



**THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES**

# **GUIDELINES FOR THE REVIEW TEAM**

**MODULE 5**



**Quality Assurance Unit**  
*Supporting the  
Board for Undergraduate Studies  
and the  
Board for Graduate Studies and Research  
February 2016*

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

### **First Edition**

In the process of developing of a Quality Assurance review system for the University of the West Indies (UWI), the Office of the Board for Undergraduate Studies (OBUS) conducted a series of three workshops/seminars, one on each of the three campuses of the University. During this series a proposed methodology for quality assurance reviews was examined. OBUS wishes to acknowledge the varied contributions that colleagues made during those workshop/seminars that influenced and modified the original proposals. In particular, OBUS would like to note the very useful and informed contributions of Dr. Ian Mugridge from the Commonwealth of Learning and Ms. Angela Glasner from the Higher Education Funding Council for England.

OBUS, October 1997

### **Sixth Edition**

Reviews under this Quality Assurance review system began at THE UWI during the 1997/98 academic year. Members of the Review Teams and the UWI colleagues involved have since provided important critiques of the material and commented usefully on other aspects of the process. OBUS acknowledges these contributions, which have influenced both modifications to the documentation and to the details of the methodology employed.

During the 2000/2001 academic year it was agreed by the University that a Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) should be established. Appointments were made to this Unit in 2002 and there is now an Officer responsible for each of the campuses. All the Officers in the QAU and other members of staff in the OBUS have contributed to the production of this edition.

QAU/OBUS, July 2002

### **Seventh Edition**

Since the last edition of these Notes, The UWI has introduced a fourth Campus called the Open Campus and produced a new strategic plan which places greater emphasis on graduate programmes and research. To support these developments two additional Officer appointments were made to the QAU. One Officer has specific responsibility for enhancing graduate and research matters and will support the campus-based QAU initiatives and the other Officer's focus is on matters relating to the Open Campus. These notes therefore have been modified to reflect additional dimensions of the Quality Assurance review process as they relate to the evolving remit of the QAU.

QAU/OBUS, October 2009

# INTRODUCTION

## Quality Assurance at the University of the West Indies

The purpose of this module is to provide an outline of the duties of the members of a Review Team appointed under the Quality Assurance review programme of the University of the West Indies (UWI). The reviews concern all programmes and services provided that relate to the comprehensive education of both undergraduate and postgraduate students, as well as to academic, research and non-academic areas, e.g. student services, health services, etc. These reviews are conducted on behalf of the Board for Undergraduate Studies (BUS) and the Board for Graduate Studies and Research (BGSR).

Concerns exist about quality in the higher education sector. These concerns can be attributed to several factors. One factor is that the costs of higher education have risen significantly as the sector has expanded. Questions are therefore now raised as to whether resources are being used efficiently and whether they give stakeholders good value for money. Other points of debate have been the relevance of the programmes offered to societal or personal needs, the extent to which students are achieving the programmes' objectives, and the need to raise the throughput rate and simultaneously ensure that quality and standards are maintained. The Chancellor's Commission on Governance<sup>1</sup> mandated the development and implementation of a full system of quality assurance and evaluation at the UWI, a decision that reflected worldwide trends in the higher education sector. The implementation of a quality assurance and evaluation system has been one of the major tasks of BUS, which began its work in 1996. The Office of the Board for Undergraduate Studies (OBUS) carries out the policies of BUS.

At the outset it was recognised that at the UWI several mechanisms were already in place that might help secure and maintain desirable quality and standards in its academic work. These included, for example, systems for course and programme approval, procedures for obtaining student feedback on courses, the use of External Examiners in several Faculties and the establishment of an Instructional Development Unit on each campus. Within a broader context of enhancing the quality of all of its operations, THE UWI has developed a process of review of its teaching programmes, research activities and non-academic educational activities. This process has the primary aims of: (1) raising the quality of the learning experience of students at the UWI

---

<sup>1</sup> University of the West Indies. 1994. *A new structure: The regional university in the 1990s and beyond*. Kingston: UWI.

and (2) providing assurance to stakeholders of the continuing high quality and standard of the work of the UWI.

The understanding of quality adopted by the UWI for its reviews is one of *fitness for purpose*, the 'definition' of quality adopted by many policy makers in the higher education sector. The intention is to relate quality to the stated purpose of the service provided. Quality is then judged in terms of the extent to which a product or service meets its stated purposes, and within the process the relevance and viability of the programme is also determined. This allows decisions as to the aims and objectives of the teaching of a discipline, the content of the programmes and courses, teaching methods, assessment practices, research output, supervision of doctoral students, the comprehensiveness of student services, etc. to reside with the staff, while an evaluation of the results may be performed by others.

