ASEAN UNIVERSITY NETWORK QUALITY ASSURANCE

GUIDELINES FOR AUN QUALITY ASSESSMENT AND ASSESSORS

&

FRAMEWORK OF AUN-QA STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN 2012-2015

ASEAN UNIVERSITY NETWORK

AUN-QA
A Touch of Quality

Foreword

The compilation of the two AUN-QA publications, 'the Guidelines for AUN Quality Assessment and Assessors' and Framework of AUN-QA Strategic Action Plan 2012-2015 was made for the ease of references to the audience with an interest in AUN-QA, its system and mechanisms.

The first version of this compilation was published in 2012 while this latest version 2.0, was in publication after the adoption and endorsement by AUN-QA Chief Quality Officers' Meeting 2014 and 30th AUN Board of Trustees Meeting respectively.

Guidelines for AUN-QA Assessment and Assessors

Guidelines for AUN Quality Assessment and Assessors is published by:

Acknowledgement

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Foreword

The handbook documents the operating guidelines for AUN quality assessment. It sets out the roles, responsibilities and requirements of the applying university (assessee), assessors, observers and staff of AUN Secretariat.

The guidelines aim to provide a common frame of reference and accountability to the AUN quality assessment process and stakeholders. They are formulated based on Section 3.8 of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area, Third Edition, 2009. The European standards and guidelines for external quality agencies on accountability procedures are reproduced below.

1. A published policy for the assurance of the quality of the agency itself, made available on its website;
2. Documentation which demonstrates that:
   - the agency's processes and results reflect its mission and goals of quality assurance;
   - the agency has in place, and enforces, a no-conflict-of-interest mechanism in the work of its external experts;
   - the agency has reliable mechanisms that ensure the quality of any activities and material produced by subcontractors, if some or all of the elements in its quality assurance procedure are subcontracted to other parties;
   - the agency has in place internal quality assurance procedures which include an internal feedback mechanism (i.e. means to collect feedback from its own staff and council/board); an internal reflection mechanism (i.e. means to react to internal and external recommendations for improvement); and an external feedback mechanism (i.e. means to collect feedback from experts and reviewed institutions for future development) in order to inform and underpin its own development and improvement.
3. A mandatory cyclical external review of the agency's activities at least once every five years.

The publication of this handbook is the first step towards fulfilling the above guidelines and satisfying all of them is expected to be evolved over time. Feedback on the content of the handbook is welcome and it should be sent to the Executive Director, AUN Secretariat.

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

1.0 Introduction to AUN-QA Network

1.1 About AUN-QA

ASEAN University Network-Quality Assurance (AUN-QA) network is a group of Chief Quality Officers (CQOs) appointed by the AUN member universities as the focal point for coordinating activities to realise the mission of harmonising educational standards and seeking continuous improvement of academic quality of universities in ASEAN. The AUN-QA activities are carried out by the CQOs in accordance to the Bangkok Accord adopted in 2000, which provides a series of guidelines to promote the development of a quality assurance system as instruments for maintaining, improving and enhancing teaching, research and the overall academic standards of AUN member universities.

Since the establishment of the Bangkok Accord in 2000, AUN-QA has been actively promoting, developing, and implementing quality assurance practices based on an empirical approach where quality assurance practices are shared, tested, evaluated, and improved. The   AUN-QA timeline is depicted below.

ASEAN University Network

AUN - Quality Assurance Timeline

PAST ACHIEVEMENTS

1) Bangkok Accord on AUN-QA
2) AUN-QA Guidelines
3) AUN-QA Manual
4) AUN Actual Quality Assessments (AQAs)
5) IAI-QA trainings for CLMV

2014 - 2015
CURRENT FOCUSES

1) AUN Quality Assessment at Programme Level
2) Benchmarking by Peer Assessment at Programme Level
3) Preparation of the AUN Quality Assessment at Institutional Level
4) AUN-ADB Project
5) AUN-QA Training for Universities in ASEAN

1998
- 1998 AUN-QA initiated by 4th AUN-BOT Meeting

2000
- 2000 BANGKOK ACCORD on AUN-QA
- 2000 Chief Quality Officers (CQOs)

2004
- 2004 AUN-QA Guidelines Endorsement

2005
- 2005 Draft AUN-QA Manual Technical Assistance Under AUNP Support

2006
- 2006 AUN-QA Manual Endorsement

2007
- 2007 AQA Programme Assessment 2007 1st UM, Malaysia

2008
- 2008 AQA Programme Assessment 2008 4th ITB, Indonesia; 3rd UI, Indonesia; 2nd DLSU, Philippines
- 2008 AUN-QA Guidelines Chinese Edition Endorsement
- 2008 1st Training of New AUN-QA Assessors

2009
- 2009 AUN-QA Guidelines Vietnamese Edition was approved by BOT
- 2009 IAI-QA Training Manual Endorsement
- 2009 AQA Programme Assessment 2009 5th UGM, Indonesia; 6th VNU-HN, Viet Nam; 7th VNU-HCM, Viet Nam
- 2009 2nd Training of New AUN-QA Assessors

2010
- 2010 AQA Programme Assessment 2010 8th UI, Indonesia; 9th DLSU, Philippines; 10th VNU-HN, Viet Nam
- 2010 IAI-QA Trainings 2010 series Feb NUOL, Laos; Apr RUPP, Cambodia; May VNU-HCM, Viet Nam

2011
- 2011 Guide to AUN Actual Quality Assessment at Programme Level Endorsement
- 2011 AQA Programme Assessment 2011 11th UGM, Indonesia; 12th DLSU, Philippines; 13th VNU-HCM, Viet Nam; 14th UP, Philippines
- 2011 AUN-QA Training Course for Accomplishing Programme Assessment 3-6 Oct 11 Bangkok
- 2011 DAAD ASEAN-QA Training Workshop on QA Part 1

2012
- 2012 AUN-QA Workshop and CQOs Meeting 5-6 Jan 12 Chiang Mai Bangkok
- 2012 DAAD ASEAN-QA Training Workshop on QA Part 2
- 2012 AUN-QA Training Course for Accomplishing Programme Assessment 16-19 Apr 12 Bangkok
- 2012 AQA programme assessment 2012 14th VNU-HN, Viet Nam; 15th UI, Indonesia; 16th VNU-HN, Viet Nam
- 2012 AUN-QA Training Course 4-7 Dec 12 Bangkok
- 2012 AUN-ADB Project for CLM Countries
- 2012 DAAD ASEAN-QA Training Workshop on QA Part 3

2013
- 2013 AQA Programme Assessment 2013 17th IPB, Indonesia; 18th VNU-HN, Viet Nam; 19th VNU-HCM, Viet Nam; 20th UGM, Indonesia; 21st UNAIR, Indonesia; 22nd DLSU, Philippines; 23rd UI, Indonesia; 24th VNU-HN, Viet Nam
- 2013 AUN-QA Training Course for Accomplishing Programme Assessment 22-25 Apr 13 Bangkok
- 2013 AUN-QA Advanced Training Course Nov 2013 Philippines

2014
- 2014 AQA Programme Assessment 2014 25th UP, Philippines; 26th CU, Thailand; 27th IPB, Indonesia; 28th VNU-HN, Viet Nam; 29th UGM, Indonesia; 30th VNU-HCM, Viet Nam; 31st CTU, Viet Nam; 32nd UGM, Indonesia; 33rd DLSU, Philippines; 34th VNU-HCM, Viet Nam; 35th UI, Indonesia
- 2014 AUN-QA Training Tier 1 25th UP, Philippines 18-21 March; 26th CU, Thailand 1-4 December
- 2014 AUN-QA Training Tier 2 13-19 November
- 2014 AUN-ADB Project for CLM Countries 28-31 Jul Cambodia; 4-7 Aug Lao PDR; 25-28 Aug Myanmar

DAAD ASEAN-QA Stakeholder Conference 9th - 11th of October 2013, Bangkok, Thailand

1.2 Objectives of AUN-QA

AUN-QA is established under the auspices of the ASEAN University Network (AUN), and is the de facto regional quality assurance agency for higher education in ASEAN. The main objectives of AUN-QA are:

- Develop, promote, implement and enhance the AUN-QA Guidelines and criteria
- Facilitate and conduct AUN quality assessment
- Serve as the authority for issuing AUN quality labels
- Develop and train quality assurance professionals and practitioners
- Provide advisory and consulting services on best quality assurance practices
- Collaborate with other quality agencies inside and outside ASEAN in relation to harmonisation of quality assurance frameworks and development of professionals in quality assurance.

1.3 Structure of AUN-QA

The AUN-QA network consists of members and associate members, a Quality Assurance (QA) Council, a Secretariat and a pool of assessors, all of whom are governed by the Board of Trustees of the AUN. The organisation of AUN-QA network is documented below.

1.3.1 Functions of the Board of Trustees (BOT)

The AUN-BOT, as the highest policy making body of the network, shall have the additional responsibilities necessary to carry out the objectives of the AUN-QA
- Formulate policies for the operation of the AUN-QA network;
- Approve proposals for projects, including budget allocation, work programmes and implementation activities;
- Approve the functions of the QA Council and the appointment of its members;

- Conduct periodic review and evaluation of on-going projects and activities based on the recommendations and assessment of the Executive Director; and,
- Perform such other functions that may be necessary to carry out the objectives of the AUN.

