality assessment. The accepted practice for assuring these attributes is by defining a quality framework or assessment structure comprising 'Criteria', 'Best Practices' and Standards' against which a judgment on quality could be made (Coomaraswamy, 2019; Warnasuriya et al., 2015 a). The principles and approaches used in formulating the assessment structure given in the *Manual for Institutional Review of Sri Lankan Universities and Higher Education Institutions* (Warnasuriya et al., 2015*)* were adopted to develop the assessment structure presented in this manual.

In the assessment structure, Criteria represent the core aspects that contribute to the quality of PG education provision. Best Practices are those practices that would improve the quality of the said criteria, and Standards represent the desired level of internalization of the Best Practice by the PGPP/PGPMU/ PG programme.

During the identification of best practices and standards to design the quality framework for postgraduate programme review, due consideration was paid to the prevailing diversity in organizational structures and the nature of study programmes. Therefore, the PGI/ FGS/ Faculty/ Department that hosts the review is accorded the freedom to identify the PGPP and

PGPMU in conjunction with the CQA and QAC and to manage the logistics of the review accordingly.

1.5. Postgraduate Programme Review - Purpose

Postgraduate programme review is concerned with the manner in which a PGPP and PGPMU assure itself and the wider public that the quality and standards of its postgraduate programmes of study are being achieved and maintained. It evaluates the quality of student learning at programme level in greater depth, focusing on programme management, programme design and delivery, learning environment and student support, student assessment and awards in finer detail.

The overall purpose of programme review is to achieve accountability for quality and standards, and to use a peer review process to promote adoption and internalization of good practices, inculcate quality culture and facilitate continuous improvement of the study programme. It is also meant to instil confidence, achieve accountability, provide information, promote improvement and showcase innovation in respect of the postgraduate programme of study that has been reviewed.

Postgraduate programme review helps the PGPP/PGPMU to demonstrate the good practices that have been internalized to enhance the student learning experience and improve the quality and standards of education provision.

1.6. Postgraduate Programme Review - Scope

The scope of the postgraduate programme review has been carefully determined. The Core aspects or 'Criteria' that determine the quality of postgraduate education provision and standard of awards prescribed for scrutiny of postgraduate programmes of study in this manual were selected through careful study of quality assurance manuals/ handbooks published by the University Grants Commission (UGC) of Sri Lanka as well as QA manuals/ guides published in several other countries. Six criteria were initially selected. During identification of Best Practices that would enhance the quality of each criterion, it became evident that certain best practices are not practiced widely by the PGPPs/ PGPMUs, but should be encouraged. Those best practices were included in another criterion titled 'Innovative and Healthy Practices' with the intention of promoting such best practices and facilitating recognition of PGPPs and PGPMUs that have already internalized them. The views obtained at two stakeholder consultations (pre- and post- pilot testing of the draft criteria and associated best practices and standards by all PGPPs of state universities) were considered prior to finalization of the manual. Accordingly, the 'Scope' of postgraduate programme review has been captured in the seven criteria listed below:

1. Programme Management

2. Programme Design and Development

3. Human and Physical Resources and Learner Support

4. Teaching-Learning and Research

5. Student Assessment and Award of Qualifications

6. Programme Evaluation

7. Innovative and Healthy Practices

1.7. Postgraduate Programme Review - Requirements

Postgraduate Programme Review is offered to any postgraduate study programme aligned at SLQF level 7 to 12, which has completed at least one cycle or graduated at least one batch of students. There has to be willingness by programme staff to critically self-evaluate their programme of study under the given criteria, gather evidence of achieving the desired standards, prepare a self-evaluation report (SER) in the format prescribed in this manual and submit the SER to the QAC expressing the intention of the PGPP/ PGPMU to get the study programme reviewed through the QAC. Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) of the PGPP and the Centres for Quality Assurance (CQA) of the university/ HEI have a major role to play in facilitating the process.

1.8. Postgraduate Programme Review - Cycle

All PGPPs/ PGPMUs in universities and other HEIs in Sri Lanka, that wish to submit their PG study programmes for review under the Quality Assurance Framework of the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the Ministry of Education (MoE) of Sri Lanka will be subjected to review at 5-year cycles.

1.9. Postgraduate Programme Review - Procedure

The postgraduate programme review process will consist of three steps.

1). Preparation for Postgraduate Programme Review

2). The Review Visit

3). Reporting (Postgraduate Programme Review Report submission and publication)

1.9.1. Preparation for Postgraduate Programme Review (PGPR)

1.9.1.1. Preparation by the PGPP/PGPMU

Three to six months before the intended PG Programme Review, the PGPMU responsible for delivering the programme of study should begin to compile the Self-Evaluation Report (SER) in liaison with the IQAC of the PGPP. Details of Self-Evaluation Report preparation and the format are given in Chapter Four of this manual.

A PGPP/PGPMU should have the following pre-requisites in order to prepare for a PGPR:

- A Corporate/ Strategic plan to achieve goals and objectives as per its mission and vision

- Familiarity of and adherence to the relevant codes of practice

- Compliance of the study programmes with Sri Lanka Qualification Framework (SLQF) and Subject Benchmark Statements (SBS), where available

- Willingness to engage in a constructive critical self-evaluation without threat or hindrance

- Willingness to submit postgraduate study programmes to external peer review with a sense of 'ownership' of the process of inquiry and review at all levels

1.9.1.2. *Preparation by the QAC, CQA, IQAC and the Review Team*

The QAC shall liaise all activities through the University's CQA and the PGPP's IQAC, with regard to external review of PG study programmes.

The PGPMU which offers the study programme/s should inform the QAC through the CQA of the university/HEI, of their intention and readiness for Postgraduate Programme Review. This request should precede submission of the Self-Evaluation Report (SER).

The QAC will select the Review Team from a pool of trained accredited reviewers and identify one of them as the Review Chair. The members of the Review Team will be sent a set of documents including the Code of Conduct for Reviewers and a Declaration of Interests form (Annexure 01). Reviewers are expected to return the completed Declaration form to the QAC as an indication of willingness to undertake the assigned review. Upon receipt of the Declaration form, details of the Review Team will be forwarded to the PGPMU for their concurrence through the CQA.

About four to six weeks before the intended review, the dates for the review visit will be decided upon by mutual agreement of the Review Team and the PGPP. Upon finalizing the logistics and dates, the SER will be sent to the selected members at least four weeks prior to the review visit.

Upon receipt of the SER, individual members of the review panel are expected to peruse the document to make a preliminary assessment/ observation, make notes on any further information that may be required prior to/during the review visit, and submit a desk review evaluation report to the QAC, as detailed in Chapter Four.

A pre-review meeting among the review panel, CQA Director, Programme Coordinator, and a QAC representative will be organized by the QAC about two weeks before the scheduled visit. The broad scope of the review process, including the range of documentation to be made available and the timetable for the visit will be intimated to the PGPP/PGPMU by the QAC.

At this meeting the Review Team will exchange findings of the desk evaluation, collectively agree on the assessments made and the lines of inquiry and any further information they need to see in advance. They will also identify individuals and groups that they wish to meet during their visit, and delegate specific criteria/ areas of inquiry to individual reviewers.

1.9.2. The Review Visit

The CQA in liaison with the IQAC and the QAC should make necessary arrangements to receive the Review Team and facilitate the review process. Details are given in Chapter Four of this manual. The members of the Review Team are expected to adhere to the prescribed code of conduct.

The Review Team upon completion of the preliminaries during the visit, will

- examine and verify (as far as possible) the claims in the programme's SER, review with the PGPP/PGPMU of any specific concerns arising from the reviews previously conducted by the QAC or by professional bodies,

- gather additionally required evidence to enable them to form a view on the effectiveness of the mechanisms employed by the PGPP/PGPMU to improve the quality of educational provision, learning experience and achievement of the intended learning outcomes by the students, as well as the functioning of the IQAC

- assess the extent to which the recommendations and criticisms made by any previous reviews have been addressed.

The Review Team will also consult documentation provided by the PGPP/PGPMU. It will endeavour to keep to a minimum the amount of documentation it requests during the visit. The aim is to consider evidence provided by the PGPP/PGPMU and to focus on discussions with staff and students to get a clear picture of the processes in operation. The Review Team should always seek to read and use all information provided, either in hard copy or in digital form.

Postgraduate Programme review is evidence-based. The judgments made by the Review Team emerge from consideration of the evidence individually and collectively. They should not rest on unsupported views or prejudice. Most evidence for review will come from information and documentation provided by the PGPP/PGPMU itself. In addition, and as available, Review Teams will draw on other relevant material such as (professional body quality assessment/accreditation reports, UGC standing committee reports etc.) where appropriate.

All reviews will draw upon the following principal sources of evidence:

- The SER prepared for the review

- Evidence referenced in the SER

- Degree of internalization of best practices as prescribed in the Programme Review Manual

- Compliance with the nationally approved reference points

- Information gathered by the Review Team during the review visit.

The site visit should conclude with a meeting (wrap-up meeting) with the Head of the PGPP, Chairperson of the PGPMU, Programme Coordinator, Director of the CQA, Coordinator of the IQAC, and other relevant senior academic and administrative staff. The Review Team is expected to provide a general indication of its conclusions based on the review including strengths and weaknesses identified. The PGPP/PGPMU will be given an opportunity to correct any obvious factual errors or misinterpretations at this point, but they would have to wait until the written report is submitted to give their response to the report.

1.9.3. Postgraduate Programme Review Report (PGPRR) submission and publication

The outcome of postgraduate programme review is a published report. Its purpose is to inform the PGPP/PGPMU and external parties of the findings of the PGPR and to provide a reference point to support and guide staff in their continuing quality enhancement activities. In particular, the report will provide an overall judgment on the reviewer's assessment supported by a commentary on the strengths and weaknesses of the following:

- the rigor and robustness of the PGPP/PGPMU's mechanisms for discharging its responsibility for the quality of the education provision of the study programme and the standard of awards made;

- the effectiveness of its planning, quality and resource management and the efficiency of its administration;

- the sufficiency, reliability of the evidence used and its accessibility to external scrutiny;

- a statement on the level of overall performance and accomplishment of the PG study programme under the Grading of A, B, C or D based on the Programme-wise score as estimated according to equations given in Chapter Four.

- a commentary including commendations when a PG programme receives an A Grading to encourage achievement of excellence and a commentary on recommendations on aspects which need further improvements for PG study programmes that receive a B,C or D Grading or based on the scores achieved on different criteria and respective standards.

The draft PGPRR will be submitted to the QAC by the Review Chair. The QAC will send a copy of the draft PGPRR to the PGPP/PGPMU for their perusal. This will provide an opportunity to PGPP/PGPMU to peruse the draft report and if there are concerns to make it known to the QAC. If the PGPP/PGPMU requests a discussion with the Review Team to resolve concerns, QAC will facilitate a meeting between the Review Team and the PGPP/PGPMU for the purpose before finalizing the report. Details of the procedure to be followed are described in Chapter Six.

1.10. Outcome of Postgraduate Programme Review (PGPR)

After the PGPP/PGPMU accepts the postgraduate programme review report, it will enter the public domain through the QAC website, enabling all stakeholders including postgraduate

students, postgraduates, prospective employers, grant providing agencies, educationists and policymakers have access to it. The UGC and MoE will receive a copy through the QAC.

The most important follow-up actions have to be undertaken by the PGPP/PGPMU itself. The CQA and IQAC should ensure that relevant members of the PGPP/PGPMU have access to the Review Report. All concerned academics, administrators, and support staff are expected to read at least the sections of the PGPRR relevant to them. Their reactions should be obtained in a formal manner and discussed in depth at the level of the PGPMU, PGPP, CQA. The PGPRR should also be sent to the Senate and Council for perusal along with the outcome of these discussions.

A comprehensive follow-up action plan for quality enhancement is expected to be drawn up and integrated into the Action Plan for Internal Quality Enhancement, to be implemented by the PGPP/PGPMU. The CQA/ IQAC and other relevant committees should continue to monitor the progress in implementing remedial measures / activity plans. Internal quality enhancement activities should take place on a continuous basis.

The QAC should continue to provide system wide analyses and information regarding postgraduate programme reviews to the PGPPs with a view to internalizing best practices. This could be accomplished through the QAC newsletter and website.

Part II

Quality Assurance Framework and Performance Assessment

Chapter Two

Criteria, Best Practices, Standards and Evidence

Quality assessment of a postgraduate study programme is a diagnostic review of the effectiveness of the means employed by the PGPP/PGPMU for managing and assuring the fitness for purpose of the education provision of the study programme, student learning experience and standards of awards of a postgraduate programme. As indicated in Chapter One (section 1.4), objectivity and transparency of the assessment process and comparability among study programmes are desired attributes of a quality assessment. The accepted practice for assuring these attributes is by defining a quality framework or assessment structure comprising 'Criteria', 'Best Practices' and Standards' against which a judgment on quality could be made (Coomaraswamy, 2019; Warnasuriya et al., 2015 a). In order to make judgements objectively, evidence of internalizing best practices for achievement of the specified standards are used.

This chapter presents the seven 'Criteria' or key aspects that contribute to the quality of a postgraduate study programme. Under each criterion, the 'Best Practices' or the actions and procedures that would improve the quality of education provision, and the 'Standards' or the desired level of internalization of the Best Practices by the PGPP/PGPMU/ PG programme are presented. In addition, some examples of evidence that could demonstrate the degree of internalization of the best practice or achievement of the respective standard are provided.

The Self-Evaluation Report (SER) of the postgraduate study programme should be structured in line with the 'Criteria' and 'Standards' provided in this chapter. The 'Standards' are to be used by reviewers to measure the degree of internalization of the Best Practices and the level of attainment of the relevant Standard. More details on the Procedure for using Standards for Assessment of Performance of a Study Programme are given in Chapter Three.

2.1. Criterion 1. Programme Management

Scope: This criterion refers to the PGPP's overall aspects of programme management which encompasses: PGPP's mission, strategy; role and purpose of its post-graduate programmes; alignment with Corporate Plan and Action Plan of the University/ PGPP; Scope and SOPs of each Post-graduate Programme Planning and Management Unit (PGPMU); financial management including programme budgets; availability of filing system, MIS and segregation of access rights; financial and risk management strategies. It also incorporates the availability of policies on the following and mechanisms for implementation of such policies: human resource development; programme design, development and review; Programme approval; publication of essential information regarding programmes of study; student selection and admissions; completion of programmes of study; student charter/code of conduct; handling student grievances; internal quality assurance; students with special needs; Gender Equity and Equality and anti-Sexual & Gender Based Violence.

The scope of this criterion is captured in the following 'Standards':

Best Practices	Standards	Examples of Sources of Evidence
A strategic plan with clearly stated goals and objectives that are achieved through delivery of the PGPP's postgraduate programmes of study is available.	1.1. The goals and objectives of the programmes of study offered by the PGPP are aligned with its strategic plan.	Prospectus/ Course Handbook with Goals and Objectives of programmes; University/PGPP's Corporate/strategic plan; Action plan and annual plans; Documents on action plan implementation and monitoring.
The PGPP's organizational structure complies with relevant legislation and enables effective management and execution of its core functions in relation to PG programme delivery.	1.2. The organizational structure of the PGPP complies with relevant legislation and regulations.	Relevant legislative provisions; Organogram; TORs of PGPP's Statutory Boards and other Committees.
	1.3. The organizational structure of the PGPP and the PGPMU is designed to ensure efficient and effective management of its programmes of study.	Relevant by-laws of the PGPP and PGPMU; Minutes of PGPP's Statutory Boards and other Committees.
A clearly stated and comprehensive HRD policy is available.	1.4. The PGPP has a clearly stated human resource development policy which includes appointment of suitably qualified teaching faculty and other staff, orientation, professional development, and periodic evaluation of its staff.	Human Resource Development policy documents; Cadre provision documents; Qualifications required for teaching faculty; Scheme of recruitment and promotion (where relevant); Work norms, duty lists/ Job descriptions of all relevant staff categories.

Best Practices	Standards	Examples of Sources of Evidence
Channels of communication between the PGPP, the PGPMU, teachers and students are well-established and maintained.	1.5. Appropriate channels of communication between the PGPP, the PGPMU, teachers, and students, are established officially, and function in a timely manner.	Guidelines on official channels of communication; Records of communications between PGPP and the PGPMU, teachers and students.
The PGPP manages and allocates resources in keeping with its goals, objectives and stated policies.	1.6. The PGPP has clearly stated policies and effective mechanisms for management of its financial, physical, and human resources, and allocates the resources in accordance with the stated policy.	Policies on allocation of resources; Strategic plan of the PGPP; Action plan and records of allocation of financial resources; approved programme budgets; Minutes of the finance committee and the audit committee.
Students' views on matters related to the programme of study and the learning environment are taken into consideration.	1.7. The PGPP has established mechanisms to entertain student views and representation on matters related to the programme of study and the learning environment, and addresses these concerns in a timely manner.	Records of the established mechanism/s to accommodate student views; Records of student feedback; Minutes of meetings with Student and Alumni; Minutes of the Boards of Study and other Statutory Boards; committees; Records on follow up actions taken.
Compliance with the guidelines and standards prescribed in the Sri Lanka Qualifications Framework (SLQF) is a prime consideration in design and development of curricula of study programmes and courses.	1.8. The PGPP has a clearly stated policy that requires compliance with the guidelines and standards prescribed in the Sri Lanka Qualifications Framework (SLQF) in designing and development of curricula of study programmes and courses.	PGPP/Faculty/Senate approved curriculum design policy; Guidelines on Curriculum design and development.

Best Practices	Standards	Examples of Sources of Evidence
Curriculum design and development is outcome-based and subject to periodic review and revision.	1.9. The PGPP's policy on curriculum design and development requires the use of an outcome-based approach, and periodic review of the curriculum.	PGPP/Faculty/Senate approved curriculum design and review policy; Guidelines on Curriculum design and review.
	1.10. The PGPP and PGPMU have mechanisms in place to ensure that curriculum design and development are outcome-based and subject to periodic review.	Programme and course specification templates approved by the Senate; Minutes of the Board/s of Study, Departmental meetings, Curriculum planning committees; Programme development committee and its composition; Curriculum planning documents; Employer and stakeholder's survey; Employer's feedback during programme design and development; Records on ongoing training programmes on OBE; Records on periodic review of curricular of programmes.
Essential information regarding each study programme is publicly available.	1.11. The PGPP/ PGPMU publishes up-to-date essential information regarding the programme/s of study.	Handbook/Prospectus/web links containing description of postgraduate study programme/s offered, learning resources, student support services, disciplinary procedures, welfare facilities available, rights and responsibilities of students, and grievance redress mechanisms.
Programmes of study are completed in a timely manner.	1.12. The PGPP has a clearly stated policy that requires its programmes of study to be completed within a defined time period, and effective mechanisms are in place to monitor and ensure their timely completion.	Curriculum implementation policy; Handbook/prospectus/web links; Dates of commencement and completion of programme/s; PGPP/PGMU Annual academic calendar; Minutes of Boards of study; Progress review reports of postgraduate research students; Records of individual student registration and completion with dates.

Best Practices	Standards	Examples of Sources of Evidence
Students who are demonstrably qualified for advanced academic study are selected for programmes of study in a non-discriminatory manner.	1.13. The PGPP has a policy that requires clearly defined, transparent, non-discriminatory admission criteria, which are made known to prospective students, and the PGPMU adheres to this policy in the selection of students to the programme/s of study.	Policy on selection of students; Handbook/prospectus/web links with details of admission criteria; Minutes of Boards of study/Department, Admission Committees and the Senate.
All new entrants are offered an orientation to their programme of study.	1.14. The PGPMU conducts an appropriately structured orientation programme for all new entrants to programmes of study.	Outline, contents, structure and schedules of the orientation programmes; Records of attendance; Feedback received from the participants.
The records of all post-graduate students are comprehensive, secure, confidential, and up to date, with clearly defined access rights.	1.15. The PGPP maintains up to date organized filing system/MIS with effective separation of the management of academic activities and key administrative functions, and with clearly defined access rights with provision for secure backups of all files and records.	Manual of existing filing system, custodianship and access rights of files or MIS user manual; Approved document on user rights; MIS Backup files and records.
Internal quality assurance mechanism/activities enhance the quality of programmes of study.	1.16. The PGPP has a clearly stated policy and mechanism on internal quality assurance with well-defined operational procedures that are implemented by the PGPP and PGPMU to ensure the quality of its educational programmes.	IQA policy; Manual of by -laws and operational procedures; Minutes of relevant meetings; Progress reports of implementing internal quality assurance procedures; Reports of implementation of previous EQA recommendations.
Arrangements for phasing out curricula and facilitating transition of students are in place.	1.17. The PGPP has a clearly stated policy for phasing out curricula and facilitating transition of students, and PGPMU phases out the curriculum of a programme of study with minimum disruption to progression of students and enabling smooth transition of students.	Policy document on phasing out curricula and transitional arrangements; Guidelines on phasing out curricula and transitional arrangements; Minutes of Boards of study/Departments/ Board of Management on phasing out curricula and transitional arrangements; Student appeals and records of decisions.

Best Practices	Standards	Examples of Sources of Evidence
Students are well-informed about their responsibilities and entitlements.	1.18. The PGPP has a code of conduct for students/ student charter/ learning contract, and PGPMU ensures that students are aware of their responsibilities and adhere to the students' code of conduct.	PGPP/PGPMU Prospectus/ Handbook; Student charter, Code of conduct; Student disciplinary by laws; Minutes of the Departments/ Board of Study/ Board of Management.
Student grievances are managed effectively.	1.19. The PGPP has a clearly stated policy on management of student grievances and the PGPP/PGPMU has a published mechanism for receiving student complaints and handles such complaints appropriately.	Policy document on student's grievance redressal; PGPP/PGPMU Prospectus/Handbook; Minutes of student grievance redressal committees of PGPP/PGPMU; Report on the past grievance incidents and solutions provided.
The sustainability of all programmes is assured by a sound financial management system that complies with national and institutional guidelines.	1.20. The PGPP has a sound financial management system that complies with national guidelines and enables the PGPMU to continue delivery of the study programmes without hindrance.	Relevant circulars of the Ministry of Finance and the UGC; Council approved PGPP/PGPMU guidelines for preparation of programme budgets; Programme budgets; Minutes of the Finance Committee/Council meetings; Records of addressing issues raised by Boards of Study by the PGPMU.
A policy, strategy and practices to support students with special needs are in place.	1.21. The PGPP has a clearly stated policy and established mechanisms to offer support for students with special needs.	Policy document on students with special needs; Student handbook; Student requests; Minutes of the meetings of Department/Board of Study and other relevant committees; Records of accommodating requests.
Policies, strategies and practices relating to Gender Equity & Equality (GEE) and anti-Sexual & Gender Based Violence (SGBV) are in place.	1.22. The PGPP has a clearly stated policy and practices on GEE and SGBV and PGPMU implements measures to ensure GEE and deter any form of SGBV amongst all categories of staff and students.	Policy document on GEE and SGBV; Student Handbook; Records of complaints; Minutes of the meetings of Department/Board of Study and other relevant committees; Records of action taken on complaints.