### **UWI Quality Assurance Review process in summary**

#### *Reviews*

Reviews are undertaken, in a five- to seven-year cycle, of the academic provision of different disciplines/services and other services that support the learner at the UWI. These reviews are separate from the assessment for renewal of contract or promotion of individual members of staff, for which the Campus or University Appointments Committee is responsible. The UWI quality assurance review system is formative in nature, with the aims of raising the quality of the learning experience and providing assurance to stakeholders about the quality of the UWI.

#### *Visit by QAU staff*

The process begins with a member of the QAU staff visiting the entity to be reviewed and having discussions with the Head of Department or Section/Director of Institute as well as academic and non-academic staff. This meeting is designed to orientate the staff to the purposes and procedures of the review, provide an opportunity for questions, ensure that the purpose of the Self Assessment is clear, provide guidelines and allow for review-specific discussion.

### *Review Team*

Following the meeting with QAU staff, a Review Team is proposed and appointed. The Review Team is typically constituted with a representative from the same academic discipline/support area on another campus and two or three independent members: one or two senior academics/practitioners from outside the region and a local/regional professional with expertise in the area, usually from the Caribbean, but external to the UWI.

### *Self Assessment*

A key element within the review process is a self-assessment exercise undertaken by the staff of the discipline/service. A handbook, *Preparing for a Review: Undertaking the Self-Assessment*<sup>2</sup>, guides members of staff in conducting the self-assessment. The Review Team considers the report of the self-assessment exercise, along with other documentation, data and information. The aim of the self-assessment is to examine the aims and objectives of teaching the discipline, research activity, the comprehensiveness and effectiveness of services to describe the provision and outcomes, and to determine the extent to which these are being realised.

### *Visit to campus*

The Review Team visits the Campus for three to five days to test the validity of the self-assessment report and to gather further evidence. During the visit the Review Team meets with faculty/institute/school academic and administrative staff, undergraduate and postgraduate students, graduates of the programmes, employers of graduates, campus co-coordinators, PVC(s) and Campus management personnel. The Team also inspects relevant facilities and observes teaching and other relevant sessions. The Team develops a draft review report on the final day.

### *Reporting and follow-up*

Before the Team leaves the Campus it provides oral feedback to staff. This is then followed by a written report that is distributed widely. As a result of the self assessment exercise, and the visit and report of the Review Team, the members of staff identify issues for further consideration. The Head of Department or Section/Director of Institute reports on action taken following the review to Faculty Board and Campus Committees, which report on to the Academic Board. The Campus Principal has overall responsibility for the monitoring of the follow-up processes. A year later, the Department/Institute/School/Centre/Unit/Site (DISCUS) reports to BUS and BGSR outlining the activities that have occurred.

---

<sup>2</sup> QAU/OBUS. 2002. *Quality Assurance at the University of the West Indies: The Self Assessment* 5<sup>th</sup>. Ed. University of the West Indies, Kingston

## **WORK OF THE REVIEW TEAM**

The Review Team's schedule is tight and the investigation in-depth, so as to properly grasp the extent to which the Self-Assessment Report is reflective of the published aims and objectives. It is important therefore to conduct the review in an open and honest manner so that the resulting report is a fair evaluation of the activities, in a particular discipline both at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, in academic, research and non-academic areas, and can be of benefit to direct and indirect stakeholders, including the wider University and regional community.

Some of the information and data received by the Review Team may be confidential and should be sensitively handled to reflect and respect that fact. Overall, the review is focused on the students' learning experiences and achievement, and determining the extent to which the stated aims and objectives of the programme are being met.

The first task for the Review Team is to thoroughly examine the material sent to them by the QAU before the visit to the campus. This material usually consists of the Self-Assessment Report along with its appendices. Further documentation and information will be provided during the visit, but the Review Team may also be sent:

- i) information on programmes and courses in Faculty/departmental handbooks or other records
- ii) an undergraduate and postgraduate student profile, with numbers in the courses/programmes
- iii) examination results for all courses, for the preceding three years, including courses franchised to other tertiary learning institutions
- iv) numbers of graduates of the programmes in the preceding three years and the proportions and numbers in each class of qualification (degree, certificate, diploma and associate qualification)
- v) a list of members of academic staff, with qualifications and research interests
- vi) research activity, including research outcome and output (including publications for three years preceding review).
- vii) student progress reports, including any periodical supervision reports
- viii) student and staff research papers.

