



MBA 41

**QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION OF PRIVATE
HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS (PHEIs)
(Assessing the Role and Practices of the Ministry of Education)**

A Project Paper Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the
Degree of Masters in Business Administration (MBA)



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41

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Table of Contents

Content	Page
Abstract.....	i
CHAPTER ONE: THE PROBLEM AND ITS APPROACH	
1.1. Introduction.....	1
1.2. Statement of the Problem.....	2
1.3. Hypothesis.....	3
1.4. Objectives of the Study.....	4
1.5. Significance of the Study.....	4
1.6. Methodology.....	5
1.7. Scope and Limitations of the Study.....	6
1.8. Glossary of Key terms.....	7
1.9. Organization of the Study.....	8
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITREATURE	
2.1. Introduction.....	9
2.2. Defining Quality Assurance (QA) in Education.....	10
2.3. Quality and Standards.....	11
2.4. Principles of QA in Education.....	14
2.5. Purpose of QA.....	16
2.6. Types of Quality Monitoring.....	17
1. Internal Quality Monitoring.....	17
2. External Quality Monitoring.....	19
2.7. Delegated Accountability.....	21
2.8. Changing Quality Environment.....	23
CHAPTER THREE: HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY REFORMS, EMERGENCE OF PHEIs, AND THE QUALITY CONCERN	
BACKGROUND.....	25
3.1. Reform Policies and Strategies.....	27
3.2. The Context of PHEIs' Growth.....	30
3.3. The Accreditation Directive of the Ministry.....	32
3.4. Role and Involvement of the Ministry.....	34

CHAPTER FOUR: QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION OF PHEIS

4.1. Purpose and Definition.....	35
4.2. General Eligibility Requirements.....	37
4.3. Procedural Requirements.....	39
1. Institutional Pre-accreditation.....	39
2. Institutional Accreditation.....	42
3. Overview of the Accreditation and Evaluation Process.....	44
4.4. Accreditation Standards.....	46
4.5. Specific Policies Relating to Institutional Accreditation.....	70
1. Appeals Policy and Procedures.....	70
2. Conflict of Interest and Evaluation Committee.....	71
3. Public Disclosure.....	73
4.6. Views of PHEIs on QA and Accreditation Practices.....	73
4.7. PHEIs: Threats and Challenges.....	79

CHAPTER FIVE : SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1. Summaries and Conclusions.....	83
5.2. Recommendations.....	88
Concluding Comments/ Lessons from International Experiences.....	94

REFERENCES AND RELATED BIBLOGRAPHIES

APPENDIX

- A. Interview Questions to Head of the Accreditation and Certification Office in the MoE
- B. Interview Questions to Academic Deans of Selected PHEIs
- C. Main Approaches and Methodologies of QA at National level

ABSTRACT

The increasing demand for quality private higher education by government, students and society entails that PHEIs now face similar pressure that the production industries and other business sectors have been facing for decades. While quality can mean different things to different people, in the context of higher education it particularly refers to a judgment about the level of goal achievement and the value and worth of that achievement. It is also a judgment about the degree to which activities or outputs have desirable characteristics, according to some norm or against particular specified criteria or objectives. The main issues in the quality debate about higher education in many countries are the maintenance and improvement of levels of teaching, learning, research and scholarship; improvement in the quality and adaptability of graduates; how to define and measure quality; management approaches likely to improve outcomes from higher education institutions; the use of benchmarking and performance indicators; and how to convince stakeholders that institutions and systems are doing a competent job in ensuring quality outputs. Based on this, wide differences are observed among countries in their approach to quality assurance. One typical approach has been the accreditation of institutions or professional programs. Accreditation refers to a process of external review which enables higher education programs or institutions to be recognized or certified as meeting appropriate standards. Compared with the past, the new approach to quality assurance and accreditation is largely concerned about improvement and renewal as contrasted to emphasis on input requirements, academic standards, and accountability concerns.

This paper particularly tries to describe and report on existing guidelines and criteria for quality assurance procedures and the accreditation system used by the Ethiopian Ministry of Education (MoE) in the assessment and review of PHEIs primarily engaged in business fields. As a base for comparison the study draws lessons from international experiences, review of relevant literature, and views and responses obtained from local private providers of higher education.

The findings of the study indicate that quality assurance and accreditation efforts of the Ministry tend to predominantly stress on accountability over concern for improvement and renewal. In this respect it has been suggested that quality is about a change in culture, which involves a slow process of evolution. The dominant delegated accountability approach to quality that emphasizes procedures and list of standards is always likely to lead to degree of skepticism about quality that would be counter productive in the development of a quality culture with in the private institutions.

Chapter One

The Problem and Its Approach

1.1. INTRODUCTION

During late 20th century the topic of quality and quality assurance has evolved from marginal position to being the foremost concern in higher education (Kells 1992; Kells and van Vaught 1998; and Craft 1992 and 1994). The rapid expansion of higher education provision, including the growth in the number of providers and learners and diversification in terms of types of providers, learners and programs have been among the leading factors for the visibly growing quality concern in the higher educational provision. Apart from this, developments in the international competition and increased learner, staff and graduate mobility have increased the need in the market place for national and international equivalences of awards and curricula and a greater level of transparency (Neave 1997).

Academic institutions that provide quality and value in the provision of their educational services are likely to grow and prosper. Such institutions gain benefits like stronger student and staff loyalty, lower vulnerability to economic change, ability to command higher funding and more autonomy from the state in policy development. Some higher educational institutions currently experience problems in retaining both academic staff and dealing with growing student needs. Some of the reasons for this may be that staff and students perceive that other institutions are offering more valuable education in terms of quality (recognition, career development, student support, etc). It thus, becomes imperative for the educational institutions to ensure that their services are in demand. Various strategies to make higher education affordable and valuable for students need to be applied on the national level in order to support the social role of the educational institutions and the growth in quality assurance methodologies and the implementation of the results of the quality assurance both institutional and socially.

There are wide differences among countries in their approaches to quality assurance. In some countries governments have taken steps to strengthen quality by introducing new reporting requirements or other mechanisms of management control. Many countries

have developed accreditation systems, while others have established evaluation committees or centers that carry out cycles of external review. In many countries, independent bodies have been established, often a single national agency but sometimes, separate agencies are responsible for different types of institutions, regions, or purposes. Such variation in approach reflects political and cultural preferences with in each country, differences in government leadership, as well as varying stages of development for the higher education sector.

This paper particularly tries to explore and report on existing guidelines and criteria for quality assurance procedures and the accreditation system used by the Ethiopian Ministry of Education (MoE) in the assessment and review of private higher education institutions (PHEIs), which offer diplomas and /or above in business fields. As a base for comparison the study draws lessons from international experiences, review of relevant literature, and views and responses obtained from local private providers of higher education.

1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

As stated earlier with governments in most parts of the world now considering their agenda for higher education, issues of quality assurance and quality enhancement have been a major focus of attention. Despite differences in the size and stage of development of their higher education sectors, many governments have decided that traditional academic controls are inadequate to today's challenges and that more explicit assurances about quality are needed.

Several broad trends have contributed to growing governmental interest in establishing policy mechanisms to ensure quality and accountability in higher education. Particularly significant has been the trend toward mass higher education. Many countries have seen rapid post-secondary enrollments in the last few decades, along with increased participation rates for young people. Greater diversity of educational offerings has emerged in response to this mass higher education; different types of institutions have been introduced with different lengths of study programs, and varying modes of instructional delivery as ways to accommodate rapid enrollment expansion. Other important responses seen are the growth of a private, entrepreneurial sector of higher education and the expansion of educational offerings.

In line with these recent trends, many private colleges have also started to emerge in Ethiopia over the past few years. With the fast pace of expansion and continued involvement of the private investors in the sector, the issue of quality has become a critical concern among authoritative bodies, service providers as well as all individuals and institutions linked to the educational sector.

Being mindful to the above developments, this research project is particularly concerned with finding answers to the following questions:

- What are the purposes, principles, and values of the Ethiopian Ministry of Education (MoE) for higher education quality assurance and accreditation?
- Central to its educational policies, how are the quality assurance methods and procedures outlined and described?
- What quality measures and standards are employed to assess and review the performance of higher private academic institutions?
- What required support does the MoE provide to the academic institutions in insuring continuous improvement of quality education and meeting the standards?
- What efforts have been made so far to work in partnership and consultation with higher education and training stakeholders?
- What improvement in general has the present accreditation system brought to the private higher education?

Finally, the study tries to look at the recent progresses, challenges and threats that PHEIs now confront in their efforts toward ensuring quality education.

1.3. HYPOTHESIS

Quality assurance programs serve a variety of purposes but generally their primary purposes are a *combination* of public accountability, efforts to ensure credibility, improvement and renewal. In some cases, there is a gap between stated purposes and actual purposes, and frequently there is tension between accountability and improvement purposes. The researcher believes these gap and tension are also prevalent in the Ethiopian situation; and a hypothesis is drawn that the present quality and accreditation system is not well developed in a sense that it concentrates more on accountability and

enforcement of agreed or preestablished standards rather than working for continued improvement and renewal of the overall educational system.

1.4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This paper aims at identifying and examining the important measures and standards of quality in higher education and the major procedural requirement and criteria for accreditation of the PHEIs currently operating in Ethiopia. More specifically, the principal objectives with respect to the institutions under the study (the MoE and some selected private colleges) can be summarized as follows:

- Practically see the methods and techniques of determining and ensuring compliance with appropriate standards of higher education and training. Describe the practices of evaluation and reviewing of the private academic institutions with regard to their obligations and responsibilities for implementing and maintaining desirable quality assurance procedures.
- Discuss any existing mechanism or means of promoting and supporting continuous improvement in the quality and standards of private provision of higher education and training programs;
- Examine requirements by the ministry for provider ownership of quality assurance and learner assessment procedures.
- Assess the adequacy of present efforts toward clear and accurate information is made publicly available about the quality and standards of higher education and training provision.
- Analyze and present the views and responses of some academic official of selected private colleges on quality assurance and accreditation matters.
- Try to forward suggestions based on the findings.

1.5. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The outcomes of this study are expected to:

- Enhance the awareness and due attention given to the issue of quality and quality assurance efforts in the educational sphere. This in part can be done by indicating how lessons on successful and relevant quality strategies in ordinary business environment can be transferred to educational institutions.

- Help academic institutions develop appropriate quality management practices that assist them build and maintain stakeholders confidence and meet requirements for accreditation.
- Serve as additional source of information for educational policy makers to strictly consider the importance of requiring higher institutions to implement appropriate quality assurance practices and procedures in producing socially useful and enriching knowledge as well as a relevant range of graduate skills and competencies necessary for social and economic progress.
- Identify the level and importance of collaboration between the academic institutions and educational authorities in creating 'desirability' for higher education through meeting social and economic trends while maintaining high level of academic integration and superior quality.
- Initiate further studies in similar areas and provide documentation for up coming researchers.

1.6. METHODOLOGY

A descriptive research will be predominantly used in the study to portray the current practices and procedural requirements of the MoE in assessing the quality of higher education provision and the system it employs for accreditation of the PHEIs.

The research also analyzes and presents the responses and views of some selected private colleges on matters related to quality assurance and the accreditation system presently used by the Ministry.

Target Sample

The study includes:

- ❖ The Quality and Accreditation section of the MoE, and
- ❖ Four major accredited private academic institutions (all located in Addis), which currently offer diplomas and /or above in business studies.

Methods and Sources of Data Collection

The data obtained in this study come from both primary and secondary sources:

Primary Data. The primary data are collected through individual responses to questions asked in the interview sessions. Personal interviews are conducted with concerned officials working in the quality assurance section of the Ministry and also with academic deans of the selected private colleges. This approach is particularly used as a way of

refining the understanding and expanding the scope of investigation on facts drawn from secondary sources of data.

Secondary Data. The secondary data are mainly obtained from review of the Ministry's documents and publications. Documents related to quality standard guidelines and criteria for quality assurance procedures as well as the accreditation system directives and other similar publications are closely examined and reviewed.

Method of Analysis

The details revealed in the study are summarized and presented using simple descriptive method of analysis. This involves describing and comparing the MoE's standards and criteria for accreditation with the general quality factors/dimensions found in relevant literature, as well as, with the views and responses obtained from academic deans of the selected private colleges. This 'triangulated' approach is believed to give a wider perspective in understanding the framework for quality dimensions in higher education, which in its turn could enrich the awareness and efforts toward establishing a quality driven higher education system that contributes to the over-all socio-economic development of the country.

1.7. SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study is limited to only the quality assurance and accreditation system for the private providers of higher post secondary education which offer qualifications in the fields of business. The study is bound within the city of Addis and only considers in the analysis accredited PHEIs.

Quality in higher education is a multi-dimensional concept. It differs depending on whether the reference point is the 'provider', the 'provision', the 'medium of delivery', the 'out put' or the 'receiver' of education. The purpose, scope and focus of quality assurance is also viewed differently by different constituencies, for example, staff, students, institutions, agencies, employers, professional associations and governments. For the purposes of this project, the scope of the term quality assurance is taken to include the following dimensions:

- regulation (legal frameworks, governance, responsibilities and accountabilities, etc)
- educational process (admissions, registration or enrolment, support for learning, assessment etc)
- validation and approval frameworks, levels and standards etc
- outcomes (qualifications, certificates, and diploma supplements, recognition, etc).

The paper is mainly concerned on institutional rather than specific program accreditation. Hence the detailed procedures with regard to curriculum design, specific course content and delivery are out of the scope of this study.