Best Practices	Standards	Examples of Sources of Evidence
Efficient and effective management of programmes of study are facilitated by the availability of standard protocols set out in a management guide.	1.23. The PGPP has a Management Guide that sets out all the procedures adopted by the PGPP/ PGPMU for the implementation of its policies, and the Management Guide is used by the PGPMU to ensure efficient and effective management of the programme of study.	Management Guide; Guidelines on Programme Management; Minutes of the meetings of Department/Board of Study and other relevant committees.

2.2. Criterion 2 - Programme Design and Development

Scope: This criterion addresses those aspects of a programme of study that are directly related to programme design and development, including relevancy to the PGPP's mission, goals and objectives; the principles adopted by the PGPMU in designing the programme of study, including due consideration for relevant policies of the PGPP; the process by which the programme is developed by the PGPMU and approved by the PGPP; and the availability of an effective process for regular monitoring and review of design, development, approval and delivery of postgraduate programmes. A programme of study is defined as a stand-alone, approved curriculum (which includes course work or research) followed by a student, which leads to a qualification awarded by a higher education institution.

The Scope of this criterion is captured in the following standards:

Best Practices	Standards	Examples of Sources of Evidence
Purpose of the programme is consistent with the vision, mission, strategic goals of the institution.	2.1. Programme conforms to the mission, goals and objectives of the PGPP.	Corporate/strategic plan; Programme specification; Minutes of programme development committee.
Programme is developed or upgraded following a needs assessment, using OBE approach, to produce graduates who possess attributes and profile, that meet identified national and global needs.	2.2. PGPMU ensures that curriculum review and design processes are guided by a formal needs analysis which includes input from employer/ professional body surveys, addresses national needs, reflects global trends, and current knowledge and practice, which is followed by programme development with external stakeholder participation.	Curriculum development policy and plan; Needs survey instruments and feedback; Minutes of programme development team and composition; Employer and stakeholders' survey; Reports from employers considered during programme design and development; Focus group discussions; Programme specifications.
The principles to be considered when programmes are designed and developed are documented and communicated to all concerned in the programme design.	2.3. PGPMU effectively communicates matters related to design and development of the programme of study with relevant faculty members, current students, alumni, employers and relevant professional, industry and community bodies.	Proof of adopting principles of programme design in programme specification; Records of communicating programme design guidelines with relevant staff; Feedback from relevant faculty members, current students, alumni, employers and relevant professional, industry and community bodies.

Best Practices	Standards	Examples of Sources of Evidence
Programme is developed collaboratively in a participatory manner by a curriculum development committee or an equivalent body	2.4. Programme is designed or revised by a curriculum design and development committee of experts or PGPMU and approved by the PGPP with clearly defined tasks and procedural frameworks.	Curriculum planning documents; Minutes of curriculum planning committee or PGPMU; PGPP policy/plan on curriculum development.
Sufficient and appropriate academic expertise is available for programme design and development.	2.5. The members of the PGPMU, in terms of the number, qualifications and competencies is adequate for designing and development of the study programmes.	List of academic members of the PGPMU involved in designing and development of the study programme that includes the number, qualifications and relevant competencies.
Programme design follows the principles of OBE and is consistent with the respective SLQF qualification descriptors, level descriptors and relevant professional/practice-based/ statutory body requirements and standards, wherever applicable.	2.6. Programme is designed conforming to the "Purpose and Scope of Qualification" requirement of the appropriate SLQF Level	Proof of compliance with SLQF; Aim of the programme; Programme specification.
	2.7. Graduate profile of the programme is aligned with the "Attributes of Qualification Holders" requirement of the appropriate SLQF Level	Proof of compliance with SLQF; Map of graduate profile with SLQF attributes of Qualification holders.
	2.8. Programme complies with the "Minimum Admission Requirement" for the appropriate SLQF Level	Proof of compliance with SLQF; Advertisement; Programme specification.
	2.9. Programme Learning Outcomes (PLOs) are aligned with the 12 SLQF learning outcomes (LOs), and comprehensively address all relevant SLQF Level Descriptors.	Proof of compliance of compliance with SLQF; Mapping of PLOs with the 12 SLQF Level LOs; Mapping of course/module/research and lesson LOs with PLOs.
	2.10. The progression of achievement of the 12 SLQF learning outcomes over the duration of the programme is clearly planned and documented.	Programme and course/module specifications; Proof of compliance with SLQF (at different levels); Constructive alignment document.

	2.11. Programme fulfils the required total volume of learning at the relevant SLQF Level	Programme specification; Credit calculation table for each module/course and for the entire programme; Proof of compliance with SLQF
	2.12. Progression opportunities and progression pathways upon successful completion of study programme are clearly stated in the prospectus.	Programme specification; Prospectus.
	2.13. The PGPP and HEI ensure the name of the qualification awarded for the programme complies with the SLQF with respect to the Type, Designator, Qualifier, and the Abbreviation.	Approved name of the qualification; Proof of compliance with SLQF
The design and development of study programmes is carried out incorporating the latest developments and practices in the field of study, and according to the principles of outcome-based education and student-centred learning.	2.14. Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) of each course/module/research, which include latest developments in the field, are clearly mapped with respective PLOs and SLQF Level Descriptors.	Programme specification; Course specifications; Template of course design showing course ILOs aligned with respective PLOs and SLQF Level Descriptors (constructive alignment document).
Teaching-learning methods and assessment strategies are aligned with course/ research ILOs.	2.15. Teaching- learning activities are designed to be student-centred, and clearly aligned with assessment tasks and ILOs for each course/module	Programme/course specifications; Standards prescribed by professional bodies; Minutes of curriculum development committee; Feedback from course evaluation; Curriculum (course/module) blueprints; Assessment blueprints.

Best Practices	Standards	Examples of Sources of Evidence
(This Best Practice and the Standard are applicable only to SLQF Levels 7 – 10)		
Volume of learning to be engaged in completing individual courses and/or research components (workload) to be completed within a specified time frame, is consistent with SLQF requirements.	2.16. Each individual course/module has a credit value, designated number of study hours (notional hours) which include any combination of direct teaching hours, learning activities, assignments, tutorials, laboratory/clinical work, project work, self-learning, use of library, revision and examinations in compliance with the SLQF.	Proof of using SLQF; Course specifications of the programme of study; Inclusion of the above in Handbook/Prospectus, Lecture schedule and time table.
Detailed programme and course specifications are publicly available for taught courses and research components.	2.17. The PGPMU publishes programme specifications for the study programmes and course specifications for taught courses and research component (where relevant).	Programme specifications for the study programmes and course specifications for taught courses and research component published for past 3 cycles.
A Programme Specification, developed according to a template approved by the HEI and conforming to guidelines prescribed in the SLQF, is publicly available.	2.18. The programme has the appropriate proportions of taught courses and a research component or guided independent study component, in compliance with the SLQF.	Programme Specification; Proportion of taught causes, research component or guided independent study component of the programme of study.
	2.19. The research component or the guided independent study component of the programme (when applicable) fulfils the requirements described in the SLQF for the respective level.	Programme Specification; Volume of learning assigned for research component or guided independent study component of the programme of study.
	2.20. PGPMU uses officially approved standard formats/ templates/ guidelines for programme, course/module design and development and complies with official requirements during the programme design and development phases.	PGPP/HEI approved curriculum design policy; Proof of adopting SLQF and other requirements of professional bodies in programme/course development; Curricula of study programmes; Programme website.

Best Practices	Standards	Examples of Sources of Evidence
Study programmes are designed with an annual academic calendar in mind, enabling the students to complete the programme at the stipulated time.	2.21. The PGPMU designs study programmes according to an annual academic calendar (where relevant) that enables the students to successfully complete the programme at the stipulated time.	Institutional mechanism in setting the timetable; Past timetables and records of entry and graduation dates of batches of students over the past 3 cycles.
The programme is approved by an institutional committee which takes into consideration the design principles, appropriateness of the learning experiences to facilitate achievement of desired programme outcomes, assessment of student achievements and measures taken to maintain academic standards.	2.22. Programme approval decisions are taken by the relevant institutional committee after full consideration of design principles, academic standards, and appropriateness of the learning opportunities available, monitoring and review arrangements and content of the programme specification.	PGPP/HEI criteria for programme approval process; Minutes of programme approval committee; Minutes of the academic authority with records of implementing the approval process.
Student feedback and post-graduation data are used for continuous improvement of the programme of study and the student experience.	2.23. PGPMU uses student feedback for continuous improvement of the programme of study and the student experience.	End-of-Programme Student survey; Records of incorporating inputs from survey results.
	2.24. PGPMU collects information about students' progression after graduation and uses it for continuous improvement of the programme.	Methods practiced for collecting information about students' progression after graduation; Records of incorporating inputs for improvement of the programme.
The results of programme evaluation are used for continuous improvement of the programme of study	2.25. PGPMU uses the results of programme evaluation for the process of curriculum revision.	Methods practiced for conducting tracer studies annually; Survey data; Annual report; Examination results analysis; Use of results of programme evaluation for curriculum revision.

2.3. Criterion 03. Human & Physical Resources and Learner Support

Scope: The scope of this criterion falls under three main attributes: the human component (academic staff, executive officers, academic support staff and non-academic staff), the infrastructure facilities (classrooms, library, computer labs, laboratories, field stations, workshops, LMS) and student support services (library service; IT services, mentoring, counselling) provided.

This criterion reviews the strategies and procedures that are in place to recruit suitably qualified, well-trained staff to conduct a particular programme efficiently, provide adequate infrastructure facilities for the students to continue with their studies uninterruptedly and provide essential student support services such as training (soft skills/technical), mentoring, counselling career guidance etc. to achieve their higher education goals. In addition, the PGPP/PGPMU has mechanisms to regularly monitor the effectiveness of these procedures in terms of students' feedback, peer reviews, student satisfaction surveys and take necessary action to respond to the outcomes of the feedback/surveys.

The Scope of this criterion is captured in the following standards:

Best Practice	Standards	Examples of Sources of Evidence
Human Resources		
Adequate numbers of qualified staff (academic, administrative and other categories) are available to maintain the quality of education provision and standard of awards of the PG programme.	3.1. The PGPP and PGPMU have sufficient academic, administrative, academic support staff and non-academic staff for efficient execution of the programme and to maintain the academic quality of course delivery and supervision of research.	PGPP/PGPMU HR profile; List of academic, administrative and other categories of staff contributing to the programme and designations, CVs with expertise/ qualifications of academic staff; Letters of appointments.
Academic staff who are assigned teaching or research supervision responsibilities are required to carry out the accepted task to completion within the stipulated time period.	3.2. The PGPMU has mechanisms to make sure that the academic staff who are assigned teaching or research supervision responsibilities carry out the task to completion within the stipulated time period.	Appointment letters/ contractual agreements with TOR for academic staff for teaching and research supervision; PGPMU policy on research student – supervisor ratio; Records of completion of teaching/ research supervision on stipulated time period; PGPMU minutes.

Best Practices	Standards	Examples of Sources of Evidence
All staff are familiar with the relevant institutional regulations and procedures.	3.3. The PGPP ensures that all staff of all categories are informed of relevant institutional regulations and procedures including updates.	Management Guide/ Manual/ documents on Institutional regulations and procedures; List of induction/ awareness programs conducted by PGPP; Records of staff undergoing induction or awareness programmes; Records of completion of the programmes; Budgets and manuals; Feedback received from participants.
All members of staff have received up to date training in their respective fields/roles as appropriate.	3.4. The PGPP supports Continuous Professional Development and training of its academic, academic support, administrative and non- academic staff.	PGPP/BoM/ Faculty Board minutes; PGPMU/ BoS minutes; Records of CPD programs supported by PGPP; Lists of academic, academic support, administrative and non - academic staff completed CPD programs; Updated CVs of staff.
The performance of every member of staff (in each category) is monitored, evaluated, and recognized, based on pre-approved and published criteria, regularly and systematically.	3.5. The PGPP has published pre-approved criteria to evaluate the performance of all categories of staff and a mechanism to regularly monitor their performance.	Management Guide/ Manual; List of pre- approved criteria to evaluate the performance of each category of staff; Senate minutes; Templates used to evaluate each category of staff; Records of regular monitoring of staff performance in each category.
	3.6. The PGPP rewards members of staff with outstanding performance.	Pre-approved criteria; Evaluation committee minutes; List of staff rewarded for their performances over the past 3 cycles; Senate minutes; Teacher evaluation records.

Best Practices	Standards	Examples of Sources of Evidence
All categories of staff provide student-friendly services.	3.7. The PGPP/PGPMU has established guidelines on PG student services that are communicated to all students.	PGPP Prospectus/ Student Handbook indicating administrative structure related to PG student services; PGPP website with FAQs; Help desk; Orientation programme agenda; Records of student orientation.
	3.8. PGPP/PGPMU makes the guidelines on student services available to staff.	Guidelines relevant to student services; PGPP Prospectus; Records of communicating Codes of practices to staff.
	3.9. The PGPP ensures adherence to guidelines and codes of conduct relevant to student services, by staff.	Records of student requests and responses; Student feedback; Student satisfaction survey reports; Minutes of the relevant Boards/ meetings/ student grievance redressal committee.
Physical Resources and Learner Support (Learning and Research Environment)		
Learning resources adequately support achievement of the programme/ course learning outcomes.	3.10. The PGPMU ensures that learning resources are up-to-date, adequate for all students, and support achievement of programme outcomes by all students	Needs analysis data of learning resources; PGPMU meeting minutes; Inventory of learning resources; Student feedback; Student satisfaction survey reports.
The learning environment facilitates safe engagement of students in learning activities and research.	3.11. The PGPMU ensures that students are made aware of and trained (where relevant) for safe engagement in learning activities and research.	Safety guidelines on-learning activities and research; List of awareness or training programs conducted for student safety; Records of student participation; PGPMU minutes; Student feedback; Student satisfaction survey reports.

Best Practices	Standards	Examples of Sources of Evidence
A well-resourced library service that adheres to Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) is available to staff and students.	3.12. The PGPP provides students and teachers with access to a library that is networked and has up-to-date titles in print or electronic media, Open Educational Resources (OER) and data bases that comply with laws pertaining to intellectual property rights.	Inventories of library resources (print /electronic), Library website; Stakeholder views, Library committee minutes; Library regulations regarding IPR; Student Handbook highlighting library regulations; Relevant usage reports, Student satisfaction survey reports.
	3.13. The library provides students and teachers with services such as interlibrary loans, reprography, reading rooms, wi-fi, electronic access, meeting rooms etc.	List of library facilities available; Records of relevant services provided for staff and students; List of Library staff and their respective roles; Library website, Feedback from students and staff; Student satisfaction survey reports.
	3.14. The library provides students and staff with facilities to carry out plagiarism checks	Specifications of the software in use; Training programs on plagiarism checks; Request letters of students; Reports of plagiarism checks; Relevant committee minutes; Library committee minutes.
Adequate computer and internet facilities, and related support services are available to students and staff.	3.15. PGPP or PGPMU ensures students and staff have access to adequate computer and internet facilities, essential up-to-date licensed software and friendly technical support.	Numbers and specifications of computers and software available; Service agreements; Maintenance records; Technical assistance logbook with job completion records, Usage reports; Student and staff feedback; Student satisfaction survey reports.

Best Practices	Standards	Examples of Sources of Evidence
An effective Learning Management System is available.	3.16. The PGPP ensures that students have access to a functional LMS, that is customized by the PGPMU for its programmes of study.	URL of LMS; Records of LMS user accounts; Records of use of LMS by students and staff for individual study programmes; Student Handbook.
	3.17. The PGPMU provides training for staff and students in the use of the LMS	Minutes of relevant meetings; Training programs conducted for staff and students on LMS; Agenda of the LMS training programs; List of attendance in the LMS training programmes.
Adequate physical infrastructure for teaching-learning and research (including those required for students and staff with special needs) and administrative support are available.	3.18 The PGPMU ensures access by staff and students to well-equipped and adequate physical facilities for teaching-learning and research activities, both on-site and outside of the PGPP.	Office facilities for academic staff and students; Class rooms, Computer labs; Media resources; Laboratories; Clinical training facilities; Studio facilities; Field stations for research and training; Service agreements; Maintenance records; Student feedback; Student/Staff satisfaction survey reports.
	3.19 The PGPP maintains well-equipped and adequate physical infrastructure for administrative and non-academic staff.	Office facilities for administrative and non-academic staff; Annual Inventory reports; Service agreements; Annual Procurement Plan; Request letters for maintenance and repairs; Relevant Committee meeting minutes.
	3.20 The PGPP ensures availability of adequate and well-maintained cafeteria and sanitary facilities for all students and staff, including those with special needs.	Cafeterias and sanitary facilities; Maintenance records; Welfare committee meeting reports; Accessibility to persons with special needs; Staff and student feedback.

	3.21. The PGPMU ensures that students and staff with special needs have adequate access to facilities for teaching-learning and research	Needs analysis reports; Management committee meeting minutes; Physical verification of facilities available for students and staff with special needs; Student feedback; Student satisfaction survey reports.
A mentoring and counselling system that supports students towards completion of the programme of study is available.	3.22. The PGPP or PGPMU has a mentoring and counselling system in place to provide students with guidance and support throughout the programme of study.	Student Handbook; Responsibilities of programme coordinators / academic mentors/ counsellors; List of academic mentors/counsellors appointed for each study programme; Appointment letters with TORs; Training on academic mentoring/ counselling; Records of providing mentoring/ counselling; Minutes of relevant Committee meetings.

2.4. Criterion 4 – Teaching-Learning and Research

Scope: The scope of the criterion encompasses the planning of Teaching-Learning and Research activities; the alignment of such activities to PLOs; compliance to the SLQF; use of feedback for quality improvement; and suitability of teachers and supervisors. It addresses the extent to which student-centred instructional methods are used; the extent of application of outcome-based approaches in teaching and supervision; and the use of blended learning in taught courses. As for research degree programmes and practice-based programmes, the criterion covers the aspects of quality of research guidance and mentoring including the availability and accessibility of the supervisor or the mentor, readiness to provide constructive feedback, and the willingness to obtain and pay attention to students' feedback. As per the quality of the supervisor or the mentor, the attributes such as the active engagement in research, experience as a supervisor, interest in the supervising job, and the commitment to the supervisory role are included. Furthermore, it addresses the moral responsibility and ethical conduct of the teachers and supervisors in all areas of involvement with students and colleagues.

The Scope of this criterion is captured in the following Standards:

Best Practices and Standards for Programmes of Study of SLQF Levels 7 to 10.

Best Practices	Standards	Examples of Sources of Evidence
Teaching-learning activities and research training and supervision are well-planned and appropriate to ensure achievement of specified programme learning outcomes/ graduate attributes of relevant SLQF level.	4.1. The PGPMU ensures that the conducted programme of study is consistent with detailed programme and course specifications/ research proposal specifications.	Manual for teachers of postgraduate taught courses / research degrees; Programme and course specifications / research proposal specifications approved by the Senate; Students' handbook; Learning support materials distributed to students / uploaded to LMS or Cloud Storage.
	4.2. The PGPMU ensures that teaching-learning and research activities are consistent with and facilitates the achievement of programme learning outcomes by all postgraduate students.	Course specifications/ research proposal specifications; Student Handbook; Lecture Record book; Teaching-learning and research activity plans; Learning support materials distributed to students/ uploaded to LMS or Cloud Storage.

Best Practices	Standards	Examples of Sources of Evidence
Teaching-learning, and research of all programs are geared towards achieving the 'Purpose and Scope' of the qualification level as specified in the SLQF.	4.3. The PGPMU ensures that all postgraduate programmes demand a high level of theoretical engagement through teaching, guided independent study or research in compliance with the Purpose and Scope as outlined in the SLQF requirements.	Proof of compliance with Purpose and Scope of the relevant SLQ level; Detailed programme specification; Feedback from current students and alumni.
All teachers involved in each program are suitably qualified for the purpose.	4.4. PGPMU has mechanisms to ensure that all teachers involved in each graduate program are qualified to provide high level of theoretical knowledge or to guide independent study or research projects.	Updated database of teaching panel with qualifications; Criteria for lecturer appointment; Minutes of PGPMU meetings; Senate or Board of Management approved Teaching panel for courses in each semester.
Time spent on teaching-learning activities accurately correspond to the credit value stated in the course curriculum and notional hours specified in the SLQF.	4.5. PGPMU ensures that teaching-learning engagement time of students of every course comply with the credit value stated in the course curriculum and notional hours specified in the SLQF.	Course specifications; Detailed course or module plan; Lecture Record book; Records of LMS usage by teachers; Log-in reports of the use of the LMS by students; Students' feedback on teaching-learning engagement time.
Teachers prepare detailed course plans aligned with course ILOs and inform students of the course plan at the commencement of the course.	4.6. The PGPMU ensures that every course unit or module in a programme of study has a detailed course syllabus or plan that sets out the weekly schedule of activities that are aligned with the course ILOs.	Approved guidelines on course syllabus; Detailed course syllabus/ course plan including weekly class activity schedule/list of test assignments and associated weighting.
	4.7. The PGPMU ensures that all students are made aware of the specified course or module plan and the course ILOs at the commencement of the course unit or module.	Student Handbook; Detailed course unit or module plan; Learning support materials distributed to students/ uploaded to LMS; Students' feedback.

