

REPORT ON AN INSTITUTIONAL SELF STUDY

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS

A self study is a thorough examination of all of an institutions functions and activities taking account of its mission and objectives, and the standards for quality assurance and accreditation defined by the NCAAA. Conclusions should be supported by evidence, with verification of analysis and conclusions, and advice from others able to offer informed and independent comment.

A self study report should be considered as a research report on the quality of the institution. It should include sufficient information to inform a reader who is unfamiliar with the institution about the process of investigation and the evidence on which conclusions are based to have reasonable confidence that those conclusions are sound.

Other documents such as university handbooks should be available separately and completed scales from the *Self Evaluation Scales for Higher Education Institutions* should have been completed and made available with the self study report. Consequently full details of what is included in these documents need not be repeated in the self study report. However this report should include all the necessary information for it to be read as a complete report on the quality of the institution.

The template includes a number of sections and headings to assist in preparing the report. These sections and headings should be followed in the report. However additional information can be included. Throughout the report evidence should be presented in tables or other forms of data presentation to support conclusions, with comparative data included where appropriate, and reference made to other reports or surveys with more detailed information.

The report should be provided as a single page numbered document, single sided, with a table of contents. A list of acronyms used in the report should be attached.

Template for Report on Institutional Self-Study

For guidance on the completion of this template, please refer to Sections 3.6, 3.7 and 3.8 of Chapter 3 of Part 2 of this *Handbook*.

A. General Information

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| Name of Institution |
| Date of Report |

B. Institutional Profile

An institutional profile should be prepared including the following material:

- A brief summary of the institution's history, scale and range of activities;
- A description of the management and organizational structure using an organizational chart, list of colleges and departments, and the names and contact details of key individuals;
- A list of campus locations indicating programs offered and student numbers;
- Teaching and other staff and student numbers in total and by college, department, and program;
- Summary information about the institution's accreditation status including the outcomes of any previous institutional reviews, and any conditions that were established;
- A description of the institution's quality assurance arrangements, priorities for development, and any special issues affecting its operations;
- A summary of the institution's strategic plan. (A copy of the actual strategic plan should be available for reference if required.)
- A list of matters that are of particular interest to the institution and on which the institution is seeking comment and advice in the review.

B. Self-Study Process

Provide a brief description of procedures followed and administrative arrangements for the self study. Include an organization chart. Membership and terms of reference for committees and /or working parties should be attached.

C. Context of the Self Study

1. Environmental Context.

Summary of significant elements of the external environment in which the institution is operating and changes that have occurred recently or are expected to occur (eg. economic or social developments, population changes, government policies, developments at other institutions with implications for this institution's programs).

2. Institutional Context.

Brief summary of recent developments at the institution with implications for the review.

D. Mission, and Goals and Strategic Objectives for Quality Improvement

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| 1. Mission of the Institution |
| 2. Summary of Strategic Plan for Quality Improvement (The institution's major goals and strategic objectives for quality improvement should be listed, indicating for each objective, performance indicators and benchmarks or standards of achievement the institution wishes to achieve.) |

E Special Emphasis in the Self-Study (if any)

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| Indicate any areas of particular interest to the institution in the review. (These may relate to responses to changes in the external or institutional environment, to planning priorities that may have been determined as a result of quality assessments or other strategic priorities, to government policies, etc.) |
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G. Progress Towards Major Quality Objectives (Refer to Item D2 above)

Assessment of institutional performance in relation to plans or any major quality improvement initiatives in the period under review. These may have been undertaken in response to a previous self study, recommendations or requirements following an external review, or for other reasons. Brief reports should be provided on each major initiative citing the objective(s), specific data indicating the results achieved, and a comment on reasons for success or failure to achieve the desired results.

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| 1. Objective 1 |
| Result Achieved (Performance in relation to indicators and benchmarks) |
| Comment |
| Objective 2 |
| Result Achieved (Performance in relation to indicators and benchmarks) |
| Comment |

(continue for other strategic quality improvement objectives)

H. Evaluation in Relation to Quality Standards

Reports should be given on performance in relation to each of the standards set out in the *Standards for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions*. The reports should refer to areas of strength and weakness as indicated by the rating scales in the accompanying document—*Self Evaluation Scales for Higher Education Institutions*. Reference should also be made, where relevant, to other evidence such as performance indicators and surveys of students, graduates, faculty and employers and tables summarizing research output. If specific numerical data is available it should be included or provided in attachments and referred to in the text. Priorities for improvement should be indicated. If priorities for improvement have already been determined in planning, or initiatives already undertaken these should be noted and any initial results reported.