The student researcher understand, that quality issues could be studied in much more extensive manner than this. However, due to time and financial constraints and to also make the study manageable in scope and depth, the scale of investigation has been restricted to the above boundaries.

1.8. GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

Accreditation The process of external quality review used in higher education to scrutinize colleges, universities, and higher education programs for quality assurance and quality improvement. Success results in an accredited institution and/or program. In some countries, it conveys institutional authority to offer specific programs

Criteria Standards for accreditation or certification of an institution or program. These involve expectations about quality, effectiveness, financial viability, compliance with national (U.S.: state and federal) rules and regulations, outcomes, and sustainability (see standards). In the U.K., "criteria" refers to standards for degree-awarding powers and the title "university."

Quality Refers to "fitness for purpose"—meeting or conforming to generally accepted standards as defined by an accrediting or quality assurance body.

Quality Assessment A diagnostic review and evaluation of teaching, learning, and outcomes based on a detailed examination of curricula, structure, and effectiveness of the institution or program. Designed to determine if the institution or program meets generally accepted standards of excellence

Quality Assurance Planned and systematic review process of an institution or program to determine that acceptable standards of education, scholarship, and infrastructure are being maintained and enhanced. Usually includes expectations that mechanisms of quality control are in place and effective. Also (U.K.), the means through which an institution confirms that the conditions are in place for students to achieve the standards set by the institution or other awarding body.

Quality Audit A test of an institution's quality assurance and control system through a self-evaluation and external review of its programs, staff, and infrastructure. Designed to provide an assessment of an institution's system of accountability, internal review mechanisms, and effectiveness with an external body confirming that the institution's quality assurance process complies with accepted standards.

Quality Culture Quality Culture is the creation of a high level of internal institutional quality assessment mechanisms and the ongoing implementation of the results. Quality Culture can be seen as the ability of the institution, program etc to develop quality assurance implicitly in the day to day work of the institution and marks a move away from periodic assessment to ingrained quality assurance.

Quality Improvement The expectation that an institution will have in place a plan to monitor and improve the quality of its programs. In most cases, quality assurance and accrediting agencies require that established procedures ensure that this is an ongoing process.

Standards The level of requirements and conditions that must be met by institutions or programs to be accredited or certified by a quality assurance or accrediting agency. These conditions involve expectations about quality, attainment, effectiveness, financial viability, outcomes, and sustainability. (See also criteria and quality)

ACRONYMS

PHEIs/Institutions - Private Higher Education Institutions

PHE - Private Higher Education

HEI - Higher Education Institutions (both public and private)

HE - Higher Education

TVET - Technical and Vocational Education and Training

MoE/ Ministry - Ethiopian Ministry of Education

QA - Quality Assurance

1.9. ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The study has five chapters including the previous chapter discussing the problem and its approach. Chapter Two contains Review of Literature. Chapter Three provides background on HE Policy reforms, the Emergence of PHEIs, and Concern for Quality. Chapter Four includes description of Quality Assurance and Accreditation Standards and Procedural Requirements of the Ministry. It also presents views of PHEIs on the present accreditation system and the challenges and threats they face in their provision of quality education. Summaries, conclusions and suggestions are provided in the last chapter (Chapter Five) of the study, including important lessons from international experiences.

Chapter Two

Review of Related Literature

2.1. INTRODUCTION

The concept of quality assurance (QA) is not a new one, but the range of the terminology and methodologies which are now used to define, develop and apply it, are relatively recent. There are a great number of different perceptions of what is meant by quality in higher education (Harman 1994). Varying definitions have been suggested (e.g. see Ball 1985; Birnbaum 1994; Lindsay 1992; van Vaght and Westerheijden 1992), but it has not been possible to reach consensus. The most widely accepted criterion of quality in higher education is probably "fitness for purpose" (Ball 1985). Consensus about this does not solve the problem of what is meant by quality in higher education: it just carries the discussion one step further to the question "what is the purpose of higher education?". However, this is helpful, since to a large extent it is the different opinions about the purpose of higher education, that lie behind the varying concepts of what should be meant by quality in higher education. The different approaches to quality reflect different conceptions of higher education itself.

Most individuals include parts of more than one perspective in their personal conception of quality. And combining each perspective with a particular group of stakeholders may not mean that every individual in that group sees quality in exactly the same way; in every group there would be pronounced individual differences. However, the suggested perspectives could represent fundamentally different views of what higher education is for (Birnbaum 1994; and Lindsay 1992). It is, therefore, important to describe each perspective separately in order to get a clear picture of what each stands for, what the ideological basis is, and what the implications of the proposed view of quality are. It will also make it possible to discover points of agreement and disagreement, thus providing a useful starting point for negotiations about a common platform for quality work in a given situation.

Indeed QA has implicitly predominated all walks of life from industry, service centres and hospitals to education. The need for quality has therefore proved to be the decisive factor in determining the success or failure of many products and services all through the development of society. Nevertheless, quality has often been implied rather than explicitly analysed and measured. There are of course advantages in applying more explicit measurements of quality. Among these is an increased ability to readily compare similar services and products, the development of common standards and of course wider information for the consumer. Thus the emphasis on the need to employ explicit measures to check and monitor quality is the challenge that we in the education arena must now deal with.

2.2. DEFINING QUALITY ASSURANCE IN EDUCATION

Quality is often described as the totality of features and characteristics of a service that bear on its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs. Quality in higher education, according to Article 11 of the World Declaration on Higher Education published by the United Nations, is a multi-dimensional concept, which should embrace all its functions and activities: teaching and academic programmes, research and scholarship, staffing, students, buildings, faculties, equipment, services the community and the academic environment. It should take the form of internal self-evaluation and external review, conducted openly by independent specialists, if possible with international expertise, which are vital for enhancing quality. Independent national bodies should be established and comparative standards of quality, recognised at international level, should be defined. Due attention should be paid to the specific institutional, national and regional contexts in order to take into account diversity and to avoid uniformity. Stakeholders should be an integral part of the institutional evaluation process. Quality also requires that higher education should be characterised by its international dimension: exchange of knowledge, interactive networking, mobility of teachers and students, and international research projects, while taking into account the national cultural values and circumstances.

Approaches to 'quality' in higher education in most countries have started with an assumption that, for various reasons, the quality of higher education needs monitoring.

Governments around the world expect higher education to:

- be more relevant to social and economic needs;
- widen access;
- be more cost effective (that is, expand numbers, usually in the face of decreasing unit cost);
- ensure comparability of provision and procedures, within and between institutions, including international comparisons;
- be responsive to a range of stakeholders (including students and employers).

Often educational institutions are responding to governmental pressure to “pay more attention to and be more accountable for quality”. The issue of autonomy and freedom within academic life is one of the most contentious areas among academics in the discussion regarding the introduction and development of a functioning QA system. These issues are addressed later in this chapter through discussions on *significance of QA* and its *relationship to accreditation*. For the moment a brief clarification of the notion of quality in higher education, and its relation to standards, is necessary.

2.3. QUALITY AND STANDARDS

Throughout the world, the quality of higher education is being assessed. This involves operationalising the notion of quality in some way, which in turn requires a clear statement about the concept of quality that is being measured. It appears that far too often, quality assessment and quality assurance processes have started by determining how quality is to be assessed or reviewed rather than by asking what, fundamentally, is it that is to be assessed.

Quality

There are five broad approaches to quality identifiable in relation to higher education (Harvey and Green, 1993); quality as:

- exceptional;
- perfection;
- fitness for purpose;
- value for money;
- transformative.

The *exceptional* view sees quality as something special. Traditionally, quality refers to something distinctive and élitist, and, in educational terms is linked to notions of excellence, of 'high quality' unattainable by most.

Quality as *perfection* sees quality as a consistent or flawless outcome. In a sense it 'democratises' the notion of quality and if consistency can be achieved then quality can be attained by all.

Quality as *fitness for purpose* sees quality in terms of fulfilling a customer's requirements, needs or desires. Theoretically, the customer specifies requirements. In education, fitness for purpose is usually based on the ability of an institution to fulfill its mission or a programme of study to fulfill its aims.

Quality as *value for money* sees quality in terms of return on investment. If the same outcome can be achieved at a lower cost, or a better outcome can be achieved at the same cost, then the 'customer' has a quality product or service. The growing tendency for governments to require accountability from higher education reflects a value-for-money approach. Increasingly students require value-for-money for the increasing cost to them of higher education.

Quality as *transformation* is a classic notion of quality that sees it in terms of change from one state to another. In educational terms, transformation refers to the enhancement and empowerment of students or the development of new knowledge.

Quality issues in higher education are also closely related to issues of standards (Middlehurst, 1992). Indeed, it is evident that, in debates about the nature and functioning of higher education, there is considerable overlap between the concepts of 'quality' and 'standards'. However, quality and standards are not the same. 'Standards' are specified and usually measurable outcome indicators which are used for comparative purposes (Harvey, 1995).

Standards

In education, standards relate to three areas of activity:

- academic standards;
- standards of competence;
- service standards;
- organisational standards.

Academic standards measure ability to meet specified level of academic attainment. In relation to teaching and learning this refers to the ability of students to fulfill the requirements of the programme of study, through whatever mode of assessment is required. This usually requires demonstration of knowledge and understanding. Implicitly, other skills are assessed, such as communication skills. Sometimes 'higher level' skills, such as analysis, comprehension, interpretation, synthesis and critique are explicitly assessed. For research, academic standards are less precise and usually imply the ability to undertake effective scholarship or produce new knowledge, which is assessed via peer recognition.

Standards of competence measure specified levels of ability on a range of competencies. Competencies may include general transferable skills required by employers; skills required for induction into a profession; and academic (or 'higher level') abilities, skills and aptitudes implicit or explicit in the attainment of an award. These may be stated or inferred in taught course objectives or be a part of the expectations of competencies to be achieved by research students.

Service standards are measures devised to assess identified elements of the service or facilities provided. Such standards may include turnaround times for assessing student work; maximum class sizes, frequency of personal tutorials; availability of information on complaints procedures, time-lag on introducing recommended reading into libraries, and so on. Benchmarks are often specified in 'contracts' such as student charters. They tend to be quantifiable and restricted to measurable items, including the presence or absence of an element of service or a facility. *Post hoc* measurement of customer opinions (satisfaction) are used as indicators of service provision. Thus, service standards in higher education parallel consumer standards.

Organizational standards involve the attainment of formal recognition of systems to ensure effective management of organisational processes and clear dissemination of organisational practices.

Interrelationship between quality and standards

The interrelationship between quality and standards depends on the approach to quality and the particular notion of standard. With five 'definitions' of quality and four 'definitions' of standards there are twenty interrelationships (See Figure next page).

The exceptional approach to quality, for example, emphasises the maintenance of academic standards through the summative assessment of knowledge. It presumes an implicit, normative 'gold-standard' both for learning and for research. The perfection approach emphasises consistency in external quality monitoring of academic, competence and service standards. The fitness-for-purpose approach relates standards to specified purpose-related, objectives. Therefore, in theory, it requires criteria referenced assessment of students. The value-for-money approach places emphasis on a 'good deal' for the customer and requires the maintenance or improvement of academic standards, of both graduate abilities and research output, for the same (or declining) unit of resource. The transformative approach uses standards to assess the enhancement of students both in terms of academic knowledge and a broader set of transformative skills, such as analysis, critique, lateral thinking, innovation, and communication. As transformation involves empowerment, formative as well as summative assessment is required.

2.4. PRINCIPLES OF QA IN EDUCATION

Aristotle stated in his Book VIII of Politics that 'this education and these studies exist for their own sake'. In this context quality assurance should exist along side and support the ideal of 'fitness for propose of education' where the purpose is the development of society and education of the individual. Again, there are the two approaches that can be taken to quality assurance, which can define the methods and type of QA processes that higher education institutions can combine:

- The intrinsic qualities of higher education refer to the basic values and ideals, which form the very heart of higher education: the unfettered search for truth and the disinterested pursuit of knowledge. It focuses on the knowledge creating processes and student learning. Even though most academics today will agree that quality in higher education is more than this, intrinsic quality represents the core

Figure Relationship between quality and standards.

