ASEAN UNIVERSITY NETWORK QUALITY ASSURANCE

GUIDE TO AUN-QA ASSESSMENT AT PROGRAMME LEVEL VERSION 3.0

ASEAN University Network

AUN-QA
A Touch of Quality

ASEAN University Network

Guide to AUN-QA Assessment at Programme Level

Version 3.0

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- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nantana Gajaseni, Executive Director, ASEAN University Network (Chairperson)
- Dr. Choltis Dhirathiti, Deputy Executive Director, ASEAN University Network
- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Titi Savitri Prihatiningsih, MA, MMedEd, PhD, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia
- Prof. Dr. Wan Ahmad Kamil Mahmood, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Malaysia
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Foreword

AUN-QA Network is established as the ASEAN quality assurance network in higher education with the responsibility to promote quality assurance in higher education institutions, raise the quality of higher education, and collaborate with both regional and international bodies for the benefit of the ASEAN community.

Since the inception of the AUN-QA assessment at the programme level in 2007, more than 160 study programmes have been assessed by AUN-QA Network and AUN-QA members and associate members have benefited from the assessment.

In rising to the challenges of the ASEAN community, AUN-QA Network has to be bold and forward looking in advocating a harmonised framework for quality assurance in higher education within and outside ASEAN. To this end, AUN-QA Network has to ensure that its quality assurance framework and documentation remain relevant and current. This third version of the guidebook is the fruit of the documentation review by a team of experts from AUN-QA Network.

Lastly, I would like to acknowledge and express my sincere gratitude to Mr. Johnson Ong Chee Bin, AUN-QA Expert, for editing the guidebook, and to the members of the AUN-QA Council and the documentation review team for their contributions to the revision of the manual.

Assoc. Prof. Nantana Gajaseni, Ph.D.
Executive Director
ASEAN University Network

Preface

This guidebook is the third version of the **Guide to AUN-QA Assessment at Programme Level**. It documents the revised criteria and the process of AUN-QA assessment at programme level and provides associated resources including templates and samples in the appendices.

The guidebook is divided into four main sections:

1. **Introduction to AUN-QA Models.** This section gives an overview of the AUN-QA models.

2. **AUN-QA Model for Programme Level.** This section describes the AUN-QA model and associated criteria for programme level.

3. **Quality Assessment.** This section provides a step-by-step guide for conducting the AUN-QA assessment at programme level.

4. **Appendices.** This section contains the additional resources including checklist, templates and sample reports.

1. Introduction to AUN-QA Models

1.1 Quality Assurance (QA) in Higher Education

Quality in higher education is not a simple one-dimensional notion about academic quality. In view of the varied needs and expectations of stakeholders, quality in higher education can be said to be a multi-dimensional concept.

The World Declaration on Higher Education for the Twenty First Century: Vision and Action (October 1998), Article 11, Qualitative Evaluation considers quality in higher education as “a multi-dimensional concept, which should embrace all its functions, and activities; teaching and academic programmes, research and scholarship, staffing, students, buildings, facilities, equipment, services to the community and the academic environment. Internal self-evaluation and external review, conducted openly by independent specialists, if possible with international expertise, are vital for enhancing quality.”

To develop, implement, sustain and improve the level of quality in higher education, an institution needs to install a quality assurance system. The Regional Report of Asia and the Pacific (UNESCO, 2003b) defines quality assurance in higher education as “systematic management and assessment procedures to monitor performance of higher education institutions”.

1.2 AUN-QA Models

ASEAN University Network (AUN) recognises the importance of quality in higher education, and the need to develop a holistic quality assurance system to raise academic standards and enhance education, research and service among its member universities. In 1998, it mooted the AUN-QA Network which led to the development of AUN-QA models. Since then, the network has been promoting, developing, and implementing quality assurance practices based on an empirical approach where quality assurance practices are tested, evaluated, improved and shared. The evolution of AUN-QA Network and its development in quality assurance are depicted in Figure 1.1.

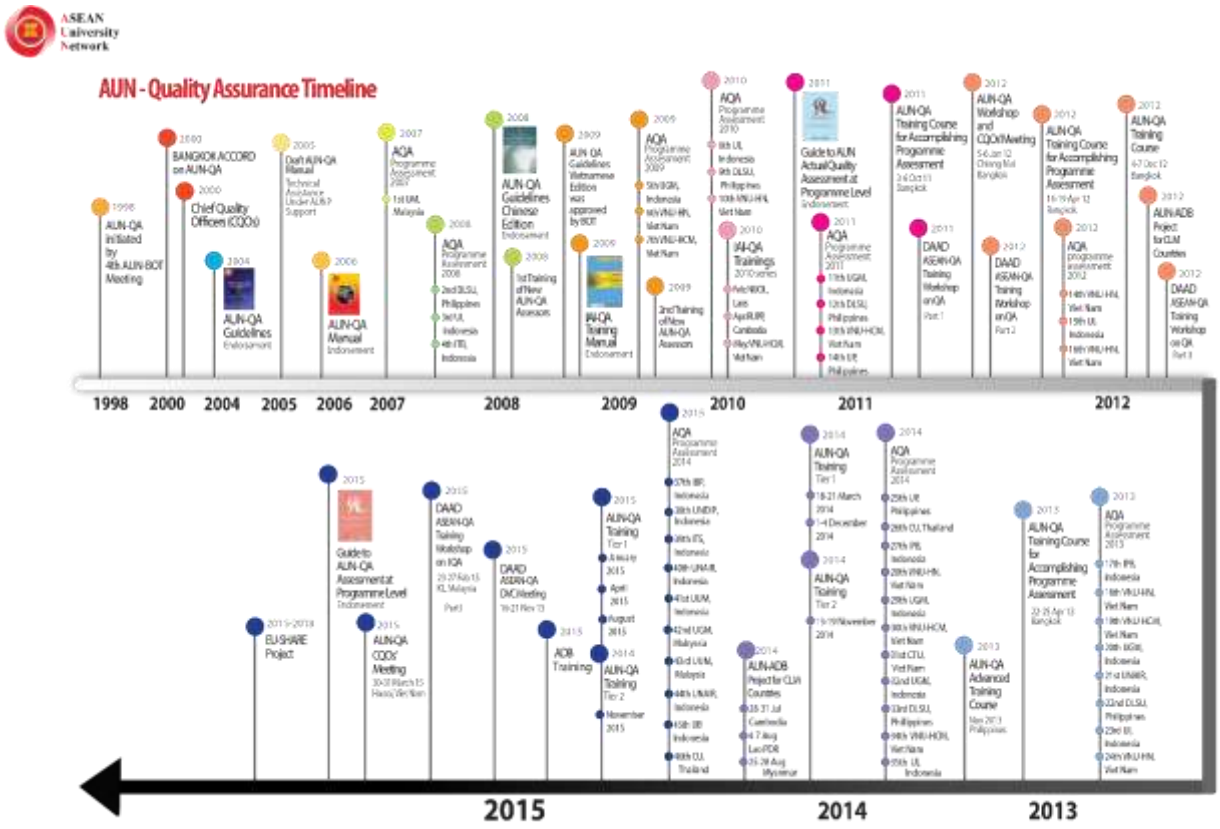

Figure 1.1 – Evolution of AUN-QA Network

The AUN-QA Models for higher education comprise strategic, systemic and tactical dimensions (see Figure 1.2) and are subjected to both internal and external QA assessment.

Figure 1.2 – AUN-QA Models for Higher Educatio

Internal QA ensures that an institution, system or programme has policies and mechanisms in place to make sure that it is meeting its own objectives and standards.

External QA is performed by an organisation or individuals outside the institution. The assessors evaluate the operation of the institution, system or programme in order to determine whether it meets the agreed upon or predetermined standards.

The AUN-QA models are applicable to the diverse universities in ASEAN which are also aligned to both regional and international quality assurance frameworks.

1.2.1 AUN-QA Model for Institutional Level

The strategic QA at institutional level encompasses 11 criteria as illustrated in Figure 1.3.

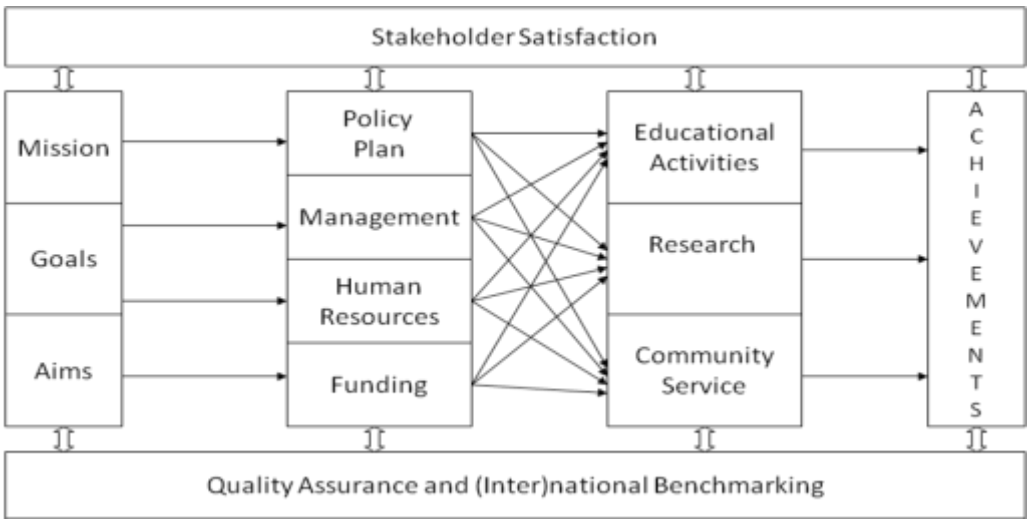

Figure 1.3 – AUN-QA Model for Institutional Level

Strategic QA at institutional level starts with the needs of the stakeholders which are translated into the university's vision, mission, goals and aims or objectives. This means that quality assurance and quality assessment will always start with the mission and goals (Column 1) and end with the achievements (column 4) to satisfy stakeholders' needs.

The second column shows how the university is planning to achieve the goals:

- translation of the goals into a policy document and policy strategy;
- management structure and management style of the university;
- human resource management: input of staff to achieve the goals; and
- funding to achieve the intended goals

The third column shows the core activities of a university:

- educational activities of teaching and learning
- research activities
- contribution to society and to the support and development of the community.

For continuous improvement, institutions should implement an effective QA system and benchmark their practices to achieve educational excellence.

1.2.2 AUN-QA Model for Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) System

The AUN-QA model for an IQA system (see Figure 1.4) consists of the following areas:

- internal quality assurance framework;
- monitoring instruments;
- evaluation instruments;
- special QA-processes to safeguard specific activities;
- specific QA-instruments; and
- follow-up activities for making improvements

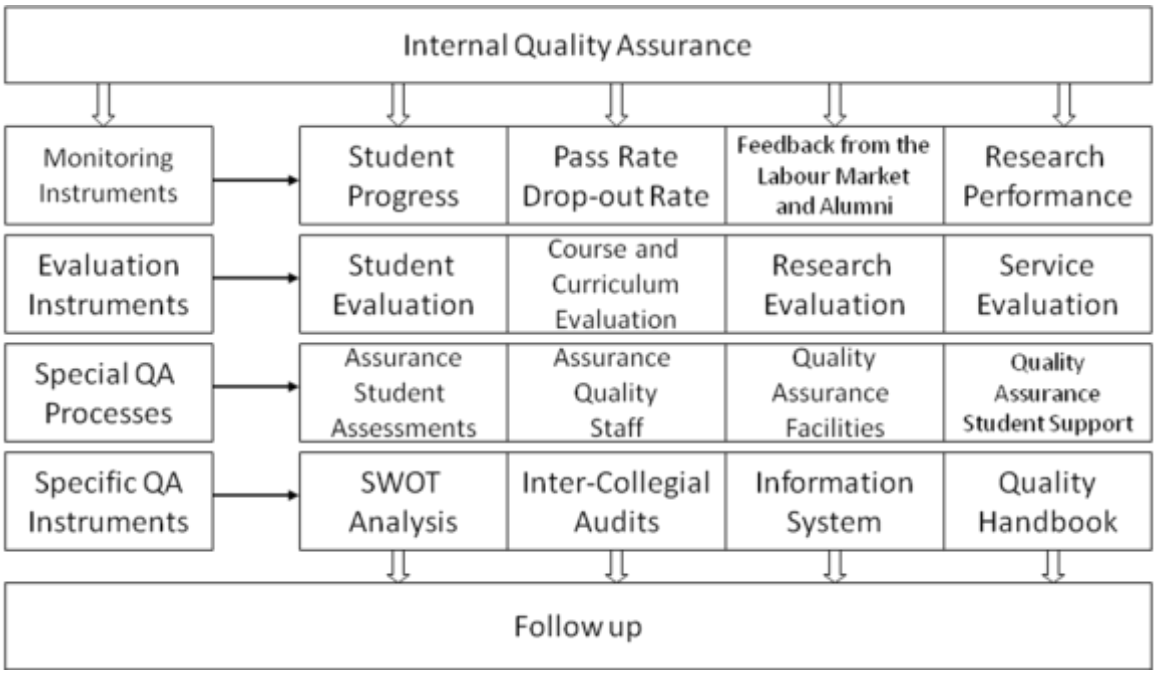

Figure 1.4 – AUN-QA Model for IQA System

An IQA system is the totality of systems, resources and information devoted to setting up, maintaining and improving the quality and standards of teaching, student learning experience, research, and service to the community. It is a system where the QA mechanisms are working to maintain and enhance the level of quality in higher education.

1.2.3 AUN-QA Model for Programme Level

The AUN-QA Model for programme level focuses on quality of educational activities with regard to the following dimensions:

- quality of input
- quality of process
- quality of output

The progression of the AUN-QA model for programme level from the first to the third version is documented in Figures 1.5, 1.6 and 1.7.

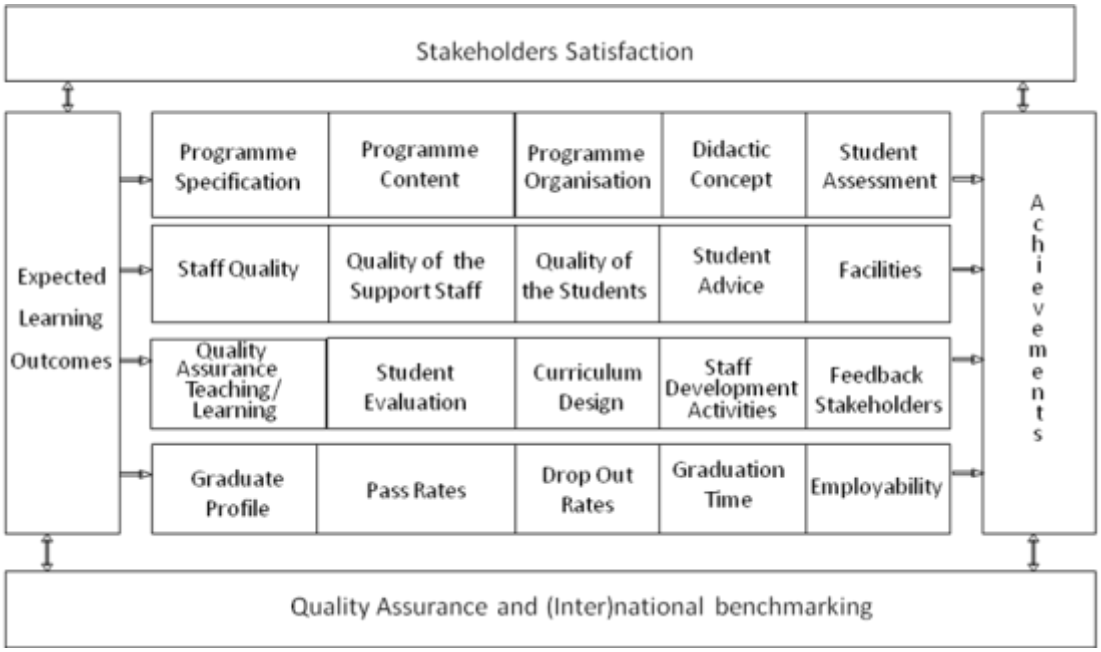

Figure 1.5 – AUN-QA Model for Programme Level (1st Version)

