FIJI HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION

Assessment of applications for registration of higher education institutions

ASSESSOR'S GUIDE

Quality higher education for sustainable development and a knowledge-based society

FIJI HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION

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NOTES

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Purpose

The purpose of this Assessor's Guide is to provide direction for those who assess applications for registration by higher education institutions. It also informs institutions of the set of outcomes by which they will be assessed for registration.

Assessment Criteria

The process of determining the registration or otherwise of an institution is based on a total of forty-eight (48) assessment criteria which are outlined in paragraphs 6.2 to 6.7 of the Policy on Registration of Higher Education Institutions. These criteria are categorized as follows:

6.2   Criteria for assessing building infrastructure and environment
6.3   Criteria for assessing the teaching and learning facilities
6.4   Criteria for assessing management
6.5   Criteria for assessing technical and management staff
6.6   Criteria for assessing academic and technical programs
6.7   Criteria for assessing non-academic and vocational programs

Assessment Outcomes

Out of the above 48 criteria, fifty-three (53) outcomes were developed to act as *standards* against which institutions are to be assessed. The assessment is in relation to what are considered to be necessary features of higher education institutions. The 53 outcomes are grouped under five main areas. These are:
* Legal status
* Management and finance
* Teaching and learning
* Students and staff
* Infrastructure and environment

Each of these five areas and their respective outcomes are printed on pages 3 to 7 of this Guide. An institution is expected to be able to meet these outcomes to be allowed registration.

Definitions:
1.   *outcome* means an approved result or effect of an action or event
2.   *standards* means approved examples against which others are measured

Outcomes components

| Subject: **Infrastructure and Environment**   AR Ref. B. 5 |

Outcome No. 10:   **ICT provision for staff and students is adequate.**

Components:
An institution is expected to have the following components of the above outcome:

1.   The institution has computer/internet facilities for staff and students.

2.   The ICT usage ratios of equipment (computer and printer)/ student and equipment (computer and printer)/staff is acceptable.

3.   If possible, the library's author and subject catalogues including names of journals and periodicals are computerized. On-line journals are made available to students.

4.   If available, the institution's website provides access to researches and other teaching and learning information.

Outcomes components

Subject: Infrastructure and Environment	AR Ref. B. 5

Outcome No. 2: **The institution is OHS compliant and it ensures the continuous health and safety of its students and staff through appropriate arrangements.**

Components:

An institution is expected to have the following components of the above outcome:

1. The institution has a policy on Occupational Health and Safety (OHS).

2. The institution's policy has provisions on the implementation of Government OHS legislations at the institutional level.

3. The institution has a valid workplace registration certificate in accordance with section 29 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1996.

Registration assessment process

In the processing of an application for registration by an institution:

1. Each assessor will receive an envelope containing the following:
    -   an Assessment Report which contains data and information that are submitted by the institution in its application form
    -   Requested attachments from the institution
    -   Optional evidence in support of application

2. In Section B of the Assessment Report, the assessor will refer to the 53 outcomes mentioned on page 1. These outcomes are grouped according to their respective areas and listed in a table from B1 to B5.

3. For each outcome listed in 2. above, the relevant annexure number is indicated, if applicable. A tick ( ) indicates that a site visit or contact is necessary. For an outcome that has neither an annexure number nor a tick, the assessment of the outcome is to be based on data or information supplied by the institution through the Application Form or, if necessary, from a site visit.

4. To assist the assessor, a number of outcomes that may not be easily identified have been broken down to show their components. These are marked with a double asterisk (**) in Section B of the Assessment Report and are listed in order with their components on pages 8 to 18 of this Guide. The components, if demonstrated by an institution, will contribute towards the achievement of their respective outcomes.

5. **When assessing outcomes in this Guide, assessors are requested to consider the totality that is created by the components listed below an outcome and any other relevant information. The components should not be applied separately as checklists. Where an institution does not possess or demonstrate evidence of a particular outcome, the institution may demonstrate through other means that it meets the outcome.**

6. The assessors will make their assessments in the spaces provided under each set of outcomes in the Assessment Report and discuss their overall findings before making a joint recommendation on the registration of an institution to the Higher Education Commission.
    The Assessment Report and the Attachments are to be returned to the Commission for filing.

