Education Faculty of Qatar University: Implementing the Quality Assurance System (Case Study)*

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Abstract

The paper discusses the development of the University of Qatar, including the process of educational reform and associated developments. The case of the Faculty of Education is addressed as a model, starting with the experience of the Faculty (Diploma in Special Education Program) with the "Enhancement of Quality Assurance and Institutional Planning in Arab Universities" project, organized by the Regional Bureau for Arab States of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in its first phase, which was devoted to "education programs". The project sought to apply global standards of education, with the aim of promoting a culture of quality assurance in Arab universities. As a result of the project, a quality assurance group was formed at the University of Qatar, with a view to assuring internal quality and upgrading all teaching and learning processes. To this end, the group set up a quality assurance system that assesses student learning outcomes of programs of study. Another result of the project was the establishment of a quality assurance committee at the Faculty of Education. This committee reviewed all Faculty and departmental programs, and developed a system of evaluation, including peer observation. The paper also discusses the results of the student learning outcomes system at University level, as well as at Faculty level. Finally, it discusses the results of a pilot study of the peer observation system.

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I. Introduction

Arab societies are going through a vital transitional phase and they are aiming, thanks to new visionary development approaches imposed by challenges of the modern era, at fostering progress. In this regard, as education efficiently contributes to the comprehensive development process, it is important to assess the relevant skills and the efficiency of the theories and practices which are adopted worldwide, (Shahata 2003). Improving administration is a key element to improving education, its philosophy and management. In line with any new form of progress, the quality of education means delivering the best educational services in the most cost-effective ways (i.e. the best quality at the lowest costs). Here are some goals of a good quality education:

1. Monitor and improve the educational institutions management systems by distributing roles and defining responsibilities.
2. Improve the physical, mental, social, moral and spiritual development of the student.
3. Increase the efficiency of education and ameliorate the performance of administrative and teaching staff within educational institutions.
4. Enable educational institutions' capacity to scientifically analyze problems.
5. Implement a quality assurance system within relevant institutions to grant them national respect and global recognition (Helal, 2002).

There are also many ways to improve academic programs, such as:

- Each institution or one of its relevant programs is voluntarily subject to an evaluation process, which does stem from a governmental decision. One of the accreditation commissions usually undertakes the evaluation based on defined standards and decides accordingly whether the institution or the program complies or not with the minimum standards, in order to get an accreditation for a specific period of time. Accreditation is thus a necessary certificate the institution uses in its relations with students, parents, teaching staff, donors, labor market and local society.
- Academic accreditation of programs provides markets with professional and competitive graduates. In this regard, accreditation councils are sorted in two categories: specialized councils which grant accreditations to specific academic programs and councils granting accreditations to a whole institution (Abu Daqqa, 2004, p. 6).
- Assessing academic programs (external academic review) falls under specific evaluation standards established by the relevant party, usually a group of experts in the field (Abu Daqqa and Arafa, 2007 p. 4).
- It is necessary to undertake an evaluation of the various programs' academic outputs on a regular basis. This process defines the knowledge, skills and values the student needs to acquire when graduating. It also evaluates the level of academic achievements and uses the available data to improve the student's aptitudes and the performance of academic programs (Abu Daqqa and Arafa, 2007 p. 4).

This study tries to set forth some experiences related to the improvement of Qatar University›s Education Faculty through reviewing the following:

1. Creation of Qatar University as a national institution and its efforts to establish various systems related to quality and academic accreditation.
2. British Quality Assurance Agency's (QAA) external review standards.
3. Education Faculty and UNDP's assessment programs for education in the Arab world: outcomes of improving quality and educational output systems in Qatar University.

4. Improving the quality assurance system in Education Faculty and establishing a peer observation system.
5. Recommendations to improve academic programs in Qatar University and other Arab Universities.

