



# ANNUAL REPORT

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Quality Assurance &  
Accreditation Center

2024: Upholding Excellence,  
Successfully Navigating the Institutional Review

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Quality Assurance &  
Accreditation Center

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## ABOUT QAAC

The inception of the **Quality Assurance and Accreditation Center (QAAC)** in the academic year 2009 - 10 marked a significant milestone in the University of Bahrain's relentless pursuit of excellence in education. As an integral component of our institution's framework, the QAAC stands as a bastion of quality assurance, ensuring the delivery of unparalleled academic services and programs to our esteemed students.

Within the confines of this annual report, we embark on a reflective journey, celebrating our past triumphs while simultaneously charting the course for our collective future. With meticulous attention to detail, we present this report as a testament to our unwavering dedication to fostering academic excellence and advancing quality assurance practices. Through the insights gleaned from our endeavors, we aspire to inspire continued progress and innovation within the academic landscape of the University of Bahrain



## UOB MISSION

Providing distinguished services in education, scientific research, innovation and entrepreneurship by employing modern methods of advanced technologies to serve the Bahraini community and develop effective partnerships locally, regionally and internationally.



## UOB VISION

*"A Bahraini higher education institution, leading in education, building a knowledge society, fostering entrepreneurship, and enhancing sustainability, that aims to be one of the best academic institutions in the region, contributing to the Kingdom of Bahrain's Economic Vision 2030."*



# ACADEMIC QUALITY

## INTERNAL ACADEMIC REVIEW

The Internal Quality Review is an academic quality improvement process conducted as a rolling plan of peer reviews, in which academic programs and quality management systems at the college and department levels are reviewed. In the 2024 the following programs were internally reviewed:



### College of Applied Studies

- Associate Degree in Business Administration
- Associate Degree in Accounting
- Associate Degree in Office Management
- Associate Degree in Cyber Security Operation



### College of Business Administration

- B.Sc. in Entrepreneurship
- B.Sc. in Business Analytics
- B.Sc. in International Business and Economics



### College of Arts

- B.A. in English Language and Literature
- Postgraduate Diploma & Master in Applied English Language Studies
- B.A. in Arts and Design
- B.A. in Tourism (Temporarily suspended)



### College of Engineering

- B.Sc. in Entrepreneurship
- B.Sc. in Business Analytics
- B.Sc. in International Business and Economics

## EXTERNAL PROGRAM REVIEW

In the year 2024, **14 programs** had been reviewed by the Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA). The BQA program reviews are specialized exercises, which focus on the academic standards of each program, its delivery and quality assurance arrangements.

A full Review Report for each program that contains an overall judgement and recommendation for improvement is available on the BQA website.

Substantial improvement plans have been put in place for the academic programs that demonstrated shortcomings during the review. College Quality Assurance Offices Monitor the implementation of improvement plans to ensure sufficient and appropriate progress.

#	Program Title	Judgment	Publication Date
1.	Master of Business Administration	Confidence	March 2024
2.	Master of Science in Finance	Confidence	March 2024
3.	Master in Human Resources Management	Confidence	March 2024
4.	BA in Arabic Language and Literature	Confidence	July 2024
5.	B.A. in Media & Communication	Confidence	July 2024
6.	Master in media and communication	Confidence	July 2024
7.	Master in Arabic Language and Literature	Confidence	July 2024
8.	B.A. in English Language and Literature	Confidence	October 2024
9.	B.Sc. in Medical Laboratory Science	Confidence	October 2024
10.	B.Sc. in Pharmacy	Confidence	October 2024
11.	B.Sc. in Radiologic Technology (Diagnostic)	Confidence	October 2024
12.	Bachelor of Primary Education	Confidence	October 2024
13.	Master in Applied English language Studies	Confidence	October 2024
14.	B.A. in Arts and Design	Confidence	November 2024

Table (1)

## NATIONAL QUALIFICATION FRAMEWORK

In 2024, **15 academic programs** were successfully placed at levels 7, 8, and 9 of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), including the revalidation of previously placed programs. These programs met the qualification placement requirements through rigorous placement and revalidation processes.

