

Beirut Arab University Quality Assurance Unit – Strategic Plan

Beirut Arab University (BAU) is one of the largest private higher education institutions and one of the oldest Universities in Lebanon. BAU is committed since its foundation in 1960 to promoting quality education. It offers more than 300 higher education programs across a broad range of fields providing a rich and rewarding educational environment to some 15,000 students from Lebanon and other countries. The University also aims to ensure active interaction with the Lebanese society.

The University is organized into ten academic faculties, with 35 departments distributed across the disciplines as to cover specific fields of specialization. Arranged in chronological order, according to the date of their initiation, BAU academic faculties are: Arts, Law, Commerce and Business Administration, Architectural Engineering, Engineering, Sciences, Pharmacy, Medicine, Dentistry, and Nursing.

The university has an admirable reputation in the fields of dentistry, engineering, architecture, medicine, and pharmacy. The information technology, science, law and arts education programs are also among the most popular in Lebanon and the region.

BAU is focusing on main strategic business issues such as:

- Developing and maintaining a culture that values and rewards quality teaching and learning
- Developing local and international partnerships and alliances
- Promoting outcome-related research in collaboration with local and international partners
- Maintaining close interaction with industry and the community
- Making positive contributions to the community
- Strengthening the support structures including technology and other infrastructure to enhance student learning.

To attain these strategic goals, BAU has started to apply credit hour system and has established a Centre for Academic Development CAD and quality assurance. The main objectives of this center are:

- Developing the Undergraduate and Postgraduate curricula.

- Cultural and research Cooperation agreements and Exchange programs with Arabic and International universities.
- Publishing a scientific journal for BAU.
- Community development projects with the Lebanese universities and authorities as well as the service and industrial institutions in Lebanon.
- Developing relationships between the university and institutions, international groups.
- Obtain Quality assurance of the Undergraduate and Postgraduate curricula and teaching plans at BAU in line with the international educational systems.

The activities have started since October 2007 where a self evaluation process has been done in the university by applying SWOT analysis in different fields:

- Teaching and Learning (Programs and Curricula, Services, Faculty and Staff, Teaching methods, Students and Student Infrastructure)
- Resources (Organization, Governance, Human Resources, Partnerships, Financial Management)
- Research & graduate programs (Strategy, Funding policy, Rules, Publications, Graduate Programs)
- Services and facilities (Campus, IT infrastructure, Employment Career and Alumni, Medical Facilities, Class Rooms, Green Area, Laboratories, Libraries)
- Stakeholders survey

As a result of this internal evaluation process, an action plan is developed; the main actions are:

- Upgrading and modernizing teaching techniques
- Modernizing curricula and overall programs
- Reinforcing cooperation with other higher education
- Adoption of credit hour system
- Reorganizing the rules of postgraduate studies
- Preparation of program accreditation documents (Course specification, Course evaluation, Faculty member evaluation report, Course report, employer survey, graduate survey, student exit survey)
- Creation of quality units in all faculties

All these points are explained in the strategic plan 2007-2012 of the university (<http://www.bau.edu.lb/strategy.php>)

In line with these strategic goals and commitment to quality assurance, BAU has been involved in many activities:

- Organization of a workshop (Quality Assurance in Higher education “Practices and experiences”) in collaboration with UNESCO regional office in Beirut.
- Participation in quality committees in the ministry of education and higher education in Lebanon (Technical Committee and Equivalence Committee)
- Participation in four tempus projects related to quality of higher education:
 - 1- Quality Assurance for Higher Education in Lebanon (QAHEL)
 - 2- Creation of a Lebanese Engineering Programs Accreditation Commission (LEPAC)
 - 3- Strengthening Institutional Capacity in Arab Universities (ALTAIR)
 - 4- Toward the Lebanese Quality Assurance Agency (TLQAA)

According to the objectives of the current tempus project “Strengthening Institutional Capacity in Arab Universities (ALTAIR)”, a quality unit is established at the university level (<http://www.bau.edu.lb/qa.php>) in addition to subunits in all faculties. The principle goal of these units is to enhance the culture of quality assurance and to get accreditation for the institution as well as for the existing programs. The mission, the vision, the objectives and responsibilities are:

Mission:

QAU of BAU is committed to apply modern strategies to push the QA process at the university. It is also committed to participate with all the QA units of the university faculties in establishing the QA concept and various QA systems to raise up the performance of the faculties at all levels as a preliminary step to ensure international accreditation.

