

Translation  
Version

# **Higher Education Quality Evaluation of Macao**

## **Guidelines on Institutional Quality Audit**

**Higher Education Bureau**

**Government of Macao Special Administrative Region**

## Table of Contents

<b>List of Abbreviations .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Preamble .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1. Introduction.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Guiding Principles of Institutional Quality Audit .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3. Institutional Quality Audit Areas, Requirements, Criteria and Evidence .</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>4. Institutional Quality Audit Model.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>5. Application for Institutional Quality Audit.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>6. Institutional Quality Audit Procedure .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>7. Judgment Principles and Outcomes of Institutional Quality Audit.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>8. Follow-up Action.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>9. Observers .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Annex 1 Institutional Quality Audit Areas, Requirements, Criteria and Possible Sources of Evidence.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Annex 2 ADRI Model Applicable to Institutional Quality Audit .....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Annex 3 Points to Note on Preparation of Self-evaluation Documents.....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Annex 3.1 Outline of Self-evaluation Document (For Reference Only).....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Annex 4 Institutional Quality Audit – Sample Agenda for “Panel’s Meeting with HEI’s Senior Management” (For Reference Only).....</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Annex 5 Site Visit Program and Arrangements .....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Annex 5.1 Sample of Two-day Site Visit Program(For Reference Only).....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Annex 6 Guidelines for Observers.....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Annex 7 Workflow for Institutional Quality Audit (IQA) .....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>Glossary .....</b>	<b>51</b>

## List of Abbreviations

ADRI	Approach-Deployment-Results- Improvement
EQAA	external quality assurance agency
DSES	Higher Education Bureau
<i>Guidelines for EQAAs</i>	<i>Guidelines for External Quality Assurance Agencies</i>
HEI	higher education institution
IQA	Institutional Quality Audit
KPI	key performance indicator
Macao	Macao Special Administrative Region
Panel	external evaluation panel
QA	quality assurance
SED	self-evaluation document

## **Preamble**

1. This set of guidelines elaborates Institutional Quality Audit (IQA) areas, requirements, criteria and process to enable higher education institutions (HEIs) in Macao Special Administrative Region (Macao) to make preparation for IQA. This set of guidelines also serves as the basis for external quality assurance agencies (EQAAs) to execute IQA.
2. The roles and responsibilities of EQAAs and the terms of service are specified in the *Guidelines for External Quality Assurance Agencies (Guidelines for EQAAs)*.
3. Refer to relevant laws and regulations as well as government announcements for details of the higher education quality evaluation system of Macao, financial support and follow-up action, etc.
4. IQA executed by external evaluation panels self-formed by HEIs (self-formed panels) is not applicable to the first IQA cycle.
5. DSES reserves the right to supplement the terms and conditions in this set of guidelines.

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 IQA is a means of evaluating educational quality applicable to HEIs with effective mechanisms and with effective self-management and internal QA. Through regular external review, good practices and areas of improvement are identified for the pursuit of excellence.
- 1.2 IQA is conducted according to relevant laws and regulations of Macao.
- 1.3 To undertake IQA, HEIs should, based on their own needs, engage EQAAs with relevant evaluation experience and sound track records. For the principles of engaging EQAAs and the terms of evaluation service, refer to the *Guidelines for EQAAs*. For HEIs with experience in self-forming their own external evaluation panels, they may consider setting up self-formed panels. However, IQA executed by self-formed panels is not applicable to the first IQA cycle.
- 1.4 HEIs must seek DSES's approval before engaging EQAAs. Upon completion of an IQA exercise, HEIs must submit to DSES the final evaluation report for confirmation of the IQA outcome within 45 days upon receipt of the IQA report.
- 1.5 IQA is normally conducted in cycles of seven years. Each IQA cycle places focus on specific effectiveness under each area of operation. This set of guidelines merely elaborates the focuses of the first IQA cycle (see paragraph 3.5). The focuses of the subsequent IQA cycles will be announced before the start of respective cycles.
- 1.6 While an IQA exercise aims to evaluate the overall operation of an HEI, in accordance with the HEI's development and needs, its engaged EQAA may sample specific discipline(s)<sup>1</sup>/academic unit(s)/program(s) for detailed examination. This serves as concrete evidence of the HEI's academic level and quality management.

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<sup>1</sup> This refers to the grouping of programs based on the definition of "narrow field" in *International Standard Classification of Education (2013)* by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) at <http://www.uis.unesco.org/>.

## **2. Guiding Principles of Institutional Quality Audit**

HEIs of Macao must conduct IQA based on the following guiding principles:

### **2.1 Quality Enhancement**

IQA is a regular external review of HEIs to evaluate whether their governance, academic development and internal QA mechanism are robust enough to provide academic and educational training and/or scientific research, as well as social services that meet their educational purposes and goals and keep pace with the latest development for the purpose of ensuring higher education quality.

### **2.2 Fit-for-purpose**

IQA is conducted, in accordance with HEIs' stated educational purposes and goals, to determine the effectiveness of their fulfillment.

### **2.3 Evidence-based**

Judgment is made on the basis of evidence to ensure objectivity, fairness and consistency of IQA outcomes. Evidence includes the self-evaluation document (SED) prepared by HEIs for IQA, and the solid empirical data collected by engaged EQAAs as well as the observations made by the external evaluation panel (Panel) during the site visit. HEIs should be entitled to express their views and present evidence throughout the IQA process. How HEIs make best use of evidence to formulate policies, to make well-reasoned decisions as well as corresponding improvements, and to enhance the effectiveness of their governance and management for the purpose of meeting the QA requirements of Macao is also part of the essential evidence of IQA.

### **2.4 Open and Transparent**

2.4.1 IQA is conducted in an open and transparent manner. Information concerning IQA areas, requirements, criteria, possible sources of evidence and process, etc. is detailed in this set of guidelines.

2.4.2 DSES reserves the right to disclose the whole or part of the evaluation report.

### **3. Institutional Quality Audit Areas, Requirements, Criteria and Evidence**

- 3.1 IQA is conducted, in accordance with HEIs' stated educational purposes and goals, to determine the effectiveness of their fulfillment. In addition, IQA examines whether HEIs can ensure that their system, structure, resources and operational mode, etc. meet their educational purposes and goals with relevant outcomes and effectiveness through their internal QA mechanism. IQA also assesses whether HEIs have the appropriate institutional structure and academic level befitting higher education, and whether HEIs meet the QA requirements of Macao.
- 3.2 IQA is intended for HEIs equipped not only with effective mechanisms, but also with effective self-management and internal QA. These HEIs ready for IQA should be able to deploy resources effectively, engage stakeholders, formulate appropriate, reasonable educational purposes and goals as well as academic levels, adopt the "student-centered" philosophy, and provide quality and effective teaching and/or scientific research activities, etc. for the purpose of facilitating students' attainment of intended learning outcomes. These HEIs, playing the role of influential academic leadership, should also be active in relevant field(s)/discipline(s) both locally and internationally, and possess the characteristics of learning organizations, that is, undertaking regular reviews, assuming accountability, keeping abreast of development, catching up with international levels, and striving for excellence.
- 3.3 IQA examines the following three areas of operation and their respective criteria:
- 3.3.1 Educational Purposes and Goals
  - 3.3.2 Institutional Administrative Management, Planning and Accountability
  - 3.3.3 Quality Assurance
    - Effectiveness of Institutional Operation
    - Effectiveness of Academic Planning, Management and Development
    - Effectiveness of Teaching and Learning, Scientific Research, Social Services, as well as Cultural Heritage and Innovation
- 3.4 The key topics for discussion and the possible sources of evidence for

each operational area are in **Annex 1**. HEIs should, based on their actual operation and the selected discipline(s)/academic unit(s)/program(s) (refer to paragraph 1.6), submit appropriate evidence with justifications to demonstrate (a) how they meet their educational purposes and goals; (b) how they effectively facilitate governance and management, academic, pedagogical and/or scientific research development, etc. to cultivate professionals for higher education through their policies, organizational structures and resources; (c) how they adopt their robust internal QA mechanism to achieve the intended outcomes and to continuously enhance their educational quality.

- 3.5 To ensure effective implementation of the higher education quality evaluation system of Macao, i) the effectiveness of institutional administrative management and planning, ii) the implementation effectiveness of HEIs' internal QA mechanism, and iii) the QA effectiveness of outcome-based programs are the focuses of the three aforementioned operational areas (see paragraph 3.3) during the first IQA cycle. EQAAs will examine HEIs' educational quality and the effectiveness of HEIs' internal QA mechanism on the basis of the appropriate evidence with justifications submitted by HEIs (refer to paragraph 3.3, paragraph 3.4 and this paragraph) and the observations made during the site visit.



## 4. Institutional Quality Audit Model

### 4.1 ADRI Model Applicable to IQA

IQA is conducted on the basis of the HEI's stated educational purposes and goals. During the IQA process, in accordance with the three operational areas (see paragraph 3.3) and the focuses on the effectiveness of specific areas (see paragraph 3.5) specified in this set of guidelines, the EQAA together with its relevant HEI will adopt a model that aims to sustain quality enhancement (ADRI). The following is the ADRI model applicable to IQA:

A: Approach

D: Deployment

R: Results

I: Improvement

For details of the ADRI model applicable to IQA, refer to **Annex 2**.

### 4.2 Peer Review

Peer review is the execution principle of the higher education quality evaluation system of Macao. Under this principle, evaluation must be conducted by peer experts with experience relevant to IQA. Peer experts include institutional leaders with governance and management experience as well as academic leaders of relevant discipline(s)/academic unit(s)/program(s) (see paragraph 1.6), academic experts who understand the education and cultural contexts of Macao, etc. and professionals from relevant industries.

4.3 The composition, the roles and responsibilities, as well as the code of conduct of the Panel, etc. are outlined in Chapter 4 of Section A and related annexes in the *Guidelines for EQAAs*.

