

POLICY

AND

PROCEDURES

OF

**INSTITUTE OF QUANTITY SURVEYORS,
SRI LANKA (IQSSL)**

FOR

**ACCREDITATION OF UNDERGRADUATE
STUDY PROGRAMMES LEADING TO
QUANTITY SURVEYING DEGREE**

August 2016

Procedures and Guidelines on Accreditation

This document provides the policy and procedures of Institute of Quantity Surveyors, Sri Lanka (IQSSL) for the accreditation of undergraduate study programme leading to Quantity Surveying degree. These guidelines are established and designed to evaluate the standard of programmes producing Quantity Surveying graduates with academic qualifications to be recognised for direct membership to IQSSL Graduate Member category.

1. INTRODUCTION

IQSSL accredits Quantity Surveying undergraduate degree programmes, ranging from those with a specialist focus to those which are more broadly based with a higher emphasis at professional level input, and to those with highly developed vocational focus emphasising at technical level and other key requirements. Each programme is considered on its merits.

1.1 THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS

IQSSL appoints a panel of members to evaluate each application. The accreditation panel shall include number of member as decided by IQSSL representing academia and industry. Subsequent to initial review, the panel shall authorise an accreditation visit for successful submission. An initial feedback will be conveyed to the relevant academic institution in a reasonable time after the visit as a record of discussions in the visit. The panel shall submit a report to the Executive Council for decision making by IQSSL. Academic institutions are informed that this process may take some time and hence advised to refrain from advertising of the accreditation until a formal approval is granted by IQSSL.

1.2 PROGRAMME DESIGN

1.2.1 IQSSL accredits programmes specifically designed to meet the requirements of its Assessment of Professional Competency pathways. Programme applications which relate to the identified domains within which Quantity Surveyors operate, the academic institute shall satisfy that their graduates from the programme will meet IQSSL Competency Standards.

1.2.2 IQSSL is not prescriptive in terms of programme design. It welcomes a diversity of provisions. Academic institutes with appropriate expertise, skills and resources are encouraged to design programmes to their particular strengths and specialisations, which will allow for greater differentiation and innovative programme developments. In designing programmes, academic institutes are encouraged to obtain feedback from Institute of Quantity Surveyors, Sri Lanka.

1.2.3 IQSSL will only accredit programmes which comply with Competencies specified by IQSSL. It aims to maintain continuous improvement of existing standards of the Quantity Surveying education and profession. This can be achieved by ensuring that programmes are delivered within the ambit and spectrum of Quantity Surveying profession. Emphasis should be given to the identification and development of core skills and competencies with the integration of subjects, within module system.

2 PROGRAMME REVIEW DOCUMENTATION

2.1 Academic institutes shall meet the requirements with necessary documentation. The institutes must provide any additional information as may be requested by the panel appointed by IQSSL.

2.2 The submission shall consist of:

- i) Programme details
- ii) Critical review of the programme
- iii) Internal review documentation
- iv) Changes during the Period under Review (only for a re-accreditation)
- v) Response to Comments made in Last Accreditation Report (only for a re-accreditation)

2.2.1 Programme Details

Programme details consist of;

- FORM 01 (Refer Annex 01)
- Introduction to the Institute and its Structure
- Introduction to the Department
- Department Management and Funding Structure
- Introduction to the Programme
- Entry Requirements and Target Enrolments
- Programme Structure and the Curriculum
- Teaching, Learning and Assessment Methods
- Evaluation of Performance, Progression and Award Criteria
- Staffing of the Programme, Staff Profiles, Current and Desired Level of Staff (Academic and Academic Support Staff) and Staff Development Policy
- Student Learning Environment and Current and Desired Level of Facilities
- Student Support, Welfare and Extra-Curricular Activities
- Graduate Employability and Employment Statistics
- Accreditations and other Recognitions by Professional Organisations
- Relationships and interactions with IQSSL, other Quantity Surveying Professional Institutes, allied professional institutions and the Industry

2.2.2 Critical Review of the Programme

- Mapping of Programme Contents with Competencies specified by IQSSL. Refer Annex 02.
- Demand Analysis
- Self-Reflection on;
 - Operation Management and the Resourcing of the Programme
 - Achievement of Aims and Objectives
 - Relevance and Balance of Programme Content including Teaching Methods and Assessments
 - Student Performance, Cohort Progression and Achievements
- Future Directions including proposed liaison with IQSSL

2.2.3 Internal Review Documentation

Briefly describe and provide the following documents under this section.