- To ensure a full understanding of the report by a person or persons unfamiliar with the institution Eg. external reviewers. (either local or international), a brief explanatory note should be included giving background information or explanations or processes relevant to the standard concerned.
- Some of the standards relate to functions that are administered by a central organizational unit for the institution as a whole. Others are decentralized and administered by colleges, departments, or other academic or administrative units in different parts of the institution. Where the functions are decentralized the reports should provide both an overall picture for the institution as a whole, and an indication of areas where quality of performance is particularly good or less than satisfactory. (See suggestions for reporting on decentralized functions in *Handbook 2 Internal Quality Assurance Arrangements*.)
- If the institution is operating in different locations or with major separate administrative centers (Eg, sections for male and female students, or a campus in another city or community) a single report should be provided but any significant differences should be noted and comments made about reasons for the differences and any response that should be made to deal with those differences. Where the institution operates in different locations or sections the descriptions of procedures should indicate how evaluations were conducted in the different locations
- It is not necessary to provide a detailed report on every individual item in every sub-section of each standard. The completed self evaluation scales will provide that more comprehensive coverage. However the report must include at least (a) Items where performance is poor or significantly different in different sections. (b) Items where performance is considered very good and evidence of strong performance can be provided. (c) Items that have been selected for special consideration as a result of strategic planning or previous evaluations
- **A vital element in these reports is to provide specific data to support conclusions, show trends, and make appropriate comparisons with other institutions selected to provide benchmarks for evaluation of performance.** This data can include statistical information, figures derived from survey results, student results (with standards verified), numbers of refereed publications or citations, usage rates of services or anything also that provides clear evidence about the matter being evaluated. A simple assertion that something is good, or needs improvement, is not sufficient without evidence to back it up.

Attach completed rating self evaluation rating scales from the Self Evaluation Scales for *Higher Education Institutions*.

1. Mission and Objectives (Overall Rating _____Stars)

The institution's mission statement must clearly and appropriately define its principal purposes and priorities and be influential in guiding planning and action within the institution.

Explanatory note about development and use of the mission.

Description of process for investigation and preparation of the report on this standard.

Report on subsections of the standard

1.1 Appropriateness of the Mission

1.2 Usefulness of the Mission Statement

1.3 Development and Review of the Mission

1.4 Use Made of the Mission Statement

1.5 Relationship Between Mission and Goals and Objectives

Overall Evaluation of Quality of Mission, Goals and Objectives. Refer to evidence obtained and provide a report based on that evidence and including a summary of particular strengths, areas requiring improvement, and priorities for action

2. Governance and Administration (Overall Rating _____ Stars)

The governing body must provide effective leadership in the interests of the institution as a whole and its clients, through policy development and processes for accountability. Senior administrators must lead the activities of the institution effectively within a clearly defined governance structure. If there are separate sections for male and female students resources must be comparable in both sections, there must be effective communication between them, and full involvement in planning and decision making processes. Planning and management must occur within a framework of sound policies and regulations that ensure financial and administrative accountability, and provide an appropriate balance between coordinated planning and local initiative.

Explanatory note about aspects of governance and administration relevant to the matters referred to in this standard that are not already explained in the institutional profile. The note can be in summary form and refer to other documents for further detail.

Description of process for investigation and preparation of report on this standard.

Report on subsections of the standard

2.1 Governing Body

2.2 Leadership

2.3 Planning Processes

2.4 Relationship Between Sections for Male and Female Students

2.5 Institutional Integrity

2.6 Internal Policies and Regulations

2.7 Organizational Climate

2.6 Associated Companies and Controlled Entities (if applicable)

Overall Evaluation of Quality of Governance and Administration. Refer to evidence obtained and provide a report based on that evidence and including a summary of particular strengths, areas requiring improvement, and priorities for action.

3. Management of Quality Assurance and Improvement (Overall Rating _____ Stars)

Quality assurance processes must involve all sections of the institution and be effectively integrated into normal planning and administrative processes. Criteria for assessment of quality must include inputs, processes and outcomes with a particular focus on outcomes. Processes must be established to ensure that teaching and other staff and students are committed to improvement and regularly evaluate their own performance. Quality must be assessed by reference to evidence based on indicators of performance and challenging external standards.

Explanatory note. Provide a summary explanation of arrangements for quality assurance including major committees and organizational unit(s) and activities carried out at different levels of the institution (including colleges or departments) Include a listing of KPIs for use in the institution, and benchmarks selected for performance.

