

TEACHING QUALITY ASSURANCE AT BAHCESEHIR UNIVERSITY UK

Version 2, October 2018

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Module and Programme Development

Introduction

Most academic institutions in the developed world and newly industrialized countries have established systems of quality assurance and control, but of different degrees of complexity and effectiveness.

In many countries, governments have felt the need to assure the quality of the awards granted by their institutions of higher education. This need has become more urgent in newly industrialized countries.

This simply means that graduates should have adequate qualifications and that their knowledge, skills and understanding are required to be in line with national development plans, particularly economic needs.

The purpose of this report is to identify the key teaching quality aspects applied at Bahcesehir University UK (BAU UK) and describe the main criteria for each identified aspect. The system is based on the set of Criteria developed by Ziarati et al (1994) for the UK Teaching Quality Assessment (TQA), which has now been replaced by the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF).

What is however significant is that in the UK, the quality assurance and control systems applied before such as, TQA and now TEF, are considered intrusive and no doubt in the future will undergo substantial changes. The UK system has had some influence in practices in other countries such Turkey and Lithuania. There several reports and Papers (Ziarati et al, 1998, 2000) which shows the influence of the UK system in other countries. To this end, the research for more non-intrusive approaches to external assessment, particularly by the funding bodies are expected to continue.

The BAU UK system of Teaching Quality Assurance is the core of the University's quality assurance and control framework and is based on 7 key aspects:

- 1. Programme Management and Operation**
- 2. Curriculum Design and Structure**
- 3. Teaching, Learning and Assessment**
- 4. Student Support and Guidance**
- 5. Learning Resources**
- 6. Quality Assurance and Enhancement**

7. Student progression and Achievements

1) Programme Management and Operation

Criteria

- A cost/benefit analysis together with market research for the proposed programme had been conducted prior for consideration by the Institution.
- Physical resources for the programme have been identified.
- The members of staff involved are sufficient in number and appropriately qualified and experienced.
- A staff development and training plan has been prepared.
- A system for taking students' and staff views has been established.
- The details of staff currently involved in delivery, assessment, internal and external quality assurance and control, are available.
- A Programme Leader has been identified and the roles of other staff involved in the programme have been established and details regarding technical and administrative support staff are available.
- A programme handbook identifying the following is available
 - Description of the programme
 - Rationale for the programme
 - Aims
 - Intended learning outcomes
 - Programme structure
 - Learning and teaching strategies
 - Assessment strategy
 - Student experience – support, progression and achievement.
 - Programme review and evaluation
 - Entry regulations
 - Academic regulations
 - Examinations – regulations and procedures.
 - Institution Management Structure
 - Appeals – procedures.
 - Counseling and advice
 - Summary Syllabuses
- There is a programme committee with a defined composition and terms of reference to oversee the programme operation and evaluation.

2) Curriculum Design and Structure

Criteria

- The year has been broken down into specific periods of study, i.e. semesters, terms etc.
- Modules/courses within the programme have been clearly identified.
- The academic depth for each module/course has been decided based on the intended student entry.
- The mix of core, elective and basic modules satisfies the Institution's rules and regulations.
- The level of modules/courses, including electives, has been decided.
- Pre-requisites for each module have been investigated and established and the structure of modules is coherent.
- Each module/course content has been developed after discussions with internal and external staff with expertise in that particular area.
- The modules selected satisfy the range and depth of knowledge required and their content has been developed to ensure minimal overlap unless desired.
- All electives have been identified and classified appropriately.
- Delivery methodology of programme modules has been decided.
- Total number of credits has been established.
- The curriculum content satisfies the academic requirements of the profession.
- The assessment methodology for each module has been determined.
- Progression routes are well defined.
- Transferable skills have been identified.
- Progression to further study has been made possible.
- A map of student-centered activities and opportunities for students' personal development are available.

3) Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Criteria

- Methodology in terms of lectures, seminars and workshops for each module has been decided.