Vision:

Excellency in applying suitable strategies and policies in the field of Quality Assurance and Enhancement to achieve distinguishable position among the corresponding Quality Assurance units in the most civilized universities.

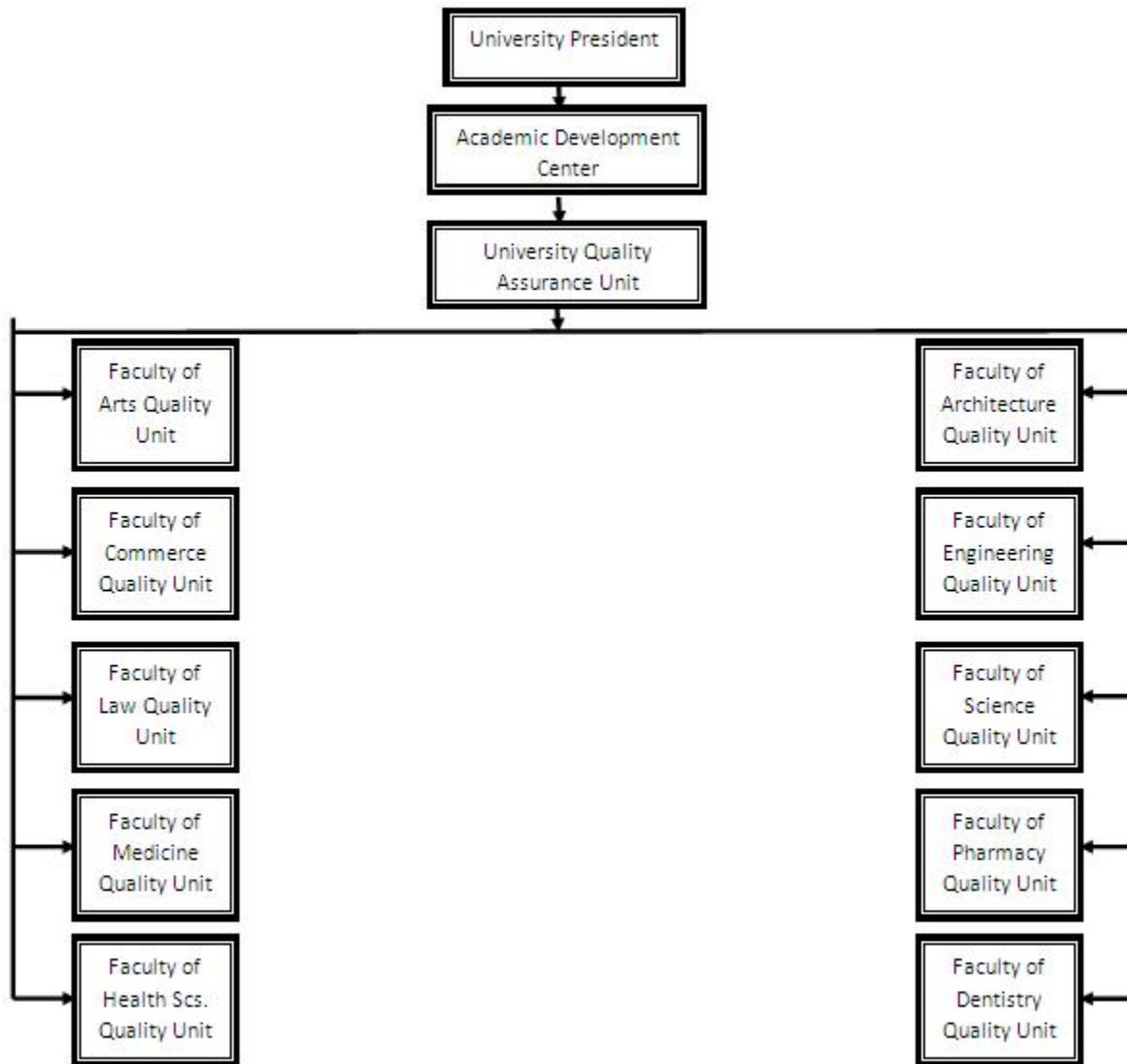
Objectives and Responsibilities:

Beirut Arab University Quality Assurance Unit aims at evaluating the university academic performance, developing the educational and research process, and enhancing community service and environmental development. It also aim at assisting in the process to get institutional accreditation for the university and academic accreditation for all existing programs through the following objectives and responsibilities:

1. Helping the university to achieve its mission and its vision.
2. Evaluating the educational process through assessing the performance indicators of the inputs and outputs of the educational process (staff members - personnel - students – graduates, etc).
3. Designing and preparing necessary evaluation forms and tools which must include evaluation mechanisms and standards and the procedures required for carrying out the evaluation system.
4. Disseminating the evaluation culture among staff members and students through holding seminars, workshops and training courses concerned with the evaluation of university performance and quality assurance.
5. Exchanging experiences and ideas regarding the development of university education with similar centers and units at Arab and international universities to benefit through them in achieving the desired development.
6. Identifying the weaknesses and strengths in academic potentialities and programs offered by the university. Then, offering suitable suggestions and means to overcome the weaknesses. Furthermore, putting in place action plans regarding schedules, responsibilities and the potentialities required.
7. Monitoring the development of different faculties, their programs and regulations to put their graduates in a distinguished position among the graduates of counterpart faculties at other universities. This will achieve their high competitiveness in the local, Arab and international job market.
8. Creating communication channels with national and international organizations concerned with evaluating and assuring the quality of university education.
9. Building confidence from the public and enhancement of the role of the students.

Structure:

Beirut Arab University Quality Assurance Unit- BAUQAU- is being established at Beirut Arab University and supervised by the university president. At every faculty of the university, a quality assurance unit is being established and supervised by the Faculty dean. The organizational structure is as follows:



Since its establishment, the quality unit and the faculty subunits work together to enhance the quality assurance culture through holding many workshops and seminars about quality assurance in general, and all related subjects. Most of the members of the quality units in all BAU faculties participated in the 2nd workshop about “**Institutional Assessment Program**”, organized at BAU in November 2009 within the frame work of this tempus project. The faculty subunits are in the process of preparing self-study reports to submit for accreditation in relevant international accreditation agencies. The following table illustrates the progress for each program:

Faculty	Program	International Organization
Arts	Mass Communications	The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC)- USA
	Psychology	Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (APAC)- Australia
	English Language	The Commission English Language Programme Accreditation (CEA)- USA
Law & Political Science	Law	- American Bar Association (ABA) - Association of American Law Schools (AALS)- USA
Commerce & Business Administration	Management & Business Administration	European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD)
Architectural Engineering	Architectural Engineering	Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA)- UK
Engineering	Electrical and Computer Engineering	Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET)
	Civil and Environmental Engineering	
	Mechanical Engineering	
	Industrial and Engineering Management	
Science	Mathematics and Computer Science	Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET)- USA
	Physics	The Australian Institute of Physics (AIP)- Australia
	Chemistry	Canadian Society for Chemistry (CSC)- Canada
	Biological and Environmental Sciences	
Pharmacy	Pharmacy	The Canadian Council for Accreditation of Pharmacy Programs (CCAPP)- Canada
Medicine	Medicine	World Federation for Medical Education (WFME)
Dentistry	Dentistry	American Dental Association (ADA)- USA
Health Sciences	Nursing	Canadian Association of Schools of Nursing (CASN)- Canada
	Nutrition & Dietetics	Dietitians Association of Australia (DAA)- Australia
	Medical Laboratory and Technology	United Kingdom Accreditation Forum (UKAF)- UK
	Physical Therapy	Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy (CAPTE)- USA