1.3.2 Functions of the QA Council

The QA Council shall have the following functions:

- Formulate, govern and review directions and policies for the operation of the AUN-QA network;
- Formulate and review guidelines, criteria, and documentation for AUN-QA models, assessment process, assessor's appointment, membership and certification scheme and fees;
- Appoint AUN assessors and develop the system for training and certifying them;
- Endorse assessment reports and certification status; and
- Revoke certification status of university if it fails to honour and fulfill its public and social duties, undertakings and obligations to its stakeholders including AUN-QA network; and

- Approved and cancel the status of associate membership in the AUN-QA network.

The QA Council will be headed by the Executive Director with **3 current Lead Assessors and 1 AUN-QA Expert (invited by the AUN Secretariat).** The term of the council members will be **2 years** so as to allow the phase-in of new members. The council shall meet on a need-to basis via formal and informal channels such as tele-conferencing, skype, emails, etc.

1.3.3 Functions of the Executive Director

The Executive Director shall have the following functions relating to AUN-QA:

- Manage the activities of the AUN Secretariat and QA Council;
- Coordinate and monitor the AUN-QA programmes of the participating universities;
- Establish and maintain links with other quality assurance bodies within and outside ASEAN;
- Perform the role of a Registrar of Assessors who is responsible for the development of a pool of qualified AUN assessors, assignment and performance of assessors, and handling of feedback and complaints of assessors;
- Engage a third party to carry out an external review of the agency's QA activities at least once every five years;
- Propose and develop ideas, innovations or mechanisms for sourcing and generating funds for AUN-QA activities; and
- Perform such other functions which may be assigned by the Board of Trustees from time to time.

The Executive Director must have an outstanding record in managing or directing international programmes and cooperation projects which are recognised in the region. He/she shall be appointed by the AUN BOT for a fixed term of 4 (four) years, renewable for another term.

1.3.4 Roles of the Members and Associate Members of AUN-QA Network

The members and associate members of AUN-QA network shall fulfill, support and participate in AUN-QA programmes and activities. They shall appoint CQOs for their universities and nominate suitable candidates to be trained and performed as AUN assessors.

They shall appoint CQOs for their universities and nominate suitable candidates to be trained and performed as AUN assessors.

Associate Member shall pay an annual membership fee of US$500 per calendar year.

1.3.5 Functions of the Secretariat

The Secretariat shall be headed by an Executive Director and have the following functions relating to AUN-QA:
- Plan and organise AUN-QA quality assessment, workshop, programmes, projects and activities;
- Coordinate and monitor AUN-QA quality assessment process, programmes, projects and activities;
- Support the AUN assessors before, during and after the quality assessment;
- Maintain and update AUN-QA documentations; website and social media;
- Accept, check and process application for associate membership;
- Maintain and update the registry of AUN assessors and CQOs; and membership; and
- Ensure the implementation of the policies and directives of the AUN BOT and QA Council.

1.3.6 Panel of AUN Assessors

AUN-QA has established a pool of CQOs and professionals who serve as panel of AUN assessors in actual quality assessment. From time to time, the AUN-QA Secretariat will invite or request AUN-QA members and associate members to nominate CQOs and staff to be considered for appointment to the panel of AUN assessors. Suitably qualified candidates are requested to submit curriculum vitae and the names of two referees. In selecting the assessor, consideration should be given to the assessor's competence and personal attributes in addition to education and work experience. The minimum requirements of an assessor to be appointed to the panel of AUN Assessors are listed below.

Education and Experience

- A recognised university education
- 5 years of experience in quality assurance or quality assessment in educational, professional or industrial setting
- Knowledge and understanding of the higher education

Personal Attributes

The assessor should posses a number of personal attributes that contribute to the successful performance of quality assessment. An assessor should be ethical, open minded, diplomatic, observant, perceptive, versatile, tenacious, decisive and self-reliant. He/she should fulfilled all obligations assigned as an assessor and has not received any adverse report from the university being assessed, peers or AUN Secretariat.

Competencies of AUN-QA Professionals

To guide AUN-QA network and its members in developing QA roles and developmental needs of their QA professionals, a progressive competency development model for AUN-QA professionals is adopted as illustrated below.

AUN-QA Professional Development Competency Model

Level		AUN-QA Practitioner	AUN-QA Assessor	AUN-QA Lead Assessor	AUN-QA Expert
Outcome		Ability to Implement AUN-QA Models	Ability to Assess AUN-QA Models	Ability to Lead AUN-QA Assessment	Ability to Train AUN-QA Professionals
Skills	Conceptual	• Strategic Management & Quality Planning	• Strategic Management & Quality Planning	• Strategic Management & Quality Planning	• Strategic Management & Quality Planning • Training Needs Analysis & Evaluation
	People	• Team Management • Stakeholders' Interview • Change Management	• Team Management • Stakeholders' Interview • Cultural Awareness	• Team Leadership & Conflict Management • Stakeholders' Interview • Cultural Awareness	• Facilitation • Coaching • Learning Styles • Cultural Awareness
	Technical	• IQA & SAR Development and Implementation • IQA & SAR Review • Project Management	• AUN-QA Guidelines • Desktop Assessment • Documentation Review • Site Assessment • Assessment Report	• AUN-QA Guidelines • Assessment Planning • Desktop Assessment • Documentation Review • Site Assessment • Assessment Report	• Course Design & Development • Delivery Methodology • Skill Domains
Knowledge	QA	AUN-QA Model (Programme Level)	AUN-QA Model (IQA System Level)		AUN-QA Model (Institutional Level)
		Quality Management Concepts and Principles			
	Edu	Learning Outcomes, Teaching & Learning, Student Assessment, Curriculum Design & Development and Educational Trends			
Attitude		Professionalism (including English Language) and Ethics			

All AUN assessors are required to attend the appropriate training before performing their roles as assigned by the AUN-QA network.

<u>Term of Assessor</u>

The term of appointment to the panel of AUN assessors is renewable every three years on satisfying the requirements in paragraph 1.3.6. Photographs and biographies of the panel of AUN assessors are available at AUN website.

1.3.7 Structure and Roles of Assessor

For the quality assessment to be carried out efficiently and effectively, the panel of AUN assessors is structured as follows:

<u>Roles of Assessor</u>

In general, an assessor should perform the following roles:

- Preparing assessment plan & checklist
- Communicating and clarifying assessment requirements
- Planning & carrying out assigned responsibilities effectively & efficiently throughout the assessment and be present at both the opening and closing sessions
- Making observations on curriculum, process and quality improvements
- Reporting the assessment results
- Retaining & safeguarding documents pertaining to the assessment

<u>Rolesof Lead Assessor</u>

In each assessment team, one senior assessor will be appointed as the lead assessor to oversee and lead the actual quality assessment. In addition, to the roles of the assessor, 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. The appointment of lead or senior assessor has to satisfy the following conditions in addition to the requirements of an assessor:

- Served as an assessor in more than 2 actual quality assessments, and
- Fulfilled all quality assessment obligations and received no adverse report from the university being assessed, peers or AUN Secretariat.

<u>Roles of Chief Assessor</u>

In each quality assessment project, one lead assessor from the assessment teams will be appointed as the chief assessor to oversee and lead the entire actual quality assessment. He/she should have served as a lead assessor in more than 2 quality assessments. In addition, to the roles of the lead assessor, the chief assessor will provide leadership to the assessment teams, joint- interviews across different assessment teams, opening and closing sessions. He/she will also be responsible for moderating ratings of common criteria across different

assessment teams, and moderating the final assessment results before submitting them to the QA Council.

Key Rolesof Assessors Before,Duringand After Assessment

A summary of the key roles of assessors before, during and after the quality assessment is tabulated below.

Key Stages	Chief Assessor	Lead Assessor	Assessor
Invitation as assessor to the actual quality assessment	• Accept or decline invitation by assessor • If accepted, assessor to submit Disclosure of Conflict of Interest. The disclosure of conflict of interest is necessary to ensure the impartial fulfillment of roles of assessor and the assessment process.		
Confirmation of assessor's appointment	• Accept appointment, roles and type of assessment to be carried out as assigned by AUN Secretariat		
Receipt of assessment itinerary	• Review overall itinerary and propose changes, if necessary	• Review itinerary of the assigned assessment and propose changes, if necessary	
Confirmation of assessment itinerary	• Submit registration details such as flight information, arrival and departure, accommodation, diet requirements, etc. • All assessors must be present at the opening and closing sessions.		
Receipt of SAR	• Assign tasks to lead assessors and co-assessor(s) • Carry out desktop assessment • Clarify SAR with the university to be assessed • Consolidate desktop	• Assign tasks to co-assessor(s) • Carry out desktop assessment • Clarify SAR with the university to be assessed • Consolidate desktop assessment and send a copy to	• Carry out desktop assessment • Submit desktop assessment to lead assessor

Key Stages	Chief Assessor	Lead Assessor	Assessor
	assessment and send a copy to co-assessor(s)	co-assessor(s)	
Site assessment	• Attend the opening and closing sessions, and carry out quality assessment, interviews, site visit and documentation review		
	• Lead opening and closing sessions and introduce assessment teams • Lead and close interviews with common participants across all assessment teams • Lead and close interviews • Adhere to assessment itinerary and request changes, if desired • Review and request for objective evidences • Observe and identify areas of strengths and improvement • Rate level of performance against assessed criteria • Establish and agree on level of performance • Reconciliation of ratings of common criteria across assessment teams • Prepare preliminary assessment report and findings for	• Lead and close interviews • Adhere to assessment itinerary and request changes, if desired • Review and request for objective evidences • Observe and identify areas of strengths and improvement • Rate level of performance against assessed criteria • Establish and agree on level of performance • Prepare preliminary assessment report and findings for presentation • Present assessment findings at closing session	• Participate fully in interviews • Review and request for objective evidences • Observe and identify areas of strengths and improvement • Rate level of performance against assessed criteria • Prepare preliminary assessment report and findings for presentation

