



**GENERAL SIR JOHN KOTELAWALA DEFENCE
UNIVERSITY**

POLICY ON QUALITY ASSURANCE

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Quality and Quality Assurance (QA) in Higher Education have gained momentum and relevance in the recent past due to several reasons. Some of these include; the ever increasing needs and demands for higher education in the knowledge economy, the huge expansion of higher educational institutes to meet the needs of the employment sector and aspirations of seekers of tertiary education, and the demand for greater responsibility and accountability of universities to fulfil stated mandates while ensuring efficient and effective use of public funds. Accordingly, in the present context, Quality and Quality Assurance have assumed greater proportions as essential elements in higher education.

Quality Assurance (QA) is the means by which a higher educational institute guarantees with confidence and certainty that standard of its awards, quality of its education provision and knowledge generation are properly maintained and enhanced. QA is also about ensuring that there are mechanisms, procedures and processes in place to work towards initiating, developing, assessing, monitoring and evaluating quality and using feedback for a cyclical, continuous and iterative process of improvement of quality and standards to achieve desired quality goals. It is also a management philosophy supported with a comprehensive set of processes and tools aimed at achieving a culture of continuous improvement.

The KDU is committed to ensure a high-quality educational experience and a research and development agenda as embodied in its Mission, which is 'To ensure a high-quality, learner-centered educational experience through undergraduate, graduate, and professional programmes along with high-quality research across many disciplines in the field of defence, in both residential and non-residential settings in the campus.'

The Centre for Quality Assurance (CQA) has been established at General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University (KDU) in line with the recommendations of the University Grants Commission (UGC) Circular No 09/2019 on 'Further Strengthening of Internal Quality Assurance Systems in Universities and Other Higher Educational Institutes' in order to enhance the quality culture of the university by, further

strengthening quality and quality assurance of education, research and service functions with the support of good governance and management systems.

The stated policy on quality assurance will greatly enhance and support quality and quality assurance at KDU.

2.0 SCOPE OF THE QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY

Quality is the outcome of the interaction of many factors, which are within the scope of this Policy. However, certain factors tend to stand out prominently as major determinants of quality in higher education processes. This QA policy of KDU therefore embraces and applies and is of particular interest and relevance to the following:

1. All faculties, academic/administrative departments and other institutional structures operating under the umbrella of the KDU and its affiliated institutions;
2. All undergraduate and postgraduate study programmes and research and innovations carried out at KDU;
3. All staff, temporary and permanent, who are active in teaching, research, administration and in providing any form of support service to the core functions of the University;
4. All students registered with the KDU;
5. All infrastructure, learning resources, governance/institutional setup, information dissemination structure and social amenities belonging to the KDU.

Accordingly, the entire institution has to view quality as an overarching principle of all its operations.

3.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY

3.1 Aim

The main aim of the quality assurance policy is to provide the essential framework to ensure that relevant and appropriate academic standards are maintained in every aspect of the university and that good quality education is provided to students by supporting continuous quality improvement in the university and in all study programme level activities. In particular, the QA policy aims to achieve the following objectives:

3.2 Objectives

1. To foster public perception with the highest level of trust and confidence ensuring transparency, accountability, and good practices in all operational aspects of the University;
2. To ensure that the quality assurance system of the University is designed based on national guidelines and requirements, and the requirements of the students, staff and other stakeholders;
3. To establish a quality culture within the university community with a robust quality assurance system and capacity building;
4. To ensure the integrity of the academic awards of the University;
5. To safeguard and improve the academic standards and quality of education at the University;
6. To develop and maintain quality academic study programmes appropriate to the academic strengths and the requirements of the University;
7. To ensure that all study programmes are of high standard and of continued relevance to graduates, labour markets and the needs of the workforce in the country;
8. To develop and refine internal quality assurance mechanisms and to apply such mechanisms systematically across all study programmes offered, all research activities engaged in, all services rendered to society and all support services provided to students and staff by the University;

9. To prepare the university to meet the external quality assurance assessment and accreditation requirements by the UGC and other local and international agencies, and thereby to facilitate follow-up actions and a monitoring process;
10. To safeguard and improve the existing good practices to strengthen the quality culture within the institution with enhanced governance and management; and
11. To continually improve quality of community services offered by the University.

4.0 PRINCIPLES AND VALUES OF QUALITY ASSURANCE

4.1 Principles

The quality assurance across the university is based on several principles as set out below.

1. Quality assurance and enhancement are developmental and are part of the university's strategy for ensuring the highest-quality study programmes, learning, teaching, curricula, research, and academic activities and standards of the university.
2. Quality assurance and quality enhancement are ongoing, and they are part and parcel of the university's strategies for continuous improvement and excellence.
3. Quality assurance and quality enhancement are an outcome of collaborative and cooperative efforts.
4. Quality assurance and quality enhancement are empowering, transparent, and inclusive involving all areas of the university and stakeholders.
5. Quality assurance and quality enhancement are designed to promote institutional and public confidence in the academic standards of the university.
6. Quality assurance and quality enhancement are designed to meet internal and external approval, accreditation, and recognition requirements.

7. Quality assurance and quality enhancement are supported and facilitated processes in the university.
8. Quality assurance and quality enhancement practices at all areas of the university are documented, monitored, reviewed, and evaluated.