Standards	Academic standards	Standards of competence	Service standards	Organisational standards
Quality				
Exceptional	Emphasis on summative assessment of knowledge and, implicitly, some 'higher-level' skills. Implicit normative gold-standard. Comparative evaluation of research output. Élitism: the presupposition of a need to maintain pockets of high quality and standards in a mass education system.	Linked to professional competence; emphasis mainly on traditional demarcation between knowledge and (professional) skills.	Input-driven assumptions of resource-linked service/facilities. Good facilities, well-qualified staff, etc. 'guarantee' service standards. Reluctance to expose professional (teaching) competence to scrutiny.	Clear role hierarchy reflecting academic status and experience. Often a heavy emphasis on 'traditional values'. Strong emphasis on autonomy and academic freedom. Aversion to transparency.
Perfection or consistency	Meaningless, except for an idealistic notion that peer scrutiny of standards or quality will be undertaken in a consistent manner.	Expectation of a minimum prescribed level of professional competence. Problem in assessing for 'zero defects'.	Primary relevance in ensuring service-standard based quality — mainly in relation to administrative processes (accuracy and reliability of record keeping, timetables, coursework arrangements, etc.)	Right first time. Document procedures, regulations and good practice. Obtain ISO9000 certification.
Fitness for purpose	Theoretically, standards should relate to the defined objectives that relate to the purpose of the course (or institution). Summative assessment should be criteria referenced, although as purposes often include a comparative element (e.g., in mission statement) these are mediated by norm-referenced criteria.	Explicit specification of skills and abilities related to objectives. Evidence required to at least identify threshold standards. Professional competence primarily assessed in terms of threshold minimums against professional body requirements for practice.	The purpose involves the provision of a service. Thus, process is assessed in terms of (minimum) standards for the purpose — usually in terms of teaching competence, the link between teaching and research, student support (academic and non-academic) and so on.	Ensure appropriate mechanisms in place to assess whether practices and procedures fit the stated mission-based purposes.
Value for money	Maintenance or improvement of academic outcomes (graduate standards and research output) for the same (or declining) unit of resource. That is, ensure greater efficiency. Similarly, improve the process-experience of students. Concern that efficiency gains work in the opposite direction to quality improvement. Provide students with an academic experience (qualification, training, personal development) to warrant the investment.	Maintain or improve the output of generally 'employable' graduates for the same unit of resource. Similarly, ensure a continual or increasing supply of recruits to post-graduation professional bodies. Provide students with an educational experience that increases competence, in relation to career advancement, which ensures a return on investment.	Customer satisfaction analyses (student, employers, funding bodies) to assess process and outcomes. Students and other stakeholders are seen as 'paying customers'. Customer charters specify minimum levels of service (and facilities) that students (parents, employers) can expect.	Relies heavily on periodic or <i>ad hoc</i> reviews of whether organisational structure is effective and efficient, often informed by management information (especially basic output statistics).
Transformation	Assessment of students in terms of the standard of acquisition of transformative knowledge and skills (analysis, critique, synthesis, innovation) against explicit objectives. Focus on adding value rather than gold standards. As transformation involves empowerment, formative as well as summative assessment is required. Transformative research standards are assessed in terms of <i>impact</i> in relation to objectives.	Provide students with enhanced skills and abilities that empower them to continue learning and to engage effectively with the complexities of the 'outside' world. Assessment of students in terms of the acquisition of transformative skills (analysis, critique, synthesis, innovation) and the transformative impact they have post-graduation.	Emphasis on specification and assessment of standards of service and facilities that enable the process of student learning <i>and</i> the acquisition of transformative abilities.	Emphasis on organisational structure that encourages dialogue, teamworking and, ultimately, empowerment of the learner. Delegated responsibility for quality and standards. Innovation, responsiveness and 'trust' are prominent.

of academic quality. The academic community can be seen as guardians of intrinsic quality.

- The extrinsic qualities refer to the capacities of higher education institutions to respond to the changing needs of the society with whom they interact. Extrinsic quality concerns the demands that society directs towards higher education. These demands change in tandem with social changes, which occur over time. It could be argued to what extent extrinsic quality should be determined by economic demands or the state (government) demands – both of which form pillars of society.

This therefore leads to a wider range of issues such as:

- The purpose of education?
- The ways in which educational institutions serve society and who decides this?
- The complex processes of teaching and learning and their evaluation?
- The development of appropriate knowledge, skills, competencies among staff to enable them to enhance their performance as teachers.

2.5. PURPOSE OF QA

‘Quality’ has been used as a tool to ensure some compliance to the concerns discussed above. However, the rationale and the policy often tend to be worked out after the decision to undertake an audit, assessment or accreditation process has been made. Thus approaches to ‘quality’ are predominantly about establishing quality monitoring *procedures* (van Vaught 1994).

Quality monitoring procedures thus serve a variety of purposes that can be grouped together under three headings:

- accountability;
- improvement;
- information.

1. The *accountability function* includes three broad concerns. First, accountability to external funders (governments in the main) that public money is spent appropriately. Second, accountability to the sector that principles and practices within higher education are not being eroded or flouted. This form of accountability is mainly used to control the

development of private providers but can be used to ensure that public providers do not become lax. Third, is accountability to 'customers' to ensure that an appropriate education experience is provided.

Quality Assurance can thus be seen as a condition that leads to the achievement of transparency. It will ensure the quality of the *academic* (teaching, curriculum etc) and *structural* (buildings, computers etc) provision of courses and it will allow an objective review of their quality. The transparency should be dialectical, meaning that the quality assurance should make institutions transparent, but also that the quality assurance in itself should be transparent, allowing the outcomes to be shared by the participants (actors).

2. The *improvement function* of quality monitoring procedures is to encourage institutions to reflect upon their practices and to develop what they do. Gone are the days when higher education institutions could take the view that, by dint of their status as institutions of higher learning, they were quality organisations with no need to improve. There is, as has been suggested, growing pressure on institutions to be more responsive to a range of stakeholders and to continually improve to meet changing needs.

3. A final purpose of quality monitoring procedures is the *generation of information*. This is both information for funders, which can be used to aid funding allocation decisions and thus links to accountability, and information for users that helps inform choice.

2.6. TYPES OF QUALITY MONITORING

Quality monitoring in higher education occurs as part of internal institutional procedures and as external to the institution.

2.6.1. Internal quality monitoring

Institutions collect a wide range of data about the services they provide including:

- surveys of student views;
- internal peer review of teaching;
- internal audits of quality procedures;
- surveys of recent graduates;
- employer views of graduates.

Most exercises are designed to elucidate quality judgments with a view to enhancing the quality of provision, for example, peer reviews of teaching designed to share good

practice, or surveys of students, graduates or employers designed to identify areas of satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

So, one way or another, a considerable amount of data about stakeholder views is generated that is designed to provide feedback primarily for quality improvement purposes. To be effective in quality improvement, data collected from surveys and peer reviews must be transformed into information that can be used within an institution to effect change. Furthermore, this information must be linked into a process of feedback and action. In short, there must be a means to close the loop between data collection and effective action.

This requires that the institution has in place a system for:

- identifying responsibility for action;
- encouraging ownership of plans of action;
- accountability for action taken or not taken;
- feedback to generators of the data;
- committing appropriate resources.

Establishing this is not an easy task, which is why so much institutional data generated by surveys or peer reviews is not used to effect change, irrespective of the good intentions of those who initiate the enquiries. This involves encouraging a bottom-up quality improvement process alongside a top-down accountability requirement.

Management, in this approach, has six strategic functions in respect of quality improvement:

- setting the parameters within which the quality improvement process takes place;
- establishing a non-exploitative, suspicion-free context in which a culture of quality improvement can flourish;
- establishing and ensuring a process of internal quality monitoring;
- disseminating good practice through an effective and open system of communication;
- encouraging and facilitating teamworking amongst academic and academic-related colleagues;
- delegating responsibility for quality improvement to the effective units that are going to deliver continuous improvement at the staff-student interface.

Most higher education institutions are characterised by either a 'collegiate' structure in which lines of accountability are diffuse and often implicit, and where academic managers are often elected or a hierarchical structure in which lines of accountability are focused and explicit and professional managers are appointed.

It is potentially easier for the hierarchical structure to implement a top-down accountability system, although it is much harder for it to ensure ownership of, and involvement in, the quality improvement process, rather than mere compliance with managerial requirements. Conversely, the collegiate system would appear to be better able to encourage ownership although a real willingness to account for action may be a more difficult procedure to implement.

2.6.2. External quality monitoring

External quality monitoring (EQM) is an all-encompassing term that covers a variety of quality-related evaluations undertaken by bodies or individuals external to higher education institutions. It includes the following.

Accreditation and evaluation of institutions

- External evaluation of institutional status, such as the assessment undertaken by the Consejo Nacional de Universidades in Venezuela, which evaluates and grants licenses to new, experimental higher education institutions and continues to evaluate them until they attain full autonomy (Ayarza, 1993).
- Periodic evaluation of institutional viability such as the accreditation process in the United States, which is a self-regulatory process of recognition by nongovernmental voluntary associations (Petersen, 1995)
- External assessment of institutional provision, such as that undertaken by the Comité National d'Évaluation (CNE), in France, which evaluates each institution holistically (Staropoli, 1991; Ribier, 1995) but does not in any way accredit the institution.

Quality assurance is a prerequisite for accreditation. Higher education institutions are constantly evolving and changing, accreditation is based on an evaluation done at a specific point in time, normally with reference to a specific area of the institutions (a course or facility). This normally leads to the awarding of certificate or recognition that the institution or part therefore meets certain standards. When accrediting, quality assurance should be the guarantee that the standard measured in the accreditation process can be upheld in the long term.

Audit of procedures within an institution

- External quality audit of internal quality assurance *procedures*, such as the academic audits of institutions formerly undertaken by the Quality Audit Division of the Higher Education Quality Council in Britain (HEQC DQA, 1993) and the audits of Polytechnic quality procedures by the Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council (HEEC, 1997). There is no attempt to evaluate the institution as such, just to ensure that the institution has clearly defined internal quality monitoring procedures that ensure effective action.
- The Australian Committee for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (CQAHE) added a ranking to the examination of quality assurance portfolios volunteered by universities, which was linked to recommendations about additional incentive funding (Meade, 1993). The three rounds of the Australian approach focused on specific elements, such as teaching, research performance or community interaction.
- In Sweden, the approach to audit undertaken by the National Agency is to focus on the stated improvement agendas of institutions and explore the efficacy of improvement projects (Askling, 1997).

Accreditation of programmes of study

- Validation (and periodic review) of programmes of study by central awarding bodies such as the procedures previously undertaken by the Council for National Academic Awards in the UK
- Accreditation of courses in North America by up to 14 nongovernmental voluntary associations who recognise provision in institutions that have been found to meet stated criteria of quality.
- Accreditation and validation of programmes of study, such as those undertaken in some countries by professional and regulatory bodies (Harvey and Mason, 1995).

Assessment of teaching quality in subject areas or of programmes

- External evaluations of teaching and learning provision at a programme or subject level, such as the assessment of subject area provision undertaken by the Quality Assessment Division of the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE, 1994) or the evaluations undertaken by the independent Center for Quality Assurance and Evaluation of Higher Education in Denmark (Thune, 1993).

Research assessment

- Evaluation and appraisal of research, such as the Research Assessment Exercise conducted by the Funding Councils in Britain (HEFCE/SHEFC/ HEFCW, 1993) and research evaluations undertaken by the Academy of Finland since the early 1980s (Luukkonen and Stähle, 1990).

Standards monitoring

- The use of external examiners to monitor standards on postgraduate or undergraduate degrees in the UK, Denmark, Ireland, New Zealand, Malaysia, Brunei, India, Malawi, Hong Kong and in the technikons in South Africa (Silver, 1993; Warren Piper, 1994).

The organisation, degree of government control, extent of devolved responsibility and funding of higher education systems vary considerably from one country to the next. However, the rapid changes taking place in higher education are tending to lead to a convergence towards a dominant model for quality. This model is one of *delegated accountability*. Central to this process is the emphasis placed on quality as a vehicle for delivering policy requirements within available resources.

2.7. DELEGATED ACCOUNTABILITY

External quality monitoring is not restricted to one or two types of higher education system. It can be found in all types of higher education systems, including:

- the 'Continental model' of 'centralised-autonomy' found in much of Western Europe including Italy, France and Austria;
- the 'British model' of autonomous institutions also found throughout much of the Commonwealth;
- 'market systems' such as the USA and the Philippines;
- 'semi-market' systems such as Taiwan and Brazil;
- centralised systems such as China;
- newly-devolved systems such as those in Eastern Europe, the Baltic States and Scandinavia.

The development of most EQM systems has been as a result of a pragmatic response to government mandates and systems adapt and respond to changing situations (Craft 1994). However, within this fluid situation, some common themes emerge, suggesting a convergence to a dominant form of accountable autonomy.

Methodology of EQM

Approaches to external quality methodology in higher education have not only been characterised by a convergence to delegated authority but also a growing uniformity of methodology. Most EQM incorporates various combinations of three basic elements:

- self-assessment;
- peer evaluation;
- statistical or performance indicators.

This is followed up by a report that is usually at least semi-public although sometimes augmented by a confidential additional report. In some cases, funding is linked to the outcomes of the process, although it is rare that significant amounts of direct funding are involved.

Typically, the procedure is for the institution or programme of study (or subject area) to produce a self-evaluation report. This qualitative self-evaluation is often complemented by statistical data. The report and the appropriate statistical data are scrutinised by an external body, which subsequently facilitates a visit of 'respected' peers to the institution. The peer-review panel undertakes a visit lasting, usually, between one and four days. They attempt to relate the self-assessment document to what they see or, in practice, hear. The peer-review panel may have received other appropriate documents in advance of the visit or may have access to other material during the visit. The peers may observe facilities or even, in some cases, the teaching and learning process. In the main, though, the peer review process usually involves reading the self-evaluation and engaging in discussion sessions with groups of selected institutional managers, teaching and administrative staff and students.

In the appropriate setting, self-evaluation and peer review can be a significant spur to fundamental self-reflection. If the institution *wants* to explore its purpose, its areas of effectiveness, its weaknesses and future opportunities then self-evaluation, followed by a peer-review process, that involves open dialogue and helpful feedback, can be an invaluable tool. It can help develop a future strategy for continuous improvement. However, the long-term effectiveness is entirely dependent on the establishment of

internal procedures and development of a *culture* of continuous improvement. For example, the European-wide, CRE-Audits, undertaken on a *voluntary* basis, have, been useful for most of the universities that have taken part in helping them develop strategic plans. Whether, in the long term, they will result in a process of continuous quality improvement depends on how well the outcomes are communicated and linked in with the day-to-day activities of the teaching and research staff.