Key Stages	Chief Assessor	Lead Assessor	Assessor
	presentation • Present assessment findings at closing session		
Post-assessment	• Prepare, moderate and finalise all assessment reports and results to AUN Secretariat within 4 weeks after site assessment • Provide feedback to AUN Secretariat on the assessment, if necessary • Request payment of honorarium and submit claims, if any • Review feedback from the university being assessed	• Prepare and finalise assessment report and result to chief assessor within 3 weeks after site assessment • Provide feedback to chief assessor and AUN Secretariat on the assessment, if necessary • Request payment of honorarium and submit claims, if any • Review feedback from the university being assessed	• Submit assessment report and result to lead assessor within 2 weeks after site assessment • Provide feedback to lead assessor and AUN Secretariat on the assessment, if necessary • Request payment of honorarium and submit claims, if any

1.3.8 Code of Ethical Conduct for Assessor

In promoting high standards of public service and ethical conduct, assessors:

- shall conduct themselves professionally with integrity, truth, accuracy, fairness, respect, and responsibility to the stakeholders and the general public at all times;
- shall not represent conflicting or competing interests, nor place themselves in such a position where their interest may be in conflict or appear to be in conflict with the assessment process and certification;
- Shall complete the "Conflict of Interest Declaration" form upon accepting the role of the assessor;
- shall not offer confidential information or disclose information that may in any way influence the assessment process and certification;
- shall not intentionally communicate false or misleading information that may compromise the integrity of the assessment process and certification status; and
- shall not approach an institution that they have assessed for their personal gain, including the establishment of an employment or consulting relationship

1.3.9 Provision of AUN-QATraining and Consulting to AUN-QA Members and Associate Members

Expansion of awareness and outreach of AUN-QA is encouraged. Training relating to the SAR writing and assessment shall be made through AUN Secretariat. These training courses that are not administered by AUN Secretariat shall not be recognised as a prerequisite for membership application.

1.4 Membership of AUN-QA Network

The membership of AUN-QA network consists of the following categories:

Category A Membership (Members)

Consists of member universities of the ASEAN University Network (AUN). All AUN members will automatically become a member of the AUN-QA network which are approved by the BOT.

Category B Membership (Associate Members)

Consists of non-member universities of the AUN. Associate membership is open to any educational institution of higher learning that fully meets the associate membership requirements specified by the AUN-QA network. All associate

membership shall be approved by the AUN-QA Council.

1.4.1 Benefits of Members and Associate Members of AUN-QA Network

- Opportunities to be involved in AUN-QA programmes, and/or projects and to develop joint initiatives with other partnering organisations;
- Networking through CQOs meetings and conferences;
- Opportunity for their institutions and programmes to be assessed by AUN-QA network;
- Given privilege and priority to attend AUN-QA training workshops and courses; and
- Sharing of AUN-QA best practices and information relating to quality assurance.

1.4.2 Eligibility of Associate Membership

- The institution shall be recognised by the national QA agencies and/or the relevant ministry of the country where the business is registered and operated,

- The institution must have been established for at least 10 years, and

- Shall demonstrate QA practices that support AUN-QA network such as have implemented QA systems and processes, attending AUN-QA organized training, etc.

1.4.3 Application and Withdrawal of Associate Membership

Application form for associate member shall be submitted in the prescribed form. Each application will be subject to the approval by the QA Council. All decisions made by the QA Council shall be final.

Associate membership shall commence upon the receipt of the annual membership fee.

Any member who wishes to withdraw from associate membership may do so by sending a written notice of withdrawal to the Executive Director of AUN. The institution shall be liable to all outstanding sums, if any.

The AUN-QA Council shall have the power to cancel membership of any associate member who is deemed to have acted contrary to the interests of the AUN or AUN- QA network. The cancellation of associate membership and its reasons shall be made in writing.

### 1.4.4 Use of Membership Status

Associate membership to the AUN-QA network does not entitle the institution to use such membership as if it were a member of ASEAN University Network (AUN). AUN- QA network shall not be responsible for any statements and opinions made by any members in papers or discussions at any of its meeting. No members may act on behalf of the AUN-QA network or issue reports for the network unless such actions or other documents have the prior written approval of the Executive Director of AUN. All members shall adhere to the guidelines stated in this guide.

The annual subscription payable by associate members shall be at the rates decided by the QA Council from time to time. Membership shall automatically be ceased if the annual subscription is not paid within six (6) months. Re-instatement of membership shall be by re-application with all outstanding subscriptions duly paid.

2.0   Quality Assessment Process

2.1   The PDCA Process

AUN-QA adopts the Plan-Do-Check-Action (PDCA) or Deming Cycle approach for quality assessment at the institutional, IQA system and programme level as illustrated in the diagram below.
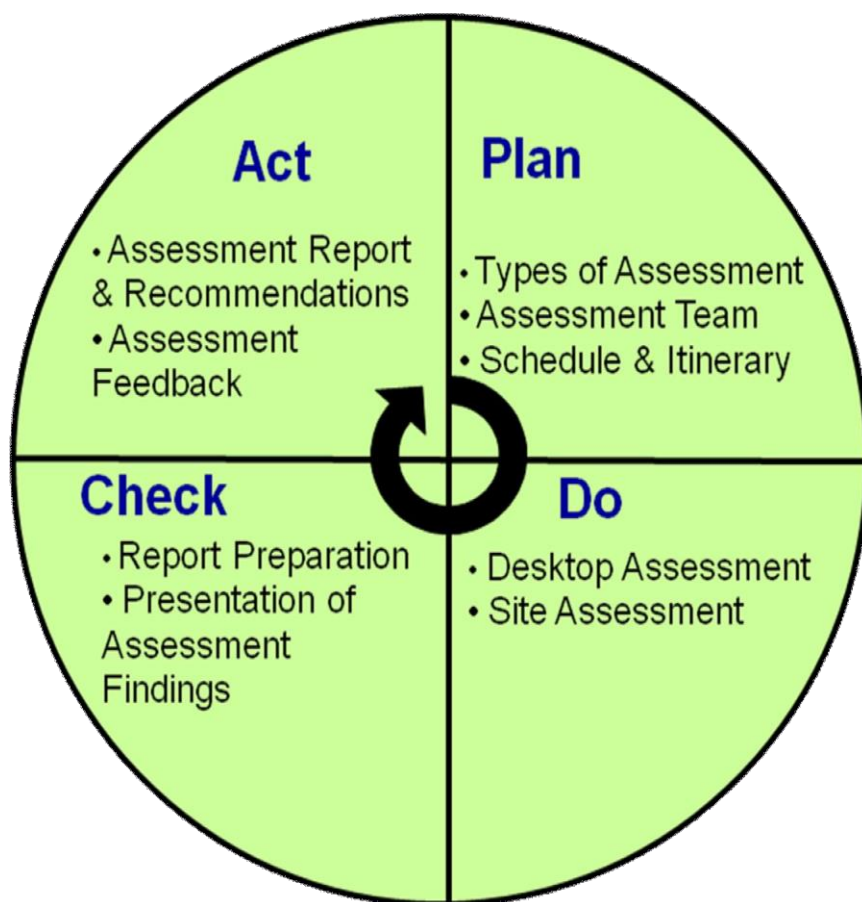
PDCA Process

The following table shows the typical timelines and key activities for an AUN quality assessment based on the PDCA process.

Stage	Timeline	Key Activity	Agent
Plan	6 – 12 months prior to assessment	Issue call for applications for assessment	AUN Secretariat
		Apply for assessment	Applying university
		Process applications and schedule universities for assessment	AUN Secretariat
		Confirm schedule of assessment	• Applying university • AUN Secretariat
	6 months prior to assessment	Invite assessors for assessment	AUN Secretariat
		Accept or decline invitation by assessors. Submit Disclosure of Conflict of Interest	Assessor
		Appoint and confirm assessors and assessment teams	• AUN Secretariat • Assessor
	2 - 3 months prior to assessment	Confirm assessment itinerary, accommodation and logistics arrangements with applying university	• AUN Secretariat • Applying university • Assessor
		Send registration form to assessor	AUN Secretariat
		Submit registration form with flight information, accommodation and diet requirements	Assessor
Do	$1\frac{1}{2}$ - 2 months prior to assessment	Submit self-assessment report (SAR) to AUN Secretariat and assessors	Applying university
		Conduct desktop assessment and clarify with applying university, if necessary	Assessor
	1 day prior to assessment	Arrival of assessors and AUN Secretariat	• AUN Secretariat • Applying university • Assessor

