DESIGNING A QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FOR A CAMBODIAN UNIVERSITY

By

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Thesis Certification

The work presented in this thesis is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, original except as acknowledged in the text. I hereby declare that I have not submitted this material, either in whole or in part, for a degree at this or any other institution.

..........................................................
Abstract

Quality assurance has been a legislative requirement in Cambodian universities since 2003, yet it is still a relatively new concept. A formal quality-management framework at a systemic level does not yet exist and little attention has been paid to this in the higher education sector. This has led Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to make ad hoc decisions in dealing with quality issues. Despite some institutions having appointed dedicated quality assurance officers, there is little evidence of a quality management culture in Cambodian universities. For these reasons, the creation of a formal quality management system is imperative in order to ensure that universities conduct their operations effectively and can operate in a global higher education context.

The study has documented and analysed the issues, structures and processes of quality management in higher education in England, Australia and Thailand. This analysis has been applied to the Cambodian context in order to develop a relevant quality management framework for a particular Cambodian university (City University). This framework may also serve as a model for other higher education institutions in Cambodia.

The study included an analysis of the extensive literature related to the quality management systems currently employed in universities in England, Australia and Thailand. Senior managers, academics and staff in three Thai universities and in higher education institutions in Cambodia were surveyed and interviewed. This dual approach allowed the examination of the benefits and disadvantages of applying the features of externally established quality management systems to the Cambodian context.

Higher education institutions, in particular public universities, face many constraints and challenges in Cambodia, including scarcity of resources, poor governance, lack of autonomy, no culture of quality, poor human resource development and the like. These constraints prevent a standard Western-style system from being introduced into Cambodia in the short term. Nonetheless, it is imperative that Higher Education Institutions establish a formal and non-punitive quality management system. Introduction of a quality management system in two phases is recommended.

The first phase of the quality management system consists of simple, basic and general elements of quality with a view to establishing a quality culture in every academic’s mindset, and permeating the ideals of a quality management programme throughout the entire
university population. When a culture of quality management is well embedded, the next phase could be implemented. This second phase introduces broader and higher level elements of quality, such as benchmarking, student attributes and a national qualifications’ framework, closely linking internal quality management systems and external regulatory requirements to ensure consistency in the quality of graduates across the higher education sector, as well as attaining national, regional and international recognition.

The quality management model proposed will be an important contributor to reshaping and improving quality practices in higher education, as well as informing future key planners and higher education policy makers about quality management in Cambodia.
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### Abbreviations

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<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AACSB</td>
<td>Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>Accreditation Committee of Cambodia</td>
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<tr>
<td>ADB</td>
<td>Asian Development Bank</td>
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<tr>
<td>AQF</td>
<td>Australian Qualifications Framework</td>
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<tr>
<td>AUN-QA</td>
<td>ASEAN University Network Quality Assurance</td>
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<tr>
<td>AUQA</td>
<td>Australian Universities Quality Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>AusAID</td>
<td>Australian Agency for International Development</td>
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<td>AUSSE</td>
<td>Australian Survey of Student Engagement</td>
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<td>AUTC</td>
<td>Australian Universities Teaching Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEQ</td>
<td>Course Experience Questionnaire</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHE</td>
<td>Commission on Higher Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>CQAHE</td>
<td>Committee for Quality Assurance in Higher Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>CU</td>
<td>City University (pseudonym for the University studied in Cambodia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEET</td>
<td>Department of Employment, Education and Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEEWR</td>
<td>Department for Education, Employment and Workplace Relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEST</td>
<td>Department of Education, Science and Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DETYA</td>
<td>Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EQA</td>
<td>External Quality Assurance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EQUIS</td>
<td>European Quality Improvement System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDS</td>
<td>Graduate Destination Survey</td>
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<tr>
<td>HE</td>
<td>Higher Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>HECS</td>
<td>Higher Education Contribution Scheme</td>
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<td>HEFCE</td>
<td>Higher Education Funding Council for England</td>
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<td>HEIs</td>
<td>Higher Education Institutions</td>
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<td>HEQC</td>
<td>Higher Education Quality Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILT</td>
<td>Institute for Learning and Teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQA</td>
<td>Internal Quality Assurance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCEETYA</td>
<td>Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>MoEYS</td>
<td>Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MUA</td>
<td>Ministry of University Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<tr>
<td>NQF</td>
<td>National Qualifications Framework</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>ONESQA</td>
<td>Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>PAI</td>
<td>Public Administration Institution</td>
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<td>PDCA</td>
<td>Plan-Do-Check-Act</td>
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<td>PREQ</td>
<td>Postgraduate Research Experience Questionnaire</td>
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<td>QAA</td>
<td>Quality Assurance Agency</td>
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<td>RAE</td>
<td>Research Assessment Exercises</td>
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<td>RGC</td>
<td>Royal Government of Cambodia</td>
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<td>SNCE</td>
<td>Supreme National Council of Education</td>
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<td>SRA</td>
<td>Self-Assessment Report</td>
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<td>TEQSA</td>
<td>Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>TQM</td>
<td>Total Quality Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNTAC</td>
<td>United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USAID</td>
<td>the United States Agencies for International Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WB</td>
<td>World Bank</td>
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