## 5. Application for Institutional Quality Audit

- 5.1 The HEI intending to apply for IQA must submit an IQA proposal to DSES. The evaluation proposal should include details of the IQA exercise, explanation of the engaged EQAA's compliance with relevant requirements (see paragraph 5.2) (attached with supporting documents), as well as reasons for selecting the EQAA, the budget for evaluation expenses, the schedule, the proposed discipline(s)/academic unit(s)/program(s) for detailed examination (see paragraph 1.6), and the working language in the course of evaluation, etc.
- 5.2 When selecting an appropriate EQAA, the HEI should take account of its relevant evaluation experience, track records and reputation, etc. At the same time, it is also necessary to consider and select the principles and requirements of the EQAA according to the actual needs of the HEI. Further details about the engagement of EQAAs are in Chapter 1 of Section A of the *Guidelines for EQAAs*.
- 5.3 To ensure fairness and consistency, IQA has to be conducted on the basis of this set of guidelines. It is only under exceptional circumstances that the HEIs may be unable to fully comply with this set of guidelines on the IQA areas, requirements, criteria and/or process; in such cases, the reason(s) for failing to comply with this set of guidelines (including expansion, reduction, modification), the proposed change(s) as well as their implications must be detailed in the evaluation proposal. Nonetheless, the proposed change(s) should not substantially diverge from this set of guidelines.
- 5.4 The HEI will be informed of the outcome of its IQA application by DSES through a notification letter.
- 5.5 Upon receipt of DSES's approval of the IQA application, the HEI should enter into a service agreement with its engaged EQAAs, and must conduct the IQA exercise in hand according to the specifications in the notification letter from DSES and the evaluation proposal approved by DSES. Details of the service agreement are outlined in Chapter 3 of Section A of the *Guidelines for EQAAs*.
- 5.6 The results for the IQA application will generally be decided within 90 days.
- 5.7 If DSES deems it necessary, the applicant institution may be required to

provide explanations, present evidence and supplementary information. Or, DSES will obtain technical support services in accordance with the provisions of the higher education quality evaluation system of Macao. Or, DSES will obtain opinions from other professional, academic entities or individuals, including consulting the Panel; in such cases, the calculation of the above period (paragraph 5.6) shall be suspended.

## 6. Institutional Quality Audit Procedure

- 6.1 Upon signing the service agreement, the EQAA must recruit members for the Panel and execute the service agreement according to the terms set forth in the service agreement and in Chapter 4 of Section A of the *Guidelines for EQAAs*. The EQAA can appoint the Panel only upon clearance of conflict of interest by the HEI, and must then send the confirmed panel membership list to DSES for record. The terms of service of the EQAA, and the roles and responsibilities as well as the code of conduct of the Panel are detailed in the *Guidelines for EQAAs*.
- 6.2 Upon commencement of an IQA exercise, the HEI should designate a dedicated contact person to communicate with the case officer of the EQAA. To avoid conflict of interest, the HEI cannot contact the panel members directly.
- 6.3 The HEI is to submit its self-evaluation document (SED) to the EQAA according to the schedule set forth in the service agreement. The SED should illustrate how the HEI effectively ensures that its academic and/or scientific research provision meets its educational purposes and goals under the “fit-for-purpose” guiding principle. “Points to Note on Preparation of Self-evaluation Documents” and the “Outline of Self-evaluation Document (For Reference Only)” are in **Annex 3** and **Annex 3.1** respectively.
- 6.4 The case officer of the EQAA is to conduct a preliminary review of the SED to ensure adequacy of the information before sending the document to the Panel for study.
- 6.5 The Panel or its representative(s) (such as the Panel Chair) is/are to hold the “Panel’s Meeting with HEI’s Senior Management” (for the sample agenda, see **Annex 4**) within 4 to 6 weeks upon receipt of the SED. The purpose of this meeting is to enable the Panel to gain a better understanding of the HEI’s educational purposes and goals, its current operation as well as the proposed discipline(s)/academic unit(s)/program(s) for detailed examination (see paragraphs 1.6 and 5.1) so as to map out the strategies for the site visit according to the guiding principles of IQA and/or to modify the discipline(s)/academic unit(s)/program(s) for detailed examination to be held during the site visit after negotiation with the HEI. In view of the fact that the IQA Panel members may come from various parts of the world, the “Panel’s

Meeting with HEI’s Senior Management” should be conducted in the most cost-effective means, which is to be confirmed after negotiation between the Panel and the HEI.

- 6.6 The Panel may request for clarification and/or supplementary information from the HEI via the EQAA as and when necessary according to this set of guidelines, the SED submitted by the HEI and/or the information collected during the “Panel’s Meeting with HEI’s Senior Management”.
- 6.7 The HEI has to provide written responses and/or supplementary information according to the schedule set by the EQAA.
- 6.8 The Panel is to pay a site visit to the HEI on the scheduled dates as set forth in the service agreement (normally within 6 to 8 weeks after the “Panel’s Meeting with HEI’s Senior Management”) according to the strategies for the site visit (see paragraph 6.5) formulated by the Panel after the aforementioned meeting. During the site visit, the Panel is to meet different stakeholders (including the governance and management staff, staff, students, alumni, external advisors, partner organisations, employers of the alumni and other related external parties, etc.), visit relevant equipment and facilities, and examine records and other supporting documents in order to grasp a thorough understanding of the HEI’s operation. For the “Site Visit Program and Arrangements” and the “Sample of Two-day Site Visit Program (For Reference Only)”, refer to **Annex 5** and **Annex 5.1** respectively.
- 6.9 Under normal circumstances, information collection ends upon completion of the site visit.
- 6.10 Before the site visit comes to an end, the Panel is to conduct the “Exit Meeting” with the HEI’s senior management to share its key observations about the evaluation exercise, including but not limited to the intended IQA outcomes (namely “commendations”, “affirmations” and recommendations”). The minutes of the “Exit Meeting” are to be sent to the HEI by the EQAA for record normally within 1 week after the site visit.
- 6.11 The EQAA is to send the draft of the IQA report to the HEI normally within 12 weeks after the site visit; and the HEI is to comment on the factual accuracy normally within 2 weeks upon receipt of the draft report.
- 6.12 The EQAA is to send the final IQA report to the HEI normally within 2

weeks upon receipt of the HEI's comments on the factual accuracy of the draft report.

- 6.13 The HEI has to submit to DSES the final evaluation report for confirmation of the IQA outcome within 45 days upon receipt of the IQA report.
- 6.14 The confirmation procedure of the IQA application will generally be decided within 90 days.
- 6.15 If DSES deems it necessary, the applicant institution may be required to provide explanations, present evidence and supplementary information. Or, DSES will obtain technical support services in accordance with the provisions of the higher education quality evaluation system of Macao. Or, DSES will obtain opinions from other professional, academic entities or individuals, including consulting the Panel; in such cases, the calculation of the above period (paragraph 6.14) shall be suspended.
- 6.16 The workflow for IQA is in **Annex 7**.

## **7. Judgment Principles and Outcomes of Institutional Quality Audit**

- 7.1 Whether an HEI can effectively carry out self-management and make continuous progress depends on its proven internal QA mechanism. Therefore, IQA reviews the robustness of the HEI’s internal QA mechanism to ensure that its institutional policies, academic development and/or scientific research, etc., effectively contribute to the accomplishment of its educational purposes and goals, including but not limited to cultivating graduates with requisite attributes. In addition, the HEI should strive for continuous enhancement to keep pace with the latest development via internal and external evaluation.
- 7.2 IQA adopts the Approach-Deployment-Results-Improvement (ADRI) model as the framework for assessment. It is conducted under the “fit-for-purpose” guiding principle. Through external review, the HEI is evaluated to see whether or not its internal QA mechanism is effective and whether or not its system, structure, resources, academic and/or scientific research provision, etc. achieve the intended higher education level, maintaining the comparable academic standards at international level. The following are the judgment principles of IQA:

### **7.2.1 Valid**

The HEI must demonstrate that it has set up its internal QA mechanism with implementation strategies, and adopted performance indicators as well as academic levels based on sound and valid justifications in line with Law No. 10/2017 on *Higher Education Regime* and related administrative regulations, and with reference to the good practices of HEIs of similar nature, as well as international practices<sup>1</sup>, etc.

### **7.2.2 Consistent**

The HEI’s internal QA mechanism, governance and management must be implemented under the “consistent”

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<sup>1</sup> According to international practices, academic and/or professional standards of individual courses and specifications are subject to change, depending on institutional goals and/or program objectives. For example, if an HEI adopts the internationally recognized qualifications of Washington Accord as the graduation requirements of its engineering degree programs, the relevant requirements will be used as the requirements for the effectiveness of the program design and as the sound and valid standards for self-evaluation.

principle to ensure fairness; otherwise, the HEI must provide sound justifications for any variation or deviation from the established policies and implementation practices, and such considerations must be well documented for record and review purposes.

### 7.2.3 **Prudent**

The HEI must make decisions on the basis of evidence and form well-reasoned judgments through triangulation. It should also demonstrate its due diligence with management strategies, such as checks and balances, accountability as well as consensus, and with concrete examples.

### 7.2.4 **Transparent**

The HEI's operation should be under the "open and transparent" spirit as stated in one of the guiding principles of IQA. Information gathered by the HEI (such as suggestions and feedback from academic peers and industry experts, external benchmarking, that is, comparability study of HEIs of similar nature/disciplines/academic units/programs, and any other useful information that may have an impact on academic levels and institutional performance) must be well documented for development, review and improvement purposes, and as evidence for internal and external evaluation. There must be sound justifications for all decisions, including any variation or deviation from practices; and such considerations must be well documented for record and review purposes. To enable stakeholders (the governance and management levels, staff, students and other related external parties, etc.) to reach a consensus through their understanding of and their support for the institutional development policies and implementation, the HEI must formulate a policy on disclosure of information and provide an open platform to collect ideas and encourage participation in school management.

