QUALITY ASSURANCE IN AN ODL INSTITUTION: THE OUM EXPERIENCE

Ramli Bahroom
ramli@oum.edu.my
Latifah Abdol Latif
latifah@oum.edu.my

Open University Malaysia

21 August 2010
CONTENT OF PRESENTATION

- ODL & HCD
- Objective of Paper
- OUM: A Unique Model
- Quality Assurance at OUM
- Issues & Challenges
- Conclusion
ODL & Human Capital Development (HCD)

- Human capital - a key success factor (KSF) for sustainability
- ODL as a contributor towards democratisation of education, thus plays a key role in HCD
- The challenge is to ensure delivery of Q-education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ages</th>
<th>Early childhood</th>
<th>Preschool</th>
<th>Basic education</th>
<th>Tertiary Education</th>
<th>Professional working life</th>
<th>Retiree/Second career</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5+/6+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Themes

- **Early childhood**
  - Ensuring every child succeeds
  - Holding schools accountable for outcomes
  - Investing in great leaders for schools
  - Attracting and developing the best teachers

- **Preschool**
  - Revamping education system to significantly raise student outcomes

- **Basic education**
  - Raising skills to increase employability

- **Tertiary Education**
  - University/college
  - Polytechnic
  - Community college
  - Technical Education and Vocational Training (TEVT) Institution

- **Professional working life**
  - Mainstreaming and broadening TEVT
  - Enhancing the competency of tertiary graduates

- **Retiree/Second career**
  - Accelerating labour reform
  - Attracting and retaining top talent
  - Upgrading existing talent pool

- **Reforming labour market to transform Malaysia into a high-income nation**

**Source:** Economic Planning Unit
## Malaysia: Selected Targets in HCD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Targets</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>28 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour force</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour force with tertiary education</td>
<td>50% by 2020</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohort 17-23 in tertiary education</td>
<td>40% by 2010</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary school teachers with first degrees</td>
<td>60% by 2015</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of PhDs in public universities</td>
<td>75% for research universities &amp; 60% for other universities</td>
<td>35.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Malaysian Higher Education System, 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Public</th>
<th>Private</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Higher Education Institutions</td>
<td>112 (20 universities)</td>
<td>460 (45 universities &amp; university colleges)</td>
<td>572</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolment</td>
<td>566,349</td>
<td>484,377</td>
<td>1,050,726</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic staff</td>
<td>26,700</td>
<td>29,023</td>
<td>55,723</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ODL institutions</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
OBJECTIVE OF PAPER

To share on QA practices at OUM as an ODL institution
OUM: A UNIQUE MODEL

11 Public Universities

Advantage of this model:
1. Accessibility to vast academic resources (teaching & learning, module writing, assessment, etc.)
2. Teaching & learning facilities
3. Quality assurance by stakeholders
# PROGRESS OF OUM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Aug 2001</th>
<th>May 2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Cumulative intake</td>
<td>753</td>
<td>94,433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Programmes</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Learning Materials (Print &amp; Web-based)</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>1,441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Learning Centres</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>486</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Active Tutors (Part-time)</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>10,187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Graduates</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>26,410</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
OUM as an International Player

Strategic Partnerships Overseas

- Villa College, The Maldives
- University of Science & Technology, Yemen
- Accra Institute of Technology, Ghana
- Arab Open University, Bahrain
- NeLC, Riyadh, KSA
- Potential: Hanoi University, Vietnam & Eszterházy Károly College, Hungary
Commisioned by Ministry of Higher Education, Malaysia

Prepared by OUM
Additional reasons for QA in ODL Institutions

1. Increasing number of learners
2. Changing modes of delivery for ODL learners
3. QA frameworks are still at the early stages of development.
QUALITY ASSURANCE IN MALAYSIA

• Malaysian Qualifications Framework (MQF) → Clarifies the criteria for earned academic levels, learning outcomes, credit systems & study pathways

• Malaysia Qualifications Agency (MQA) → the implementation agency
QUALITY CULTURE AT OUM

“It is the policy of OUM to implement total quality measures in its operations to ensure quality programmes are effectively delivered at reasonable costs through quality work culture.”

- Quality, Research and Innovation Council (QRIC) → oversees quality policies of OUM.
- Institute for Quality, Research and Innovation (IQRI) → implements QA at OUM.
CLIENT CHARTER: OUM

At OUM, we assure you (learners) of:

- efficient and high quality ODL services
- efficient and state-of-the-art learning systems and services
- flexible, convenient and affordable learning experience
QUALITY PRACTICES AT OUM

1. MS ISO 9001:2008
2. MQA Audits
3. COL Performance Indicators
4. Internal auditing
5. Auditing for overseas partners
6. Learner-centered QA initiatives
1. MS ISO 9001:2008


Departments: Registry (2005), Digital Library (2005), Centre for Instructional Design & Technology (2005) and Centre for Student Management (2007).
2. Academic Performance Audit (APA) by MQA

2.1 Code of Practice for Programme Accreditation (COPPA)
- Accreditation of individual academic programmes
- Ongoing process

2.2 SETARA
- National ranking for all HEIs in Malaysia
3. Commonwealth of Learning Performance Indicators (COLPI)

- In 2009, OUM adopted the performance indicators under COLPI
4. Internal Auditing for Departments without ISO

- Departments without ISO must have SOPs.
- Institute for Quality, Research & Innovation (IQRI) conducts quality audits for these departments.
5. Audits on International Operations

- OUM also audits the operations of its overseas partner institutions.
- Thus far, such audits have been conducted in Bahrain, Yemen and the Maldives.
6. Learner-Centred QA Initiatives

- Interactive blended delivery model to meet the needs of its students to study in a flexible environment
- Online portal to increase two-way communication opportunities for learners
- A policy requiring all the faculties and units to respond to learners’ inquiries within 3 working days via telephones, fax, emails and e-CRM
- Learner Satisfaction Surveys and Tracer Studies to obtain feedback from learners
- Rigorous QA for assessment processes (including MCQ)
- One-stop learner service centre to track and monitor learners complaints and their resolutions
ISSUES & CHALLENGES

- Externally: Quality assurance instruments and auditors are from conventional-mode universities, thus lacking understanding and appreciation of ODL

- Internally: Creating a quality culture is a highly demanding task:
  - Quality efforts is everyone’s responsibility
  - QA is a continuous process
  - Quality should be linked to staff performance evaluation
CONCLUSION

ODL institutions are to be the major player in HCD

QA is particularly important for ODL institutions whose learners are deprived of the conventional face-to-face teaching and learning supports.

The challenge for ODL institutions is to ensure that they can sustain the quality of education that they deliver.

For OUM, we do not have a choice. We have to continually meet the needs of our market. QA IS OUR SURVIVAL.
Thank You!
COL PI @ OUM

1. Vision, Mission and Planning
2. Management, Organisational Culture and Leadership
3. The Learners
4. Human Resource Development
5. Programme Design and Development
6. Course Design and Development
7. Learner Support and Progression
8. Learner Assessment and Evaluation
9. Learning Infrastructure and Resources
10. Research, Consultancy and Extension Services
11. Financial
Code of Practice for Institutional Audit (COPIA) by MQA

1. Institutional Vision, Mission and Educational Goals
2. Programme Leadership and Administration
3. Programme Aims Learning Outcomes, and Curriculum Design and Delivery
4. Assessment of Student
5. Student Selection and Support Services
6. Academic Staff
7. Educational Resources
8. Programme Monitoring and Review
9. Continual Programme Quality Improvement