- Internal Review Reports
- Quality Assurance Documents
- Feedback (Students, Employers, Staff Peer Reviews)
- Meeting Minutes
- Samples of Examination Papers and Assignments

2.2.4 Changes during the Period under Review

This section is only applicable for re- accreditation documentation. Provide the below mentioned changes with the reasons.

- Curriculum Revisions
- Staff Changes (Recruitments and Resignations) and Staff Developments
- Changes to Teaching and Learning Facilities/ Resources

2.2.5 Response to Comments made in Last Accreditation Report

This section is only applicable for re- accreditation documentation. Provide responses to each comment made in Last Accreditation Report.

2.3 The following programme details with support documents must be included within relevant sections or in annexure with clear reference:

- Rationale and philosophy of the programme, clearly stated with an appropriate assessment strategy and details of how these are applied within the curriculum
- Identification of specific challenges that the programme is designed to meet
- Details of how competencies specified by the IQSSL are taught and assessed within the curriculum

- Entry requirements and target enrolments (minimum and maximum numbers); standards of the entry qualifications, and evidence on existing programmes that these are being maintained
- Relationship to other related programmes.
- Structure and content, including curriculum, syllabi, required and recommended reading, teaching methods etc
- Assessment, progression and award arrangements including the appointment and role of external quality assurers
- Staffing of the programme: the range of expertise, qualification and experience of each member of staff
- Details of the involvement of Chartered Quantity Surveyors in the development, teaching and assessment of the programme
- Current staff development policy and achievements; recent research, publications and other scholarly activities; and consultancies
- Support resources, technical and administrative staff, facilities accommodation and major equipment: library and other reference facilities/infrastructure
- Funding for the programme
- Academic administration structure of the university/ college and its influence on the programme
- Programme management including its administrative structure, and constitution of programme committees and/ or boards
- Quality assurance and enhancement methods in place and practiced
- Student facilities, amenities and support
- Details of Extracurricular Activities encouraged and supported by the Academic Institution.

3 CURRICULUM GUIDANCE

- a) The design of undergraduate and other programmes should take account of the competencies set out in the document *Assessment of Professional Competency Guidelines (available on request)* Universities/Colleges are advised to consult this document carefully when preparing their submissions.
- b) There is no requirement that all of the competencies specified are covered to the professional capacity for accreditation to take place. Some of these competencies have limited academic framework and can only be achieved through practical experience built upon structured education. It is the policy of IQSSL to encourage a broad diversity of programme provision, and therefore the requirement to justify competencies covered and not covered should not be taken as encouragement towards standardisation of programme proposals within any discipline.
- c) There is no wish to be prescriptive in the content of programme bearing in mind the diversity of mode of study. However, it is expected that at least 70% of the compulsory content of the programme would address competencies specified by IQSSL.

4 INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL VALIDATION DOCUMENTATION

IQSSL will not consider a programme proposal until it has been approved by all appropriate authorities within its own University or College. All relevant documentation and reports relating to internal validation process should form part of the submission.

The submission shall also include external validation documents such as external review reports, demand assessments, and accreditation certificates by other professional bodies.

5 PERIODS OF ACCREDITATION AND CONDITIONS

- 5.1 IQSSL will grant accreditation to a programme for up to THREE academic years (i.e. three student intakes for programmes with one intake a year), but shorter periods may be appropriate where, for example, further development, or other changes in the programme or Academic Institution are expected.
- 5.2 Two standard conditions apply to all accreditations /reaccreditations; (a) the submission of annual monitoring reports and (b) the appointment of external examiners.
- 5.3 Programmes are normally granted accreditation subject to certain specific conditions in addition to standards conditions. To maintain the accreditation, the Academic Institution must comply with all conditions, usually within a specified time limit. **Failure to meet conditions may result in withdrawal of accreditation by IQSSL.**
- 5.4 Any changes to programme content and delivery should be duly notified to the IQSSL. Major changes to programme content and delivery, and any change to modes of assessment should be notified at least 30 days prior to implementation and will require the approval of IQSSL for continuity of accreditation. Major change to programme content is a change that requires modification in “Mapping of Programme Contents with Competencies specified by IQSSL”. Major change to programme delivery includes changes to delivery mode, and deviation to weekly workload of students beyond $\pm 20\%$. Major change to staff beyond $\pm 20\%$ should be also duly notified to the IQSSL.
- 5.5 The annual monitoring reports referred to in 5.2 above must include responses to any specific conditions of accreditation where applicable.
- 5.6 The terms of accreditation may include a number of recommendations on which Academic Institutions are invited to take action. Recommendations are not mandatory, but may become a point of focus when programmes are considered for re-accreditation.