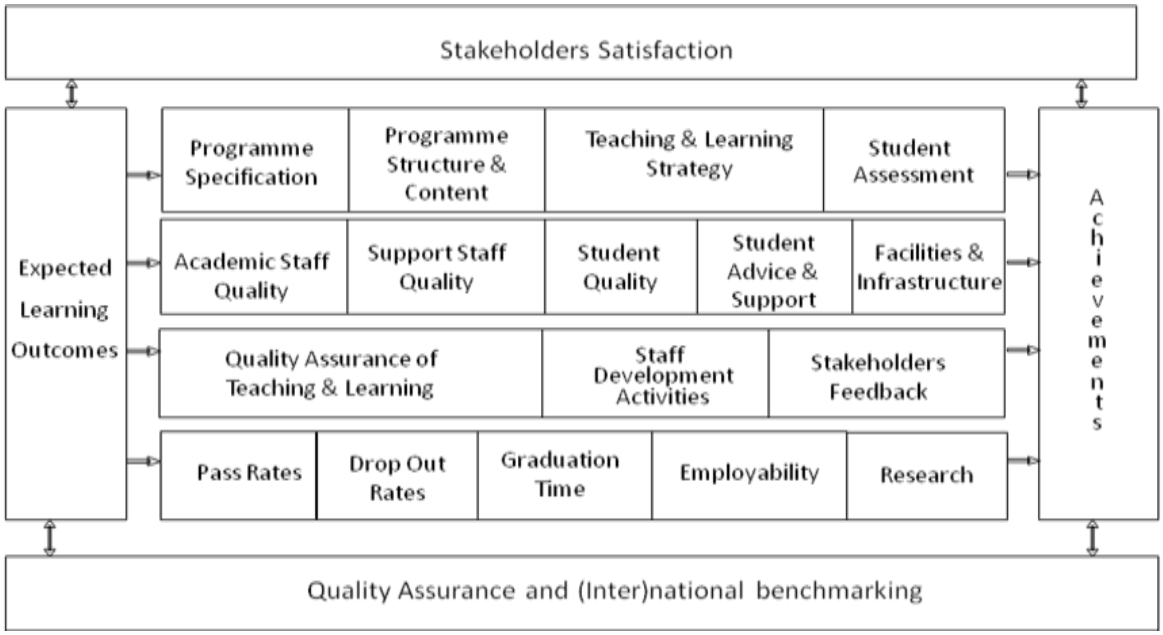

Figure 1.6 – AUN-QA Model for Programme Level (2nd Version)

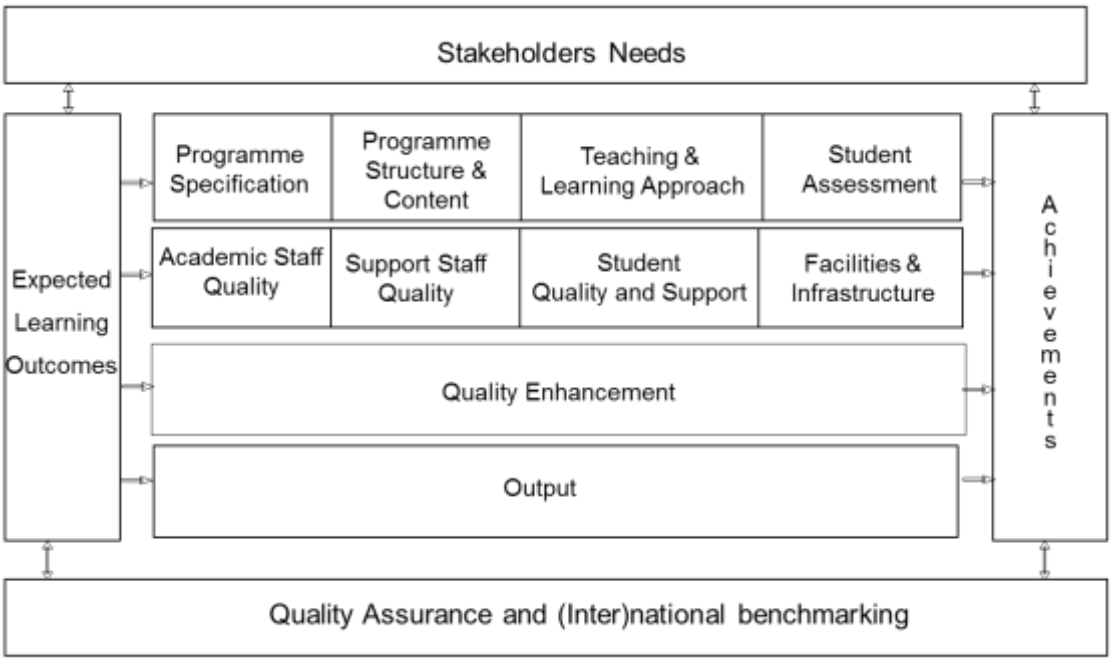

Figure 1.7 – AUN-QA Model for Programme Level (3rd Version)

The changes to AUN-QA criteria at programme level for 1st version, 2nd version and 3rd version are tabulated in Figure 1.8.

1st Version	2nd Version	3rd Version
1. Goals and Objectives; Expected Learning Outcomes	1. Expected Learning Outcomes	1. Expected Learning Outcomes
2. Programme Specification	2. Programme Specification	2. Programme Specification
3. Programme Content	3. Programme Structure and Content	3. Programme Structure and Content
4. Programme Organisation		
5. Didactic Concept and Teaching/ Learning Strategy	4. Teaching and Learning Strategy	4. Teaching and Learning Approach
6. Student Assessment	5. Student Assessment	5. Student Assessment
7. Staff Quality	6. Academic Staff Quality	6. Academic Staff Quality
8. Quality of Support Staff	7. Support Staff Quality	7. Support Staff Quality
9. Student Quality	8. Student Quality	8. Student Quality and Support
10. Student Advice and Support	9. Student Advice and Support	
11. Facilities and Infrastructur	10. Facilities and Infrastructure	9. Facilities and Infrastructure
12. Quality Assurance of Teaching/Learning Process	11. Quality Assurance of Teaching and Learning Process	10. Quality Enhancement
13. Student Evaluation		
14. Curriculum Design		
15. Staff Development Activities	12. Staff Development Activities	6. Academic Staff Quality 7. Support Staff Quality
16. Feedback Stakeholders	13. Stakeholders Feedback	10. Quality Enhancement
17. Output	14. Output	11. Output
18. Stakeholders Satisfaction	15. Stakeholders Satisfaction	

Figure 1.8 – Changes to AUN-QA Criteria at Programme Level

2. AUN-QA Model for Programme Level

The 3rd version of the AUN-QA model for programme level (see Figure 2.1) starts with stakeholders needs. These needs are formulated into the expected learning outcomes which drive the programme (1st Column). There are four rows in the middle of the model and the first row addresses the question of how the expected learning outcomes are translated into the programme; and how they can be achieved via teaching and learning approach and student assessment.

The second row considers the "input" into the process including academic and support staff; student quality and support; and facilities and infrastructure.

The third row addresses the quality enhancement of the programme covering curriculum design and development, teaching and learning, student assessment, quality of support services and facilities, and stakeholders' feedback.

The fourth row focuses on the output of the programme including pass rates and dropout rates, the average time to graduate, employability of the graduates, research activities and stakeholders' satisfaction.

The final column addresses the achievements of the expected learning outcomes and the programme.

The model ends with the fulfilment of stakeholders' needs and the continuous improvement of the quality assurance system and benchmarking to seek best practices.

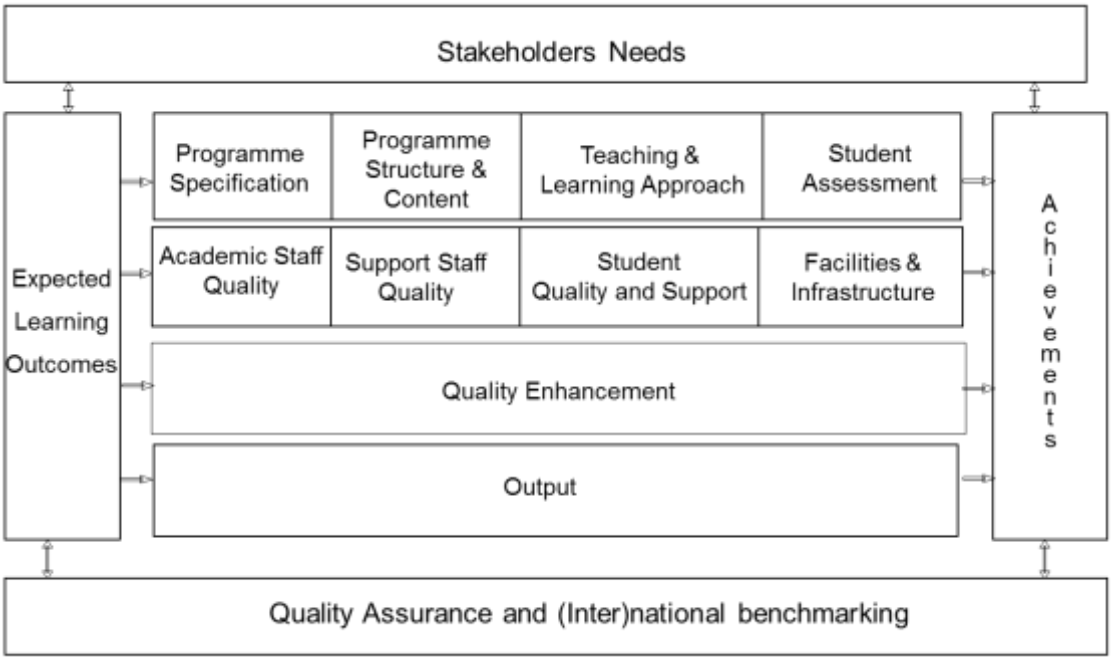

Figure 2.1 – AUN-QA Model for Programme Level (3rd Version)

The 3rd version of the AUN-QA model for programme level encompasses the following 11 criteria:

1. Expected Learning Outcomes
2. Programme Specification
3. Programme Structure and Content
4. Teaching and Learning Approach
5. Student Assessment
6. Academic Staff Quality
7. Support Staff Quality
8. Student Quality and Support
9. Facilities and Infrastructure
10. Quality Enhancement
11. Output

The requirements of each AUN-QA criterion are given in a box. To facilitate implementation and assessment of each criterion, the list of statements of each criterion is translated into sub-criterion listed in the checklist. The number in brackets [ ] in the sub-criterion indicates the corresponding statement(s) in the box. Explanation of key concepts in the criterion is given, where applicable. Diagnostic questions and sources of evidence are listed to help practitioners to discover their QA practices. The complete checklist for AUN-QA Assessment at programme level is documented in Appendix A.

The relationship of the 11 AUN-QA criteria is tabulated in Figure 2.2 below.

AUN-QA Criterion	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1	1.1 1.2 1.3	2.1 2.2	3.1 3.2	4.2 4.3	5.1 5.3	6.4				10.1 10.3	11.5
2	1.1 1.2	2.1 2.2 2.3	3.1 3.2 3.3	4.2	5.1 5.2 5.3	6.4		8.4			11.5
3	1.1 1.2	2.1 2.2 2.3	3.1 3.2 3.3	4.2 4.3	5.1 5.2 5.3	6.4				10.2 10.3	11.5
4	1.1 1.2	2.1 2.2	3.1 3.2	4.1 4.2 4.3	5.1	6.4		8.5	9.1 9.2 9.3 9.4	10.3	11.5
5	1.1 1.2	2.1 2.2 2.3	3.1 3.2	4.1 4.2	5.1 5.2 5.3 5.4 5.5	6.4		8.3 8.4 8.5		10.3	11.5
6	1.1 1.2 1.3	2.3	3.1 3.2 3.3	4.1 4.2 4.3	5.1 5.2 5.3 5.4	6.1 6.2 6.3 6.4 6.5 6.6 6.7		8.3 8.4	9.1 9.2 9.3 9.4	10.1 10.3 10.4 10.6	11.4 11.5
7							7.1 7.2 7.3 7.4 7.5	8.5	9.1 9.2 9.3 9.4 9.5	10.1 10.5 10.6	11.5
8		2.3		4.1 4.2 4.3	5.2 5.3 5.4 5.5	6.4	7.3 7.5	8.1 8.2 8.3 8.4 8.5	9.1 9.2 9.3 9.4 9.5	10.1 10.3 10.4 10.5 10.6	11.4 11.6
9				4.2 4.3		6.7	7.1 7.2 7.3 7.4 7.5	8.5	9.1 9.2 9.3 9.4 9.5	10.5 10.6	11.4 11.5
10	1.3		3.1 3.2 3.3	4.1 4.2 4.3	5.1 5.2 5.3 5.4 5.5	6.7	7.3	8.3 8.4 8.5	9.1 9.2 9.3 9.4 9.5	10.1 10.2 10.3 10.4 10.5 10.6	11.5
11	1.3	2.3	3.3	4.2 4.3	5.2 5.4 5.5	6.1 6.2 6.3 6.4 6.5 6.6	7.2 7.3 7.4 7.5	8.3 8.4 8.5	9.1 9.2 9.3 9.4 9.5	10.5 10.6	11.1 11.2 11.3 11.4 11.5

Figure 2.2 - Relationship of AUN-QA Criteria

2.1 Expected Learning Outcomes

AUN-QA Criterion 1

1. *The formulation of the expected learning outcomes takes into account and reflects the vision and mission of the institution. The vision and mission are explicit and known to staff and students.*
2. *The programme shows the expected learning outcomes of the graduate. Each course and lesson should clearly be designed to achieve its expected learning outcomes which should be aligned to the programme expected learning outcomes.*
3. *The programme is designed to cover both subject specific outcomes that relate to the knowledge and skills of the subject discipline; and generic (sometimes called transferable skills) outcomes that relate to any and all disciplines e.g. written and oral communication, problem-solving, information technology, teambuilding skills, etc.*
4. *The programme has clearly formulated the expected learning outcomes which reflect the relevant demands and needs of the stakeholders.*

AUN-QA Criterion 1 – Checklist

1	**Expected Learning Outcomes**	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.1	The expected learning outcomes have been clearly formulated and aligned with the vision and mission of the university [1,2]							
1.2	The expected learning outcomes cover both subject specific and generic (i.e. transferable) learning outcomes [3]							
1.3	The expected learning outcomes clearly reflect the requirements of the stakeholders [4]							
	Overall opinion							

Explanation

Outcomes-based education (OBE) can be described as a way in which curriculum is defined, organised and directed based on all the things that learners would learn and demonstrate successfully when they complete the study programme. The focus of OBE is on the results of learning, where the knowledge, skills and attitudes including habits of mind, the learners are expected to learn are clearly identified and expressed as expected learning outcomes.

The expected learning outcomes, which are formulated from the needs of the stakeholders, form the starting point of the programme design. Learning outcomes are concerned with the achievements of the learner rather than the intentions of the teacher, which are often written as aims, goals or objectives of the programme.

Learning outcomes should be written in a way where learning is translated into observable and measurable results which can be demonstrated and assessed.

Diagnostic Questions

- What is the purpose of the study programme?
- What are the expected learning outcomes?
- How are the expected learning outcomes formulated?
- Do the learning outcomes reflect the vision and mission of the university, faculty or department?
- Does the labour market set any specific requirements for graduates to meet?
- To what extent is the content of the programme tuned to the labour market?
- Is there a well-defined job profile?
- How are the learning outcomes made known to staff and students?
- Are the learning outcomes measurable and achievable? How?
- To what extent have the learning outcomes been achieved?
- Are learning outcomes being reviewed periodically?
- How are the learning outcomes translated into concrete requirements of the graduate (i.e. knowledge, skills and attitudes including habits of mind)?

Sources of Evidence

- Programme and course specifications
- Course brochure and prospectus or bulletin
- Skills matrix
- Stakeholders' input
- University and faculty websites
- Curriculum review minutes and documents
- Accreditation and benchmarking reports

2.2 Programme Specification

AUN-QA Criterion 2

1. *The Institution is recommended to publish and communicate the programme and course specifications for each programme it offers, and give detailed information about the programme to help stakeholders make an informed choice about the programme.*
2. *Programme specification including course specifications describes the expected learning outcomes in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes. They help students to understand the teaching and learning methods that enable the outcome to be achieved; the assessment methods that enable achievement to be demonstrated; and the relationship of the programme and its study elements.*

AUN-QA Criterion 2 – Checklist

2	**Programme Specification**	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.1	The information in the programme specification is comprehensive and up-to-date [1, 2]							
2.2	The information in the course specification is comprehensive and up-to-date [1, 2]							
2.3	The programme and course specifications are communicated and made available to the stakeholders [1, 2]							
	Overall opinion							

Explanation

Programme specification is a set of documents that describes the study programme offered by the university. The programme specification usually encompasses the following items:

- a summary of programme aims and intended outcomes;
- an outline of the course structure;
- a matrix showing how the programme learning outcomes are achieved through the courses; and
- a set of course specifications

The programme specification serves:

- as a source of information for students and potential students seeking to understand a programme;
- as a source of information for employers, particularly on the knowledge and transferable skills developed by the programme;
- professional and statutory regulatory bodies that accredit higher education programmes which can lead to entry into a profession or other regulated occupations. Programme specification should identify those aspects of the programme that are designed to meet the requirements of the relevant bodies;
- institutional and teaching teams to promote discussion and reflection on new and existing programmes and to ensure that there is common understanding on the expected learning outcomes of the programme. Programme specification should enable institutions to satisfy themselves that the designers of the programme are clear about their expected learning outcomes and that these outcomes can be achieved and demonstrated. Programme specification can serve as a reference point for internal review and monitoring of a programme's performance;
- as a source of information for academic reviewers and external examiners who need to understand the aim and intended outcomes of a programme; and
- as a basis for gaining feedback from students or recent graduates on the extent to which they perceived the opportunities for learning to be successful in promoting the intended outcomes.