### 7.2.5 **Learning Organization**

The HEI must be a learning organization. In other words, it must possess self-reflection, critical thinking, a high level of autonomy, perseverance to strive for the best performance, professionalism and academic leadership.



### 7.2.6 **Student-centered**

Education is by nature student-centered. The HEI must adopt this philosophy into its educational purposes and provide favorable and quality learning environment as well as learning experience for students so that they can attain the intended learning outcomes upon completion of the programs under reasonable circumstances.

- 7.3 The engaged EQAA must make judgments of the IQA exercise on the basis of evidence provided by the HEI, in accordance with the requirements specified in the *Guidelines for EQAAs* and in this set of guidelines.
- 7.4 IQA outcomes are recorded in the IQA report together with respective justifications. Possible IQA outcomes include commendations, affirmations and recommendations as follows:
- 7.4.1 Commendations: Good practices that can be for reference by other HEIs;
  - 7.4.2 Affirmations: In the SED, the HEI identifies areas where there are gaps and proposes a practicable improvement plan with a timetable. During the IQA exercise, the Panel analyses the proposal and produces an affirmation, which may contain proposals for changes.
  - 7.4.3 Recommendations: The Panel may identify additional gaps not listed in the SED and propose remedial actions.

## **8. Follow-up Action**

- 8.1 Within 12 weeks upon receipt of the final IQA report, the HEI must formulate an action plan to address the recommendations stated in the report. The EQAA must comment on and affirm the action plan which the HEI should then submit to DSES for record. DSES may give comments on the action plan.
- 8.2 The HEI must include the progress of the areas of improvement prescribed in the aforementioned action plan in its annual report to DSES.
- 8.3 If the HEI is to make substantial changes<sup>3</sup>, the changes must be handled according to its internal QA mechanism and properly documented for IQA judgments in the next cycle. All substantial changes must be included in the annual report to DSES for record purpose.

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<sup>3</sup> Substantial changes primarily refer to changes that have a major impact on the operation, management and academic development of an HEI. Changes in the following areas may be considered substantial: the HEI's educational purposes, goals, overall management structure, resources deployment policy or directional change in academic development, etc. These merely serve as examples for reference and are by no means exhaustive.

## 9. Observers

- 9.1 DSES may send observer(s) at its discretion to sit in meetings relevant to the IQA exercise (including the “Panel’s Meeting with HEI’s Senior Management” (see paragraph 6.5) and the “Pre-visit Meeting” held one day prior to the site visit) and the site visit (see paragraph 6.8) for the purposes of observing the evaluation process and identifying room for improvement in the flow and arrangements of the evaluation exercise, etc. Observer(s) must abide by the code of conduct as well as the terms of confidentiality applicable to the Panel. If the EQAA/the HEI raises a valid evidence-based objection to the presence of observer(s) on the basis of conflict of interest, the observer(s) concerned must not sit in the relevant meetings and the site visit. However, DSES can assign other observer(s) as replacement(s). Observer(s) are bound by the terms specified in the *Guidelines for Observers* (**Annex 6**) and must carry out their duties.
- 9.2 DSES is to send the name list of observer(s) to the HEI and the EQAA so that the case officer of the EQAA can deliver relevant documents and information, etc. to observer(s) as well.

## **Institutional Quality Audit Areas, Requirements, Criteria and Possible Sources of Evidence**

1. IQA is intended for HEIs equipped not only with effective mechanisms, but also with effective self-management and internal QA. These HEIs should be able to deploy resources effectively, engage stakeholders, formulate appropriate, reasonable educational purposes and goals as well as academic levels, adopt the “student-centered” philosophy, and provide quality and effective teaching and/or scientific research activities, etc. for the purpose of facilitating students’ attainment of intended learning outcomes. These HEIs, playing the role of influential academic leadership, should also be active in academic field(s)/discipline(s) both locally and internationally, and possess the characteristics of learning organizations, that is, undertaking regular reviews, assuming accountability, keeping abreast of development, catching up with international standards, and striving for excellence.
2. HEIs must adopt a model that aims to sustain quality enhancement (ADRI) (see **Annex 2**) when conducting self-evaluation on IQA areas (refer to Area I: Educational Purposes and Goals, Area II: Institutional Administrative Management, Planning and Accountability, and Area III: Quality Assurance in this Annex), the findings of which can then serve as evidence for the external evaluation.
3. During the first IQA cycle, the focuses of the three aforementioned operational areas (see paragraph 2 above) are placed onto i) the effectiveness of institutional administrative management and planning, ii) the implementation effectiveness of HEIs’ internal QA mechanism, and iii) the QA effectiveness of outcome-based programs.
4. HEIs provide information and documents related to their internal QA mechanism and management as evidence for IQA, and adopt the selected discipline(s)/academic unit(s)/program(s) etc. as empirical evidence for detailed examination. The following only serve as examples of possible sources of evidence and are by no means exhaustive.

## **Area I: Educational Purposes and Goals**

### **Requirements**

HEIs must formulate appropriate educational purposes and goals to cultivate talented individuals for Macao and to reach international levels both academically and professionally. Their educational purposes and goals must be clear enough to gain understanding and support from stakeholders (teachers, students and other related external parties) so that they can reach a consensus.

### **Key topics for discussion**

1. What are the educational purposes and goals of the HEI being audited?
2. What were the considerations when formulating its educational purposes and goals?
3. What kinds of information and data were used as reference?
4. What was the process of formulation? Who were involved?
5. What measures were taken to promote teachers', students' and other stakeholders' understanding of and support for the HEI's educational purposes and goals? How effective were these measures?
6. Are there regular reviews of the HEI's educational purposes and goals? How is the review conducted? What is the follow-up on review findings?

### **Possible sources of evidence**

1. Institutional statutes, long-term, mid-term and short-term strategic planning reports, and academic development reports
2. Internal QA reports
3. Minutes of relevant meetings held by policy-making units, e.g. the governing body, the council and the academic committee
4. Minutes of relevant meetings held by the internal QA committee
5. Internal and external consultation documents and reports
6. Surveys and feasibility study reports as well as other information collected regarding the HEI's development

7. Reports on regular review, action plans, and relevant progress and effectiveness reports
8. Roles and responsibilities of decision-making units, their membership lists, and curricula vitae and appointment criteria of the members

## **Area II: Institutional Administrative Management, Planning and Accountability**

### **Requirements**

HEIs must establish an appropriate management structure and deploy resources effectively in line with the educational purposes and goals, direction of development, strategies and policies formulated by their respective decision-making units so as to achieve the intended educational performance and academic levels of the HEIs for international benchmarking.

### **Key topics for discussion**

1. How does the HEI being audited support its academic development to fulfill its educational purposes through appropriate budgeting, teaching facilities and resources planning, staff planning and development, organizational management, etc.?
2. How does the HEI adopt checks and balances, ensure consistency and fairness in the execution of policies and in decision-making, and achieve effective management?
3. How does the HEI formulate decision-making process to ensure that staff at all levels are aligned towards the intended organizational goals?
4. How does the HEI review the performance of each operational unit for continuous enhancement?
5. Does the HEI have an open information policy and provide an open platform to collect ideas and encourage participation in school management?
6. Is the HEI a learning organization which possesses the following competencies: self-reflection, critical thinking, a high level of autonomy, perseverance to strive for the best performance, professionalism and academic leadership?

### **Possible sources of evidence**

1. Organizational charts, and roles and responsibilities of various administrative and academic units
2. Financial statements and budgets, and financial management reports
3. Facilities and resources planning reports and relevant utilization reports, resources deployment policies and relevant minutes
4. Staffing policies, staff planning, development and performance management policies, etc., award and penalty system, reports on implementation review
5. Participation of staff and students in school management and relevant minutes
6. Dissemination of information within the HEI and records of information sharing
7. Records of follow-up action on all kinds of review, and respective effectiveness reports on follow-up action
8. HEI's atmosphere, corporate culture and ethos

### **Area III: Quality Assurance**

#### **Requirements**

HEIs must possess a proven internal QA mechanism to help formulate institutional policies, to enhance academic and/or scientific research development, etc., to cultivate graduates with requisite attributes, and to strive for continuous enhancement and keep pace with the latest development via internal and external evaluation.

#### **Key topics for discussion**

1. Are the “valid”, “consistent”, “prudent” and “transparent” judgment principles<sup>4</sup> adopted in the internal QA mechanism of the HEI being audited?

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<sup>4</sup> For the definitions of these four judgment principles, refer to paragraph 7.2 of Chapter 7 in this set of guidelines.

2. Does the HEI formulate clear internal QA guidelines/handbooks for reference by all relevant units or parties?
3. Does the HEI make decisions based on valid evidence and reasoned judgments?
4. Does the HEI adopt external benchmarking and collect comments through multiple channels for triangulation before making reasoned judgments?
5. Does the HEI systematically record all decisions and considerations, including those that vary or deviate from the established policies and implementation practices, for review and follow-up purposes?
6. Does the HEI properly record all information collected from various sources for development, review and improvement purposes and as evidence in internal and external evaluation? Such information includes advice and feedback from academic peers and industry experts, comparability study of HEIs of similar nature/disciplines/academic units/programs, and other useful information that may have an impact on the academic levels, and institutional performance.
7. Does the HEI regularly review, follow up on areas where improvement is needed and review on the effectiveness?
8. Does the HEI adopt quality education as its academic philosophy?
9. How does the HEI cultivate quality education as part of its corporate culture?

### **Possible sources of evidence**

1. HEI's internal QA mechanism guidelines/handbooks
2. The complete record of a recent substantial decision on discipline(s)/academic unit(s)/program(s) for detailed examination, for example, as proof of QA in operation
3. Work planning and meeting minutes of the QA organization/unit
4. Reports of regular reviews, follow-up plans, action plans and reports on effectiveness of review



## **Criterion 1: Effectiveness of Institutional Operation**

- HEIs must formulate appropriate key performance indicators and regularly collect data for review.