- The assessment papers, i.e. examination and assignment briefs have been prepared in accordance with the assessment requirements for the intended outcome.
- For each assessment, there is an assessment criterion as well as a grading criterion.
- The assessment ensures the students attain the required standards, i.e. examination papers and coursework satisfy depth and range requirements.
- There are mechanisms to assess teaching quality and this mechanism provides a grading system and includes the following areas
 - Clarity of the objectives for the session related to the intended outcomes.
 - Student participation.
 - Resources used during the session and appropriateness of the accommodation.
 - Planning, content, method, pace and examples used.
- There are mechanisms for supporting students with learning difficulties
- Students are given opportunities to become involved in the programme operation and in taking responsibility for their own learning.
- The learning strategy clearly identifies teacher-centred and student-centred activities and that these activities are planned.
- There is a system for sampling students' assessed work.
- Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of teaching provided and on their modules of study.
- There is an assessment schedule so that students know when, what and how they are going to be assessed.
- Learning experiences of students are relevant to employment.
- There is a systematic and progressive development and assessment of transferable skills.
- The assessment procedures are open, fair and free from bias.
- Records of assessments are up to date and available for scrutiny.
- There are procedures for internal verification and evaluation of all aspects of the assessment process.

4) *Student Support and Guidance*

Criteria

- There is a strategy to provide meaningful support and guidance to students.
- There are planned arrangements for students' admission and induction and all staff are aware of these arrangements.

- There are arrangements for counseling and welfare support and all students have a tutor and know how to access a counselor.
- The students have been introduced to learning and IT resources and full information has been given to them on how to use these facilities.
- There is comprehensive service to students regarding careers and the world of employment.
- Relevant statistical and progression data are available.
- A mechanism is in place to identify student needs in terms of support and guidance.
- Students have access to an office for their social and club activities.
- Liaison staff have been identified to support students' social and club activities.
- Students have access to relevant and appropriate IT facilities including Internet, application software and on-line databases.

5) Learning Resources

Criteria

- There is an overall strategy for learning resources and their development.
- There is a library handbook which details library resources and opening times.
- Details of Learning Resources, including library and IT availability, are provided.
- Details of all physical resources and their location and availability to students, including those available off-site, are given.
- Each category of learning resources, namely laboratories, library and IT, are staffed accordingly (sufficient in number, appropriately qualified and experienced).
- Roles of staff involved in learning resources have been identified, including details of technical support staff.
- Training development needs of the learning resources staff have been identified and a programme of staff development for these staff is in place.
- The accommodation provided for laboratories, library and IT is appropriate.
- The students have access to learning support facilities in addition to books, periodicals and CD-ROMs, etc.
- There is evidence of an effective liaison between academic staff and learning resources staff.
- Students are provided with open access and independent learning materials.
- There are arrangements for introducing staff and students to learning resources.

6) Quality Assurance and Enhancement

Criteria

- The needs of the organization are clearly identified.
- The needs of job specifications are clearly identified.
- The needs of individuals are clearly identified.
- The academic depth for each module/course has been decided based on the intended student entry.
- There is a policy to improve quality and maintain standards.
- There is a quality system in operation, which contains a Quality Assurance and Control manual with clear procedures and instructions.
- The views of staff/students on operational aspects of the organization and quality issues are sought.
- There are periodic and on-going arrangements for monitoring the quality of academic programmes as well as administrative support services.
- Quality Assurance and Control arrangements are clear, rigorous and understood by staff and students.
- There is a staff development programme, which supports the staff development of academic and non-academic units.
- There is an appraisal and peer review of staff, including teaching skills.
- There is evidence of support for continuing professional development.
- There is a central as well as localized support for research.
- Research programmes, in the main, underpin the academic programmes offered.

7) Student Progression and Achievement

Criteria

- There is a clear strategy for entry arrangements of students into academic programmes.
- Student entry and intended outcome of programmes and modules are carefully matched.
- The progression rates and non-completion rates are clearly identified.
- Transfers in and out of programmes or courses/modules are clearly reconsidered and recorded.
- There are clear procedures to ensure grades and qualifications awarded to students are fair and unbiased.

- The arrangement for credit rating is such that the students are not disadvantaged if they decide to opt out of the institution at any time.

There are clear arrangements to monitor students' career development after graduation.