The information to be included in the programme specification is listed below.

- Awarding body/institution
- Teaching institution (if different)
- Details of the accreditation by a professional or statutory body
- Name of the final award
- Programme title
- Expected Learning outcomes of the programme
- Admission criteria or requirements to the programme
- Relevant subject benchmark statements and other external and internal reference points used to provide information on programme outcomes
- Programme structure and requirements including levels, courses, credits, etc.
- Date on which the programme specification was written or revised

The information to be included in the course specification is listed below.

- Course title
- Course requirements such as pre-requisite to register for the course, credits, etc.
- Expected learning outcomes of the course in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes
- Teaching, learning and assessment methods to enable outcomes to be achieved and demonstrated
- Course description and outline or syllabus
- Details of student assessment
- Date on which the course specification was written or revised.

Diagnostic Questions

- Are the expected learning outcomes translated into the programme and its courses?
- What information is documented in the programme and course specifications?
- Is the course specification standardised across the programme?
- Is the programme specification published and made available or known to stakeholders?
- What is the process for reviewing the programme and course specifications?

Sources of Evidence

- Programme and course specifications
- Course brochure and prospectus or bulletin
- Skills matrix
- Stakeholders' input
- University and faculty websites
- Curriculum review minutes and documents
- Accreditation and benchmarking reports

2.3. Programme Structure and Content

AUN-QA Criterion 3

1. *The curriculum, teaching and learning methods and student assessment are constructively aligned to achieve the expected learning outcomes.*
2. *The curriculum is designed to meet the expected learning outcomes where the contribution made by each course in achieving the programme's expected learning outcomes is clear.*
3. *The curriculum is designed so that the subject matter is logically structured, sequenced, and integrated.*
4. *The curriculum structure shows clearly the relationship and progression of basic courses, the intermediate courses, and the specialised courses.*
5. *The curriculum is structured so that it is flexible enough to allow students to pursue an area of specialisation and incorporate more recent changes and developments in the field.*
6. *The curriculum is reviewed periodically to ensure that it remains relevant and up-to-date.*

AUN-QA Criterion 3 – Checklist

3	**Programme Structure and Content**	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.1	The curriculum is designed based on constructive alignment with the expected learning outcomes [1]							
3.2	The contribution made by each course to achieve the expected learning outcomes is clear [2]							
3.3	The curriculum is logically structured, sequenced, integrated and up-to-date [3, 4, 5, 6]							
	Overall opinion							

Explanation

The curriculum should be designed so that the teaching and learning methods and student assessment support the achievement of the expected learning outcomes. Biggs (2003) refers to this process as "constructive alignment". "Constructive" refers to the concept that students construct meaning through relevant learning activities; and "alignment" refers to the situation when teaching and learning activities and student assessment are aligned to achieve the expected learning outcomes. Constructive alignment of any course involves:

- defining expected learning outcomes that are measurable;
- selecting teaching and learning methods that are likely to ensure that the expected learning outcomes are achieved; and
- assessing how well the students have achieved the expected learning outcomes as intended.

Diagnostic Questions

- Do the contents of the programme reflect the expected learning outcomes?
- How are the courses in the programme structured so that there is coherence and a seamless relationship of the basic and specialised courses such that the curriculum can be viewed as a whole?
- Has a proper balance been struck between specific and general courses?
- How is the content of the programme kept up-to-date?
- Why was this programme structure chosen?
- Has the educational programme been changed structurally over recent years? If so, why?
- Does the programme promote diversity, student mobility and/or cross-border education?
- Is the relation between basic courses, intermediate courses and specialised courses in the compulsory section and the optional section logical?
- What is the duration of the programme?
- What is the duration and sequence of each course? Is it logical?
- What benchmarks are used in designing the programme and its courses?
- How are teaching and learning methods and student assessment selected to align with the expected learning outcomes?

Sources of Evidence

- Programme and course specifications
- Brochure, prospectus or bulletin
- Curriculum map
- Skills matrix
- Stakeholders' input and feedback
- University and faculty websites
- Curriculum review minutes and documents
- Accreditation and benchmarking reports

2.4. Teaching and Learning Approach

AUN-QA Criterion 4

1. *The teaching and learning approach is often dictated by the educational philosophy of the university. Educational philosophy can be defined as a set of related beliefs that influences what and how students should be taught. It defines the purpose of education, the roles of teachers and students, and what should be taught and by what methods.*
2. *Quality learning is understood as involving the active construction of meaning by the student, and not just something that is imparted by the teacher. It is a deep approach of learning that seeks to make meaning and achieve understanding.*
3. *Quality learning is also largely dependent on the approach that the learner takes when learning. This in turn is dependent on the concepts that the learner holds of learning, what he or she knows about his or her own learning, and the strategies she or he chooses to use.*
4. *Quality learning embraces the principles of learning. Students learn best in a relaxed, supportive, and cooperative learning environment.*
5. *In promoting responsibility in learning, teachers should:*
   a. *create a teaching-learning environment that enables individuals to participate responsibly in the learning process; and*
   b. *provide curricula that are flexible and enable learners to make meaningful choices in terms of subject content, programme routes, approaches to assessment and modes and duration of study.*
6. *The teaching and learning approach should promote learning, learning how to learn and instil in students a commitment of lifelong learning (e.g. commitment to critical inquiry, information-processing skills, a willingness to experiment with new ideas and practices, etc.).*

AUN-QA Criterion 4 – Checklist

4	**Teaching and Learning Approach**	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.1	The educational philosophy is well articulated and communicated to all stakeholders [1]							
4.2	Teaching and learning activities are constructively aligned to the achievement of the expected learning outcomes [2, 3, 4, 5]							
4.3	Teaching and learning activities enhance life-long learning [6]							
	Overall opinion							

Explanation

In line with the overarching purpose of higher education in fostering holistic education of students, quality learning results in students acquiring the following skills:

- *The ability to discover knowledge for oneself.* Learners have research skills and the ability to analyse and synthesise the material they gather. Learners understand various learning strategies and can choose the most appropriate for the task at hand.
- *The ability to retain knowledge long term.* An approach to learning that emphasizes construction of meanings rather than memorising facts for greater retention.
- *The ability to perceive relations between old knowledge and new.* Quality learning is always trying to bring information from various resources together.
- *The ability to create new knowledge.* Quality learners discover what others have learnt and documented, perceiving the relations between that knowledge and their own experiences and previous learning to develop new insights.
- *The ability to apply one's knowledge to solve problems.*
- *The ability to communicate one's knowledge to others.* Quality learners form and substantiate independent thought and action in a coherent and articulated fashion.
- *An eagerness to know more.* Quality learners are lifelong learners.

Conditions necessary for quality learning are:

- Quality learning occurs when learners are ready – in cognitive and emotional terms – to meet the demands of the learning task
- Quality learning occurs when learners have a reason for learning
- Quality learning occurs when learners explicitly relate previous knowledge to new
- Quality learning occurs when learners are active in the learning process
- Quality learning occurs when the learning environment offers adequate support for learners.

There is no single teaching and learning method that is valid for all situations. Thought must be given to the teaching and learning approach behind the curriculum.

Diagnostic Questions

- Is there an explicit educational philosophy shared by all staff members?
- Is diversity of learning environment promoted including exchange programme?
- Is teaching provided by other departments satisfactory?
- Are the teaching and learning methods used aligned with the expected learning outcomes?
- How is technology used in teaching and learning?
- How is the teaching and learning approach evaluated? Do the chosen methods fit into the learning outcomes of the courses? Is there sufficient variety in the methods?
- Are there any circumstances that prevent these desired teaching and learning methods from being used (number of students, infrastructure, teaching skills, etc.)?

If research is a core activity for the university:

- When do students come into contact with research for the first time?
- How is the interrelationship between education and research expressed in the programme?
- How are research findings applied in the programme?

If practical training and/or community service is a specific aspect of the teaching and learning approach:

- Is practical training a compulsory or optional part of the programme?
- How many credits are allocated to these activities?
- Is the level of the practical training and/or community service satisfactory?
- What benefits do communities gain from the service provided by the programme?
- What benefits do employers and students gain from the practical training?
- Are there any bottlenecks in the practical training? If so, what causes them?
- How are students being coached?
- How is the assessment done?

Sources of Evidence

- Educational philosophy
- Evidence of action learning such as project, practical training, assignment, industrial attachment, etc.
- Student feedback
- Online learning portal
- Programme and course specifications
- Internship reports
- Community involvement
- Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

2.5 Student Assessment

AUN-QA Criterion 5

1. *Assessment covers:*
   - *New student admission*
   - *Continuous assessment during the course of study*
   - *Final/exit test before graduation*
2. *In fostering constructive alignment, a variety of assessment methods should be adopted and be congruent with the expected learning outcomes. They should measure the achievement of all the expected learning outcomes of the programme and its courses.*
3. *A range of assessment methods is used in a planned manner to serve diagnostic, formative, and summative purposes.*
4. *The student assessments including timelines, methods, regulations, weight distribution, rubrics and grading should be explicit and communicated to all concerned.*
5. *Standards applied in assessment schemes are explicit and consistent across the programme.*
6. *Procedures and methods are applied to ensure that student assessment is valid, reliable and fairly administered.*
7. *The reliability and validity of assessment methods should be documented and regularly evaluated and new assessment methods are developed and tested.*
8. *Students have ready access to reasonable appeal procedures.*

AUN-QA Criterion 5 – Checklist

5	**Student Assessment**	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.1	The student assessment is constructively aligned to the achievement of the expected learning outcomes [1, 2]							
5.2	The student assessments including timelines, methods, regulations, weight distribution, rubrics and grading are explicit and communicated to students [4, 5]							
5.3	Methods including assessment rubrics and marking schemes are used to ensure validity, reliability and fairness of student assessment [6, 7]							
5.4	Feedback of student assessment is timely and helps to improve learning [3]							
5.5	Students have ready access to appeal procedure [8]							
	Overall opinion							

Explanation

Student assessment is one of the most important elements of higher education. The outcomes of such assessment have a profound effect on students' future careers. It is therefore important that assessment is carried out professionally at all times and takes into account the extensive knowledge that exists on testing and examination processes. Assessment also provides valuable information for institutions about the efficiency of teaching and learner support. Student assessment is expected to:

- be designed to measure the achievement of the expected learning outcomes;
- be fit for purpose, whether diagnostic, formative or summative; have clear and published grading and marking criteria;
- be undertaken by people who understand the role of assessment in the students' progression towards achieving the knowledge and skills associated with their intended qualification; where possible, not relying on the evaluation of one single examiner;
- take account of all the possible consequences of examination regulations;
- have clear regulations covering student absence, illness and other mitigating circumstances;
- ensure that assessment is conducted securely in accordance with the institution's stated procedures;
- be subjected to administrative verification in ensuring the effectiveness of the procedures.
- inform students about the assessment being used for their programme, what examinations or other assessment methods they will be subjected to, what will be expected of them, and the criteria that will be applied to the assessment of their performance.

Diagnostic Questions

- Is entry assessment done on new students?
- Is exit assessment done on departing (graduating) students?
- To what extent do the assessment and examinations cover the content of the courses and programme? To what extent do the assessment and examinations cover the objectives of the courses and of the programme as a whole?
- Is the assessment criterion-referenced?
- Is a variety of assessment methods used? What are they?
- Are the pass/fail criteria clear?
- Are the assessment/examination regulations clear?
- Are any safeguards in place to ensure objectivity?
- Are the students satisfied with the procedures? What about complaints from students?
- Do clear rules exist for re-assessment and are students satisfied with these?

A special form of student assessment is the final project (dissertation, thesis or project). This requires students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills and their ability to manipulate the knowledge in a new situation.

- Do clear regulations exist for the final project?
- What criteria have been formulated to assess the final project?
- What does the preparation for producing the final project involve (in terms of content, methods, and skills)?
- Is the level of the final project satisfactory?
- Do any bottlenecks exist for producing final project? If so, why?
- How are students being coached?

Sources of Evidence

- Samples of in-course assessment, project work, thesis, final examination, etc.
- Rubrics
- Marking scheme
- Moderation process
- Appeal procedure
- Programme and course specifications
- Examination regulations

2.6 Academic Staff Quality

AUN-QA Criterion 6

1. *Both short-term and long-term planning of academic staff establishment or needs (including succession, promotion, re-deployment, termination, and retirement plans) are carried out to ensure that the quality and quantity of academic staff fulfil the needs for education, research and service.*
2. *Staff-to-student ratio and workload are measured and monitored to improve the quality of education, research and service.*
3. Competences of academic staff are identified and evaluated. *A competent academic staff will be able to:*
   - *design and deliver a coherent teaching and learning curriculum;*
   - *apply a range of teaching and learning methods and select most appropriate assessment methods to achieve the expected learning outcomes;*
   - *develop and use a variety of instructional media;*
   - *monitor and evaluate their own teaching performance and evaluate courses they deliver;*
   - *reflect upon their own teaching practices; and*
   - *conduct research and provide services to benefit stakeholders*
4. *Recruitment and promotion of academic staff are based on merit system, which includes teaching, research and service.*
5. *Roles and relationship of academic staff members are well defined and understood.*
6. *Duties allocated to academic staff are appropriate to qualifications, experience, and aptitude.*
7. *All academic staff members are accountable to the university and its stakeholders, taking into account their academic freedom and professional ethics.*
8. *Training and development needs for academic staff are systematically identified, and appropriate training and development activities are implemented to fulfil the identified needs.*
9. *Performance management including rewards and recognition is implemented to motivate and support education, research and service.*
10. *The types and quantity of research activities by academic staff are established, monitored and benchmarked for improvement.*

AUN-QA Criterion 6 – Checklist

6	**Academic Staff Quality**	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.1	Academic staff planning (considering succession, promotion, re-deployment, termination, and retirement) is carried out to fulfil the needs for education, research and service [1]							
6.2	Staff-to-student ratio and workload are measured and monitored to improve the quality of education, research and service [2]							
6.3	Recruitment and selection criteria including ethics and academic freedom for appointment, deployment and promotion are determined and communicated [4, 5, 6, 7]							
6.4	Competences of academic staff are identified and evaluated [3]							
6.5	Training and developmental needs of academic staff are identified and activities are implemented to fulfil them [8]							
6.6	Performance management including rewards and recognition is implemented to motivate and support education, research and service [9]							
6.7	The types and quantity of research activities by academic staff are established, monitored and benchmarked for improvement [10]							
	Overall opinion							

Explanation

Academic staff is the single most important learning resource available to most students. It is important that those who teach have a full knowledge and understanding of the subject they are teaching, have the necessary skills and experience to communicate their knowledge and understanding effectively to students in a range of teaching contexts, and can access feedback on their own performance.

The quality of an institution not only depends on the quality of the programmes but also the quality of the academic staff. The quality of academic staff encompasses qualification, subject matter expertise, experience, teaching skills and professional ethics. The academic staffing covers full-time and part-time professors, lecturers, and visiting teaching staff. Besides the quality of academic staff, the institution has to determine the quantity of academic staff required to meet the demands and needs of the students and the institution. Often full-time equivalent (FTE) and staff-to-student ratio are used to determine the size of the academic staff.

Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)

In calculating the FTEs of academic staff, institutions should define what constitutes full-time student loads and faculty teaching loads including part-time students and faculty at their percentage of full time loads.

There are different ways in calculating FTEs and institutions should state the method, parameters and assumptions used. One of the methods to calculate FTEs is based on the investment of time. For example, if 1 FTE is equal to 40 hours per week (full-time employment), then the FTE of an academic staff member with a teaching load of 8 hours per week will be 0.2 (i.e. 8/40). The investment of time method can also be used for calculating FTEs of student. For example, if 1 FTE student has to attend 20 hours of lesson a week, then the FTE of a part-time student with 10 hours of lesson a week will be 0.5 (i.e. 10/20).

Another method to calculate FTEs is based on teaching load. For example, if the official full-time teaching load of an academic staff is 4 courses per semester, then each course accounts for 0.25 FTE. If an academic staff member is assigned 2 courses per semester, then the FTE will be 0.5 (i.e. 2 x 0.25 FTE). Similarly, student study load can be used to calculate the FTEs of student. For example, if 1 FTE student has to take 24 credits load per semester, then the FTE of a student with 18 credits load per semester will be 0.75 (i.e. 18/24).

Use Figure 2.3 to specify the number of academic staff and their FTEs in the last 5 academic years.

