

# QUALITY ASSURANCE HANDBOOK for SRI LANKAN UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

DECEMBER 2007



**Quality Assurance and Accreditation Council**  
UGC/Ministry of Higher Education



325/1/1, Thimbirigasyaya Rd., Colombo 05  
Tel: 011-2506851, 011-2506861, 011-2506871 Fax: 011-2506861  
E-mail: [colinpeiris@qaacouncil.lk](mailto:colinpeiris@qaacouncil.lk) Web: [www.qaacouncil.lk](http://www.qaacouncil.lk)

**FINAL VERSION  
DECEMBER 2007**

Quality Assurance Handbook  
for  
Sri Lankan University Libraries

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## INTRODUCTION

This handbook is a result of collaborative work of the Quality Assurance and Accreditation (QAA) Council of the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the Senior Library Staff of Sri Lankan universities. It provides guidelines for the external review process for university libraries.

The handbook is divided into four parts, namely External Review Process, Codes of Practice, Guidelines for Self Evaluation and Annexes.

The first part on External Review Process describes the purposes and main features of the review process. The review judgements and the review outcomes are also discussed in this section.

The Part II of the handbook titled Codes of Practice presents the statements of good practices that are meant to serve as the (benchmark) standards for libraries in achieving their goals and objectives. However, it has to be emphasized that the list of good practices provided in this handbook is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive.

Detailed guidelines on the preparation of the Self Evaluation Report are given in Part III of this handbook. The Annexes include External review of libraries – Step-wise process, Reviewer profile, and typical agenda for the review visit and Guidance on the preparation of the review report.

The following eight aspects have been selected as the most important areas for external review of libraries. These aspects of evaluation reflect the concerns and expectations of staff in Sri Lankan university libraries.

1. Mission and Goals
2. Management
3. Resources
4. Services
5. Integration
6. Contribution to Academic Output
7. Networking
8. Evaluation

It is expected that the proposed external review process would make a significant contribution to the continuous quality improvement of library services in Sri Lankan universities. However, it has to be emphasized that the responsibility for quality and standards can only lie effectively where the powers to control or change practices exist, that is, with the institution itself and not with an external body.

It is a precondition for continuous quality improvement that the universities and libraries develop and sustain a Quality Culture within their institutions. Quality Culture is the creation of a high level of internal institutional quality assessment mechanisms and the ongoing implementation of the results. Quality Culture can be seen as the ability of the

university (in this case the library) to develop quality assurance implicitly in the day to day work of the institution (library) and makes a move away from periodic assessment to ingrained quality assurance.

**Quality Assurance and Accreditation (QAA) Council  
of the University Grants Commission  
Ministry of Higher Education  
Sri Lanka**

## **PART I: EXTERNAL REVIEW PROCESS**

The external review process is shaped by how much can reasonably and practicably be covered in a periodic external review process without imposing an additional burden on libraries which would reduce their effectiveness in providing services. The aim is to use evidence and data generated and used by the library itself to appraise quality of its services. The greater the reliance of external quality assessment upon the library's own evidence of self evaluation, the greater is the prospect that standards will be safeguarded and quality will be enhanced.

### **Purposes of the External Review Process in Libraries**

- to safeguard the quality and effectiveness of library services in Sri Lankan universities
- to facilitate continuous quality improvement
- to encourage good management of university libraries
- to instill confidence in a library's capacity to safeguard the quality and effectiveness of its services, both internally and externally
- to identify and share good practices in the provision library services
- to achieve accountability through external quality assessment and a public report
- to provide systematic, clear and accessible information on the university library services

### **Main Features of the External Review Process**

- Production of an analytical Self Evaluation Report (SER) by the library staff
- Peer Review: Review against the vision, mission, goals and objectives contained in the SER and a Review Visit of 2 to 3 days
- Publishing the Review Report with judgements, and the strengths/good practices and weaknesses identified.

Step-wise process of the external review of libraries is given in the Annex 1.

### **Self Evaluation Report**

The first and most important step in the process of external review is the self evaluation by the library. The Self Evaluation Report (SER) is provided by the library staff. The proposed layout for the SER is as follows:

1. Introduction
2. Vision, Mission and Objectives
3. Management
4. Resources
5. Services
6. Integration
7. Contribution to Academic Output

8. Networking
9. Evaluation
10. Annexes

It is strongly recommended that the SER be limited to a maximum of 40 pages including annexes. Detailed guidelines on the preparation of the SER are given in Part III of this handbook.

### **Peer Review**

Peer review is carried out by a team of three academics with at least two librarians from the university system. The reviewers receive the library's SER prior to the review visit, gather evidence during the visit and then make judgements on the quality and effectiveness of library services.

The reviewer profile is given in Annex 2.