Description of process for preparation of report on this standard.

Report on subsections of the standard

3.1 Institutional Commitment to Quality Improvement

2.2 Scope of Quality Improvement Processes

2.3 Administration of Quality Assurance Processes

2.4 Use of Indicators and Benchmarks

2.5 Independent Verification of Standards

Overall Evaluation of Management of Quality Assurance and Improvement. Refer to evidence obtained and provide a report based on that evidence and including a summary of particular strengths, areas requiring improvement, and priorities for action.

4. Learning and Teaching. (Overall Rating _____ Stars)

The institution must have an effective system for ensuring that all programs meet high standards of learning and teaching through initial approvals, monitoring of performance, and provision of institution-wide support services.

In all programs student learning outcomes must be clearly specified, consistent with the National Qualifications Framework and (for professional programs) requirements for employment or professional practice. Standards of learning must be assessed and verified through appropriate processes and benchmarked against demanding and relevant external reference points. Teaching staff must be appropriately qualified and experienced for their particular teaching responsibilities, use teaching strategies appropriate for different kinds of learning outcomes, and participate in activities to improve their teaching effectiveness. Teaching quality and the effectiveness of programs must be evaluated through student assessments and graduate and employer surveys, with feedback used as a basis for plans for improvement.

Description of process for investigation and preparation of report on this standard.

Report on subsections of the standard

(In sub-section 4.1 a description should be given of the institutions processes for oversight of quality of learning and teaching. In each other subsection include an explanatory statement describing what is done throughout the institution.. If common procedures are not followed this should be indicated and an explanation given of major variations and how the institution as a whole monitors quality of performance.)

4.1 Institutional Oversight of Quality of Learning and Teaching

4.2 Student Learning Outcomes

4.3 Program Development Processes

4.4 Program Evaluation and Review Processes

4.5 Student Assessment

4.6 Educational Assistance for Students

4.7 Quality of Teaching

4.7 Support for Improvements in Quality of Teaching

4.8 Qualifications and Experience of Teaching Staff

4.9 Field Experience Activities

4.10 Partnership Arrangements with Other Institutions (If applicable)

Overall Evaluation of Quality of Learning and Teaching. Refer to evidence obtained and provide a report based on that evidence about the extent to which the requirements of the standard of learning are met throughout the institution. The evidence of performance should be provided (or summarized and referred to in other documents) including KPIs, survey reports and other relevant sources of evidence. A general conclusion should be drawn that includes a summary of particular strengths, areas requiring improvement, and priorities for action.

5. Student Administration and Support Services (Overall Rating _____ Stars)

Administration of admissions and student record systems must be reliable and responsive, with confidentiality of records maintained in keeping with stated policies. Students' rights and responsibilities must be clearly defined and understood, with transparent and fair procedures available for discipline and appeals. Mechanisms for academic advice, counselling and support services must be accessible and responsive to student needs. Support services for students must go beyond formal academic requirements and include extra curricular provisions for religious, cultural, sporting, and other activities relevant to the needs of the student body.

Explanatory note about student administration arrangements and support services, including functions carried out centrally and those managed in colleges or departments. For those managed in departments or colleges refer to any relevant institution-wide policies or regulations and describe the processes used by the institution to monitor how effectively local services are provided.

Description of process for preparation of report on this standard.

Report on subsections of the standard

5.1 Student Admissions

5.2 Student Records

5.3 Student Management

5.4 Planning and Evaluation of Student Services

5.5 Medical and Counseling Services

5.6 Extra-Curricular Activities for Students

Overall Evaluation of Quality of Student Administration and Support Services. Refer to evidence obtained and provide a report based on that evidence that includes a summary of particular strengths, areas requiring improvement, and priorities for action.

6. Learning Resources (Overall Rating _____ Stars)

Learning resources including libraries and provisions for access to electronic and other reference material must be planned to meet the particular requirements of the institution's programs and provided at an adequate level. Library and associated IT facilities must be accessible at times to support independent learning, with assistance provided in finding material required. Facilities must be provided for individual and group study in an environment conducive to effective investigations and research. The services must be evaluated and improved in response to systematic feedback from teaching staff and students.

Explanatory note about provision of learning resources within the institution. This should include information about the extent to which library services are provided centrally or within colleges. If they are provided in different locations, descriptions should be given of any overall institutional coordination and performance monitoring.