Where *compulsory* monitoring uses self-evaluation, peer review and statistical indicators, the efficacy of the methodology is rather more debatable. Where institutional staff see the self-evaluation as part of a judgmental process, especially if it is linked to status rankings or to funding, then there will be a disinclination to be open about weaknesses and a tendency to overstate strengths. A lack of frankness makes dialogue difficult and the self-evaluative process becomes a defensive account rather than an opportunity to explore future development and change. In such circumstances, self-evaluation followed by an inquisitorial peer review encourages retrenchment rather than responsiveness.

2.8. CHANGING QUALITY ENVIRONMENT

Important recent changes have taken place in the quality assurance environment (e.g., see El-Khawas 1998; and Middlehurst 2001). And most of these have come with many new challenges and implications for institutions as well as for systems of quality assurance.

Among the major changes discussed are

- The emergence of new providers of higher education, creating a more complex and competitive environment for universities, colleges and institutes;
- The development of new ways of delivering higher education with opportunities to enhance the quality and quantity of learning, assisted by advances in information and communications technologies;
- The development of 'education and educational services' as a large and growing business sector, driven by globalisation, knowledge expansion and technological change. Education is now viewed (by the World Trade Organisation, WTO, and by some providers) as a service that can be traded and by business as a source of intellectual capital that can provide competitive

advantage. Individuals and society at large also view education as a public and private good;

- Economic, social and political agendas that emphasise life-long learning, accessibility, regional development and social cohesion. Governments and state agencies increasingly perceive universities as instruments of public policy for achieving these goals;
- Increasing mobility of individuals;
- The blurring of national boundaries, the development of regional policies, alliances and zones.

Together, these changes are beginning to have an impact on the structure and forms of higher education that already exist (at this stage, more in some countries than others) and are leading to questions about the purposes, outcomes and funding of existing institutions. The changes and the ensuing public debates about higher education also have implications for the parameters of 'quality' in education and for the principles and procedures that underpin quality assurance arrangements.

Not all the developments described above have yet made their appearance widely in Ethiopia, but still reflect a dimension of change. Experience suggests that technological advances and moves towards the internationalisation and globalisation of many areas of human endeavour spread fast. "Today's strange idea is often tomorrow's innovation and next year's orthodoxy"(Middlehurst 2001)

Chapter Three

Higher Education Policy Reforms, Emergence of PHEIs, and the Concern for Quality

BACKGROUND

Higher education is of paramount importance for economic and social development. Inculcating relevant knowledge and advanced skills, higher education provides the human resources required for leadership, management, business and professional positions. The institutions also serve as the major research establishments that generate, adopt and disseminate knowledge. By giving people access to knowledge and the tools for increasing and diversifying their knowledge, higher education expands people's productivity, as well as national capacity and competitiveness. Today, as the world becomes increasingly interconnected, more interdependent and increasingly a globalized village, higher education is critical for the achievement of economic progress, political stability and peace, as well as for building democratic culture and society.

Although its contribution in the last fifty years was laudable in many respects, higher education in Ethiopia was and is not earnestly and fully participating in the development efforts of the country. With their out of date orientation and worn out traditions, higher education institutions in Ethiopia have deprived the country of the opportunity of getting out of poverty and underdevelopment. (Teshome, 2003).

A multidimensional crisis of profound economic impact and social deterioration during the past years has contributed to weaken the institutions of higher education in Ethiopia. It has undermined the confidence, which socio-economic patterns had in them and diminished their quality, efficiency and impact on development. Until about a decade ago, the absence of a clear vision of the social and economic importance of higher education, severe resource constraints and settings that provide access to the benefit of the elite only have contributed to the fact that the contribution of higher education to socio-economic development in the country has been much less than expected.

In the early 1990s, the government identified the need for strengthened, re-oriented and revitalized human resource development as a key to the success of socio-economic policies and strategies. The need was felt during the transitional period (1991-1994) when a serious shortage of trained, able and adaptable workforce and leaders at different levels within the new government structure was encountered in the intent to develop democratic society. The government's new economic policies, private sector initiatives and development, as well as

the new federal system and the absence of any institutions of higher learning in many of the regions, have called the attention of government leadership to expansion and reform of the sector. Though higher education in Ethiopia had been in existence for almost half a century, the level of enrolment, the number of graduates, and contribution of the sector to the development of the country were limited (Habtamu, 2000). With a shift in the social and economic development directions of the country, it has become essential to expand equitable access and to reform the education system, including the higher education sector.

For the last ten years the country experienced a unique situation where the government is committed to education and the Ethiopian society seems to have woken up to the importance of education. Until recently, the significant and meaningful role that higher education plays in the improvement of the life of the society, the overall development of the country, and the reduction of poverty was not properly addressed in government strategies and was not given due public attention. The higher education system was mediocre by not being in a position to inspire the country's government and society towards poverty alleviation and sustainable development. With the new government in 1991, free market economic policies, improved environment for private investments, and the relatively better and steady growth of the economy, as well as openness to the world and the spread of information and communication technologies, have required more personnel with higher education and training (MoE, 1999). These situations have improved the society's outlook and the focus of the government on higher education to meet the increasing demands of the world of work.

Since 1994, the government has taken a positive step by allowing private and non-government organizations to invest and provide education and training, including higher education. The enormous potential of private institutions to provide cost-effective higher education is acknowledged by the government, and they have come to be considered as productive and relevant partners (TGE: 1994). The private providers are thereby encouraged to complement public institutions as a means of managing costs of expanding higher education enrolments, increasing the diversity of training programs, and broadening social participation in higher education. The major initiatives of the government were the issuance of regulations allowing private investment in education and the general proclamation for encouragement and coordination of investment. The policy and regulatory framework of the government avoids disincentives such as tuition fee controls, includes an incentives package (tax holiday/exemptions, land provisions, removing procedural impediments, etc.) and mechanisms for accreditation, oversight and evaluation.

Such ambivalent attitude assumed by the Ethiopian government over the past few years have contributed to a remarkable growth of private higher education institutions (PHEIs) in the country. Between 1999/2000 and 2000/2002 alone the PHEIs have increased by 40%; and currently they enroll more than 24% of the country's higher education students. By African standard this is a significant achievement for a sector which is only at its infancy. However there is belief that this rapid increase may level off shortly as quality, which is usually undermined by a profit motive of the mushrooming institutions, becomes more demanded.

Many of the PHEIs presently existing in the country started from a very low capacity and their quality of education and training remains to be strained due to: limited funding; lack of appropriate and adequate equipment and facilities; insufficient number of qualified instructors; inflexible and outdated occupational standards; lack of adequate functional relationship between training centers and the real world of work; lack of stakeholders' participation in curriculum design and implementation; and inefficient management.(ESDP II of MoE,1995)

This study recognizes the importance and increasing concern for quality of private higher education in the country. It primarily aims at examining the important measures of quality education and criteria for accreditation employed by the MoE. The study first describes in detail the procedures and accreditation practices of the Ministry. Following this improving suggestions and recommendations are extended based on the assessment made on the present system in conjunction with some worldwide practices and views obtained from academic deans of selected PHEIs. Before entering in to such analysis, however, it is important to start with highlighting the reform and expansion experiences of the Ethiopian higher education system and the context of growth for the private higher education institutions.

3.1. REFORM POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

A succession of new policies was designed and implemented in Ethiopia over the past few years with an eye to setting Ethiopia on a new course of development and poverty alleviation. The Education and Training Policy (TGE, 1994) has been the major framework for reform and transformation. The policy has stressed issues of quality and relevance in educational programs; quality of teaching staff and facilities; improvement of learning process towards a focus on students; improvement of management and leadership; introduction of financial diversification, including income generation and cost-sharing by students; and improvement in the system of evaluation, monitoring, autonomy and accountability.

The reform and expansion agenda of the country's higher education was initiated and critically followed with a motto to overcome its problems, recognize and be responsive to the

needs of the society and the country. As described above the agenda focused on: revisiting the vision and missions of the sector, improving quality and relevance, expanding, diversifying and ensuring equity of access, diversifying financial resources and improving efficiency of the system, as well as enhancing leadership and management.

Revisiting vision and mission statement

The government believes that the higher education reform and expansion will succeed if a clear vision and relevant mission are first properly set for the system. The *vision* of higher education in Ethiopia, therefore, is designed to embody *the development of quality human resource and the generation and dissemination of knowledge to fulfill the requirements of the country's development needs, societal transformation, poverty reduction, as well as building democratic and peaceful society.*

The Debrezeit and Nazreth conferences outlined areas of focus for the mission of Ethiopian higher education system as: (a) producing qualified citizens who would contribute to the regional and national social and economic development, (b) undertaking research to generate, transfer and apply knowledge for the development of the country and to further science and technology, (c) providing services to the local and national society, and (d) inculcating relevant knowledge. In its generality, the mission statement that was developed was: *"producing (in a cost effective and result oriented manner) quality human resource in disciplines relevant for the socio-economic development of Ethiopia, as well as undertaking relevant and quality research"*(FDRE, 2002). Having done that, it was easy to identify challenges and opportunities for and against meeting the mission and towards the reform and expansion endeavors.

Higher education in Ethiopia, therefore, was required to revise a certain number of dogmas and legacies inherited from its previous models. In addition to its traditional role of educating, creating knowledge and developing the mind, it is increasingly asked to train, be student-centered, practice-oriented, society-focused, and to teach professions that require skills and hands-on training, as well.

Quality and relevance of higher education

There can be no doubt that one of the predominant concerns about the educational enterprise is the sustenance of quality. The standard of education in Ethiopia at all levels was declining greatly and the entire education system was at stake in the early 1990's. The performance of university graduates in the work place, as well as their adaptability and leadership abilities, were not as much as expected and should be. Most graduates were good in the theoretical knowledge but poor in skills and in the application of the knowledge they gained from the

universities in to the real world of work (Teshome, 2003). The main element of the strategy to improve the performance of higher education against which progress can be measured includes improved quality of teaching and research, increased responsiveness to labor market demands, and greater equity. Enhancing quality involves student preparation and training, availability of higher motivated and competent teaching staff, supplying adequate facilities and inputs and strengthening evaluation and monitoring mechanisms towards quality of training and research outputs.

The Ethiopian higher education reform anticipates the establishment of a Quality and Relevance Assurance Agency (QRAA) to develop standards and evaluate institutions to maintain quality and relevance (Higher Edu. Proc.No 351/2003, Art.78). The agency will be an autonomous body responsible for evaluating, monitoring and providing support to higher education institutions in the country. It will also serve as advisory body for the government on issues of standards, quality and relevance of higher education programs of study. The government and the higher education community have purposely included "Relevance" as a major issue to be addressed by the agency. This is mainly because of the concern that with increasing expansion and diversification there may be situations where curricula may become out of context and produce graduates that do not fit to the socio-economic needs of the country.

The reform has also recommended the establishment of Pedagogical Resource Centers (PRC) in each institution as another means of ensuring quality. A National Pedagogical Resource Center has been established in Addis Ababa University with the mandate to train trainers for the different institutions. The training has focused on issues of how lecturers organize their work, how they use available resources, understand purposes of the education offered, determine the desired learning outcomes, design the right course content, and organize the teaching-learning process.

Another most critical reform activity in relation to quality and relevance is the curricula review of the country's higher education. The curricula of higher education in Ethiopia, both at undergraduate and graduate programs, were in many cases judged as having large elements of irrelevance with respect to the current national and global development situations. Emphasis is given to the urgent need to revise and adapt the curricula to meet national, social, economic, cultural and geographical circumstances. In revisiting the curricula, the Ministry has opted for copying and adapting relevant curricula from other countries such as India, Tanzania and Ireland and reorienting as per the policy provisions (MoE, 1997).

The other important quality agenda is to make higher education student- and community-oriented. Higher education has been asked to focus on student-centered approaches in its training and education as well as research. Furthermore, to prepare the graduates properly for the world of work, learning activities are required to become practice and community oriented. To this effect, in 1999, higher education institutions came together and adopted the concept of community-oriented practical education/training (COPE) to be incorporated in all disciplines and institutions.

3.2. THE CONTEXT OF PHEIs' GROWTH: *The Ethiopian scenario*

Though there are a few institutions, which had existed prior to this date, the proliferation of Ethiopian PHEIs has only begun in 1988 EC (Wondwosen, 2003). Since then, and especially since 1991 EC., there has been an increase in the number of private institutions providing post-secondary level education. According to the information obtained from the Ethiopian Investment Office, until end of 1995 EC., 73 institutions have secured the license to operate in the sector. The increase in the number of these institutions can easily be discerned from the table below.

Table: Growth Rates of PHEIs Establishments in Ethiopia

<i>Establishment Year*</i>	<i>No. of institutions established</i>	<i>%</i>
1988	1	1.37
1989	1	1.37
1990	1	1.37
1991	8	10.96
1992	7	9.59
1993	7	9.59
1994	19	26.03
1995	29	39.72
Total	73	100

* Year in Ethiopian Calendar

Source of data: Ethiopian Investment Office (unpublished)

As might be seen from the table, 1991EC has shown a dramatic upsurge in the number of institutions, which obtained license to operate. A similar increase has not been noted in the years 1992 and 1993EC. It is in 1994 and 1995EC that we see a dramatic increase again. When defined by their level of operation, 55 of the above institutions are in the implementation stage, and 18 are under operation, with none in its pre-implementation stage.

As in many developing countries, the unprecedented demand for higher education (beyond what the public institutions could actually provide) is in large responsible for the indicated

growth and for the recent ambivalent attitude of the government towards the creation of the PHEIs.