The Review Team considers the information, documentation and data to help identify areas that might be further investigated. Other documentation available to the Review Team during its visit will include, for example, departmental/institute/school reports, Faculty Board minutes, minutes of other relevant meetings, External Examiners' reports or samples of examination papers and marked scripts. The Review Team may request additional information, where necessary.

The Self-Assessment Report begins with a statement of the aims and objectives of the particular entity/discipline/service at the campus level. The aims and objectives set the context in which the provision is evaluated and should be expressed so as to form a suitable framework. There should be a clear relationship between the aims and the objectives. Aims express broad purposes for the programmes and indicate the educational experiences that the DISCUS is intending to provide for the students. The learning objectives should be reasonably specific, appropriate and realistic, and not simply aspirations that cannot realistically be achieved by the students. The Review Team will evaluate the aims and objectives set by the DISCUS.

The remainder of the Self-Assessment Report seeks to demonstrate how these aims and objectives are being achieved. In the Report, the material is considered beneath the headings appropriate to the provision under review. These include: *Undergraduate, postgraduate taught and research programmes; Teaching and learning; Student profile; Assessment and learning outcomes; Researcher supervision and throughput; Resources for teaching, learning and research, Researcher supervision and throughput, Research output and outcome; Quality assurance and enhancement; Student guidance; Student development; Services to support the learner; and Co-curricular activities.* Evidence must be provided to support the statements as this evidence should form the foundation for the conclusions articulated in the Review Report.

The Review Team should use the aims and objectives as a guide during its work and investigate the extent to which published aims and objectives are being realised. The Team should look for links between the claims and the evidence and, during the visit to the campus, for consistency among evidence from different sources. Members of the Review Team, in their reading of the Self-Assessment Report, should attempt to reach an understanding of the provision from the perspective of the DISCUS. The analysis of the report before the visit will lead to the identification of issues that appear to warrant further examination. Each member of the Review Team must attempt to ensure that relevant issues are raised when the Team meets and to identify other information and data required, as one focus of the work during the visit will be the gathering of such information and data.

In light of the data and information gathered before and during the visit, the Review Team is expected to engage in a critical analysis of the Self-Assessment Report, of the provision found, of the student learning experience and of the outcomes of the programme/service, with particular attention to the:

- clarity of the aims and objectives
- degree to which the programme/service has been designed to achieve the aims and objectives
- currency, relevance, viability and appropriateness of the programme/service
- range of the specific and transferable skills developed by the programme/service
- nature, range and appropriateness of the teaching strategies employed
- nature, range and appropriateness of the learning opportunities provided
- nature, range and appropriateness of the assessment methods used
- supervision and throughput activities
- supervision and throughput rate
- nature, range and appropriateness of support service provided
- extent of the use of assessment to promote learning
- appropriateness of the standards employed
- mechanisms for student feedback and student support
- adequacy of physical and human resources
- quality assurance mechanisms being used
- degree to which input from external sources, such as graduates, employers, related professional bodies, External or University Examiners, is utilised
- research ethos and activity
- differentiated materials
- seminars
- research clusters for peer review, support, papers, mock vivas



## **Evidence of Good, Promising or Best Practice**

The Review Team is also asked to assess evidence of good, promising and/or best practice in the academic entity. Good practices are commonly accepted practices within the higher education community that enhance institutional quality (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, 2012); while promising practices are programmes, activities, or strategies that have worked within one organization, and show promise during their early stages for becoming best practices with long-term sustainable impact (Compassion Capital Fund National Resource Center, n.d., p. 4).

At no time is any one practice recommended as “best” universally. Instead, the strategies and principles in use are noted and, if contextually relevant, practitioners can learn from or draw on the practice recorded. In assessing best practice the Review Team is asked to be guided by the following definition:

***an intervention, process or approach, which has contextual relevance for the University of the West Indies; is exemplary in its ability to produce superior results when assessed against the goals set and/or against similar practice in the relevant core area; engages internal and external stakeholders; is efficient in terms of resources (human, time, financial); is well documented; has utility and is recognized beyond the practice site. (Harvey, 2012 p.17)***

Some relevant questions relating to the assessment of best practice are as follows:

1. Has the practice been documented in an easily accessible form and place?
2. What institutional need/goals of The UWI did the practice address?
3. What national or regional developmental issue did the practice address?
4. What evaluation or comparative analysis was done to provide evidence of the results of the intervention, process, or approach?
5. What are the indicators of the superior results of the practice? (Pre state as against post state)
6. Has the practice achieved the post state within budgets for time, human, and financial costs?
7. What is the conclusive judgement of this practice? (Can it be more widely used, learnt from, or not?)