The NQF serves as a key mechanism for bridging the gap between the labor market and learning outcomes. Programs that achieve placement are assured to meet appropriate levels of educational attainment and skill development, aligning with market demands and occupational standards.

Currently, a total of **40 academic programs** offered by UoB are placed on the NQF. A strategic placement and revalidation plan is actively in motion to ensure comprehensive alignment with the NQF. Under this initiative, **45 programs** were submitted for placement or revalidation in 2024, reflecting a firm commitment to academic excellence and quality assurance.

With a clear roadmap for 2025, the plan continues to drive progress, ensuring that all UoB academic programs gain NQF recognition, reinforcing their value and relevance in both education and the labor market.

All placement and revalidation reports are publicly available on the BQA website through the NQF webpage for further details.

### NQF Placement & Revalidation at UoB (2024)



15

Programs Placed at NQF Levels 7, 8 & 9  
(including revalidations).



40

UoB Programs  
Currently on the NQF.

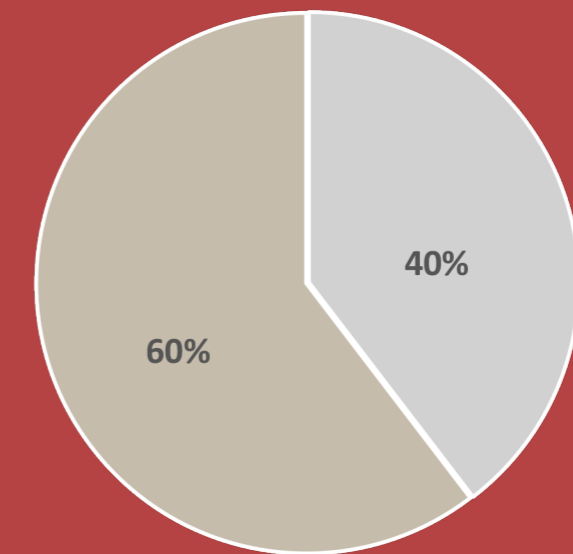
### 2024 Progress



45

Programs Submitted  
for Placement/Revalidation.

### UOB PROGRAMS PLACEMENT STATUS



■ Placed Programs ■ Non Placed Programs

Figure 1: UoB Programs Placement Status

# INSTITUTIONAL QUALITY

## BQA INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW PREPARATION

The QAAC has developed a comprehensive Institutional Review Project Plan, which clearly outlines the timeframe for each stage of the project, including the implementation periods for the action plan.

Furthermore, in December 2023, QAAC initiated the institutional review preparation process. This included organizing an introductory session for UoB leadership to familiarize them with the review framework and processes, as well as conducting a thorough review of the 2019 BQA Institutional Review Report to identify key areas for improvement and alignment.