The vision, mission, goals and objectives contained in the SER provide an important reference point for the external review. They are also reproduced in the review report. Reviewers evaluate the quality and effectiveness of services provided by the library under review according to the goals and objectives aspired to them by the library staff. Accordingly, management, resources and the services are all evaluated according to the goals and objectives set by the library or university themselves. This approach allows the external review process to take account of innovation, creativity and the diversity of universities and libraries.

The external review process for university libraries identifies eight broad areas for assessment. Universities and their libraries affirm different missions and there are acknowledged differences in size, age and maturity of universities and libraries. It is important that the external review process does not distort the national picture by unreasonably and inaccurately measuring all libraries by a fixed 'gold standard'. However, at the same time, all libraries are expected to have in place and to be able to account for arrangements for quality assurance of their activities that support and sustain the quality and effectiveness they claim, and reflect agreed national guidelines.

### **Aspects of Evaluation**

The following eight aspects have been chosen by the QAA Council of the UGC through participatory workshops as the most important areas for external review of libraries. These aspects of evaluation reflect the concerns and expectations of staff in Sri Lankan university libraries.

1. Mission and Goals
2. Management
3. Resources
4. Services
5. Integration
6. Contribution to Academic Output
7. Networking
8. Evaluation

## Review Visit

The purpose of the review visit is to review, consider and test the evidence provided by the library staff in the light of the vision, mission and objectives.

A visit normally lasts for 2 to 3 days. During the visit, the review team conducts discussions with the library staff, teaching staff, administrative staff and students (undergraduates and postgraduates) of the university. Further, the review team observes resources and facilities of the main library and the branch libraries (if any), and peruses the relevant documents.

The review visit usually ends with a feedback meeting to the library staff and the senior management of the university. The review chair will summarize the findings of the team and invite questions for factual clarification, but this meeting should not be seen as an opportunity to question the team's judgements. The section below on Review Outcomes contains details on procedures following the receipt of a draft report by the university/library.

Programme for the review visit is given in Annex 3.

## Review Judgements

The review team will summarize its findings in each aspect, noting strengths, good practices and weaknesses. At the end of each aspect, the review team will use one of following three judgements:

- *good*
- *satisfactory*
- *unsatisfactory*

In judgements of '*good*' or '*satisfactory*', the review team will wish to highlight strengths and good practices in the aspect of evaluation. In the '*good*' category, there are likely to be few, if any, weaknesses. In the '*satisfactory*' category, there will be at least one weakness, and in the '*unsatisfactory*' category there are likely to be no examples of significant strengths or good practices.

Guidance on the preparation of the review report is given in Annex 4.

The collective statements on each of the eight aspects will lead the review team to their overall judgement concerning the quality and effectiveness of library services.

There will be three options open to the review team in making the overall judgement:

- *good*
- *satisfactory*
- *needs major improvements*

In all cases, the overall judgement will be supported by the evidence contained in the review report. If an overall judgement of '*satisfactory*' or '*needs major improvements*' is given, the review report will give clear reasons for this judgement and suggest how the university and the library might address the matters giving rise to the judgement.

Judgements of '*needs major improvements*' will be exceptional. In such a case, there would need to be evidence of significant weaknesses in a majority of the aspects, giving rise to serious concerns. Further, for an overall judgement of '*needs major improvements*'

to be given, a review team will need to have judged at least three of the eight aspects as '*unsatisfactory*'.

### **Review Outcomes**

The libraries and the relevant universities are expected to plan follow-up action(s) as a result of an external review of a library. One year after a review, the library will be requested to provide a brief report to the QAA Council of the UGC on action(s) taken in response to the review recommendations.

Should any of the review aspects be judged as '*unsatisfactory*', the library concerned will be requested to take action within six months to remedy the problems identified and report accordingly to the QAA Council. It will be for the QAA Council to decide whether a follow-up visit is necessary. Once the QAA Council is satisfied with the outcome, an amended report will be published to reflect the action(s) taken.

### **Request for a Discussion**

Following an external review, a university/library may request the QAA Council for a discussion with the review team about the contents of the review report, prior to publication. The university/library should notify the QAA Council of its wish to take up this opportunity within one month of receipt of the first draft of the review report, highlighting the particular areas it wishes to discuss.

The discussion meeting may last up to one day and should take place within three months of the university/library making the request. The meeting should normally be chaired by a member of the QAA Council. The chair of the meeting may not be a member of the university concerned, nor may he or she have any other close links with it. Others present at the meeting will be members of the review team (all if possible, but at least two), and representatives chosen by the university, who are likely to include some of the library staff who participated in the review and members of the senior management of the university.

Detailed notes of the meeting should be taken, if possible by a representative of the QAA Council.

The discussion is likely to focus on one or more of the following:

- A request from the university/library for clarification of one or more of the statements made in the draft report
- A request from the university/library that one or more of the statements in the report be changed
- The university/library wishes to ask the review team's advice on how to address issues raised during the review
- The university/library wishes to discuss how to build on good practices identified by the review team, perhaps taking account of practices at other libraries.