### **Key topics for discussion**

1. What are the key performance indicators (KPIs) of the HEI being audited?
2. What elements were taken into consideration when defining the KPIs? Do the considerations correspond to the HEI's educational purposes and goals, as well as development strategies?
3. What reference information and data were used?
4. Are the performance indicators and academic levels formulated on the basis of sound and valid justifications in line with Law No. 10/2017 on *Higher Education Regime* and related administrative regulations, with reference to the good practices of HEIs of similar nature and international practices?
5. What is the process of formulating the KPIs? Who/What units are involved in the formulation?
6. How did the relevant units cooperate to achieve the expected performance standards after formulation? Were they able to reach the expected standards? What follow-up action was taken when the expected standard was not reached?
7. How effective are the KPIs?
8. Were there any regular reviews? What is the review process? What follow-up action arises from the reviews?

### **Possible sources of evidence**

1. The various tools and methods of collecting information on KPIs
2. Outcomes of KPIs, review reports and annual reports on KPIs
3. Information and data that were referenced, and the rationale records on the acceptance/rejection of the reference information and data
4. Regarding discipline(s)/academic unit(s)/program(s) for detailed examination, reports on reviews of KPI outcomes, minutes and reports

on follow-up action, etc.

## **Criterion 2: Effectiveness of Academic Planning, Management and Development**

- HEIs' academic planning must meet their own educational purposes and goals, be led by dedicated academic leaders in charge of management and development as a team, keep pace with the latest development, and be aligned with international standards.

### **Key topics for discussion**

1. How does the HEI formulate an academic development plan to implement the HEI's educational purposes and goals, direction of development, strategies and policies established by the decision-making unit?
2. What elements were taken into consideration when drawing up the academic development plan? Do these considerations correspond to the HEI's educational purposes and goals, as well as development strategies?
3. What reference information and data, external benchmarking, and international standards were used?
4. How does the HEI make use of reports on comparability study of HEIs of similar nature/discipline(s)/academic unit(s)/program(s) to initiate internal discussions and for review purpose?
5. How does the HEI formulate the blueprint and timeline of the development plans for different disciplines according to its strengths? (Illustrate with discipline(s)/academic unit(s)/program(s) for detailed examination as concrete example(s))
6. How to ensure that the teaching staff work as a team with quality education delivery as a core value?
7. How to utilize resources within and outside the HEI to collect opinions and ensure international comparability of its academic levels?
8. How does the HEI devise its succession plan to introduce and cultivate academic leaders according to its developmental needs?
9. How does the HEI provide appropriate support for its academic leaders

according to its developmental needs?

10. What are the profiles of the HEI's academic leaders, e.g. qualification, experience, academic and professional reputation, etc.?
11. Do the HEI's academic leaders possess professionalism, commitment, foresight and perseverance to strive for the best performance?

### **Possible sources of evidence**

(Outline the situation of the HEI as a whole and illustrate with discipline(s)/academic unit(s)/program(s) for detailed examination as concrete example(s))

1. Academic planning and development reports
2. Appointment criteria of academic leaders and curricula vitae of current academic leaders
3. Appointment criteria of teaching staff at various ranks, and analysis reports of experience and qualification of current teaching staff
4. Minutes of meetings held by various committees responsible for academic planning, development and management
5. Academic review reports, reference data and reports on follow-up action

### **Criterion 3: Effectiveness of Teaching and Learning, Scientific Research, Social Services, as well as Cultural Heritage and Innovation**

- HEIs must include cultural heritage and innovation as part of their teaching objectives; curriculum design must be outcome-based while the means of training must be student-centered; and academic levels must be set according to the requirements of Macao and applicable international levels. If HEIs also provide scientific research and social services, then adequate and appropriate resources must be provided to ensure the quality of these services and, ultimately, the pursuit of excellence.

### **Key topics for discussion**

1. How does the HEI formulate work plans for teaching, scientific research (if applicable) and social services (if applicable) according to the

established academic plan and development strategy?

2. How does the HEI ensure through its internal QA mechanism that its performance meets the expected standard continuously and is in pursuit of excellence?

**Possible sources of evidence**

1. Planning outlines and implementation manuals of discipline(s)/academic unit(s)/program(s) for detailed examination, etc.
2. Statistical information, review reports on students' assessment and other information of relevant discipline(s)/academic unit(s)/program(s)
3. Minutes of meetings held by the management units of relevant discipline(s)/academic unit(s)/program(s)
4. Review reports, follow-up action plans and effectiveness reports on the action plans for relevant discipline(s)/academic unit(s)/program(s)
5. Planning and review reports, etc. of scientific research and social services (if applicable)

## ADRI Model Applicable to Institutional Quality Audit

IQA is conducted on the basis of the stated educational purposes and goals of the HEI being audited. In the IQA process, the EQAA, together with the HEI, adopts a model that aims to sustain quality enhancement (ADRI) for the purpose of examining the HEI's performance in the three areas of operation covered in this set of guidelines with focuses on the specified operational effectiveness in each IQA cycle, and illustrates with selected discipline(s)/academic unit(s)/program(s) for detailed examination as concrete example(s):

- A: Approach — What are the educational purposes/goals of the HEI being audited? What are the implementation plan and strategy? What are the performance indicators? How are the performance indicators developed?
- D: Deployment — How does the HEI achieve the stated purposes/goals?
- R: Results — How does the HEI know about its own achievement of the stated purposes/goals? What are the results? What is the evidence of meeting the standards?
- I: Improvement — How are the results (R) used to inform the review of the approach (A) and the deployment (D) for continuous enhancement and the pursuit of excellence? What corresponding improvements are to be made?

### 1. Approach

- 1.1 The HEI should position itself properly by setting its educational purposes and goals with due regard to its competitive edge, aligned with its vision and purposes.
- 1.2 The HEI has clearly stated its educational purposes and goals which are understood and supported by its staff, students and other stakeholders so that all parties work towards a common goal.
- 1.3 The HEI has formulated appropriate and effective strategies, structure and processes according to its educational purposes and goals.

- 1.4 The HEI has defined appropriate and workable performance indicators to facilitate regular effectiveness review. The performance indicators should have been well-communicated to stakeholders so that they understand the requisite standards for review.

## **2. Deployment**

- 2.1 The implementation plan and strategy have been fully introduced and well supported.
- 2.2 The implementation plan and strategy have been funneled down to the HEI's daily operation and planning.

## **3. Results**

- 3.1 The effectiveness of the implementation plan and strategy is clearly reflected by the HEI's educational outcomes and academic levels.
- 3.2 The performance and levels of all operations and disciplines are above average and on track for further enhancement.
- 3.3 The HEI's key disciplines clearly stand out from its peers of similar nature.

## **4. Improvement**

- 4.1 The HEI conducts regular review to verify its intended approach, deployment, and results/effectiveness.
- 4.2 The HEI adopts open and transparent review methods/internal QA mechanism to encourage understanding of, support from and participation by all relevant units and stakeholders.
- 4.3 The HEI provides comprehensive and reliable evidence as proof of continuous quality enhancement and the pursuit of excellence.
- 4.4 The HEI formulates a follow-up action plan to address the areas where improvement is required, and reviews relevant effectiveness according to the schedule set forth in the action plan for the purpose of continuous enhancement.

### **Points to Note on Preparation of Self-evaluation Documents**

1. HEIs' effective self-management and self-improvement through their internal QA mechanism are characteristics of a learning organization. A document which can reflect HEIs' abilities to self-evaluate and take follow-up action is evidence of institutional quality.
2. A self-evaluation document (SED) should be written in a systemic, precise and concise manner, and be easy to read. It should be characterized by the following:
  - 2.1 With the "fit-for-purpose" guiding principle as the core of self-evaluation;
  - 2.2 Based on internal Q and relevant regular review;
  - 2.3 Conducted by means of the ADRI model;
  - 2.4 Critical, and beyond factual description, and based on the "valid", "consistent", "prudent" and "transparent" judgment principles;
  - 2.5 Judgment made against the established KPIs;
  - 2.6 Clear, concise and supplemented with appropriate evidence (normally from discipline(s)/academic unit(s)/program(s) for detailed examination) as proof of attainment of performance.
3. The internal QA and the relevant regular review should reflect HEIs' abilities to self-manage and self-improve in the following areas, inter alia:
  - 3.1 SWOT analysis on HEIs' strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) or any other similar analysis;
  - 3.2 Positioning, educational philosophy, educational goals, core values, vision and purposes of HEIs; understanding of, support from and consensus from staff, students and other stakeholders;
  - 3.3 Institutional development plan, academic plan, projects on key disciplines/scientific research/social services and relevant effectiveness review; relevant good practices, areas for improvement and relevant follow-up action plan;
  - 3.4 Formulation of KPIs for the evaluation of the HEI's educational outcomes, relevant implementation strategies and approaches,

- effectiveness and concrete examples showing how KPIs have ever facilitated HEIs' self-improvement;
- 3.5 Governance and management structure, staff's performance and efficiency; relevant good practices, areas for improvement and relevant follow-up action plan;
  - 3.6 Appointment, performance, and succession plan of academic leaders; relevant good practices, areas for improvement and relevant follow-up action plan;
  - 3.7 Results and effectiveness of students' learning experience/learning outcomes and other applicable services (e.g. scientific research and social services); relevant good practices, areas for improvement and relevant follow-up action plan;
  - 3.8 Campus equipment and facilities, resources deployment and student support services, etc.; relevant good practices, areas for improvement and relevant follow-up action plan;
  - 3.9 HEIs' culture and atmosphere, decision-making and policy execution practices, opportunities for teachers and students to participate in school management, HEIs' learning atmosphere and transparency, etc.; relevant good practices, areas for improvement and relevant follow-up action plan;
  - 3.10 Effectiveness of HEIs' internal QA mechanism, participants and their comments; relevant good practices, areas for improvement and relevant follow-up action plan.
4. If HEIs can effectively manage and improve themselves, they should be able to prepare an SED with regard to their own development and characteristics according to the IQA areas listed in **Annex 1**. In the SED, HEIs should place the focus on the specified operational effectiveness within that particular IQA cycle and present evidence with justifications (normally from selected discipline(s)/academic unit(s)/program(s) for detailed examination) for respective key topics for discussion. The annexes must be referred to in the main text, clearly titled and labeled for cross referencing.
  5. The SED is preferred to be written in HEIs' working language to reflect their actual daily operation.