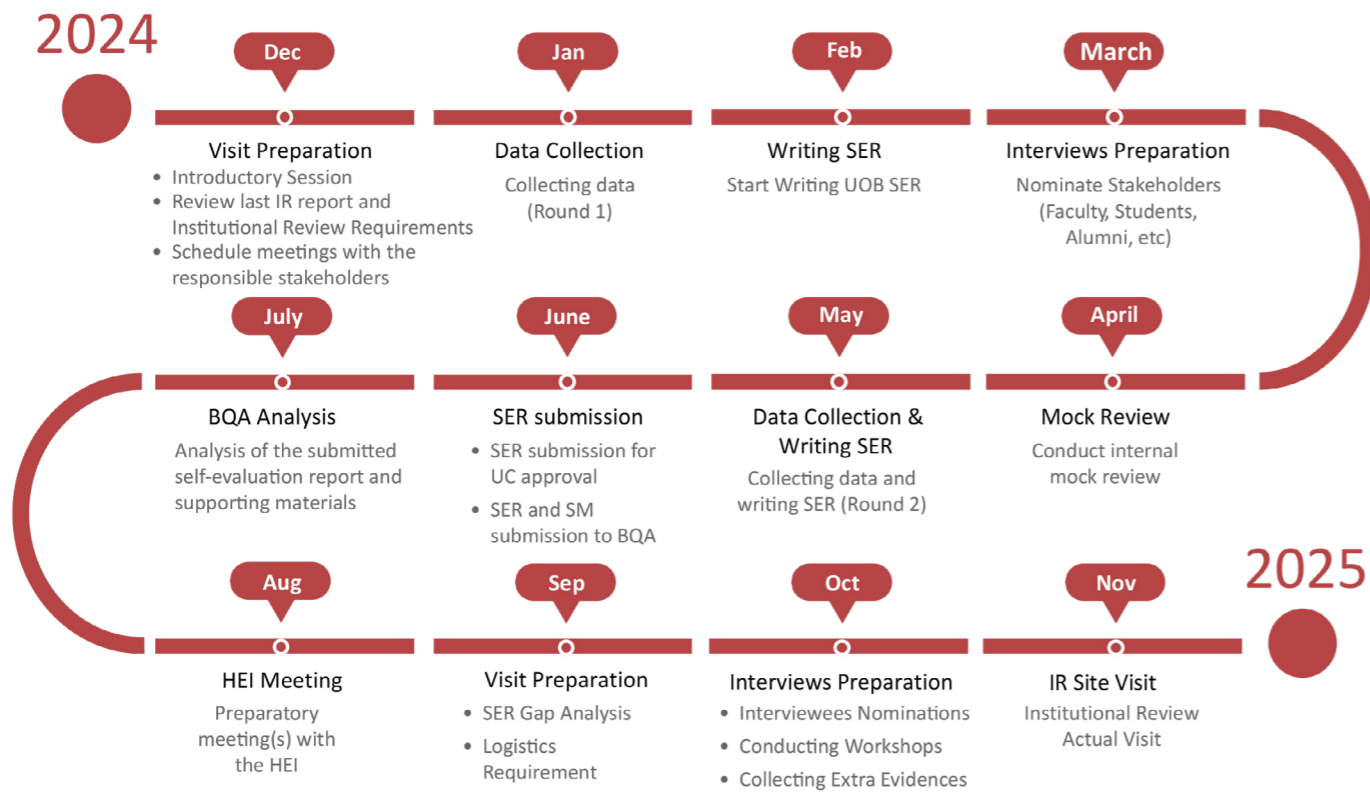





Figure 2: Institutional Review Project Timeline and Stages

## INTERNAL MOCK REVIEW:

In April, the QAAC organized a mock review to conduct a comprehensive self-evaluation of the university's performance, practices, and outcomes in alignment with the General Framework of Higher Education Institutional Review standards. The Mock Review Panel consisted of Quality Assurance Experts, including former Directors of the QAAC and College Quality Assurance Directors, who were appointed by the President of the University of Bahrain.

### Responsibilities of the Review Panel included:


-  Reviewing and analyzing the Self-Evaluation Report and supporting materials prior to conducting interviews.
-  Tracking and cross-verifying documentary evidence (supporting materials) with oral evidence (interviews) to ensure consistency and accuracy.
-  Providing actionable recommendations and identifying areas for improvement to enhance institutional performance.




## BQA INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW VISIT (18 - 21 NOVEMBER 2024):

### PREPARATION FOR THE REVIEW PANEL VISIT

In advance of the Review Panel's visit, the QAAC conducted a series of targeted preparation workshops for all UoB stakeholders participating in the interview sessions. These workshops served two key purposes:


 **Awareness Building:** Familiarizing participants with the objectives, processes, and expectations of the institutional review visit.