The notes of the meeting will be approved by the chair, if necessary after consultation with UGC Standing Committee on QAA. He or she will then make a final decision on the contents of the report, which will then be published.

## **PART II: CODES OF PRACTICE**

These codes of practice (or statements of good practices) are expected to serve as the (benchmark) standards for libraries in achieving their goals and objectives. However, it has to be emphasized that the list of good practices provided below is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive. It is expected that the library go beyond these practices in its efforts in providing quality services, and in its query for continuous quality improvement.

### **1. VISION, MISSION AND OBJECTIVES**

- 1.1. The library has its own vision, mission, goals and objectives to serve as a framework for its activities.*
- 1.2. The mission and objectives of the library are compatible and consistent with the university vision and mission.*
- 1.3. Assessment of the quality and effectiveness of the library is, in general, linked closely with the goals and objectives of the university.*

### **2. MANAGEMENT**

- 2.1. The library is managed in a manner that permits and encourages the most effective use of available library resources.*
- 2.2. There are procedures and mechanisms in place to ensure optimum use, maintenance and development of facilities.*
- 2.3. The library has an effective collection management policy.*
- 2.4. There are clear lines of responsibility and accountability within the library, and the roles of staff are clearly spelt out.*
- 2.5. The responsibilities and authority of the librarian is defined in writing.*
- 2.6. There is a standing library advisory committee.*

### **3. RESOURCES**

- 3.1. Adequate and qualified staff are employed to meet the library objectives and its obligations to the university community.*
- 3.2. The organizational structure and the qualifications of staff are appropriate for the functioning of the library.*
- 3.3. All staff are trained/retrained for the roles and tasks they perform, especially with respect to the application of new technologies.*
- 3.4. Appropriate physical resources (i.e. infrastructure, internet connectivity and computer facilities and other equipment) are available to meet the library goals and objectives, and its obligations to the university community.*
- 3.5. The library facility and its branches are well planned, it provides secure and adequate space, conducive to study and research with suitable environmental conditions for its services, personnel, resources and collections.*
- 3.6. Sufficient numbers of books, journals, periodicals are available for library users.*
- 3.7. Libraries are allocated with sufficient funds for program budget, (collection development, capital maintenance and general operations).*

3.8. *The library maintains a database of the collections of branch libraries.*

#### **4. SERVICES**

4.1. *The library provides, promotes, maintains and evaluates a range of quality services that support the university mission, goals and objectives.*

4.2. *The library provides effective, efficient and prompt assistance for its users.*

4.3. *Access to library resources is provided in a timely and accurate manner. Hours of access to the library are targeted with the convenience of its users.*

4.4. *The library provides relevant services to its users.*

4.5. *The library assists users in information retrieval methods, evaluation and documentation by combining new techniques and technologies with the best of traditional sources,.*

4.6. *The library collections and the catalogue for accessing them are organized using national bibliographic standards. A central catalogue of library resources provides access for multiple concurrent users and clearly indicates all resources.*

4.7. *Policies regarding access are appropriately disseminated to library users.*

#### **5. INTEGRATION**

5.1. *In order to build its programmes and services in the context of the university, the library is involved in the overall planning and decision making process.*

5.2. *Library staff participate in the relevant sub-committees of the senate, faculties etc. on a regular basis.*

5.3. *Library staff collaborate regularly with the academic staff of faculties by participating in curriculum planning and information literacy instruction as well as educational outcomes assessment.*

5.4. *Information literacy skills and user education are integrated across the curriculum and into appropriate courses with special attention given to information evaluation, critical thinking, intellectual property, copyright, and plagiarism.*

5.5. *Librarian plays a key role in university research publications (e.g. Executive Editor).*

#### **6. CONTRIBUTION TO ACADEMIC OUTPUT**

6.1. *The library is an 'Academic Resource Input' with regard to all information provision for the mother organization.*

6.2. *The library is a 'Cutting Edge Service Unit' for teaching, learning, research and national development.*

6.3. *The library leads in delivering information literacy skills for life-long learning, independent thinking and developing 'Good Citizenship'.*

6.4. *The library is proactive, innovative and forward looking unit which continually add value to its mother organization.*

6.5. *The library is based on the 'Learning Oriented Model' which maximizes the usage of relevant, current and timely information resources.*

## **7. NETWORKING**

- 7.1. Provisions are made for interlibrary loan, consortial borrowing agreements, access to virtual electronic collections, and document delivery and any other resource sharing methods at national and international level.*
- 7.2. Distance learning programs are supported by equivalent means such as remote electronic access to collections, the provision of reliable network connections, and electronic transmission or courier delivery of library materials to remote users.*
- 7.3. Centralized facility is available to interlink all libraries for access to information resources.*