6. For the “Outline of Self-evaluation Document (For Reference Only)”, refer to **Annex 3.1**.

## Outline of Self-evaluation Document

### Cover Page

- Name of HEI
- **Institutional Quality Audit**
- Date for Site Visit
- Name of EQAA
- Issue Date of Document

### Main Text

- Table of Contents
- List of Abbreviations (if applicable)

### Preamble

- Introduction of HEI, introduction of proposed discipline(s)/academic unit(s)/ program(s) for detailed examination in the IQA exercise

### Main Text of Document

- An elaboration of supporting facts and data, presented in the order of the IQA areas listed in **Annex 1** and demonstrating with appropriate documentary evidence that the HEI is equipped with self-management and self-improvement. The basic framework of the elaboration is as follows:

#### **Area I: Educational Purposes and Goals**

#### **Area II: Institutional Administrative Management, Planning and Accountability**

#### **Area III: Quality Assurance**

Criterion 1: Effectiveness of Institutional Operation

Criterion 2: Effectiveness of Academic Planning,  
Management and Development

Criterion 3: Effectiveness of Teaching and Learning,  
Scientific Research, Social Services, as well as  
Cultural Heritage and Innovation

- Conclusion

**Annex**

- Annexes are to be listed according to the order of appearance in the main text of the document.

**Institutional Quality Audit –**  
**Sample Agenda for “Panel’s Meeting with HEI’s Senior**  
**Management”**

Within 4 to 6 weeks upon receipt of the SED from the HEI, the Panel or its representative(s) (such as the Panel Chair) meets with the HEI’s senior management in order to gain a better understanding of the HEI’s educational purposes and goals, its current situation and the proposed discipline(s)/academic unit(s)/program(s) for detailed examination (see paragraphs 1.6, 5.1 and 6.5 in the main text) so as to map out the strategies for the site visit according to the guiding principles of IQA and/or to modify the discipline(s)/academic unit(s)/program(s) for detailed examination to be held during the site visit after negotiation with the HEI. The suggested agenda is as follows:

<b>Items</b>	<b>Duration</b>
Panel’s internal meeting	30 minutes
Presentation* by HEI’s representatives	20 minutes
Q & A and discussion session	1 hour
Panel’s internal meeting	30 minutes

**\*Suggested content of presentation**

This presentation aims to be concise and is recommended to be completed within 20 minutes in order to allow sufficient time for the Panel to exchange ideas with the HEI’s senior management. The presentation may cover the following areas:

- Introduction of the HEI
- Educational purposes and goals, vision and philosophy of the HEI
- Direction and strategies of institutional development
- Effectiveness review of strategies, and quality enhancement
- Characteristics and effectiveness review of the discipline(s)/academic unit(s)/program(s) for detailed examination

### **Administrative arrangements**

- The actual meeting time is to be agreed by both the case officer of the EQAA and the HEI.
- Since panel members may be located in various parts of the world, when making the arrangements of this Meeting (including the number of participants, the meeting venue and the mode of the meeting, such as face-to-face interviewing and video-conferencing), the EQAA and the HEI can take the most cost-effective means into consideration.

## Site Visit Program and Arrangements

1. The site visit is arranged by the EQAA and takes place on the dates set forth in the service agreement, normally within 6 to 8 weeks after the “Panel’s Meeting with HEI’s Senior Management”.
2. The site visit for IQA normally lasts for 2 to 5 days, depending on the HEI’s operation and the scale of quality audit involved (i.e. the number of discipline(s)/academic unit(s)/program(s) for detailed examination). The site visit program may be adjusted according to the scale of quality audit and the practical situations of individual IQA exercises to achieve the objectives of the site visit.
3. The site visit activities and the HEI’s representatives for interviews must be determined with reference to the terms and conditions related to the scale of quality audit as stipulated in the service agreement.
4. The site visit activities and the HEI’s representatives for interviews (the EQAA may make necessary modifications based on practical considerations) are as follows for triangulation:
  - 4.1 Meeting the HEI’s representatives<sup>5</sup>:
    - 4.1.1 The governing body of the HEI (e.g. Chancellor, Governing Board, School Affairs Committee);
    - 4.1.2 Leadership of the HEI (e.g. President and Vice President, academic leaders at institutional level);
    - 4.1.3 Staff of the HEI (e.g. teaching and administrative staff in charge of QA, staff in charge of discipline(s)/academic unit(s)/program(s) for detailed examination and academic level(s), including relevant academic and/or administrative staff, etc.)<sup>6</sup>;
    - 4.1.4 External parties:
      - Stakeholders involved in QA of the HEI (e.g. advisory committees at institutional level, advisory committees of discipline(s)/academic unit(s)/program(s) for

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<sup>5</sup> The HEI is required to provide the Panel with the names, the roles and the spoken languages/dialects of its representatives so as to facilitate the interviews during the site visit. For the purpose of triangulation, the HEI’s representatives are advised not to take part in interviews at different sessions.

<sup>6</sup> Sampling should be done in proportion if part-time staff are involved.

- detailed examination, honorary advisors, external experts engaged in the internal QA of the HEI, etc.);
- Partner organizations in pedagogical, academic and scientific research areas;
  - Service users (e.g. employers, industry practitioners);
- 4.1.5 Students<sup>7</sup> and alumni;
- 4.2 Visiting campus facilities;
- 4.3 Reviewing documents (e.g. documents not yet been sent to the Panel before the site visit, or specified tabled documents for onsite review by the Panel during the site visit);
- 4.4 Conducting the “Exit Meeting” (To conclude the site visit, the Panel is to hold the “Exit Meeting” with the HEI’s senior management to share its key observations, including but not limited to the intended IQA outcomes).
5. Before the site visit, the HEI should inform the EQAA of the name list of the participants in the interviews to be held during the site visit, and their roles. The interview language is preferred to be the HEI’s working language. If any of the representatives have a special request for the interview language, please state the spoken languages/dialects of these representatives (for interviews). When necessary, the EQAA should arrange appropriate translation and/or simultaneous interpretation services to facilitate the Panel’s comprehensive understanding of the HEI and to enable the Panel to communicate effectively with the HEI during the site visit.
6. Before the site visit, the HEI should provide the Panel with the timetable and the route for the tour around the campus so that the Panel can make prior arrangements for the strategies for the site visit.
7. To facilitate the site visit, the HEI must arrange appropriate and adequate representatives to meet with the Panel during the site visit, and provide the Panel with specified tabled documents for onsite review.
8. The HEI should arrange proper meeting facilities and logistical support, including providing meeting rooms for the Panel, computing facilities,

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<sup>7</sup> Sampling of student representatives depends on the scale of quality audit of the HEI being audited. It should be done in proportion to the student populations of different study regimes (e.g. full-time and part-time), modes of delivery (e.g. lecturing and distance learning), grades, academic levels (bachelor’s degree, master’s degree and doctoral degree), disciplines enrolled in/host academic units, student sources (e.g. local students, students from Mainland China or other regions), etc., resulting in a representative student combination.

photocopying and/or printing services as well as refreshment, etc., in accordance with the site visit program.

9. The Panel may adjust the site visit program on the spot, taking practical considerations into account, to achieve the objectives of the site visit. The HEI is requested to accommodate these changes as and when necessary.
10. The EQAA should get the HEI's agreement before drawing up the site visit program and relevant arrangements in accordance with the terms stipulated in the service agreement.
11. A sample of a two-day site visit program is in **Annex 5.1**. The length (the number of days) of the site visit program depends on the HEI's operation and the scale of quality audit (see paragraph 2 in this annex).



### Sample of Two-day Site Visit Program

(Only applicable to HEIs with one single discipline/academic unit/program for detailed examination; EQAAs may make necessary modifications to this sample site visit program according to HEIs' operation and their scale of quality audit)

#### Day One

Session	Time	Panel Activities	HEI's Representatives <sup>#</sup>
1.	9:00 am – 10:15 am	Panel arriving at meeting venue to review tabled documents	—
2.	10:15 am – 11:00 am	Panel's internal meeting	—
3.	11:00 am – 11:45 am	Meeting with HEI's leadership (To comprehend the HEI's direction of development and strategies, as well as the effectiveness of the HEI's administrative management and operational planning, etc.)	Leadership at institutional and academic unit levels, e.g. President, Vice President and Deans
4.	11:45 am – 12:00 noon	Break	—
5.	12:00 noon – 1:00 pm	Meeting with HEI's academic leadership at institutional and academic unit levels (To comprehend the HEI's academic planning, management, development and the effectiveness of these areas, etc.)	Academic Committee

# The HEI being audited is required to provide the Panel with the names and the roles of the representatives. The interview language is preferred to be the HEI's working language. If any of the representatives have a special request for the interview language, please state the spoken languages/dialects of these representatives so as to facilitate the interviews during the site visit. For the purpose of triangulation, the HEI's representatives are advised not to take part in interviews at different sessions.

