

## APQN – Institutional Membership

Higher education is becoming increasingly important for Sri Lankan students. It is no longer only the higher echelons of society that are sending their children to study abroad. There is an emerging middle class, which is striving to give their children an educational advantage. While parents and students value higher education, they are far from happy with what is offered by Sri Lankan universities. Parents with the capacity to choose are increasingly unwilling to send their children to Sri Lankan universities and seek private higher education opportunities with a growing sense of urgency. This opportunity has been capitalized by a large number of institutes.

The Horizon College of Business and Technology (HCBT) Campus has been established in 2008 to help for this existing demand. The campus comprises of two main divisions; Horizon Campus International Programmes and Horizon Campus Local Higher Education division. At present, Horizon Campus-HCBT is a training institute registered under the Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC) since 17.08.2011.

The International Universities affiliated and or partnering with Horizon Campus are:

1. Karnataka State Open University(KSOU), India
2. University of London International Programmes, UK
3. Herzing University, USA
4. Buckinghamshire New University, UK
5. Nilai University, Malaysia.

All programmes conducted under the above five foreign Institutions and their degrees awarded for successful completion are accredited by their relevant accrediting bodies and the Universities are University Grants Commission (UGC) recognised foreign Universities.

Up until early September 2013, Horizon Campus-HCBT governance structure was organised to meet the above requirements; TVEC programmes to meet TVEC accreditation and the International Programmes to meet the criteria specified by the relevant International Institute.

Quality assurance (QA) is an essential element that had gradually gained serious attention amongst the global Higher Educational Institutions (HEI). The term QA, although a borrowed terminology from the industry, its relevance and absolute necessity in the current context of Higher Education (HE) is unquestionable. Quality Assurance is a mandate of the Academic Senate of the Campus and the Internal QA Manager is a member of the Academic Senate. Several actions have been taken to maintain the Quality in the Campus in various ways.

Upon deciding to seek recognition as a degree awarding institution and the power to award degrees for Horizon Campus' proposed, undergraduate courses, the governance and administration of the organisation has been restructured to meet the specifications required by a degree awarding institute. The restructuring has been done considering the guidelines published by the Ministry of Higher Education's, University Grants Commission (UGC) and Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council (QAAC).

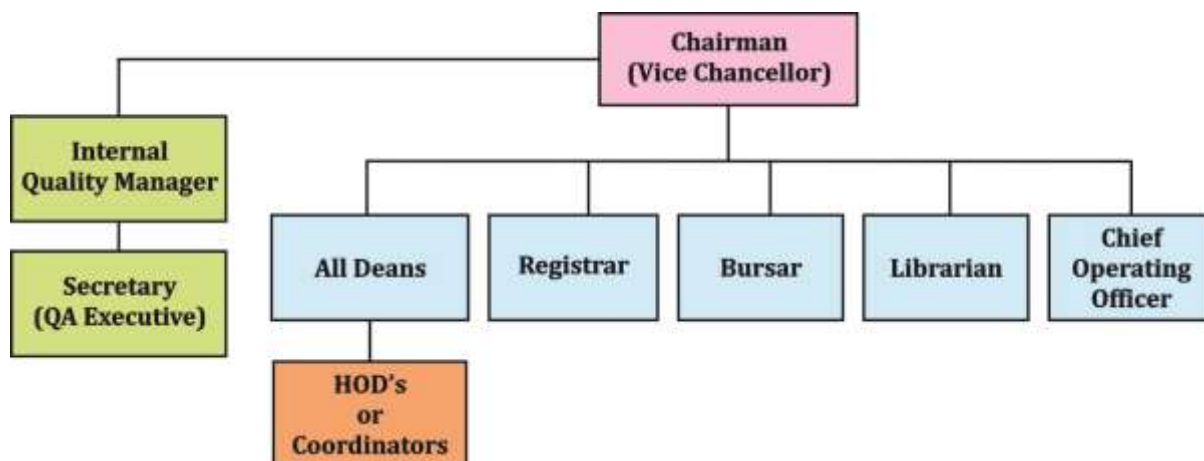
Quality assurance needs to be a continuous, on-going process. Everyone working in an institution must take responsibility for building it into their day-to-day, routine activities. This can be brought about only through Internal Quality Assurance (IQA). Hence, IQA is considered as the corner stone of QA in higher education.

Currently, the Internal QA Unit (IQAU) is doing several activities to improve the quality of the campus liaise with the QAAC. Related Subject Benchmark Statements (SBS) prepared by the QAAC have been taken when preparing curriculum of local degree programmes. Intended Learning Outcome (ILOs) and By-Laws are adhered to the current rules and regulation of the UGC according to the Sri Lanka Qualification Framework in Sri Lanka.

The IQAU has been identified the following functions:

- Co-ordination of all QA related activities within the institution;
- Liaising with UGC/QAA Council and other external QA agencies;
- Implementation of QA Reviews/Audits and follow-up action;
- Preparation of institutional self-evaluation report;
- Provision of advice on QA to all Faculties and Departments;
- Monitoring and guidance in Faculty level QA activities;
- Organization, where necessary, of awareness programmes on QA for the staff members;
- Quality and QA aspects in the institution's corporate plan;
- Facilitation of identification and sharing of good practices between academic Departments;
- Preparation of QA-related guidelines and manuals for use within the institution (e.g. academic regulations, equipment manuals, laboratory manuals etc.)
- Ensure the necessary Academic Regulations/By-Laws are in place, and if not, make recommendations for remedial action.

It is expected that IQAU will report to the Academic Senate on a monthly basis.



*Composition of the Internal QA Unit*

Student Feedback and Peer Observation are two of the good practices in higher education. In order to improve the quality of teaching and the students' learning experience, the Campus requires its teachers to obtain formal feedback from students on a regular basis.

In order to improve the quality of teaching and the students' learning experience, the campus requires its teachers to subject at least one of their teaching sessions to observation by peers at least once a year.

The Horizon Campus-HCBT implements unit reviews, cyclically and otherwise as deemed necessary, in order to assess and improve the performance of organisational units. Thus, unit reviews are an important component of the Horizon Campus-HCBT's approach to quality management. This policy and procedure applies Horizon Campus-wide. Commonly, unit reviews are at the level of a Higher Education faculty, or a major corporate department such as Marketing Services, Human Resources, Information Technology Services, Chancellery or Horizon Campus-HCBT Research.