Accredited Institutions

It must have been noted that the figures thus far indicate institutions, which have secured investment permit to operate. This figure could be misleading as it also comprises institutions which are yet planning to commence operation and/or institutions which have abandoned the venture altogether. Figures that are obtained from the MoE could be more reliable, though the problem here is that the Ministry does not have full documentation of institutions which have not been accredited.

The data obtained from the MoE show that there are eighteen PHEIs that have been accredited since 1989 EC. Three of these institutions (16.67%) might be called non-profit making institutions. The remaining fifteen (83.33%) institutions could be labeled profit making institutions. With the exception of a very few of these institutions, almost all offer trainings in the fields of business, IT and Law.

Enrollment rate

According to the MoE (2003:88) enrollment in private higher institutions has grown from 11,175 in 2000/01 to 29,237 in 2001/02. According to Teshome (2003), Ethiopian PHEIs accounts for 18 per cent of student enrollment in higher education institutions. Considering the fact that this figure was computed by taking the accredited institutions only, it could be speculated that the figure could have been much higher if the intake of unaccredited institutions had been considered. Some Ministry officials suggest that the figure may rise up to 30 per cent – a figure which is perhaps by any standard, the biggest for sub-Saharan Africa.

In terms of diploma graduates, PHEIs in Ethiopia have also begun to cover a significant share. The MoE (2003:102) reports show that out of the 19,564 total number of diploma graduates in 2001/02, 6,867 (43.5%) were from private institutions. For a sector which is barely half a decade old, this figure is remarkable.

Quality Concern

Ethiopian PHEIs have been identified with lack of quality and relevance. Despite it has shown some changes over the years, many of the institutions were initially confined in the area of business, law and IT. In terms of quality of trainings also it could be said that the PHEIs have not been with out problems, and the public opinion gathered by the MoE (2003) is indicative of this. The fact that many have grown from language schools and computer centers with limited human, financial and material resources must have contributed to the

lack of quality in their provision. Many resembled public colleges and universities both in the types and modes of training they offered.

In response to these developments therefore, the MoE, mandated by Proc.No 4/1995 and proc.No 256/2002 issued a directive in August 2002 (the final amended version) on the nomination, standard evaluation and accreditation of higher education institutions. This directive set minimum standards and plays a regulatory role for both public and private higher education institutions.

As explained by experts in MoE, prior to the issuance of the directive, there was no such organized/structured document for the regulation of higher education. The 1994 General Educational policy only sets general framework for education. It does not have specific provisions addressing higher education. It is silent on specific details, such as how PHEIs satisfy the educational demand, what roles they are expected to play, what structural and organizational setup they should have and how they should be regulated. Hence, as explained by the official in the Ministry, the urgency of the need to issue that directive was mainly attributable to the radical and rampant participation/involvement of the private sector in higher education.

3.3. THE ACCREDITATION DIRECTIVE OF THE MINISTRY:

Strategic Importance

As indicated in the directive the higher education and training given in the Ethiopia on different standard levels need to improve and change the present social environment by inculcating the knowledge of modern science and technology. It needs to contribute in the protection and development of the environment for the overall benefit of the society, and satisfy the market demand of the work force. To this end, the higher education and training need to be standardized and upgraded in providing the necessary skills.

The standard and capacity evaluation of higher education institutions requires the study and close examination of the educational and training programs, physical capacity or facility of the institutions, the condition of instructors (teachers), the use of different directives, and the organization and administrative systems of the institutions. Evaluation by these details of standards and criteria helps prove (assess) and follow up the standard and capacity compliance of the established institutions and their respective programs. To this end, the higher education standard and accreditation directive of the Ministry established for both public and private institutions is believed to have a vital role. The directive stipulates that the higher education institutions are responsible for producing a knowledgeable, capable and interested productive force through the delivery of standardized training, and particularly for

producing experts that are reliable to the economic development of the country. The higher education institutions are also expected to be responsive to the demand for the work force by avoiding training redundancies.

In general the accreditation directive of the Ministry states that the quality assurance and accreditation process should be carefully aligned with the country's educational policy and broad developmental objectives. The following major guiding principles are described in the directive for due consideration by the higher education institutions:

- Produce good citizens who understand, respect and defend the constitution; students who respect democratic values and human rights and who stand for justice based on good ethical standard;
- Carry out fruitful and progressive tasks using limited resources through the use of low cost but quality manpower and other inputs.
- Provide favorable conditions for the development and expansion of knowledge to inculcate and develop positive and new thinking in the society; develop skill in various professions and with a sense of citizenship to participate in and contribute to the development of community and the nation
- Mobilize for the establishment of democratic system by employing proper assets and by improving attitudes and methodologies in the sector.
- Undergo higher education training free from ethnic, religious, racial and sex differences, and neutral from religious and political belongingness.
- Develop attitude for research and work and capacity to solve problems. Carrying out research works aimed at solving the problems of the society, useful to the progress and development undertakings, and publicizing the research output to the beneficiaries.
- Deliver quality research services and training relevant to the demand and development of the country.
- Develop the culture of respect and tolerance among the people to live together.

In sum the overall mission for the higher educational sector in the country is to produce good citizens who respect and defend the rights and responsibilities stated in the constitution, build the capacity and tendency to solve problems, trained in various professions and skills so as to participate in the economic development of the society, with positive outlook for the expansion and dissemination of science and technology.

3.4. Role and Involvement of the Ministry: *legal bases for quality assurance and accreditation*

As indicated in the directive Ministry of Education has been empowered, by the proclamations no 41/1993, 4/1995, 256/2002 announced to determine the power and duties of the executive bodies under the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, and by proclamation no 391/2004 of technical and vocational education and training, to do the following:

- determine the standard of education nationally and follow up and control its implementation;
- issue permits to training institutes established by the federal government bodies or by foreign organizations and private investors at any level; and
- approve and control the institutions' standard qualities and capabilities.

To help implement these tasks, the Ministry designs and measures different directives. It has decreed laws (rules and regulations) pertaining to higher education, and technical and vocational education training based on the above proclamations. In addition, for the issuance of permits for and supervision of private education and training institutes, the Council of Ministers regulation no. 206/95 is another intended legal document embraced.

Chapter Four

Quality Assurance and Accreditation of PHEIs

4.1. PURPOSE AND DEFINITION

As defined in the Ethiopian proc. No. 391/2004, *accreditation means the granting of a certificate of competence by the appropriate Accrediting Authority to an institution providing higher education and training evidencing its fulfillment of the basic and additional requirements relating to the specified training standard.*

According to the official in the MoE, accreditation is described as one significant approach to quality and quality assurance in higher education system. He further stated it as a process of recognizing educational institutions for performance, integrity, and quality that entitles them to the confidence of the educational community and the public. The Ministry views quality in the context of higher education as a judgment about the level of goals achievement and the value and worth of that achievement. More specifically it describes it as a judgment about the degree to which [educational] activities or outputs have desirable characteristics, according to the overall educational policies and strategies, or against particular specified criteria or objectives.

Accreditation Powers and Authority

The accreditation of higher education institutions (HEIs) in Ethiopia is extended through the MoE (a governmental body), which has the sole responsibility for establishing criteria/standards, visiting and evaluating institutions at their requests, and approving those institutions and programs that meet the stated criteria/standards.

Art. 31 of proc. No. 391/2004 clearly states the 'accrediting powers' as follows:

The MoE shall have powers to issue pre-accreditation license and accreditation certificate to any [higher education] and training institution operated under the guidance and control of any organ of the Federal Government, or owned by non-governmental organization or by a domestic (or foreign) investor.

Based on the interview response obtained from the Ministry official accreditation in Ethiopia post-secondary education performs a number of important functions, including the encouragement of efforts toward maximum educational effectiveness. The accrediting process requires institutions and programs to examine their own goals, operations, and achievements, and then provides the expert criticism and suggestions of a visiting

evaluation committee, and, later, the recommendations of the accrediting body. According to the same person, since the accreditation is reviewed periodically, institutions are encouraged toward continued self-study and improvement.

Purpose of Accreditation by the Ministry

While the accreditation procedures differ somewhat in detail to allow for some practical program, institutional and regional variations, their rules of eligibility, basic policies, and levels of expectation are similar. Given these variations in detail, accreditation by the Ministry at the postsecondary level is intended to fulfill the following purposes:

1. foster excellence in postsecondary education through the development of criteria and guidelines for assessing educational effectiveness;
2. encourage institutional improvement of educational endeavors through continuous self-study and evaluation;
3. ensure the educational community, the general public, and other agencies or organizations that an institution has clearly defined and appropriate educational objectives, has established conditions under which their achievement can reasonably be expected, appears in fact to be accomplishing them substantially, and is so organized, staffed, and supported that it can be expected to continue to do so; and
4. provide counsel and assistance to established and developing institutions.

Phases of Accreditation

As put in the HE Proc. (2003) and the TVET Proc. (2004), the accreditation of PHEIs in Ethiopia has two phases. *Pre-accreditation* temporarily granted for one year and full-fledged accreditation to be provided later. The initial step therefore for developing post-secondary institution is to seek recognition for pre-accreditation.

The importance of having the two-phase accreditation system, according to the Ministry official, is to allow the institutions being established, upgraded or modified enjoy some transition time for accreditation while still being able to work with a pre-accreditation license. While a pre-accreditation license does not ensure accreditation, it is a status of some sort of affiliation with the Ministry that indicates an institution has achieved initial recognition and is now progressing towards accreditation. Details on accreditation and pre-accreditation requirements are discussed in following sections of this chapter.

4.2. GENERAL ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS IN APPLYING FOR INSTITUTIONAL PRE-ACCREDITATION AND ACCREDITATION

The principal programs of eligible institutions should be related to post-secondary education and training and should be built upon knowledge and competencies normally obtained by students through a completed high school program. Such programs will be based on verifiable knowledge which has been subjected to examination (ESLCE or equivalent) by competent academic persons and by established practitioners of the arts, sciences, crafts, and professions. Although diversity of requirements is expected among pre-accredited and accredited institutions, the course and degree, diploma, or certificate requirements of an applicant institution must also be congruent with those of the broad higher education community which the MoE represents.

The characteristics of an institution and the conditions required by the Ministry for consideration as a candidate for Accreditation, Pre-accreditation, and for continued recognition follow below. The Ministry makes note right before hand that the eligibility requirements should not be confused with detailed standards (*to be discussed later in this chapter*) by which quality, accreditation, and candidacy are evaluated. Following are the essential eligibility requirements:

1. The institution has a governing board/body which has the authority to carry out the mission of the institution.
2. The institution maintains direct and sole responsibility for the academic quality of all aspects of all programs and courses through the management and supervision by faculty and institutional administrators.
3. Although it is understood that an educational institution would be in reasonable harmony with its founding and sustaining organizations, a high degree of intellectual independence of its faculty and students is expected. An institution owned by or related to an outside agency, such as a church, a business organization, or an association, should ensure that it maintains an atmosphere in which intellectual freedom and independence exist.
4. It has a chief executive officer whose full-time or major responsibility is to the institution.
5. It has a statement of mission and goals adopted by the administration and governing board which demonstrates that its purposes are appropriate to higher education.

6. It serves the interests of its students rather than those of its owners or its board or its faculty and staff. It devotes all, or substantially all, of its gross income to support its mission and educational objectives.
7. Its principal programs lead to formal degrees, diplomas or two-year certificates, entitled so as to be understandable within the larger educational community.
8. Educational objectives, and the means for achieving them, which are appropriate to higher education in level, quality, and standards, have been clearly defined and published for each of its programs.
9. The majority of its courses require an appropriate foundation of learning skills taught in a preparatory program of a high school. They examine the conceptual foundations of the subject matter as well as the information growing out of these foundations and require students to do independent work, to analyze what they learn, to deal with the abstract as well as the concrete.
10. It has a faculty adequate for the educational level offered, including a full-time core faculty representing every discipline in which it offers major work.
11. It has at least a core library and learning resources appropriate to its mission, and it provides access to specialized library and learning resources needed for independent work in the fields and at the levels represented by its offerings. If it depends in part on other institutions for specialized library and learning resources, it can demonstrate that they are adequate, easily accessible, and used.
12. It follows humane and nondiscriminatory secular education policies in dealing with students, staff, and faculty.
13. It has adopted a student admission policy specifying the characteristics and qualifications appropriate for its programs, and it adheres to that policy in its admission practices.
14. It has a current and accurate catalog and other appropriate official publications available to students and the public setting forth the following: mission and goals; admission requirements and procedures; rules and regulations for conduct; academic regulations; degree-completion requirements; programs and courses with specific indications of when they are offered; tuition, fees and other costs; refund policies, and other items relative to attending the institution or withdrawing from it.

15. It can document a funding base, financial resources, and plans for financial development adequate to carry out its stated mission and goals within a balanced budget and a safe level of debt.
16. Its financial records are externally audited annually by a certified public accountant or local audit agency. The audit must include an opinion on the financial statement.
17. It has completed at least one year of its principal educational programs and has students actively pursuing these programs at the time of the Ministry's evaluation.
18. It accepts the policies and standards of the Ministry on higher education and agrees to comply with these standards and policies as currently stated or as modified in accordance with due process.
19. It discloses to the Ministry any and all such information as the Ministry may require to carry out its evaluation and accreditation function.
20. It understands and agrees that the Ministry may, at its discretion, make known to any agency or members of the public that may request such information, the nature of any action, positive or negative, regarding its status with the Ministry.

The institution eligible for pre-accreditation must use the prescribed definition for pre-accreditation in all official publications and correspondence. As stated earlier, pre-accreditation does not mean accreditation, nor does it ensure eventual accreditation.