 **Capacity Development:** Equipping attendees with essential instructions, resources, and strategies to effectively engage in the Institutional Review interviews.

Through these sessions, QAAC ensured that all stakeholders were thoroughly prepared to demonstrate UoB's commitment to quality and continuous improvement.

### THE INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW IN NUMBERS

 **Four Days Site Visit**  
(17- 21 November 2024)

 **28 Interview Sessions**

 **206 Interviewees**

### REVIEW REPORT SUMMARY:

The UoB has achieved an overall judgment of "Compliant with the General Framework Standards" in the 2024 Institutional Review. The report commends UoB's progress and identifies the following key strengths:

1. Inclusive Strategic Planning: Collaborative engagement of all university stakeholders in developing the institution's strategic direction.
2. Robust Program Development: A structured approach to designing new academic programs, incorporating stakeholder input, market research, benchmarking, and surveys.
3. Student-Centric Initiatives: Proactive measures to enhance graduate employability and foster student skill development.
4. Comprehensive Student Support: A wide range of non-academic services tailored to student needs.

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT:

1. Ensure that the operational plans of all administrative and academic units are appropriately aligned with the strategic plan of the University and that the progress in achieving the strategic objectives is monitored and processed at all levels through to the BoT.
2. Review the terms of reference for the University Council and all standing committees to include membership, quorum requirement and the protocols for decision making and review of committee effectiveness.
3. Ensure that the planning and allocation of resources (including financial resources) are adequate and linked to the operations and core functions of the institution.
4. Expedite the approval and implementation of the revised institutional organizational structure.
5. Expedite the implementation of recruitment plans, attract high caliber senior faculty and reduce teaching overloads.
6. Ensure that all UoB policies and regulations are consistently implemented, regularly updated and made available in both Arabic and English languages on a single webpage, using standardized formats.
7. Develop and implement benchmarking for all core UoB activities, including research output, quality and impact, and community services.
8. Establish a centralized research ethics committee, expand industry collaboration, and formally assess research impact on teaching and learning.
9. Address the variability in departmental supervision practices and improve supervisor accessibility.



# MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION

## COURSE EVALUATION

The Course Evaluation results for the first semester of the Academic Year 2023 - 24 revealed a positive trend in the satisfaction rate, which reached **86%**, marking an increase from the previous year (Figure 3). Additionally, the response rate rose to **50%** (Figure 4). Furthermore, approximately **97%** of faculty members achieved an overall satisfaction rate of above **70%**, reflecting their effectiveness and commitment to quality.

In the second semester of the same academic year, the satisfaction rate further improved, rising to **90%** (Figure 3). Similarly, the response rate increased to **57%** (Figure 4). About **96%** of faculty members maintained an overall satisfaction rate of above **70%**, reaffirming their high performance and adherence to academic standards. The complete reports of the survey feedback are available on the QAAC webpage on the UoB website.