	4.8. The PGPMU has a mechanism to ensure that every teacher adheres to the specified course or module plan.	Letters of appointment of teachers with ToR; Teachers' signed contracts; Lecture Record book; Course or module plan.
Feedback is obtained to assess and improve the quality of teaching-learning and research.	4.9. The PGPMU has mechanisms to obtain feedback from peers and students on teaching-learning and research activities.	Students' feedback of past 02 program cycles; Reports of peer feedback of teaching of past 03 program cycles, Peer feedback on students' research; Letters of appointment of teachers with ToRs; Teachers' signed contracts.
	4.10. The PGPMU uses feedback from peers and students to improve the quality of teaching-learning and research activities.	Results of analysis of students' feedback; Results of analysis of peer feedback reports; Letters informing teachers of the outcomes of feedback from students and peers; Records of using feedback for curriculum revision.
Blended learning is used in every study program.	4.11. The PGPMU ensures effective use of both electronic and online media as well as face-to-face teaching-learning activities in every program of study.	Records of LMS usage by teachers; Logging reports of the use of the LMS by students; Online sessions (Zoom, Teams etc.) attendance reports; Records of face-to-face class attendance; Students' feedback.
Adherence to moral responsibility and ethical conduct are upheld in all areas of teaching-learning and research.	4.12. PGPP has mechanisms to ensure adherence to honesty, academic integrity, and ethical conduct by staff and students in all areas of teaching-learning and research.	Senate/BoM approved guidelines on academic honesty (plagiarism, impersonation, cheating etc) and other academic integrity checks; Guidelines on moral conduct and adherence to research ethics by staff and students; Records on the use of plagiarism software; Records of previous ethical clearances (where relevant).

Best Practices and Standards for Programmes of Study of SLQF Levels 11 & 12.

Best Practices	Standards	Examples of Sources of Evidence
Teaching-learning activities and research training and supervision are well-planned and appropriate to ensure achievement of specified programme learning outcomes/ graduate attributes of relevant SLQF level.	4.1. The PGPMU ensures that the conducted programme of study is consistent with detailed programme and course specifications/ research proposal specifications. .	Manual for teachers of postgraduate taught courses / research degrees; Senate-approved Programme and course specifications / research proposal specifications; Students' Handbook; Learning support materials distributed to students/ uploaded to LMS.
	4.2. The PGPMU ensures that teaching-learning and research activities are consistent with and facilitates the achievement of programme learning outcomes by all postgraduate students.	Course specifications/ research proposal specifications; Students' handbook; Lecture Record book; Teaching-learning and research activity plans; Learning support materials distributed to students/ uploaded to LMS.
Teaching- learning, and research of all programs are geared towards achieving the 'Purpose and Scope of the Qualification level as specified in the SLQF.	4.3. PGPMU ensures that mechanisms are in place to provide every student who undertakes research or Practice-based programmes with relevant structured training that facilitate compliance with the Purpose and Scope as outlined in the SLQF requirements.	Proof of compliance with Purpose and Scope of the relevant SLQ level; Detailed research or practice-based program specifications; Instruction manual to research or practice-based students; Signed contracts by students.
Supervisors are suitably qualified to supervise research degree students.	4.4. PGPMU ensures the appointment of supervisors with equivalent or higher qualifications than the qualification sought by the student as stated in the SLQF.	Updated database of Research supervisors with qualifications; Updated CVs of all supervisors; Criteria for supervisor appointment; Minutes of PGPMU meetings; Senate approved supervisors/supervisory panels for individual research students with research topics.

Best Practices	Standards	Examples of Sources of Evidence
Every research student spends the minimum period of time prescribed in the SLQF on their research activities.	4.5. The PGPMU and supervisor ensure that duration of research engagement of every student complies with the minimum prescribed time requirement for the relevant qualification.	PGPP by-laws on minimum time requirement for completion of research degrees; Student handbook; Past records of research degree completion; Approved research proposals with GANTT charts; Records of supervisory meetings; students' progress reports.
Supervisor's acceptance of a prospective student is based on minimum admission requirements set out in the SLQF and on a preliminary assessment of the student's intellectual ability to undertake the proposed research project	4.6. PGPMU has a mechanism in place to accept students for research degrees after the scrutiny of referrals and the nominated supervisor assures in writing that he/she made a preliminary assessment of the prospective student, and that the student has the potential competencies to undertake the proposed research project.	Senate-approved guidelines/ manual on admission of research students; Application forms for admission of research students; Referee Report template; Supervisors' letters of consent to supervise research students; PGPMU's reports on the preliminary assessment of prospective students during interviews; PGPMU meeting Minutes; PGPMU's reports on assessment of presentations of prospective students; Students' achievements in previous degree programmes (awards, medals etc.)
Research students are supervised by those who are actively engaged in relevant field of research and have a track record of research and publications.	4.7. PGPMU ensures that only those with active track records of research are appointed as chief supervisors of students in research degree programs.	Senate or BoM approved guidelines/ manual on appointment of supervisors; Database of past, current and potential supervisors; Updated CVs of supervisors
Every student research project is developed in consultation with supervisor/s and formally approved prior to commencement of the project	4.8. The PGPMU ensures that the research plan is developed by the PG student in consultation with the appointed supervisor/s, and is formally approved by the Senate or BoM prior to commencement of the project	Senate or BoM-approved manual on supervision of research students; Minutes of supervisory meetings; Records of senate or BoM approval of research projects.

Best Practices	Standards	Examples of Sources of Evidence
Supervisors are committed to monitor the student's progress and take remedial action where necessary.	4.9. The PGPP has a mechanism to ensure that the supervisor regularly monitors students and documents their progress and takes remedial action, where necessary to ensure implementation of the research plan.	Senate or BoM approved manual on postgraduate research supervision including periodic progress monitoring; Minutes of progress review meetings; Records of students' progress; Records of remedial actions taken, if any; students' feedback on supervision.
Research students are facilitated for accessing relevant resources.	4.10. The supervisor supports students to access relevant subject experts/ resource persons / facilities and resources within and outside of the PGPP.	Senate or BoM approved manual on research supervision; Letters issued by PGPMU/ supervisors requesting assistance of relevant subject experts, resource persons, facilities or resource centres; Reports sent by such subject experts, resource persons or resource centres.
Research students are facilitated for timely completion of the degrees.	4.11. The PGPMU has mechanisms in place to facilitate students to complete the research degree as originally planned without undue delays or with approved amendments.	Senate-approved manual on research supervision with provisions for supervisors/ students to inform of undue delays on the part of the student/supervisor; Regular progress reports submitted using a comprehensive template developed by the PGPP; Reminders sent to supervisors or students; Records on changes in the direction of research, if any; Past records of research degree completion of the relevant programme.
A process of external peer review is used to assess the overall quality of supervision and research.	4.12. PGPMU uses occasions of progress review meetings and thesis defence as opportunities for obtaining independent and external peer review to assess the quality of supervision and research.	Reports of progress review meetings; Reports of external examiners of theses; Minutes of PGPMU meetings with records of discussions on external peer reviewers' comments.

Best Practices	Standards	Examples of Sources of Evidence
Adherence to moral responsibility and ethical conduct are upheld in all areas of teaching-learning and research.	4.13. PGPP has mechanisms to ensure adherence to honesty, academic integrity, and ethical conduct by staff and students in all areas of teaching-learning and research.	Senate/BoM approved guidelines on academic honesty (plagiarism, impersonation, cheating etc) and other academic integrity checks; Guidelines on moral conduct and adherence to research ethics by staff and students; Records on the use of plagiarism software; Records of previous ethical clearances.
Ethical practices in research and Intellectual Property rights are honoured by both staff and students.	4.14. PGPP has clear policies on research ethics including plagiarism and innovation, patents and Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) and ensures that students and staff are aware of those policies.	Policies on research ethics including plagiarism and innovation, patents and Intellectual Property Rights (IPR); Relevant Library policy; Code of Conduct; Awareness programmes; lists of attendees; Student handbook; ERC guidelines.
	4.15. The PGPP/ PGPMU ensures that postgraduate students and staff adhere to ethical guidelines, intellectual property rights and authorship criteria.	Minutes of Ethics Review committee; Plagiarism detection software; List of student research publications; Reported cases of IPR violations and actions taken.

2.5. Criterion 5 - Student Assessment and Award of Qualifications

Scope: This criterion addresses the following: Scheme of assessment for determining the level of accomplishment of Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs); Types of assessment, including the 'Formative' (in-course) and 'Summative' (end of course), to capture student work in the Cognitive, Psychomotor and Affective domains; Standards of awards that reflect academic norms of the study programme; Provisions for student appeals, and the equal opportunities for students with special needs.

The scope of this criterion is captured in the following standards:

Best Practices	Standards	Examples of Sources of Evidence
Officially approved comprehensive institutional framework on assessment is available.	5.1. PGPP has an approved assessment framework that encompasses an effective procedure for the conduct of examinations and award of qualifications.	Examination By-laws; Examination Rules and Regulations; Scheme of Assessments; Manual of Examination Procedures.
The assessment strategies ensure that Intended Programme Outcomes are achieved.	5.2. The assessment strategies adopted by the study program are aligned to the relevant Level descriptors of the SLQF, and where available, the requirements of the relevant professional bodies and nationally approved benchmarks.	Constructive alignment; Mapping of assessment strategies with Programme Outcomes; Assessment Blueprints; Certification of professional bodies where relevant.
Regulations and strategies on assessment are up-to-date and fit-for-the purpose.	5.3. The PGPP monitors, reviews and updates its regulations on assessments periodically, adhering to the approved process, to ensure fitness for purpose.	Minutes of relevant meetings; Revised and previous regulations.
	5.4. The PGPMU has mechanisms to ensure adherence to the approved regulations and procedures on assessments by the relevant staff, and reviews and updates the program assessment strategies periodically, to ensure fitness for purpose.	ToRs of the examiners; Minutes of relevant meetings; Updated Assessment Strategies (if relevant).

Best Practices	Standards	Examples of Sources of Evidence
Approved criteria and procedures related to award of qualification/s are prepared, published, and are adhered to, and reviewed as necessary.	5.5. The PGPP has approved criteria and established procedures related to award of qualification/s, including recognition of meritorious performance of students, where applicable, which are reviewed and updated as required.	Approved criteria for award of qualification/s and procedures in place for the award of qualification/s; Minutes of relevant meetings; Updated criteria and procedures and previous criteria and procedures.
	5.6. The PGPMU publishes and communicates the approved criteria related to assessment and award of qualifications and recognition of meritorious performance of students in a timely manner to all candidates and staff.	Manual of Examination Procedures; Student Handbook; Website; Documents on Dates of Final Examination, Board of Examinations and Release of Results (qualifications and awards); Minutes of Senate Meetings.
	5.7. The PGPMU adheres to approved criteria and established procedures for the award of qualifications and recognition of meritorious performance of students.	Approved mark sheets in the Examinations Division; Results sheets submitted to the Senate; Minutes of the Senate.
All aspects of assessment are conducted in a way that ensures the integrity and confidentiality of the process and, in turn, the integrity of academic standards of the award.	5.8. The PGPP has established guidelines to ensure that assessments are conducted with rigor, honesty, transparency and fairness and with due regard to confidentiality and integrity, and the PGPMU ensures that staff involved with examinations are made aware of these guidelines and adhere to them at all times.	Approved Examination Procedures; SOPs; ToRs of examiners; Student feedback/ complaints; Reported incidents of violations and the corrective measures taken.

Best Practices	Standards	Examples of Sources of Evidence
Decisions related to assessment and awards are documented accurately and systematically and are available for inspection/scrutiny by the relevant parties.	5.9. The PGPP ensures that all decisions related to assessments and awards are documented accurately and systematically.	SOPs for documenting the decisions related to assessments and awards; Mechanisms in place to ensure confidentiality, integrity, and accuracy of the above-mentioned decisions.
	5.10. The PGPP has a clearly defined policy of disclosure on the level of details of assessment outcomes that are made available to the students and other specified parties, and PGPMU ensures implementation of the policy.	Policies and templates for disclosure; Level of details of assessment outcomes that are made available to the students and other specified parties; Minutes of relevant meetings.
Regulations governing the nomination and appointment of examiners are clearly stipulated.	5.11. The PGPP has regulations that stipulate the criteria and procedure for nomination and appointment of both internal and external examiners and the first and second examiners, and appointment of examiners under special situations, and the PGPMU implements these regulations accordingly.	Criteria and procedure for nomination and appointment of examiners; Minutes of relevant meetings; Senate approved lists of examiners with their qualifications and affiliations.
The services of a panel of eligible examiners are available and obtained for the process of assessment.	5.12. The PGPP maintains a regularly updated database / registry of eligible examiners that includes their qualifications, specializations, affiliations and experience, and the PGPMU nominates examiners from the database ensuring regular rotation of examiners.	Eligibility criteria; Updated registry of eligible examiners; List of examiners appointed over the period under review.
	5.13. The PGPMU ensures that selected examiners possess no conflicts of interest with respect to examination of candidates.	Samples of completed Declaration of Conflict-of-Interest forms; Minutes of relevant meetings; Nominated and approved lists of examiners.

	5.14. The services of the examiners nominated by the PGPMU are obtained following the approval of PGPP and the HEI.	Lists of examiners nominated by the PGPMU and relevant minutes; Recommendation to the list by the PGPP; Approval to the list by the Senate; Marks sheets submitted by the examiners; Signed results sheets.
Disciplinary procedures for handling malpractices related to assessment are in place, and are strictly enforced.	5.15 The PGPP has established disciplinary procedures for handling examination malpractices, and ensures its strict enforcement.	Regulations pertaining to examination offences; Minutes of Disciplinary Committee meetings; Minutes of the Senate meetings
Uniform and appropriate formats and templates to document the results of assessment are in use, and an authentication service is in place.	5.16. The PGPMU and PGPP use the approved formats and templates to document the results of assessment, including the official transcript.	Approved formats and templates for academic records and transcripts; Anonymized samples of academic records.
	5.17. The HEI establishes a smooth and efficient procedure for issuing and authenticating official transcripts at the request of the students, other HEIs or employers.	Approved procedure for requesting academic records and transcripts; Approved procedure to authenticate certificates, Grade Sheets and Official Transcripts; Records of requests received and issuance.

Best Practices	Standards	Examples of Sources of Evidence
Assessments are scheduled, and the outcomes of scheduled assessments of a course / module / program of research are communicated to the students without undue delay to promote effective learning and to support the academic development of students.	5.18. The PGPMU ensures that the 'Schedule of Assessment' is made known to the students at the beginning of a course / module / program of research.	Published Calendar of Dates for assessments, including the dates of submission; Students' feedback.
	5.19. The PGPMU ensures that students are provided with regular, appropriate and timely feedback on formative assessments in compliance with the Schedule of Assessment.	Records of providing feedback on formative assessments; Records of research progress review meetings; Students' feedback.
	5.20. The PGPP and PGPMU ensure that the final results of a course/ module are released within three months from the date of examination and where applicable, Thesis / Dissertation / Research Project defense examination is conducted within six months of the date of submission of the Thesis / Dissertation / Research Report.	ToR of examiners; Dates of conducting examinations and release of results of courses / modules; Student feedback; Dates of Thesis / Dissertation / Research Report submission and receipt of Examiners' Reports and conduct of the Thesis / Dissertation / Research report defense examination; Graduates' feedback.
Fair, effective and timely procedures are available for handling student complaints and academic appeals related to assessments that ensures the opportunities to raise matters of concern without risk of disadvantage.	5.21. The PGPP has established procedures to handle students' complaints and academic appeals in a fair and effective manner without risk of disadvantage, and the PGPP promptly deals with them, and deliver timely responses.	Examination appeals procedure; Student Handbook; Website; Records of complaints and appeals; Minutes of relevant meetings and outcomes; Students' feedback.

Best Practices	Standards	Examples of Sources of Evidence
The assessment procedures are valid and reliable and the weightage assigned for different components are clearly stated in the programme / course specifications and clearly communicated to students.	5.22. The PGPMU ensures that assessment tasks and tools used are valid, reliable, and appropriately weighted to measure the level of achievement of the desired ILOs.	Programme and Course specification with weightages assigned to assessment components; ToRs of teachers and examiners; Tools used to ensure validity and reliability and appropriateness of the assessment tasks such as item analysis; Feedback from stakeholders.
Physical infrastructure available for conduct of examinations and other assessments are fit-for-the purpose in terms of appropriateness, security and comfortability.	5.23. The PGPP and PGPMU ensure that the facilities used for examinations and other assessments are appropriate, secure and comfortable (e.g., spacious, quiet) and include basic sanitary facilities.	Description / images of facilities to conduct examinations; Student and staff feedback.
Assessment and examination policies, practices, and procedures provide the students with special needs with the same opportunity as their peers to demonstrate the achievement of learning outcomes.	5.24. The PGPP and PGPMU ensure that appropriate arrangements / adjustments / facilities are made available to provide the students with special needs with the same opportunity as their peers to demonstrate the achievement of learning outcomes.	Arrangements / adjustments / facilities made available to the students with special needs; Students' feedback; Minutes of relevant meetings.

2.6. Criterion 6. Programme Evaluation

Scope: This criterion assesses whether the institution periodically evaluates its programmes of study by regular monitoring and review; achievement of student learning outcomes at programme level; career and employment outcomes; seeks recognition or accreditation where relevant; shows evidence of aspirations to achieve excellence; and whether these measures are used to influence provision of opportunities for postgraduate qualification.

The scope of this criterion is captured in the following standards:

Best Practices	Standards	Examples of Sources of Evidence
Programmes of study are regularly internally evaluated at multiple levels, using a variety of tools to further improve relevance, quality, and effectiveness.	6.1. The PGPP has a clearly stated policy and a clear plan for systematic internal evaluation of its programmes of study.	An approved policy document for internal evaluation of programmes of study; An officially designated team (committee) with ToRs for its implementation; An approved plan for periodic internal programme review.
	6.2. The PGPMU uses a variety of tools for internal evaluation of its programmes of study including the process of delivery and the achievement of specified programme learning outcomes.	Documents related to internal evaluation of programmes, lists of identified stakeholders; Questionnaires to and responses from stakeholders; Student satisfaction survey; Minutes of relevant meetings.
	6.3. The PGPMU uses the results of internal programme evaluation to remedy perceived gaps and deficiencies in programme management including allocation of resources and learner support, as well as programme design and development, teaching-learning and research activities and assessment.	Documents relating to analysis of the results of internal programme evaluation, remedial measures taken to improve relevance, quality, and effectiveness following necessary approvals; Minutes of relevant meetings.

Best Practices	Standards	Examples of Sources of Evidence
Information on its students and graduates is regularly monitored and evaluated to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of its programmes.	6.4. The PGPP maintains up-to-date data on applicants, completion rates, time to graduation, and graduate destinations.	Up to date databases with information on students and alumni; Records of tracer studies; Employers' feedback.
	6.5. The PGPMU periodically evaluates the records maintained by the PGPP on its students and graduates to identify completion rates, time to graduation, and graduate destinations and takes necessary remedial action.	Documents related to analysis of data on applicants, completion rates, tracer studies, minutes of relevant meetings; Remedial measures taken to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the programmes following necessary approvals.
	6.6. The PGPP and PGPMU ensure the standard of academic outputs of students prior to dissemination.	PGPP policy on dissemination of student academic outputs; Documents relating to approval of student academic outputs prior to their dissemination.
The academic outputs of students are regularly monitored and evaluated, and appropriate remedial action is taken where necessary.	6.7. The PGPMU maintains records of outputs resulting from graduate work carried out by registered students, periodically evaluates them and takes appropriate remedial action where necessary.	Dissertations and Theses; Research papers, scientific publications, books and other scholarly works, conference presentations / published abstracts, patents and creative works derived from the research of PG students; Documents relating to evaluation of academic outputs of students; Records of remedial action taken following necessary approvals; Minutes of relevant meetings.

Best Practices	Standards	Examples of Sources of Evidence
(This Best Practice and Standard are applicable only for SLQF levels 10, 11 and 12)		
Securing of research grants or other means of external funding to support student research is encouraged.	6.8. The PGPP or PGPMU encourages securing of research grants or other means of external funding to support student research and maintains up-to-date records of the number and value of research funding secured.	Policy regarding external research funding; Documents relating to the number and value of research grants secured to support student research.
Mechanisms are in place to effectively address concerns raised against students by stakeholders.	6.9. The PGPP has mechanisms in place to accommodate concerns raised against conduct of students by stakeholders and implements corrective and preventive measures in a timely manner.	Mechanisms for addressing concerns raised against conduct of students; Documents relating to concerns raised against students by stakeholders, Reports of inquiries conducted; Corrective actions taken; Minutes of relevant meetings.
Feedback is sought from external examiners regarding the examination process in order to take necessary remedial actions.	6.10. The PGPMU regularly obtains feedback from external examiners regarding the examination process, and analyses it to identify perceived gaps and deficiencies in the examination process, and takes appropriate remedial actions.	ToR of external examiners; Approved template for seeking feedback from external examiners on examination process; External examiner feedback documents; Documents related to analyses of external examiner feedback; Records of remedial action following necessary approvals; Minutes of relevant meetings.
The assessment outcomes of students are statistically analysed to make decisions on the overall performance of the assessment system.	6.11. PGPMU makes decisions on assessment practices, student learning experiences and outcomes, completion, retention and progression rates and the overall performance of the assessment system using statistical analysis, and takes remedial measures where necessary.	Records of monitoring; Samples of statistical analysis; Minutes of relevant meetings; Revised assessment outcomes/ strategies and former assessment outcomes/ strategies.

Best Practices	Standards	Examples of Sources of Evidence
(This Best Practice and Standards are applicable only for Professional PG programmes)		
Programmes of study are accredited or recognized by the relevant authorities or professional bodies.	6.12. The PGPP ensures that the programmes of study are accredited or recognized by the relevant authorities or professional bodies.	Certification of accreditation or recognition by the relevant authority or professional body; Minutes of relevant meetings.

2.7. Criterion 7. Innovative and Healthy Practices

Scope: This criterion considers the novel and innovative practices pertaining to Criteria 1-6 (such as the use of a comprehensive centralized MIS, availability of multiple entry/exit points and multiple opportunities for acquisition of competencies in the study programme, comprehensive student support policy, national and international collaborations, rewarding excellence, promoting multidisciplinary learning, offshore delivery, and international accreditation), that would improve the quality of the education provision and standard of awards of the study programmes, but may not be practiced in full by most postgraduate education providers at present.