The institution recognized as a candidate for accreditation must also ensure that it clearly specifies its particular programs, degrees, and geographic locations covered by the candidacy.

4.3. PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS

The accreditation directive of the ministry discusses the procedural requirements for the institutional pre-accreditation and accreditation phases separately.

4.3.1. Institutional Pre-accreditation

The following general points are given with regard to a pre-accreditation license

- Any person desiring to establish a new PHEI, to upgrade an institution already accredited and operating, or to start additional training programs of such an institution must first obtain a pre-accreditation license before the institution starts the intended training.

- A PHEI applying for pre-accreditation should have a qualified individual who would be responsible for administering its day to day operations and who can be held accountable for the quality education it provides. This requirement should be evidenced by enclosing a minimum of one year contact of employment with an individual having at least a first degree and enough experience to properly discharge his/her duties.
- A PHEI operating under a pre-accreditation license must apply (to the Accrediting Authority of the Ministry) for accreditation six months earlier to the date of expiry of the pre-accreditation license.
- Any PHEI operating under a pre-accreditation status cannot take a position to graduate students or offer diplomas. If it does so the action will be nullified.
- The fee for pre-accreditation license must be effected before any sight visit or appraisal is made by the Accrediting Authority of the Ministry (The fee payable for pre-accreditation license, or the accreditation certificate is determined by the council of ministers).
- A PHEI, to which a pre-accreditation license has been issued, can apply for the accreditation of any new programs that it could open in due course.

Application for Pre-accreditation License

When a PHEI believes that it meets all the eligibility requirements discussed earlier, the institution may submit an application for a pre-accreditation permit to the Ministry with the appropriate documents. The application could be made not later than June 30 if the institution wishes to start its academic year in September; and not later than Nov. 30 when it plans to start by the mid of a year (i.e. January to February).

The contents of the application for pre-accreditation should include:

- a) a thorough written response to each of the eligibility requirements.
- b) proposed name, main address, field of study or academic mission of the institution;
- c) objectives of the institution;
- d) financial capacity of the institution;
- e) name and address of the body for which the institution is accountable, and terms of accountability for the Heads of the institution;

- f) type of management by which the academic and administrative affairs of the institution are to be conducted;
- g) admission requirements for new students and academic programmes of the institution; this should be in accordance to provisions stated by the MoE directive and laws.
- h) such and similar details of facilities and services required for conducting education or training as libraries, laboratories, classrooms, educational and research facilities and the manner in which they are maintained;
- i) the number and standard of education of academic staff, technical and administrative support-giving staff that the institution should have or has;
- j) financial capacity of the institution ensured by certified auditor, financial administration and control system of the institution;
- k) a three -year plan of the institution;
- l) the name and address of the owners of the institution;
- m) trade, investment and other similar licenses issued by the appropriate government organs.

In addition to the above details, the application for pre-accreditation may also contain the types and number of training areas or programs for which the institution has previously obtained pre-accreditation or accreditation certificate.

Issuance of Pre-accreditation Permit

The MoE issues a pre-accreditation permit within 15 days after it makes sure that:

- a) the educational materials stated by the applicant for pre-accreditation permit are available or are likely to be made available and that the curriculum satisfies the required quality standards;
- b) the applicant has taken concrete measures that enable to satisfy the requirements provided by law and stipulated by the Ministry as well as realize the objectives of higher education;
- c) the applicant has implemented or is able to implement requirements stipulated by the Ministry in reliable manner.

The Ministry publicizes the issuance of the pre-accreditation permit (to the requesting institution) through nation-wide mass media.

The pre-accreditation permit remains valid for one year from the date of its issuance. If the institution fails to achieve the 'accredited' status within this term (period) its pre-accreditation

permit will lapse. In such a case the institution may not reapply until major deficiencies have been corrected and in no event within less than two years after the lapse of its pre-accreditation status. The burden of proof rests on the institution to demonstrate why its candidacy should be continued. The circumstances may vary in each case, but among the matters to be taken into account are:

1. general lack of comprehensive planning;
2. political or other interference with institutional integrity;
3. failure to meet enrollment projections;
4. inadequate financial control and support;
5. inadequate physical facilities and equipment;
6. weakness of library and supportive educational resources;
7. inadequacies of numbers and professional competence of faculty, administrative, and supportive staff; and
8. insufficient development of programs and curricula in relation to the institution's catalog and other publications.

The ministry makes public the final decision on the cancellation of the permit through nationwide mass media.

Content of the pre-accreditation permit

The pre-accreditation permit/certificate issued by the Ministry to the requesting institution includes:

- 1) name and address of the registered institution.
- 2) the status and program of the institution;
- 3) date of issuance and validity period;
- 4) name and signature of the official issuing the permit and the seal of the Ministry.

4.3.2. Institutional Accreditation

Private institutions are expected of meeting the following general requirements before accreditation could be granted to them:

- a) Scoring good performance during the pre-accreditation period;
- b) Providing secular education and training;
- c) Ensure congruence of the curriculum with the standards set for the education and training programs being delivered.

- d) Employment of sufficient and qualified staff which suit to the fields and levels of training provided.
- e) Admission policies compatible with and appropriate to the levels of qualifications provided.
- f) Use of appropriate language of instruction for the training. The Higher Education Proc. No.351/2003 (Art. 10) provides the medium of instruction shall be English.

Furthermore, the accreditation directive encompasses elaboration on institutional mission and purpose, physical facilities, legislation, as well as additional requirements for an institution that offers its program through distance mode of delivery.

In relation to the above points, any institution operating under a pre-accreditation permit shall present: its activities, work implementation detail, and a report that explains the measure it has taken to execute the principal goals it has been established for and to fulfill institutional standards/ criteria set by the Ministry. The report should also include the following to enable the institution get accreditation within the time limit of the pre-accreditation permit:

- A. Ownership of a legal acts registration document for a place where the institute undertakes the training or a contract document of house rent and place that serves for at least five (5) years;
- B. Renewed investment and/or and trade registration document;
- C. Renewed registration and work permit;
- D. Document regarding the establishment of the institute and its rules and regulations (charter) that enables the institute to be established and by which it has been registered by a relevant registering office;
- E. The details and number (size) of libraries, training delivery workshops, class rooms and other materials and equipment prepared for each training program
- F. The details and educational level of permanent and contract trainers and administrative staffs.
- G. The details of the students registered under ongoing, pre-accredited training fields and programs of the institute supplemented with full record of the trainees/students, classified by type and level of the trainings attended.

4.3.3. Overview of the Evaluation and Accreditation Process

PHEIs are subject to the periodic evaluation and appraisal. The evaluation process, which is jointly conducted by an institution and the MoE, may take a number of forms.

Expounding the basic steps of the evaluation and accreditation process, the directive of the Ministry puts the following points:

- A) The accrediting body of the Ministry establishes a committee that determines the standards and criteria for recognition, and an expert group under it which makes the necessary evaluation;
- B) The expert group conducts a site visit and reports to the committee on presented documents (of the institution) after evaluating and approving necessary details and requirements, and verifying degree of institutional compliance to the stated standards and criteria;
- C) In accordance with the evaluation report of the group and the information obtained from previously submitted application, the committee prepares a recommendation for decision regarding to the level of the standard achieved by the requesting institution. The committee discusses and presents comments for decision;
- D) In accordance with the recommendation given by the committee which recognizes and determines the standard capacity, the vice-minister of MoE gives his approval for recognition after ensuring that the institution has fulfilled the necessary requirements/criteria;
- E) A document bearing: the name and address of the owner of the permit, the accreditation status determined or given to the institute, the training program, type of qualification and number of students, date of issuance of the permit and the validity time, will be given to the recognition-requesting institution.
- F) In addition, the ministry prepares and communicates a written report specifying future adjustment and improvements required on the part of the institution.
- G) When an institution intends to start new training areas in addition to its already accredited programs, it must clearly communicate to the public the programs under accreditation and pre-accreditation categories.

Application for Accreditation

A private institution holding a pre-accreditation permit is required to apply for accreditation six months prior to the expiry date of its pre-accreditation permit. The application which would be submitted to the Ministry pursuant to Art.66 of Proc. No. 351/2003 contains the following (see next page):

- a) all information made available during submission of application for pre-accreditation permit;
- b) memorandum of association registered by appropriate organ;
- c) name and education standard of permanent academic staff, technical and administrative support giving staff of the institution;
- d) a list of students that have been enrolled each year in each field of study offered by the institution;
- e) list of facilities and teaching aids necessary for each programme offered by the institution;
- f) amounts of money available for the realization of the objectives of the institution and ensured by a certified auditor;
- g) facilities necessary for the institution, including land and buildings;
- h) names and addresses of the owners of the institution.

The MoE evaluates the activities, performance and the measures taken by the institution to implement its objectives and fulfill the requirements stipulated by the Ministry, and where it finds that the institution has satisfied the requirements, the assessment committee hired by the Ministry will:

- a) further verify the report and application submitted by the institution, and
- b) evaluate the institution's academic and administrative status.

The assessment committee submits recommendations in three months time to the Ministry:

- a) for the issuance of accreditation where it finds that the requirements set by law and the Ministry have been met by the institution;
- b) for the denial of accreditation stating clearly in detail defects, gaps and measures to be taken, where it finds that the requirements prescribed by law and the Ministry have not been met.

Issuance of Accreditation Certificate and Date of Validity

The MoE issues accreditation within 10 working days upon receiving the recommendation from the assessment committee and after making sure the institution meets all the requirements.

The accreditation certificate granted by the Ministry serves for three years (only for the purpose issued) and it indicates the status, institutional and program conditions, in addition to other matters that may be determined by the Ministry.

According to Art.70 of Proc.351/2003 diplomas awarded by institutions with an accreditation permit will have equal privileges and honor.

Rejection of Accreditation

The MoE denies the accreditation permit where it finds the requesting institution failing to meet the requirements stipulated by law and the Ministry for offering higher education services. The grounds for rejection are communicated/notified to the requesting institution, where it will be given a chance to reapply (again) by making some improvements which might satisfy the requirements.

The final decision of denial of the accreditation permit is announced in the nation-wide mass media and any diploma awarded by the institution afterwards will be regarded as invalid.

An institution denied of accreditation permit may also be required to take appropriate measures that the students or trainees it has already admitted continue their education or training at other appropriate institutions.

Cancellation of Accreditation Permit

Any accreditation permit can be cancelled on the following grounds:

- a) Where the Ministry or the assessment committee ensures that the accreditation permit was issued on the production of false document;
- b) Where the institution contravenes the provisions of the Higher Education proclamation or any other relevant law;
- c) Where the institution dissolves in accordance with any relevant law.
- d) Where the institution fails to rectify defect within the time fixed in the warning given by the Ministry to it for the failure to satisfy the requirements provided for by law, or for contravening directives issued by the Ministry.

The cancellation of accreditation permit becomes effective after the completion of the undergoing activities of the institution. However, if the institution cannot carry on such activities, it should take appropriate measures that the students and trainees continue their studies at other appropriate institutions. At the same time the institution shall not engage in new training programs transaction.

4.4. ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

The core values of accreditation emphasize the learning, community, responsibility, integrity, value, quality, and continuous improvement through reflection and analysis. They require that the higher education institutions and their programs are measured/assessed by extracting standards, honoring high aspiration and achievement, and expecting all parties associated with the sector to realize its responsibility to provide a supportive and conducive environment.

The accreditation standards of the MoE represent the level of requirements and conditions that must be met by the institutions before being granted the accreditation certificate. The conditions discussed mainly involve expectations about quality, attainment, effectiveness, financial viability, compliance with national rules and regulations, outcomes, and sustainability.

The standards are divided in to broad areas, lettered sections and subsections where the general intent of each standard is described first followed by further definitions and evidences of meeting the standard or criterion. Supporting documentation for each standard provide evidence of the manner in which each standard and its elements are met.

The higher education quality standards and accreditation criteria set by the MoE can be discussed under the following headings:

1. Institutional Mission and Goals
2. Education Program and its Effectiveness/ Admission and Retention
3. Faculty
4. Library and Information Resources
5. Physical Resources

Standard One: *Institutional Mission and Goals, Planning and Evaluation*

A) Mission and Goals

The institution's mission and goals define the institution, including its educational activities, its student body, and its role within the higher education community. The evaluation proceeds from the institution's own definition of its mission and goals. Such evaluation is to determine the extent to which the mission and goals are achieved and are consistent with the Ministry's eligibility requirements and standards.

A.1) The institution's mission and purposes are set forth in a concise statement that accurately delineates its character to the public it seeks to serve and provides a basis for

the evaluation of the institution against the MoE's Standards. This statement is formally adopted by the Board of Trustees and appears in appropriate institutional publications.

A.2) The institution's mission and goals derive from, or are widely understood by, the campus community, are adopted by the governing board, and are periodically reexamined.

A.3) The mission, as adopted by the governing board, appears in appropriate institutional publications, including the catalog.

A.4) Progress in accomplishing the institution's mission and goals is documented and made public.

A.5) Goals are determined consistent with the institution's mission and its resources - human, physical, and financial.

A.6) The institution's mission and goals give direction to all its educational activities, to its admission policies, selection of faculty, allocation of resources, and to planning.

A.7) Public service is consistent with the educational mission and goals of the institution.

A.8) The institution reviews with the Ministry, contemplated changes that would alter its mission, autonomy, ownership or locus of control, or its intention to offer a degree at a higher level than is included in its present accreditation.