Session	Time	Panel Activities	HEI's Representatives <sup>#</sup>
6.	1:00 pm – 2:00 pm	Lunch break	—
7.	2:00 pm – 3:00 pm	Meeting with HEI's governing body  (To comprehend the effectiveness of the HEI's educational purposes, educational goals, governance philosophy and strategic plan, resources deployment and management monitoring, etc.)	Chancellor, Governing Board, School Affairs Committee, etc.
8.	3:00 pm – 4:00 pm	Meeting with leadership at academic unit level  (To comprehend how the HEI carries out program planning, development, management and monitoring with reference to the “student-centered” guiding principle and the outcome-based approach, and how the HEI provides support for the teaching and/or research staff; to comprehend the effectiveness of teaching and learning, scientific research, social services, as well as cultural heritage and innovation, etc. of the relevant discipline/academic unit/program for detailed examination)	Academic leaders and department heads of the relevant discipline/academic unit/program for detailed examination  (Split sessions may be arranged by the EQAA for representatives from different disciplines/academic units as appropriate.)
9.	4:00 pm – 4:15 pm	Break	—

# The HEI being audited is required to provide the Panel with the names and the roles of the representatives. The interview language is preferred to be the HEI's working language. If any of the representatives have a special request for the interview language, please state the spoken languages/dialects of these representatives so as to facilitate the interviews during the site visit. For the purpose of triangulation, the HEI's representatives are advised not to take part in interviews at different sessions.

<b>Session</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Panel Activities</b>	<b>HEI's Representatives<sup>#</sup></b>
10.	4:15 pm – 4:45 pm*	Visiting campus facilities and teaching equipment	Guided by representative(s) from HEI
11.	4:45 pm – 5:45 pm	Meeting with relevant external stakeholders  (To comprehend the roles of external stakeholders in internal QA and their effectiveness)	Employers/industry practitioners, representatives from professional bodies, external examiners/advisors  (Split sessions may be arranged by the EQAA based on the backgrounds of the participants as appropriate.)
12.	5:45 pm – 6:15 pm	Panel's internal meeting	—

# The HEI being audited is required to provide the Panel with the names and the roles of the representatives. The interview language is preferred to be the HEI's working language. If any of the representatives have a special request for the interview language, please state the spoken languages/dialects of these representatives so as to facilitate the interviews during the site visit. For the purpose of triangulation, the HEI's representatives are advised not to take part in interviews at different sessions.

\* The duration here is adjustable, depending on the scale of quality audit.

## End of Day One Schedule

## Day Two

Session	Time	Panel Activities	HEI's Representatives <sup>#</sup>
13.	9:00 am – 9:45 am	Panel arriving at meeting venue for internal meeting	—
14.	9:45 am – 11:00 am	Meeting with teaching and administrative staff in charge of QA  (To comprehend the QA mechanism, its culture, its KPIs, its communication and implementation mechanisms as well as their effectiveness, teaching and assessment policies, benchmarking for assessment standards, staff development, student admission policy, etc. as well as their effectiveness)	Quality Assurance Committee or related organizations, staff, etc.
15.	11:00 am – 11:15 am	Break	—
16.	11:15 am – 12:30 pm	Meeting with staff in charge of financial management and resources deployment  (To comprehend strategic development and risk management, governance structure, roles and responsibilities of each rank, decision-making procedures, checks and balances as well as delegation of authority, financial condition, resources allocation, budgeting procedures, management and development of campus and facilities, policy on and support for staff development, etc.)	Staff in charge of finance, Campus Development and Management Committee, Staff Development Committee and other related organizations and staff

<sup>#</sup> The HEI being audited is required to provide the Panel with the names and the roles of the representatives. The interview language is preferred to be the HEI's working language. If any of the representatives have a special request for the interview language, please state the spoken languages/dialects of these representatives so as to facilitate the interviews during the site visit. For the purpose of triangulation, the HEI's representatives are advised not to take part in interviews at different sessions.

<b>Session</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Panel Activities</b>	<b>HEI's Representatives<sup>#</sup></b>
17.	12:30 pm – 1:30 pm	Lunch break	—
18.	1:30 pm – 2:30 pm	Meeting with students (To comprehend students' experiences, observations and comments on institutional development, pedagogic objectives, learning outcomes and communication support, institutional standards, teaching standards, assessment policies, learning support, study load, etc.; and to comprehend students' roles and effectiveness in the HEI's internal QA mechanism)	Student representatives <sup>^</sup> and representatives from student unions of the relevant discipline/academic unit/program for detailed examination  (Sampling criteria are set by the EQAA on the basis of each individual IQA exercise; split sessions may be arranged by the EQAA as appropriate.)

<sup>#</sup> The HEI being audited is required to provide the Panel with the names and the roles of the representatives. The interview language is preferred to be the HEI's working language. If any of the representatives have a special request for the interview language, please state the spoken languages/dialects of these representatives so as to facilitate the interviews during the site visit. For the purpose of triangulation, the HEI's representatives are advised not to take part in interviews at different sessions.

<sup>^</sup> Sampling of student representatives should be done in proportion to the student populations of different study regimes (e.g. full-time and part-time), modes of delivery (e.g. lecturing and distance learning), grades, academic levels (bachelor's degree, master's degree and doctoral degree), disciplines enrolled in/host academic units, student sources (e.g. local students, students from Mainland China or other regions), etc., resulting in a representative student combination.

Session	Time	Panel Activities	HEI's Representatives <sup>#</sup>
19.	2:30 pm – 3:30 pm	<p>Meeting with staff</p> <p>(To comprehend whether the Q mechanism and its culture are generally implemented in various academic and teaching activities as well as their effectiveness, with the program design and teaching based on the “student-centered” guiding principle and the outcome-based approach as the focus; to comprehend teachers’ involvement in academic planning, development management and monitoring, as well as their understanding of and commitment to institutional development, pedagogical objectives, learning outcomes, assessment policy and learning support; to comprehend teachers’ induction training, teachers’ performance appraisal and promotion mechanism, teachers’ engagement in and development support provided for research, consultancy and professional/social services; and to comprehend their working environment, workload and student performance, etc.)</p>	<p>Representatives of full-time teachers and research staff in the relevant discipline/academic unit/program for detailed examination (excluding those already interviewed by the Panel on Day One)</p> <p>(If the teaching team is mainly composed of part-time teachers, include them on the list. The EQAA may adjust sampling methods according to the actual situation of that particular IQA exercise; split sessions may be arranged by the EQAA based on the backgrounds of the participants as appropriate.)</p>

<sup>#</sup> The HEI being audited is required to provide the Panel with the names and the roles of the representatives. The interview language is preferred to be the HEI’s working language. If any of the representatives have a special request for the interview language, please state the spoken languages/dialects of these representatives so as to facilitate the interviews during the site visit. For the purpose of triangulation, the HEI’s representatives are advised not to take part in interviews at different sessions.

Session	Time	Panel Activities	HEI's Representatives <sup>#</sup>
20.	3:30 pm – 4:00 pm	Meeting with staff responsible for student support (To comprehend student support services, related procedures and information dissemination, implementation effectiveness of various mechanisms (for complaints, appeals and grievances), academic and student assessment policies as well as their implementation effectiveness, etc.)	Curator, Director of Information Technology Department, Student Affairs Officer, Registrar, and other relevant staff and organizations
21.	4:00 pm – 4:15 pm	Break	—
22.	4:15 pm – 5:00 pm	Meeting with alumni (To comprehend institutional standards and development, learning outcomes, and the HEI's networking with and impact on the academic and industry sectors; and to comprehend alumni's roles and effectiveness in the HEI's internal QA mechanism, etc.)	Representatives of alumni in the relevant discipline/academic unit/program for detailed examination and representatives of other alumni  (Sampling criteria are set by the EQAA on the basis of each individual IQA exercise; split sessions may be arranged by the EQAA as appropriate.)

<sup>#</sup> The HEI being audited is required to provide the Panel with the names and the roles of the representatives. The interview language is preferred to be the HEI's working language. If any of the representatives have a special request for the interview language, please state the spoken languages/dialects of these representatives so as to facilitate the interviews during the site visit. For the purpose of triangulation, the HEI's representatives are advised not to take part in interviews at different sessions.

<b>Session</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Panel Activities</b>	<b>HEI's Representatives<sup>#</sup></b>
23.	5:00 pm – 5:45 pm	Call back meeting (The Panel may invite specific HEI representatives to come again to explore a certain issue, if needed.)	Upon confirmation from the Panel (if applicable)
24.	5:45 pm – 6:15 pm	Panel's internal meeting	—
25.	6:15 pm – 6:30 pm	“Exit Meeting” (To inform the HEI's senior management of the overall observations made by the Panel)	President, and institutional leaders nominated by President

<sup>#</sup> The HEI being audited is required to provide the Panel with the names and the roles of the representatives. The interview language is preferred to be the HEI's working language. If any of the representatives have a special request for the interview language, please state the spoken languages/dialects of these representatives so as to facilitate the interviews during the site visit. For the purpose of triangulation, the HEI's representatives are advised not to take part in interviews at different sessions.

### End of Day Two Schedule

Note: The above sample of a two-day site visit program is for reference only. The case officer can apply flexibility to the schedule and make necessary modifications based on the HEI's actual situations. If the site visit program is extended to 3 days, the Panel and the HEI can have more time to discuss pertinent issues.



## **Guidelines for Observers**

DSES may send observers at its discretion to sit in meetings relevant to the IQA exercise (including the “Panel’s Meeting with HEI’s Senior Management” (see paragraph 6.5 of Chapter 6), the “Pre-visit Meeting” held one day prior to the site visit) and the site visit for the purposes of observing the evaluation process and identifying room for improvement in the flow and arrangements of the evaluation exercise, etc. Observers are subject to the code of conduct set forth in this set of guidelines, and must carry out their duties.