The scope of this criterion is captured in the following standards:

Best Practices	Standards	Examples of Sources of Evidence
Information pertaining to programmes of study and progress of students are maintained in a **cohesive manner by a centralized computerized database**. .	7.1. PGPP has established a **comprehensive centralized MIS** which maintains updated information on students and provides secured access to relevant stakeholders.	**Comprehensive centralized MIS** which enables key components such as registration, research proposal submission and official approval, progression, payments, examinations, attempts, results and official approval, completion of degree requirements for graduation and transcripts of students; MIS Manual; Access policy and mechanism.
The programme of study allows the students flexibility with multiple entry and exit points, where relevant.	7.2. PGPMU designs the programmes of study with nested qualifications that are aligned with SLQF requirements and specific details relating to exit pathways, where relevant.	Programme specification; Nested qualifications mapped with SLQF requirements; Details on early exit pathways or fallback options; Lists of students awarded early exit/ fallback qualifications.
	7.3. PGPMU designs the programmes of study with provision for lateral entry and credit transfer options, in compliance with nationally approved requirements, where relevant.	Programme specification; Approved credit transfer mechanism; Lists of students allowed lateral entry or credit transfer.

Best Practices	Standards	Examples of Sources of Evidence
Multiple opportunities for improving research and professional competencies, are integrated into the programme of study.	7.4. PGPMU integrates **multiple** opportunities for acquisition of competencies (such as communication, ability to work in a group, project management, entrepreneurship) that improve research and professional skills into design and conduct of the programme of study.	Programme specification; Training placements; Research methodology course; Opportunities for acquiring professional skills such as communication, teamwork, scientific writing, grant proposal writing, project management, time management, and entrepreneurship.
	7.5. PGPMU ensures the acquisition of research, creative, and professional skills as relevant to the field of study, in parallel with, or as part of, the academic assessment of the student's progress.	Template for reporting student progress and completion; Samples of students' progress reports and/or presentations; Minutes of relevant meetings; Mechanisms for ensuring the acquisition of relevant skills.
Students are provided with academic or non-academic support, where necessary, for successful completion of the programme of study.	7.6. The PGPP has a student support policy to facilitate successful completion of the programme of study by students, and ensures that students receive such support.	Student support policy; Records of requests for support; records of financial and other forms (academic, psychological) of support provided to students by the PGPP and PGPMU; Students' feedback.
Students are provided with language support services as required.	7.7. PGPP and PGPMU facilitate students to secure language support services including academic writing, as required.	Student Handbook; Mechanism to provide language support services; List of language support service recipients; Students' feedback.

Best Practices	Standards	Examples of Sources of Evidence
National and international partnerships and collaborations are established to improve the quality and standards of education provision and foster excellence in teaching-learning and research.	7.8. PGPMU has active collaboration and periodically renewed partnerships with local, national, regional and international organizations and research institutes, that are centres of excellence, to improve the quality and standards of education provision including teaching-learning and research.	Lists of officially approved partner institutions; Active MoUs for academic and research collaboration; Records of academic exchanges and research collaborations; Joint supervision of research students; Split research degree programmes; Joint conference proceedings.
An environment that recognizes and rewards excellence in teaching-learning, research and creative practice, mentoring and supervision is maintained.	7.9. The PGPP has established mechanisms to recognize and reward excellence in teaching-learning and mentoring/ supervision.	Policy on recognition and rewarding excellence in teaching-learning, mentoring/ research supervision; Mechanisms/ criteria to recognize and reward excellence in teaching-learning and mentoring/supervision; Lists of awardees.
	7.10. The PGPP has established mechanisms to recognize and reward excellence in student research/creative practice.	Policy on recognition and rewarding excellence in learning, research/creative practice; Mechanisms/ criteria to recognize and reward excellence in learning, research/creative practice; Lists of awardees.
National and international recognitions received for PG research outputs are documented and appreciated.	7.11. PGPP and PGPMU maintain data on national and international recognitions received for PG student research outputs and recipients are appreciated.	Mechanism for appreciation; Records of national and international recognitions received for PG student research outputs; Felicitation events.

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Best Practices	Standards	Examples of Sources of Evidence
Teaching-learning & research provide opportunities for interdisciplinary learning.	7.12. PGPP and PGPMU provide students with opportunities for interdisciplinary learning, where appropriate.	Programme specification; Student Handbook; Timetables; Interdisciplinary research programmes; Publications; Supervisory panels; Records of requests for collaboration/ sharing expertise; Consultations with external expert for interdisciplinary studies.
Admission of international students to programmes of study and offshore delivery of programmes is encouraged.	7.13. The PGPP encourages admission of international students for its programmes of study and offshore delivery of its programmes.	PGPP website; Mechanisms to admit international students; MIS or up-to-date databases with information on international students and graduates segregated by programme and nationality; Documents pertaining to offshore delivery of programmes; Minutes of relevant meetings.
International recognition or accreditation of the programmes of study is encouraged.	7.14. The PGPP encourages international recognition or accreditation of its programme of study.	Mechanisms for promoting international recognition or accreditation of the programmes of study; Applications to and responses from relevant international academic and professional bodies for recognition of programmes of study; International recognitions or accreditations received for the programmes of study.
(This Best Practice and Standard are applicable only for SLQF Levels 11 & 12)		
Supervisors are provided with opportunities for development of competencies in supervision and guidance of research students.	7.15. PGPP and PGPMU offer opportunities for or facilitate development of competencies in supervision and guidance of research students.	Training programmes on postgraduate Supervision and lists of attendees; Nature of support provided; Feedback from participants; Graduates' feedback on research supervision.

Chapter Three

Use of Standards to Assess
the Performance of a Programme of Study

This chapter describes the procedure to be used by the external peer Review Team to assess the performance of a postgraduate study programme offered by a PGPMU, based on the 'Evidence' provided by the PGPMU regarding the claim of degree of internalization of the specified 'Best practices' corresponding to each 'Standard'. It also sets out the 'Score Guide', 'Weightages of Criteria' and ' Grading Scheme' to arrive at a final judgement.

The PGPMU may also use this procedure in self-assessment of the performance of their study programme. The terms mentioned below will be used in the validation and the subsequent judgement of the study programme.

- Standard-wise judgement giving 'Standard-wise Score'

- Criterion-wise judgement giving 'Raw Criterion-wise Score'

- Application of weightages to obtain 'Actual Criterion-wise Score'

- Calculation of 'Overall Study Programme Score'

- Grading of overall performance of the Programme of Study

The procedure is described in a series of steps.

Step 1 - Careful scrutiny of the Claim of the degree of achievement by each Standard' and noting down the required relevant evidence.

Step 2 - Objective and judicious analysis and assessment of the supporting 'Evidence' on compliance with each 'Standard' as listed in the Self-Evaluation Report.

Step 3 - Based on the evidence, assessment of the extent to which each 'Standard' has been achieved by the Programme of Study and assigning and recording a Score with respect to each 'Standard' based on the 'Score Guide' given in Table 3.1

Each standard will receive a score from 0-3. This will be the 'Standard- wise Score'.

Table 3.1 – Score Guide for Each Performance Indicators

Score	Descriptor	Explanation of the Descriptor
3	Good	No issues/concerns about the strengths and quality of the evidence provided
2	Adequate	Few issues/concerns about the strengths and quality of the evidence provided
1	Barely Adequate	Major issues/concerns about the strengths and quality of the evidence provided
0	Inadequate	No relevant evidence provided

Step 4 - Derive the Performance of each Criterion by using the sum total of the scores gained in all the standards in respect of the Criterion. The value obtained is the 'Raw Criterion-wise Score'.

3.1. Weightages of Criteria

Six main criteria had been assigned equal weightage in recognition of their importance. The last criterion is assigned a slightly lower weightage since many of the best practices are not yet universally practiced. The weightages given in Table 3.2 will be used for calculating the 'Actual Criterion-wise Score'.

Table 3.2 – Differential Weightages of Criteria

No.	Criteria	Weightage on a Thousand scale
1	Programme Management	150
2	Programme Design and Development	150
3	Human & Physical Resources and Learner Support	150
4	Teaching-Learning and Research	150
5	Student Assessment and Award of Qualifications	150
6	Programme Evaluation	150
7	Innovative and Healthy Practices	100
	Total	1000

Step 5 – Convert the 'Raw Criterion-wise Score ' into an 'Actual Criterion-wise Score', based on the weightages listed in Table 3.2 and the formula given in Box 1.

Taking Criterion 2 which has 25 standards as an example, and a fictitious value of 55 for the raw criterion score given by the Review Team, the actual criterion-wise score for Programme Design and Development (Criterion 2) is estimated as 110. (Box 1)

Box 1 - Formula for converting 'raw score' to 'actual score' on the weighted scale

- Maximum raw score for each Criterion = total number of standards for the respective criterion x 3 which is the maximum score for any criterion

- Raw Criterion-wise Score = total score gained in all the standards in respect of the Criterion

- Actual Criterion-wise Score = (Raw Criterion-wise Score/ Maximum raw score for each criterion) x weightage in a 1000 point scale

Example: Criterion 2 with weightage of 150 (Table 3.2) and 25 standards

Raw criterion-wise score (given by the peer team) = 55

Maximum Score = = (25 standards x 3) = 75

Weightage on a 1000 scale = 150 (as in Table 3.2)

Actual criterion-wise score = (55/75)*150 = 110

Step 6 – Derive the '**Overall Programme of Study** Score' by totalling the 'Actual Criterion-wise Scores' of all seven Criteria and converting the total sum to a percentage as exemplified in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3 – Programme of Study Score Conversion to Percentage

No	Criteria	Weighted Minimum score*	Actual Criterion-wise Score
1	Programme Management	75	78
2	Programme Design and Development	75	110
3	Human & Physical Resources and Learner Support	75	100
4	Teaching- Learning and Research	75	108
5	Student Assessment and Award of Qualifications	75	80
6	Programme Evaluation	75	90
7	Innovative and Healthy Practices	50	52
	Total on a thousand scale		618
	%		61.8

*Represents 50% of the values given in Table 3.2

Overall Performance of a Study Programme is graded based on the number of Criteria with weighted minimum score and Overall Programme of Study Score as shown in Table 3.4

Table 3.4 Grading of Overall Performance of a Study Programme

Number of Criteria with Weighted Minimum Score	*Overall Programme of Study score %*	*Grade*
7 (Seven)	*≥ 80*	*A*
	70 – 79	*B*
	60 – 69	*C*
	< 60	*D*
6 (Six)	*≥ 70*	*B*
	60 – 69	*C*
	< 60	*D*
5 (Five)	*≥ 60*	*C*
	< 60	*D*
4 (Four) or less	Irrespective of Programme of Study score	*D*

3.2. Final Assessment of the Performance of a Programme of Study

For a **Programme of Study** to receive an '*A*' Grade, the following conditions are applicable.

i) A score equal to or more than the weighted minimum score for each of all seven criteria (Table 3.3), and

ii) Overall **Programme of Study** Score of $\geq$ 80%.

For a **Programme of Study** to receive a '*B*' Grade, the following conditions are applicable.

i) A score equal to or more than the weighted minimum score for at least six out of the seven criteria (Table 3.3), and

ii) Overall **Programme of Study** Score of $\geq$ 70%.

For a **Programme of Study** to receive a '*C*' Grade, the following conditions are applicable.

i) A score equal to or more than the weighted minimum score for at least five out of the seven criteria (Table 3.3), and

ii) Overall **Programme of Study** Score of $\geq$ 60%.

For a **Programme of Study** to receive a '*D*' Grade, the following conditions are applicable.

iii)   The weighted minimum score for at most four out of the seven criteria (Table 3.3) irrespective of the Programme of Study score, or

iv)   Overall **Programme of Study** Score of < 60% irrespective of weighted minimum criterion scores. (Table 3.3).

3.3. Certification of the SLQF Level

This procedure will be adopted in those instances where the PGPMU requests formal Certification of the SLQF Level (or attestation of SLQF Level equivalence) together with Postgraduate Programme Review. The PGPMU may also choose to apply directly to the UGC, at some later time, for SLQF Level Certification (or attestation of SLQF Level equivalence) from the UGC's SLQF Certification Committee.

The SLQF Level certification process is not applicable to qualifications awarded for programmes of study designed and approved prior to the publication of SLQF 2015, or to programmes that are no longer offered. Such programmes may be considered for attestation of SLQF Level equivalency in terms of minimum admission requirements, duration of programme, major component of contents, and mode of delivery and assessment. This attestation will confirm that such qualifications are academically equivalent to comparable SLQF-compliant qualifications.

Twenty-six standards that capture the essential features required for SLQF compliance are identified for the purpose of SLQF Level certification in case of SLQF Levels 7 to 10. For SLQF Levels 11 and 12, twenty-five of those standards will be considered. They are given in the table below:

Criterion	Standards Considered for SLQF Level Certification
1	1.8, 1.9
2	2.6, 2.7, 2.8, 2.9, 2.10, 2.11, 2.12, 2.13, 2.14, 2.15, 2.16*, 2.17, 2.18, 2.19, 2.20
4	4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7
5	5.2, 5.22

* Standard is applicable only to SLQF Levels 7 – 10

The procedure is described in a series of steps.

Step 1 – Extract the scores given by the Review Panel for each of the relevant standards.

Step 2 – Convert the total score into a percentage (unweighted).

Step 3 - Assign one of the following determination levels for the compliance of SLQF.

1. Recommend SLQF Level certification if the total score is not less than 80%, provided that no standard has a score of 0, and not more than four standards have a score of 1.

2.   Programmes of study that do not meet the above conditions will be required to correct all identified shortcomings within a specified time period before being considered again for certification.

In the case of 2 above, the QAC will follow up with regard to corrective action at the end of the period specified by the Review Panel, so that full certification can be given to a programme well ahead of the next review cycle.

In both instances, the final certification or (attestation of equivalence) will be issued by the SLQF Certification Committee of the UGC.

Example: Consider the following hypothetical case of a review of a postgraduate study programme at SLQF Level 7 to 10

Criterion																Earned Score
1	3	3														6
2	2	3	2	3	2	3	2	3	2	3	2	3	2	3	2	37
4	2	3	2	3	2	2	2									16
5	3	2														5

The total maximum score = 26 x 3 = 78

The total earned score = 6 + 37 + 16 + 5 = 64

The total as a percentage = (64/78) x 100 = 82%

Part III
Guidelines for Postgraduate Programme Providers
and Reviewers

Chapter Four

Self-Evaluation Report

The Self-Evaluation Report (SER) for a Postgraduate Study Programme Review is a document prepared by a Post-Graduate Program Management Unit (PGPMU) regarding, an individual post-graduate study programme[1]. The Self-Evaluation Report reflects the self-assessment of the PGPMU of the effectiveness of the means employed to safeguard the quality of the education provision of the study programme and its strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement. The SER is prepared by a team appointed by the HEI/PGPP in liaison with the Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) of the PGPP, and in consultation with relevant stakeholders. The SER is a key document that provides the point of reference for the Review Team to understand the PGPP/PGPMU and the study programme, which is under review and the ways in which the quality of the education provision is ensured.

This chapter provides guidance on preparation of the SER of a study programme, with the aim of ensuring comprehensiveness and maintaining uniformity in SERs prepared by the PGPMUs.

4.1. Purpose of the Self Evaluation Report (SER)

The purpose of the Self-Evaluation Report is to provide the Review Team with an account of the performance of the study programme with respect to the seven criteria and the standards thereof. The Self-Evaluation Report should describe the degree of internalization of the best practices and the level of achievement of standards, substantiated with relevant evidence. This would reflect the effectiveness of the ways in which the PGPP and the PGPMU discharges its responsibility for maintaining quality of academic provision and standards of awards.

4.2. Scope of the Self-Evaluation Report (SER)

The SER reflects the following aspects pertaining to the study programme.

- Degree of internalization of best practices and the level of achievement of Standards

- Degree to which the claims are supported by recorded evidence

- Accuracy of the data and statements made in the Self-Evaluation Report

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[1] The PGPMU may consider 'clustering' of study programmes in a single Self-Evaluation Report with the prior approval of the QAC, if compliance to 60% or more of the standards are common to the programmes so clustered.

4.2.1. Degree of Internalization of Best Practices and Level of Achievement of Standards

The SER accomplishes the above-mentioned purpose by demonstrating the degree of internalization of Best Practices by the PGPP/PGPMU and the level of achievement of Standards set out under the seven Criteria described in Chapter Two of this Manual. In doing so, the SER would demonstrate the commitment of the PGPP/PGPMU to uphold its mission of producing graduates with desired attributes. Where relevant, the SER should also reflect its commitment for the promotion of student-centred and outcome-based teaching-learning. This will also include the ways in which the study programme has responded to national policy and guidelines and human resource needs, and requirements of professional bodies where relevant. Furthermore, the SER should also indicate how the study programme has responded to the recommendations of previous reviews.

4.2.2. Degree to which the Claims are Supported by Recorded Evidence

Every claim of compliance and level of attainment with respect to each standard must be supported with multiple sources of recorded evidence including paper-based or electronic records, databases, and management systems. Citation of all pertinent evidence is a major requirement of the SER. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the PGPMU to furnish all relevant documents. Claims not supported by evidence will not be considered by the Review Team. Chapter Two of this Manual provides examples of sources of evidence relevant to each standard. It should be noted that the given examples of evidence are not prescriptive, and it is possible to support the claims of internalization with other appropriate evidence. Each recorded evidence must be suitably coded for the convenience of using them during review visits.

4.2.3. Accuracy of the Data and Statements made in the Self-Evaluation Report

It is imperative that the claims of compliance and evidence mentioned in the SER are comprehensive, accurate and verifiable. In instances where changes within the institutional set-up or in the study programme are in progress and evidence not yet available, the PGPP/PGPMU should state so in the introduction section of the SER. In such situations, the PGPP/PGPMU should indicate why the changes were necessary, how it is managing the process of change, and the expected outcome/s of the changes.

4.3. Guidelines for Preparation of the Self-Evaluation Report

The self-evaluation report should be concise and analytical, self-explanatory, and readily understandable. It should include reference to all relevant evidence.

Study programmes are expected to prepare the SER that includes the following sections:

    A. Introduction to the Study Programme

    B. Process of Compilation of the Self-Evaluation Report

    C. Compliance with the Criteria and Standards

    D. Summary

The contents of each section are outlined below.

4.3.1. Section A. Introduction to the Study Programme

The Introduction section begins with an overview of the HEI/PGPP/PGPMU and an outline of the establishment and major milestones in the development of the programme of study. This will be followed by a description of the following topics arranged under separate sub-headings:

- Organizational structure of the HEI and the PGPP

- Structure of the study programme being reviewed including areas of specializations, if any

- Graduate profile and intended learning outcomes of the study programme

- Departments contributing to the programme

- Number of students enrolled

- Numbers and profiles of the academic, administrative, academic support and non-academic staff

- Physical resources (library, laboratories, computer facilities etc.)

- Learner support systems and management (Counselling and Mentoring, LMS etc)

- Context in which the PGPP/PGPMU operates (E.g., SWOT analysis)

- Major changes initiated/ implemented during the past five years

- Impact of such changes on the quality of the education provision

This information will help the Review Team to contextualize the study programme and plan the review process.

4.3.2. Section B. Process of Compilation of the Self-Evaluation Report

This section should contain an account of the process followed by the PGPMU to prepare the

SER and may include the following:

- Familiarization of the Postgraduate Programme Review Manual and the review process

- Appointment of SER writing team with the Terms of Reference (ToR)

- Composition and responsibilities of working teams

- Activity schedules of the working teams and methods of collection of information

- Collation of data and recorded evidence

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- Analysis and synthesis of the draft report by the working groups

- Compilation into a draft SER by the Chairperson of the writing team

- Forum to discuss the draft SER

- Finalizing the SER and submission

4.3.3. Section C. Compliance with the Criteria and Standards

In this section, the SER should describe the extent to which the study programme complies with the standards of the seven criteria described in Chapter Two of this Manual. The template given in Table 4.1 should be used as a guide in writing this section.

This section should be structured as seven sub-sections under the seven criteria in the same order given in the manual. It is advised to prepare each sub-section in tabular form using the template given in Table 4.1. Column 01 of the Table should mention the number of the standard as stated in the same order given in the Manual. Column 02 should clearly describe the level of achievement of the relevant standard by the programme of study. Column 03 should list the evidence that supports the claim, while Column 04 should indicate the relevant code number of the evidence.

At the end of each sub-section, a summary statement on how the programme has complied with the Standards of the respective Criterion should be made in the appropriate box assigned for the purpose.

Accordingly, the information under each Criterion should be presented in the form of the following Table. It will be more convenient to use the landscape layout for this section.

Table 4.1. Template to be Used in Describing Compliance with the Standards

Criterion: …………………………………………………………………………			
Col. 01 **Number of the Standard**	*Col. 02* **Study Programme's Claims of Level of Achievement of the Standard**	*Col. 03* **List of Recorded Evidence to Support Each Claim of Compliance**	*Col. 04* **Codes of the Evidence**
A Summary Statement of Compliance: …………………………………………………. ………………………………………………………………………………………………… ………………………………………………………………………………………………… ………			

The following Table provides an example for describing compliance with Standard 4.4 of Criterion 04.

Criterion 4 – Teaching-Learning and Research			
Col. 01 **Number of the Standard**	*Col. 02* **Study Programme's Claims of level of achievement of the Standard**	*Col. 03* **List of Recorded Evidence to Support Each Claim of Compliance**	*Col. 04* **Codes of the Evidence**
4.1	Teachers' Manual informs teachers the Senate-approved course & research proposal specifications.	Teachers' Manual.	…/…/…/…
	PGPMU maintains a register of teaching and research activities (titles and duration) that align with course specifications.	Lecturers' register.	…/…/…/…
	PGPMU monitors the alignment of learning support materials with approved course specifications.	Records of learning support materials in print form or of LMS or Cloud storage.	…/…/…/…
A Summary Statement of Compliance: As indicated under respective standards, the PGPP and PGPMU have successfully internalized best practices regarding the use of TLAs as per programme specifications, appointment of qualified and experienced supervisors to guide research students and completion of research within stipulated time, to ensure achievement of PLOs. Evidence is scarce on students' access to relevant resources as it has been facilitated through personal contacts, and on adoption of ethical practices because the Manual on Ethical Conduct was introduced in late-2019.			