4.2 Values of Quality Assurance

Quality assurance and quality enhancement shall be transparent, systematic, rigorous, and equitable for enhancing the quality of academic programmes and ultimately for developing a quality culture.

5.0 POLICY STATEMENT

In keeping with the vision and mission of the University, KDU shall consistently develop, implement, monitor, review and evaluate the policies, strategies, procedures and regulations for ensuring the achievement and maintenance of quality standards in its undergraduate and postgraduate study programmes, in teaching and learning and in assessments and research processes. In addition, the University shall always ensure that it has in place well stipulated and widely understood criteria for judging performance standards in all its core mission activities. In line with these guides, KDU shall constantly monitor and evaluate all its day-to-day activities in the core mission areas of implementation of degree programmes, teaching/learning, research, management and governance, service to the public and support services to students and staff.

5.1 Study programmes

To ensure quality in study programmes, KDU shall:

1. Periodically review study programmes in order to confirm the extent to which the programmes;

- a) are meaningfully structured and organized.
 - b) achieve the goals and learning objectives.
 - c) not only meet student needs but also provide an experience that lives up to their highest expectations.
 - d) help in the attainment of the university's mission.
 - e) address critical national needs of human resource requirements.
 - f) consist of sufficient quality and quantity of human, material and financial resources to meet the programme requirements, and
 - g) are both viable and relevant.
2. Ensure that establishment and conduct of study programmes and units proceed on the principle of rational use of resources and cost effectiveness;
 3. Undergo regular external evaluations of the quality of the study programmes offered by its units;
 4. Involve professional bodies, potential employers and other relevant sections of society in initiation, development, review and evaluation of academic programmes through curriculum review workshops, tracer studies and other appropriate mechanisms;
 5. As a matter of procedure, ensure that all major curriculum reviews or introduction of new programmes are informed by stakeholder inputs;
 6. Shall undergo at least one review within a span of five years.

5.2 Assessment

To ensure the achievement of learning outcomes, KDU shall

1. Incorporate summative and formative assessments so that the student progress can be assessed and monitored;

2. Communicate assessment scheme to the students prior to the commencement of the academic programme so that they can be familiar with the assessment methods;
3. Provide feedback to the students on their level and progress in learning;
4. Upgrade the evaluation and assessment methods in line with the technological and andragogical developments in higher education;
5. Include assessment portfolios to increase relevance and to increase motivation of students in the learning process;
6. Conduct discussion sessions with teaching and learning partners to ensure that the assessment process is fair, balanced, valid and reliable.

5.3 Research

In fulfilling the obligation to ensure high quality in the research undertakings carried out in its constituent units, KDU shall consistently monitor and evaluate the quality and quantity of the research activities conducted, with a specific focus on:

1. Relevance and appropriateness of the set priorities;
2. Adequacy of financial allocations for research;
3. Proper structuring of research projects/ programmes to ensure relevance in graduate teaching and training of junior staff;
4. Adequacy in quality and quantity of research outputs;
5. Effectiveness of dissemination channels and impacts of research results;
6. Adherence to existing KDU policies and procedures relating to research and publications; and
7. Integration of research outputs into teaching/learning.

6.0 POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

This policy provides general guidelines for the process of implementation, monitoring and evaluating quality in all aspects of KDU operations. It does not provide any specific modalities, methods or procedures for the actual process of ensuring quality, a task to be accomplished by individual faculties, departments, directorates, units and the senior management of the University. They shall set and review quality standards in all major fields of operation. The task of the quality assurance process is to constantly determine the extent to which KDU achieves the standards it sets for itself, and to advise on ways of improving quality at both the institutional and unit levels.

QA at KDU is implemented through Internal QA Cells (IQACs) at department/faculty levels and the Centre for Quality Assurance and Senate Standing Committee on Quality Assurance (SSCQA-KDU) at university level. Curriculum development, monitoring and evaluation and other QA activities are under the purview of IQACs, the faculty curriculum committees, Boards of Study, Departments, Faculty Boards, SSC-QA, Senate and Board of Management (BOM). Other activities include capacity building in QA, external institutional review and programme review and obtaining accreditation from local and international professional accrediting authorities where they are relevant and necessary.

The Senate, Senate Standing Committee on QA, the Centre for Quality Assurance (CQA-KDU) at university level and IQACs and faculty boards at faculty level, as appropriate and applicable shall continually execute this task using appropriate evaluation instruments. The initiation, development and review of these instruments with a view to ensuring that they are capable of capturing sufficient evidence to show the extent to which KDU is achieving its set quality standards in all major spheres of operation will be accomplished by the departments, faculties, curriculum committees, IQACs and CQA KDU

7.0 POLICY REVIEW AND AMENDMENTS

7.1 Policy Review

These policy provisions shall become operational immediately upon the approval by the Board of Management of KDU, and they shall remain valid until such time that they are revoked by the same authority. However, given the changing university contexts, this document is subject to periodic reviews and revisions, and, whenever such amendments are made, the revised version of the document shall prevail.

7.2 Revision of the Policy Document

In the event that any statement in the policy guidelines is outdated or it becomes necessary to refresh it with new statements due to any changes in the university environment and allied contexts or any other valid reasons, such statements may be changed or modified at the discretion of the university with the approval of the Board of Management. However, the entire document will be reviewed after every five (05) years.