8. What are the next steps for The UWI?

- Disseminate and recommend the practice or elements of the practice for use in other units?
- Disseminate the practice for information, but with cautionary remarks on the opportunities and risks?
- Recommend changes to the practice?

### References

Compassion Capital Fund National Resource Center. (n.d.). *Identifying and promoting practices* (Intermediary Development Series). Washington, DC: US Department of Health and Human Services

Harvey, C. (2012). *Survey of the literature on global best practices in higher education*. St. Augustine, Trinidad: The University of the West Indies.

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Commission on Colleges. (2012). *Commission good practices*. Retrieved from <http://www.sacscoc.org/policies.asp#practices>

## **Visit to the Campus**

### ***Overall programme***

The visit by the Review Team to the Campus will normally last three to five days and involves a range of activities. The QAU and the entity to be reviewed will develop a timetable for the Review Team and schedule meetings with academic and administrative staff, a representative group of undergraduate, graduate and research students of the programme, employers of programme graduates, support staff and Faculty and management personnel of the campus. Time for the observation of teaching may be scheduled, along with time for visiting relevant facilities. During the visit the Team will receive further documentation and will continue its process of data analysis. The Review Team will attempt to achieve a reasonable balance in terms of the time devoted to the different activities and the proposed timetable will seek to facilitate this process.. Prior analysis of the Self-Assessment Report will also guide the assignment of Team duties and allocation of time, as it is not necessary for the whole Team to be engaged in every activity. The intention is that the Team should consider information from one source, such as the Self-Assessment Report or a meeting with students, against that obtained from other sources, in an effort to determine the validity of the varied information received.

A base room will be established for the Review Team where documents, reviews and reports, including External Examiners' reports and University Examiners' reports, past examination papers, student and staff research papers and other publications will be made available. Samples of marked student work will also be provided if needed, although the External Examiners' reports may be sufficient. During their consideration of student work, samples of conference papers, journal papers, and staff/student presentations, members of the Team will evaluate the congruence between the examination questions, the student output/outcome and the curriculum, the nature and adequacy of feedback provided to students and the level of attainment of the students in the individual courses and overall programmes.

The Review Team, or one or two of its members, will visit resources such as teaching rooms, dedicated provisions for doctoral students, libraries, laboratories and information technology (IT) facilities. Personnel in the facilities will be available for consultation. The range and quantity of the library stock in the discipline will be checked along with the appropriateness and adequacy of the journals on subscription. In disciplines where practical facilities are used, equipment will be checked to see that it is up-to-date, operational, of an appropriate standard and available in sufficient quantity.

Much of the final day will be devoted to developing a draft of the Review Report. The QAU will support and guide this process and will write the various (non discipline-specific) introductory pages. Using the material provided by the Review Team before it departs, the QAU will produce a full draft of the report, which will then be sent to the Team for comment and modification.

### ***Arrangements for Team members***

The 'house-keeping' arrangements for the visit to the country and Campus are the responsibility of the OBUS and the QAU and will include, where necessary, the booking of hotel accommodation, the provision of airline tickets and funds for subsistence, the provision of transportation and other support for the Review Team that may be necessary, both before and during the visit.

### ***Meetings***

A Leader for the Review Team, typically an external academic member, will be appointed by OBUS and will have overall responsibility for managing the work of the Review Team and the production of the final report. The Team will clarify the issues to be pursued during the visit, confirm and/or modify the schedule, identify the purposes of the various meetings, allocate visits to teaching sessions to the individual team members and discuss other relevant issues.

The first meeting in the Review Team's formal programme is with the Director/Head of Department/coordinator of the discipline. This is followed by a meeting between all the members of academic staff and/or administrative staff and the Team. These meetings permit the introduction of the Review Team members and allow the Team to discuss issues raised in the Self-Assessment Report. The meetings should also enable the Team to come to a better understanding of the organisational structure within the DISCUS and the roles of those who perform administrative duties. At the beginning of each day the Team meets briefly with the Director/Head of Department or the Coordinator of the discipline. This meeting allows the Team to request further information from the Director/Head of Department/Coordinator, who in turn may bring matters to the attention of the Team; changes may also be made to the schedule, if necessary.