4.3.4. Section D. Summary

The summary of the SER should convey to the Review Team the effectiveness of the ways in which the PGPP/PGPMU discharges its responsibility for maintaining academic standards prescribed in the Postgraduate Programme Review Manual and the quality of education provision and standard of the qualification awarded by the University. This section should reflect the degree to which the PGPP/PGPMU has internalized the best practices given in the manual, and the internal monitoring mechanism employed by the IQAC for continuous quality enhancement. It should also indicate the deficiencies or gaps and the actions taken or planned to address those deficiencies or gaps.

4.4 Length of the SER

The self-evaluation report should not exceed 10,000 words (recommend using Times New Roman in 12-point font size with 1.5-line space on A 4 size pages) excluding appendices. Appendices should provide only the pertinent information to the main text.

4.5. Need for Adherence to Guidelines

It is essential that SER writers follow the guidelines provided in this chapter. It must be noted that SERs prepared in contravention to these guidelines will be rejected and be returned to the PGPP for re-submission.

Chapter Five

Review Team and the Review Visit

The knowledge, experience, and abidance to professional standards of the members of the review team are crucial to the conduct of an objective and candid Programme Review. It is also of equal importance that reviewers and the PGPMU are aware of each other's roles and responsibilities to ensure that the review process takes place in a timely manner with no obstacles or conflicts. This chapter will provide guidelines on the selection of reviewers, composition of the review team, profile of reviewers, profile and role of review chair, conduct of reviewers, pre- review arrangements, and the review visit.

5.1. Selection of Reviewers

The Quality Assurance Council will maintain a pool of trained postgraduate programme reviewers from which it will select and appoint reviewers for each review. The reviewers will be senior academics with experience in postgraduate teaching and research supervision in the relevant discipline (may include retired academics who have had an exemplary career and are still active in academia).

The following criteria will be considered in the selection of postgraduate study programme reviewers:

- SLQF level 12 postgraduate qualifications and experience in postgraduate teaching and research supervision.

- Active involvement in study programme development and programme administration at undergraduate or postgraduate level.

- Involvement in internal quality assurance activities.

- Broad vision of higher education and expectations of the world of work.

- Acceptability to the PGPP/PGPMU being reviewed.

- Prior training as a postgraduate programme reviewer.

In addition, nominees from relevant professional bodies, who have undergone postgraduate programme reviewer training and are acceptable to the PGPP/PGPMU may be included in the team.

5.2. Composition of the Review Team

The Review Team should be composed of minimum of three members with adequate discipline representation. In respect of professional programmes, it is desirable to have one member from outside of academia to look at issues from a more industry-related or professional perspective. Adequate gender representation should be ensured. The QAC will identify the Review Chair from among the members selected for the Review Team.

5.3. Profile of Reviewers

Credibility of the entire review process depends on the quality and conduct of the reviewers. Their qualities as individuals maintaining the highest standards of professionalism and integrity are vital to the success of an external review process. Reviewers should be familiar with the external review process, be constructive in their comments, and be able to act as ambassadors for promoting quality culture in the PGPP and the PGPMU.

The 'Reviewer Profile' below, describes the attributes expected of Postgraduate Study Programme Reviewers.

- High level of academic achievement in the respective discipline.

- High degree of professional integrity.

- Awareness and acceptance of nationally approved reference points such as SLQF and the quality assurance manuals.

- An enquiring disposition with an amicable personality.

- Ability to act as an effective team member.

- Good individual time management skills.

- Ability to readily assimilate a large amount of disparate information.

- Good command of data analysis and reasoning.

- Neutrality and sound judgment.

- Free of bias, prejudice, and partiality.

- High standard of oral and written communication.

- Experience in academic management and quality assurance.

5.4. Review Chair - Profile and Role

In addition to possessing the attributes stated in 5.3, the Review Chair is expected to have managerial skills to lead a team of experts effectively and efficiently. He/she should be able to communicate effectively in face-to-face interaction; to make the teamwork within given timescales and adhere to deadlines; delegate responsibilities to the team members; facilitate

writing of the relevant sections; compile and edit to produce clear and succinct reports. The review chair is expected to have the ability to resolve conflicts, should the need arise.

5.5. Conduct of Reviewers

Reviewers are expected to comply at all times with the Code of Conduct for Reviewers, provided in Appendix 01.

They should strive to uphold the highest standards of professional practice throughout the review process, exemplified by;

- respectful and professional conduct towards staff and students,

- application of good practices provided through reviewer training,

- honour privacy of the review process,

- acceptance of individual responsibility for assigned tasks within the Review Team, and

- acceptance of collective responsibility for the Review Team's judgments.

Also, each reviewer is expected to complete and submit to the QAC, a signed Declaration of Interests Form shown in Appendix 02.

5.6. Review Arrangements

The requirements for the review visit and the responsibilities of the respective parties to facilitate clarity, consistency and effectiveness of the review process are outlined below.

5.6.1. Quality Assurance Council (QAC) and the University Grants Commission (UGC)

- QAC in consultation with the respective PGPP/PGPMU selects the Review Team and Review Chair and informs the UGC.

- Chairman of the UGC appoints the Review Team.

- QAC informs the Head of the PGPP/PGPMU and the Director of the Centre for Quality Assurance (CQA) of the University/HEI and the Coordinator of the relevant IQAC regarding the Review Team members and their contact information naming the Review Chair as the focal point of contact.

- QAC sends copies of the SER to the members of the Review Team for desk evaluation.

- Members of the Review Team send individual Desk Review reports to the QAC.

- QAC organizes a pre-review meeting among the panel of reviewers to discuss Desk Review findings and to plan the review visit.

- After the site visit, the QAC sends the draft review report submitted by the Review Team to the PGPMU for their observation.

- QAC communicates the comments of the PGPMU on the draft review report to the Review Team for consideration and finalizing the review report.

- QAC facilitates resolution of disagreements, if any, between the Review Team and the reviewees.

- Submits the finalized review report for the approval of the University Grants Commission.

- Publishes the review report and the grades on the QAC website.

5.6.2. Postgraduate Programme Provider and Postgraduate Programme Management Unit (PGPP and PGPMU)

- Inform the QAC/UGC regarding the intention to be reviewed.

- Designate the Coordinator/Secretary of the respective Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) of the PGPP as the focal point of contact to co-ordinate communications between the reviewee and the Review Team and inform the QAC/UGC of the contact information of the focal point of contact.

- Decide on the date of the review visit and the review visit schedule in consultation with the Review Chair, Head of the PGPMU and Coordinator of the IQAC.

- Make arrangements to provide necessary facilities for the Review Team for the site visit.

5.6.3. Review Team

- Review Team is expected to carefully scrutinize the SER and any supporting evidence that was made available to the team during the desk review. It is desirable for the Review Team to identify those aspects of the SER which need further clarification during the site visit.
- After submission of the desk review report to the QAC, Review Team members come for the pre-review meeting with notes on required additional information, and the tentative outcomes of desk evaluation.
- Following the discussion of their findings, Review Chair assigns the responsibilities to the team members and makes a list of additional inputs required by the Review Team for the review visit and informs the reviewee through the focal point.

The Review Team may reject the Self-Evaluation Report if it has not been written adhering to the guidelines given in this Manual and recommend to the QAC to request re-submission.

5.7. Review Visit

Review Team shall arrive at the PGPP/PGPMU on the pre-determined date and time. Review visit will be of 3-day's duration.

The first meeting of the Review Team will be with the Vice-Chancellor of the University, Director/Head of the Institute/Dean of the relevant Faculty, Chair of the PGPMU, Head/ Coordinator of the study programme, Director of the CQA of the University, and the Coordinator of the relevant IQAC. This would be followed by a meeting at the PGPP with the relevant academic and administrative staff involved in programme management. Following this meeting the review should proceed according to schedule, which includes meetings with the students, alumni, and relevant industry/ employers, and observation of facilities for teaching- learning and research, and observation of teaching/practical training sessions.

5.8. Review Process

The review process will involve the following activities to ascertain the authenticity of the claims made in the SER.

- Scrutinizing recorded evidence

- Meetings and discussions with staff and students, alumni and other stakeholders

- Observation of teaching-learning and research sessions, learning resources and facilities

- Debriefing

5.8.1. Scrutinizing Recorded Evidence

The aim is to consider evidence furnished by the institution to verify the claims made in the SER. The Review Team will carefully scrutinize the evidence provided. It will endeavour to keep to a minimum the amount of documentation it requests during the visit. The Review Team should always seek to use all information provided in arriving at judgments.

The reviewers need to bear in mind that the evidences may vary among the study programmes, and the evidences stated in this manual are **only examples, but not prescriptions**.

5.8.2. Meetings and Discussions with Staff, Students and other Stakeholders

- The aim of holding meetings is to get a clear picture of the PGPP/PGPMU's processes in operation, and to clarify the claims made in the SER.

- The programme for the site visit should include the meetings with following stakeholders:

  o Teachers, trainers, supervisors and examiners involved in delivery of the programme of study

o Members of the IQAC

o Members of the administrative officers, academic support staff, and non-academic staff involved in the programme of study

o Students or student representatives of the programme of study

o Representatives of alumni and other stakeholders such as, employers, industry, community representatives involved in the programme of study, where relevant.

5.8.3. Observation of Teaching-Learning and Research Sessions, Learning Resources, and Facilities

Direct observation of selected on-going teaching-learning and research activities and field/ laboratory work should be arranged in conjunction with the focal point of contact. The team may also request a tour of the training or research sites outside main premises, though the extent and purpose of this should be judged in the light of the team's view of its main lines of inquiry.

5.8.4. Debriefing

At the conclusion of the visit, an interactive meeting will be held between the Review Team and the following.

- Director of the PGPP/Dean of the FGS or relevant Faculty

- Chair of the BoS/ PGPMU/ Heads of the Departments

- Academic Coordinator of the Study Programme

- Members of the relevant academic staff

- Director CQA, Coordinator of the IQAC and any other academic staff member that the PGPMU deems appropriate

At this meeting, the Review Team will present the highlights of the findings with respect to each criterion including both strengths and weaknesses and facilitate an interactive discussion. This will present an opportunity to the reviewees to point out any misjudgements that may have been made by the Review Team.

Within two weeks of the site visit, the Review Chair along with the members is expected to prepare and submit a preliminary Review Report to the QAC/UGC. The details of this process are given in Chapter Six.

Chapter Six

Postgraduate Programme Review Report

The Postgraduate Programme Review Report (PGPRR) is the outcome of an external peer review of a postgraduate programme of study. The PGPRR, following acceptance by the Postgraduate Programme Provider (PGPP) concerned and final approval of the QAC, will enter the public domain through the UGC website.

The PGPRR is expected to provide a concise account of the peer review process, the findings of the review, documents perused, analysis of the evidence provided, facilities available, teaching-learning and research activities observed, issues identified, and discussions held. The report will conclude with the Review Team's reflections and conclusions on the level of accomplishment by the PGPP/ Postgraduate Programme Management Unit (PGPMU) with regard to the quality and standard of the programme that has been reviewed. In addition, the report will indicate the degree of compliance of the study programme with SLQF guidelines at the relevant level. The report will also include commendations on the accomplishments by the PGPP/PGPMU and recommendations for quality enhancement.

6.1. Purpose of the Postgraduate Programme Review Report (PGPRR)

The purpose of the PGPRR is

- to inform the PGPP/PGPMU and other stakeholders, the findings of the external peer review regarding the quality of the training and learning experiences provided to students by the programme and the standard of the award.

- to provide a reference point to support and guide the PGPP/PGPMU in continuing quality assurance activities towards quality enhancement and excellence.

6.2. Scope of the Report

The PGPRR will cover the following aspects pertaining to the particular programme that has undergone the external peer review.

- A brief introduction and review context of the University/HEI, PGPP/ PGPMU and the Programme of Study.

- A brief description of the review process (schedule of meetings as an appendix).

- The Review Team's observations on the Self-Evaluation Report (SER).

- Overview of the approach to quality assurance by the PGPP/ PGPMU.

- Assessment of performance of the programme based on the standard-wise scores and the actual criteria-wise scores.

- Final judgment of performance of the programme based on the programme score.

- Suitability of the study programme for SLQF Level certification.

- Commendations and recommendations

6.3. **Review Judgments**

The Postgraduate Programme Review Manual prescribes seven core areas (criteria) that will be scrutinized during the external peer review process. Postgraduate Programme Review involves analysis of claims made in the SER relating to internalization of the prescribed best practices and validation of the supporting evidence presented during the site visit with respect to the seven criteria and standards in a programme of study. Based on an objective analysis of the claims made on the degree of compliance with the criteria and standards of the programme under review as described in chapter 3, the Review Team will arrive at a collective judgment on the performance of the study programme.

Furthermore, based on the guidelines provided in Chapter 3.6, the Review Team will summarize its findings on the suitability of the study programme for SLQF Level certification or for the attestation of its equivalence, to be considered by the SLQF Certification Committee of the UGC.

Following reflection on the findings of the review visit, the Review Team will arrive at firm judgments and recommendations. Judgments should not be negative but constructive and supported by evidence. Recommendations should not be prescriptive but stated in a manner whereby the PGPP/PGPMU will be able to build upon what is already in place and strive towards quality improvement.

6.4. Format of the Postgraduate Programme Review Report (PGPRR)

The PGPRR will be structured under nine broad sections as given below.

Section 1 - Brief introduction to the programme

Section 2 – Review Team's observations on the Self - Evaluation Report (SER)

Section 3 - A brief description of the Review Process

Section 4 - Overview of the PGPP/PGPMU's approach to Quality and Standards

Section 5 - Judgment on the degree of internalization of the best practices of the seven criteria of Postgraduate Programme Review

Section 6 – Grading of Overall Performance of the programme

Section 7 - Suitability of the study programme for SLQF Level certification.

Section 8 - Commendations and Recommendations

Section 9 – Summary

Section 1 –Brief Introduction to the Programme

This section will start with a brief introduction to the programme and its relevance to the local and international contexts. It will give the history of the PGPP/PGPMU offering the programme, the strength, qualifications and experience of academic staff, number of students enrolled, staff student ratio, infrastructure and facilities available for student support, facilities available for student research as given in the SER and observed by the peer Review Team during the review visit. This would enable the reader to get an idea of the context of the PGPP/PGPMU, its strengths and weaknesses and any constraints faced by the PGPP/PGPMU with regard to delivery and sustainability of the programme.

This section will include a comment on the response of the PGPP/ PGPMU to the recommendations made at previous reviews if applicable.

Section 2 - Review Team's Observations on the Self-Evaluation Report (SER)

This section will indicate whether the SER has been prepared according to the guidelines given in the Postgraduate Programme Review Manual using a participatory approach involving all constituents of the PGPP/PGPMU. The Review Team will comment on whether the evidence has been presented alongside the standards and criteria as shown in the template provided in the Appendix.

The Review Team could comment on the analysis of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) as given in the SER and whether documents such as the Corporate Plan/Strategic Management Plan and any other relevant documents had been submitted alongside the SER. The team will make its observations on the extent to which the programme reflects the mission, goals and objectives set out in its corporate plan and whether student-centred learning and outcome-based education approaches have been adopted along with a clearly laid down graduate profile. The team will see whether the standards and quality are in accordance with agreed national reference points such as the Sri Lanka Qualifications Framework (SLQF) and the Subject Benchmark Statements (SBS), if available.

The Review Team will comment on whether remedial measures have been implemented to rectify deficiencies identified at previous reviews and if not, what actions the PGPP/PGPMU is making towards implementation of the recommendations. Any obstacles encountered in the implementation of previous recommendations and constraints under which the programme is currently functioning could be mentioned in this section.

Section 3 – A brief description of the Review Process

This section will describe the steps involved in preparation for the programme review by the Review Team and by the PGPP/PGPMU. This section will outline details of the review

visit such as the schedule of meetings with different constituents of the PGPP/PGPMU (which could be provided as an appendix), the personnel interviewed, teaching-learning or research processes observed, evidence examined and meetings of the Review Team at intervals during the review visit. It will also mention the Review Team's satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the arrangements made to facilitate the conduct of the review visit in a cost-effective manner. The degree of commitment of the PGPP/PGPMU to openness, transparency, communications and logistical support could be recorded in this section.

Section 4 - Overview of the PGPP/PGPMU's approach to Quality and Standards

This section will present the Review Team's observations on the overall approach of the PGPP/PGPMU to quality assurance and management. It should state whether the PGPP/ PGPMU has a well-established Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) that works in liaison with the University's/HEIs Centre for Quality Assurance (CQA) in accordance with the Internal Quality Assurance Manual (2013) of the UGC and the IQA circulars of 2015 and 2019. Comments will be made as to whether internal quality assurance is an ongoing process with best practices built into the day-to-day routine activities, thus ensuring that the quality culture is well entrenched within the PGPP/PGPMU.

This section will describe the key features of the PGPP/PGPMU's approach to quality assurance and its capacity to implement measures to remedy weaknesses and seek quality improvement. This section could include the Review Team's impression of the PGPP/PGPMU's commitment towards quality enhancement and excellence.

Section 5 - Judgment on the Seven Criteria of Postgraduate Programme Review

This section will present the Review Team's judgment of the level of attainment of quality under each of the seven criteria of the study programme. Standard-wise scores and raw criterion-wise scores will be calculated based on the scoring system given in chapter 3. Actual criterion-wise scores for each criterion based on the allocated weightage will be calculated using the formula given in Box 1 in chapter 3. The sum of the seven actual criterion-wise scores will be converted to a percentage score for the study programme. In this section of the report, the above values should be presented in tabulated form using Table 3.4. The Review Team should provide its observations on the strengths and weaknesses of each criterion and make recommendations for enhancement of quality.

Section 6 - Grading of Overall Performance of the programme

This section will set out the Review Team's assessment of the level of accomplishment of quality expected of the academic programme subjected to review based on the grading of overall performance under the categories of Grade A, B, C, or D as indicated in Chapter 3 under Procedure for Use of Standards for Assessment of Performance of the Programme of Study. Table 3.4 from Chapter 3 is reproduced below for convenience of the reader and members of the Review Team.

Table 3.4. Grading of Overall Performance of a Study Programme

Expected number of criteria with weighted minimum score	Overall Programme of Study score %	Grade
7 (Seven)	≥ 80	A
	70 – 79	B
	60 – 69	C
	< 60	D
6 (Six)	≥ 70	B
	60 – 69	C
	< 60	D
5 (Five)	≥ 60	C
	< 60	D
4 (Four) or less	Irrespective of Institution score	D

Section 7 - Suitability of the Study Programme for SLQF Level certification

This section will present the findings on compliance of the study programme with SLQF guidelines as assessed per the instructions given in Chapter 3.6 - Procedure for Use of Standards for Certification of the SLQF Level and the score guide.

Section 8 - Commendations and Recommendations

This section will list the commendations on excellence in each of the review criteria. Any other aspect pertaining to excellence in programme development and delivery could be a l s o included under commendations. In addition, this section will make recommendations for remedial actions needed to bring about quality enhancement leading to excellence.

Section 9 – Summary

This will be a summary of the Review Team's main findings as given under the different sections of the report and will be no longer than 1000 words.

6.5. **Compilation of the Postgraduate Programme Review Report**

The review chair will take the responsibility for preparing the report for submission to the QAC. The chair will discuss the review findings with other members of the Review Team

and request them to undertake writing different sections of the report. The Chair will assemble the different sections and compile and edit the final comprehensive draft report agreed to by the team. The final draft report should not exceed 6000 words.

6.6. Procedure for Submission of the Report

The chair of the Review Team will submit the draft report to the QAC. The QAC will send a copy of the draft report to the PGPP concerned for observations and comments.

6.6.1. Request for Discussion

The Review Team would have given an indication of its conclusions at the concluding (wrap-up) meeting held at the end of the review visit, with the Head of the PGPP, Director of the CQA and Coordinator of QA Cell, PGPMU Chairpersons, Coordinators of study programmes and other relevant senior academic staff responsible for conducting the programme. This meeting would have given the PGPP/PGPMU an opportunity to sort out any factual errors and misinterpretations made by the Review Team. However, on receiving the draft report from the QAC, the PGPP may ask for a further discussion with the Review Team about the contents of the report, prior to publication. The PGPP should notify the QAC of its wish to take up this opportunity within two weeks of receipt of the first draft of the report, highlighting the particular areas it wishes to discuss.

The meeting to discuss any clarifications should take place within six weeks of the PGPP making the request. The meeting should be chaired by a member of the QAC. The chair of the meeting should not be a member of the PGPP concerned, nor should he or she have any other close links with it. Detailed notes of the meeting should be taken by a representative of the QAC. Others present at the meeting will be members of the Review Team (all if possible, but at least two), and representatives chosen by the PGPP/PGPMU, who are likely to be staff who prepared the SER and those who participated in the review visit. The discussion will be for the purpose of clarifying the veracity of one or more of the statements in the draft report and deciding on the need for making necessary changes. Based on the outcome of the discussions and decisions arrived at during the meeting, the final draft report will be prepared by the Chair of the Review Team and submitted to the QAC.

6.7. Publishing

The QAC will send the draft report compiled by the Review Team chair to the PGPP concerned for observations and comments. After acceptance of the draft report by the Head of the respective PGPP, the report will be subject to editing by one of a panel of senior academics experienced in QA to ensure clarity, compliance with guidelines and consistency in formatting. The final edited version will be submitted for approval by the UGC Standing Committee on Quality Assurance and the members of the University Grants Commission. This final version will be sent to the PGPP for development of an action plan for implementation of recommendations in the Review Report. In addition, it will be made available to the public through the QAC website.

APPENDICES

Appendix 01

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR INSTITUTIONAL AND PROGRAM REVIEWERS

PREAMBLE

This Code of Conduct ("the Code") describes rules of good behaviour for reviewers engaged in the external reviews conducted by the Quality Assurance Council of the University Grants Commission (QAC-UGC) and covers the entire task from accepting the assignment to submission of the final report to the QAC. The Code gives the basic principles and guidelines with which all members of review panels should comply, and reviewers are expected to conduct reviews within the spirit of the Code. Upon signature of their review contracts, all reviewers consent to comply and respect the principles, rules and guidelines stipulated in this Code. In case of any doubt concerning the applicability of a particular section of the Code, the reviewer should contact the Director QAC of the UGC for clarifications.