OUTCOMES

B.1 legal status

No.	Outcome
1	The institution has been recognized by the Higher Education Commission.
2	The institution has valid contact details and physical address.
3	If registered under the Company's Act, the institution has a valid registration.
4**	The ownership of the institution is lawfully constituted.
5	The details of the parent institution, if applicable, are clearly stated.
6	If applicable, the institution has proof that it is an authorized agency, branch, centre or campus of an overseas higher education institution.
7	If applicable, the institution has proof that its parent institution is operating lawfully in its country of origin.

Outcomes components

Subject:	Students and Staff	AR Ref. B.4

Outcome No. 5: **The institution has a policy on excursions and practical attachments which makes adequate provisions for the safety and security of students and staff.**

Components:
An institution is expected to have the following components of the above outcome:

1. The obligations of persons responsible including students are clearly stated.

2. There are provisions relating to:
   - Identifying dangers and assessment of risks
   - Mental and physical fitness of persons involved
   - Persons with disabilities
   - Insurance cover where possible
   - Catering and hygiene

3. Field work and excursions procedures are clearly stated.

4. There is provision for disciplinary action on those who breach procedures.

OUTCOMES

Outcomes components

Subject:	Students and Staff	AR Ref. B.4

Outcome No. 4: **There is a clear refund policy for students which reflects equity and transparency.**

Components:
An institution is expected to have the following components of the above outcome:

1. The policy contains provisions for the refund of fees to students.

2. The conditions for the refund of fees are clearly spelt out.

3. The conditions in 2. above reflect fairness.

4. The refund policy is made known to students before or during enrolment.

B. 2 management and finance

No.	Outcome
1	The head of the institution is appropriately qualified academically and professionally.
2	The Directors of the institution are sufficiently experienced or qualified for the governance of the institution.
3	The relationships between the institution and its holding company, if applicable, and other organizations are clearly defined.
4	The institution complies with Fiji's tax requirements.
5	The business registration certificate, if applicable, is valid and available.
6**	The institution's operations are governed by its statutes or by-laws or rules.
7**	The institution, irrespective of its size and purpose, has demonstrated sound and transparent accounting and financial practices and shows its financial viability.
8	The institution has a head office on the premises to provide support for students and staff.
9	Small institutions and those acting as agencies for overseas institutions have adequate staff present on the premises for the day to day operation of the institution.
10	The institution has a website (optional).
11	The institution makes available, upon request, information regarding fees and programs.
12**	The institution ensures regular upgrading / maintenance of buildings and equipment.

OUTCOMES

B.3 teaching and learning

No.	Outcome
1	For a non-degree awarding institution, there is an academic manager or Dean who is responsible for the academic affairs of the institution.
2**	For a degree-awarding institution, there are structures, including relevant positions for academic governance.
3**	The institution has a system of assuring the quality of its programs, courses and qualifications.
4	The academic staff are suitably qualified.
5	The ratio of academic staff to students is acceptable.
6	The technical staff have the relevant requisite qualification in the technical area.
7	Only the programs declared in the application form are offered by the institution.
8	The institution provides an annual calendar with details of various programs the institution offers.
9	The requisite equipment, tools and materials including photocopiers are available to meet the requirements of the programs.
10	Teaching aids such as overhead projectors, boards, multimedia projectors, video and audio equipment, computer and language laboratories are adequately provided.
11	Learners' information on entry and support services including manuals are readily available.
12	The programs offered are supported by an appropriate number and quality of staff.
13**	There is a policy on staff recruitment, appraisal and development which is fair and is consistent with the institution's mission and goals.

Outcomes components

Subject:	Teaching and Learning	AR Ref. B.3

Outcome No. 13:   **There is a policy on staff recruitment, appraisal and development which is fair and is consistent with the institution's mission and goals.**

Components:
An institution is expected to have the following components of the above outcome:

1. The policy has provision for staff training in recruitment or selection.

2. There is provision for staff training in appraisal.

3. There is provision for response to staff performance that is fair.

4. There is provision for self-assessment by staff of their competency.

Outcomes components

Subject:	Teaching and Learning	AR Ref. B.3

Outcome No. 3: **The institution has a system of assuring the quality of its programs, courses and qualifications.**

Components:
An institution is expected to have the following components of the above outcome:

1. The programs and courses are designed and developed by qualified persons or groups or an accredited institution within or outside of Fiji.