## **8. EVALUATION**

- 8.1. Regular comprehensive evaluation of the overall performance of the library is in place with the involvement of all stakeholders.*
- 8.2. The choice of clientele to be surveyed and questions to be asked is made by the library management with the assistance of an appropriate advisory committee. Usually, the questions relate to how well the library supports its mission and how well it achieves its goals and objectives.*
- 8.3. Library users are encouraged to offer signed or anonymous comments and suggestions. Opportunities for making suggestions are available both in the library and through remote electronic access.*
- 8.4. Professional standards and indicators are constantly used to evaluate all library services.*

## **PART III: GUIDELINES FOR SELF EVALUATION**

The first and most important step in the process of external quality assessment is the self evaluation by the library, which measures the effectiveness and efficiency of its services, and identifies the areas of strengths and weaknesses. The main purpose of the Self Evaluation Report (SER) is to provide evidence that the library has evaluated its activities in a constructive, self-critical and analytical manner. The SER would enable the reviewers to take a view on the quality and effectiveness of the library within the context of the vision, mission, goals and objectives of the library. The SER is considered to be the backbone of the process of quality assessment, and therefore, needs to be well thought out and well organized to enable external reviewers to form an initial basis for their judgements.

The self evaluation should be conducted with the involvement of all the stakeholders, and should clearly identify both the strengths and weaknesses of the library. The library staff should have an idea of the aspects or services where improvements are needed, and it is important to mention the identified weaknesses and describe how they are being addressed. This will imply that there is a culture of continuous quality improvement in the library and definitely would not disadvantage the library in the external review process.

One of the most important principles in the external quality assessment process is that it is based on peer review. The library itself initially provides judgements on quality and effectiveness of its services through the SER. A SER that is descriptive rather than evaluative, or that does not provide sufficient coverage of the essential areas, will mean that the reviewers do not begin the review with a firm knowledge base. They will need to work harder to assure themselves that the library under review has been regularly subjected to suitable internal evaluation and that there is a culture of continuous quality improvement in the library concerned.

Another important principle in the external review process is that libraries are judged according to their vision, mission, goals and objectives. In this way, the system is designed to accommodate diversity and variation in library mission, goals and objectives.

### **Structure of the Self Evaluation Report**

The proposed structure for the SER and specific guidance on writing different chapters are given below. It is strongly recommended that the SER be limited to a maximum of 40 pages including annexes.

#### ***Chapter 1. Introduction***

The SER should begin with a brief description (including a brief history) of the university and the library. A brief introduction to the branch libraries (if any) could be done in this chapter. Any other information that the library considers as relevant could also be included in this section.

It is recommended that this chapter be limited to a maximum of 2 pages.

#### ***Chapter 2. Vision, Mission and Objectives***

This chapter should begin with the vision, mission, goals and objectives of the library. It is important to show how the goals and objectives of the library are linked with the overall vision and mission of the university.

In addition to the good practices listed as Codes of Practice (Part II) under this aspect of evaluation, the reviewers may ask among others the following questions:

- Are the library mission and objectives clearly understood by its staff and the university administration? Are they reviewed periodically?
- How does the library incorporate the university mission into its goals and objectives?
- Does the library have a unit plan? Is it incorporated in the university corporate plan?
- What is the role of library in the development of university corporate plan?

As a guide, this chapter should be limited to a maximum of 2 pages.

### ***Chapter 3. Management***

This chapter should present an analysis of the management structure, policies, procedures and mechanisms that are being adopted in the library. The link(s) between the main library and the faculty libraries (or any other divisions/units of the university), and the policies and procedures governing such linkages should be clearly presented. Policies and procedures governing the duties and responsibilities of the library staff should also be described in this section.

In respect of this aspect of evaluation, the reviewers may ask among others the following questions:

- How does the library administration encourage effective use of available library resources?
- What are the specific units established to support effective use and administration?
- What is the statutory or legal foundation (e.g. university bylaws) for the library activities?
- How effective are the policies and procedures that determine internal library governance and operations?
- What are the procedures/practices for purchasing, withdrawing, donations and valuation of lost materials?
- To whom does the librarian report? Is that reporting relationship appropriate?
- Is there a document that defines the responsibilities and authority of the librarian?
- Does the library have a standing advisory committee? Does the committee have adequate academic staff and student representation? How effective is the committee?
- Are there work norms for all members of library staff?
- Are the library staff members provided with opportunities for training and career development?

As a guide, this chapter should be limited to a maximum of 3 pages.

### ***Chapter 4. Resources***

This chapter should comprise brief summaries about staff and facilities that are available to support the library activities. A brief summary of library staff (preferably in a tabular form) including designation, year appointed, brief details of responsibilities etc. should be presented. Further, a brief summary of library collection, infrastructure facilities, internet

connectivity and computer facilities, other equipment etc. should also be presented in this chapter. Any shortage of physical and/or human resources identified and the action(s) taken to remedy such a situation should be briefly described.

