



O.P. JINDAL GLOBAL UNIVERSITY

QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION OFFICE

ANNUAL REPORT 2014-15

Members

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Contents

- Introduction
- The Context of Quality Assurance
- Scope of Work of QAAO
- Main Areas of Activity
 - Accreditation and Regulatory Activities
 - Quality Assurance and Enhancement Activities
- Current Challenges and Future Plans

Introduction

1. Quality Assurance and Accreditation Office (QAAO) was formally established on 21 September 2014. This was an important milestone in the development of the University as it is necessary to take stock of its rapid growth and development in the last five years and chalk out plans for the continuous enhancement of the quality of all our work in the University.
2. Mr. Aman Shah took up the position of Director of the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Office on 22 August 2014 after a highly successful career in higher education in Hong Kong. Ms. Jyoti Bansal started as Manager, Quality Assurance and Accreditation, in March 2015, and Ms. Princy George as Manager, Institutional Research, on 28 May 2015.

The Context of Quality Assurance

3. To understand the scope of our work, it was necessary to have a clear statement of what quality assurance means in the context of higher education. The following is an extract from the Vice Chancellor's announcement of the setting up of QAAO:

“Quality” is an evolutionary, and to some extent, a complicated concept. It means different things to different people. Some popular definitions in the relevant literature (Harvey and Knight, 1996) are as follows:

- *Perfection (meaning flawless); or exceptional (meaning excellence or outstanding achievement through the expertise of faculty);*
- *Value for money (meaning from the stakeholders perspective, return on investment via, for example, university rankings);*
- *Transformation (meaning a process of change with emphasis on adding value to students' knowledge, skills and experience and empowering them); and*
- *Fitness for purpose (meaning identification of a purpose or purposes and setting in motion a set of tasks, activities, and strategies, and employing the necessary resources to accomplish the purpose(s)).*

These definitions give us some guidance on what we at JGU need to do. We also need to understand the word “assurance”, which could mean adherence to a narrow range of regulatory requirements to achieve threshold standards, or the development of policies, systems and procedures creating a robust Quality Assurance Framework which enables us to stand shoulder to shoulder with the world class universities. Our choice in this respect is abundantly clear.

Scope of work of QAAO

4. Some of the immediate tasks identified by the Vice Chancellor define the scope of work of QAAO as follows:
 - (a) Firming up on the University's Vision/Mission and a Statement of Graduate Attributes.

- (b) Developing procedures for strengthening a culture of quality across all academic and support departments with an emphasis on evidence.
 - (c) Developing and implementing procedures for an internal academic audit system to enhance accountability and to assure quality.
 - (d) Reviewing and strengthening the procedures for the collection and use of feedback from students, faculty, staff, and other stakeholders.
 - (e) Reviewing and strengthening the procedures to collect, document and disseminate information on various achievements of students, faculty, the Schools and the University.
 - (f) Reviewing procedures for the design, development, approval and management of courses and programmes; to make the procedures more transparent and consultative.
 - (g) Developing systems for enhanced consultative procedures for decision making at various levels.
 - (h) Clarifying and documenting the roles and responsibilities via an organization chart and a committees structure.
5. The tasks identified above make it clear that quality assurance is a shared responsibility of the management and the Deans of Schools, the faculty, the staff and the students. Without the support of the management and the cooperation and commitment of all stakeholders, quality assurance measures are likely to be ineffective. This annual report of the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Office outlines our work during 2014-2015 and identifies matters arising from our interactions with regulatory bodies, the management and other stakeholders of the University.

Main Areas of Work

6. The scope of work identified above can be categorized under two primary areas of responsibility – **Accreditation & Regulatory** and **Quality Assurance & Enhancement**. The responsibility for oversight of QAAO activities rests with the Internal Quality Assurance Committee (IQAC) which ensures that QAAO activities are carried out in accordance with the strategies and policies of the University and in the best interest of the University.



Accreditation and Regulatory Activities

7. With the guidance and support of the Vice Chancellor and the Registrar, QAAO has engaged in the accreditation and regulatory tasks noted below:

(a) **National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC)**

The National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) issued a letter of intent (LOI) to JGU on 15 September 2014. This initiated the formal process of obtaining NAAC accreditation for the University. A series of briefings were held and data collected from all sources and the documents were submitted in February 2015 after uploading them on the University's website. This set of documents were replaced in the specific (shorter) format required by NAAC in July 2015 together with a 50-point Core/Desirable Indicator sheet. During the process of data collection, a number of briefings and meetings were held with relevant groups in the University.