A representative group of undergraduate, postgraduate and research students will meet with the team, without the presence of members of staff. This meeting allows the Team to check on the effectiveness of a variety of elements of the provision from a student perspective. Issues to be explored may include the appropriateness of the programme/provision, curriculum, the coherence of the course and programme

structure, approaches taken to teaching and learning, advice received on academic or other matters, student supervision, student representation on committees, the responsiveness of staff to student problems, the quality of teaching, the adequacy of library, laboratory and sporting facilities, and so on. Depending on the schedule, there may be the possibility of meeting with other students in a less formal way, for example, at the end of a class that has been observed, but such meetings have to be approached with due care.

Meetings are also organized with recent graduates of the programmes and users of any relevant services, employers of graduates, post-graduate students, support staff and with management personnel, such as the Dean of the Faculty, the Campus Registrar and the Campus Principal or Deputy Principal.

The information gained by differently assigned team members is drawn together when the Team confers, during scheduled team meetings, in order to write a comprehensive report. Strengths within the provision are to be identified along with issues that appear to require further consideration and action. At the end of the review data collection period, a final meeting is held with members of the academic, support and administrative staff to present an oral report of the main points that the Review Team is proposing to include in its written report.

### ***Reporting***

On the final day of the review visit, the Team provides the QAU with the first draft of the report. The Review Team's report begins with a statement, written by the QAU, giving the background to the Quality Assurance reviews, outlining the methodology used to generate and gather the data and information and then reproducing the Aims and Objectives as stated in the Self-Assessment Report.

The Review Team's material focuses on an evaluation of the evidence gathered in relation to each section of the Self-Assessment Report. Reference should be made to the relevant aims and objectives and to the sources of evidence, such as meetings or documents. The body of the report is then usually presented to correspond with the major sections of the Self-Assessment Report, although extra sections may be added where needed. The Team's report must aim to be formative and evaluative, documenting strengths but also providing recommendations as to issues for further consideration and other action. A final section may be used to summarise the recommendations.

A draft version of the report is sent by the QAU to the Review Team members for comment and modification. The final version of the report is sent to the Director/Head of Department or Coordinator of the discipline for confirmation of its factual accuracy before it is published. The Review Team's report is then distributed widely within the UWI.

### **CODES OF PRACTICE FOR THE REVIEW TEAM**

The Team Leader:

- a) manages the work of the Team and assigns specific responsibilities to each team member
- b) ensures, together with the Quality Assurance Officer, that the review is conducted in a collegial, professional and timely manner
- c) ensures that team members identify specific areas of the Self-assessment Report for further investigation
- d) considers and agrees on the schedule of activities for the week in consultation with the Quality Assurance Officer
- e) guides the Team during meetings with stakeholders
- f) ensures that consultations with stakeholders follow agreed procedures
- g) ensures that at the end of each day, the day's proceedings are summarized and important issues identified
- h) ensures that issues identified inform subsequent deliberations where appropriate
- i) requests additional data and information, where required, from the QAU and/or DISCUS
- j) ensures that all facilities relevant to the work of the teaching/learning/research/support environment are evaluated – e.g. library, IT facilities, sport facilities, lecture theatres, laboratories, bookshop, etc
- k) assigns responsibility to Team members during the week for specific areas of the draft report
- l) ensures all information and data gathered for inclusion in the report are critically analysed
- m) takes responsibility for the preparation of the final report

- n) presents the major findings of the evaluation in the form of oral feedback to the DISCUS on the final day of the visit
- o) submits the draft of the report to QAU by the end of the last day of the review exercise.

Team Members must:

- a) support the Team Leader in ensuring that the work of the Team is completed in a collegial, professional and timely manner
- b) critically analyse the Self-Assessment Report and identify areas for further investigation during the review period
- c) agree on the schedule of activities for the week
- d) engage stakeholders in discussions pertaining to the areas identified at (b) above and on any other issues that may arise
- e) review all documentation and request additional data and information as required
- f) visit the facilities relevant to the work of the discipline, e.g. library, lecture theatres, laboratories, IT facilities, postgraduate provision, etc
- g) submit to the Team Leader a summary of proceedings in the area for which he/she is responsible
- h) provide Team Leader with a draft of the section(s) of the report for which he/she has responsibility for inclusion in the final draft report
- i) support the Team Leader in the presentation of the major findings of the evaluation to the Department on the final day
- j) assist the Team Leader in finalising the report for submission to the QAU by the end of the last day of the review exercise