In addition to the good practices listed as Codes of Practice (Part II) under this aspect of evaluation, the reviewers may ask among others the following questions:

- Does the library have adequate staff to carry out its work?
- What criteria are used to make decisions about the acquisition, retention, and use of print, non-print and electronic resources? How does the library select resources for its users?
- What is the role of the teaching faculty in the selection of library resources and in the ongoing development and evaluation of the collection?
- Does the library have a continuing and effective programme to evaluate its collections, resources and online databases, both quantitatively and qualitatively?
- Do print, non-print and electronic resources reflect university curricular and research needs?
- Does the library have sufficient user licenses for its electronic resources so that on-site and remote users can be accommodated?
- How are consortial purchasing and licensing agreements utilized?
- If the library has responsibility for collecting and maintaining the university archives, how does it address these responsibilities?
- How do the library's collections and online databases compare with other libraries?
- How does the library maintain the currency and relevancy of the collection?
- Does the library provide well-planned, secure, and sufficient space to meet the perceived needs of staff and users?
- Are building mechanical systems properly designed and maintained to control temperature and humidity at recommended levels?
- What are the perceptions of users regarding the provision of conducive study spaces, including a sufficient number of seats and varied types of seating?
- Is there enough space for current library collections and future growth of print resources?
- Does the staff have sufficient workspace, and is it configured to promote efficient operations for current and future needs?
- Does the library have sufficient number of computer work stations?
- Does the library have a well designed building, if not do you have a plan for it?
- Are there any 'free reading' facilities available in the university other than the library?
- Is there a scheme for library staff training (local or foreign)?

It is recommended that this chapter be limited to a maximum of 6 pages.

### ***Chapter 5. Services***

This chapter should present an overview of all the services provided by the library. Details regarding the hours of access, catalogue of library resources, dissemination of information to library users, assistance provided by the library for its users in information retrieval, outreach activities conducted by the library (if any) should be presented in this chapter. This information should be supplemented by a self-critical evaluation of the services provided by the library.

In addition to the good practices listed as Codes of Practice (Part II) in relation to Services, the reviewers may ask among others the following questions:

- How well does the library establish, promote, maintain and evaluate a range of quality services that support the academic programmes of the university and optimal library use?
- Are reference, circulation etc. services designed to enable users to take full advantage of the resources available to them?
- How do student and faculty expectations affect library services?
- How well do interlibrary loan and document delivery services support the needs of users?
- Does the library maintain hours of access consistent with reasonable demand?
- What library services are provided for programmes at off-campus sites? How are the needs of users and their satisfaction determined at those sites?
- How are students and faculty informed of library services?
- Does the library maintain and utilize quantitative and qualitative measurements of its ability to serve its users?
- When academic programs are offered at off-campus sites, what are the standards or guidelines used to assure success?
- Does the library provide formal and informal opportunities for instruction?
- Does the library provide adequate space for instruction for both large and small groups? Is the available space designed to provide hands-on instruction, as well as presentation of all types of resources?
- Does the library make appropriate use of technology in its instruction?
- What methods are used to provide maximum intellectual and physical accessibility to the library and its resources?
- How are the accuracy and currency of the catalogue assured?
- Is the arrangement of the collections logical and understandable?
- What are the outreach activities conducted by the library?

It is recommended that this chapter be limited to a maximum of 6 pages.

### ***Chapter 6. Integration***

This chapter should review the collaboration between the library and other communities and departments, divisions and units of the university. Activities such as involvement of

library staff in the overall planning and decision making process of the university, participation in the relevant sub-committees of the senate, faculties etc, involvement in academic activities etc. should be described in this chapter.

In respect of this aspect of evaluation, the reviewers may ask among others the following questions:

- How do librarians involve in overall planning and decision making process of the university?
- How do librarians collaborate with the academic staff in teaching and learning activities?
- How do librarians collaborate with academic staff in planning and designing information literacy “user education” programs?
- What is the representation of library staff in the senate, faculties etc.?
- How does the library facilitate faculty research (where applicable)?
- What is the involvement of the librarian for the research publications of the university?

It is recommended that this chapter be limited to a maximum of 2 pages.

### ***Chapter 7. Contribution to Academic Output***

This chapter should present an analysis of the contributions of the library to the academic output of the university. The role of the library in teaching, learning and research activities, in the provision of information for its users, in delivering information literacy skills etc. has to be analyzed in this chapter. In this case, it would be helpful to substantiate the statements made by the presentation of some output/outcome indicators (e.g. usage of library by 1<sup>st</sup> class graduates, usage of library by graduates getting jobs within first 3 months etc.)