Stage	Timeline	Key Activity	Agent
	Day 1 of assessment	Opening session and site assessment	• AUN Secretariat • Applying university • Assessor
Do/Check	Day 2 of assessment	Site assessment and preparation of assessment report	• AUN Secretariat • Applying university • Assessor
Check	Day 3 of assessment	Closing session and departure of assessors and AUN Secretariat	• AUN Secretariat • Applying university • Assessor
Act	Within 4 weeks after assessment	Submit assessment report to AUN Secretariat and provide feedback to AUN Secretariat on the assessment, if necessary. Request payment of honorarium and submit claims, if any	Assessor
	Within 6 weeks after assessment	Send assessment report and assessment feedback to applying university	AUN Secretariat
	Within 10 weeks after assessment	Submit feedback on assessment process and results	• Applying university • AUN Secretariat
	Within 12 weeks after assessment	Review feedback and inform applying university, if any	• AUN Secretariat • Assessor
	Within 14 weeks after assessment	Recommend the release of final assessment reports and certification status to the QA Council for endorsement	• AUN Secretariat
		Endorse the release of final assessment reports and certification status	QA Council
	Within 16 weeks after assessment	Release of final assessment report and certification status to applying university and publish certification status in AUN website	AUN Secretariat
	Within 30 weeks after assessment	Release of best practices of applying university in the AUN-QA Benchmarking Database	AUN Secretariat

| Stage	Timeline	Key Activity	Agent
	Within 9 – 12 months after assessment	Request for progress report from applying university on recommendations made by assessment teams	AUN Secretariat
		Submit progress report by applying university	Applying university
		Monitor and track status of certified university	AUN Secretariat

## 2.2 Plan Phase

The plan phase consists of:

- Types of Assessment
- Assessment Team
- Schedule & Itinerary

2.2.1 Types of Assessment

At the start of the annual planning exercise, AUN Secretariat will issue a call to universities interested in AUN-QA assessment. The three types of AUN quality assessment are institutional, IQA system and programme level. Detailed description of the models is available in the AUN-QA Manual for the Implementation of the Guidelines and Guide to AUN Actual Quality Assessment at Programme Level.
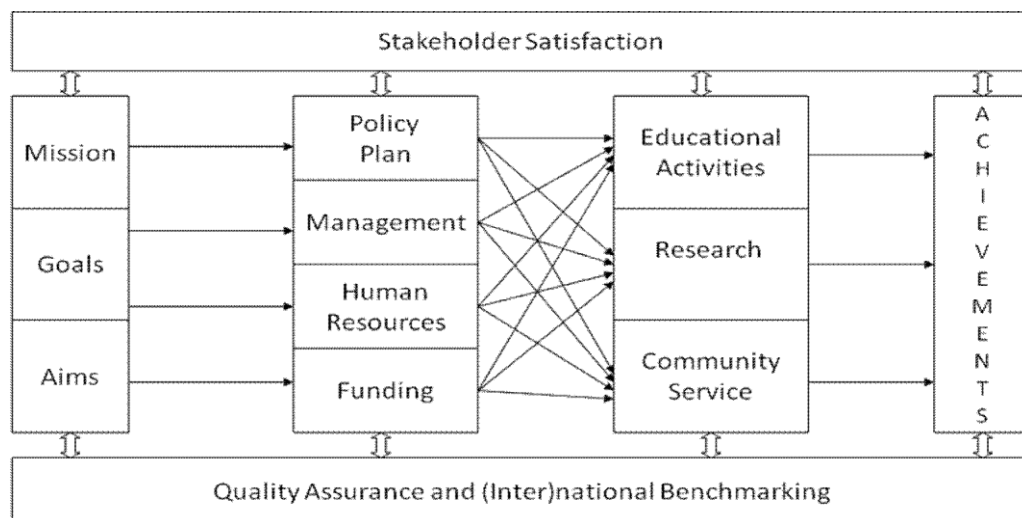
AUN-QA Model for Institutional Level
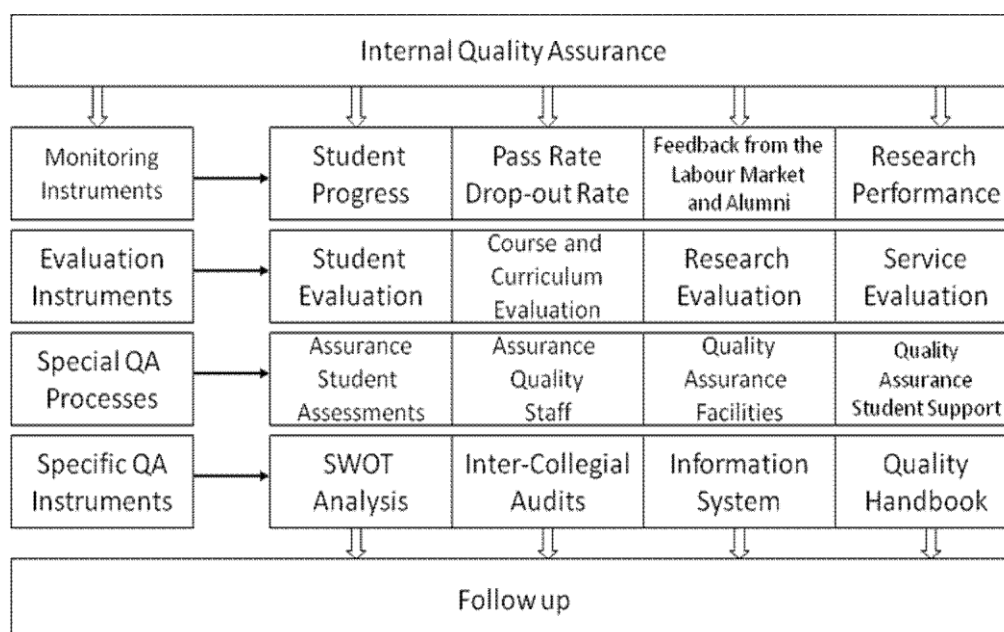
AUN-QA Model for IQA System
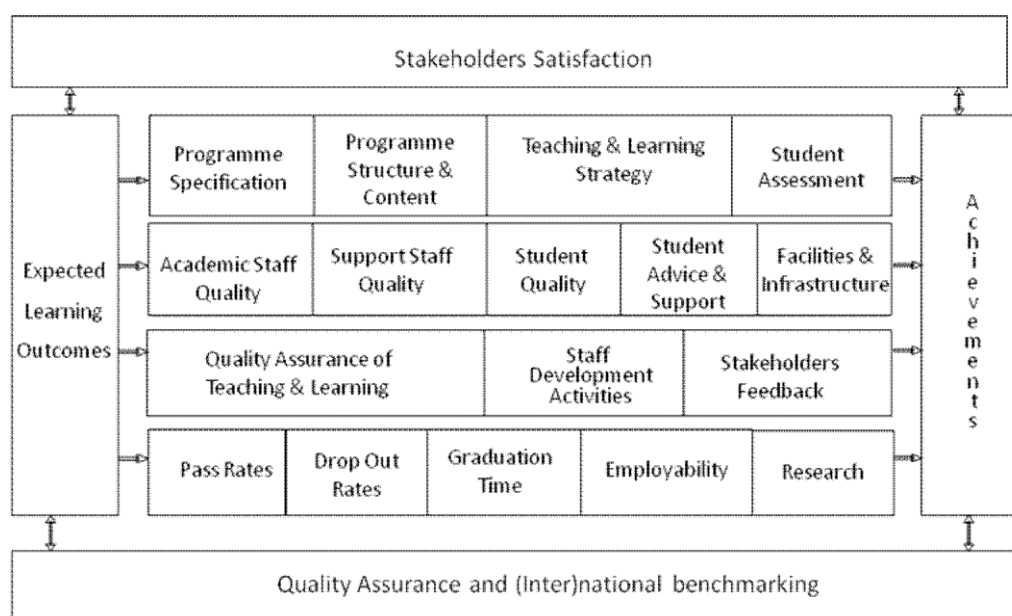
AUN-QA Model for Programme Level

2.2.2 Assessment Team

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. As a guide, the number of assessment teams assigned to the types of quality assessment is as follows:

Assessment Type	Institutional/IQA System	Programme
No. of Assessment Teams	2 – 3 teams	1 team per programme
No. of Assessment Days	4 – 5 days	3 days

The assessors will carry out their assigned roles and tasks as outlined in paragraph 1.3.7. In general, an assessor should perform the following roles:

- Preparing assessment plan & checklist
- Communicating and clarifying assessment requirements
- Planning & carrying out assigned responsibilities effectively & efficiently throughout the assessment and be present at both the opening and closing sessions
- Making observations on curriculum, process and quality improvements
- Reporting the assessment results
- Retaining & safeguarding documents pertaining to the assessment

As an assessor, you need to establish contact with the members of the assessment team(s) and AUN Secretariat. It is important that the SAR reaches you at least $1^{1}/_{2}$ to 2 months before the assessment so that you have sufficient time to carry out desktop assessment and seek clarification with the university to be assessed if needed.

2.2.3 Schedule and Itinerary

You are required to review the preliminary assessment itinerary and suggest changes, if necessary.

A typical assessment itinerary will spread over 3 – 5 days depending on the type of quality assessment, and the size and complexity of the university to be assessed. It normally consists of:

- Opening session
- Site assessment
- Interviews with stakeholders
- Site tour
- Report preparation
- Closing session

A typical itinerary for programme level assessment is shown below.

Date/ Time	Programme
Day 1	
09.00 – 09.30	**Opening Session**
09.30 - 09.45	Coffee break
09.45 – 10.30	**Briefing by Faculty Dean**
10.30 – 10.45	Transferred to respective department
10.45 – 12.00	**Meeting with Key Faculty Members: Head of Department and Programme Chair**
12.00 – 13.30	**Site Visit to Laboratories, Workshops, Libraries**
13.30 – 14.30	Working lunch
14.30 – 15.45	**Meeting with Faculty Members**
15.45 – 16.00	Coffee break
16.00 – 17.30	**Meeting with Support Staff**
17.30 – 18.30	Departure to dinner venue
18.30 – 21.00	Welcoming dinner
21.00	Departure to hotel
Day 2	
07.30	Departure to Campus
08.30 – 10.00	**Meeting with Students**
10.00 – 11.30	**Meeting with Alumni**
11.30 – 13.00	**Meeting with Employers**
13.00 – 14.00	Working Lunch
14.00 – 17.00	**Conclusion & Preparation of the Actual Assessment by Assessors**
18.00 – 21.00	Dinner (Free & Easy)
Day 3	
07.30	Departure to Campus
09.00 - 11.00	**Presentation of Key Results of the Actual Assessment by Assessors**
11.00 – 11.30	**Closing Session**
11.30 – 13.00	Lunch

A typical itinerary for IQA system assessment is shown below.