- 5.7 Accreditation will apply to a programme, in a named mode of study (i.e. full time, part time, etc.) which is validated, supported and controlled by an academic institution. Accreditation cannot be transferred to an alternative location without IQSSL approval.
- 5.8 IQSSL must be informed of any significant changes introduced after a programme has received its accreditation. IQSSL will then decide whether the changes affect the accredited status of the programme or whether further information should be provided.
- 5.9 A programme offered in an alternative mode of study or with a new named pathway will be treated as a new programme.

6 MONITORING QUALITY CONTROL AND SANCTIONS

- 6.1 All accredited programmes are monitored annually and academic institutions are required to submit the following details for each IQSSL accredited programme within three months of the end of each academic year:
- i) external quality assurance reports
 - ii) the academic institution's response to these
 - iii) annual programme review reports.
- 6.2 IQSSL will not require an annual monitoring report in the year in which an academic institution applies for re-accreditation. Annex 03 is the annual monitoring report template.
- 6.3 The appointment and function of external examiners (external quality assurers) on accredited programmes is one of the most effective means of assuring standards during the period for which the programmes are accredited.
- 6.4 IQSSL will only consider accrediting a new programme at an academic institution if the existing accredited programme(s) has complied with annual monitoring and any other conditions of the accreditation.
- 6.5 Universities/colleges are responsible for ensuring that annual monitoring information is submitted to IQSSL each year. Failure to submit the required information **may result in the withdrawal of accreditation from a programme.**
- 6.6 Where, as a result of the monitoring and review process, a perceived shortfall in quality of programme provision is identified, IQSSL may:
- i) require an immediate review visit; and/or
 - ii) withdraw accreditation from a programme(s)

7 EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE

- 7.1 There are quality standards that IQSSL wishes to assure by an external audit on regular basis. This is to ensure that accredited programmes meet minimum standards which assure the quality of the student experience.

For all accredited programmes, IQSSL requires an ongoing third party quality audit to:

- i) verify there is fair assessment,
- ii) check there is a relevant and balanced curriculum, with clear objectives and outcomes, and to
- iii) offer formal feedback to the academic institution on i) and ii) above.

The IQSSL external quality assurance system is identified as a necessary supplement to the internal quality assurance system. IQSSL requires the appointment of external examiners to carry out external quality assurance.

7.2 External examiners

External examiners act as independent and impartial advisors providing academic institutions with informed comments on the set standards and student achievement in relation to those standards. The role of the external examiners is therefore an integral and key part of academic institution quality assurance. External examiners verify that standards are appropriate for a specific award, assist academic institutions in the comparison of academic standards across higher education awards, and verify that processes for student assessment, examination, and the determination of awards are sound and have been fairly conducted.

Approval of IQSSL is required for the external examiner appointments made by academic institutions. The normal requirement for each accredited programme is two (02) IQSSL approved external examiners, comprising one academic and one practitioner, at least one of whom must be an Member, with the following exception.

- Where an academic institution is offering a number of programmes in a related discipline the requirement for two IQSSL approved external examiners remains, with those examiners, if appropriate, overlapping across a number of programmes. The same examiners can be used for major/minor combinations as well as for straight majors.

7.3 Criteria for appointment of external examiners

- i) An external examiner should have appropriate standing, expertise and experience indicated by:
- present post and place of work
 - range and scope of experience in higher education or professional practice
 - current and active involvement in academic activities, research or professional practice related to the field of study.
- ii) An academic external examiner should have recent external quality assurance experience or comparable related experience in assessing students. A proposed examiner who has no previous experience at the appropriate level, should be supported by a co-examiner having:
- previous external examining experience,
 - extensive internal examining experience, or
 - other relevant and recent experience likely to support the external examiner role.
- iii) External examiners should be impartial in judgement, and should not have close involvement with the academic institution concerned which might compromise objectivity. Appointments will not normally be approved if a proposal results in external examiner ships which are reciprocal between academic institutions, either concurrent or consecutive.
- iv) External examiners should not be re-appointed within five (05) years of completing a previous external examiner appointment to the academic institution. Over the five (05) years prior to the date of appointment, the proposed examiner should not have been a member of staff, a governor, a student or a near relative of a member of staff in relation to the programme.
- v) The proposed external examiner should not normally be, and must always declare if he or she is:
- personally associated with the sponsorship of students on the programme
 - required to assess colleagues who are recruited as students to the programme
 - corporately or personally responsible for students regarding bursaries or other emoluments to students on the programme being examined.

The external examiner application form is attached as Annex 04.