In respect of this aspect of evaluation, the reviewers may ask among others the following questions:

- Does the library fully understand its vital role in relation to the university?
- Do the librarians have knowledge to identify the resources required?
- Do the librarians work closely with the academics to fulfill the academic requirements?
- Are the library staff professionally competent to deliver the ideals in information?
- Could the library play the central role of ‘Learning Oriented Model’?

It is recommended that this chapter be limited to a maximum of 3 pages.

### ***Chapter 8. Networking***

This chapter should provide an overview of the resource sharing methods such as interlibrary loan, consortial borrowing agreements, access to virtual electronic collections, document delivery etc. adopted by the library. Provision of support to distance learning programmes (if any), link between the main library and other the faculty libraries, IT facilities available in library etc. also should be analyzed in this section.

In addition to the good practices listed as Codes of Practice (Part II) under this aspect of evaluation, the reviewers may ask among others the following questions:

- Does the library provide timely and effective interlibrary loan or document delivery service for materials not owned by the library?
- Does the library participate in available consortial borrowing programs?
- Does the library provide sufficient numbers of appropriately capable computer workstations with adequate bandwidth for access to electronic resources?
- Is access to the catalogue and to other library resources available across campus and off-campus?
- In what ways does the library provide services for its users who are engaged in distance learning programs?
- Does the library have links with relevant national and international networks?
- Is the library in a position to provide uninterrupted access to e-resources?

It is recommended that this chapter be limited to a maximum of 3 pages.

### ***Chapter 9. Evaluation***

This chapter should present an overview of the system adopted by the library for evaluating its performance. Different methods (both qualitative and quantitative) used to obtain the feedback from library users should be described. Details regarding the internal evaluation mechanism including the performance indicators used should also be described in this chapter. In this case, it is recommended to substantiate the statements made, by the presentation of some quantitative information.

In addition to the good practices listed as Codes of Practice (Part II) under this aspect of evaluation, the reviewers may ask among others the following questions:

- How does the library maintain a systematic and continuous program for evaluating its performance, for informing the university community of its accomplishments, and for identifying and implementing needed improvements?
- How does the library assess itself? What quantitative and qualitative data does the library collect about its performance? How does it take into account special needs, such as those of physically challenged users?
- How does the library compare itself with other libraries?
- Do all the stakeholders (i.e. students, graduates, academic staff, library staff, other users etc.) take part in performance evaluations/feedback forums?
- How the evaluation checklists, student journal entries, information literacy diaries etc. are used to evaluate the library use?
- Is the assessment and evaluation by librarians from other institutions and/or other appropriate consultants in place?
- Are there any performance indicators maintained by the library?

It is recommended that this chapter be limited to a maximum of 2 pages.

### *Annexes*

In addition to the qualitative statements made in the previous chapters under different aspects of evaluation, it might deem to be necessary to provide some statistics and/or quantitative data. This may not only substantiate the statements made but also would make the reviewers' tasks much easier. However, it is strongly recommended to limit the number of annexes to an optimal maximum. As a guide, this section should be limited to a maximum of 10 pages.

## ANNEXES

### Annex 1: EXTERNAL REVIEW OF LIBRARIES – STEP-WISE PROCESS

#### A. Pre-Visit Activities

- Communication with the Vice Chancellors, requesting the schedule for External Review of the Library
- Awareness Programme on the “*Need for QA Activities in Sri Lankan Higher Education and the External Review Process*”  
During this awareness programme, information and guidance on the following aspects are provided:
  - Present Status of the QA Activities in Sri Lanka
  - External Review Process
  - Preparation of Self-Evaluation Report (SER)
- Submission of the SER by the Library to the QAA Council of UGC
- Identification of the Review Team  
Review team consists of three members outside the university and had gone through the reviewer training programme. In general, the review team consists of three academics with at least two librarians from the university system.
- Obtaining the Acceptance of the Review Team by the Library
- Scheduling the Review Visit in agreement with the Review Team and the Library
- Sending the SER along with other relevant documents to the Reviewers  
Following documents are sent along with the SER:
  - Programme for the Visit
  - Guidance on Preparation of Reviewers’ Report
  - Contract PaperThese documents are sent at least 3 to 4 weeks prior to the visit. Copies of the covering letter are sent to the Vice Chancellor and the Librarian.
- Preparatory Programme for the Review Visit  
Following issues are discussed during this programme:
  - Key Questions on Eight Aspects of Evaluation
  - Agenda for the Visit
  - Review Judgements & Review Outcomes
  - Logistics for the VisitThis programme is conducted at least 2 weeks prior to the Visit.
- Logistics Arrangements  
Transport and accommodation for the reviewers are arranged in collaboration with the Library/University.
- Meeting of QAA Council Representatives with the Review Team prior to the Visit  
During this meeting, a brief account on the knowledge and skills required of reviewers is given. Further, the experience gained and lessons learned from the conducted reviews are also communicated to the reviewers. This meeting is held either on the day before the visit or on the first day of the visit.