Verifiable evidence concerning a breach of the Code by a reviewer, or evidence of any other unprofessional conduct not covered in this Code, may result in termination of the reviewer's contract by the QAC and/or listing of the reviewer as ineligible for future contracts, and/or reporting to the Council of the reviewer's University.

An external quality assurance (EQA) review analyses the fitness of an institution's/Faculty's processes for managing and assuring the expected outcomes of academic activities including study programs undertaken by the institution/faculty and the quality of student learning experience and standards of awards. It evaluates the extent to which internal quality assurance (IQA) mechanisms adopted by the institution/ faculty can be relied upon to maintain the quality of provision of educational programmes over time.

The reviewer is expected perform EQA reviews under the guidance of QAC. The reviewer is expected to exercise maximum objectivity in weighing ground realities and hard and soft evidence provided in support of the claims made in the SER by the reviewee against the standards stipulated in the prescribed Review Manuals by the QAC. Therefore, the reviewer must have a complete understanding of the procedures detailed in the relevant review manual.

DEFINITIONS

1. **Confidential information:**

    Information that was obtained as a consequence of conducting the review and that is not publicly available

2. **Conflict of Interest:**

    a. Real Conflict of Interest: The reviewer has personal or organizational interests which might influence the performance of his/her duties and responsibilities as a reviewer

b. Apparent conflict of interest: A situation where it can be reasonably perceived that the reviewer's private interests might influence the performance of his / her duties and responsibilities as a reviewer

3. Impartial: Absence of prejudice towards any party

4. Independent: Free of external pressure and staying neutral

5. Integrity: Acting honestly and ethically in the process, being objective and independent

6. Misconduct: Intentional or negligent failure to observe the rules of conduct set by this Code

CORE VALUES

Core values that should be upheld by all involved parties include:

A. Persistent effort to achieve the highest level of standards

B. Conscientious and continuous pursuit of excellence in one's work

C. Honesty, integrity and objectivity in all involved procedures

D. Responsibility for one's actions and conduct

E. Respect for rights, differences and dignity of stakeholders of the process

F. Accountability to the public

G. Transparency in all dealings

H. Impartiality and independence in all dealings

CODE OF CONDUCT

In the conduct of all external reviews, all reviewers are at all times required to uphold the above core values and following guidelines, and conduct themselves in a manner that does not bring the UGC or academia into disrepute, and be cognisant of the fact that their contribution is of national interest and they represent the UGC.

1. Objectivity: The reviewer shall at all times make a maximum effort to be objective:

    1.1. Make sure that decisions are always based on first-hand evidence;

    1.2. Go by the definitions provided in the review manual. On matters where definitions are not provided in the manual, the reviewers as a team may arrive at interpretations and are expected to include those in the report to be transparent;

1.3. Not use personal/subjective ideas/interpretations or interpretations used in their own study programs/institutions to assess practices adopted by the program/institution under review;

1.4. Judgements must be robust and fully supported by evidence so that they can be defended, if required;

1.5. Weigh and test the evidence presented by the institution with claims made in the SER and the requirements in the review manual in making judgements;

1.6. Be an informed observer before contributing to decision-making by the panel.

2. **Confidentiality:** the reviewer shall protect the confidentiality of all proceedings and information:

2.1. Safeguard in strict confidence, all information made available to him/her especially communications containing sensitive information, information of a personal nature and may lead to defamations if disclosed, and information already contested at Courts of Law;

2.2. Not disclose any confidential information acquired during the review process to anyone external to the panel (excluding the confidential feedback provided to the Director, QAC following the review task for the continuous improvement of the review process);

2.3. Not disclose any information concerning the evaluation procedure to any other party (in addition to the information given in the final full report and the feedback provided to the Director, QAC);

2.4. From the date of accepting the assignment, the reviewer shall not contact any colleague or another individual of the institution or program under review and communicate whatsoever matters pertinent to the review with such individual/individuals, except through the QAC. The Review Chair may communicate with the Dean of a study program or the Director of the CQA regarding site-visit arrangements with the awareness of the Director of the QAC on the matter.

3. **Conflict of Interest:** The reviewer shall act with strict impartiality:

3.1. Identify and declare any real or apparent conflict between personal interest (direct or indirect) and interests of QAC and reviewee, that will undermine objectivity;

3.2. Inform the QAC immediately of any change in interest that may conflict with that of the QAC;

3.3. Consider that all parties/groups that they discuss/meet with are equally important stakeholders in the process of the review;

3.4. No reviewer shall use their encounter with reviewee for his/her personal advantage.

4. Integrity: The reviewer shall act honestly and ethically:

4.1. Conduct of the reviewer should not foster any suspicion that he/she is behaving in a particular manner of personal interest or advantage;

4.2. Reviewer shall exercise maximum honesty during the entire review process;

4.3. Reviewer shall not accept any direct or indirect gift, reward or hospitality or undue extra attention which may appear to place them under obligation and compromise

impartiality. The reviewer shall discuss in the team or contact the Director, QAC immediately, if he/she feels that the situation/offer is not under his/her control

4.4. Reviewer shall not offer any favour or undue extra attention to any party/individual of the program or the institution under review.

4.5. Reviewer shall refrain from any behaviour that could be interpreted as dishonest, unethical and unprofessional

4.6. The reviewer is expected to reflect on his/her own conduct, and question and analyse the integrity and underlying motives

CONDUCT DURING SITE VISIT

1. Evaluation during site visit

1.1. The evaluation on site shall be based on claims made in the SER

1.2. The reviewer shall be aware that the task during the site visit is to weigh the evidence (soft or hard) provided/ witnessed/ received in support of the claims made in the SER against the standards stipulated in the review manual

1.3. The reviewers shall not demand or insist on further evidence or any other requirement during the site visit, but report on the evidence witnessed and the review experience. However, the reviewer may seek clarifications on ambiguous matters with documents or verbal explanations.

2. Relationship with the reviewee

2.1. The reviewer should bear in mind that the site visit is a full-time assignment.

2.2. The reviewer should behave, and be perceived to behave, as a peer (equal) of the academics of the institution or the program under review, and refrain from adopting a position of 'superiority' over the reviewee.

2.3. The reviewer should not assume another role during the site visit other than being a reviewer. The reviewer should refrain from attempting to teach or advocating a particular view or practice to the reviewee by indicating that such practice is already being adopted

by the institution/program of the reviewer etc. (i.e., revealing "I have done it but you have not"; "I have it but you don't" attitude). A reviewer may, however, make suggestions by way of sharing good practices.

2.4. The reviewer should be polite and courteous to all stakeholders.

2.5. The reviewer should be tolerant, and show respect for the rights, differences and dignity of all stakeholders.

2.6. The reviewer should strive to create a pleasant and productive working environment for all parties

3. Commitment to competency and professionalism

3.1. The reviewer should exercise and maintain professional competence at all times

3.2. The reviewer should be prepared and pay full attention in the task

3.3. The reviewer should participate in the full schedule

3.4. The reviewer should keep careful records of observed supporting evidence, facilities and teaching practice, and discussions during stakeholder meetings.

3.5. The reviewer shall strive to be punctual, and adhere to the site visit schedule as much as possible, especially with regard to meetings with stakeholders.

3.6. The reviewer shall dress appropriately.

3.7. Communication

3.7.1. The reviewer should maintain purposeful dialogues focused on the program or institution under review

3.7.2. The reviewer should be open and clear as much as possible in the discussions

3.7.3. The reviewer should ask questions in a friendly and constructive manner, creating a conducive environment that minimizes stress and builds trust and respect

3.7.4. The reviewer should refrain from being sarcastic and intimidating

3.7.5. The reviewer should avoid personal questions and deal carefully with any sensitive information that may be divulged by stakeholders

3.7.6. The reviewer should ensure that views of all are entertained, valued and listened to, and foster exchange of opinions

3.7.7. The reviewer should not use prescriptive language, but instead make suggestions for change where appropriate.

4. Providing feedback

4.1. The reviewer should ensure that feedback on findings is given in a constructive and qualitative manner

4.2. The review panel must report honestly and fairly on their findings during the site visit, with regard to strengths and weaknesses under each review criterion

4.3. The review panel should keep the specific outcomes (grade, scores etc) confidential during the site visit and declare those only through the report

4.4. The review panel must ensure that judgements are accurate and reliable and reflect ground level operations of the institution/program

5. Conduct within the Review Panel

5.1. Reviewers must ensure that each panel member is an equal partner and cooperate in taking specific responsibility under the guidance of the Chair of the panel

5.2. All reviewers should attend private meetings of the panel when convened by the Chair

5.3. All reviewers should ensure that the final outcomes are decided collectively and by consensus. If there is a significant difference of opinion among members of the review panel, the opinion of the majority should be final.

6. Review Chair

6.1. should conduct, command and exercise authority in a fair and responsible manner

6.2. should oversee the review process in an all-inclusive manner

6.3. is expected to make and keep the schedules

6.4. is expected to be responsible for communications with the QAC and the reviewee

6.5. should ensure that the views of all participants are valued and taken into account, and foster open exchange of opinions

6.6. should ensure that everyone in the meeting feels comfortable with the review panel

6.7. at the end of each meeting, should recapitulate the main topics covered in the discussion in order to make sure that all issues have been brought to debate

6.8. should strive to ensure that there are no unsettled issues or concerns by the end of every meeting

REPORT WRITING

1. The reviewer should remain in regular contact with the Review Chair and other members of the Review Panel until the Review Report has been finalized and submitted to the QAC.

2. All members of the Review Panel should share their contributions to the review report by email in a timely fashion, so that the Review Chair is able to produce a single, comprehensive review report that is consistent with the guidance set out in the relevant review manual.

3. Each member of the Review Panel should carefully read those sections of the Review Report written by other members of the panel and ensure that they are in agreement with the views expressed therein. Ultimately, every reviewer is responsible for the full content of the final report.

4. Each reviewer should strive to meet deadlines set collectively by the Review Panel, in order to meet the QAC deadlines for submission of the preliminary report, followed by the draft Review Report and the finalized Review Report.

MATERIAL REFERENCED

a. ENQA Code of conduct, accessed at https://enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/ENQA-Agency-Reviews_Code-of-Conduct.pdf

b. https://www.eurosai.org/handle404?exporturi=/export/sites/eurosai/.content/documents/ materials/Quality-Assurance-Review-Handbook-2012.pdf

c. https://www.must.edu.mo/images/QA/CODE%20OF%20CONDUCT.pdf

d. *Manual for Review of Undergraduate Study Programmes of Sri Lankan Universities and Higher Education Institutions.* UGC, 2015

e. *Manual for Institutional Review of Sri Lankan Universities and Higher Education Institutions.* UGC, 2015.

Appendix 02

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS FOR EXTERNAL REVIEWERS

External reviews conducted by the Quality Assurance Council (QAC) of the University Grants Commission (UGC) on programmes of study and higher education institutes requires the involvement of large numbers of university academics, who may have interests related to the institution under review. To ensure the highest integrity and public confidence in such reviews, the QAC requires those serving as reviewers to disclose any circumstances that could give rise to, or be reasonably perceived to give rise to conflict of interest, as it may affect or appear to influence the reviewer's objectivity and independence. A perceived conflict of interest exists when an interest would not necessarily influence the individual, but could result in the individual's objectivity being questioned by others.

You must disclose on this Declaration of Interests form, any financial, professional, employment or other interest relevant to the institution or programme under review that could influence the outcome of the decision made by the QAC regarding the final grading. You must also declare relevant interests of your immediate family members in relation to the same study program or the institution.

Please note that failure to fully complete and disclose all relevant information on this form may, depending on the circumstances, lead the QAC to decide not to appoint you to a similar assignment in the future.

Upon your declaration, the QAC holds the right to make the decision reading the service expected from you in relation to a particular study program or institution. Answering 'yes' to a question on the form printed on the next page does not automatically disqualify you from undertaking a review. Your answers will be reviewed by the QAC to determine whether you have a conflict of interest relevant to the review at hand. Based on your declaration, the QAC may conclude that no potential conflict exists or that the interest is irrelevant or insignificant. If, however, a declared interest is determined to be potentially or clearly significant, the QAC may conclude that you should not be part of the respective Review Team. If you are unable or unwilling to disclose the details of an interest that may pose a real or perceived conflict, you must disclose that a conflict of interest may exist, and in that event the QAC may decide that you be totally recused from the review, after consulting with you.

Please complete this form and submit it to the Director QAC as soon as you are notified of your appointment as a reviewer to a particular study program or institution, so that the QAC has adequate time to make a decision and manage the situation to prevent any delays in the review process.

Name of university under review:

………………………………………………………………………………………

Name of faculty and degree programme under review (for program review only):

………………………………………………………………………………………

Name of reviewer:

………………………………………………………………………………………

NIC no

………………………………………….

A., Please answer each of the questions below. If the answer to any of the questions is 'yes', briefly describe the circumstances in the following table.

1. Within the past five years, have you or a member of your immediate family*, been an employee of the university under review? Yes ☐ No ☐

2. Within the past five years, has any member of your immediate family* been a student in the university under review? Yes ☐ No ☐

3. Do you have an undergraduate or postgraduate degree from the university under review? Yes ☐ No ☐

4. Do you have any other relationship§ with the university under review that may lead to conflict of interest? Yes ☐ No ☐

*The term 'immediate family' refers to your spouse, parents, siblings and children.

§ This includes close acquaintance with the Head of Department, Dean or Vice-Chancellor of the relevant university; and research collaborations within the past five years, with staff in the Department under review

B. Explanation of 'yes' responses: If the answer to any of the above questions is 'yes', briefly describe the circumstances below.

Type of interest (Question no)	If it is relevant to a family member, specify relationship	Describe other relevant details including the nature and dates and duration of the circumstance/s of interest or the value of it, if financial

Declaration: I hereby declare on my honour that the disclosed information is true and complete to the best of my knowledge. Should there be any change to the above information, I will promptly notify the Director / QAC and complete a new declaration of interest form that describes the changes.

Date: ………………………. Signature ……………

Appendix 03 a

List of Participants[2] in Stakeholder Webinar 01
held on 08th April 2021 to Introduce the Draft Manual

Name of the University	Name of the Participant	Position
University of Colombo	Prof. N. Pallewatta	Director- Centre for Quality Assurance
	Dr. Kaushalya Perera	Director and Coordinator -PG Studies
	Dr. D.V. K.P. Seneviratne	IQAC Coordinator – Faculty of Education
	Dr. E. Sulochana Neranjani	Coordinator – PG Dip Education (English)
	Prof. Asela Olupeliyawa	IQAC Coordinator – Faculty of Medicine
	Dr. Tharanga Thoradeniya	Chair - PG Programme Committee
	Dr. G. Kisokanth	Chair-IQAC, Faculty of Nursing
	Prof. Sanjeewa Perera	IQAC Coordinator – Faculty of Science
	Prof. Mayuri Wijesinghe	PG Programme Director – Faculty of Science
	Dr. Chamini Hemachandra	IQAC Coordinator – Faculty of Technology
	Dr. Kanchana Abeysekara	PG Coordinator – Faculty of Technology
	Prof. Sudheera Ranwala	IQAC Coordinator – Faculty of Graduate Studies
	Dr. Chaminda Padmakumara	Director of Studies
	Dr M.G.G. Hemakumara	Institute of Human Resource Advancement
	Ms. Kamani Mathotaarachchi	IQAC Coordinator – Institute of Human Resource Advancement
	Dr. G. Kisokanth	Chair- IQAC, Faculty of Nursing
	Dr. Ruwan Gamage	IQAC Coordinator - National Institute of Library and Information Science (NILIS)
	Dr. Tudor Weerasinghe	PG Programme Coordinator- Sri Palee Campus
	Dr. Senani Kalawana	PG Programme Coordinator – Institute of Indigenous Medicine (IIM)
	Dr. B. Manori S. Amarajeewa	IQAC Coordinator - IIM
	Mr. B.A. Sumanajith Kumara	Senior Lecturer
	Dr. Darshana Sumanadasa	PG Programme Coordinator - Faculty of Law
	Dr. U.A.T. Udayanganie	IQAC Coordinator – Faculty of Law
	Dr. N. Sampath Punchihewa	Dean – Faculty of Law
	Dr. Nadeesha Lewke Bandara	PG Programme Coordinator - Institute of Biochemistry, Molecular Biology & Biotechnology (IBMBB)
	Dr. Sujatha Weerasinghe	IQAC Coordinator- Institute of Agrotechnology and Rural Sciences
	Dr. Prasad Wimalaratna	PG Programme Coordinator- University of Colombo School of Computing
	Ms. Maduka Wijeratna	SAR - University of Colombo School of Computing (UCSC)

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[2] Based on information provided by the Quality Assurance Council and Directors of Centres for Quality Assurance

University of Peradeniya	Prof. R.W. Pallegama	Director- Centre for Quality Assurance
	Dr. Malshani L. Pathirathna	Head - Department of Nursing
	Prof. B.S.M.S. Siriwardena	Professor - Dept. of Oral Pathology
	Dr. R. M. Jayasinghe	Senior Lecturer - Dept. of Prosthetic Dentistry
	Dr. Nadeeshani Nanayakkara	Senior Lecturer- Dept. of Civil Engineering
	Dr. Sudheera Navarathne	Senior Lecturer - Department of Electrical & Electronic Engineering
	Prof. R.H. Kuruppuge	Professor - Dept. of Operational Management, Faculty of Management
	Dr. Nuresh Eranda	Coordinator – IQAC, Faculty of Management
	Prof. Kalana Maduwage	Professor - Department of Biochemistry, Faculty of Medicine
	Prof. Chandika Gamage	Professor - Department of Microbiology, Faculty of Medicine
	Dr. M.N.M. Fouzi	Senior Lecturer - Dept. of Farm Animal Production & Health
	Dr. Rasika Jinadasa	Coordinator - Postgraduate Education Unit, Faculty of Vet. Medicine & Animal Sci.
	Prof. C.M.B. Dematawewa	Director - Postgraduate Institute of Agriculture (PGIA)
	Mr. K.A.B. Damunupola	Deputy Registrar - PGIA
	Prof. A. Pitawala	Director - Postgraduate Institute of Science (PGIS)
	Dr. B.M.K. Pemasiri	IQAC Coordinator – Postgrad. Inst. Science
	Mr. V. Ranathunga	Postgraduate Institute of Science (PGIS)
	Prof. J.M.A. Jayawickrama	Former Director - Postgraduate Institute of Humanities & Social Sciences (PGIHS)
	Prof. Suresh J.S. De Mel	Director - Postgraduate Institute of Humanities & Social Sciences (PGIHS)
	Prof. W.A. Liyanage	Coordinator - IQAC - PGIHS
University of Sri Jayewardene pura	Snr. Prof. Samanthi Senaratne	Director- Centre for Quality Assurance
	Dr. Gayan Jayakody	Senior lecturer- Coordinator PhD programme
	Dr. Samantha Rathnayake	Management Consultant - PIM
	Dr. Sakunthala Dureirathnam	Postgraduate Institute of Management (PIM)
	Dr. R.P.C.K. Jayasinghe	Senior Lecturer-Faculty of Commerce & Mgt
	Dr. P. J. S. Fernando	Senior Lecturer – Dept. Business Economics
	Dr. Ayoma Sumanasiri	Head - Department of Commerce
	Prof. Prasad M. Jayaweera	Head - Professor of Computer Science
	Snr. Prof. Kamani Wanigasuriya	Senior Professor – Faculty of Medicine
	Dr. Lilani Attygalle	Senior Lecturer - Dept. of Physics
	Dr. Neranji Wijewardana	Senior Lecturer – Criminology
	Prof. K.G.P.K. Weerakoon	Coordinator
	Dr. A.R. Ajward	Professor – Dept. Accounting
	Dr. Upul Kumarasinghe	Senior Lecturer – Dept. Chemistry
	Prof. Theshini Perera	Professor – Dept. Chemistry

	Dr. Thushitha Etampawala	Senior Lecturer
	Dr. Chamara Senaratne	Head & Senior Lecturer
	Mrs. H.M.B.S. Herath	Coordinator - MSc in GIS & RS, FGS
	Mr. Mohomed Atheeq	Programmer Cum System Analyst
University of Jaffna	Prof. Meena Senthilnanthanan	Director - Centre for Quality Assurance
	Dr. Mrs. A. Nanthakumaran	Dean – Faculty of Applied Science
	Dr. K. Sooriyakumar	Dean - Faculty of Agriculture
	Dr. Y. Nanthagopan	Dean - Faculty of Business Studies
	Dr. (Mrs.) T. Raveendran	Member - BoS in Management & Commerce
	Prof. (Ms.) V. Arasaratnam	Chairperson – Life Sciences
	Prof. A. Atputharajah	Dean- Faculty of Engineering & Chairperson - BoS in Engineering
	Prof. P. Ravirajan	Acting Dean - Faculty of Graduate Studies, Dean - Faculty of Science, Chairperson - BoS in Education
	Prof. N. Shanmugalingan	Member - BoS in Historical & Social Studies
	Dr. S. Rajumesh	Member - BoS in Management & Commerce
University of Ruhuna	Prof. Mahinda Atapattu	Director-Centre for Quality Assurance
University of Kelaniya	Prof. S.P. Senanayake	Director - Centre for Quality Assurance
	Prof. Ariyarathna Jayamaha	Dean – Faculty of Graduate Studies
	Snr. Prof. R.K.L.M. Dharmasiri	Coordinator - PG Programme, Faculty of Social Sciences
	Prof. Dilkushi Wettewe	Board of Study in Humanities
	Snr. Prof. W.U. Chandrasekara	Board of Study in Science
	Prof. Lal M. Dharmasiri	Professor
University of Moratuwa	Mr. V. Sivahar	Director - Centre for Quality Assurance
	Dr. (Ms.) T.C. Sandanayake	Director – PG Studies – Faculty of IT
	Ms. G.T.I. Karunaratne	Director – QA Cell – Faculty of IT
	Mr. C.P. Wijesiriwardena	Senior Lecturer – Faculty of IT
	Dr. I.N. Manawadu	Senior Lecturer – Faculty of IT
	Dr. K.A.S.N. Sumathipala	Senior Lecturer – Faculty of IT
	Mr. C.M. Suwadaarachchi	Director – PG Studies – Faculty of Business
	Dr. T.S. De Silva	Director – QA Cell – Faculty of Business
	Prof. L.W.R.P. Udayanga	Director – PG Studies – Faculty of Engineering
	Dr.(Mrs.) M.T.P. Hettiarachchi	Actg. Director – QA Cell – Faculty of Engineering
	Dr. (Ms.) S.A.B. Coorey	Director - PG Studies - Faculty of Architecture
	Prof. (Ms.) I.G.P. Rajapaksha	Director – QA Cell – Faculty of Architecture
	Prof. (Ms.) Y.G. Sandanayake	Professor - Faculty of Architecture
	Dr. (Ms.) Wajishani Gamage	Senior Lecturer – Faculty of Architecture
	Prof. Ajith De Alwis	Dean – FGS
	Ms. U.A.A.G. Dhanushika	Scientific Assistant - FGS
	Dr. Prasanna Gunathilake	Senior Lecturer-Dept. Food Sci. & Technol.
	Prof. K.P. Vidanapathirana	Senior Professor - Department of Electronics