II. Growth of Qatar University

Qatar University was created in 1973 with two core education faculties for teachers (men and women) pursuant to a decision taken by the Prince in his speech delivered on 22 February 1973 to celebrate his first anniversary at the head of the country. Since its beginning, the University has gone through different phases, marked by the establishment and development (quantitative and qualitative) of higher education which encompasses the quality of education and the related educational and teaching processes, scientific research and serving society. The organizational and administrative hierarchy of the University was established in compliance with the Qatar University creation Law of 8 June 1977. It is represented by the President, the Regent, Secretary General, deans of faculties, student affairs representatives, head of departments, research center directors and other scientific facilities. Everything is organized so that the Prince of Qatar is the Supreme president of the University.

In 1977, three faculties were established, namely those of humanities, social sciences and sciences faculties. On 4 October 1980, the Engineering Faculty was officially launched.

At the beginning of the academic year 19851986/, the University took an important initiative and established a College of Business and Economics.

In 1990, the Faculty of Technology was established according to arrangements made by the University to follow the trends of technological progress and meet the needs of the industrial and economic sectors. Academic centers such as libraries, computer labs and a teaching technology center, were also created to support the educational process and the three-dimensional mission of the University (teaching, scientific research and serving society). (El-Kabissi, 1993)

Furthermore, with the beginning of the 21st century and perhaps more precisely from the years 2003 /2004, the University entered a new era of development and reform. It endeavored to obtain an accreditation for quality assurance, which is vital to improve the output of academic quality and achieve the developmental goals. That is why, the university has been trying to obtain academic accreditations for all its programs and put in place development plans "University development project" for years 2003/ 2004. An agreement with RAND Corporation made this possible and provided the University with global academic skills which contributed in establishing an integrated development project. A high commission was thus created including worldwide experts, RAND Corporation and some members of the university teaching . The University development plan resulted in the following:

1. Adopting the idea of creating a Board of Regents.
2. Adopting the idea of creating an Academic Senate, presided over by the University vice-president for academic affairs. This Senate studies the general academic issues related to the educational programs' design and presentation standards, nomination and teaching faculty promotion policies, academic performance assessment systems and teaching faculty professional development.
3. Supporting faculties and academic departments willing to obtain international academic accreditation from international universities and specialized institutions.
4. Adopt a system to assess the teaching faculty's performance,

Moreover, this initiative was first announced within the Institutional Strategic Plan Project as part of the University's efforts to meet its goals, namely serving its members and meeting their aspirations.

The departments in the faculties have made great efforts to develop managerial agencies and human resources, defining their objectives, designing academic plans, establishing academic programs and improving their academic outputs in line with academic recognition conditions. Besides the new academic concepts that have been adapted, there have also been some additions to the university culture and with it new terms have started to appear. For example, Academic Core Team, Portfolio, E-Portfolio, philosophy, mission, vision, thinking platform etc.

In this regard, symposiums, training workshops and other activities were organized to spread this culture amongst students in universities and raise awareness as to the importance of such orientation and its culture.

In addition, it is noteworthy to say that many programs and faculties in Qatar University obtained or are trying to obtain an academic accreditation from global and prestigious education institutions. Here are some examples to name but a few: The Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) accredited in the beginning of October 2005 the programs of chemical, civil, electronic and mechanical engineering. Therefore, Qatar and the UAE University are the first two universities in the GCC countries to be granted accreditation for their engineering programs in line with standards in the year 2000. And in spring 2008, the National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Science NAACLS granted accreditation to the Biomedical Sciences program in the faculties of Humanities and Sciences in Qatar University. In 2009, the Canadian Society for Chemistry accredited the Chemistry program in the faculty of Arts and Science. The Canadian Council for Accreditation of Pharmacy Programs CCAP also granted the faculty of Pharmacy in the Qatar University an accreditation. This became the first faculty in the world, outside the Canadian borders, to be accredited by the above-mentioned council. Moreover, the College of Business and Economics is likely to receive an academic accreditation in the year 2010, as well as the education and law faculties.

III. Development of a quality assurance system in Qatar University

The higher education system in Qatar comprises nine universities, including one national university and eight private universities. In this regard, Qatar University guarantees a good quality of education in all its programs. It is also an active member of various global and regional organizations such as: Association of Arab Universities, Federation of Islamic Universities and International Association of Universities. Besides, the University attracts a large number of researchers and faculty from other Arab countries who work under the supervision of the Board of Regents. All faculties in the University deliver a Bachelor's degree in addition to postgraduate studies in a number of chosen programs.