Category	M	F	Total		Percentage of PhDs
			Headcounts	FTEs	
Professors					
Associate/ Assistant Professors					
Full-time Lecturers					
Part-time Lecturers					
Visiting Professors/ Lecturers					
Total					

Figure 2.3 - Number of Academic Staff (specify reference date and method of calculation used for FTE of academic staff)

Staff-to-student Ratio

This indicator is the ratio 1 FTE academic staff member employed to the number of FTE students enrolled. The aim is to give an idea of how much contact time and academic support students at the institution may expect to receive. Specify the staff-to-student ratio in the last 5 academic years as per Figure 2.4.

Academic Year	Total FTEs of Academic Staff	Total FTEs of students	Staff-to-student Ratio

Figure 2.4 – Staff-to-student Ratio (specify the method of calculation used for FTE of students)

Research Activities

Research is an important output from academic staff. The types of research activities (such as publications, consulting work, projects, grants, etc.) carried out by academic staff should meet the requirements of the stakeholders. Provide data on the types and number of research publications in the last 5 academic years as in Figure 2.5.

Academic Year	Types of Publication				Total	No. of Publications Per Academic Staff
	In-house/ Institutional	National	Regional	International		

Figure 2.5 - Types and Number of Research Publications

Diagnostic Questions

Academic Staff:

- Are academic staff members competent and qualified for their jobs?
- Are the competencies and expertise of the academic staff adequate for delivering the programme?
- What are the challenges institutions meet or encounter with regards to human resources, such as age distribution, difficulties in filling vacancies or in attracting qualified academic staff? How do institutions handle these challenges?
- How many Master's and PhD degree holders are there among the academic staff?
- What policy is pursued with regard to the employment of academic staff, both in teaching and research?
- Is conscious effort made to involve professors in mentoring and/or training junior/new academic staff?
- Is a policy in place with regard to the involvement in seminars, supervision of final papers, practical training or internship?
- Are academic staff members satisfied with the teaching loads?
- Is the staff-to-student ratio satisfactory?
- What is the accountability of academic staff in terms of roles, responsibilities, academic freedom, and professional ethics?
- What types of research activities are carried out by academic staff? Are these activities aligned to the vision and mission of the university and faculty?
- What is the level of research grants and how is it utilised?
- What is the number of research papers published? Are the research papers published in national, regional and international journals?

Staff Management :

- How is manpower planning of academic staff carried out?
- Does the department have a clearly formulated staff management structure?
- Are recruitment and promotion criteria of academic staff established?
- Is there a performance management system?
- What is the succession plan for key appointment holders?
- What is the career development plan for academic staff?
- Are academic staff members satisfied with the HR policy?
- What is the future development of HR policy for academic staff?
- How academic staff members are prepared for the teaching task?
- Is the teaching delivered by the academic staff supervised and assessed?

Training and Development:

- Who is responsible for academic staff training and development activities?
- What are the training and development process and plan? How are training needs identified?

- Does the training and development plan reflect the university and faculty mission and objectives?
- Is there a system to develop strategic and technical competencies of academic staff?
- What are the training hours and number of training places for academic staff per year?
- What percentage of payroll or budget is allocated for training of academic staff?

Sources of Evidence

- Manpower plan
- Faculty distribution in terms of age, gender, expertise, etc.
- Career and succession plans
- Recruitment criteria
- Staff qualifications
- Training needs analysis
- Training and development plan and budget
- Peer review and appraisal system
- Student feedback
- Award and recognition schemes
- Staff workload
- Organisation chart
- HR policies
- Staff handbook
- Job description
- Employment contract
- Research and publication data
- National and/or professional licence/certificate

2.7 Support Staff Quality

AUN-QA Criterion 7

1. *Both short-term and long-term planning of support staff establishment or needs of the library, laboratory, IT facility and student services are carried out to ensure that the quality and quantity of support staff fulfil the needs for education, research and service.*
2. *Recruitment and selection criteria for appointment, deployment and promotion of support staff are determined and communicated. Roles of support staff are well defined and duties are allocated based on merits, qualifications and experiences.*
3. *Competences of support staff are identified and evaluated to ensure that their competencies remain relevant and the services provided by them satisfy the stakeholders' needs.*
4. *Training and development needs for support staff are systematically identified, and appropriate training and development activities are implemented to fulfil the identified needs.*
5. *Performance management including rewards and recognition is implemented to motivate and support education, research and service.*

AUN-QA Criterion 7 – Checklist

7	**Support Staff Quality**	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7.1	Support staff planning (at the library, laboratory, IT facility and student services) is carried out to fulfil the needs for education, research and service [1]							
7.2	Recruitment and selection criteria for appointment, deployment and promotion are determined and communicated [2]							
7.3	Competences of support staff are identified and evaluated [3]							
7.4	Training and developmental needs of support staff are identified and activities are implemented to fulfil them [4]							
7.5	Performance management including rewards and recognition is implemented to motivate and support education, research and service [5]							
	Overall opinion							

Explanation

Programme quality depends mostly on interaction between staff and students. However, academic staff cannot perform their roles well without the quality of services provided by the support staff. These are the support staff members who manage the libraries, laboratories, computer facilities and student services.

Use Figure 2.6 to specify the number of support staff available in the last 5 academic years.

Support Staff	Highest Educational Attainment				Total
	High School	Bachelor's	Master's	Doctoral	
Library Personnel					
Laboratory Personnel					
IT Personnel					
Administrative Personnel					
Student Services Personnel (enumerate the services)					
Total					

Figure 2.6 - Number of Support Staff (specify reference date)

Diagnostic Questions

Support Staff:

- Are the support staff members competent and qualified for their jobs?
- Are the competencies and expertise of the support staff adequate?
- What difficulties are there in attracting qualified support staff?
- What policy is pursued with regard to the employment of support staff?
- Are support staff members satisfied with their roles?

Staff Management:

- How manpower planning of support staff is carried out?
- Are recruitment and promotion criteria of support staff established?
- Is there a performance management system?
- What is the career development plan for support staff?

Training and Development:

- Who is responsible for support staff training and development activities?
- What are the training and development process and plan? How are training needs identified?
- Is there a system to develop technical competencies of support staff?
- What are the training hours and number of training places for support staff per year?
- What percentage of payroll or budget is allocated for training of support staff?

Sources of Evidence

- Manpower plan
- Career plans
- Recruitment criteria
- Staff qualifications
- Training needs analysis
- Training and development plan and budget
- Performance appraisal system
- Student feedback
- Award and recognition schemes
- Organisation chart
- HR policies
- Staff handbook
- Job description
- Employment contract

2.8 Student Quality and Support

AUN-QA Criterion 8

1. *The student intake policy and the admission criteria to the programme are clearly defined, communicated, published, and up-to-date.*
2. *The methods and criteria for the selection of students are determined and evaluated.*
3. *There is an adequate monitoring system for student progress, academic performance, and workload. Student progress, academic performance and workload are systematically recorded and monitored, feedback to students and corrective actions are made where necessary.*
4. *Academic advice, co-curricular activities, student competition, and other student support services are available to improve learning and employability.*
5. *In establishing a learning environment to support the achievement of quality student learning, the institution should provide a physical, social and psychological environment that is conducive for education and research as well as personal well-being.*

AUN-QA Criterion 8 – Checklist

8	**Student Quality and Support**	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8.1	The student intake policy and admission criteria are defined, communicated, published, and up-to-date [1]							
8.2	The methods and criteria for the selection of students are determined and evaluated [2]							
8.3	There is an adequate monitoring system for student progress, academic performance, and workload [3]							
8.4	Academic advice, co-curricular activities, student competition, and other student support services are available to improve learning and employability [4]							
8.5	The physical, social and psychological environment is conducive for education and research as well as personal well-being [5]							
	Overall opinion							

Explanation

The quality of the output depends a lot on the quality of the input. This means that the quality of the entering students is important.

Student intakes:
- Give a summary of the intake of first year students using Figure 2.7.
- Give a summary of the total number of students enrolled in the programme using Figure 2.8.

Academic Year	Applicants		
	No. Applied	No. Offered	No. Admitted/Enrolled

Figure 2.7 - Intake of First-Year Students (last 5 academic years)

Academic Year	Students					
	1st Year	2nd Year	3rd Year	4th Year	>4th Year	Total

Figure 2.8 - Total Number of Students (last 5 academic years)

Diagnostic Questions

Student Quality:

- How are student intakes monitored and analysed?
- How are students selected?
- What policy is pursued with regard to the intake of students? Does it aim to increase the intake or to stabilise it? Why?
- What measures are taken to influence the quality and the size of the intake? What effect do these measures have?
- How does the programme take into account the level of achievement of entering students?

Student Study Load and Performance:

- Does the department have a credit points system? How are credits calculated?
- Is the study load divided equally over and within the academic years?
- Can an average student complete the programme in the planned time?
- What are the indicators used to monitor student progress and performance?

Student Support:

- Does the department have a monitoring system for recording study progress and following graduates (for example, tracer surveys)?
- How is the data of the monitoring system used?
- What role do academic staff members play in informing and coaching students and integrating them into the programme?
- How are students informed about their study plans?
- Is special attention paid to coaching of first year students and underperformed students? If so, how does it work?
- Is specific support given to provide study skills for students with problems?
- Is separate attention paid to coaching of advanced students?
- Is assistance given in completing the final project? Where can students who get stuck with their practical training or final project get help?
- How are students advised on problems concerning course options, change of options, interruption or termination of studies?
- How is information provided to students on career prospects?
- Are the reasons examined for students who take longer than expected to complete the programme?
- Are students satisfied with the support services available?

Sources of Evidence

- Student selection process and criteria
- Trend of student intakes
- Credit system
- Student workload
- Student performance reports
- Participation in academic and non-academic activities, extracurricular activities, competition, etc.
- Mechanisms to report and feedback on student progress
- Provision of student support services at university and faculty level
- Coaching, mentoring and counselling schemes
- Student feedback and course evaluation

2.9 Facilities and Infrastructure

AUN-QA Criterion 9

1. *The physical resources to deliver the curriculum, including equipment, materials and information technology are sufficient.*
2. *Equipment is up-to-date, readily available and effectively deployed.*
3. *Learning resources are selected, filtered, and synchronised with the objectives of the study programme.*
4. *A digital library is set up in keeping with progress in information and communication technology.*
5. *Information technology systems are set up to meet the needs of staff and students.*
6. *The institution provides a highly accessible computer and network infrastructure that enables the campus community to fully exploit information technology for teaching, research, services and administration.*
7. *Environmental, health and safety standards and access for people with special needs are defined and implemented.*

AUN-QA Criterion 9 – Checklist

9	**Facilities and Infrastructure**	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9.1	The teaching and learning facilities and equipment (lecture halls, classrooms, project rooms, etc.) are adequate and updated to support education and research [1]							
9.2	The library and its resources are adequate and updated to support education and research [3, 4]							
9.3	The laboratories and equipment are adequate and updated to support education and research [1, 2]							
9.4	The IT facilities including e-learning infrastructure are adequate and updated to support education and research [1, 5, 6]							
9.5	The standards for environment, health and safety; and access for people with special needs are defined and implemented [7]							
	Overall opinion							

Explanation

The provision of facilities and infrastructure should be in line with the objectives of the programme. Facilities are also connected to the teaching and learning approach. For example, if the approach is to teach in small working groups, then flexible classroom arrangement should be made available. Learning resources such as computers, e-learning portals, library resources, etc. should be adequately provided to meet the needs of students and staff.

Diagnostic Questions

- Are there enough lecture-halls, seminar rooms, laboratories, reading rooms, and computer rooms available? Do they meet the needs of students and staff?
- Is the library sufficiently equipped for education and research?
- Is the library accessible and within easy reach (location, opening hours)?
- Are there sufficient laboratory facilities including support staff?
- Do the laboratories meet the relevant requirements?
- Are sufficient teaching aids and tools available to students and staff?
- What hardware and software are made available to meet the needs of education and research?
- To what extent do the facilities and infrastructure promote or obstruct the delivery of the programme?
- Is the total budget for teaching aids and tools sufficient?
- How are the facilities and infrastructure being maintained?

Sources of Evidence

- List of facilities, equipment, computer hardware and software, etc.
- Facilities booking, utilisation rates, downtime/uptime, operating hours
- Maintenance plan
- New facilities and upgrading plans
- Safety, health and environmental policy
- Emergency plan
- Student and staff feedback
- Budgets for facilities and infrastructure

2.10 Quality Enhancement

AUN-QA Criterion 10

1. *The curriculum is developed with inputs and feedback from academic staff, students, alumni and stakeholders from industry, government and professional organisations.*
2. *The curriculum design and development process is established and it is periodically reviewed and evaluated. Enhancements are made to improve its efficiency and effectiveness.*
3. *The teaching and learning processes and student assessment are continuously reviewed and evaluated to ensure their relevance and alignment to the expected learning outcomes.*
4. *Research output is used to enhance teaching and learning.*
5. *Quality of support services and facilities (at the library, laboratory, IT facility and student services) is subject to evaluation and enhancement.*
6. *Feedback mechanisms to gather inputs and feedback from staff, students, alumni and employers are systematic and subjected to evaluation and enhancement.*

AUN-QA Criterion 10 – Checklist

10	**Quality Enhancement**	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10.1	Stakeholders' needs and feedback serve as input to curriculum design and development [1]							
10.2	The curriculum design and development process is established and subjected to evaluation and enhancement [2]							
10.3	The teaching and learning processes and student assessment are continuously reviewed and evaluated to ensure their relevance and alignment [3]							
10.4	Research output is used to enhance teaching and learning [4]							
10.5	Quality of support services and facilities (at the library, laboratory, IT facility and student services) is subjected to evaluation and enhancement [5]							
10.6	The stakeholder's feedback mechanisms are systematic and subjected to evaluation and enhancement [6]							
	Overall opinion							

Explanation

Quality enhancement in higher education refers to the improvement of:

- students' knowledge, skills and attitudes or competencies;
- students' learning environment and opportunities; and
- quality of an institution or a programme.

Quality enhancement is a planned initiative that is implemented for the purpose of quality assurance and improvement. It is the continuous search for improvement and best practices.

The confidence and trust of students and other stakeholders in higher education are established and maintained through effective and efficient quality assurance and enhancement activities which ensure that programmes are well-designed, regularly monitored and periodically reviewed, thereby securing their continuing relevance and currency.

The quality assurance and enhancement of programmes are expected to include:

- formulation of expected learning outcomes;
- curriculum design and development process;
- teaching and learning approach and student assessment;
- support resources, facilities and services;
- research application; and
- stakeholders' feedback mechanisms

Diagnostic Questions

Curriculum Design and Evaluation:

- Who is responsible for designing the curriculum?
- How are academic staff and students involved in the curriculum design?
- What are the roles of the stakeholders in the design and review of the curriculum?
- How do curriculum innovations come about? Who takes the initiative? On the basis of what signals?
- Who is responsible for implementing the curriculum?
- When designing curriculum, is benchmarking with other institutions done?
- In which international networks does the department participate?
- With which institutions abroad do student exchanges take place?
- Has the programme been recognised abroad?
- Is a structured quality assurance in place?
- Who are involved in internal and external quality assurance?
- Is there a curriculum committee? What is its role?
- Is there an examination committee? What is its role?
- How are the programme and its courses evaluated?
- Is the evaluation done systematically?
- How is research output applied to teaching and learning?
- How are students involved in evaluating the curriculum and courses?
- How and to whom are the evaluation results made known?
- What actions are taken to improve the curriculum and its design process?

Feedback Mechanisms:

Mechanisms such as surveys, questionnaires, tracer study, focus group discussions, dialogues, etc. are often used to gather inputs and feedback from stakeholders.

- What feedback mechanisms are used to gather inputs and feedback from staff, students, alumni and employers?
- Is the way to gather feedback from stakeholders structured and formal?
- How is the quality of support services and facilities evaluated?
- How is feedback analysed and used for improvement?

Sources of Evidence

- Curriculum design, review and approval process and minutes
- Stakeholders input
- QA of assessment and examination
- External examiners
- Local and international benchmarking
- Programme and course feedback
- Uses of feedback for improvement
- Sample of feedback questionnaire
- Reports from surveys, focus group, dialogue, tracer study, etc.

2.11 Output

AUN-QA Criterion 11

1. *The quality of the graduates (such as pass rates, dropout rates, average time to graduate, employability, etc.) is established, monitored and benchmarked; and the programme should achieve the expected learning outcomes and satisfy the needs of the stakeholders.*
2. *Research activities carried out by students are established, monitored and benchmarked; and they should meet the needs of the stakeholders.*
3. *Satisfaction levels of staff, students, alumni, employers, etc. are established, monitored and benchmarked; and that they are satisfied with the quality of the programme and its graduates.*

AUN-QA Criterion 11 – Checklist

11	**Output**	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11.1	The pass rates and dropout rates are established, monitored and benchmarked for improvement [1]							
11.2	The average time to graduate is established, monitored and benchmarked for improvement [1]							
11.3	Employability of graduates is established, monitored and benchmarked for improvement [1]							
11.4	The types and quantity of research activities by students are established, monitored and benchmarked for improvement [2]							
11.5	The satisfaction levels of stakeholders are established, monitored and benchmarked for improvement [3]							
	Overall opinion							

Explanation

In assessing the quality assurance system, institutions not only have to evaluate the quality of the process, but also the quality of output and its graduates. In evaluating the quality of the graduates, institutions have to monitor the achievement of the expected learning outcomes, pass rates and dropout rates, the average time to graduation and the employability of graduates. Research is another important output from the process. The types of research activities carried by students should meet the requirements of the stakeholders.