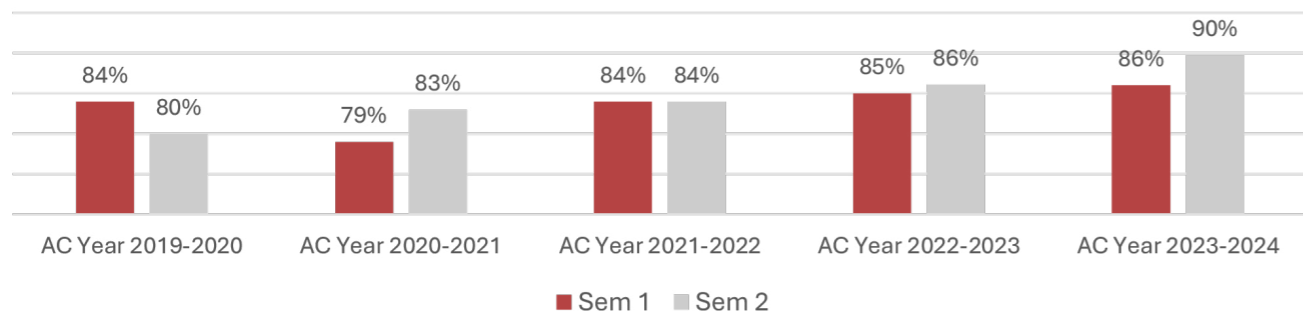


Figure 3: Course Evaluation Satisfaction Trend Analysis

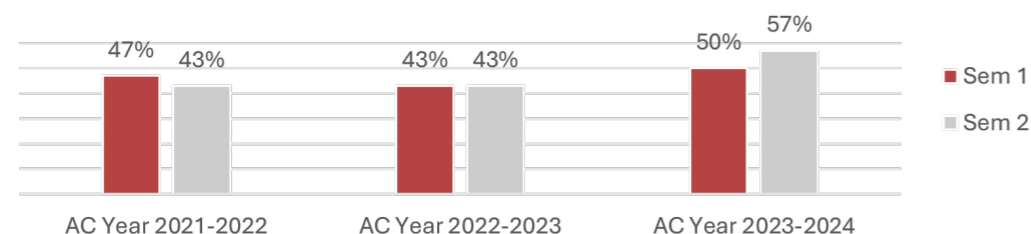


Figure 4: Course Evaluation Responses Rate Trend Analysis

## SENIOR EXIT SURVEY 2024

The Senior Exit Survey is an annual survey that collects feedback from senior students, undergraduate and postgraduate, who are about to graduate from the UoB. The survey asks about various aspects of their university experience, such as academic advising, curriculum and instruction, learning outcomes, and campus experience. The survey results help the university evaluate its performance and improve its services for future students.

The 2024 Senior Exit Survey garnered responses from **4,031 undergraduate** and **315 postgraduate** students. Key findings include:

- **Undergraduate Satisfaction:** 86% of undergraduates reported high satisfaction with their UoB education experience (Figure 5).
- **Postgraduate Satisfaction:** Similarly, 86% of postgraduates expressed high overall satisfaction (Figure 6).

For detailed insights, including category-specific breakdowns, please refer to the full report published on the QAAC webpage.