## **Summary of the work of the Review Team**

### *Before visit to campus*

- Read and evaluate Self-Assessment Report
- Prepare list of issues for further investigation
- Request any publications or other public and electronically available data

### *During visit to campus*

- Meet with
  - academic staff
  - administrative staff
  - support staff
  - undergraduate students
  - postgraduate (and research) students
  - graduates
  - employers
  - members of related professional organisations
  - Faculty, service and campus management personnel
  - staff of relevant facilities/provision
- Examine other documentation
- Visit relevant facilities
- Observe teaching sessions
- Prepare draft report

### *After visit to campus*

- Comment on QAU draft of report



### **Activities at the UWI after Receipt of Review Team's Report**

The Campus Principal has overall responsibility for the monitoring of the follow-up process after the receipt of the Review Team's report. As a result of the Self-Assessment exercise, the visit and report of the Review Team, the programme/service providing staff will identify issues for further consideration. The Director/Head or section leader will develop proposals for submission to its Campus Committee/Faculty Board. At a later time a report on the action taken will be sent to the Campus Committee/Faculty Board, which will report on to the Campus Academic Board. In rare cases, the Institute or School Director/Dean of the Faculty or the Principal of the campus may introduce the Review Team's report directly into the Faculty Board or the Academic Board. A year after the review, the department reports to BUS and BGSR, through the Campus Academic Board, and outlines the activities that have occurred. The Campus Principal, as Chair of Academic Board, may also be asked to inform BUS and BGSR of action taken.

**Indicative questions used to guide completion of Self-Assessment Report**

**Curriculum**

The purpose of this section is to describe the structure and content of the programmes and courses offered. This may include a brief history of the programmes with the rationale for the programmes at the time of their inception and the currency and relevance of the programmes at the present time

***Questions to guide completion of the Curriculum section***

- What is the content of the undergraduate and postgraduate programmes and courses offered?
- Why are the various courses included and why are they in that particular sequence?
- How is a progression of intellectual challenge to students over the duration of each programme ensured?
- In what ways are an appropriate and sufficient choice in the range of programmes and courses provided?
- How are students made aware of aims and objectives of each course?
- Does the content of the programmes satisfy the needs of:
  - students wishing to progress to employment within the field
  - students who wish to further study within the same discipline
  - students who take the courses or programmes for either background knowledge for another discipline
  - students who take the course or programme for personal development
  - employers of the graduates?
- How does the course content help develop both specialist knowledge and general transferable skills?

- Is the content of courses up-to-date and how frequently are the courses formally reviewed?
- To what extent do courses draw on recent research in ways that are meaningful to the students?
- Are the courses informed by the research activity of the academic staff involved?
- What developments are occurring at the UWI in the teaching of the discipline?

### **Evidence to be considered in the Curriculum Section**

- Course outlines; programme outlines in DISCUS handbooks; evidence from surveys, or other sources, of opinions of students, graduates and employers of the quality of the courses and programmes; plans for the development of the programmes/courses; past examination papers.

### **Teaching and Learning**

The purpose of this section is to describe the teaching and learning approaches used to achieve the declared learning objectives and highlight pedagogical and andragogical innovations.

#### ***Questions to guide completion of the Teaching and Learning section***

- What are the different teaching approaches utilised in the teaching of the discipline?
- Are the teaching and learning methods for the courses appropriate for its aims and objectives?
- In what ways is information on the teaching and learning methods provided to the students?
- To what extent do intra-departmental and/or cross-campus contact and discussion inform the teaching approaches?

- Are the students encouraged to be active learners and, if so, how is this achieved?
- How are the students' critical and analytical abilities developed?
- Is the student workload appropriate, both within programmes and in the individual courses?
- What academic support systems are available to the students?
- What type and quantity of feedback do the students receive?
- What arrangements are there for the supervision and guidance of the academic work of students, at both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels, and how effective are these arrangements?

### **Evidence to be considered in the Teaching and Learning Section**

- Information on the use of lectures, tutorials, laboratory sessions, seminars, workshops, field trips, invited lecturers, team teaching, etc. in the teaching of the discipline; information on the students' learning experiences on the courses offered; student ratings of teaching; guidelines for academic advisors and research supervisors, student support systems.