Moreover, Qatar University aims at to be a model national university providing high quality education which focuses on the student. As for academics, administrative staff and students in the university, they all show social values and culture which reflect the level of the University.

In an attempt to improve the University's administrative and quality assurance system, many activities have been conducted, including research, to define the local requirements for higher education quality assurance. These studies highlighted a need to establish various structures within the University. Furthermore, it has also stipulated that the University's administration must be independent and the institution must provide high quality education to its students.

The University has improved financial and administrative mechanisms to guarantee a good performance from the teaching faculty and the leaders in charge, so that its education complies with international standards.

IV. Educational reform and restructuring

1. Education resources
Qatar University undertook various alterations and changes in order to deliver modern, constructive and useful education resources, such as: providing students with equipment, devices and software most suitable for their majors, improving the use of the different education resources, providing adequate and updated books and training courses, giving Internet access to both teaching faculty and students, and registering for online databases relative to the university's members and students specialization fields.

2. Quality management and improvement
The University has established efficient and adequate mechanisms to continue developing and improving the teaching process. It also created a Quality Control Unit, a mechanism aimed at achieving self-evaluation at both university and majors levels. In addition to that, the University developed a Quality Guide along with internal and external evaluation systems available, continuous academic improvement mechanisms for teaching and executive staff, nomination and promotion mechanisms and clear admission mechanisms according to the required major.
Furthermore, Qatar University has developed its facilities and support services as well. This was achieved through the integrated improvement of the library based on establishing an electronic research system, providing classrooms with adequate instruments and equipment. This is in addition to giving access to the teaching faculty to well equipped offices, laboratories and facilities.
It has been noted that quality assurance has started to give positive results especially when it comes to the benefits of preparing self evaluation documents, program standards, academic plans and degree courses reviews, along with syllabus content review (i.e. terms, syllabus objectives, knowledge and skills the student is expected to acquire and establish a link between the syllabus objectives and the program's objectives on the one hand and the syllabus objectives and the University mission on the other).

V. Quality Assurance project in Arab Universities

1. United Nations Development Program (UNDP) – Enhancement of quality assurance and institutional planning in Arab Universities
The United Nations (UN) Arab Human development report highlighted a dangerous situation in the region which had stemmed from one of the worst global economic situations and a slow growth. Thus, the UNDP Arab Regional Office launched a project entitled "Enhancement of quality assurance and institutional planning in Arab Universities", based in the Jordanian capital of Amman.
The project aims at maximizing the efficiency of institutional planning in universities and higher education administrations in order to better use the available resources. It also aims at evaluating programs within the faculties in many Arab universities and their enhancement as a key element of growth and economic development.

There was a substantial number which participated in this project:
- 24 universities from 13 Arab countries: Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Qatar, Bahrain, Sudan, Oman, Morocco, Algeria, Palestine.
- 50 experts in education representing Education Faculties in Arab Universities (http://www.qaa.ac.uk)

The project's objectives were the following:
- Global internal and external quality assessment of the quality of educational programs in Arab universities in light of the British Quality Assurance Agency's (QAA) standards.
- Assessment of the performance of students about to graduate in all programs, which are evaluated through international tests able to be compared at the regional and international levels.
- Creation of a statistical database providing indicators on students, teaching staff, workers and programs in every participating Arab university.
- Provision of indicative outcomes relative to the enhancement of quality assurance in tertiary education.

Hereunder are some results of Arab universities education faculties programs' assessment (UNDP- RBAS, Dec., 2006):
- Universities participating in the assessment have clearly contributed to the preparation of teachers on the level of Bachelor's degree and postgraduate study in the Arab region.
- Many universities continue not to adopt the Intended Learning Outcomes when planning their academic curricula.
- Academic standards were "good" in 5 universities, "satisfying" in 16 and "non- satisfying" in 2. Moreover, the academic standards weak points were obvious when it came to students' evaluation, as this process still focuses on measuring memorization and information recall, ignoring the student's thinking skills, while there is no evidence on the transparency and fairness of the correction process.
- The quality of education opportunities varies from one university to another in the region.
- Enhancing quality assurance in higher education institutions still represents a weak point in many universities.