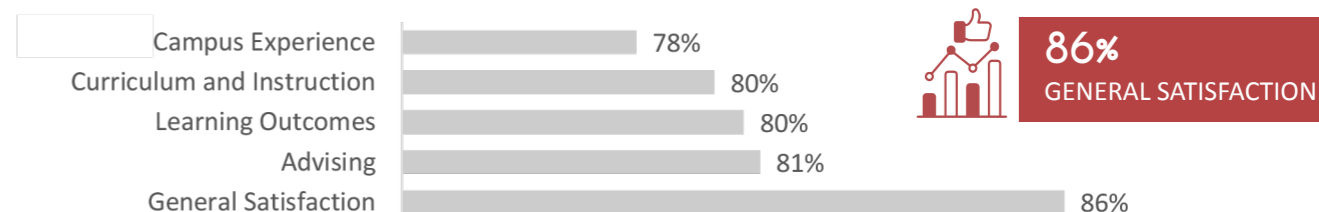


Figure 5: Overall Undergraduates Satisfaction

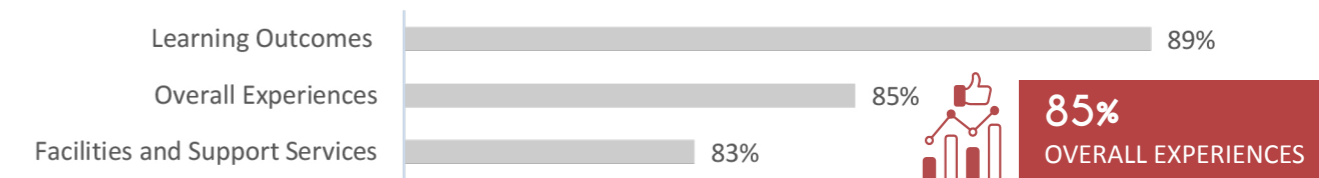


Figure 6: Overall Postgraduate Satisfaction

# DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

## DEVELOPMENT OF THE STUDENT EVALUATION SURVEY SYSTEM

In the second semester of the Academic Year 2023 - 2024, the QAAC introduced Explorance Blue, a survey system designed to enhance the assessment of course quality, faculty teaching and other types of evaluations. This innovative platform offers a fully automated approach, leveraging deep integration with IT systems to streamline data collection and analysis. With its launch, Explorance Blue replaced the course evaluation function in the Student Information System (SIS), marking a significant advancement in the institution's commitment to continuous improvement in educational quality. The system integrates seamlessly with the Learning Management System (Blackboard), further enhancing the course evaluation experience.

Explorance Blue supports diverse types of course evaluations, the QAAC has implemented three distinct course evaluation typologies so far: Thesis, Theoretical, and Training Courses, and plans to fully utilize by the conclusion of the 2024 / 2025 Academic Year. Additionally, the system provides multi-level reporting, categorized by faculty, department, college, and university levels. This capability strengthens the feedback loop, ensuring that students are actively engaged in an effective and value-added process.

### Types of Surveys Implemented:



Thesis Courses



Theoretical Courses



Training Courses

### Upcoming Project:



#### Program-Level Reporting:

Implementation of advanced program-level reports to deepen data analysis and support strategic decision-making



#### Expansion of Course-Type-Specific Evaluations:

- Senior Project Courses
- Laboratory, Practical, and Clinical Courses

### Key Enhancements:



#### Support for Diverse Course Formats:

The system now accommodates various course types, including lab, clinical, self-learning, thesis, and project-based courses.



#### Multi-Level Reporting:

Enables comprehensive reporting at the faculty, department, and university levels for actionable insights.



#### Strengthened Feedback Mechanisms:

Facilitates continuous improvement through robust feedback collection and analysis.

### New Version of Course Evaluation Survey:

A significantly enhanced version of the course evaluation survey has been implemented, featuring:



#### Faculty Performance Questions:

Specific questions to evaluate teaching effectiveness and faculty engagement.



#### Course Content Evaluation Questions:

Dedicated questions to assess the relevance, quality, and structure of course materials.

## SENIOR EXIT SURVEY INTEGRATION

The Senior Exit Survey has been successfully integrated into the Blue system and connected with the SIS to automate the clearance approval process, effective from the first semester of the 2024 - 2025 academic year.



## FACULTY CONTRACT RENEWAL SYSTEM:

In early 2024, the QAAC initiated the Faculty Contract Renewal System project to modernize and streamline a previously manual, paper-based process that was inefficient and time-consuming. Recognizing the need for greater efficiency, transparency, and accuracy, QAAC spearheaded this digital transformation to automate and standardize the process.

The Faculty Contract Renewal System is a user-friendly web application designed to automate and streamline the faculty evaluation process. The new system eliminates paper-based inefficiencies by introducing an online platform that centralizes submissions, approvals, and tracking. Key benefits include:



**Reduced processing time** through automated workflows.



**Enhanced accountability** with digital audit trails.



**Improved accessibility** for faculty and administrators.

This initiative aligns with UoB's commitment to operational excellence and digital innovation, ensuring a smoother, faster, and more reliable contract renewal process for all stakeholders. The project is on track and scheduled for launch in September 2025, marking a significant step forward in developing faculty management processes at the University of Bahrain.