Date/ Time	Programme
Day 1	
09.00 – 09.30	**Opening Session**
09.30 - 09.45	Coffee break
09.45 – 10.30	**Briefing by President, Vice-Chancellor or Rector**
10.30 – 12.30	**Meeting with Key Management Staff and Administrators**
12.30 – 13.30	Working lunch
13.30 – 15.15	**Meeting with Quality Assurance Department Head, Committees and Staff**
15.15 – 15.30	Coffee break
15.30 – 17.00	**Meeting with Human Resource Department Head, Committees and Staff**
17.00 – 18.30	Departure to dinner venue
18.30 – 21.00	Welcoming dinner
21.00	Departure to hotel
Day 2	
07.30	Departure to Campus
08.30 – 10.30	**Campus Tour**
10.30 – 10.45	Coffee Break
10.45 – 12.30	**Meeting with Selected Faculty Head, Committees and Staff**
12.30 – 13.30	Working Lunch
13.30 – 15.00	**Meeting with Selected Faculty Head, Committees and Staff**
15.00 – 15.15	Coffee Break
15.15 – 17.00	**Meeting with Selected Faculty Head, Committees and Staff**
18.00 – 21.00	Dinner (Free & Easy)
Day 3	
07.30	Departure to Campus
08.30 – 10.15	**Meeting with Research Department Head, Committees and Staff**
10.15 – 10.30	Coffee Break
10.30 – 12.30	**Meeting with Support Department Heads, Committees and Staff**
12.30 – 13.30	Working Lunch
13.30 – 17.00	**Conclusion & Preparation of the Actual Assessment by Assessors**
18.00 – 21.00	Dinner (Free & Easy)

Date/ Time	Programme
Day 4	
07.30	Departure to Campus
09.00 - 11.00	**Presentation of Key Results of the Actual Assessment by Assessors**
11.00 – 11.30	**Closing Session**
11.30 – 13.00	Lunch

A typical itinerary for institutional assessment is shown below.

Date/ Time	Programme
Day 1	
09.00 – 09.30	**Opening Session**
09.30 - 09.45	Coffee break
09.45 – 10.30	**Briefing by President, Vice-Chancellor or Rector**
10.30 – 12.30	**Meeting with Key Management Staff and Administrators**
12.30 – 13.30	Working lunch
13.30 – 15.15	**Meeting with Human Resource Department Head, Committees and Staff**
15.15 – 15.30	Coffee break
15.30 – 17.00	**Meeting with Finance/Funding Department Head, Committees and Staff**
17.00 – 18.30	Departure to dinner venue
18.30 – 21.00	Welcoming dinner
21.00	Departure to hotel
Day 2	
07.30	Departure to Campus
08.30 – 10.30	**Campus Tour**
10.30 – 10.45	Coffee Break
10.45 – 12.30	**Meeting with Selected Faculty Heads, Committees and Staff**
12.30 – 13.30	Working Lunch
13.30 – 15.00	**Meeting with Selected Faculty Heads, Committees and Staff**
15.00 – 15.15	Coffee Break
15.15 – 17.00	**Meeting with Selected Faculty Heads, Committees and Staff**
18.00 – 21.00	Dinner (Free & Easy)

Date/ Time	Programme
Day 3	
07.30	Departure to Campus
08.30 – 10.15	**Meeting with Research Department Head, Committees and Staff**
10.15 – 10.30	Coffee Break
10.30 – 12.30	**Meeting with Research Department Head, Committees and Staff**
12.30 – 13.30	Working Lunch
13.30 – 15.00	**Meeting with Support Departments Heads, Committees and Staff**
15.00 – 15.15	Coffee Break
15.15 – 17.00	**Meeting with Support Department Heads, Committees and Staff**
18.00 – 21.00	Dinner (Free & Easy)
Day 4	
07.30	Departure to Campus
08.30 – 10.00	**Meeting with Students**
10.00 – 11.15	**Meeting with Alumni**
11.15 – 12.30	**Meeting with Employers**
12.30 – 13.30	Working Lunch
13.30 – 17.00	**Conclusion & Preparation of the Actual Assessment by Assessors**
18.00 – 21.00	Dinner (Free & Easy)
Day 5	
07.30	Departure to Campus
09.00 - 11.00	**Presentation of Key Results of the Actual Assessment by Assessors**
11.00 – 11.30	**Closing Session**
11.30 – 13.00	Lunch

2.3 Do Phase

After the plan phase is the Do phase where most of work will be done involving desktop and site assessment.

2.3.1 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 Self-Assessment Report (SAR) and available documentation. The desktop assessment facilitates the development of an assessment plan using the AUN-QA Assessment Planning Template. 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 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 under the AUN-QA framework. If any of the criteria are not documented, the assessors should clarify with the contact person of the university. Identify information and documents mentioned in the report and verify them against the physical documents during the site assessment. Using the diagnostic questions outlined in the AUN-QA framework to develop questions and identify evidences for verification. Assessor may request for language translation of certain documents before the actual assessment, if necessary. This will help to increase the level of objectivity in the findings and assessment.

The PDCA approach is a good tool to apply in assessment planning. Questions can be formulated at each stage of the PDCA.
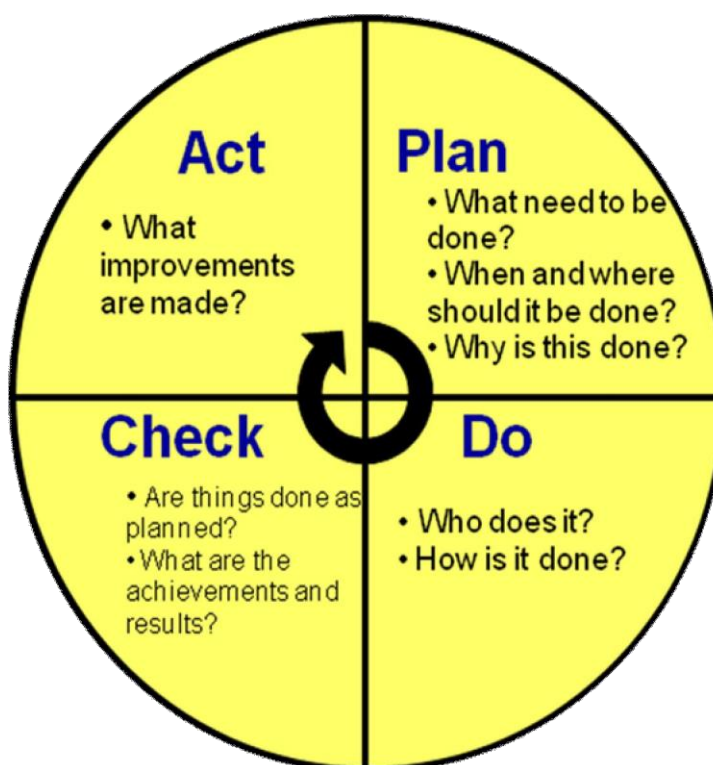
For example at the plan stage, questions on what, when and why can be used to establish objectives and processes that deliver results based on AUN-QA guidelines and criteria and organisation policies. At the Do stage, questions can revolve around implementation and who are involved. At the check stage, 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 to help you in your planning of the questions for the interview.

To facilitate the desktop assessment and planning, AUN has formulated planning template for each type of assessment. These templates are given during the AUN Assessor Training Workshop and a copy is usually sent to the assessor prior to the assessment by AUN Secretariat.

2.3.2 Site Assessment

Actual 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 between the interviews or after the interviews. The assessment will conclude with a closing meeting.

An opening meeting with the host university management representatives should be held prior to the commencement of the actual 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 chief/lead assessor of the assessment team are as follows:

"Good morning ladies and gentlemen. My name is XXX and I am from ZZZZZ University and I am the lead of the assessment team. The other members in my team are Mr XXX and Ms XXX.

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. Should any change be required, we will coordinate with your representative XXX. If all things proceed as planned, the assessment will take between 2 and 3 days.

A final closing meeting will be held on the final day of the assessment where we will be presenting the summary of our findings. Before we proceed, is there anything that you would like to ask? (Pause for a second).

Thank you for your kind attention. We will now proceed with a presentation by the university."

Interviews

Interviews with various stakeholders are normally pre-arranged by the host university prior to the actual assessment. The interviews may start with a discussion involving the writers of the self-assessment report before and during the actual assessment. In this interview, the team can ask for clarification of any obscurities and explanation of any topics that are not totally 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, the didactic qualifications of the staff, the coherency of the programme, to find out if they are acquainted with the goals and objectives, the organisation of the curricula and the facilities.

These student interviews 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 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. The composition of the student panels requires special attention. It is important that the group is as far as possible representative of the whole student population in that field, i.e. that it not only includes the good students, but also the less gifted ones. The selection of students should follow AUN guidelines stated in paragraph 3.4. The assessors should have a list of the students and their details such as year of study, study pathway, etc being interviewed.

Interviews with staff members will be used for discussion on the content of the curriculum, the goals and objectives: "Why and how did you choose this programme?" Other topics to be discussed include the examinations, the final paper (if any), the final research projects, etc. It is advisable to talk with groups of not more than 25 staff members.