After analysing the input, process and output, institutions have to analyse the satisfaction of its stakeholders. There should be a system to collect and measure stakeholders' satisfaction. The information collected should be analysed and benchmarked for making improvements to the programme, quality practices and quality assurance system.

Pass Rate and Dropout Rate

Provide information on the pass rates and dropout rates of the last 5 cohorts in Figure 2.9.

Academic Year	Cohort Size	% completed first degree in			% dropout during			
		3 Years	4 Years	>4 Years	1st Year	2nd Year	3rd Year	4th Years & Beyond

Figure 2.9 - Pass Rates and Dropout Rates (last 5 cohorts)

Diagnostic Questions

Pass Rates and Dropout Rates:

- Does the institution have an efficient system to monitor pass rates and dropout rates of students?
- What does the department think of the pass rates? If not satisfactory, what measures have been taken to improve the pass rates?
- How high is the dropout rate? Are there explanations for the dropout rate?
- Does the department know where the dropout students are going?

Average Time to Graduation:

- What does the department think of the average time to graduate?
- What measures have been taken to promote graduation and to shorten the average time to graduate?
- What effect do these measures have?

Quality of Graduates:

- Is the quality of the graduate satisfactory?
- Do the achieved standards match the expected standards?
- Do graduates get jobs easily? What are the career prospects of graduates over the last few years?

Employability of Graduates:

- What percentage of graduates found a job within six months of graduation over the past five years? What percentage of graduates found a job within a year?
- What percentage of graduates is still unemployed 1 year after graduation?

Research:

- What types of research activities are carried out by students? Are these activities aligned to the expected learning outcomes and the vision and mission of the university and faculty?

Stakeholders' Satisfaction:

Staff:

- What mechanisms are available to staff to express their satisfaction or dissatisfaction about the programme, resources, facilities, processes, policies, etc.?
- What indicators are used to measure and monitor the satisfaction level of staff?
- What initiatives are carried out to raise the satisfaction level of staff? Are they effective?

Students:

- Does the department know what students think about the courses, programme, teaching, examinations, etc.?
- How does the department cope with the feedback and complaints from students?

Alumni (Graduates):

- What is the opinion and feedback of the graduates about the competencies that they acquired?
- How is the feedback from the alumni used to improve the programme?

Labour market:

- Are employers satisfied with the quality of the graduates?
- Are there any specific complaints about the graduates?
- Are specific strengths of the graduates appreciated by the employers?

Sources of Evidence

- Process and indicators for measuring stakeholders' satisfaction
- Stakeholders' satisfaction trends
- Graduates, alumni and employers surveys
- Press reports
- Employment surveys
- Employment statistics
- Employers feedback

3. Quality Assessment

3.1 Introduction to Quality Assessment

Assessment can be defined as a general term that embraces all methods used to judge the performance of an individual, group or organisation. Self-assessment is the process of critically reviewing the quality of one's own performance at institutional, system or programme level.

Quality assessment in higher education, therefore, can be defined as a diagnostic review and evaluation of teaching, learning, and outcomes based on a detailed examination of curricula, structure, resources and effectiveness of the institution, system or programme. It aims to determine if the institution, system or programme meets generally accepted quality standards.

3.2 Function and Principles of Quality Assessment

Self-assessment is introduced in higher education together with external assessment, accreditation or quality audits. In many cases, self-assessment serves as preparation for a site visit by external experts and the self-assessment report (SAR) provides the external experts with the basic information about the institution, programme and quality assurance system. It also provides an opportunity for the institution and its staff to discover the quality of its quality assurance system.

An effective self-assessment is time-consuming as it requires effort and time from staff. However, the gains from a good self-assessment are valuable. It gives information and facts about the quality assurance system and provides a platform for stakeholders to discuss issues on the quality of education.

The fundamental principles describe in the ISO 19011 standard are relevant to self-assessment and AUN-QA assessment: Three of the principles that relate to the conduct of the assessors are:

- Ethical conduct – the foundation of professionalism;
- Fair presentation – the obligation to report truthfully and accurately; and
- Due professional care – the application of diligence and judgment to assessment.

Two other principles that relate to the assessment process are:

- Independence – the basis for the impartiality and objectivity of the assessment conclusions; and
- Evidence – the rational basis for reaching reliable and reproducible assessment conclusions in a systematic assessment process. Evidences are based on records and statements of fact or information which are relevant to the assessment criteria and are verifiable.

Adherence to these fundamental principles is a prerequisite for providing a reliable and relevant assessment process and outcome.

The following considerations should be made before carrying out a self-assessment:

- Management must fully support the self-assessment and provide access to relevant information that is needed for an effective quality assurance system. The self-assessment serves to acquire structural insight into the operation and performance of the institution;
- Gaining management support to carry out a self- assessment is not enough. The whole organisation has to prepare itself for the self-assessment. Assessing quality is more than evaluating the performance of a programme; it is also about developing and shaping the institution. Staff members should be made responsible for the quality and all staff should be involved in the self-assessment.
- Writing a critical self-evaluation of the quality assurance system demands good organisation and coordination. Primarily, someone has to lead and coordinate the self-assessment process. The chosen leader should have good contacts within the institution including key management staff, faculty and support staff; have access to obtain the required information at all levels; and have the authority to make appointments with stakeholders.
- It is desirable to install a working group in charge of the self-assessment. It is important that the group is structured in such a way that the involvement of all sections is assured. The working group should be in charge of the self-assessment, gathering and analysing data and drawing conclusions.
- As it is assumed that the self-assessment is supported by the institution, it is important that all staff members should be acquainted with the contents of the SAR. The working group might organise a workshop or seminar to discuss or communicate the SAR.

3.3 Preparation of Self-Assessment Report (SAR)

Figure 3.1 illustrates the approach for preparing SAR which encompasses Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA).

Figure 3.1 – PDCA Approach to SAR Development

The “Plan” phase starts with the communication of intent for quality assessment. Appoint a group responsible for writing the SAR. The group should consist of key people representing various departments and led by someone appointed by the faculty or university. As part of the change management process, early engagement with the stakeholders is crucial to get their buy-in and commitment before the start of the project. A clear timetable should be set up to develop the SAR (see Figure 3.2). Each member in the group should be made responsible for collecting and analysing data and information, and writing the SAR. Each member must have a good understanding of the AUN-QA criteria before proceeding to the next phase.

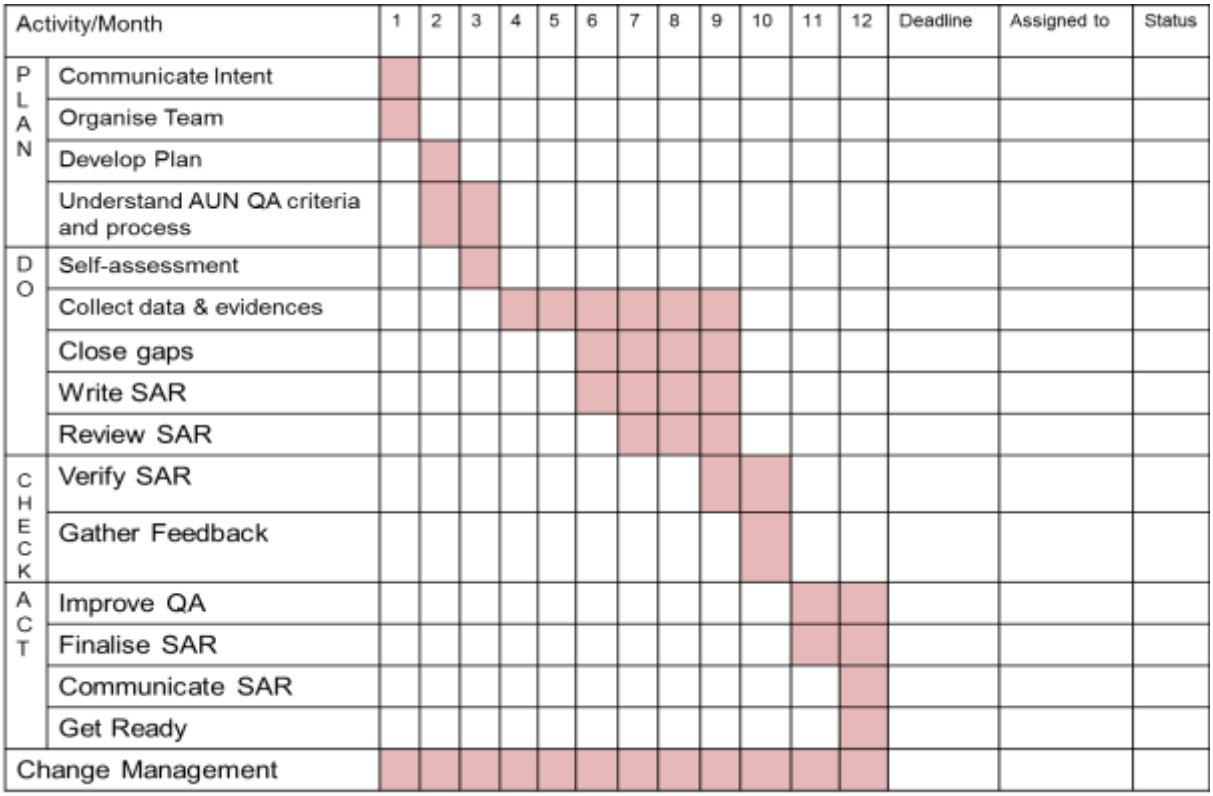

Figure 3.2 - Typical Project Timeline for SAR Development.

The “Do” phase involves identifying the gaps in the quality assurance system in meeting the AUN-QA criteria. Data collection is a critical step in this phase as it helps to quantify the existing quality assurance practices as well as to identify what the institution needs to do to meet the AUN-QA criteria. Solutions to close the gaps should be implemented before proceeding to write and review the SAR.

The “Check” phase involves verifying the SAR as well as the quality assurance practices; and giving feedback to improve them. An independent team should be appointed to assess the SAR and the existing quality assurance practices against the AUN-QA criteria. Recommendations to improve the SAR and close the gaps in the existing quality assurance practices should be made.

The “Act” phase involves implementing the recommendations raised in the “Check” phase and finalising the SAR before communicating the SAR to the relevant stakeholders and getting ready for external assessment.

3.4 Self-Assessment Report (SAR)

A typical self-assessment project would take about 9 months to a year to prepare. However, the duration depends on the stage of development, availability of data and information and the maturity of the university, faculty or school. At the start of the project, it is important that the sponsor, project team and staff have a common comprehension and understanding of the AUN-QA guidelines and criteria. Training and communications should be set up to ensure this. The SAR is the product of the self-assessment exercise and it should be written in an objective, factual and complete manner and follow the AUN-QA criteria self-assessment checklist (See Appendix A).

The self-assessment must be finalised with a SAR. Writing an effective SAR requires skills and time. Some guidelines for writing an effective SAR are:

- The report is the account of the self-assessment. That is to say, the SAR is not just descriptive but it is also analytical. It includes an evaluation of the problems. At the same time, it provides an indication of how the problems identified will be dealt with. Use the diagnostic questions provided in each of the AUN-QA criteria to do this.
- Since it is a self-assessment, which is of the utmost importance for an external assessment team, it is important for the SAR to follow a specific format based on the AUN-QA criteria and checklist.
- Illustrate clearly what, where, when, who and how the QA mechanisms or instruments are implemented and managed to fulfil the criteria. This will help you to piece all related information together.
- Focus on information and data (objective evidences) that directly address the criteria. The report has to be concise and factual. Provide trends and statistics to show achievements and performance. The quantitative data requires special attention. The manner in which data is presented is important for the right interpretation of the data. There is a clear need for standardisation of data such as student numbers, appointment of teaching staff, staff-to-student ratio, pass rates, etc.
- Self-assessment forms the starting point for improvement between the review committee and the faculty as well as a document for inter-collegial assessment. When conducting a self-assessment, it is important to draw up an institution’s own standards and criteria, but it is also essential to take account of the criteria formulated by outsiders, such as an accrediting body. When analysing an institution's own quality, it is important to look for evidence on how far the criteria have been met. If there are no formally formulated standards in the country or region, the standards as formulated in this manual may be used and taken as benchmarks.
- The SAR should be written or translated into a language (i.e. English) that is easy for external assessors to comprehend. Provide a glossary of abbreviations and terminologies used in the report.

The SAR is the final document that will play a role in formulating a quality plan for the years to come. It might also provide the input for accreditation or for inter-collegial assessment

The content of the SAR should consist of:

Part 1: Introduction

- Executive summary of the SAR
- Organisation of the self-assessment – how the self-assessment was carried out and who were involved?
- Brief description of the university, faculty and department – outline the history of quality assurance, mission, vision, objectives and quality policy of the university followed by a brief description of the faculty and department.

Part 2: AUN-QA Criteria

This section contains the write-up on how the university, faculty or department addresses the requirements of the AUN-QA criteria. Follow the criteria listed in the self-assessment checklist.

Part 3: Strengths and Weaknesses Analysis

- Summary of strengths - summarise the points that the department considers to be its strengths and mark the points that the institution is proud of.
- Summary of Weaknesses - indicate which points the department considers to be weak and in need of improvement.
- Completed self-assessment checklist as in Appendix A
- Improvement plan – recommendations to close the gaps identified in the self-assessment and the action plan to implement them.

Part 4: Appendices

Glossary and supporting documents and evidences

3.5 Preparation of Quality Assessment

Conducting a quality assessment requires good preparation. It is important that the university considers its resources and prepares its people before proceeding with the assessment. The preparation includes communicating the SAR and other documentation, host team, interviewees, assessment team, logistics and other administrative arrangements, etc.

Before requesting for the quality assessment, it is important that management or project initiator communicates the intent to all stakeholders concerned. This is to ensure that those involved understand the reasons and objectives behind the assessment and at the same time to get commitment and approval for the assessment project. Sufficient time should be given for criteria owners to prepare the quality assessment.

The purpose of the assessment is not about the assessment ratings but rather on the continuous improvement of the quality assurance system implemented. As the assessment will be based mostly on objective evidences, it is important that the university has prepared a well written SAR and get ready all key documents and records for assessment. Information about the university and programme should be prepared and presented to the assessment team. This would allow them to have an overview of the university history, policies, vision and mission and programmes. SAR and key documents should be translated to a language that is understood by the assessment team. An interpreter may be present during the site assessment, if necessary. The translated copy of the SAR should be sent to the assessment team in advance – at least $1^1/_2$ to 2 months before the site assessment.

The university should assemble key management representatives, SAR team and guides or interpreter to host the assessment. The key management representatives could give the commitment and support for the assessment and giving the presentation of the university, faculty or programme. The SAR team should be present for clarification of the SAR and serve as contact person(s) for the exercise.

Guides should be available to bring the assessors to the site as well as making documents and records available; and serve as a liaison between the assessors and the staff of the faculty or university. Interpreter may be engaged to translate documents, interview questions or responses.

Prepare and notify the interviewees in advance about the assessment. It is important to share with them the intent and purpose of the assessment. Key office holders and fair representation from staff and students should be invited for the assessment exercise. External parties such as alumni, employers and other stakeholders should also be invited for the interview.

For internal assessment, experts from adjacent faculties may be considered. However, there are some conditions that members have to meet:

- they should act independently
- there should be no conflicts of interest. Members should have no advantage through their verdict
- they must be accepted by the faculty to be assessed.

It is also possible to invite retired staff on the grounds that they are more independent (and have more time available). However, it is also important to have members still working in the field and with a knowledge of recent developments.

Depending on the types of quality assessment, an assessment team appointed to carry out the quality assessment may consist of 2 to 5 members. The members of the team may include:

- a chairperson, totally independent and unconnected with the institution to be assessed. The chair does not need to be an expert in the field, but should have the experience with management of higher education institutions and the development of quality assurance in higher education.

- two experts on the subject area or discipline being assessed
- an expert from the labour market and/or from the professional association
- an expert from abroad (but because the visit will be done in the local language, this member must be proficient in the language)
- an expert on education and learning processes.