### **Student Profile, Assessment and Learning Outcomes**

The purpose of this section is to describe the assessment methods and show how they relate to the aims and objectives of the programmes, to outline the levels of and trends in student performance and to discuss any relationships between student characteristics, student achievement and assessment methods.

#### ***Questions to guide completion of the section***

##### *Student profile*

- What is the student profile according to age, gender, qualifications and other relevant criteria?
- Are the entry qualifications of the students appropriate for the courses/ programmes?

### *Assessment methods*

- Is a range of assessment methods utilised?
- Are the assessment methods selected appropriate to the aims and objectives of the courses?
- How are students informed of the assessment methods to be used on a course?
- How are any agreed standards utilised in the marking of scripts monitored?
- To what extent is assessment used as a teaching and learning tool?

### *Student learning outcomes*

- Are student learning outcomes satisfactory, e.g. examination results or other measures of learning?
- What, if any, is the relationship between entry qualifications and performance?
- What are the completion or throughput rates, for both full-time and part-time students?
- Have reasons for non-completion been identified and appropriate action taken?
- What trends are there in qualifications awarded (number of degrees per year, number in each class)?
- Does the evidence suggest that the programmes are achieving the stated aims and objectives?

### **Evidence to be considered in the Student Profile, Assessment and Learning Outcomes Section**

- Assessment methods used and how they link with the aims and objectives; statistics on characteristics of students; criteria for entry to programmes/courses; examination results for all courses (campus and distance) for preceding three academic years; numbers graduating from each programme in the preceding three years; throughput rates for programmes offered; samples of examination papers with scripts and mark schemes; reports from External Examiners/University Examiners; reports (from the Career Unit or other sources) on posts taken after graduation.

## **Resources for teaching and learning**

The purpose of this section is to describe the provision of resources to support the teaching and learning of the discipline. The resources may include the provision of accommodation for teaching, library holdings, laboratory equipment, information technology (IT) resources, technical and administrative support and any other relevant resources. Arrangements for maintenance, replacement and updating of the resources should also be outlined.

### ***Questions to guide completion of the section***

#### *Library*

- Are the library holdings of books adequate for the courses/programmes offered?
- Are there adequate holdings of, and subscriptions to, periodicals and journals?
- Is the liaison between the Campus library and the department/section satisfactory?
- Are the learning support facilities of the library, including IT resources, adequate for the discipline?

#### *Physical resources*

- Is the teaching accommodation adequate for the range of teaching methodologies employed (e.g. lecture theatres, seminar and tutorial rooms, laboratories)?
- Are other physical resources needed for the discipline, (such as laboratory space, equipment, materials) adequate and up-to-date?
- Is adequate budgetary allowance made for the recurrent costs of provision of materials for teaching, for both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes?
- Are adequate IT resources available to the students?

#### *Personnel resources*

- Is adequate technical, administrative and secretarial support available?
- Are the resources available to the staff and students fully utilised?

## **Evidence to be Considered in the Resources for Teaching and Learning Section**

- Results of surveys of the stock of books in library for discipline; list of periodicals on subscription; number, type and size of rooms available for teaching; assessment of adequacy of laboratory provision, space, equipment, materials; assessment of adequacy of IT provision for both staff and students; staff list: administrative, technical, secretarial; resources available related to teaching, e.g. photocopiers, scanners.

### **Quality Assurance and Enhancement**

The purpose of this section is to describe the procedures that are in place for demonstrating that the courses and programmes in the discipline are achieving their stated aims and objective, that there is a satisfactory quality of provision, that the standards are appropriate and that the quality and standards will be maintained. Arrangements for staff development are also to be described here.

#### ***Questions to guide completion of the section***

##### *Quality Assurance policy and procedures*

- Is there a document outlining the department's Quality Assurance policies and procedures?

##### *Courses and programmes*

- What are the ways in which the quality of the courses and programmes is kept under review?
- What data are gathered about the courses and programmes and how are the data utilised?
- How is student feedback obtained and used in developing programmes and courses, or otherwise?
- Is there, for each programme, a group which meets on a regular basis and includes both staff and student representatives and, where relevant, professional representatives?
- How are the External Examiners' reports used in ensuring that adequate standards are being maintained, and in modifying and developing courses and programmes?

- What use is made of the reports of University Examiners?
- Which external groups or individuals are invited to comment on the programmes (for example, employers, graduates, related professional bodies) and what use is made of this comment?