Description of process for investigation and preparation of report on this standard. (if library services are provided in different locations this investigation should deal with provisions throughout the institution and draw conclusions about overall performance and variations between different locations)

Report on subsections of the standard

6.1 Planning and Evaluation

6.2 Organization

6.3 Support for Users

6.4 Resources and Facilities

Overall Evaluation of Learning Resource Provision. Refer to evidence and provide a report based on that evidence that includes a summary of particular strengths, areas requiring improvement, and priorities for action

7. Facilities and Equipment (Overall Rating _____ Stars)

Facilities must be designed or adapted to meet the particular requirements for teaching and learning in the programs offered by the institution, and offer a safe and healthy environment for high quality education. Use of facilities must be monitored and user surveys used to assist in planning for improvement. Adequate provision must be made for classrooms and laboratories, use of computer technology and research equipment by faculty and student and appropriate provision made for associated services such as food services, extra curricular activities, and where relevant, student accommodation.

Explanatory note about administration of arrangements for planning, development and maintenance of facilities and equipment. This should include cross references to other more detailed facilities planning documents.

Description of process for investigation and preparation of report on this standard.

Report on subsections of the standard

7.1 Policy and Planning

7.2 Quality and Adequacy of Facilities and Equipment

7.3 Management and Administration

7.4 Information Technology

7.5 Student Residences

Overall Evaluation of Provision of Facilities and Equipment. This report should refer to evidence and relevant benchmarks, and include a summary of particular strengths, areas requiring improvement, and priorities for action

8. Financial Planning and Management (Overall Rating _____ Stars)

Financial resources must be adequate for the programs and services offered and efficiently managed in keeping with program requirements and institutional priorities. Effective systems must be used for budgeting and for financial delegations and accountability providing local flexibility, institutional oversight and effective risk management.

Explanatory note describing budgeting and financial planning and funding submission processes and arrangements for audit. The explanation should include a list of financial reports that are prepared. Information should be given about levels of financial delegation within the institution with reference to other documents that set out institutional policies and regulations relating to these delegations. .

Description of process for investigation and preparation of report on this standard.

Report on subsections of the standard

8.1 Financial Planning

8.2 Financial Management

8.3 Auditing and Risk Management

Overall Evaluation of Financial Management and Planning Processes. The report should refer to relevant evidence and benchmarks and include a summary comment indicating particular strengths, areas requiring improvement, and priorities for action.

9. Employment Processes (Overall Rating _____ Stars)

Teaching and other staff must have the qualifications and experience for effective exercise of their responsibilities and professional development strategies must be followed to ensure continuing improvement in faculty and staff expertise. Performance of all faculty and staff must be evaluated, with outstanding performance recognized and support provided for improvement where required. Effective, fair, and transparent processes must be available for the resolution of conflicts and disputes involving faculty and or staff.

Explanatory note about processes for employment and professional development of teaching and other staff. The explanation should include a description of how colleges and departments are involved in the selection of teaching staff, a description of institutional policies on staff development and promotion, and indicators used for monitoring the quality of staff management processes throughout the institution,

Description of process for preparation of report on this standard.

Report on subsections of the standard

9.1 Policy and Administration

9.2 Recruitment

9.3 Personal and Career Development

9.4 Discipline, Complaints and Dispute Resolution

Overall Evaluation of Institutional Employment Processes. The report should refer to relevant evidence and benchmarks and include a summary comment indicating particular strengths, areas requiring improvement, and priorities for action.

10. Research (Overall Rating _____ Stars)

All staff teaching higher education programs must be involved in sufficient appropriate scholarly activities to ensure they remain up to date with developments in their field, and those developments should be reflected in their teaching. Staff teaching in post graduate programs or supervising higher degree research students must be actively involved in research in their field. Adequate facilities and equipment must be available to support the research activities of teaching staff and post graduate students to meet these requirements. In universities and other institutions with research responsibility, teaching staff must be encouraged to pursue research interests and to publish the results of that research. Their research contributions must be recognized and reflected in evaluation and promotion criteria. The research output of the institution must be monitored and benchmarked against that of other similar institutions. Clear and equitable policies must be established for ownership and commercialization of intellectual property.

Explanatory note describing the nature and extent of research involvement of the institution and of teaching staff within it. The explanation should include a brief description of organizational arrangements for developing and monitoring research activity across the institution including any research centers and activities to encourage research by individual staff members. Indicators used for monitoring research performance should be listed.

Description of process for preparation of report on this standard.