In selecting the assessor, consideration should be given to the assessor's competence and personal attributes in addition to education and work experience. Knowledge and skills specific to quality management system are those related to:

- quality and quality assurance in general
- AUN-QA guidelines and criteria
- other QA education models and frameworks

As far as assessment team leaders are concerned, they should have the knowledge and leadership skills necessary to enable the team to conduct the assessment efficiently and effectively. In addition to the above, the assessor should posses a number of personal attributes that contribute to the successful performance of assessment. An assessor should be ethical, open minded, diplomatic, observant, perceptive, versatile, tenacious, decisive and self reliant. The necessary knowledge and skills and the personal attributes to apply them effectively can be acquired by an appropriate combination of education, work experience, assessor training and assessment experience. These "building blocks" are quantified by, for example, specifying the minimum level of education, the necessary number of years' work experience and the minimum amount of audit or assessment experience.

The appointed assessors should have the required knowledge and skills on quality, quality assurance, AUN-QA guidelines and criteria and assessment techniques and skills. If not, training should be conducted for them.

The training should include:

- Quality and quality assurance in higher education
- The AUN-QA criteria and guidelines
- Organisation of self-assessment project
- Writing and reviewing of SAR
- Quality assessment process
- Stakeholders' interviews
- Writing feedback reports

Staff organising the assessment should take care of the following logistics and other administrative arrangements:

- Meeting and interviewing rooms:
  - Opening/closing meeting which normally would require a bigger room in consideration of the number of people involved.
  - Interview room for the conduct of the assessment with the interviewees
  - Assessors would need room for discussion and report writing.

- Observers who wish to learn about the conduct of the assessment
- Site tour – arrangement for the assessors to visit places such as library, lab, lecture halls, etc as part of the assessment
- Computer equipment/facilities for presentation on opening and closing meetings
- Photocopying/printing services
- Refreshments/meals
- Transport arrangements/airport transfers
- Accommodation

3.6 Quality Assessment Process

The Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) or Deming Cycle illustrated in Figure 3.3 is adopted for quality assessment at the programme level, as well as for both institutional level and IQA system.

Figure 3.3 – PDCA Approach to AUN-QA Assessment

3.6.1 Plan Phase

The “Plan” phase consists of:

- Types of Assessment
- Assessment Team
- Schedule & Itinerary

At the start of the planning, the institution has to decide which quality assessment that they want to conduct as each serves a different purpose and requires a different level of expertise. The 3 types of quality assessment in AUN-QA are institutional, IQA system and programme level.

The assessment team(s) will be appointed by the AUN Secretariat in advance based on assessor's background, experience and language ability. Each team should comprise at least 2 members from different universities. The assessors in each team should decide on their roles and assignment before, during and after the assessment.

The chairperson or the lead assessor will provide leadership to the assessment team, setup preliminary meetings/discussions, assigning of roles and assessment areas/criteria and moderating the final assessment results. In general, an assessor should perform the following roles:

- Preparing assessment plan and checklist
- Communicating and clarifying assessment requirements
- Planning & carrying out assigned responsibilities effectively and efficiently
- Making observations on curricula, processes, facilities and quality improvements
- Reporting the assessment results
- Retaining & safeguarding documents pertaining to the assessment

Before the site assessment, assessors need to check the date, time, location and venue of the assessment to be carried out for each programme. For venue, it is normally held at the university which facilitates the access to documents, site tour, faculty members and supporting staff. Interviews are best held in conference-like arrangement and avoid using a room that is too large or in a lecture-style. When interviewing staff, it is preferably that the room also holds the relevant documents to facilitate easy verification.

Assessors should also obtain the details of the contact person(s) of the university and AUN Secretariat so that prior communication can be established, if necessary. Know who is in the assessment team and agree on the roles. Make sure that the SAR is submitted at least $1^1/_2$ to 2 months before the site assessment to allow for the preparation of desktop assessment.

A typical Itinerary will spread over 3 days and it will normally consist of:

- Opening meeting
  - Presentation on the overview of the unit to be assessed
- Interviews (Dean, Department Head, Programme Chair, faculty members, supporting staff, students, alumni and employers)
- Site tour (teaching facilities, laboratories, workshops, libraries, general facilities)
- Assessment and report preparation
- Breaks, lunches and dinners
- Closing meeting
  - Presentation of preliminary assessment findings

A typical itinerary is shown in Figure 3.4.

Date/ Time	Activities
Day 0 Arrival and Pick-up of Assessors and Staff from AUN Secretariat	
Day 1	
09.00 – 09.30	Opening Session
09.30 - 09.45	Coffee Break
09.45 – 10.00	Briefing by Dean
10.00 – 11.30	Meeting Key Faculty Members: Head of Department, Programme Chair and SAR Team
11.30 – 13.00	Site Visit to Campus and Faculty - Laboratories, Lecture Facilities, Libraries, Computer Facilities, etc.
13.00 – 14.00	Lunch
14.00 – 15.30	Meeting with Faculty Members
15.30 – 15.45	Coffee Break
15.45 – 17.00	Meeting with Support Staff
17.00 onwards	Dinner
Day 2	
08.30 – 10.00	Meeting with Students
10.00 – 10.15	Coffee Break
10.15 – 11.30	Meeting with Alumni
11.30 – 13.00	Meeting with Employers
13.00 – 14.00	Lunch
14.00 – 17.00	Clarification and/or Preparation of Assessment Findings
17.00 onwards	Dinner (Free & Easy)
Day 3	
09.00 - 11.00	Presentation of Preliminary Assessment Findings
11.00 – 11.30	Closing Session
11.30 – 13.00	Lunch and Departure of Assessors

Figure 3.4 – Typical AUN-QA Assessment Itinerary

3.6.2 Do Phase

The “Do” phase involves desktop and site assessment.

Desktop Assessment

Desktop assessment is the first initial step before the site assessment. It is a document review exercise which involves a preliminary assessment of the quality assurance system based on the SAR and available documents. The desktop assessment facilitates the development of an assessment plan. The AUN-QA Assessment Planning Template (see Appendix B) is used for this purpose. The desktop assessment allows the following preparatory work to be done:

- Clarifying SAR and quality assurance practices
- Identifying strengths and weaknesses of the quality assurance practices
- Identifying gaps in meeting the AUN-QA criteria
- Identifying possible areas for improvement
- Crafting questions for stakeholders’ interviews
- Identifying sources of evidence for verification

The purpose of assessment planning is to gather evidence of practices that meet AUN-QA guidelines and criteria. The plan should include:

- Sources of information and evidence
- Strategy employed to gather the evidence as well as identifying documents and records for review. Strategy may include interview, site visit, document review, website access, etc.
- Identify individuals to be interviewed and plan schedule of interviews and site tour
- Prepare questions needed to gather the evidence

The SAR is the most critical document for desktop assessment and it should be given to the assessors in advance before the actual assessment. It should give an overview of the university, faculty, department and programme being assessed. The SAR should cover all the criteria listed in the checklist. If any of the criteria are not documented, the assessors should clarify with the contact person of the university. Assessors should identify information and documents mentioned in the report and verify them against the physical documents during the site assessment.

The PDCA approach is a good tool to apply in assessment planning. Questions can be formulated at each stage of the PDCA (see Figure 3.5).

Figure 3.5 – PDCA Approach in Formulating Questions

For example at the “Plan” stage, questions on what, when and why can be used to establish objectives and processes that deliver results based on AUN-QA guidelines and criteria and organisation policies. At the “Do” stage, questions can revolve around implementation and who are involved. At the “Check” stage, questions on monitoring and measuring performance and processes can be formulated. Lastly, at the “Act” stage, assessors can plan questions on actions to continually improve performance. Adopt the 5Ws (why, what, where, who and when) and 1H (How) questioning technique during the interview.

To facilitate the desktop assessment and planning, a template for desktop assessment at programme level is documented in Appendix B. A sample on how the template is being used for desktop planning is documented in Appendix C.

Site Assessment

Site assessment or site visit consists of an opening meeting with key management representatives of the university. The opening meeting is normally followed by a presentation of the university and programme. After which, interviews would be held with the various stakeholders. Site tour may be arranged before or between the interviews. The assessment will conclude with a closing meeting.

An opening meeting with the host university management representatives should be held at the start of the site assessment. The purpose of the brief opening meeting is to:

- Introduce the members of the assessment team to the host university's management representatives
- Establish official communication links between the assessment team and the host university
- Review scope and objectives of the assessment
- Clarify details of the assessment plan and schedule
- Allow the host university to introduce the university and its programme normally done through a presentation

Typical opening statements by the chairperson of the assessment team are as follows:

"Good morning ladies and gentlemen. My name is XXX and my colleague is YYY. We are the assessment team from ASEAN University Network (AUN).

At the request of your university, we are glad to make a quality assessment at the programme level under the AUN-QA guidelines and criteria. The scope of the assessment will cover the XXX programme at the faculty of ABC. We will be looking at the activities that are relevant to these areas. We will be following a schedule as agreed earlier and do let us know if there are any changes. The assessment will take about 3 days.

A closing ceremony will be held on the final day of the assessment where we will be presenting the preliminary assessment findings.

Before we proceed, is there anything that you would like to ask? (Pause for a second).

Thank you and you may now introduce the members in your team."

Interviews

Interviews with various stakeholders are normally pre-arranged by the host university prior to the site assessment. The interviews may start with a discussion involving the writers of the SAR at the start and during the site assessment. In this interview, the team can ask for clarification of any obscurities and explanation of any topics that are not clear.

The interviews with the students provide a very rich source of information, but the information needs to be checked and tested against the ideas of the staff members. Student interviews are important to get an insight into the study load, quality of the academic staff, the curriculum of the programme, the quality of the facilities, etc.

The student interview should be held in the absence of staff members, so that they can speak freely. The size of the student groups is ideally about 5 students in each cohort. It's best to talk to about 5 students from the first year, 5 from say the second and third years, and 5 who are nearly at the end of their studies. It is important that the students are a fair representation of the population. The selection of students should follow the requirements stated in the “Guidelines for AUN-QA Assessment and Assessors”. The assessors should have a list of the students and their details such as name, year of study, etc.

Interviews with staff members will be used for discussion on the content of the programme, learning outcomes, teaching and learning methods, student assessment, etc. It is advisable to interview with group of not more than 25 staff members. Other interviews may be held with members of a curriculum committee and with members of the committee responsible for examinations. During the interview with the curriculum committee, the question of how the curriculum is kept up to date will be discussed as will the question of how innovations are planned and realised. The interview with the examination committee must clearly show how the quality of the examinations and degree is assured.

Interviews with employers and alumni provide a good indication of the quality of graduates and curriculum. They can provide a good source for the university to improve its processes, systems, facilities, curriculum, etc.

In each interview, the assessor will usually go through several steps including informing the interviewees about the purpose of the interview, gather background information about the interviewees and conducting the actual interview.

Objectives of Interview are to:

- Gather information and evidences
- Clarify and verify SAR and practices
- Give interviewees opportunity to present the full picture

It is important for the assessors to talk less and listen more as the purpose of the interview is to ensure a fair and objective view of the assessment. In preparing the interview, the assessor should consider the following:

- Know the interviewees
  - Language
  - Education
  - Specialisation or area of interests
- Plan the questions
  - Focus on the criteria
  - Phrase questions as neutrally as possible to avoid bias
  - Use open-ended questioning technique (5Ws and 1H) to probe for information
  - Use close-ended questions to confirm information
  - Manage time to cover different criteria and interviewees

An interviewing process consists of 3 phases as follows:

- Introduction
- Questioning
- Conclusion

At the introduction phase, the following items should be carried out:

- Introduce the assessment team
- Explain purpose of the interview
- Put interviewees at ease
- Get to know the background of interviewees (e.g. years of service or study, current position, scope of work, etc.), if necessary

During questioning, do take note of the following factors:

- Use reassuring tones and approach in a respectful manner
- Assure interviewees that the session is strictly confidential and no information will be attributed to any one individual
- Lead the discussion
- Take note
- Keep to the agenda
- Watch your time

Use effective questioning techniques:

- Ask one question at a time. Give interviewees ample time to respond before moving to the next question.
- Use open-ended questions to probe for information.
- Use close-ended questions to confirm information.
- Avoid leading questions
- Try to use neutral language. Avoid words like never, bad, good, always, weak, etc.

Before concluding the interview, do the following:

- Ask if interviewees have anything else to add. This gives them some control over the interview and a chance to tell you something important that might not be on the list.
- Thank the interviewees for their time

Four basic techniques in active listening are:

1. Mirroring. Restating what the interviewee says using different words. Restate in such a way as to encourage the interviewee to go on.
2. Using silences. Silence may make people feel uncomfortable in a conversation. However, not every gap in a conversation needs to be filled. Distinguish between positive and negative silences where the interviewee is thinking. During a negative silence where the interviewee is not able to respond, provide help.
3. Acknowledging. Remind the interviewee periodically that you are listening with words like “Yes”, “I see”, “Um..m”. Use body language like nodding and eye contact without interrupting the interviewee unnecessarily.
4. Open-ended questioning. Use questions that encourage the interviewees to think further rather than give a straight “Yes” or “No” answer. Close ended questions often cut the natural flow of the interviewee’s thoughts, make them feel interrogated and put them on the defensive.

Objective Evidence

Evidence should be collected on all matters related to the assessment objectives and scope. Checklist can be used to aid the collection of evidence. Evidence should be collected through:

- Interviews
- Examination of documents/records (physical and electronic)
- Observation of activities and facilities
- Site tour
- Use of statistical methods such as sampling can be used to increase efficiency during assessment. However, the sample should be a fair representation of the area under examination.

Site tour can be planned before or between interviews. The site tour normally includes visit to lecture halls, tutorial rooms, laboratories, workshops or practical rooms, libraries and computer labs. Special attention should be paid to the environment in the facilities, condition of the equipment and tools, cleanliness and maintenance of the facilities. Site tour also provides the assessors an opportunity to clarify the findings or SAR with the support staff.

3.6.3 Check Phase

The “Check” phase involves report preparation and presentation of the assessment findings.

At the end of the assessment, prior to preparing the final report, the assessment team may hold a clarification meeting with the host university’s management representatives and those responsible for the programme.

The purpose of the meeting is to:

- present the preliminary results of the assessment
- ensure that the results of the assessment are clearly understood
- provide an opportunity for clarification
- conclude the assessment

The meeting is part of the “Check” phase and it helps the assessors to prepare an objective and factual report. It gives the assessors and assessees an opportunity to clarify doubts and to seek a better understanding of the QA processes and how the AUN-QA criteria are being fulfilled. It helps to identify and agree on the areas for improvement and provides the motivational force for the university to improve its QA system. The 2-way communication in the “Check” phase would make the university more receptive to the findings and help to build a closer and enduring relationship between the assessors and the university.

Assessment Report

The objectives of assessment report are:

- Level of performance based on AUN-QA guidelines and criteria
- Key strengths of university/faculty/programme
- Areas for improvement

The steps to prepare assessment report are illustrated in Figure 3.6.

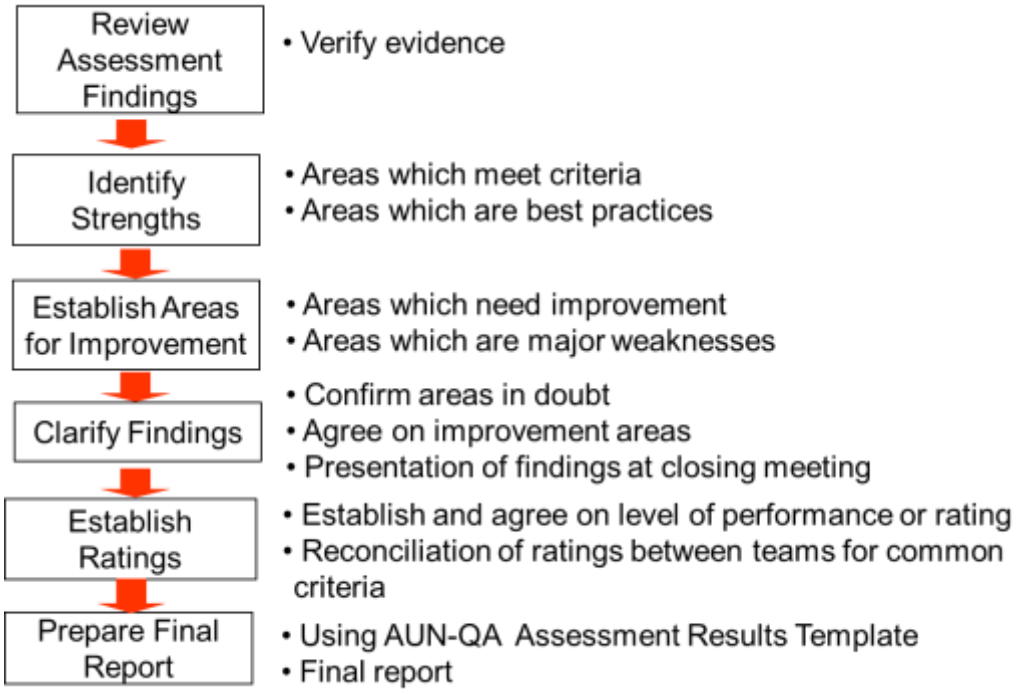

Figure 3.6 – Steps in Preparing Assessment Report

To prepare a creditable and objective report, the assessment team has to verify the evidences gathered and agree on the strengths and weaknesses of the QA practices adopted by the university**.** Next is to establish the gaps against the AUN-QA criteria and suggest areas for improvement. Based on the findings, the assessment team has to establish and agree on the level of performance or rating. Any differences should be resolved through factual and objective evidences against the best known practices. Reconciliation of ratings of common criteria across programmes should be carried out to ensure consistency of results.