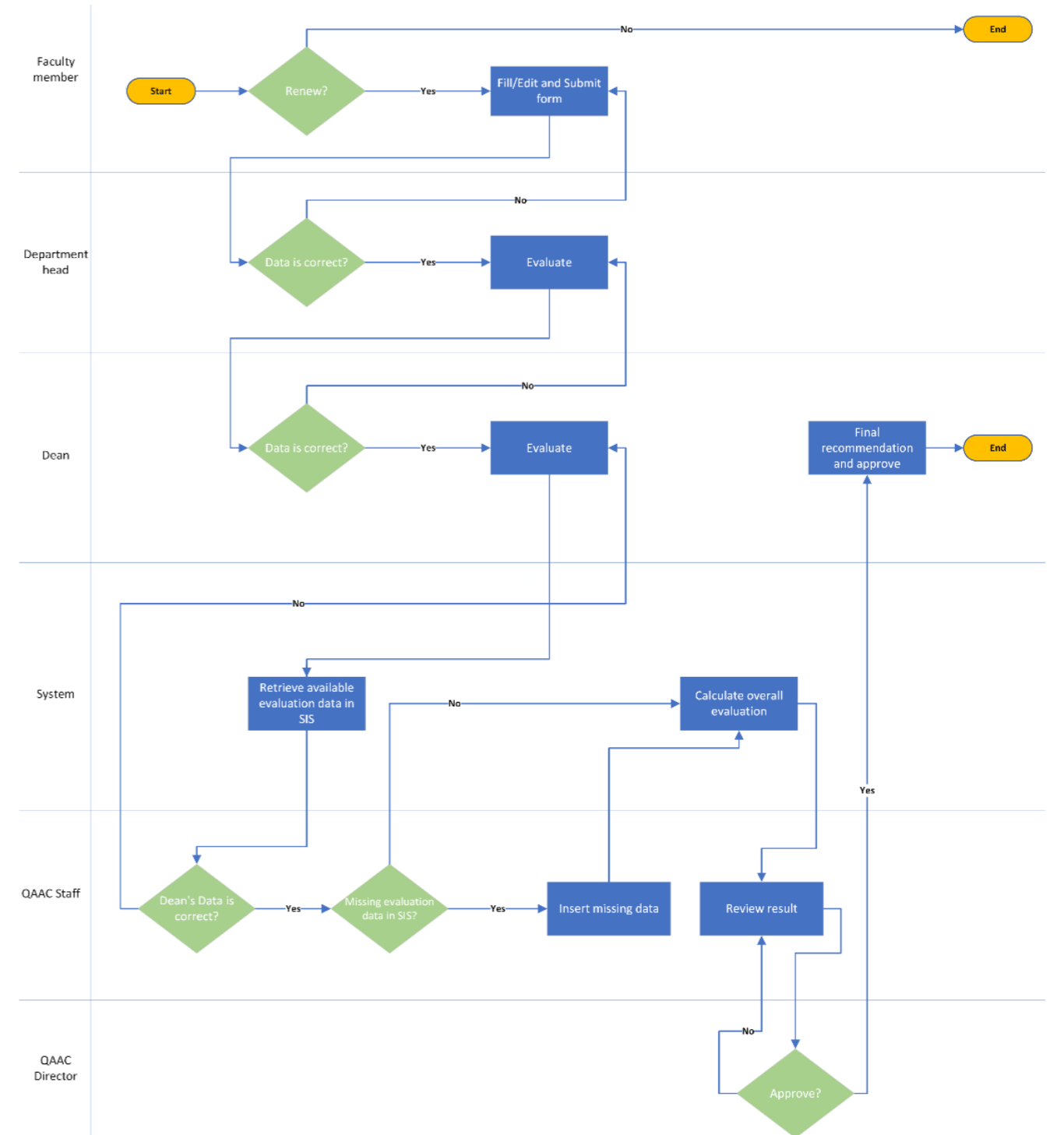


Figure (7): Faculty Contract Renewal Workflow

# POLICY DEVELOPMENT

## NEWLY DEVELOPED POLICIES



### 1. Assigning Credit Hours to Courses Policy:

As part of its ongoing commitment to academic excellence and regulatory alignment, UoB, through the QAAC, successfully developed and implemented the Assigning Credit Hours to Courses Policy in 2024. This initiative represents a strategic advancement in ensuring consistency, transparency, and compliance with international academic standards.