2. There are committees or forums to oversee the adoption of new courses and programs and review existing ones.

3. The programs and courses are evaluated for improvement and evaluation reports are maintained.

4. Students are assessed in accordance with assessment procedures that promote fairness, transparency and integrity.

OUTCOMES

B.4 students and staff

No.	Outcome
1	The institution has a system to deal with students' and staff grievances.
2	There is a disciplinary committee to handle issues of discipline of students and staff.
3	The institution has rules and regulations which explicitly state the responsibilities of students and staff.
4**	There is a clear refund policy for students which reflects equity and transparency.
5**	The institution has a policy on excursions and practical attachments which makes adequate provisions for the safety and security of students and staff.
6	If applicable, the institution has proof of the recognition of its qualifications by its parent institution.
7	If applicable, the institution has proof of the eligibility of its students in its parent institution.

OUTCOMES

B.5 infrastructure and environment

No.	Outcome
1	The institution is located in an environment which is conducive to teaching and learning.
2**	The institution is OHS compliant and ensures the continuous health and safety of its students and staff through a suitable arrangement.
3	The location is clear from external disturbances and noise pollution.
4	The learners with physical disabilities and who are confined to wheelchairs have special provisions.
5	The workspace per learner is appropriate depending on the course of study.
6	The National Fire Authority has provided clearance.
7	A license has been issued by the relevant municipality to operate a higher education institution.
8	Separate male and female toilets are adequately provided.
9	The provision of electricity, water and telephone facilities are adequate.
10**	ICT provision for staff and students is adequate.
11	The classrooms and laboratories are adequately sized to accommodate students.
12	The Resource Centre/library is adequately equipped to support the programs being offered.
13	The Common rooms for learners are adequate.
14	The standard of housekeeping, hygiene, cleanliness and sanitation is good.

Outcomes components

Subject:	Teaching and Learning	AR Ref. B.3

Outcome No. 2: **For degree-awarding institutions, there are structures, including relevant positions, for academic governance.**

Components:
An institution is expected to have the following components of the above outcome:

1. There is an academic committee or Senate for the overall academic governance of the institution.

2. Faculties and departments are headed by suitably qualified individuals.

3. There are committees or forums to vet examinations papers and ensure quality control of examination results.

Outcomes components

Outcomes with components

A number of outcomes have been broken down into their components to assist the assessors as they assess the achievement of these outcomes. These are referred to in paragraph 4 on page 2. On pages 3-7, the numbers of these outcomes are marked with a double asterisk (**).

Subject:	Management and Finance	AR Ref. B.2

Outcome No. 12: **The institution ensures regular upgrading / maintenance of buildings and equipment.**

Components:
An institution is expected to have the following components of the above outcome:

1. Maintenance and upgrading of facilities and equipment are a formal part of the institution's planning and allocation of resources including financial resources.

2. There is a replacement plan for educational and other equipment including new technology.

3. Equipment and buildings are assessed periodically for efficiency and ability to support the institution's programs.

Subject:	Legal Status	AR Ref. B.1

Outcome No. 4: **The ownership of the institution is lawfully constituted.**

Components:
An institution is expected to have the following component of the above outcome:

1. The Memorandum or Articles of Association exists, if applicable.

Outcomes components

Outcomes components

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<u>**Outcome No. 6:**</u>   **The institution's operations are governed by its   statutes or by-laws or rules.**

Components:
An institution is expected to have the following components of the above outcome:

1. The institution has statutes or by-laws or rules in existence.

2. There are rules to address:

    •   Conflict of interest in administrative practices

    •   Recruitment, evaluation and dismissal of staff

    •   Intellectual property rights

    •   Information access by students and the public

<u>**Outcome No. 7:**</u>   **The institution, irrespective of its size and purpose, has demonstrated sound and transparent accounting and financial practices and shows its financial viability.**

Components:
An institution is expected to have the following components of the above outcome:

1. Financial planning is linked to institutional goals and strategies.

2. Financial performance is assessed against financial plan.

3. Financial data analysis indicates sufficient financial resources for the institution's mission and goals.

4. There are institutional controls to deal with financial operations.