Other interviews will 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, etc. 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 graduates' quality and the relevancy of the 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 followings:

- 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 background of interviewees if necessary e.g. years of service or study, current position, scope of work, etc.

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. For example, how are students being assessed for their project works?
- Use close-ended questions to confirm information. Is there feedback gathered from stakeholders?
- Avoid leading questions. Do you think the curriculum is adequate and relevant? Leading interviewees to the answer of the question asked.
- Try to use neutral language. Avoid words like never, bad, good, always, weak, etc.

Before concluding the interview, do the followings:

- 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 your interviewees to think further rather than give a straight "Yes" or "No" answer. Close ended questions often cut the natural flow of your interviewee's thoughts, make them feel interrogated and put them on the defensive. Unless you are sure a close ended question would help, you should use open ended questions.

<u>Objective Evidence</u>

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 between interviews or at the end of the interview. 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 staff.

2.4   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 should hold a meeting with the host university's management representatives and those responsible for the functions concerned. The purpose of the meeting is to:

- present the preliminary results of the assessment to the management representatives and those responsible for the functions
- ensure that the results of the assessment are clearly understood
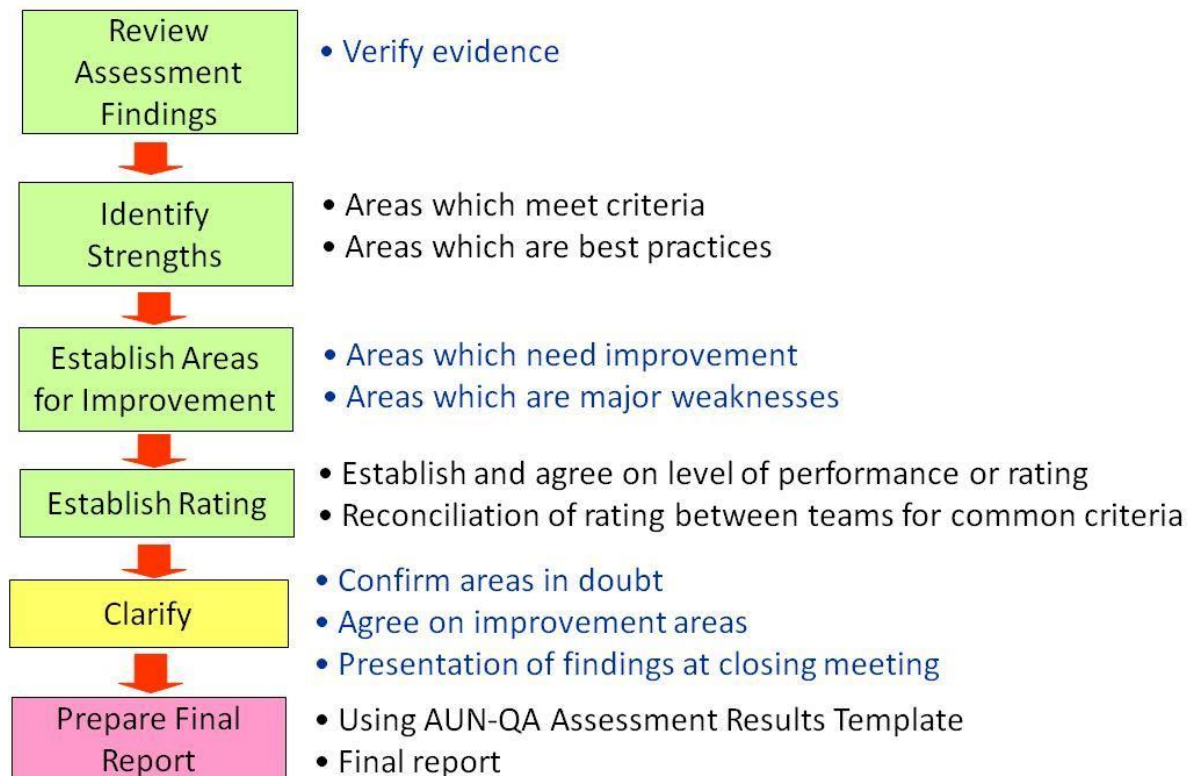- provide an opportunity for clarification
- conclude the assessment

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 applying university 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 below.

Review Assessment Findings	• Verify evidence
Identify Strengths	• Areas which meet criteria • Areas which are best practices
Establish Areas for Improvement	• Areas which need improvement • Areas which are major weaknesses
Establish Rating	• Establish and agree on level of performance or rating • Reconciliation of rating between teams for common criteria
Clarify	• Confirm areas in doubt • Agree on improvement areas • Presentation of findings at closing meeting
Prepare Final Report	• Using AUN-QA Assessment Results Template • Final 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.

AUN adopted a 7-point rating scale for its quality assessment. The scaling aims to offer the universities and external assessors an instrument for scaling their verdicts and to see how far they have progressed on the way to meeting the criteria and to see how far quality is assured. The meaning of the value in the 7-point scoring scale is as follows:

1= nothing (no documents, no plans, no evidence) present
2= this subject is in the planning stage
3= documents available, but no clear evidence that they are used
4= documents available and evidence that they are used
5= clear evidence on the efficiency of the aspect
6= example of best practices
7= excellent (world-class or leading practices)

For assessing the quality of teaching and learning, the numbers have a different wording, but more or less the same meaning. The assessment of the quality of a programme is also done on a 7-point scale. For looking at the quality and improvement activities, the 7-point scale could also be read as follows:

1= absolutely inadequate; immediate improvements must be made
2= inadequate, improvements necessary
3= inadequate, but minor improvements will make it adequate
4= adequate as expected (meeting the AUN-QA guidelines and criteria)
5= better than adequate (exceeding the AUN-QA guidelines and criteria)
6= example of best practices
7= excellent (world-class or leading practices)

As weight is not allocated to each criterion, the overall opinion should be based on the achievement or fulfilment of the criterion as a whole. It should not be computed based on the average score of the statements under each criterion.

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 your comment factually and indicate the importance of having the practice or process. The final report should be prepared using the AUN-QA Template.

In writing feedback report, do follow 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 comments are fundamental to an effective assessment. Your comments would help the university 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 evaluations

A closing meeting is usually done by the chief/lead assessor 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."

2.5 Act Phase

The Act phase involves preparing the final report and the assessment feedback. The final report consists of a summary and the assessment results. A typical summary report is documented below.

Introduction

This report documents the findings on the quality assessment at programme level for the Bachelor of XXX programme at the Faculty of ABC, University of XYZ on 3 October 2010. The quality assessment was carried out by Prof YYY from DEF University and Prof GHI from SSS University. The report is based on the information provided in the self-assessment report, on-site verification of the documentation and interviews with selected stakeholders including faculty staff, students, alumni and employers.

Results of Assessment

The assessment framework is based on the AUN Actual Quality Assessment at Programme Level. The assessment covers 15 criteria and each criterion was assessed based on a 7-point scale. A summary of the assessment results is as follows:

Listing the criteria and their scores.

The Department of ABC has put in place quality assurance approaches to address the criteria spelt out in the AUN-QA guidelines. Of the 15 criteria, 9 criteria were rated "better than adequate" especially in programme outcomes, specification and structure & content; student assessment; staff and student quality; facilities & infrastructure; quality assurance of teaching & learning and output. 5 criteria were rated "adequate as expected" and 1 criterion on stakeholders feedback was rated as "inadequate but minor improvements will make it adequate".

A summary of the key strengths and areas for improvement is tabulated below.

A detailed report of the quality assessment at programme level for the Bachelor of XXX is attached.

Conclusion

Based on the self-assessment report, evidences and interviews, the Bachelor of XXX fulfilled all except one criterion. Overall the quality assurance implemented for the programme is between adequate as expected and better than adequate.

Report prepared by:
Date
Enc. Assessment Results

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 to the university being assessed. The purpose of the feedback report is to help in improving the assessment process. Please do not take the feedback as a personal assessment of your performance at the quality assessment. The feedback is meant for improvement in AUN-QA assessment process and as a platform for learning.

A 4-week period is given to the applying university to comment on the fact and objective evidences presented in the assessment report. They may appeal against any wrongful representation of the fact or evidence to the AUN Secretariat. The AUN Secretariat together with the assessors will evaluate and respond to the re-submission of the fact or evidence by the applying university within 2 weeks before it is recommend to the QA Council for release.

Once the final assessment report and certification is endorsed by QA Council, the result will be announced to the applying university and AUN website. Best practices observed during the assessment will be included into the AUN-QA Benchmarking Database.

Within 9 – 12 months after the assessment, the applying university is required to submit a progress report on the recommendations made by the assessment teams to AUN Secretariat.

At any time, the QA Council has the right to revoke the certification status of university if it fails to honour and fulfill its public and social duties, undertakings and obligations to its stakeholders including AUN-QA network.

3.0   Quality Assessment Requirements

3.1   Eligibility for Assessment

To be eligible for assessment under the AUN-QA network, the applying university must fulfill the following conditions:

- AUN member university or associate member of AUN-QA Network; and
- Must have at least three cohorts of graduates from the same programme at the time of application; and

3.2   Requirements for Assessment

The applying university shall meet all the following requirements stated by AUN Secretariat and assessors to ensure that the quality assessment is carried out efficiently and effectively.