2. Faculty of Education: assessment phases of the Education diploma program

The Faculty of Education has provided, since 2002, a special education diploma program. It opened two separate classes for men and women and in the first year about 42 students graduated. However, in the later part of 2004, the Higher Council for Family Affairs and the Ministry of Civil Services, the program's sponsors, highlighted the necessity to review some courses of the above-mentioned program. This was so it would comply with the needs and requirements of services delivered to families in Qatar. Accordingly, a governmental committee of experts in special education, academics from Qatar University and others (who prepared a report recommending the amendment of some academic decisions concerning the program) reviewed the program in 2004. In this regard, Qatar University accepted the suggested amendment and adopted the new program for the academic year 2004 - 2005. (Lazarus, et al., 2004).

Later on, the University suggested that the Special Education diploma program join the UNDP project (Enhancement of quality assurance and institutional planning in Arab Universities). It would then be part of the academic plans enhancement projects related to quality assurance systems in the Arab countries. Therefore, experts in quality assurance and enhancement started

to prepare to review this diploma program for the year 2005 / 2006.

Once the review process was achieved, the project team submitted a report to Qatar University comprising of a list of important conclusions made by the external auditors:

- Concrete efforts have been made to enhance academic standards and educational outputs so they comply with the diploma's program conceptual framework, international standards, requirements of the Special Education program and procedures adopted in Qatar.
- The program's objectives along with relevant educational outputs and courses are linked. This increases the efficiency of the curricula used in the teaching process in addition to the evaluation of educational outputs acquired by the students. Moreover, the on-the-job training curriculum appeared to be structured and well organized. It also provides students with the practical and vocational skills they need in the special education field.
- The external program's stakeholders and program's team cooperate within a partnership framework.
- In addition, there are clear links between scientific, practical, educational and teaching research within the program. This is reflected by the participation of students and teaching faculty in many conferences and by the use of modern updates, modern communication technology and educational means (especially technological equipment). The latter shows the efficiency of the program and contributes to enhancing both the educational and teaching processes (UNDP/RBAS, 2006).
- The program delivers excellent vocational development opportunities to students. It is recommended that this is continued, so it provides such opportunities in the future.
- In the conclusion, the report confirmed that quality assurance and enhancement systems in Qatar University were satisfying and that some quality assurance components were also available in the university. Accordingly, it recommended establishing a more efficient quality assurance and enhancement system (UNDP/RBAS, 2006).

VI. Establishment of a learning outputs assessment system in Qatar University

According to the conclusions of the above mentioned report in the autumn of 2007, recommendations began to be implemented. These included establishing a learning output evaluation system. It is defined as a structured and organized process to gather proofs and analyze data, in order to use conclusions in enhancing the educational process (Academic Evaluation Handbook, 2007). Soon afterwards, Qatar University announced the launching of a learning outputs assessment system and submitted it to the Academic Assessment Office and the Quality Unit (this unit was established directly after the UNDP report was released) of the University. Furthermore, Quality Unit members, teaching faculty members and an American expert reviewed the system to guarantee its validity and reliability.

The Academic Assessment Office and the Quality Council in Qatar University announced, at the beginning of the semester for spring 2007, the implementation of the new system by organizing two scientific conferences aimed at presenting the system. Later, the Office organized three workshops to present the best ways to use the system, its most important elements and the period of time required to submit a progress report concerning learning output assessment.

In autumn 2007, all the faculties were asked to form a Quality Assurance Council. This Council monitors the learning outputs assessment system, reviews the accredited program outcomes,

reviews the program's mission along with relevant objectives and educational outputs and coordinates its work with the Academic Assessment Office.