Wayamba University of Sri Lanka	Dr. W.A.S. Wijesinghe	Chairman -Senate Research & Higher Degrees Committee
	Dr Nayomi Ranathunga	Senior Lecturer- Dept. Physiology
	Dr Tharinda Vidanagama	Head – Dept. Computing & Information Systems
	Dr. Asankha Pallegedara	Dept. Industrial Management
	Dr. R.A.N. Ranatunga	Head – Dept of Physiology
	Prof. Kapila Yakandawala	Professor
	Prof. H.M.A. Herath	Head & Senior Lecturer
	Dr. D.A.T. Kumari	Senior Lecturer
	Dr. Ananda Chandrasekera	Senior Lecturer
	Dr. W.S. Sanjeewa	Senior Lecturer
	Ms. D.M.K.G. Niroshani	Senior Assistant Registrar (Academic)
Rajarata University of Sri Lanka	Dr. D.M.S. Duminda	Director - Centre for Quality Assurance
	Dr. Manoj Fernando	Senior Lecturer
	Dr. Nalaka Geekiyanage	Senior Lecturer
	Dr. Mrs. P.L. Hettiaracchchi	Coordinator – Higher degrees Committee, Faculty of Applied Sciences
	Snr. Prof. P.A. Weerasingha	Senior Professor
Sabara-gamuwa University of Sri Lanka	Prof. H.A.D. Ruwandeepika	Director - Centre for Quality Assurance
	Prof. H.M.S. Priyanath	Dean - Faculty of Graduate Studies
	Prof. M. Esham	Chairperson - BoS in Agricultural Sciences
	Prof. D.A.I. Dayaratne	Chairperson - BoS in Management
	Dr. E.P.N. Udayakumara	Chairperson - BoS in Physical and Natural Sciences
	Prof. B.T.G. Samantha Kumara	Chairperson - BoS in Computing and Information Systems
	Dr. Homindra Divithure	Chairperson - BoS in Geomatics
	Dr. Nirosha Paranawithana	Chairperson - BoS in Humanities
	Dr. G.R.S.R.C. Samaraweera	Chairperson, BoS in Social Sciences
	Dr. S. Joniton	Chairperson - BoS in Sport Science and Physical Education
Eastern University of Sri Lanka	Snr. Prof. P. Vinobaba	Director – Centre for Quality Assurance & Snr. Professor in Zoology
	Dr. S. Santhirasegaram	Head - Department of Languages
	Dr. T. Bhavan	Senior Lecturer Gr. I
	Ms. S. Maheswaranathan	Senior Lecturer Gr. I
	Dr. P. Pratheesh	Senior Lecturer Gr. I
	Dr. J. Sutha	Senior Lecturer Gr. II
	Dr. T. Mathiventhan	Senior Lecturer in Botany
	Dr. (Mrs). Q.Y. Soundararajah	Senior Lecturer in Physics
South Eastern University of Sri Lanka	Prof. M.A.M. Rameez	Coordinator - Postgraduate Programme, FAC
	Dr. M.A.S.F. Saadhiya	Lecturer - PG Programme
	Dr. Rahila Ziyad	Lecturer - PG Programme
	Dr. A.F.M. Ashraff	Lecturer - PG Programme
	Ms. Nelani De Costa	Supportive staff - PG programme
	Mr. M.H.M. Rinos	Lecturer - PG Programme

	Dr. S. Gunapalan	Lecturer - PG Programme
	Prof. A. Jahfer	Lecturer - PG Programme
	Dr. (Mrs). S. Safeena MGH	Lecturer - PG Programme
	Mr. S. Sabraz Nawaz	Lecturer - PG Programme
	Dr. M.I.M. Hilal	Lecturer - PG Programme
	Dr. K.M. Mubarak	Coordinator Postgraduate Programme -FMC
Uva Wellassa University of Sri Lanka	Dr. P. H. T. Kumara	Senior Lecturer II
	Prof. E.D.N.S. Abeyratne	Professor
	Prof. (Mrs) P.I.N. Fernando	Professor
	Prof. Sisira Ediriweera	Professor
	Prof. D.K. Dinesh Jayasena	Professor
	Dr. Ruwan Ranasinghe	Senior Lecturer Gr. II
	Dr. P.E. Kaliyadasa	Senior Lecturer Gr. I - Export Agriculture
	Mr. Dhananjaya Nawarathna	Lecturer
Visual and Performing Arts University	Dr. Chinthaka Meddegoda	Director – Centre for Quality Assurance
	Dr. Tharanga Dandeniya	HOD - Department of Drama, Oriental Ballet & Modern Dance
	Prof. Kolitha Banu Dissanayake	Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies
The Open University of Sri Lanka	Dr. I.S.K. Wijewardena	Senior Lecturer – Faculty of Engineering Technology
	Dr. F.M. Nawastheen	Senior Lecturer Gr. II
	Dr. Thiwankee Wickramasinghe	Senior Lecturer Gr. I
	Dr. Chamila Dias	Senior Lecturer
	Dr. K.P. Harini Amarasuriya	Senior Lecturer Gr. I
	Dr. Isuru Wijayawardane	Senior Lecturer
	Ms. Mihiri Jansz	Lecturer (Probationary)
	Dr. M.G.Y.L. Mahagamage	Senior Lecturer
	Dr Chanika Jayasinghe	Senior Lecturer Gr. II
	Dr. Lahiru Wijenayaka	Senior Lecturer

Appendix 03 b

List of Participants[3] in Stakeholder Webinar 02 held on 29th July 2021 to Present the Suggestions Incorporated Draft Manual

Name of the University	Name of the Participant	Position
University of Colombo	Prof. Nirmalie Pallewatta	Director – Centre for Quality Assurance
	Dr. K. Perera	Director - PG Studies, FoA
	Dr. Darshi Thoradeniya	Director - IQAC, FoA
	Dr. B.M.S. Amarajeewa	IQAC Coordinator – Institute of Indigenous Medicine (IIM)
	Dr. A.S.A.C. Abeysinghe	Coordinator - IQAC
	Dr. M.H.M. Hafeel	Chairperson – Speciality Board
	Dr. Kokila Konasinghe	Coordinator
	Dr. R.C.G. Gamage	Coordinator-PGLIS -National Institute of Library and Information Science (NILIS)
	Dr. D.V.K.P. Seneviratne	IQAC Coordinator – Faculty of Education
	Prof. S.S.N. Perera	Coordinator - IQAC, Faculty of Science
	Ms. S.D. Somaratna	Coordinator – IQAC, Library
	Dr. W.K.S.M. Abeysekera	PG Coordinator- Faculty of Technology
	Prof. Sudheera Ranwala	Coordinator IQAC – Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS)
	Dr. Nadeesha Lewke Banadra	PG Programme Coordinator - IBMBB
	Dr. P.S. Saputhanthri	Senior Lecturer Gr I – Dept. Plant Sciences
	Prof. N. Fahamiya	IQAC- Coordinator, IIM (Unani)
	Dr. Shanthi Kulatunga	Chairperson - Specialty Board Swasthavittha, PGIIM
	Dr. I.A.M. Leena	Chairperson - Specialty Board Kaumarabhrithya, PGIIM
	Dr. O.T.M.R.K.S.B. Kalawana	PG Programme Coordinator - IIM
	Prof. Asela Olupeliyawa	IQAC Coordinator – Faculty of Medicine
	Prof. Tharusha Gooneratne	Head – Dept. Accounting
	Dr. Chiranthi Wijesundara	Coordinator - NILIS
	Dr. Pradeep N. Weerasinghe	Senior Lecturer- FGS
	Prof. Sharmila Jayasena	Professor – Dept. Biochemistry & Molecular Biology
	Dr. E. Sulochana Neranjani	Course Coordinator-PG Dip Education (English)
	MR. Chinthaka Chandrakumara	Course Coordinator-PG Dip Education
	Dr. C.H. Magalla	Senior Lecturer Gr. I - Statistics
	Dr. Fazeenah Hameed	Chairperson - Specialty Board, PGIIM
	Dr. Tharanga Dandeniya	Head – Dept. Drama and Theatre
	Ms. M.G.D.A. Anuruddhika Siriwardena	Lecturer (Probationary) – Faculty of Education

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[3] Based on information provided by the Quality Assurance Council and Directors of Centres for Quality Assurance

University of Peradeniya	Prof. W. Ranjith Pallegama	Director - Centre for Quality Assurance
	Dr. Karunananda Pemasiri	Coordinator – QAC, PGIS
	Dr. W. Jilushi Damunupola	Senior Lecturer - Department of Botany
	Prof. N.S. Soysa	Coordinator - IQAC, Faculty of Dental Sci.
	Dr. Nadeeshani Nanayakkara	Senior Lecturer-Dept. of Civil Engineering
	Prof. S.J.S. de Mel	Director - Postgraduate Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences (PGIHS)
	Dr. Sudheera Navaratne	Senior Lecturer - Department of Electrical & Electronic Engineering,
	Dr. M.N.M. Fouzi	Senior Lecturer - Dept. of Farm Animal Production & Health
	Dr. B.A. Nuresh Eranda	Coordinator – IQAC, Faculty of Management
	Prof. H.M.T.G.A. Pitawala	Director - Postgraduate Institute of Science
	Prof. C.M.B. Dematawewa	Director - Postgraduate Institute of Agriculture
	Prof. Kalana Maduwage	Professor - Department of Biochemistry,
	Prof. S.R. Kodituwakku	Dean - Faculty of Science
	Dr. D.H.R.N. Rasika Jinadasa	Coordinator - Postgraduate Education Unit, Faculty of Vet. Medicine & Animal.Science
	Dr. Malshani Pathirathna	Head -Nursing
	Prof. Asiri Abeyagunawardane	Dean - Faculty of Medicine
	Prof. Chandika Gamage	Professor - Department of Microbiology
	Prof. Inoka Karunaratne	Head - Dept. Zoology, Faculty of Science
	Dr. P.K. Perera	Senior Lecturer, Member of PGIS-IQAC
	Dr. H.M.V.R. Herath	Director – Centre for Engineering Research and Postgraduate Studies (CERPS)
	Prof. C. Boghawattha	Postgraduate Institute of Agriculture
	Prof. N.W.B. Balasooriya	Coordinator IQAC – Faculty of Science
	Prof. Sanath Rajapapakse	Head Dept. Molecular Biology and Biotechnology
	Dr. P.A.P. Samantha	Dean - Faculty of Mgt and Finance
University of Sri Jayewardene pura	Snr. Prof. Samanthi Senaratne	Director – Centre for Quality Assurance
	Ms. Badra Herath	Coordinator - MSc in GIS & RS, FGS
	Prof. Sunethra Thennakoon	Coordinator QAC- FGS & Chair- Board of Study in Multidisciplinary Studies
	Snr Prof. Lalitha S. Fernando	Senior Professor
	Prof P. Janak J. Kumarasinghe	Director - Postgraduate Centre for Business Studies, Faculty of Management Science
	Prof. P.D. Nimal	Dean – Faculty of Management Science
	Prof. Saman Yapa	Chair - Board of Study in Business Studies
	Snr Prof. M. Pathmalal	Dean – Faculty of Graduate Studies
University of Jaffna	Prof. (Mrs.). M .Senthilnanthanan	Director - Centre for Quality Assurance
	Dr. S. Srikanthan	Coordinator - Master of Cultural Studies
	Prof. S. Kannathasan	Dean - Faculty of Graduate Studies
	Prof. K.T. Ganesalingam	Chair – Board of Study (BoS) in Historical and Social Studies

	Mr. R. Sarveswara	Coordinator - Postgraduate Diploma in Education
	Dr. R. Surenthirakumaran	Coordinator - Master of Health Management
	Prof. (Mrs.) R. Yogendrarajah	Chair – BoS in Management and Commerce
University of Ruhuna	Prof. Mahinda Atapattu	Director – Centre for Quality Assurance
	Dr. G.G. Tushara Chaminda	Coordinator - MSc. in Civil Engineering
	Dr. M.A.P.D.P. Wickramaratne	Coordinator - MSc (Agribusiness Management)
	Dr. P.A.B.N. Perumpuli	Coordinator - MFST
	Prof. G.H.M.J. Subashi De Silva	Coordinator - MSc Structural Engineering
	Prof. P. Ruwani Hewawasam	Chairperson – BoS in Medicine
	Prof. D.A.L. Leelamani Jayasinghe	Chair - Board of Study
	Dr. N.V.G.A. Hemantha Kumara	Coordinator - MA
	Prof. P.A.P. Samantha Kumara	Dean - Faculty of Mgt and Finance
University of Kelaniya	Prof. S.P. Senanayake	Director - Centre for Quality Assurance
	Prof. Renuka Attanayake	Coordinator - PG Programme
	Dr. A.M. Tissa Amarakoon	Coordinator - PG Programme and Coordinator - FQAC
	Dr. A.M.I. Lakshan	Coordinator - PG Programme
	Dr. W.V.A.D. Karunarathne	Chairperson – MD Board of Study
	Dr. Namali Suraweera	Coordinator - LISC
	Ms. R.M.N. Sanjeewani	Member CRC- Faculty of Social Sciences
	Prof. K.L.M. Dharmasiri	Coordinator - Faculty of Social Sciences
University of Moratuwa	Mr. V. Sivahar	Director - Centre for Quality Assurance
	Prof. Y.G. Sandanayake	Professor - Faculty of Architecture
	Prof. Ajith de Alwis	Dean - Faculty of Graduate Studies
	Dr. K.A.S.N. Sumathipala	Senior Lecturer – Faculty of IT
	Dr. S. Gunatilake	Actg. Director - PG Studies-Faculty of Architecture
Wayamba University of Sri Lanka	Prof. K.P. Vidanapathirana	Senior Professor - Department of Electronics, Faculty of Applied Sciences
	Dr. W.A.S. Wijesinghe	Chairman - Senate Research & Higher Degrees Committee
Rajarata University of Sri Lanka	Dr. D.M.S. Duminda	Director - Centre for Quality Assurance
	Dr. D.M.C. Dassanayake	Coordinator - MBA Program
	Dr. W.H. Manoj Samarathunga	Coordinator - BBA Year I
	Mr. W.W.A.N. Sujeewa	Coordinator - BBA Year III
	Snr. Prof. P.A. Weerasinghe	Programme Director - PG Programme, Faculty of Agricultural Science
	Dr. H.M.P. Buddhika Ranaweera	Director - MBA Year I
Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka	Prof. H.A.D. Ruwandeepika	Director - Centre for Quality Assurance
	Prof. M. Esham	Chairperson - BoS in Agricultural Sciences
	Dr. Homindra Divithure	Chairperson - BoS in Geomatics
	Dr. G.R.S.R.C. Samaraweera	Chairperson, BoS in Social Sciences
	Prof. D.A. I. Dayaratne	Chairperson - BoS in Management

	Prof. B.T.G.S. Kumara	Chairperson - BoS in Computing and information Systems
	Dr. Nirosha Paranavitana	Chairperson - BoS in Humanities
	Dr. E.P.N. Udaya Kumara	Chairperson - BoS in Physical and Natural Sciences
	Dr. S. Jonition	Chairperson - BoS in Sport Science and Physical Education
	Dr. H.R.S. Bandara	Secretary - BoS in Geomatics
	Dr. A.W. Suraj Chandana	Secretary - BoS in Sports Science & Physical Education
	Dr. K.P.N. Jayasena	Secretary - BoS in Computing & Information Systems
	Prof. P.K. Dissanayake	Secretary - BoS in Agriculture
	Dr. L.M.C.S. Menike	Secretary - BoS in Management
	Mrs. T.P.N.T. Guruge	Asst. Registrar- Faculty of Graduate Studies
Eastern University of Sri Lanka	Dr. P. Elango	Director – Centre for Quality Assurance
	Prof. S. Arasaretnam	PG Coordinator - Science
	Mr. M. Rajendran	Head – Agric. Engineering
	Dr (Mrs.) Niranjana Rodney Fernando	Senior Lecturer Gr. I
	Mr. K. Mohanathasan	Senior Lecturer Gr. II
	Dr. P. Pretheeba	Senior Lecturer Gr. II
	Prof. Thayamini Seran	Postgraduate Coordinator
	Mrs. S. Maheswaran	Senior Lecturer Gr. I
	Prof. V. Inpamohan	Professor
	Dr. N. Varnakulendran	Senior Lecturer Gr. II
South Eastern University of Sri Lanka	Dr. M.I.S. Safeena	Director - Centre for Quality Assurance
	Prof. F.H. Abdul Rauf	Chairperson - Board of Study MBA
	Dr. K.M. Mubarak	Coordinator - PG Programme -FMC
	Ms. K.R.F. Seefa	Supportive staff - PG Programme
	Prof. M.A.M. Rameez	Lecturer- PG Programme
Uva Wellassa University of Sri Lanka	Dr. A.M.A.N.B. Attanayake	Director – Centre for Quality Assurance
	Prof. Dinesh P. Jayasena	Professor
	Dr. P.E. Kaliyadasa	Senior Lecturer Gr. I - Export Agriculture
Visual and Performing Arts University	Dr. Chinthaka Meddegoda	Director – Centre for Quality Assurance
	Dr. Tharanga Dandeniya	Head – Dept. Drama, Oriental Ballet & Modern Dance
The Open University of Sri Lanka	Prof. Nihal S Senanayake	Director – Centre for Quality Assurance
	Dr. F.M. Nawastheen	Senior Lecturer – Faculty of Education
	Mr. M.N.C. Fernando	Senior Lecturer – Faculty of Education
	Ms. Mihiri Jansz	Lecturer – Postgraduate Institute of English
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Appendix 04

List of Postgraduate Providers who Provided Feedback on Applicability of the Draft Manual

Name of the University	Name of the Postgraduate Provider
University of Colombo	Faculty of Graduate Studies
	Postgraduate Unit - Faculty of Law
	Postgraduate Programmes - Faculty of Medicine
	Sri Palee Campus
	Institute of Biochemistry, Molecular Biology and Biotechnology
	Faculty of Arts
	Faculty of Management & Finance
	Faculty of Technology
University of Peradeniya	Postgraduate Institute of Agriculture
	Postgraduate Institute of Science
	Postgraduate Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences
	Higher Degrees Committee - Faculty of Medicine
	Veterinary Postgraduate Education Unit
	Faculty of Management
University of Sri Jayewardenepura	Postgraduate Institute of Management
	Faculty of Graduate Studies
	Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce
University of Jaffna	Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce
University of Kelaniya	Faculty of Graduate Studies
Wayamba University of Sri Lanka	Faculty of Applied Sciences
Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka	Faculty of Graduate Studies
Uva Wellassa University of Sri Lanka	Post Graduate Unit
The Open University of Sri Lanka	Faculty of Education

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Glossary of Terms

Academic calendar	The schedule of planned events of an institution for the academic year giving details such as scheduled dates of re-opening for the academic year, commencement of semesters, holidays, examinations, release of results, convocation, etc.
Academic appeals	A procedure which allows students in certain circumstances to ask for a review of a decision relating to their academic progress or award.
Academic expertise	Intellectual skills on reasoning based on fundamentals/ concepts/ theories/ principles of subject areas acquired through studying, training, or practice in a university/ college / academy.
Academic quality	The overall level of performance of the academic unit in the context of its mission as measured by the extent of accomplishment of the unit's intended learning outcomes, operational outcomes and broad-based goals; describes how well the study programme is designed and administered, and learning opportunities available help students to achieve the intended learning outcomes and awards. It encompasses provision of relevant curricula, effective teaching, learning support, assessment and learning opportunities.
Academic standards	The level of achievement a student has to reach to gain an academic award.
Academic transcript	Documentation of a student's permanent academic record, which usually means all courses taken, all grades received, all honours received, and degree conferred to a student.
Access	The arrangements that an educational or training system makes with respect to entry requirements and provisions in order to offer greater opportunities for a much wider range of applicants in flexible terms than the traditional system.
Accreditation	Formal process of enquiry against a set of agreed criteria and standards/ benchmarks, undertaken by a formally constituted body and will lead, if successful, granting a formal status (i.e., an accredited institution or accredited programme or accredited degree).
Action plan	Description of specific activities related to short- and long-term strategic objectives including outcomes and outputs with detailed roadmap, planned milestones or key performance indicators, details of resource commitments and timelines.
Alumni	Former students who have graduated from the programme of study offered by the HEI.
Appeal mechanism	Documented procedure for dealing with challenges to a rule or decision, or for reviewing a judgment or decision made on behalf of the institution. This also includes the constitution, roles, responsibilities and ethical practices of the committees or authority established for the purpose.