Report on subsections of the standard

10.1 Institutional Research Policies

10.2 Faculty and Student Involvement in Research

10.3 Commercialization of Research

10.4 Facilities and Equipment

Overall Evaluation of Research Performance. For a university the report should include statistical data on the extent and quality of research activity including competitive grants, publications and citations and other relevant information benchmarked against appropriate institutional benchmarks. For a college this information can be included but the report must include data on professional or scholarly activities that ensure teaching staff are up to date with developments in their teaching field. The report should include summary comment indicating particular strengths, areas requiring improvement, and priorities for action.

11. Institutional Relationships with the Community (Overall Rating _____ Stars)

Contributing to the community must be recognized as an important institutional responsibility. Facilities and services are made available to assist with community developments, teaching and other staff must be encouraged to be involved in the community and information about the institution and its activities made known. Community perceptions of the institution must be monitored and appropriate strategies adopted to improve understanding and enhance its reputation.

Explanatory note about institutional policies for community service activities and media or other contacts to develop community understanding and support. The explanation should include information about how contributions to the community are recognized within the institution.

Description of process for preparation of report on this standard.

Report on subsections of the standard

11.1 Institutional Policies on Community Relationships

11.2 Interactions with the Community

11.3 Institutional Reputation

Overall Evaluation of Institutional Relationships with the Community. The report should include relevant statistical and survey data and indicate particular strengths, areas requiring improvement, and priorities for action

I Independent Evaluations

1. Describe the process used to obtain independent comment on the self study. Processes may include a review of documentation by experienced and independent persons familiar with similar institutions and who could comment on relative standards, consultancy advice or a report by a review panel, or even the results of an accreditation review by an independent agency. An independent evaluation may be conducted in relation to the total self-study, or involve a number of separate comments by different people on different issues.

2. Summary of matters raised by independent evaluator(s)

3. Comment on matters raised by independent evaluator(s) (Agree, disagree, further consideration required, action proposed, etc.)

J Conclusions

1. List and briefly describe institutional activities that are particularly successful or that demonstrate high quality.

2. List and briefly describe institutional activities that are less than satisfactory and that need to be improved.

K Action Recommendations

These should be based on the matters identified earlier in the report for further improvements or to overcome problems or weaknesses identified indicate specific actions proposed to deal with the most important priorities for action identified in those sections. Matters of greatest urgency or highest priority should be identified. For each action proposed recommendations should be made on who should be responsible for the action, timelines specified, and any necessary resources required.

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| Action Recommendation 1 |
| Person (s) responsible |
| Timelines (For total initiative and for major stages of development) |
| Resources Required |

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| Action Recommendation 2..... |
| Person(s) responsible |
| Timelines |
| Resources Required |
| Action Recommendation 3..... |
| Person(s) responsible |
| Timelines |
| Resources Required |
| Action Recommendation 4..... |
| Person(s) responsible |
| Timelines |
| Resources Required |
| Continue for further action recommendations.. |

The Institutional Self Study Report should be on A4 paper, unbound, printed on one side, page numbered, and with a table of contents for easy reference.

Attachments

Membership and terms of reference for sub-committees and working parties

Reference list of key reports and other documents cited in the report

Glossary of acronyms and abbreviations used in the report

Copy of report(s) by independent evaluator(s)

In addition to the self-study report the following documents should be provided:

- (i) Self-evaluation Scales for Higher Education Institutions. The completed scales should include star ratings, independent comments and indications of priorities for improvement as requested in the document, and should be accompanied by a description of the processes used in investigating and making evaluations.
- (ii) A copy of the institution's strategic plan.
- (iii) A copy of the institution's strategic plan for quality improvement (which may be included within the broader institutional strategic plan).
- (iv) Current student catalogue, prospectus, bulletin or handbook including descriptions of the curriculum, admissions requirements, degree completion requirements, and related information.

The following documents should be available for the review panel during the visit. Members of the panel may ask for some of it to be sent to them in advance.

- (v) Faculty handbook or similar document with information about staffing policies, professional development policies and procedures and related information.
- (vi) Administrative and financial policies manual or similar document including the institution's bylaws and regulations, roles and responsibilities of administrative and academic officers and major committees, and an explanation of the institutions governance and administrative structure.
- (vii) Quality assurance manual or description of procedures including information about the institutions system of assessing programs and services, the role of the institution's quality center and systems for gathering and analyzing data on quality of performance and planning for improvement.
- (viii) Current data on faculty and other teaching staff including tables with numbers by academic rank, by highest qualification, teaching staff/student ratios for each department and college, and for the institution as a whole. For a university (optional for a college) information should be provided on research output for each department, college and for the institution as a whole. Current teaching staff CVs should be on file and available for the review panel if required.