In addition, the Academic Assessment Office and the Quality Unit prepared an annual report on the educational outputs assessment system related to the different university programs. The reports' review conclusions showed that 63.4% of the programs present their mission in an easy to remember, precise and concise way. The programs' objectives are also clearly stated, along with targeted categories, work mechanisms and beneficiaries. They also comply with the mission of the concerned faculty, university and programs' partners. Furthermore, 63.6% of the programs clearly showed to their partners the objectives of their mission.

The conclusions show that 54.5% of the programs describe clearly and precisely the intended learning outcomes and these are observable and measurable. Furthermore, around 50% of the programs use certain means and procedures to measure and assess the learning outputs in a systematic and organized way. Academic outputs can then be acquired efficiently and successfully. The results from 50% of the programs showed that assessment methods and the procedures which are used did not link to what is expected of students' learning. Besides, those procedures are not suitable to assess learning outcomes. Results also showed that the assessment procedures which are used tend to focus on learning outputs and not on the learning processes. Moreover, it was found that one learning output was actually a mix of several outputs. It was also obvious that learning output reports included much information and many details (Academic Assessment Office, 2007a).

VII. Education Faculty: Implementation of peer observation

The Education Faculty (based on the above-mentioned initiatives) started to reform and enhance the educational and teaching process. Many changes occurred in the educational process. Members of the teaching faculty started using various teaching methods and modern strategies. In addition, members cooperated together through the exchange of information concerning the academic performance of each other. The academic assessment system's results were also reflected in students learning outcomes measurement and assessment. Various means were applied, such as teaching faculty and program's external partners working as one group and the teaching faculty and students in another, with both groups exchanging information concerning the learning outputs assessment's progress report (Academic Assessment Office Report, 2007, b, p.2).

In the year 2006 - 2007, the Education Faculty adopted a decision to create a Quality Assurance Committee. Its most important objectives include reviewing the learning outputs in the different faculty programs and reviewing course descriptions in line with student needs and the expectations and requirements of faculty and external partners. (Faculty of Education Report, 2007-b, p. 2).

The Quality Assurance Committee in the Faculty of Education consequently undertook a global review and close examination of all courses offered by the Faculty of Education as a university requirement. Then, these courses were reviewed and examined by two external reviewers from the American University of Beirut and Texas A&M University to assure their quality and their compliance with student needs (Faculty of Education Report, 2007-b, p. 2).

Once the educational outputs enhancement system was implemented in the programs of the different education faculty departments (i.e. Educational Sciences, Psychological Sciences, Physical Education & Sport Science and Art Education), the administration of the Education Faculty

in Qatar University had to come up with a mechanism that would follow the implementation of enhancement steps in classrooms, to make sure that outputs are enhanced and, hence, the educational process quality. In this regard, it was the Quality Assurance Committee in the faculty which had to consider this issue and find the adequate mechanism.

Many researchers and experts in education and quality assurance (Deming 1986, Faught 2001, and Michael, 2005) agree that continuous gathering and analyzing of data concerning the educational process is one of the core elements in achieving quality assurance. Moreover, Huda & Freed (2000) consider that assessing educational outputs with practical means helps in diagnosing the situation and taking the adequate decisions for institutional development (Abu Shaar, 2008).

In the autumn of 2007, the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) established a Peer Observation system. It is a developmental system, since it gives the faculty a constructive feedback that serves in enhancing and assuring the quality of student learning and promotes good educational and teaching practices in accordance with quality systems and academic accreditation strategies in the faculty of education (Quality Assurance Committee, 2008, p.2).

1. The Peer Observation Guide: preparation stages

The QAC conducted surveys in some foreign and Arab universities to identify the follow-up measures which are taken to guarantee learning outputs and program quality. It noticed that many universities use the Classroom Observation System as a means to assess the teaching faculty or the educational process in general. It is noteworthy to say that conditions and implementation mechanisms vary in universities using such system. In light of the literature and universities review the QAC decided to choose the Classroom Observation System as a means to follow the implementation of academic programs outputs in the faculty.