The MoE recognizes that there is great variation in the mission and purposes of institutions of higher education. The mission of the institution defines its distinctive character, addresses the needs of society and identifies the students it seeks to serve, and reflects both the institution's traditions and its vision for the future.

B) Planning and Evaluation

The institution engages in ongoing planning to achieve its mission and goals. It also evaluates how well, and in what ways, it is accomplishing its mission and goals and uses the results for broad-based, continuous planning and evaluation. Through its planning process, the institution asks questions, seeks answers, analyzes itself, and revises its goals, policies, procedures, and resource allocation.

B.1) The institution clearly defines its evaluation and planning processes. It develops and implements procedures to evaluate the extent to which it achieves institutional goals.

B.2) The institution engages in systematic planning for, and evaluation of, its activities, including teaching, research, and public service consistent with institutional mission and goals.

B.3) The planning process is participatory involving individuals and groups appropriate to the institution such as board members, administrators, faculty, staff, students, and other interested parties.

B.4) The institution uses the results of its systematic evaluation activities and ongoing planning processes to influence resource allocation and to improve its instructional programs, institutional services, and activities.

B.5) The institution integrates its evaluation and planning processes to identify institutional priorities for improvement.

B.6) The institution provides the necessary resources for effective evaluation and planning processes.

B.7) The institution's research is integrated with and supportive of institutional evaluation and planning.

B.8) The institution systematically reviews its institutional research efforts, its evaluation processes, and its planning activities to document their effectiveness.

B.9) The institution uses information from its planning and evaluation processes to communicate evidence of institutional effectiveness to its public.

Supporting Documentation for Standard One

Supporting documents that should be made available for examining the institution's compliance to the above standard include:

1. Official statement of the institutional mission: Indicate how and when it was developed, approved, and communicated to the institution's constituencies.
2. Evidence that demonstrates the analysis and appraisal of institutional outcomes.

Examples may include:

- annual goals and assessment of success in their accomplishments;
- studies of alumni and former students;
- studies regarding effectiveness of programs and their graduates;
- studies that indicate degree of success in placing graduates;
- test comparisons that reveal beginning and ending competencies; and
- surveys of satisfaction - students, alumni, and employees.

Other required exhibits and suggested documents to be examined are:

- Institutional short term, strategic, or long term plans. Including system master plans when applicable.
- Planning studies, including enrollment history for the past three years, enrollment projections, program need analyses, personnel availability data, development possibilities, and other products of institutional research.

Standard Two: Educational Program and Its Effectiveness

A) General Requirements (Certificate, Diploma, and Degree Programs)

The institution offers collegiate level programs that culminate in identified student competencies and lead to degrees or certificates in recognized fields of study. The achievement and maintenance of high quality programs is the primary responsibility of an accredited institution; hence, the evaluation of educational programs and their continuous improvement is an ongoing responsibility. As conditions and needs change, the institution continually redefines for itself the elements that result in educational programs of high quality.

A.1) The institution demonstrates its commitment to high standards of teaching and learning by providing sufficient human, physical, and financial resources to support its educational programs and to facilitate student achievement of program objectives whenever and however they are offered. If the institution depends on resources outside its direct control (for example, classrooms, library resources, and testing sites), provision is made for a clear, fixed understanding of that relationship which ensures the reasonable continued availability of those resources. Clear descriptions of the circumstances and procedures for the use of such resources are readily available to students who require them.

A.2) The goals of the institution's educational programs, whenever and however offered, including instructional policies, methods, and delivery systems, are compatible with the institution's mission. They are developed, approved, and periodically evaluated under established institutional policies and procedures through a clearly defined process. Each educational program demonstrates consistency through its goals, structure, and content; policies and procedures for admission and retention; instructional methods and procedures; and the nature, quality, and extent of student learning and achievement. The

institution provides sufficient resources to sustain and improve programs and instruction.

A.3) Degree and certificate programs demonstrate a coherent design; are characterized by appropriate breadth, depth, sequencing of courses, synthesis of learning, and the assessment of learning outcomes; and require the use of library and other information sources.

A.4) The institution uses degree designators consistent with program content. In each field of study or technical program, degree objectives are clearly defined: the content to be covered, the intellectual skills, the creative capabilities, and the methods of inquiry to be acquired; and, if applicable, the specific career-preparation competencies to be mastered.

A.6) The institution is able to equate its learning experiences with semester or quarter credit hours using practices common to institutions of higher education, to justify the lengths of its programs in comparison to similar programs found in public accredited institutions of higher education, and to justify any program-specific tuition in terms of program costs, program length, and program objectives.

A.7) Faculty, in partnership with library and information resources personnel, ensure that the use of library and information resources is integrated into the learning process.

A.8) The institution's curriculum (programs and courses) is planned both for optimal learning and accessible scheduling. As part of its overall planning and evaluation, the institution develops, approves, administers, and periodically reviews its diploma and degree programs under established, clearly defined, and effective institutional policies.

A.9) Policies, regulations, and procedures for additions and deletions of courses or programs are systematically and periodically reviewed. Additions and deletions of programs or courses are consistent with available resources, faculty expertise, student needs, and academic planning.

A.10) In the event of program elimination or significant change in requirements, institutional policy requires appropriate arrangements to be made for enrolled students to complete their program in a timely manner and with a minimum of disruption.

In general the institution has the responsibility for the academic elements of all instructional programs and courses for which it awards institutional credit. These responsibilities include course content and the delivery of the instructional program; selection and approval of

faculty; admission, registration, and retention of students; evaluation of prior learning; and evaluation of student progress, including the awarding and recording of credit.

B) Off-Campus and Other Special Programs

Continuing education and special learning activities, programs, and courses offered for credit are consistent with the educational mission and goals of the institution. Such activities are integral parts of the institution and maintain the same academic standards as regularly offered programs and courses. The institution maintains direct and sole responsibility for the academic quality of all aspects of all programs and courses through the management and supervision by faculty and institutional administrators. Adequate resources to maintain high quality programs are ensured.

B.1) The institution provides evidence that all off-campus, continuing education (credit and non-credit), and other special programs are compatible with the institution's mission and goals, and are designed, approved, administered, and periodically evaluated under established institutional procedures.

B.2) The institution is solely responsible for the academic and fiscal elements of all instructional programs it offers.

B.3) Full-time faculty representing the appropriate disciplines and fields of work are involved in the planning and evaluation of the institution's continuing education and special learning activities.

B.4) The responsibility for the administration of continuing education and special learning activities is clearly defined and an integral organizational component of the institution's organization.

B.5) Programs and courses offered through electronically-mediated or other distance delivery systems provide ready access to appropriate learning resources and provide sufficient time and opportunities (electronic or others) for students to interact with faculty.

B.6) There is an equitable fee structure and refund policy.

B.7) The granting of credit for continuing education courses and special learning activities is based upon institutional policy, consistent throughout the institution, and applied wherever located and however delivered.

C) Admission and Retention

The institution has an orderly and ethical program of admission which complies with the requirements of the national examination standards (ESLCE) and legislation concerning equality of educational opportunity. Its admission and retention policies and procedures are clear, consistent with its mission and purposes, and available to all students and prospective students through appropriate publications. It endeavors to develop a student body which as a whole is broadly representative of the population the institution wishes to serve.

C.1) Standards for admission ensure that student qualifications and expectations are compatible with institutional objectives. Individuals admitted demonstrate through their intellectual and personal qualifications a reasonable potential for success in the programs to which they are admitted. If the institution recruits and admits individuals with identified needs that must be addressed to assure their likely academic success, it applies appropriate mechanisms to address those needs so as to provide reasonable opportunities for that success. Such mechanisms receive sufficient support and are adequate to the needs of those admitted. The institution endeavors to integrate specifically recruited populations into the larger student body and to assure that they have similar academic experiences.

C.2) If the institution accepts undergraduate transfer credit from other institutions, it applies policies and procedures which provide adequate safeguards to ensure that credit accepted reflects appropriate levels of academic quality and is applicable to the student's program. The institution does not erect barriers to the acceptance of transfer credit that are unnecessary to protect its academic quality and integrity, and it seeks to establish articulation agreements with institutions from which and to which there is a significant pattern of student transfer. Such agreements are made available to those students who are affected by them.

C.3) The evaluation of student learning or achievement and the award of credit are based upon clearly stated criteria that reflect learning objectives and are consistently and effectively enforced. They are appropriate to the degree level at which they are applied.

C.4) There is demonstrable academic content for all experiences for which credit is awarded. Credit awards are consistent with the course content.

C.5) When credit is awarded on the basis of prior experiential or non-collegiate sponsored learning alone, student learning and achievement are demonstrated to be at least comparable in breadth, depth, and quality to the results of institutionally provided learning experiences. The policies and procedures for the award of credit for prior or experiential learning are clearly stated and available to affected students.

C.6) The institution specifies and publishes requirements for continuation in, termination from, or re-admission to its academic programs which are compatible with its educational purposes. Graduation requirements are clearly stated in appropriate publications and are consistently applied in the degree/diploma certification process. The degrees/diplomas awarded accurately reflect student attainments.

Supporting Documentation/evidences for Standard Three

Supporting documents that should be made available for examining the institution's compliance to the above standard include:

1. Instruments and procedures used to measure educational program effectiveness.
2. Inventory of documents that demonstrate the appraisal of educational program outcomes. The documents are to be available on campus for examination by the evaluation committee. (Examples may include same as the ones indicated for standard one; number 2)
3. Inventory of diploma and/or degree programs that have been added or deleted in the last three years.
4. Number of diplomas/degrees granted in each program for the last three years.
5. Published statements or other written rationale for the general education program.
6. Student retention and rate of graduate data for the last three years.
7. Completed student Admissions Report.

Other required/suggested exhibits and documents include :

1. Type of programs offered
2. Statement of diploma/degree objectives for each program.
3. Description of curriculum development bodies and advisory groups, with rules of procedure and recent minutes.
4. Complete departmental or program self-studies prepared for part of this self-study.
5. Evaluation forms and summary reports of student evaluations of faculty and courses.

6. Self-study and evaluation committee reports from external reviews and the most recent accreditation visits and documentation of resulting actions.
7. Criteria and procedures for admission and retention of students, maintenance of student records, and awarding of credit, including credit for prior experiential learning.
8. Policies regarding transfer of credit, including articulation agreements with other institutions.
9. Policies regarding remedial work.
10. Description of the materials and forms used in the academic advisement process.
11. Grade distribution studies.
12. Policies governing public service.
13. Compilation of entering freshman student ability measures.
14. Samples of course examinations and other instruments used to assess student achievement or competency and, when possible, available work products determined to be of different levels of quality.
15. Funds devoted to research, if applicable, for each of the past three years; principal sources of such funds.

i. Specific Admission Requirements for Post secondary education

The education system of Ethiopia has been changed since 2002, with a structure 4+4 (elementary), 2+2 (secondary), and 3 years of post-secondary education leading to first degree. According to this new structure, at the end of grade ten, students will sit for the Ethiopian General Secondary Education Certificate Examination (EGSECE) (TGE, 1994).

On the basis of the result of EGSECE, students will be placed either to pursue academic programs leading to first degrees, or terminal vocational/technical programs leading to a certificate of six months' duration, diploma of two years' duration, or an advanced diploma of three years' duration.

Following are admission requirements for diploma (middle level 10+3) programs:

1. Students admitted to diploma program must provide their school leaving examination certificate from comprehensive high school (10th or 12th grade) bearing a minimum of 2.0 G.P.A approved by a legal body. This can be changed as necessary in accordance with annual directives of the Ministry of Education.

2. In addition to this, students can also be admitted based on the following options:

- A. Students who have completed and obtained Middle Level II Certificate for 10⁺² technical and vocational education and training (TVET) program are selected and ranked, and best 10% of these are finally permitted to resume their studies in the 10⁺³ diploma program of similar fields to their Middle Level II certificate. Apart from this where the students qualifying for the 10+3 diploma program wish to continue their studies in other institutions, they will be required to bring written support/evidence or permit from their former institutions.
- B. Students who have completed and obtained Middle Level II certificate, and have a minimum of 2.0 G.P.A in EGSECE can be admitted and trained in 10+3 diploma program (without going through screening process in A.), provided that they can bring a legal document and letter of recommendation evidencing work experience of two years minimum in related fields of study.

The academic programs that lead to first degrees start with a two-year preparatory program for university. The completion of the two-year preparatory program will be culminated by a university entrance exam. Almost 85% of those who take this examination are assured of admission by the MoE to public college or university.

ii. General Points to Note

- A. The method of computing grade points of students to be admitted to institutions would be carried out in accordance with the directives of the National examinations under the ministry of education.
- B. Any institution with a pre-accreditation status cannot issue diploma to students, without first having the accreditation certificate. If it does so the certification will be invalid.
- C. To arrange and assign those students/trainees fulfilling the admission requirement to different institutions, and to enable and make sure that admission requirement is properly implemented, each institute delivering 10⁺¹ and 10⁺² education and training program is instructed at every program end to report in descending order 10% of those students who have scored 75% and above upon completion and obtaining of their middle level certificate. The report is presented in written form to the accrediting body of the Ministry.

Standard Three: Faculty

A) Faculty Selection, Evaluation, and Roles

The selection, evaluation, and retention of a competent faculty is of paramount importance to the institution. The faculty's central responsibility is for educational programs and their quality. The faculty is adequate in number and qualifications to meet its obligations toward achievement of the institution's mission and goals.

A.1) The institution employs professionally qualified faculty with primary commitment to the institution and representative of each field or program in which it offers major work. Qualifications are measured by advanced degrees held, evidence of scholarship, advanced study, creative activities, and relevant professional experience, training, and credentials.