## ***B. Post-Visit Activities***

- Follow-up Communication with the Review Team to get the Review Report  
Average time for the submission of the report is 2 to 4 weeks after the visit. Every effort is made by the QAA Council to get the review report as early as possible. Reviewers are regularly reminded about the importance of early submission of the report.
- Submission of the Draft Review Report to the QAA Council
- Forwarding the Draft Review Report to the Library  
Library is requested to send its comments on the review report within a period of one month after the receipt of the draft report. If the QAA Council has not received any communication from the library within a period of one month, it is assumed that the library has accepted the report, as indicated in the covering letter.
- Forwarding the Library Comments on the Report to the Reviewers, *if and when necessary*
- Forwarding the Reviewers' Feedback on Comments back to the Library, *if and when necessary*
- Arrangement of a fresh Discussion between the Library and the Review Team, *if and when necessary*
- Submission of the Review Report (Final Version) to the UGC Standing Committee on QAA for Approval
- Forwarding the Review Report (Final Version) to the Library with a copy to the Vice Chancellor
- Publication of the Reviewers' Report on the QAA Web Site

## **Annex 2: REVIEWER PROFILE**

### **Introduction**

Reviewers have a key role to play in an external review. They personify the commitment to peer review. Their qualities as individuals and the coherence and effectiveness of review teams are vital to the success and credibility of an external review process. Informed, constructive and perceptive reviewers are extremely persuasive ambassadors for the process within and beyond higher education.

### **Qualities Required in Reviewers**

The reviewers are expected to have a clear knowledge and understanding of the review process, a reasonable acquaintance with all national guidance on quality assurance matters, and a detailed working knowledge of aspects of quality assurance in higher education.

In addition, external reviewers should possess the following qualities:

- firm commitment to the principles of quality assurance in higher education
- firm commitment to the purpose of external quality assurance of higher education in Sri Lanka including the external review of libraries
- wide experience and knowledge about university libraries and its activities
- an enquiring disposition
- powers of analysis and sound judgment
- personal authority and presence
- ability to act as an effective team member
- good individual time management skills
- experience of chairing meetings
- ability to make appropriate judgements in the context of complex institutions different from their own
- experience of organization and management, particularly in relation to library activities
- high standard of oral and written communication, preferably with experience of writing formal reports to published deadlines.

### **Skills Required in Reviewers**

External reviewers should have the ability to

- conduct meetings and interviews with academic staff, library staff, students etc.
- write succinctly and coherently
- meet exacting timescales and deadlines
- work effectively as a member of a team

## **Recruitment, Training and Role of Reviewers**

External reviewers are normally nominated by universities and/or other institutions. Reviewers are recruited and trained to ensure that they are capable of carrying out their duties effectively. Training of reviewers is carried out by the QAA Council of the UGC, and a register of trained reviewers will be made available to all universities. The QAA Council of the UGC monitors the performance of all reviewers, using feedback from review visits.

In particular, reviewers should

- possess the knowledge and skills required for an assessment of the library activities
- have successfully completed the training programme
- be available for an agreed number of reviews

The responsibilities of reviewers include

- reading and analyzing the self-evaluation report prepared by the library and any other documentation sent in advance of a review visit
- participating in visits to the library in order to gather, share, test and verify evidence
- making judgments on the quality and effectiveness of the services provided by the reviewed library
- contributing to and commenting on the compilation of the review report

## **Review Chair**

Individuals may be appointed as review chairs, to lead review teams. They will normally have experience of external review, together with extensive experience of quality assurance and national involvement in higher education.

The review chair is responsible for maintaining an overview of the range and balance of review activities and for helping the reviewers to apportion their time effectively. Above all, the review chair must enable the team to develop a robust evidence base on which to make judgments.

In order to carry out their role, review chairs will need to demonstrate:

### ***Knowledge and understanding of library activities***

- recent knowledge and understanding of current issues
- awareness of recent technological developments in relation to library services
- knowledge and understanding of the assurance of standards and quality; experience of liaison with senior management and staff at other levels

### ***Skills***

- ability to manage small teams
- ability to work within tight timescales and to strict deadlines
- ability to lead a team of experts
- ability to communicate effectively in face-to-face interaction
- ability to produce clear and succinct reports on time

### **Annex 3: PROGRAMME FOR THE REVIEW VISIT**

#### **Day 1 – .....**

- 08.30 – 09.00 Private Meeting of Review Panel with QAA Council Representatives
- 09.00 – 09.30 Discuss the Agenda for the Visit
- 09.30 – 11.30 Meeting(s) with the Vice Chancellor/University Administration/Library Advisory Committee/Chairman, Internal QA Unit/Librarian etc.
- 11.00 – 13.00 Library Presentation on the Self Evaluation Report and Discussion
- 13.00 – 14.00 *Lunch*

#### **Meetings**

- Library Staff } Academic  
                          } Para-Professionals  
                          } Support Staff
- Library Advisory Committee
- Teaching Staff
- Students } Undergraduate  
                  } Postgraduate
- Facilities
  - Main Library [3 hrs.]
  - Visit to the Branches
  - Observe ICT/IT/
- Observation of Documents [2 hrs.]