2. Designing the Classroom observation system

The QAC started searching for a name to give to the Classroom Observation system and in light of reviews and discussions the following name was adopted: "Peer Observation System.» The system's objectives were defined as follows:

- To support a dynamic educational process in order to improve the learning and teaching quality in the Qatar University Education Faculty.
- To raise awareness concerning problems that teaching faculty may face in the instructional process.
- To encourage the faculty teaching staff to discuss and participate in the mutual exchange of experiences and ideas in the fields relevant to education quality.
- To achieve important changes based on proof and data related to the educational process in the education faculty in general, in order to guarantee the education quality.
- To provide the faculty Academic Accreditation commission with proofs and data related to the learning process quality in the faculty before the self-evaluation stage.
- To assess and enhance the faculty programs' learning outputs.
- To train new academic personnel or cadres capable of improving the educational process in the university through exchanging academic experiences.

The QAC also decided to make a guide for Peer Observation System that contains all procedures and details related to Classroom Observation implementation and provides to faculty full information and answers concerning the Classroom Observation process. It took the QAC a semester (autumn 2007) to choose the content of the guide, as many discussions were held and many opinions reviewed before the final content of the Peer Observation Guide was adopted.

Once the QAC adopted the Guide, four experts (experienced professors in the faculty) were consulted on the Guide's content. Based on their comments the Committee revisited the Guide and introduced the relevant amendments.

3. Applying the Peer Observation system to the teaching staff of Education Faculty

Once the Peer Observation Guide was ready, the QAC defined the steps that guarantee a successful implementation of the system and evade impediments. These are the steps taken:

a. The idea of implementing the Peer Observation system was spread among the teaching staff and the importance of education quality in the faculty was highlighted. The steps taken to begin this system were:

   1) The Peer Observation Guide was distributed to all members of the teaching staff, so they could give their opinion on the subject.
   2) The QAC met with heads of departments to give needed explanations concerning the system and hear their opinion on the subject.
   3) The Observation system was launched through an official meeting held in the faculty.
   4) Meetings were held between the Commission and the teaching faculty in each faculty department to discuss the system and its efficiency regarding education quality.
   5) Individual meetings were held with some members of the teaching staff who required explanations or needed to express their opinion concerning the implementation of the system.

b. The Committee's meeting highlighted some obstacles that constrain the implementation of the system. Some faculty staff expressed the following concerns related to system implementation:

   1) The impact of the Classroom Observation on academic freedom. Furthermore, it was considered by some to be a lack of respect to the professor in front of his students.
   2) The impact of the observation results on the faculty staff's annual academic assessment.
   3) The impact of the observation results on the contract renewal of new teaching staff and on whether they would retain their job or not.
   4) The impact of observation results on teaching faculty staff's annual premium.
   5) The lack of objectivity in gathering data during class observation.

c. The QAC in the faculty took some steps and procedures to overcome the above-mentioned concerns:

   1) The guide will clearly state that the two observers do not have the right either to make any remarks during the observation or to participate in the lecture (express their opinion or talk). They must sit in a neutral place in the classroom where students would not openly notice them and so the teaching staff does not appear to be evaluated.
   2) The guide will clearly state that the observation results (based on the Peer Observation system) do not have anything to do with the teaching faculty staffs' assessment, performance evaluation or their job offer.
   3) It is important to be careful in choosing terms when preparing the guide, so they are not seen as performance assessment or a judgment of the teaching staff.
   4) The guide will clearly state that the observation results are kept confidential undisclosed. They are exclusively used to assess the quality of the education process in the faculty through the QAC.

5) The teaching staff member should have the chance to choose the course to be observed, in addition to the day and time of the observation visit.

6) The QAC will announce the observation visit results in general and without giving names.

7) The evaluated teaching staff shall check the final report of the observation visit, ask for explanations, discuss and review the results in addition to giving his opinion before signing the final report.