The policy establishes a robust and standardized framework for credit hour allocation, ensuring that instructional time, student workload, and learning outcomes are systematically aligned with the NQF and institutional academic requirements. This structured approach enhances program integrity, fosters curriculum coherence, and reinforces the University's role as a leading academic institution in the region.

By embedding best practices in curriculum design and quality assurance, the policy contributes to a more structured and scalable academic framework, strengthening UoB's positioning within the global higher education landscape.



### 2. Policy for University Services Quality Evaluation Surveys:

A policy governing the conduct of surveys, data collection, and analysis aimed at enhancing decision-making, improving educational programs and services, and raising the overall quality of education. This policy also ensures accountability to all relevant stakeholders, fostering transparency and alignment with institutional goals.



### 3. Policy for Strategic Plan Development and Implementation at the UoB:

This policy organizes the responsibilities and roles involved in the preparation and monitoring of the strategic plan. It establishes guidelines for setting objectives, developing operational plans, and defining performance indicators to ensure effective execution. The policy emphasizes mechanisms for inclusive participation, quality, and transparency throughout all stages of planning, implementation, and evaluation.

## UPDATED POLICIES AND MANUALS



### 1. Enhancement of the Quality Assurance Manual:

As part of its commitment to continuous improvement and alignment with international best practices, QAAC has revised and updated its Quality Assurance Manual in June 2024. This update reflects the University's evolving quality assurance practices, integrating the programs lifecycle, assessment cycles, and enhancement mechanisms to ensure a structured and sustainable approach to academic and institutional excellence.

The revised manual establishes a comprehensive framework for quality management, defining clear roles and responsibilities, strengthening compliance with regulatory and accreditation requirements, and reinforcing stakeholder engagement. By embedding a systematic approach to evaluation, continuous improvement, and strategic alignment, this enhancement ensures that UoB remains at the forefront of higher education quality, fostering a culture of accountability, innovation, and institutional effectiveness.



### 2. Enhancement of the Assessment Moderation Policy:

In March 2024, UoB approved a significant update to its Assessment Moderation Policy, underscoring its commitment to maintaining rigorous academic standards and ensuring the integrity of its assessment processes.

This revision introduced explicit criteria for the appointment of external moderators thereby strengthening the objectivity and reliability of the assessment moderation framework. By delineating clear qualifications and experience requirements for external moderators, UoB ensures that assessments are evaluated by individuals with the requisite expertise, thereby enhancing the validity and fairness of student evaluations. This strategic enhancement aligns with the best international practices, reflecting UoB's dedication to continuous improvement and excellence in educational quality assurance.

## QAAC MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2024



### Migration to the New Survey Management System:

Successfully completed the transfer of surveys from the Student Information System (SIS) and other platforms to the new survey management system.



### Senior Exit Survey Development:

Finalized the development of the Senior Exit Survey, to gather critical feedback from graduating students.



### Internal Program Reviews:

Conducted internal reviews of academic programs, achieving **100% completion of the Internal program reviews plan of 2024**, ensuring readiness for external evaluations and continuous improvement.



### Alignment with the National Qualifications Framework (NQF):

Successfully placed **40%** of academic programs on the National Qualifications Framework, ensuring alignment with national standards.



### Update of Quality Assurance Regulations and Policies:

Updated four policies related to quality assurance and academic accreditation, ensuring alignment with the university's development plan.



### Professional Development Workshops:

Organized **22 workshops** and training courses to develop the skills of university staff and enhance their capabilities in academic and institutional quality.



### Academic Quality Manual Update:

Completed the update of the Academic Quality Manual and its supporting tools, to ensure compliance with best practices and academic standards.