### **1. Code of Conduct for Observers**

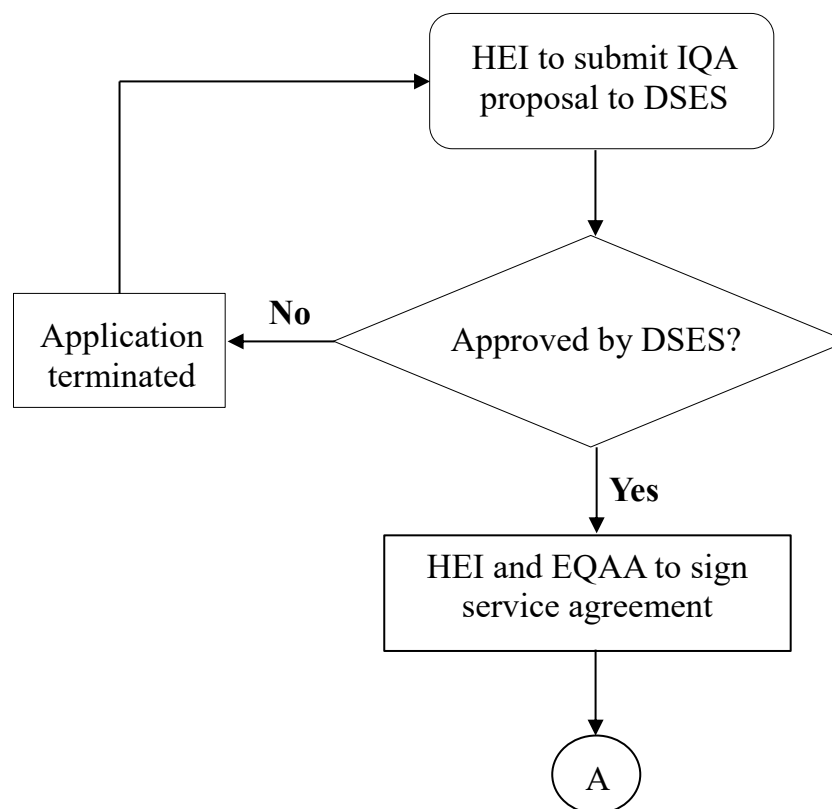
- 1.1 DSES is to provide the HEI being evaluated and the EQAA with the name list of observers. If the EQAA/the HEI raises a valid evidence-based objection to the presence of the observers on the basis of conflict of interest, the observers concerned shall not sit in the relevant meetings and the site visit.
- 1.2 Observers must abide by the same code of conduct and terms of confidentiality as the panel members.

### **2. Procedures for Observation**

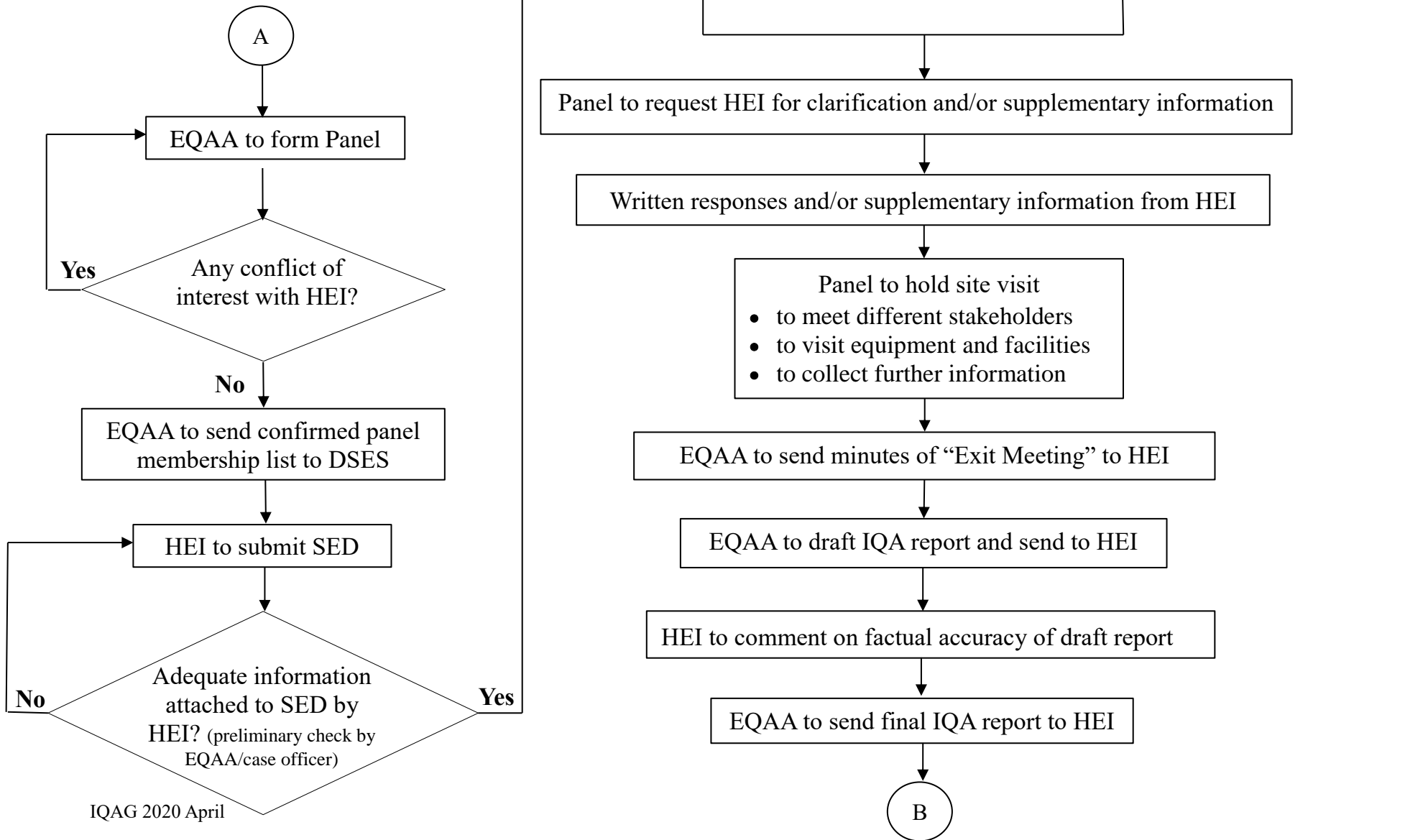
- 2.1 Before the site visit, the case officer of the EQAA is to send observers the requisite documents to be reviewed by the Panel (e.g. the SED provided by the HEI, the Panel’s collective comments to the HEI and the HEI’s written responses, the site visit program, agenda and documents of the “Pre-visit Meeting”, etc.).
- 2.2 Observers are not to participate in the discussion during the meetings with the Panel and the HEI’s representatives
- 2.3 Observers shall not record, video-tape or take photos at any time during meetings relevant to the IQA exercise (such as the “Panel’s Meeting with HEI’s Senior Management”, the “Pre-visit Meeting”) and during the site visit.

## Workflow for Institutional Quality Audit (IQA)

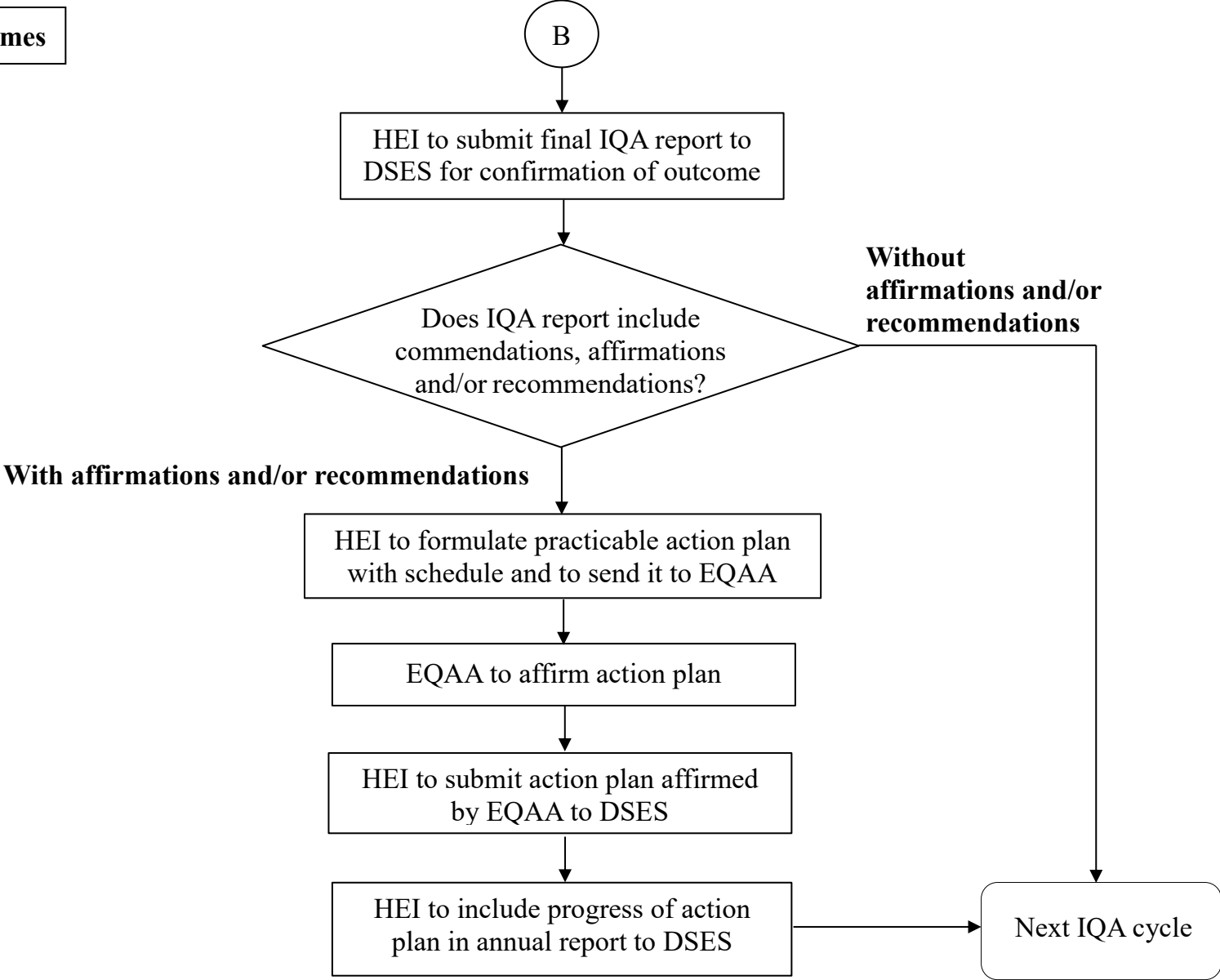
### 1. Application for IQA



## 2. IQA Procedure



**3. IQA Outcomes**



## Glossary

(In alphabetical order)