4. Survey study on Peer Observation

The Quality Assurance Commission (after designing the final version of the Peer Observation Guide, distributing it to the teaching staff in the Education Faculty and overcoming all implementation obstacles) undertook an exploratory study to ensure that the system's implementation procedures are sound and accurate. The study also aimed at training the Commission's observers on using all the data and information, in addition to gathering the reactions of the «observed» peers. The Commission adopted the following steps to achieve the study:

a. The study was exclusively conducted on volunteer who accepted being observed (i.e. 25% of the teaching faculty in each department).

b. An observation schedule was established in line with the time and place of the members' lectures.

c. Two observers from the Committee members were designated.

d. The Committee sent a letter to the "observed" teaching faculty participating in the study, at least a week prior to the observation visit date, notifying them of:
   1) Place and date of the observation visit
   2) Required documents (course description, relevant educational outputs, course activities, evaluation methods and exam samples)
   3) Names of the two observers.

The two observers usually agree, after each observation visit, with the "observed" member about the place and time of the discussion meeting. Such meetings take place before the member and the two observers adopt the final Report and submit it to the QAC. It allows the faculty staff to know the observation visit outcomes, discuss the Report content, write his comments and express his opinion.

In light of the observers' final reports and the observation data, the QAC undertook a statistical treatment of data in order to obtain the final results. Hereunder are the study results:

- 83% of the staff sample who were visited made an introduction to the lecture and explained its objectives
- 83% of them started the lecture on time.
- 75% of them checked the students› motivation through various debates, dialogues and activities.
- 75% of them explained the content and the key elements of the lecture.
- 83% of them clearly explained the main ideas of the lecture.
- 92% of them linked the given information to practical applications through applicative examples.
- 83% of them caught the students' attention during the lecture by asking questions and launching debates and discussions.
- 92% of them used adequate means to promote the student's responsiveness during the lecture.

- 92% of them used various educational activities (critical writing, article analysis, and topic presentations).
- 92% of them ended the lecture with a summary.
- 83% of them ended the lecture on time.
- 100% of them treated students with attention and respect.
- 92% of them used various and adequate teaching means (self- directed learning and working in small groups).
- 75% of them asked evaluative questions during the lecture to make sure students understood the topic being presented.
- 100% of participants to the study had a positive feedback in the Peer observation system in general and the observation visits in particular.

- 67% of them encounter various problems in the classroom, such as:
- Classroom is inadequate to work in small groups as seats are fixed and cannot be   moved.
- Some classrooms do accommodate the number of students.
- The central air conditioning system does not work properly (lack of fresh air, loud sounds).
- Some classrooms lack computers and overhead projectors.
- Some majors (physical education and art education) lack basic equipment necessary for the courses.

In light of the study result (which was achieved by the end of academic year 20072008/) the QAC prepared a comprehensive report comprising the results of the study which was duly submitted to the Faculty's dean. The faculty administration took adequate steps to address the negative points stated in the report.

The QAC started applying the Peer Observation system to all teaching staff of faculty departments at the beginning of the academic year 20082009/. In this regard, the Committee adopted the following implementation steps:
- Notifying the chair of departments that the QAC had started implementing the observation system in order to define the schedules and places of the lectures.
- Designating the two observers, the faculty staff who will be visited and the course to be observed, in addition to putting an overall schedule of the observation visits covering all teaching staff.
- Notifying the evaluated member of the observation visit time, and the names of the two designated observers, in addition to sending him a copy of the Peer Observation Guide.

IX. Conclusion

1. The Faculty of Education in Qatar University aims at improving its programs in accordance with international standards, in order to provide high quality instruction, to guarantee an excellent education level for graduates and to obtain academic accreditation.
2. It is important to design a clear a long-term strategy in the Faculty of Education in Qatar University, in order to achieve quality assurance through the continuous enhancement of a changing educational process.
3. It is necessary to disseminate the quality assurance culture amongst teaching faculty, employees and students in the faculty and consider it as a building block.
4. A data gathering system is required, to spot both weak and strong points in the educational process,as it aids assessment of this process in the faculty on a permanent basis,
5. Following the changes and development of the labor market in Qatar, helps the Education

faculty enhance its programs to provide graduates with an excellent education level, and to be able to take up the challenges in the labor market.

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