- Submit Self-Assessment Report (SAR) which is written in English at least $1^{1}/_{2}$ - 2 months before the commencement of the site assessment together with key documents and evidences in English (such as learning outcomes, programme specification and curriculum outline);
- All key documents and evidences should be properly labeled and located in one room for each assessment team to facilitate the verification of evidences;
- Provide language interpreter and guides during site assessment;
- Fulfill all assessment, administrative and logistics requests made by AUN Secretariat and assessors for the purpose of carrying out the assessment efficiently and effectively;
- Release and share best practices in AUN Benchmarking Database as well as with AUN-QA members and associate members
- Pay the full assessment fees before the site assessment and reimbursements, if any, within 30 days upon issuance of the claims by AUN Secretariat; and
- Submit progress report on the recommendations made by the assessment teams to AUN Secretariat within 9 – 12 months after assessment;

3.3   Requirements for Self-Assessment Report (SAR)

SAR submitted by the applying university shall meet the following requirements:

- The SAR should be written and translated into English language that is easy for the assessors to comprehend. A glossary of abbreviations and terminologies used in the report should be provided;
- The SAR should be submitted or made available in both hardcopy and softcopy to the assessors and AUN Secretariat at least $1^1/_2$ – 2 months before the site assessment;
- Hardcopies of the SAR must be made available to the assessors at the site assessment together with the supporting documents and evidences clearly labeled and displayed in the discussion room for assessors; and
- The SAR should not be more than 50 A4 pages and printed in a consistent typeface with font size 12. The content of the SAR should consist of:

Part1: Introduction

- Executive summary of the SAR
- Organisation and approach of self-assessment carried out
- Brief description of the university, faculty and department – outline the history, mission, vision, objectives and quality policy of the university followed by a brief description of the faculty and department.

Part2: AUN-QACriteriaRequirements

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.

Part3: StrengthsandWeaknessesAnalysis

- Summary of strengths - Summarise the points that the department considers to be its strengths and mark the points that you are proud of.
- Summary of Weaknesses - Indicate which points the department considers to be weak and in need of improvement.
- Completed checklist
- Improvement plan – recommendations to close the gaps identified in the self-assessment and the action plan to implement them.

Part4: Appendices

Glossary, supporting documents and evidences

3.4   Requirements for Stakeholders' Interviews

Interviews with stakeholders such as key management staff, administrative heads, committees, support staff, students, alumni and employers are arranged as part of the site assessment and their input and feedback form part of the objective evidence. It is important that the interviewees are selected based on the following requirements:

- True representation of the population. For example, if the programme being assessed is a 4-year degree course, then the students selected must be from each cohort in year 1, year 2, year 3 and year 4. They must also be a mix of male and female with varied academic achievements based on the population profile. Likewise for the support staff, the representation of the interviewees should be selected based on the proportion to the category of staff and size of the administrative departments;
- For the selection of alumni members, the university should arrange to have alumni who graduated within 5 years, between 5 and 10 years and beyond 10 years;
- For the selection of employers, the university should not arrange to have more than 30% of them who are alumni of the university;
- The size of each interview session should be between 15 and 25 interviewees. It should not exceed 25 interviewees per session;
- A listing of the interviewees with basic information about the interviewees must be provided to the assessors before the interview. The information to be included in the list is tabulated below.

Stakeholder	Information of interviewee
University staff	Name, designation, appointment and department
Students	Name, year of study and programme
Alumni members	Name, graduation year and graduation degree
Employers	Name, designation and employer name

- As the interviews are held in strict confidentiality, voice and video recording of the session is not allowed; and
- To ensure forthright exchanges of views, no university staff member of the applying university is allowed at interviews with students, alumni and employers.

3.5   Requirements for Logistics and Accommodation

The logistics and accommodation requirements are as follows:

- Prepare and arrange the assessment itinerary including opening and closing sessions, photo taking, interviews, site tour, etc as specified by AUN Secretariat;
- Provide meeting rooms and secretariat support with all necessary equipment for the assessment teams and AUN Secretariat for discussion and to prepare report and presentation;
- Provide internet access to all assessors and AUN Secretariat throughout the assessment;
- Provide airport transfer and local transport between hotel and assessment site(s);
- Arrange accommodation as specified by AUN Secretariat;
- Provide meals as specified by AUN Secretariat;
- Provide escorts or security personnel inside and outside the assessment site(s), if necessary
- Make arrangements at opening and closing sessions with the following requirements:

  - Provide necessary equipment including:
    - Notebook
    - Photocopy machine
    - Printer
    - LCD projector
    - Screen
    - Microphones
    - U-shaped conference table
    - Backdrop
    - 10 flags of ASEAN member countries (large and small)
  - Provide name badges and material folders or bags for participants
  - Assign one emcee for the event
  - Arrange the meeting room according to ASEAN protocol
  - Prepare materials for the Workshop

3.6   Requirements for Permitting Observers

For the purpose of staff development and learning, observers are permitted to attend specific parts of the site assessment. To safeguard the integrity and confidentiality of the assessment, observers must adhere to the following requirements:

- They must be from AUN-QA members, associate members or external party authorised by AUN Executive Director;
- They must be approved by AUN Executive Director with permission granted by the university being assessed;

- They must submit a request stating the purpose of the observation and a short biographical statement to the AUN Executive Director at least 3 months before the site assessment;
- They are required to formally declare that they have no conflicts of interest with the university being assessed;
- They are not allowed to record the observed session using any electronic devices;
- They will not be allowed to observe any private discussion held by the assessment team;
- They may be excluded from any meeting or interview by the chief/lead assessor and/or AUN Secretariat at their discretion;
- They are not allowed to ask questions or provide comments during the site assessment and interviews;
- They are responsible for their own accommodation and travel; and
- They may be invited to provide comments about the assessment process by AUN Secretariat

4.   Assessment Scheme and Fees

4.1   Assessment Scheme

The certification which will be provided after the assessment period by AUN Secretariat is **valid for 4 years only.**

4.2   Use of AUN-QA Logo and Certificates

University qualified with any of the above certification status can use the relevant AUN-QA logo and certificates within the validity period. The AUN-QA Logo and Certificates can only be used on corporate materials, brochures, publicity materials, website and premises of the awarded university. Otherwise, written permission must be sought from AUN Secretariat. The logo and certificate must be used as one entity and no distortions or modifications are allowed. Below is an example of the AUN-QA Certificate
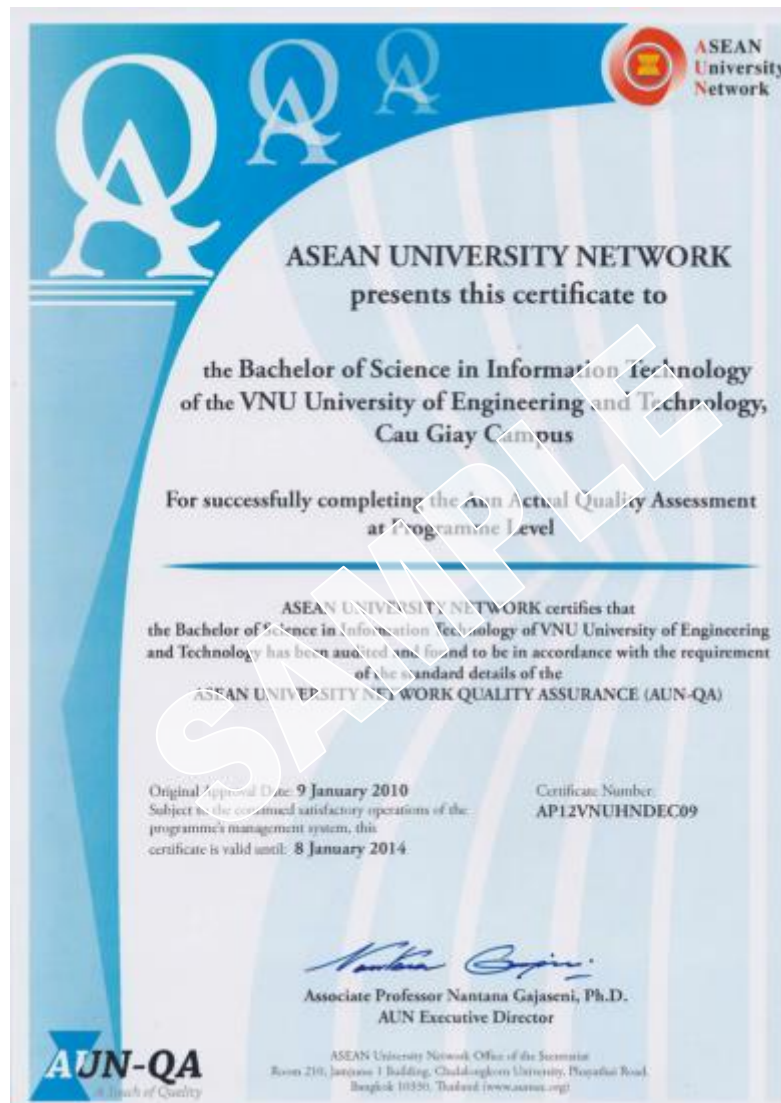
4.3 Assessment Fees

To maintain the sustainability of the AUN-QA system, it is imperative that the adequate funding and financial support be secured with consistency.