*NOTE: Based on the above, the library will be requested to prepare an agenda for the visit which could be finalized with the Review Team on Day 1 of the visit.*

## **Annex 4: GUIDANCE ON THE PREPARATION OF THE REVIEW REPORT**

The proposed layout for the Review Report is as follows.

1. External Review Process
2. Background of the University and the Library
3. Findings of the Review Team
  - 3.1. Vision, Mission and Objectives
  - 3.2. Management
  - 3.3. Resources
  - 3.4. Services
  - 3.5. Integration
  - 3.6. Contribution to Academic Output
  - 3.7. Networking
  - 3.8. Evaluation
4. Conclusions
5. Recommendations
6. Annexes

*Chapter 1 (External Review Process) provides a summary of the purposes and aims of the external review process. This chapter outlines the main principles of the external review, lists the aspects of provision under review, describes the peer review process and provides details of how reports are published.*

*Chapter 2 (Background of the University and the Library) gives a brief history and a brief description of the university and library.*

*Chapter 3 (Findings of the Review Team) which is considered as the main body of the report, summarizes the findings of the team in each of the eight aspects and gives an aspect judgement at the end of each section.*

This chapter should:

- ***clearly highlight the strengths and good practices found*** by the review team in each aspect;
- ***clearly describe any weaknesses identified*** by the review team; and
- ***in all aspects refer to the evidence*** that exists to support the review team's judgements, using examples of the team's findings.

*Chapter 4 (Conclusions) summarizes the judgements in each aspect with examples of major strengths/good practices and weaknesses identified, and presents the overall judgement arising from the review. It is expected that this section will enable the reader to have some understanding about the strengths/good practices and weaknesses of the library without reading the full text of chapter 3.*

It is recommended that the following format be used in this chapter.

1. Vision, Mission and Objectives:

*Strengths/Good Practices:*

.....

*Weaknesses:*

.....

2. Management:

*Strengths/Good Practices:*

.....

*Weaknesses:*

.....

3. Resources:

*Strengths/Good Practices:*

.....

*Weaknesses:*

.....

4. Services:

*Strengths/Good Practices:*

.....

*Weaknesses:*

.....

5. Integration:

*Strengths/Good Practices:*

.....

*Weaknesses:*

.....

6. Contribution to Academic Output:

*Strengths/Good Practices:*

.....

*Weaknesses:*

.....

7. Networking:

*Strengths/Good Practices:*

.....

*Weaknesses:*

.....

8. Evaluation:

*Strengths/Good Practices:*

.....

*Weaknesses:*

.....

Based on the observations made during the visit by the review team and discussed above, the eight aspects were judged as follows:

<b>Aspect Reviewed</b>	<b>Judgement Given</b>
Vision, Mission and Objectives	.....
Management	.....
Resources	.....
Services	.....
Integration	.....
Contribution to Academic Output	.....
Networking	.....
Evaluation	.....

*Considering the judgements given for the eight different aspects, the reviewers are able to give an overall judgement of “.....” for the Library of the University of.....*

*Chapter 5 (Recommendations) presents the list of recommendations that the review team would like to make for the future development and the continuous quality improvement of the services provided by the library. If the review team wishes to make recommendation(s) in respect of any issue/aspect other than the 8 aspects evaluated, such recommendation(s) should be listed in this chapter with suggestions as to how they might be implemented.*

*Chapter 6 (Annexes) presents the annexes that could include the Agenda of the Visit, List of Persons Met during the Visit, List of Facilities Observed, List of Documents Observed etc.*

**Important:**

- **Review reports should be written in a clear, direct style, using short sentences.** Statements should be unambiguous and any suggestions for improvement should be written so as to enable the library to understand how they might be implemented.
- The review team is requested to make every effort to **ensure that all statements in the report are factually accurate and supported by evidence**, wherever possible with more than one example.
- According to the guidelines (see Review Outcomes – Part I), the libraries and the relevant universities are expected to plan follow-up action(s) as a result of an external review. One year after a review, the library will be requested to provide a brief report to the QAA Council of the UGC on action(s) taken in response to the

review recommendations. Further, the library will be requested to take action within 6 months to remedy the problems identified, if any aspect is judged as '*needs improvement*'. As such, the review team is requested to make every effort to **submit the review report as early as possible**.