A 7-point rating scale is used for AUN-QA assessment. It provides universities and assessors an instrument for scaling their verdicts and to see how far they have progressed in their AUN-QA journey. The 7-point rating scale is described below.

Rating	Description
1	**Absolutely Inadequate** The QA practice to fulfil the criterion is not implemented. There are no plans, documents, evidences or results available. Immediate improvement must be made.
2	**Inadequate and Improvement is Necessary** The QA practice to fulfil the criterion is still at its planning stage or is inadequate where improvement is necessary. There is little document or evidence available. Performance of the QA practice shows little or poor results.
3	**Inadequate but Minor Improvement Will Make It Adequate** The QA practice to fulfil the criterion is defined and implemented but minor improvement is needed to fully meet them. Documents are available but no clear evidence to support that they have been fully used. Performance of the QA practice shows inconsistent or some results.
4	**Adequate as Expected** The QA practice to fulfil the criterion is adequate and evidences support that it has been fully implemented. Performance of the QA practice shows consistent results as expected.
5	**Better Than Adequate** The QA practice to fulfil the criterion is better than adequate. Evidences support that it has been efficiently implemented. Performance of the QA practice shows good results and positive improvement trend.
6	**Example of Best Practices** The QA practice to fulfil the criterion is considered to be example of best practices in the field. Evidences support that it has been effectively implemented. Performance of QA practice shows very good results and positive improvement trend.
7	**Excellent (Example of World-class or Leading Practices)** The QA practice to fulfil the criterion is considered to be excellent or example of world-class practices in the field. Evidences support that it has been innovatively implemented. Performance of the QA practice shows excellent results and outstanding improvement trends.

In assigning rating to criterion and sub-criterion, only whole number should be used. The overall verdict of the assessment should be computed based on the arithmetic average of the 11 criteria with only one decimal place.

Before making the final presentation to the university management, the assessment team should clarify any doubts and agree on the areas for improvement with the key staff of the faculty or department. The report should not be judgemental such as using the word “frequently”. Instead state the comment factually and indicate the importance of having the practice or process. The final report should be prepared using the AUN-QA Assessment Report Template in Appendix D.

In writing feedback report, do adhere to the following guidelines:

- Feedback must be:
  - Objective
  - Based on evidence
  - Encouraging
  - Part of a “learning” process
- Feedback must not:
  - Ridicule
  - Mandate solution
  - Be insensitive to the overall effort
  - Ignore the achievement made

Good feedback is fundamental to an effective assessment. It would help the university to determine its readiness in meeting AUN-QA guidelines and criteria. It also provides the basis for feedback on areas that the university needs to improve. Good feedback should:

- Use clear, simple, grammatically correct and complete sentences. They help to reduce the time needed to clarify points.
- Avoid jargons or acronyms
- Be constructive – use positive tone, be specific to guide improvement and comment only on areas contained in the criteria.
- Be non-prescriptive – state observations and evaluation

A closing meeting is usually done by the chairperson of the assessment team. Typical closing meeting statements include:

“Good morning ladies and gentlemen. On behalf of the assessment team, I would like to thank you and your staff for the hospitality and assistance which you have given us throughout the assessment. We have enjoyed the friendly atmosphere during the assessment.

First, I would like to reiterate the purpose and scope of this assessment under the AUN-QA guidelines and criteria at programme level. The assessment has been carried out on the basis of a prepared plan which involved examining a representative sample of the activities relevant to the AUN-QA framework. With your kind consent, I will present the preliminary results and findings from the team.

A final report will be sent to your university by the AUN secretariat at a later date.”

3.6.4 Act Phase

The “Act” phase involves preparing the final report and the assessment feedback. The final report consists of a summary and the detailed assessment results (see Appendix D). A sample of the report is documented in Appendix E. A typical summary in the report is reproduced below.

This report is based on the information provided in the self-assessment report (SAR), evidences, site tour and interviews with selected stakeholders including academic and support staff, students, alumni and employers. It should be read together with the preliminary findings presented at the closing ceremony where the key strengths and areas for improvement were highlighted.

The AUN-QA assessment at programme level covers 11 criteria and each criterion is assessed based on a 7-point scale. The summary of the assessment results is as follows:

Criteria	Score
1. Expected Learning Outcomes	4
2. Programme Specification	5
3. Programme Structure and Content	4
4. Teaching and Learning Approach	5
5. Student Assessment	5
6. Academic Staff Quality	5
7. Support Staff Quality	4
8. Student Quality and Support	5
9. Facilities and Infrastructure	4
10. Quality Enhancement	4
11. Output	5
Overall Verdict	**4.5**

Based on the assessment results, the Bachelor of XXX Programme fulfilled the AUN-QA requirements. Overall the quality assurance implemented for the programme is between “Adequate as Expected” and “Better than Adequate”.

After the assessment team has completed and sent a copy of the report to AUN Secretariat, they will forward it together with a copy of the feedback report (Appendix F) to the university being assessed. The purpose of the feedback report is to help in improving the assessment process.

4. Appendices

Appendix A – Checklist for AUN-QA Assessment at Programme Level
Appendix B – AUN-QA Assessment Planning for Programme Level Template
Appendix C – Sample of AUN-QA Assessment Planning
Appendix D – AUN-QA Assessment Report for Programme Level Template
Appendix E – Sample of AUN-QA Assessment Report
Appendix F – AUN-QA Assessment Feedback Report

Appendix A

Checklist for AUN-QA Assessment at Programme Level

1	**Expected Learning Outcomes**	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.1	The expected learning outcomes have been clearly formulated and aligned with the vision and mission of the university [1,2]							
1.2	The expected learning outcomes cover both subject specific and generic (i.e. transferable) learning outcomes [3]							
1.3	The expected learning outcomes clearly reflect the requirements of the stakeholders [4]							
	Overall opinion							
2	**Programme Specification**							
2.1	The information in the programme specification is comprehensive and up-to-date [1, 2]							
2.2	The information in the course specification is comprehensive and up-to-date [1, 2]							
2.3	The programme and course specifications are communicated and made available to the stakeholders [1, 2]							
	Overall opinion							
3	**Programme Structure and Content**							
3.1	The curriculum is designed based on constructive alignment with the expected learning outcomes [1]							
3.2	The contribution made by each course to achieve the expected learning outcomes is clear [2]							
3.3	The curriculum is logically structured, sequenced, integrated and up-to-date [3, 4, 5, 6]							
	Overall opinion							
4	**Teaching and Learning Approach**							
4.1	The educational philosophy is well articulated and communicated to all stakeholders [1]							
4.2	Teaching and learning activities are constructively aligned to the achievement of the expected learning outcomes [2, 3, 4, 5]							
4.3	Teaching and learning activities enhance life-long learning [6]							
	Overall opinion							

5	**Student Assessment**	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.1	The student assessment is constructively aligned to the achievement of the expected learning outcomes [1, 2]							
5.2	The student assessments including timelines, methods, regulations, weight distribution, rubrics and grading are explicit and communicated to students [4, 5]							
5.3	Methods including assessment rubrics and marking schemes are used to ensure validity, reliability and fairness of student assessment [6, 7]							
5.4	Feedback of student assessment is timely and helps to improve learning [3]							
5.5	Students have ready access to appeal procedure [8]							
	Overall opinion							
6	**Academic Staff Quality**							
6.1	Academic staff planning (considering succession, promotion, re-deployment, termination, and retirement) is carried out to fulfil the needs for education, research and service [1]							
6.2	Staff-to-student ratio and workload are measured and monitored to improve the quality of education, research and service [2]							
6.3	Recruitment and selection criteria including ethics and academic freedom for appointment, deployment and promotion are determined and communicated [4, 5, 6, 7]							
6.4	Competences of academic staff are identified and evaluated [3]							
6.5	Training and developmental needs of academic staff are identified and activities are implemented to fulfil them [8]							
6.6	Performance management including rewards and recognition is implemented to motivate and support education, research and service [9]							
6.7	The types and quantity of research activities by academic staff are established, monitored and benchmarked for improvement [10]							
	Overall opinion							

7	**Support Staff Quality**	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7.1	Support staff planning (at the library, laboratory, IT facility and student services) is carried out to fulfil the needs for education, research and service [1]							
7.2	Recruitment and selection criteria for appointment, deployment and promotion are determined and communicated [2]							
7.3	Competences of support staff are identified and evaluated [3]							
7.4	Training and developmental needs of support staff are identified and activities are implemented to fulfil them [4]							
7.5	Performance management including rewards and recognition is implemented to motivate and support education, research and service [5]							
	Overall opinion							
8	**Student Quality and Support**							
8.1	The student intake policy and admission criteria are defined, communicated, published, and up-to-date [1]							
8.2	The methods and criteria for the selection of students are determined and evaluated [2]							
8.3	There is an adequate monitoring system for student progress, academic performance, and workload [3]							
8.4	Academic advice, co-curricular activities, student competition, and other student support services are available to improve learning and employability [4]							
8.5	The physical, social and psychological environment is conducive for education and research as well as personal well-being [5]							
	Overall opinion							

9	**Facilities and Infrastructure**	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9.1	The teaching and learning facilities and equipment (lecture halls, classrooms, project rooms, etc.) are adequate and updated to support education and research [1]							
9.2	The library and its resources are adequate and updated to support education and research [3, 4]							
9.3	The laboratories and equipment are adequate and updated to support education and research [1, 2]							
9.4	The IT facilities including e-learning infrastructure are adequate and updated to support education and research [1, 5, 6]							
9.5	The standards for environment, health and safety; and access for people with special needs are defined and implemented [7]							
	Overall opinion							
10	**Quality Enhancement**							
10.1	Stakeholders' needs and feedback serve as input to curriculum design and development [1]							
10.2	The curriculum design and development process is established and subjected to evaluation and enhancement [2]							
10.3	The teaching and learning processes and student assessment are continuously reviewed and evaluated to ensure their relevance and alignment [3]							
10.4	Research output is used to enhance teaching and learning [4]							
10.5	Quality of support services and facilities (at the library, laboratory, IT facility and student services) is subjected to evaluation and enhancement [5]							
10.6	The stakeholder's feedback mechanisms are systematic and subjected to evaluation and enhancement [6]							
	Overall opinion							

11	**Output**	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11.1	The pass rates and dropout rates are established, monitored and benchmarked for improvement [1]							
11.2	The average time to graduate is established, monitored and benchmarked for improvement [1]							
11.3	Employability of graduates is established, monitored and benchmarked for improvement [1]							
11.4	The types and quantity of research activities by students are established, monitored and benchmarked for improvement [2]							
11.5	The satisfaction levels of stakeholders are established, monitored and benchmarked for improvement [3]							
	Overall opinion							
Overall verdict								

In assigning rating to criterion and sub-criterion, only whole number should be used. The overall verdict of the assessment should be computed based on the arithmetic average of the 11 criteria with only one decimal place.

Appendix B

AUN-QA ASSESSMENT PLANNING (PROGRAMME LEVEL)

AUN-QA Assessment No.:	Date of Assessment:
Name of Programme Assessed:	
Name of University:	
Name of Faculty/School:	
Name of Management Representative/Designation:	Email:
Name of Assessors:	

Criteria		Strengths	Interview Questions	Sources of Evidence	Areas for Improvement
1. Expected Learning Outcomes	1.1 The expected learning outcomes have been clearly formulated and aligned with the vision and mission of the university [1,2]				
1. Expected Learning Outcomes	1.2 The expected learning outcomes cover both subject specific and generic (i.e. transferable) learning outcomes [3]				

Criteria		Strengths	Interview Questions	Sources of Evidence	Areas for Improvement
1. Expected Learning Outcomes	1.3 The expected learning outcomes clearly reflect the requirements of the stakeholders [4]				
2. Programme Specification	2.1 The information in the programme specification is comprehensive and up-to-date [1, 2]				

Criteria		Strengths	Interview Questions	Sources of Evidence	Areas for Improvement
2. Programme Specification	2.2 The information in the course specification is comprehensive and up-to-date [1, 2]				
2. Programme Specification	2.3 The programme and course specifications are communicated and made available to the stakeholders [1, 2]				

Criteria		Strengths	Interview Questions	Sources of Evidence	Areas for Improvement
3. Programme Structure and Content	3.1 The curriculum is designed based on constructive alignment with the expected learning outcomes [1]				
3. Programme Structure and Content	3.2 The contribution made by each course to achieve the expected learning outcomes is clear [2]				

Criteria		Strengths	Interview Questions	Sources of Evidence	Areas for Improvement
3. Programme Structure and Content	3.3 The curriculum is logically structured, sequenced, integrated and up-to-date [3, 4, 5, 6]				
4. Teaching and Learning Approach	4.1 The educational philosophy is well articulated and communicated to all stakeholders [1]				

Criteria		Strengths	Interview Questions	Sources of Evidence	Areas for Improvement
4. Teaching and Learning Approach	4.2 Teaching and learning activities are constructively aligned to the achievement of the expected learning outcomes [2, 3, 4, 5]				
4. Teaching and Learning Approach	4.3 Teaching and learning activities enhance life-long learning [6]				

Criteria		Strengths	Interview Questions	Sources of Evidence	Areas for Improvement
5. Student Assessment	5.1 The student assessment is constructively aligned to the achievement of the expected learning outcomes [1, 2]				
5. Student Assessment	5.2 The student assessments including timelines, methods, regulations, weight distribution, rubrics and grading are explicit and communicated to students [4, 5]				

Criteria		Strengths	Interview Questions	Sources of Evidence	Areas for Improvement
5. Student Assessment	5.3 Methods including assessment rubrics and marking schemes are used to ensure validity, reliability and fairness of student assessment [6, 7]				
5. Student Assessment	5.4 Feedback of student assessment is timely and helps to improve learning [3]				

Criteria		Strengths	Interview Questions	Sources of Evidence	Areas for Improvement
5. Student Assessment	5.5 Students have ready access to appeal procedure [8]				
6. Academic Staff Quality	6.1 Academic staff planning (considering succession, promotion, re-deployment, termination, and retirement) is carried out to fulfil the needs for education, research and service [1]				

Criteria		Strengths	Interview Questions	Sources of Evidence	Areas for Improvement
6. Academic Staff Quality	6.2 Staff-to-student ratio and workload are measured and monitored to improve the quality of education, research and service [2]				
6. Academic Staff Quality	6.3 Recruitment and selection criteria including ethics and academic freedom for appointment, deployment and promotion are determined and communicated [4, 5, 6, 7]				

Criteria		Strengths	Interview Questions	Sources of Evidence	Areas for Improvement
6. Academic Staff Quality	6.4 Competences of academic staff are identified and evaluated [3]				
6. Academic Staff Quality	6.5 Training and developmental needs of academic staff are identified and activities are implemented to fulfil them [8]				

Criteria		Strengths	Interview Questions	Sources of Evidence	Areas for Improvement
6. Academic Staff Quality	6.6 Performance management including rewards and recognition is implemented to motivate and support education, research and service [9]				
6. Academic Staff Quality	6.7 The types and quantity of research activities by academic staff are established, monitored and benchmarked for improvement [10]				

Criteria		Strengths	Interview Questions	Sources of Evidence	Areas for Improvement
7. Support Staff Quality	7.1 Support staff planning (at the library, laboratory, IT facility and student services) is carried out to fulfil the needs for education, research and service [1]				
7. Support Staff Quality	7.2 Recruitment and selection criteria for appointment, deployment and promotion are determined and communicated [2]				

Criteria		Strengths	Interview Questions	Sources of Evidence	Areas for Improvement
7. Support Staff Quality	7.3 Competences of support staff are identified and evaluated [3]				
7. Support Staff Quality	7.4 Training and developmental needs of support staff are identified and activities are implemented to fulfil them [4]				

Criteria		Strengths	Interview Questions	Sources of Evidence	Areas for Improvement
7. Support Staff Quality	7.5 Performance management including rewards and recognition is implemented to motivate and support education, research and service [5]				
8.Student Quality and Support	8.1 The student intake policy and admission criteria are defined, communicated, published, and up-to-date [1]				

Criteria		Strengths	Interview Questions	Sources of Evidence	Areas for Improvement
8.Student Quality and Support	8.2 The methods and criteria for the selection of students are determined and evaluated [2]				
8.Student Quality and Support	8.3 There is an adequate monitoring system for student progress, academic performance, and workload [3]				