Assessment fee schemes

The revised assessment fee schemes for AUN Member Institutions undergoing AUN-QA Assessment are as follows:

Item	Member	Associate Member
1. Honorarium for Lead Assessors	**USD 750 per programme (borne by host)**	**USD 750 per programme (borne by host)**
2. Honorarium for Assessors	**USD 500 per programme (borne by host)**	**USD 500 per programme (borne by host)**
3. Airfare for Assessors and two AUN Secretariats	**Borne by host(economy class)**	**Borne by host(economy class)**
4. Accommodation for Assessors and two AUN Secretariats	**Borne by host**	**Borne by host**
5. Administrative Fee toAUN Secretariats	**USD 1,000 per assessment (borne by host)**	**USD 1,000 per assessment (borne by host)**
6. Local Hospitality (meals and transportation)	**Borne by host**	**Borne by host**
7. Development fund	**None**	**USD 1,000 per programme (borne by host)**

Edited 2 Mar 2014

In case of the non-Member, the service fee shall be applied.

AUN-QA Development Fund

The AUN-QA Development Fund should be formally established with TOR and regulations. The development fund can be collected from the following sources:

- The AUN-QA Assessment for Associate Member
- 10% of the revenue generated under the AUN-QA activities will be deposited into the development fund
- Potential funding agencies such as private sector, international organization, international funding agencies, etc.

Framework of AUN-QA Strategic Action Plan 2012-2015

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Framework of AUN-QA Strategic Action Plan

(2012-2015)

The AUN-QA Workshop and CQOs' Meeting 2012 was organized by the AUN Secretariat on 5-6 January 2012 in Chiang Mai, Thailand. The workshop was attended by 24 Chief Quality Officers and representatives from AUN Member Universities in 8 ASEAN Member States except Brunei Darussalam and Myanmar.

Objective of the framework

The objective of the framework of AUN-QA Strategic Action Plan is to set the outline of strategic plan including thekey activities, in order to further develop the AUN-QA system through the enhancement of QA assessment and capacity building among the AUN Member Universities and also extend to non-Member in ASEAN region; which could lead to the acquisition of regional and international recognitions.

Components of the framework

The framework consists of two components, **the Core** and **the Support** component. The core component has two strands; 1.) The QA assessment, and 2.) The capacity building. On the other hand, the support component is composed of 1.) Peopleplan, and 2.) The funding and finance. The support component will serve as assisting tools for the core component to mature, and ultimately fulfill the framework's objective.

The Core component

1.) The QA Assessment

The AUN-QA sees the need for and the value of infusing new ideas and providing feedback towards improving AUN-QA instruments and processes. As such, the idea of inviting guests or peer assessors from outside the AUN-QA will be pursued as part of the AUN-QA's future plan.

Peer Assessment

The peer assessment will be in a form of collaboration with external assessors[1]. The external assessors will take on observer status during the AUN-QA programme assessment and provide feedback on the assessment process. Likewise, the AUN-QA Assessors are encouraged to participate as the observer during the assessment of the partner institutions/agencies. The following conditions will be applied during the AUN-QA peer assessment:

- External assessors must understand the spirit and philosophy of AUN-QA assessment and abide by it.
- The external assessors shall abide by the guideline used by the AUN-QA Assessors (code of conduct).
- Lead assessor must be AUN-QA member.

The AUN-QA Assessment at the institutional level

The AUN-QA Assessment at programme level will continue to be pursued and that the experiences of the AUN-QA Assessors be further developed and cultivated so as to efficiently initiate the AUN-QA assessment at the institutional level within this framework's timeline (2012-2015).

2.) The capacity building

Regionalization and internationalization of the AUN-QA

To uplift the regional and international recognition on the AUN-QA system, a bottom-up approach should be put into practice. The rationale for this approach is identified as follows:

1. **Increase the number and capacity of lead assessors and assessors**
   The capacity building of the AUN-QA Assessors focuses on the increase in the number of both lead assessors and the assessors. The following key activities should be taken into consideration:
   - The series of training for trainers
   - Trainees shall be mobilized to conduct assessment.
   - The existing assessors should also be encouraged to attend the training periodically.
   - The CQOs are still eligible to conduct assessment after the retirement. However, priority should be given to personnel in service

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[1] External assessors herein are referred to assessors from non AUN-QA Member

- The compilation of the list of QA experts recommended by the Member Universities, the QA experts should be identified to create the pool of QA experts that helps improve Member Universities' QA system and practices. The QA experts can be independent from the university
- Formal certification for assessors and the assessor development plan should be practically implemented

2. **Improving the assessment's efficiency**
    The following has been recommended:

- Clarifying questions pertaining to the SAR, sent to the university prior to the visit
- The AUN-QA certificate is valid for 4 years and the universities shall provide and update of their programme for renewal of the certificate
- AUN-QA Council shall be established and part of its function is to approve the report of the assessments
- Compilation of 'best practices' database
- AUN-QA Web-based information management system shall be established in order to improve AUN-QA capacity building. The system should be composed of:
    - Call for invitation
    - Appointment of assessors
        - Cultural and national practices such as religious activities should be taken into consideration
    - SAR submission (applicant)
    - Evidence submission (applicant)
    - Listing of assessors/ universities
    - Schedules of assessments
    - Benchmarking, best practices
        - More details operation for assessments
    - Tracking updates of AUN-QA
    - Feedback to assessors/ AUN

    - The posting of QA analysis on AUN website

Funding for capacity building

The ultimate goal of the AUN-QA capacity building is to strengthen the AUN-QA system and the AUN-QA Assessment. This will in turn improve the quality education of the assessed university to produce graduates that will be part of skilled/knowledgeable human resources in the ASEAN region.

In order to strengthen the human resource development for AUN-QA, it is necessary to seek the funding support from Dialogue partners, funding agencies, national QA agencies, Ministry of Education, etc.

3. Acquisition of regional and international recognition

With a more efficient AUN-QA Assessment system, it could pave the way for the AUN-QA to gain recognition region-wide, and will also extends to the international level at the next stage. The following implementations should be established and practiced:

- Conduct research that concerns "the impacts of the AUN-QA towards the quality improvement". The evidences and indicators that reflect the improvement of the assessed programme should be addressed and consolidated in order to reflect the efficiency of the AUN-QA Assessment. This in turns will foster the recognition of the AUN-QA worldwide
- Conduct thematic workshops/conferences to share strengths and improving weaknesses
- Building the cooperation with international QA associations/agencies to improve the education in the region
- Engaging and sharing resources with other QA networks/associations for recognition to establish reputable AUN-QA standard

4. Increasing the potential to cooperate with other QA agencies around the globe

AUN-QA is a regional educational body that helpshigher education institutions develop, improve, promote, and benchmark their internal QA in order for them toattain accreditation. The AUN-QA also endeavors to extend its assistance to other universities in the region.To increase the potentiality of the AUN-QA to cooperate with other global QA agencies, there are two levels of action plans that need to be set.

Extension of the cooperation
- Extend the cooperation to QA agencies in Japan, Republic of Korea, PR China, and Australia, New Zealand
- Explore cooperation with other international bodies like OIC, South American Organisation, etc.
- Cooperate with international QA agencies such as ENQA, INQAAHE, APQN, AQAN, ACCSP (accreditation body)

AUN-QA code of conduct
- Extending the invitation to observers for each other's meeting.
- The Guide to AUN-QA, including activities and the role of AUN-QA should be recognized by SEAMEO RIHED, UNESCO Global QA Forum, national accreditation body and other professional agencies such as FEIAP dialogues
- Involving the higher education administrators to have support.
- More regional MOU

- The IQA should be initially accomplished before seeking for EQA
- AUN-QA shallnot compete with other accreditation bodies

The Support component

1.) Expansion of AUN-QA Implementation

The AUN-QA system is value-added in nature and should be implemented in a wider perspective. As such, the expansion of membership should be introduced, although the growth in membership should be carefully managed so not to undermine the efficiency and the quality of the AUN-QA projects and activities. The CQOs have agreed to extend the AUN-QA Network to Associate Member; provided below are the membership modality and fee scheme:

- **Modality**
  - The applicant institution will need to be recognized by the national QA agencies or the relevant Ministry
  - The applicant institution's final approval should be addressed by AUN-QA council
- **Fee scheme**
  - **Member**[2] - will be exempted from annual fee
  - **Associate Member**[3], the annual fee will be USD 500 per year provided in accordance with calendar year

2.) Funding and Finance

To maintain the sustainability of the AUN-QA system, it is imperative that the adequate funding and financial support be secured with consistency.

Assessment fee schemes

The Meeting agreed to the revised assessment fee schemes for AUN Member Institutions undergoing AUN-QA Assessment. In addition, the Meeting agreed on fees for Associate Member as follows:

Item	Member	Associate Member

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[2] Member is referred to AUN Member Universities

[3] Associate Member is referred to non AUN-Member Universities

2. Honorarium for Lead Assessors	**USD 750 per programme (borne by host)**	**USD 750 per programme (borne by host)**
2. Honorarium for Assessors	**USD 500 per programme (borne by host)**	**USD 500 per programme (borne by host)**
3. Airfare for Assessors and two AUN Secretariats	**Borne by host(economy class)**	**Borne by host(economy class)**
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8. Local Hospitality (meals and transportation)	**Borne by host**	**Borne by host**
9. Development fund	**None**	**USD 1,000 per programme (borne by host)**

In case of the non-Member, the service fee shall be applied.

AUN-QA Development Fund

The Meeting also agreed that the AUN-QA Development Fund should be formally established with TOR and regulations. The development fund can be collected from the following sources:

- The AUN-QA Assessment for Associate Member
- 10% of the revenue generated under the AUN-QA activities will be deposited into the development fund
- Potential funding agencies such as private sector, international organization, international funding agencies, etc.

The Meeting agreed to the Framework of AUN-QA Strategic Action Plan 2012-2015, adopted in Chiang Mai, Thailand on 6 January 2012.