This exercise is ongoing as NAAC has not yet indicated the dates of their Peer Team visit to the University. QAAO expects to conduct further briefings and hopefully a mock audit in September 2015.

This exercise also brought into focus the stark absence of a central repository of data in the University resulting in various difficulties in compiling the data required. Measures have been taken since then to correct this deficiency although the University has not yet reached the stage of finding a more stable solution.

(b) **Bar Council of India (BCI)**

QAAO undertook the task of assisting JGLS in their application to BCI in terms of documentation and the visit of the BCI Team for expanding the student numbers in the BA LLB and BBA LLB programmes, and for approval of the continuation of the BA LLB, BBA LLB and the LLB programmes beyond 2014- 2015. This exercise is not yet complete as BCI has yet to respond to the University's application following their visit in July 2015.

(c) **University Grants Commission(UGC)**

QAAO coordinated data compilation and the programme for the visit of the UGC Expert Committee during August 12-13 2015 relating to the University's application for recognition under Section 12(b) of the UGC Act. Documents pertaining to the visits, as required by the authorities, were prepared and submitted. This exercise is also not yet complete as UGC's response following the visit is awaited.

(d) **Other Surveys**

QAAO receives requests for other types of surveys from time to time and has provided data for:

- The Questionnaire for India Survey 2015 by Higher Education Review in March 2015.
- The Questionnaire for Education World magazine by Core in March 2015.
- Information was provided on Campus Preparedness Survey 2015 by campus management.

Quality Assurance and Enhancement Activities

8. JGU's Vision, Mission, Core Values and Graduate Attributes

After wide consultation within the University and with the feedback and guidance from the Vice Chancellor, Advisors to the Vice Chancellor, the Registrar and the Deans, the Director, QAAO submitted the JGU statements of Vision, Mission, Core Values and Graduate Attributes to the Academic Council and the Management Board. These statements have now been approved and adopted.

9. Annual Programme Review Report

With the continuing growth and development of the University, it has become necessary to formalise the implementation of good practice for the management and delivery of courses and programmes within each School with the clear objective of ensuring a student-centered approach to course delivery. One such good practice is to establish a culture of self-reflection and peer review relating to course/programme delivery. QAAO submitted a proposal for the adoption of the Annual Programme Review Report for each academic programme offered by each School. The report is intended to provide the means to engage in self-reflection, peer review, and continuous improvement. A set of roles, procedures, and timelines for the preparation of the Report was presented to the first Internal Quality Assurance Committee (IQAC) in April 2015. The IQAC agreed that such an exercise is a necessary step as a quality enhancement measure. The Academic Council and the Board of Management have approved the proposal and the first set of Reports should now be available with the Registrar.

The Annual Report will serve as a prelude to an academic audit system and if implemented carefully, a stable mechanism to collect useful data on courses and programmes.

10. Publication of relevant handbooks and brochures

The Director, HR, has implemented a good practice of publishing a Faculty Handbook.

In the interests of clarity and transparency, the English Language Centre now publishes a programme brochure relating to English language proficiency courses for students in the areas of reading, writing, speaking and listening.

11. Involvement of students in quality assurance and enhancement activities

Students form the core of the University's purpose and mission, and QAAO is engaged in establishing a rapport with student bodies at a University-wide level. The QAAO is exploring ways to create opportunities for students to contribute to the conception, planning, and implementation of new and sustainable quality enhancement measures in the University.

Over the past year, the Director, QAAO has pursued this through several meetings and interactions with members of the JGU Student Council.

12. Current challenges and future plans

- (a) As a young institution, JGU is still in the process of institutionalizing quality assurance strategies and processes. A primary challenge facing the University and the QAAO is the need for a central data repository relating to all University activities that fall within the remit of the QAAO. In addition to enabling the University to be adequately prepared for future accreditation/recognition/ranking exercises, this will also allow the QAAO and the University to improve processes for self-reflection, planning and continuous improvement.
- (b) Having been established only a year ago, it is anticipated that the current and coming year will see an institutionalization of processes of quality improvement in such a manner that it will become increasingly integrated into the larger JGU community.
- (c) QAAO is currently engaged in drafting of the University's Strategic Plan on the basis of submissions of individual Schools as their action plan for 2020. With the approval of the Vice Chancellor, the draft will then be subject of wider consultation before it is submitted to the Academic Council and Board of Management.
- (d) The future plans of QAAO consist of:
 - Strategies to strengthen ties with student bodies and the alumni;
 - Strategies to strengthen the QA culture in the University;
 - Development of an annual student satisfaction survey;
 - Development of an academic audit system; and
 - Development of a QA Digest consisting mainly of teaching, learning and assessment matters for circulation to faculty on a periodic basis.