Assessment	The measurement of aspects of a learner's performance in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes. It can be formal or informal and formative or summative.
Assessment Blueprinting	Mapping of the individual assessment items against intended learning outcomes of a study programme and allocating appropriate weightages to each assessment item, ensuring coverage of all aspects of the curriculum and educational domains by the assessment programme over a specified period of time.
Assessment Rubric	A scoring or grading tool that explicitly represents the performance expectations for each of the components/ dimensions of an assigned task at each level of mastery.
Assignments	Student-centred learning exercises given during a course at pre-determined intervals and according to defined criteria to achieve in fulfilment of assessment requirements. Work submitted by the learners may be assessed and feedback given.
Attestation of SLQF Level equivalence	Certification of the SLQF level equivalent. The process applicable to qualifications awarded for programmes of study designed and approved prior to the publication of SLQF 2015, or to programmes that are no longer offered. Such attestation confirms that such qualifications are academically equivalent to comparable SLQF-compliant qualifications.
Award	A certificate or title conferred by an academic institution signifying that the recipient has successfully completed a prescribed course of study that leads to a qualification such as a degree, diploma or certificate or other formal recognition.
Blended learning	A style of education in which students learn via electronic and online media as well as traditional face-to-face teaching.
Code of conduct	Expectations of behaviour mutually agreed upon by the institution and its constituent members.
Collaboration	The process by which people/organizations work together to accomplish a common mission.
Competencies	Ability to apply the relevant principles and techniques of a particular subject to practical situations.
Compliance	State of being in accordance with established guidelines, specifications, requirements or legislation.
Constructive Alignment	Alignment of the three basic areas of a curriculum, namely, the intended learning outcomes, respective teaching-learning activities and assessment activities. An essential step in developing an outcome-based curriculum.
Continuous improvement	A management process whereby the procedures, services, content, material, teaching-learning processes of study programmes are constantly evaluated in the light of their efficiency, effectiveness and flexibility, and appropriate and timely improvements are made on a continual basis to achieve the desired benchmark/ excellence.

Continuous quality improvement	A philosophy and process for analysing capabilities and processes and improving them on a continual basis to achieve the stated objectives and stakeholder satisfaction.
Counselling	The provision of academic, personal and emotional support and guidance to learners.
Course	A planned series of learning experiences in a particular subject/discipline offered by an institution; a self-contained, formally structured unit of a programme of study.
Coursework	Work performed by students or trainees for the purpose of learning. Coursework may be specified and assigned by teachers, or by learning guides. Coursework can encompass a wide range of activities, including practice, experimentation, research, and writing (e.g., assignments, project reports, dissertations, book reports, and essays) carried out either individually or in small groups.
Course completion rate	Percentage of students in the total enrolment for the course/programme who have satisfactorily completed the prescribed requirements of a given course/programme.
Course materials	Materials in print or in electronic format which are provided to the learner to support the achievement of the intended learning outcomes.
Course specification	An officially approved concise description of a course of study which specifies course objectives, intended learning outcomes, course content, teaching-learning and assessment details including constructive alignment, grading system, recommended readings and the information on the programme for which the course is prescribed, department responsible for offering it, and prior-learning requirements.
Credit	A unit used in the expression and calculation of the academic value/ volume of learning pertaining to the courses followed by a learner. The value of a credit is normally determined by the number of notional learning hours required to provide face to face instructions, assignments, practical, clinical, research and assessments, and self-study by students. According to Sri Lanka Qualification Framework, 1 credit is equivalent to 50 notional hours of learning.
Credit transfer	Procedure of granting credit to a student for educational experiences or courses undertaken at another institution. This not only facilitates smooth transfer of learners from one programme to another and from one institution to another nationally but also enables transnational mobility.
Curriculum	A standards-based sequence of planned experiences where students practice and achieve predefined learning outcomes to gain proficiency in content related to knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Curriculum is the central guide for all students and educators as to what is essential for teaching and learning, and assessment, so that every student achieves

	the core learning outcomes and content (including those related to research) through rigorous academic experiences.
Differently-abled students	Refer to Students with special needs.
Disclosure policy	Policy on the level of details of assessment outcomes that are made available to the students and other specified parties.
Distance education	An educational process and system in which all or a significant proportion of the teaching-learning is carried out by someone or something removed in space and time from the learner. Distance education requires structured planning, well-designed courses, special instructional techniques and methods of communication by electronic and other technology, as well as specific organizational and administrative arrangements.
Distance learning	A system and a process that connects learners to distributed learning resources. All distance learning, however, is characterized by separation/ distance of place and/or time between instructor and learner, amongst learners, and/or between learners and learning resources conducted through one or more media.
Drop out	A term used for learners who cease to be active in a particular programme/course.
Eligible examiners	Academics or professionals who meet the approved criteria for appointment as examiners for a specific programme or level of study.
Ethics	The practice of applying a mutually agreed code of conduct based on moral principles to the day-to-day actions of individuals or groups within any organization
Evaluation	A periodic assessment of the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness impact and/or sustainability of an activity or intervention.
External peer review	The process through which the study programmes/ universities/ HEIs are critically assessed by independent relevant individuals unconnected to both the decision-making body and those who have prepared the material being assessed.
External Quality Assurance (EQA)	Assessment performed by an organization external to the institution to assess the status and standards of operation of the institution or its programmes to see whether it meets the pre-determined standards/benchmarks.
Feedback mechanism	Systems for obtaining information from participants in a process that contributes to the assessment of its quality and effectiveness.
Formative assessment	Assessment of learning that is carried out during a course or a project, to provide feedback to students.
Generic skills	Skills that can be applied across a variety of subject domains; skills that are fundamental to a class of activities and are transferable from one job or activity to another. Lists of generic skills usually include basic/fundamental skills such as literacy, numeracy, analytical skills, technical

	skills, people-related skills, conceptual skills, life-long learning skills, innovative and entrepreneurial skills, entertainment skills etc.
Goal	A result, milestone or checkpoint which will indicate significant progress towards achieving the institutional mission at the end of any endeavour. A goal should be specific, measurable, critical for success and benchmarked.
Governance	Managing an organization based on pre-determined policy, rules, regulations and standards; providing leadership and standards, managing and coordinating the use of physical and human resources, effecting procedures and processes, in a transparent and efficient manner to successfully achieve the vision of the organization.
Grade sheet	A document where a student's grades are recorded.
Graduate attributes	The knowledge, skills and attitudes an academic community agrees that its students should develop during their time with the institution as a result of learning they engage with their programme of study. These attributes could be subject specific or generic and have the potential to outlast the contexts/ disciplinary boundaries in which they were originally acquired.
Graduate Profile	Description of the threshold (minimum) levels of knowledge, skills and attitudes that every graduate should achieve as a result of successful completion of a study programme. Graduate profiles are written at institutional and qualification level.
Grievance redressal	Mechanisms for receiving, processing and addressing dissatisfaction expressed, complaints and other formal requests made by learners, staff and other stakeholders on the institutional provisions promised and perceived.
Handbook	A publication produced by a Faculty/HEI for prospective students giving details about the institution, its resources, its programmes/course offered including and admission requirements, codes of conduct for students, by-laws relating to discipline, etc.; this may also be referred as Student handbook provided by an HEI for registered students of an institution containing information on all matters relevant to students for their academic progress in the institution.
Independent learning	Instructional system in which learners are encouraged to carry out their studies by themselves beyond the classroom instruction so as to prepare them for lifelong learning.
Independent study	Mode of learning in which learners work through their study materials independently of other learners.
Induction/ Orientation programme	The process by which learners are introduced to a new organization/ environment; the learners are informed of their responsibilities, commitments, the study programme, facilities provided, expected conduct and behaviour, etc.
Innovation	New knowledge/ technique/ tool generated through experimentation that will add value to product / tool /

	techniques or improve efficiency of a process/ technique/ service.
Inputs	Products, services and prepared materials used to produce the desired outcomes/outputs.
Institutionalization	Formalization or internalization or adoption of a practice/ guidelines/ values/ norms which would add value to the institutional procedures and practices.
Instructional design	The practice of systematically designing, developing and delivering instructional products and experiences, both digital and physical, in a consistent and reliable fashion toward an efficient, effective, appealing, engaging and inspiring acquisition of knowledge.
Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)	Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) define what a learner will have acquired and will be able to do upon successfully completing their studies. ILOs should be expressed from the students' perspective and are measurable, achievable and assessable. ILO is a generic term that can be used to represent programme learning outcomes (PLOs), course learning outcomes (CLOs) or lesson learning outcomes (LLOs).
Interdisciplinary	Integrating knowledge and methods from different disciplines, using a real synthesis of approaches.
Interdisciplinary study	An integrative approach in which information from more than one discipline is used in interpreting the content of a subject, phenomenon, theory or principle.
Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)	Internal system of monitoring to ensure that policies and mechanisms are in place and to make sure that it is meeting its own objectives and pre-determined standards.
Internal review	Internal assessment or review process commissioned regularly by HEIs to assure internalization of best practices and achieving the standards/ benchmarks with respect to its governance and management, and study programmes and allied activities.
Internalization	Refer to Institutionalization.
Language support services	Range of language related assistance provided to students to facilitate acquisition of skills in academic writing, verbal communication and learning required for the programme of study.
Learner-centred education	A system of education where the learner is at the centre of education with responsibility for learning while the teacher functions as the facilitator of learning.
Learner support	A supportive network of preparatory courses, skill development opportunities, personal and academic counselling to meet learner's needs through a flexible approach to resources including individualized support from the teacher/facilitator.
Learner support services	Physical and academic facilities made available to enable every learner to achieve the stated ILOs through online support, tutor support, library and information services, laboratories and administrative support.

Learning activities	Activities designed or deployed by the teacher to bring about, or create the conditions for learning (acquisition of new knowledge, skills or attitudes).
Learning environment	The place and setting where learning occurs. A virtual learning environment is one in which a student is provided with tools and resources to learn both independently and with a virtual cohort of learners.
Learning Management System (LMS)	A software application for the administration, documentation, tracking, reporting and delivery of electronic educational technology (also called e-learning) courses or training programs. Typically, a learning management system provides an instructor with a way to create and deliver content, monitor student participation, and assess student performance.
Learning outcomes	Statements of what a learner is expected to know and/or be able to do at the end of a period of learning.
Learning resources	The resources of the learning process which may be used by a learner (in isolation or with other learners) to facilitate learning.
Learning support materials	A variety of resources including teacher, student and/or commercially-made items used to facilitate learning.
Lifelong learning	A philosophical concept in which learning is viewed as a long-term process beginning at birth and lasting throughout life; a conceptual framework within which the learning needs of people of all ages, educational and occupational levels may be met, regardless of circumstances; a process of accomplishing personal, social and professional development throughout the lifespan of individuals by learning to enhance the quality of life.
Lifelong learning skills	Knowledge and skills which improve learners' competence and commitment at the time of learning and facilitate continuous learning throughout life.
Management Information System (MIS)	A computerized integrated information collection, collation, analysis and reporting system to support institutional management and decision-making processes.
Meritorious performance	Exceptionally good academic performance seldom equalled by peers or colleagues that warrants academic recognition.
Mission	The overall function or purpose of an institution.
Module	A separate and coherent block of learning; a self-contained, formally structured unit of a programme of study.
Monitoring	A management tool that operates during programme implementation to carry out a continuous or on-going collection and analysis of information about implementation, and to review programmes with a view to correcting problems as they arise.
Multidisciplinary	Individuals from different disciplines working together, each drawing on their disciplinary knowledge.
Needs analysis	A process of identifying the learning and training needs of a particular group or population.

Open and Distance Learning	A way of providing learning opportunities characterized by the separation of teacher and learner in time and/or place; learning that is certified in some way by an institution or agency; the use of a variety of media, including print and electronic; two-way communications that allow learners and tutors to interact; the possibility of occasional face to face meetings between tutor and learners; and a specialized division of labour in the production and delivery of courses.
Organizational chart / Organogram	A diagram that shows the structure of an organization and the relationships and relative ranks of its parts and positions/jobs.
Organizational structure	A framework that shows the divisions of an organization and reveals vertical responsibilities and horizontal linkages, and may be represented by an organization chart.
Orientation	A process through which a new student or employee is integrated into an institution, learning about its culture, policies and procedures, and the specific practicalities of his or her programme of study or job.
Outcome-Based Education (OBE)	A process that involves the restructuring of curriculum, assessment and reporting practices in education to reflect the achievement of high order learning and mastery rather than the accumulation of course credits. (Tucker, 2004).
Outputs	Products, materials, services or information arising out of a particular process.
Outreach	The provision of programmes, services, activities and /or expertise to those outside the traditional university community. Outreach is a one-way process in which the university is the provider either on a gratis basis or with an associated charge.
Outstanding performance	Extraordinary accomplishments of a staff member well beyond goals set for their role, as measured by results, consistent work quality, quantity and timeliness in all areas of responsibility.
Partner institutions/ organizations	Key institutions/organizations which are working in collaboration with the institution or programme under review to achieve a common goal or to improve performance.
Partnership/ alliance	A formal arrangement between two partners for a specific purpose; It is both a strategy and a formal relationship between the university and another major provider that engenders cooperation for the benefit of both parties and the student population at large.
Peer assessment	A method of assessment that is based on the consensus opinion of a peer group of learners on the respective contributions made to the work of the group by each individual.
Performance appraisal	A systematic assessment of an employee's performance in order to determine his/her achievement of assigned tasks, training needs, potential for promotion, eligibility for merit increment etc., and training needs to enhance performance.

Performance Indicators	Criteria used by educational institutions in self-evaluation and by external evaluators when judging the quality of educational provision.
Policy	A statement of principles or intentions which serve as continuing guidelines for management in accomplishing the institution's mission, goals and objectives.
Postgraduate Programme Management Unit (PGPMU)	Academic entity responsible for the delivery of the postgraduate study programme (Faculty/ Department/ Board of Study).
Postgraduate Programme Provider (PGPP)	Administrative entity responsible for the registration of the postgraduate (PGI/FGS/Faculty) or the Degree awarding entity (University/HEI).
Print media	Printed materials, as distinguished from broadcast or electronically transmitted communications.
Prior learning	What has been learnt by an individual prior to enrolment in a particular programme by means of knowledge or skills acquired in an educational institution or previous experience gained from a workplace.
Process	A set of interrelated work activities characterized by a set of specific inputs and activities to achieve specific outputs/tasks.
Professional body	An entity that is dedicated to the advancement of knowledge and practice of a profession through developing, supporting, regulating and promoting professional standards for technical and ethical competence; A group of people in a learned occupation who are entrusted with maintaining control or oversight of the legitimate practice of the occupation.
Programme	Structured teaching-learning opportunities which lead to an award; Refers to all activities that engage students in learning.
Programme Learning Outcomes	Programme Learning Outcomes (PLOs) describe the essential knowledge, skills and attitudes that the graduates of the programme should be able to demonstrate upon successfully completing the programme.
Programme of study	A stand-alone, officially approved curriculum (which includes course work or research) followed by a student, which leads to a qualification awarded by a higher education institution.
Programme specification	A general overview of the structure and other key aspects of the programme, including concise description of the programme with respect to its aims, objectives, intended learning outcomes, volume of learning in terms of credits, courses, course contents, recommended readings, teaching, learning assessment procedures, responsible department, grading system, learner support, entry requirements, fallback options, requirements for the award of the degree.
Progression	Vertical movement of learners from one level of education to the next higher level successfully or towards gainful employment.

Prospectus	A publication produced by an institution for prospective students giving details about itself, its programmes, courses and admission requirements.
Quality	The fitness for purpose of a product or service according to a set of required standards, with minimum cost to society.
Quality assessment	A process of evaluation of performance of an institution or its unit based on certain established criteria.
Quality Assurance	The policies and procedures by which the universities can guarantee with confidence and certainty that standard of its awards and quality of its education provision and knowledge generation are being maintained. It also refers to the process of maintaining standards reliably and consistently by applying criteria of success in a course, programme or institution.
Quality enhancement	Continuous institutional effort to achieve higher level of performance and quality that is understood to be reasonably better than which prevailed earlier. It is also defined as enhancing performance efficiency of a HEI/system.
Quality review (external)	A systematic, independent examination by a third party to determine whether the institutional practices with respect to its governance and management, physical and human resources, academic development and planning, academic programmes and courses, teaching and learning, and assessment, learner support services and other allied activities and provisions comply with predefined quality dimensions (i.e., criteria, best practices and standards).
Regulatory agencies	Government or quasi government agencies with responsibility for the overall planning and monitoring of the educational provision of institutions commonly under their purview.
Research	Rigorous intellectual activity which involves systematic investigation to generate new knowledge/ products/ services.
Research proposal specification	Officially approved research proposal which specifies the title, research overview, research context, significance, rationale, research objectives, research materials and methods, data collection and analysis methods, timeline, expected outputs (key performance indicators), and references.
Safe engagement	Means employed to protect students from physical or emotional injury while engaging in learning activities including research.
Safety guidelines	Rules that need to be followed by students during learning activities in the laboratory, studios or field to ensure protection from injury.
Self-appraisal	Individual's or institution's evaluation of own performance.
Self-assessment	A process in which learners answer questions or carry out prescribed activities to determine whether expected learning has occurred.

Self-Evaluation Report (SER)	A document prepared by the Faculty/ Institute providing a description and analysis with supporting evidence of the effectiveness with which the Faculty/Institute discharges its responsibility for academic standards and adherence to good practices in ensuring the quality of the study programme.
Sri Lanka Qualification Framework (SLQF)	A comprehensive document published by the Ministry of Higher Education, outlining a nationally consistent framework for all higher education qualifications offered in Sri Lanka, recognizing the volume of learning of students and identifying the learning outcomes that are to be achieved by qualification holders. Its objective is to have uniform system in naming a qualification, the designators, and qualifiers of each qualification awarded by HEIs in Sri Lanka.
Staff development	Skills development, refresher programmes or other training provided for staff within or outside the institution to enable them to continuously update their knowledge and skills for effective and efficient performance and career advancement.
Standards	Measurable indicators that provide the basis of comparison for making judgments concerning the performance of an instructional activity, programme or institution.
Standard Operational Procedures (SoPs)	Operational procedures developed and adopted by the governing authority/council of the Institution/higher educational institution by adhering to Acts, Ordinances, Circulars, Establishment Codes and letters issued by Parliament, Ministries and regulatory agencies, as the case may be, to guide the stakeholders to undertake their core functions; these are essential perquisites for ensuring good governance and management.
Statistical analysis	The use of statistical data including varying variables, entities, and events to determine probabilistic or statistical relationships in quantitative manner
Strategic plan	A specific and action-oriented, medium or long-term plan of the University/HEI to progress towards achieving a set of institutional goals as dictated by its mission and vision.
Student-Centred Learning (SCL)	Refer to Learner-centred education
Student Charter	Student Charter sets out the general principles of the partnership between students and the HEI. It applies to all registered students of the HEI following taught or research programmes, whether studying on or off campus. A student charter outlines values, principles, functions, responsibilities of the institution towards students and the students' responsibilities and codes of practices, and also the consequences of breach of discipline.
Student engagement	The degree of attention, curiosity, interest, optimism, and passion that students show when they are learning or being

	taught, which extends to the level of motivation they have to learn and progress in their education.
Student feedback	Gathering response/criticism from students at the end of a study program or an individual course unit for improving and refining the education that the HEI provides; the strategies for gathering feedback from students may range from informal discussions with students to the use of feedback forms containing a mix of free-responses and quantitative questions using Likert scales.
Student support services	Refer to Learner support services.
Students with special needs	Learners who require additional support or specialized services due to long- or short-term physical or mental impairment(s) that affect their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities.
Subject Benchmark Statement (SBS)	Reference point that provides a description of a particular subject/discipline describing its general academic characteristics and standards, and articulating the attributes that a graduate should be able to demonstrate. It describes expectations about standard of awards in a subject/discipline and what gives a subject/discipline its coherence and identity. Subject Benchmarks are used when developing or revising course syllabi.
Summative evaluation	Evaluation that occurs at the completion of a course or project, which provides a summary account of its effectiveness and the extent to which it meets its goals and objectives.
Tracer studies	Information gathering methods/ studies conducted by an HEI to evaluate the relevance of their educational programmes in terms of employability and professional development of its graduates; obtain information about the state of employment of former graduates, labour market signals, professional success for retrospective evaluation of study programmes, curricular development, continuing education etc.
Transparency	Openness and clearly assigned accountability in relation to institutional processes
Validation	Process of confirming appropriateness; determination of the effectiveness of instructional materials or system by the use of appropriate summative evaluation techniques.

Notes on Authors

Professor Emeritus E.R. Kalyani Perera is a former Senior Professor in Animal Science of the University of Peradeniya. During nearly 40 yearlong academic career with 34 years postgraduate teaching and research experience, she has published ~100 research articles, authored several book chapters, textbooks and a dictionary. Presently, she is a Council member of the University of Moratuwa, Senior Consultant of Matale City University and Academic consultant of Gampaha Wickramarachchi University. She has been involved in quality assurance activities since 2002, and trained many academics in quality assurance and curriculum development. She was Acting Director of the Quality Assurance Council of the University Grants Commission (2020-2021), National Quality Assurance Consultant of Universities (2012-2016), Quality Assurance Consultant of University of Sri Jayewardenepura (2017-2018), and a Council member of Uva Wellassa University (2019-2020). She has been involved in formulating Manuals for Institutional Review, Programme Review, External Degrees, Subject Benchmark Statements and Sri Lanka Qualification Framework.

Senior Professor Nilanthi de Silva is Vice-Chancellor of the University of Kelaniya, and Senior Professor of Parasitology in its Faculty of Medicine. She was Director of the Quality Assurance Council of the University Grants Commission (2018 - 2020) and Dean of the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Kelaniya (2012 - 2018). Prof de Silva is a specialist in Medical Parasitology, who has published more than 100 papers in scientific journals, and has an h-index of 31 on Google Scholar. She is an expert advisor to the World Health Organization on Medical Parasitology and Neglected Tropical Diseases. Prof. de Silva has had a long-standing interest in Quality Assurance in Higher Education. Her efforts to improve the education of health professionals led her to work with the Sri Lanka Medical Council to spearhead the development of nationally approved regulations for Minimum Standards for Medical Education.

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Dr. B.D. Nandadeva is a retired professor formerly affiliated to the University of Kelaniya. He earned his Ph.D. in Art Conservation Research from the University of Delaware, USA, M.SC. from the University of Moratuwa, a Graduate Diploma from the University of Canberra, Australia, and B.A. (Hons.) from the University of Ceylon. He has conducted research at the

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