Criteria		Strengths	Interview Questions	Sources of Evidence	Areas for Improvement
8.Student Quality and Support	8.4 Academic advice, co-curricular activities, student competition, and other student support services are available to improve learning and employability [4]				
8.Student Quality and Support	8.5 The physical, social and psychological environment is conducive for education and research as well as personal well-being [5]				

Criteria		Strengths	Interview Questions	Sources of Evidence	Areas for Improvement
9. Facilities and Infrastructure	9.1The teaching and learning facilities and equipment (lecture halls, classrooms, project rooms, etc.) are adequate and updated to support education and research [1]				
9. Facilities and Infrastructure	9.2 The library and its resources are adequate and updated to support education and research [3, 4]				

Criteria		Strengths	Interview Questions	Sources of Evidence	Areas for Improvement
9. Facilities and Infrastructure	9.3 The laboratories and equipment are adequate and updated to support education and research [1, 2]				
9. Facilities and Infrastructure	9.4 The IT facilities including e-learning infrastructure are adequate and updated to support education and research [1, 5, 6]				

Criteria		Strengths	Interview Questions	Sources of Evidence	Areas for Improvement
9. Facilities and Infrastructure	9.5 The standards for environment, health and safety; and access for people with special needs are defined and implemented [7]				
10. Quality Enhancement	10.1 Stakeholders' needs and feedback serve as input to curriculum design and development [1]				

Criteria		Strengths	Interview Questions	Sources of Evidence	Areas for Improvement
10. Quality Enhancement	10.2 The curriculum design and development process is established and subjected to evaluation and enhancement [2]				
10. Quality Enhancement	10.3 The teaching and learning processes and student assessment are continuously reviewed and evaluated to ensure their relevance and alignment [3]				

Criteria		Strengths	Interview Questions	Sources of Evidence	Areas for Improvement
10. Quality Enhancement	10.4 Research output is used to enhance teaching and learning [4]				
10. Quality Enhancement	10.5 Quality of support services and facilities (at the library, laboratory, IT facility and student services) is subjected to evaluation and enhancement [5]				

Criteria		Strengths	Interview Questions	Sources of Evidence	Areas for Improvement
10. Quality Enhancement	10.6 The stakeholder's feedback mechanisms are systematic and subjected to evaluation and enhancement [6]				
11. Output	11.1 The pass rates and dropout rates are established, monitored and benchmarked for improvement [1]				

Criteria		Strengths	Interview Questions	Sources of Evidence	Areas for Improvement
11. Output	11.2 The average time to graduate is established, monitored and benchmarked for improvement [1]				
11. Output	11.3 Employability of graduates is established, monitored and benchmarked for improvement [1]				

Criteria		Strengths	Interview Questions	Sources of Evidence	Areas for Improvement
11. Output	11.4 The types and quantity of research activities by students are established, monitored and benchmarked for improvement [2]				
11. Output	11.5 The satisfaction levels of stakeholders are established, monitored and benchmarked for improvement [3]				

Appendix C

ASEAN University Network

SAMPLE of AUN-QA ASSESSMENT PLANNING (PROGRAMME LEVEL)

AUN-QA Assessment No.: **99th AUN-QA Assessment at AUN University**	Date of Assessment: **1 – 3 August 2015**
Name of Programme Assessed: **Bachelor Degree in Manufacturing Engineering** SAMPLE	
Name of University: **AUN University**	
Name of Faculty/School: **Faculty of Engineering**	
Name of Management Representative/Designation: **Dr. Ali Ahmad/Head of Department**	Email: **ahmad@aun.com**
Name of Assessors: **Dr. Tommy Lee, University of SEA** **Dr. Amir Hamzeh, University of Northeast**	

Criteria		Strengths	Interview Questions	Sources of Evidence	Areas for Improvement
1. Expected Learning Outcomes	1.1 The expected learning outcomes have been clearly formulated and aligned with the vision and mission of the university [1,2]	The established learning outcomes are aligned to the requirements of the National Accreditation Board as well as reference to ABET and prominent university in USA, UK, Australia and Singapore. The expected learning outcomes are revised every 4 years with the latest revision in 2014. These are formulated with the consideration of the regional and national needs and global trend of scientific progress, which are part of the university, faculty and department mission statements.	What educational taxonomy is used in writing the expected learning outcomes? SAMPLE	Programme specification University and faculty websites Curriculum review minutes and documents	
1. Expected Learning Outcomes	1.2 The expected learning outcomes cover both subject specific and generic (i.e. transferable) learning outcomes [3]	The expected learning outcomes are established and integrated for both specific and generic skills and knowledge using matrix of competencies as documented in the new curriculum 2014.	How do the generic learning outcomes meet the needs of the employers?	Programme specification University and faculty websites Curriculum review minutes and documents	

Criteria		Strengths	Interview Questions	Sources of Evidence	Areas for Improvement
1. Expected Learning Outcomes	1.3 The expected learning outcomes clearly reflect the requirements of the stakeholders [4]	Stakeholder's inputs (meeting with stakeholders on 28 August 2013) are gathered and reflected in the expected learning outcome documented in the new curriculum 2014.	How the needs of the stakeholders are gathered? SAMPLE	Surveys and tracer reports Curriculum review minutes and documents	
2. Programme Specification	2.1 The information in the programme specification is comprehensive and up-to-date [1, 2]				

Appendix D

AUN-QA ASSESSMENT REPORT (PROGRAMME LEVEL)

AUN-QA Assessment No.:	Date of Assessment:
Name of Programme Assessed:	
Name of University:	
Name of Faculty/School:	
Name of Management Representative/Designation:	Email:
Name of Assessors:	

Report Summary

This report is based on the information provided in the self-assessment report (SAR), evidences, site tour and interviews with selected stakeholders including academic and support staff, students, alumni and employers. It should be read together with the preliminary findings presented at the closing ceremony where the key strengths and areas for improvement were highlighted.

The AUN-QA assessment at programme level covers 11 criteria and each criterion is assessed based on a 7-point scale. The summary of the assessment results is as follows:

Criteria	Score
1. Expected Learning Outcomes	
2. Programme Specification	
3. Programme Structure and Content	
4. Teaching and Learning Approach	
5. Student Assessment	
6. Academic Staff Quality	
7. Support Staff Quality	
8. Student Quality and Support	
9. Facilities and Infrastructure	
10. Quality Enhancement	
11. Output	
Overall Verdict	

Based on the assessment results, the Bachelor of XXX Programme fulfilled the AUN-QA requirements. Overall the quality assurance implemented for the programme is "_____".

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
1. Expected Learning Outcomes	1.1 The expected learning outcomes have been clearly formulated and aligned with the vision and mission of the university [1,2]				
1. Expected Learning Outcomes	1.2 The expected learning outcomes cover both subject specific and generic (i.e. transferable) learning outcomes [3]				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
1. Expected Learning Outcomes	1.3 The expected learning outcomes clearly reflect the requirements of the stakeholders [4]				
2. Programme Specification	2.1 The information in the programme specification is comprehensive and up-to-date [1, 2]				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
2. Programme Specification	2.2 The information in the course specification is comprehensive and up-to-date [1, 2]				
2. Programme Specification	2.3 The programme and course specifications are communicated and made available to the stakeholders [1, 2]				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
3. Programme Structure and Content	3.1 The curriculum is designed based on constructive alignment with the expected learning outcomes [1]				
3. Programme Structure and Content	3.2 The contribution made by each course to achieve the expected learning outcomes is clear [2]				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
3. Programme Structure and Content	3.3 The curriculum is logically structured, sequenced, integrated and up-to-date [3, 4, 5, 6]				
4. Teaching and Learning Approach	4.1 The educational philosophy is well articulated and communicated to all stakeholders [1]				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
4. Teaching and Learning Approach	4.2 Teaching and learning activities are constructively aligned to the achievement of the expected learning outcomes [2, 3, 4, 5]				
4. Teaching and Learning Approach	4.3 Teaching and learning activities enhance life-long learning [6]				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
5. Student Assessment	5.1 The student assessment is constructively aligned to the achievement of the expected learning outcomes [1, 2]				
5. Student Assessment	5.2 The student assessments including timelines, methods, regulations, weight distribution, rubrics and grading are explicit and communicated to students [4, 5]				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
5. Student Assessment	5.3 Methods including assessment rubrics and marking schemes are used to ensure validity, reliability and fairness of student assessment [6, 7]				
5. Student Assessment	5.4 Feedback of student assessment is timely and helps to improve learning [3]				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
5. Student Assessment	5.5 Students have ready access to appeal procedure [8]				
6. Academic Staff Quality	6.1 Academic staff planning (considering succession, promotion, re-deployment, termination, and retirement) is carried out to fulfil the needs for education, research and service [1]				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
6. Academic Staff Quality	6.2 Staff-to-student ratio and workload are measured and monitored to improve the quality of education, research and service [2]				
6. Academic Staff Quality	6.3 Recruitment and selection criteria including ethics and academic freedom for appointment, deployment and promotion are determined and communicated [4, 5, 6, 7]				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
6. Academic Staff Quality	6.4 Competences of academic staff are identified and evaluated [3]				
6. Academic Staff Quality	6.5 Training and developmental needs of academic staff are identified and activities are implemented to fulfil them [8]				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
6. Academic Staff Quality	6.6 Performance management including rewards and recognition is implemented to motivate and support education, research and service [9]				
6. Academic Staff Quality	6.7 The types and quantity of research activities by academic staff are established, monitored and benchmarked for improvement [10]				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
7. Support Staff Quality	7.1 Support staff planning (at the library, laboratory, IT facility and student services) is carried out to fulfil the needs for education, research and service [1]				
7. Support Staff Quality	7.2 Recruitment and selection criteria for appointment, deployment and promotion are determined and communicated [2]				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
7. Support Staff Quality	7.3 Competences of support staff are identified and evaluated [3]				
7. Support Staff Quality	7.4 Training and developmental needs of support staff are identified and activities are implemented to fulfil them [4]				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
7. Support Staff Quality	7.5 Performance management including rewards and recognition is implemented to motivate and support education, research and service [5]				
8.Student Quality and Support	8.1 The student intake policy and admission criteria are defined, communicated, published, and up-to-date [1]				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
8.Student Quality and Support	8.2 The methods and criteria for the selection of students are determined and evaluated [2]				
8.Student Quality and Support	8.3 There is an adequate monitoring system for student progress, academic performance, and workload [3]				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
8.Student Quality and Support	8.4 Academic advice, co-curricular activities, student competition, and other student support services are available to improve learning and employability [4]				
8.Student Quality and Support	8.5 The physical, social and psychological environment is conducive for education and research as well as personal well-being [5]				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
9. Facilities and Infrastructure	9.1The teaching and learning facilities and equipment (lecture halls, classrooms, project rooms, etc.) are adequate and updated to support education and research [1]				
9. Facilities and Infrastructure	9.2 The library and its resources are adequate and updated to support education and research [3, 4]				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
9. Facilities and Infrastructure	9.3 The laboratories and equipment are adequate and updated to support education and research [1, 2]				
9. Facilities and Infrastructure	9.4 The IT facilities including e-learning infrastructure are adequate and updated to support education and research [1, 5, 6]				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
9. Facilities and Infrastructure	9.5 The standards for environment, health and safety; and access for people with special needs are defined and implemented [7]				
10. Quality Enhancement	10.1 Stakeholders' needs and feedback serve as input to curriculum design and development [1]				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
10. Quality Enhancement	10.2 The curriculum design and development process is established and subjected to evaluation and enhancement [2]				
10. Quality Enhancement	10.3 The teaching and learning processes and student assessment are continuously reviewed and evaluated to ensure their relevance and alignment [3]				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
10. Quality Enhancement	10.4 Research output is used to enhance teaching and learning [4]				
10. Quality Enhancement	10.5 Quality of support services and facilities (at the library, laboratory, IT facility and student services) is subjected to evaluation and enhancement [5]				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
10. Quality Enhancement	10.6 The stakeholder's feedback mechanisms are systematic and subjected to evaluation and enhancement [6]				
11. Output	11.1 The pass rates and dropout rates are established, monitored and benchmarked for improvement [1]				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
11. Output	11.2 The average time to graduate is established, monitored and benchmarked for improvement [1]				
11. Output	11.3 Employability of graduates is established, monitored and benchmarked for improvement [1]				

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
11. Output	11.4 The types and quantity of research activities by students are established, monitored and benchmarked for improvement [2]				
12. Output	11.5 The satisfaction levels of stakeholders are established, monitored and benchmarked for improvement [3]				
Overall Verdict					

Appendix E

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SAMPLE of AUN-QA ASSESSMENT REPORT (PROGRAMME LEVEL)

AUN-QA Assessment No.: **99th AUN-QA Assessment at AUN University**	Date of Assessment: **1 – 3 August 2015**
Name of Programme Assessed: **Bachelor Degree in Manufacturing Engineering** SAMPLE	
Name of University: **AUN University**	
Name of Faculty/School: **Faculty of Engineering**	
Name of Management Representative/Designation: **Dr. Ali Ahmad/Head of Department**	Email: **ahmad@aun.com**
Name of Assessors: **Dr. Tommy Lee, University of SEA** **Dr. Amir Hamzeh, University of Northeast**	

Report Summary

This report is based on the information provided in the self-assessment report (SAR), evidences, site tour and interviews with selected stakeholders including academic and support staff, students, alumni and employers. It should be read together with the preliminary findings presented at the closing ceremony where the key strengths and areas for improvement were highlighted.

The AUN-QA assessment at programme level covers 11 criteria and each criterion is assessed based on a 7-point scale. The summary of the assessment results is as follows:

Criteria	Score
1. Expected Learning Outcomes	4
2. Programme Specification	5
3. Programme Structure and Content	4
4. Teaching and Learning Approach	5
5. Student Assessment	5
6. Academic Staff Quality	5
7. Support Staff Quality	4
8. Student Quality and Support	5
9. Facilities and Infrastructure	4
10. Quality Enhancement	4
11. Output	5
Overall Verdict	**4.5**

Based on the assessment results, the Bachelor of XXX Programme fulfilled the AUN-QA requirements. Overall the quality assurance implemented for the programme is between “Adequate as Expected” and “Better than Adequate”.

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
1. Expected Learning Outcomes	1.1 The expected learning outcomes have been clearly formulated and aligned with the vision and mission of the university [1,2]	The established learning outcomes are aligned to the requirements of the National Accreditation Board as well as reference to ABET and prominent university in USA, UK, Australia and Singapore. The expected learning outcomes are revised every 4 years with the latest revision in 2014. These are formulated with the consideration of the regional and national needs and global trend of scientific progress, which are part of the university, faculty and department mission statements. SAMPLE	The formulation of expected learning outcomes should be based on an educational taxonomy and the basic rules in writing the expected learning outcomes should be observed.	4	4
1. Expected Learning Outcomes	1.2 The expected learning outcomes cover both subject specific and generic (i.e. transferable) learning outcomes [3]	The expected learning outcomes are established and integrated for both specific and generic skills and knowledge using matrix of competencies as documented in the new curriculum 2014.	There is a lack of core courses and electives contributing to the programme generic expected learning outcomes 6, 7, 8 and 9 as documented in the curriculum map.	4	

Criteria		Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Score (1 – 7)	Overall Score
1. Expected Learning Outcomes	1.3 The expected learning outcomes clearly reflect the requirements of the stakeholders [4]	Stakeholder's inputs (meeting with stakeholders on 28 August 2013) are gathered and reflected in the expected learning outcome documented in the new curriculum 2014. SAMPLE	The relationship between the stakeholders' needs and the programme expected learning outcomes should be mapped so that the rationale and impact of change can be well established and communicated.	4	
2. Programme Specification	2.1 The information in the programme specification is comprehensive and up-to-date [1, 2]				

Appendix F

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AUN-QA ASSESSMENT FEEDBACK REPORT (PROGRAMME LEVEL)

AUN-QA Assessment No.:	Date of Assessment:
Name of University	Name of Faculty/School
Name Management Representative/Designation:	Email:
Name of Programme Assessed:	
Name of Assessors:	
Feedback on SAR Preparation (interpretation of criteria, writing of SAR, gathering of evidences and other problems faced in preparing the SAR)	
Feedback on Assessment Process (Process: pre-assessment preparation, site assessment and final assessment results and presentation; Assessment: objectivity, independence, evidence-based, Programme: itinerary, activities and duration)	
Feedback on Usefulness of Assessment Report (improvement, planning, benchmarking purposes)	
Other comments and suggestions to improve the AUN-QA Assessment	

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ASEAN UNIVERSITY NETWORK
17TH FLOOR, CHALOEM RAJAKUMARI 60
(CHAMCHURI 10) BUILDING,
CHULALONGKORN UNIVERSITY,
PHAYATHAI ROAD, BANGKOK
10330, THAILAND

TEL: (66 2) 2153640 / 2153642 / 2183256 / 2183258
FAX: (66 2) 2168808
WEBSITE: WWW.AUNSEC.ORG