Academic Unit	It refers to an academic-related unit within an HEI, such as Faculty.
ADRI Model (Applicable to IQA)	This ADRI Model applicable to IQA is a model that aims to sustain quality enhancement. It is a comprehensive approach of evaluating HEIs' management performance and academic levels. Based on HEIs' educational purposes and goals, this model reviews the following: approach of implementing the stated educational purposes and goals ( <b>A</b> pproach), deployment of the implementation plan ( <b>D</b> eployment), results of deployment ( <b>R</b> esults) and action plan for improvement ( <b>I</b> mprovement).
Case Officer	A case officer, in his/her capacity as the representative of the EQAA, is responsible for handling an evaluation exercise and acts as the contact point between the HEI being evaluated and the Panel.
Consistent	This is one of the judgment principles to evaluate institutional performance when conducting IQA. HEIs must execute their internal QA mechanism, governance and management under this “consistent” principle. Any deviation from the established policies and/or procedures must be fully justified with proper documentation for review purpose.
Discipline	A discipline refers to the grouping of programs based on the definition of “narrow field” in <i>International Standard Classification of Education (2013)</i> by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).
Evidence-based	This is one of the guiding principles of IQA, under which judgment is made on the basis of evidence (including the self-evaluation document provided by HEIs, the solid empirical data collected by engaged EQAAs as well as the observations made by the Panel during the site visit) to ensure objectivity, fairness and consistency.

<p>External Evaluation Panel (Applicable to IQA)</p>	<p>This is the Panel either formed by the EQAA or self-formed by the HEI under the principle of peer review, depending on the HEI’s intention and its experience in self-forming panels. (However, panels self-formed by HEIs are not applicable to the first IQA cycle.) The Panel must execute external evaluations in accordance with this set of Guidelines and the <i>Guidelines for EQAAs</i> by making judgments and recommendations on the operational effectiveness of the HEI being audited.</p>
<p>External Quality Assurance Agency (EQAA)</p>	<p>EQAAs are quality assurance bodies/organizations that provide evaluation services for HEIs. Such bodies/organizations must meet the requirements specified in Chapter 1 of Section A in the <i>Guidelines for EQAAs</i> and be approved by DSES before providing specified evaluation services for relevant HEIs.</p>
<p>Fit-for-purpose</p>	<p>This is one of the guiding principles of IQA, under which engaged EQAAs must determine the effectiveness of HEIs’ fulfillment based on their stated educational purposes and goals.</p>
<p>Institutional Quality Audit (IQA)</p>	<p>IQA is a type of evaluation under the higher education evaluation of Macao that aims to review the operation of HEIs equipped with effective mechanisms on a regular basis in order to identify good practices and areas for improvement in their operations for the pursuit of excellence.</p>
<p>Institutional Quality Audit Areas</p>	<p>IQA areas are the various aspects of institutional operation and development categorized into three major areas for specification of the requirements and criteria for IQA.</p>
<p>Institutional Quality Audit Outcomes</p>	<p>The possible IQA outcomes are “commendations”, “affirmations”, and “recommendations”; the IQA outcome is detailed in the final IQA report.</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">Institutional Quality Audit Report</p>	<p>It is the final report sent by the EQAA to the HEI being audited after the site visit for IQA. The IQA report covers the EQAA’s observations, judgments and respective justifications made on the effectiveness of the HEI’s fulfillment of its stated educational purposes and goals according to the different IQA areas, leading to the concluding IQA outcome.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Learning Organization</p>	<p>This is one of the judgment principles to evaluate institutional performance when conducting IQA, according to which an HEI possessing self-reflection, critical thinking, a high level of autonomy, perseverance to strive for the best performance, professionalism and academic leadership is a learning organization.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Open and Transparent</p>	<p>This is one of the guiding principles of IQA, under which evaluation is conducted in an open and transparent manner. Both HEIs and engaged EQAAs must abide by the same set of IQA guidelines which details the IQA areas, requirements, criteria, and process, etc. when conducting IQA. IQA outcomes are to be included in the final IQA reports.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Panel’s Meeting with HEI’s Senior Management (Applicable to IQA)</p>	<p>This is the meeting between the Panel and the HEI’s senior management within 4 to 6 weeks upon receipt of the self-evaluation document from the HEI. The purpose of this Meeting is to enable the Panel to gain a better understanding of the HEI’s educational purposes and goals, its current operation and the proposed discipline(s)/academic unit(s)/program(s) for detailed examination so as to map out the strategies for the site visit according to the guiding principles of IQA and/or to modify the discipline(s)/academic unit(s)/program(s) for detailed examination to be held during the site visit after negotiation with the HEI.</p>

Peer Review (Applicable to IQA)	Peer review is the execution principle of the higher education quality evaluation system of Macao. Under this principle, evaluation must be conducted by peer experts with experience relevant to IQA. Peer experts include institutional leaders with governance and management experience as well as academic leaders of relevant disciplines/ academic units/ programs, academic experts who understand the education and cultural contexts of Macao, etc., and professionals from relevant industries.
Pre-visit Meeting	It is the preparatory meeting held by the Panel normally one day prior to the site visit. In the “Pre-visit Meeting”, the case officer, as instructed by the Panel, provides the following information: background information of the HEI being evaluated, analysis data and related documents, etc., and the major questions to be discussed during the site visit.
Program	The program here refers to the teaching content, teaching activities and student assessment, etc. arranged according to the program objectives as well as the Program and Curriculum Plan.
Prudent	This is one of the judgment principles to evaluate institutional performance when conducting IQA, according to which an HEI is to adopt the same principle when making decisions to ensure that well-reasoned judgment is made on the basis of evidence.
Quality Enhancement	This is one of the guiding principles of IQA that aims at continuously optimizing HEIs’ operations to enhance their educational quality.
Quality Assurance Requirements of Macao	The QA requirements of Macao refer to the compliance with Law No. 10/2017 on <i>Higher Education Regime</i> and related administrative regulations of Macao, particularly the provisions of the higher education quality evaluation system of Macao, as well as the requirements specified in the evaluation guidelines of Macao.



<p>Self-evaluation Document (Applicable to IQA)</p>	<p>It is the document provided by HEIs for review by EQAAs when conducting IQA. The IQA self-evaluation document (SED), prepared in a self-evaluative manner, elaborates with reference to the different IQA areas how HEIs adopt effective self-management and self-improvement under the “fit-for-purpose” guiding principle to focus on the specific operational effectiveness of a particular IQA cycle and to present evidence with justifications for the key topics for discussion. Appropriate evidence is normally from discipline(s)/academic unit(s)/program(s) for detailed examination.</p>
<p>Site Visit (Applicable to IQA)</p>	<p>It is the Panel’s visit to the campus of the HEI being audited on specified date(s) set forth in the service agreement to meet different stakeholders of the HEI, visit relevant equipment and facilities, and examine records and other supporting documents in order to fully comprehend the HEI’s educational purposes and goals, its operation (including that of relevant discipline(s)/academic unit(s)/program(s) for detailed examination) as well as effectiveness.</p>
<p>Staff</p>	<p>This term refers to teachers and other staff of HEIs.</p>
<p>Student-centered</p>	<p>This is one of the judgment principles to evaluate institutional performance when conducting IQA, according to which HEIs must provide favorable and quality learning environment and learning experience for students so that they can attain the intended learning outcomes upon completion of the programs under reasonable circumstances.</p>

<p>Substantial Changes</p>	<p>Substantial changes primarily refer to changes that have a major impact on the operation, management and academic development of an HEI. Changes in the following areas may be considered substantial: the HEI's educational purposes, goals, overall management structure, resources deployment policy or directional change in academic development, etc. These merely serve as examples for reference and are by no means exhaustive.</p>
<p>Teaching Facilities</p>	<p>Teaching facilities refer to all facilities and equipment needed by students for learning, including classrooms, laboratories, training rooms, online learning platforms, libraries, study rooms and/or relevant workplace attachment sites, etc.</p>
<p>Transparent</p>	<p>This is also one of the judgment principles to evaluate institutional performance when conducting IQA, including considerations for whether information gathered by the HEI (such as suggestions and feedback from academic peers and industry experts, external benchmarking, that is, comparability study of HEIs of similar nature/disciplines/academic units/programs, and any other useful information that may have an impact on academic levels and institutional performance) is properly recorded for internal and external evaluation, and for development, review and improvement purposes; whether there are sound justifications for all decisions, including any variation or deviation from practices and whether such considerations are well documented for record and review purposes. To enable stakeholders (i.e. the governing board, management level, staff, students and other related external parties, etc.) to reach a consensus through their understanding of and their support for the institutional development policies and implementation, the HEI must formulate a policy on disclosure of information and an open platform to collect ideas and encourage participation in school management.</p>

Valid	<p>This is one of the judgment principles to evaluate institutional performance when conducting IQA, according to which an HEI must demonstrate that it has set up its internal QA mechanism, formulated implementation strategies and approaches, and adopted key performance indicators and academic levels based on sound and valid justifications in line with Law No. 10/2017 on <i>Higher Education Regime</i> and related administrative regulations, with reference to the good practices of other HEIs of similar nature and international practices.</p>
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