#### *Staff development*

- Is there a clear, written staff development policy and to what extent is it followed?
- What are the induction arrangements for new staff?
- How are staff development needs identified and is adequate support available for staff development activities?
- What academic and/or professional links have been established by members of staff?
- Have members of staff undertaken development activities in relation to their teaching?

### **Evidence to be Considered in the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Section**

- Reports of performance indicators and action ensuing; External Examiners'/ University Examiners' reports and reports on action taken; student feedback data; reports from staff/student liaison committees; other comments from external groups; staff development policy and related documents.

### **Additions to the Self-Assessment Report for Review of Graduate Programmes**

#### ***Curriculum***

##### *Questions to guide completion*

- Is the curriculum at a level of complexity and specialisation that extends the knowledge and intellectual maturity of the student?
- Does the programme allow students to analyze, explore, question, reconsider and synthesise old and new knowledge and skills?



- Does the curriculum afford the student the opportunity to demonstrate creative independence that will allow the graduate to practice in and contribute to a profession or field of scholarship?
- How often is the graduate programme reviewed?
- Is there a clear distinction between a course of study leading to a master's and a course of study leading to a doctorate?
- Does the curricular content relate to current practices in the field of specialisation?

### ***Teaching and learning***

- Is there a substantial difference between undergraduate and graduate teaching?

### ***Student profile, assessment and learning outcomes***

#### *Student profile*

- What are the qualitative and quantitative requirements for admission?
- What is the proportion of part-time/full-time students?

#### *Admission*

- How are students made aware of admission requirements?
- Are admission criteria regularly evaluated?
- Are there any qualifying examinations?

#### *Assessment methods*

- Are assessment methods in alignment with the Aims and Objectives for graduate programmes?

#### *Student learning outcomes*

- Are there specified time periods for degree completion?
- What are the number and success rate of post-graduate programmes?

## ***Resources for teaching and learning***

### *Library*

- Is there access to relevant and up-to-date journals?

### *Physical resources*

- Are there adequate and appropriate IT resources (for storing/analyzing data, access to the Internet and word processing) available to the students?
- Are there adequate equipment and laboratories and, especially for clinical based research, is there access to suitable case material?

### *Personnel resources*

- What are the qualifications of staff teaching in the graduate programmes?

## ***Research***

- Is there a vibrant and developing research ethos within the department?
- How are students “mentored” into the research ethos?
- How are research areas identified for students?
- What mechanisms are in place to support students’ advancement in their areas of specialisation, for example with respect to attendance/presentations at academic conferences, publications, etc.
- Are students able to pursue original ideas for research or is their research limited by the research interests of existing faculty?
- Is there adequate funding to support the cost of carrying out graduate research?

## ***Supervision of Theses and Research Projects***

- Is there any structured mechanism for assigning graduate students to supervisors?
- Does your department have guidelines for supervision?
- What arrangements are there for the supervision and guidance of the academic work of (a) master’s students (b) doctoral students, and how effective are these arrangements?
- How is the supervision process monitored?

## QUALITY ASSURANCE MODULES

The Quality Assurance Unit has a range of resources detailing all elements of quality assurance and quality enhancement at The UWI:

- Module 1: The Fundamentals of Quality Assurance and Enhancement  
(QAU/M1/Nov 2010/v1)
- Module 2: Quality Assurance and Quality Evaluation  
(QAU/M2/Nov 2010/v1)
- Module 3: The Quality Assurance Review Process  
(QAU/M3/Nov 2010/v1)
- Module 4: Preparing for a Review: Undertaking the Self-Assessment Report  
(QAU/M4/Feb 2016/v5)
- Module 4a: Undertaking the Postgraduate & Research Programme Self-Assessment  
(QAU/M4a/Feb 2016/v2)
- Module 4b: Undertaking the Publications Section of Postgraduate and Research Self-Assessment  
(QAU/M4b/Nov 2010/v1)
- Module 5: Guidance Notes for the Review Team  
(QAU/M5/Feb 2016/v3)
- Module 6: Following Up on the Review Team's Report  
(QAU/M6/Nov 2010/v1)
- Module 7: Guidelines for Developing a Quality Assurance Manual  
(QAU/M7/Nov 2010/v1)
- Module 8: Tool and Techniques for Quality Improvement  
(QAU/M8/Nov 2010/v1)

All modules are available from your campus Quality Assurance Unit or online at [www.uwi.edu/qau](http://www.uwi.edu/qau)

## Notes



Quality Assurance Unit  
(supported by the Office of the Board for Undergraduate Studies)  
Last Revised February 2016