A.2) Faculty participate in academic planning, curriculum development and review, academic advising, and institutional governance.

A.3) The institution employs an open and orderly process for recruiting and appointing its faculty. Faculty participate in the search process for new members of the instructional staff. The institution observes pertinent legal requirements related to equal employment opportunity and compatible with its mission and purposes, addresses its own goals for the achievement of diversity of race, gender, and ethnicity. Faculty selection reflects the effectiveness of this process and results in a variety of intellectual backgrounds and training. Each prospective faculty member is provided with a written contract that states explicitly the nature and term of the initial appointment and, when applicable, institutional considerations that might preclude or limit future appointments. Institutional personnel policies and procedures are also published and made available to the faculty.

A.4) Similarly, the institution publishes, makes accessible, and explains upon appointment the explicit criteria and procedures for the appointment, evaluation, advancement, and termination of academic support staff who are not faculty but who have academic responsibilities. Such staff are appropriately qualified and are provided reasonable employment security. Salaries and benefits are consistent with the requirements of the positions. The institution provides appropriate opportunities for staff development.

A.5) Where graduate teaching assistants are employed, the institution carefully selects, trains, supervises and evaluates them.

A.6) Faculty are accorded reasonable contractual security for appropriate periods consistent with the institution's ability to fulfill its mission. The institution sets salaries and benefits at levels which ensure its continued ability to attract and maintain an appropriately qualified instructional staff of a quality consistent with the institution's mission and purposes. Policies on salaries and benefits are clearly stated, widely available, and equitably administered.

A.7) Faculty categories (e.g., full-time, part-time, adjunct) are clearly defined by the institution as is the role of each category in fulfilling the institution's mission and purposes. Should part-time or adjunct faculty be utilized, the institution has in place policies governing their role compatible with its mission and purposes and the Standards of the Ministry. There are an adequate number of faculty whose time commitment to the institution is sufficient to assure the accomplishment of classroom and out-of-classroom responsibilities essential for the fulfillment of institutional mission and purposes. It avoids undue dependence on part-time faculty, adjuncts, and graduate assistants to conduct classroom instruction.

A.8) In a faculty handbook or in other written documents that are current and readily available, the institution clearly defines the responsibilities of faculty and the criteria for their recruitment, appointment, evaluation, and promotion. Such policies are equitable and compatible with the mission and purposes of the institution; they provide for the fair redress of grievances, and they are consistently applied and periodically reviewed.

B) Scholarship, Research and Faculty Development and Welfare

Scholarship, including research and innovation, is inherent in the work of faculty and students and is integrated in mutually supportive ways with instructional activities, regardless of the size or nature of the institution.

B.1) Consistent with institutional mission and goals, faculty are engaged in scholarship and appropriate research works.

B.2) Faculty assignments and workloads are consistent with the institution's mission and purposes. They are equitably determined to allow faculty adequate time to provide effective instruction, advice and evaluate students, continue professional growth, and participate in scholarship, research, and service compatible with the mission and

purposes of the institution. Faculty workloads are reappraised periodically and adjusted as institutional conditions change.

B.3) Consistent with its mission and goals, the institution provides appropriate financial, physical, administrative, and information resources for scholarship and research.

B.4) The nature of the institution's research mission and goals and its commitment to faculty scholarship and research works are reflected in the assignment of faculty responsibilities, the expectation and reward of faculty performance, and opportunities for faculty renewal through sabbatical leaves or other similar programs

B.5) Faculty are demonstrably effective in carrying out their assigned responsibilities. The institution employs systematic procedures for the regular evaluation of faculty appointments, performance, and retention. The evaluative criteria reflect the mission and purposes of the institution and the importance it attaches to the various responsibilities of faculty, e.g., teaching, scholarship, creative activities, research, and professional and community service. The institution has equitable and broad-based procedures for such evaluation, in which its expectations are stated clearly and weighted appropriately for use in the evaluative process.

B.6) The institution provides its faculty with substantial and equitable opportunities and support for continued professional development throughout their careers. Such opportunities are consistent with and enhance the achievement of the institution's mission and purposes. Faculty accept the obligation to take advantage of these opportunities and take the initiative in ensuring their continued competence and growth as teachers, scholars, and practitioners.

B.7) The institution has mechanisms to ensure that faculty act responsibly and ethically, observe the established conditions of their employment, and otherwise function in a manner consistent with the mission and purposes of the institution

B.8) The institution protects and fosters academic freedom of all faculty regardless of rank or term of appointment.

Supporting Documentation/evidences for Standard Three

Supporting documents that should be made available for examining the institution's compliance to the above standard include:

1. Statistics available concerning faculty and administration characteristics, such as numbers of males and females, minorities, full-time and part-time faculty, years of

service with the institution, degrees or levels of education, and years of other significant service.

2. Completed report Institutional Faculty Profile and Number and Source of Terminal Degrees of Faculty.
3. Salary data for faculty, including compensation for special or extra responsibilities.
4. Policy and procedures on the evaluation of faculty, both full-time and part-time.
5. Representative examples of the institutional and public impact of faculty scholarship.
6. Summary of the most significant scholarly activity and research by faculty during the past three years.

Other Required Exhibits include:

1. Faculty handbook, including personnel policies and procedures.
2. Policy on Academic Freedom.
3. Faculty committees and membership.
4. Evaluation forms and summary reports of student evaluations of faculty and courses.
5. Access to personnel files and current professional vitae/CVs.
6. Criteria and procedures for employing, evaluating, and compensating faculty in special programs such as off-campus, study aboard, travel/study, non-credit, or extension credit programs.
7. Copies of any doctrinal statements required for employment, promotion, and tenure.
8. Policies governing the employment, orientation, and evaluation of part-time faculty and teaching fellows, if applicable.
9. Summary reports of faculty involvement with public services/community services.
10. Institutional policies regarding scholarship and research, including sponsored research by faculty and students.
11. Summary of the faculty role in developing and monitoring policies and practices in scholarship and research work.
12. Statistics on faculty retention and turnover.

Specific Staff Requirements

i. Academic staff / Faculty

A) *Instructor's educational qualification and experiences*: an instructor employed in an institution must have a minimum of one year experience, which is closely related to the type of training he/she provides.

With regard to educational level, an instructor employed in institution granting middle level certificate programs (10^{+1} and 10^{+2}) must at least have first degree or above in related field of instruction. And for institutions providing diploma programs instructors' profile is expected to be 50% B.A and 50% M.A. degree holders in respective fields of training. The following table shows desired mix of staff qualification in higher education institutions:

Table 1: Percentage Distribution of a Mix of Staff Qualification

Academic Qualification	Degree Offering Institutions	Diploma Offering Institutions
PHD	30%	10%
M.A/ MSc.	50%	50%
B.A/ BSc.	20%	40%

Source: Accreditation Directive, MoE

B) *Instructors' employment and work load*

- ❖ The number of permanent instructors should make up 70% of the total academic staff employed in the institution.
- ❖ An instructor/academic staff is expected to work 39 regular hours in a week. However, the total class hours (credit hours) that the instructor teaches could range from 20 to 25 hours per week. The remaining time should be used for class preparation, student support and consultation, research, as well as for signing and grading students' results.
- ❖ At least 50% of the total instructors in the institution are expected to have taken proper pedagogic trainings.

ii. Administration and support staff

The administration and service staff requirements of an institution are detailed out in Table 2 next page.

Except for the first two posts all support giving staff should have a minimum of diploma or certificate and average of two-year experience in their respective areas of employment.

The college dean (director) and vice dean are expected to have masters degree and above in business or related areas, and should possess work experiences of 3 to 5 years.

Table 2: Administration and Support Staff Requirement List

No.	Job Description	No.	Job Description
1	Director/ Dean	7	Store Clerk
2	Vice Dean	8	Registrar/ Record officer
3	Finance and Administration	9	Librarian
4	Purchasing	10	Secretary
5	Accounting	11	Duplicating section head
6	Casher	12	Health assistant & others

Standard Four: Library and Information Resources

A) Purpose and Scope

The primary purpose for library and information resources is to support teaching, learning, and, if applicable, research in ways consistent with, and supportive of, the institution's mission and goals. Adequate library and information resources and services, at the appropriate level for degrees offered, are available to support the intellectual, cultural, and technical development of students enrolled in courses and programs wherever located and however delivered.

A.1) The institution's information resources and services include sufficient holdings, equipment, and personnel in all of its libraries, instructional media, language laboratories, computer centers, and other repositories of information to accomplish the institution's mission and goals.

A.2) The institution's core collection and related information resources are sufficient to support the curriculum.

A.3) Information resources and services are determined by the nature of the institution's educational programs and the locations where programs are offered.

B) Information Resources and Services

Information resources and services are sufficient in quality, depth, diversity, and currency to support and enrich the institution's curricular offerings.

B.1) The institution provides facilities adequate to house the collections and equipment so as to foster an atmosphere conducive to inquiry, study, and learning among students, faculty, and staff.

B.2) Equipment and materials are selected, acquired, organized, and maintained to support the educational program.

B.3) Library and information resources and services contribute to developing the ability of students, faculty, and staff to use the resources independently and effectively.

B.4) Policies, regulations, and procedures for systematic development and management of information resources, in all formats, are documented, updated, and made available to the institution's constituents.

B.5) Opportunities are provided for faculty, staff, and students to participate in the planning and development of the library and information resources and services.

B.6) Computing and communications services are used to extend the boundaries in obtaining information and data from other sources, including regional, national, and international networks.

C) Facilities and Access

The institution provides adequate facilities for library and information resources, equipment, and personnel. These resources, including collections, are readily available for use by the institution's students, faculty, and staff on the primary campus and where required off-campus.

C.1) Library and information resources are properly cataloged and readily accessible to all students and faculty. These resources and services are sufficient in quality, level, breadth, quantity, and currency to meet the requirements of the educational program.

C.2) In cases of cooperative arrangements with other library and information resources, formal documented agreements are established. These cooperative relationships and externally provided information sources complement rather than substitute for the institution's own adequate and accessible core collection and services.

D) Personnel and Management

Personnel are adequate in number and in areas of expertise to provide services in the development and use of library and information resources.

D.1) The institution employs a sufficient number of library and information resources staff to provide assistance to users of the library and to students at other learning resources sites.

D.2) Library and information resources staff include qualified professional and technical support staff, with required specific competencies, whose responsibilities are clearly defined.

D.3) The institution provides appropriate orientation and training for use of these resources, as well as instruction in basic information literacy.

D.4) Library and information resources and services are organized to support the accomplishment of institutional mission and goals. Organizational arrangements recognize the need for service linkage among complementary resource bases (e.g., libraries, computing facilities, and instructional media).

D.5) The institution consults library and information resources staff in curriculum development.

D.6) The institution provides sufficient and consistent financial support for the effective maintenance and improvement of the institution's library, information resources, and services. It makes provision for their proper maintenance, preservation, currency, and security. It allocates resources for scholarly support services compatible with its instructional and research programs and the needs of faculty and students.

Supporting Documentation/evidences for Standard Four

The required exhibits for standard four are:

1. Printed materials that describe for students the hours and services of learning resources facilities such as libraries, computer labs, and audio-visual facilities.
2. Policies, regulations, and procedures for the development and management of library and information resources, including collection development and weeding.
3. Statistics on use of library and other learning resources.
4. Statistics on library collection and inventory of other learning resources.
5. Assessment measures utilized to determine the adequacy of facilities for the goals of the library and information resources and services.
6. Assessment measures to determine the adequacy of holdings, information resources and services to support the educational programs both on and off campus.
7. Data regarding number and assignments of library staff.

8. Chart showing the organizational arrangements for managing libraries and other information resources (e.g. computing facilities)
9. Comprehensive budget(s) for library and information resources.
10. Vitae of professional library staff.
11. Formal, written agreements with other libraries.
12. Computer usage statistics related to the retrieval of library resources.
13. Printed information describing user services provided by the computing facility.
14. Studies or documents describing the evaluation of library and information resources.

Specific Requirements to this Standard

i. College library

The following requirements are given for college/institution's library:

- The library of an academic institution must have enough lighting, ventilation, and must at least accommodate 25% of the institution's total number of students.
- The library must be equipped with recent and relevant books (preferably printed within the last ten years), journals, and other publications which have importance to the training programs offered in the institution.
- All library resources should be properly shelved and cataloged for ease of access/retrieval and reference.
- The availability of texts (reference books) must be comparable to the number of students. For a diploma student on average 35 text and supplementary books should be made available during his/her term of study. This may include resources stored in monographic or CD-Rom forms.
- The library must be open the whole day and there must be a librarian with a minimum of diploma and one assistant, giving services.

ii. Computer Center

An academic institution must have a computer center to provide practical computer trainings to students attending various fields in business and other related areas. The number of computer should be in the ratio of one computer to two students, and the computer center of an institution must at once accommodate a minimum of 20% of its total number of students. However, the number of students that an instructor can train at one time should not exceed 50.

Standard Five: Physical Resources

A) Instructional and Support Facilities

Sufficient physical resources, particularly instructional facilities, are designed, maintained, and managed (at both on- and off-campus sites) to achieve the institution's mission and goals.

A.1) The institution has sufficient and appropriate physical resources, including labs, network infrastructure, materials, equipment, and buildings and grounds, whether owned or rented; these are designed, maintained, and managed at both on- and off-campus sites to serve institutional needs as defined by its mission and purposes.

A.2) Classrooms, teaching halls/auditoriums and other instructional facilities are appropriately equipped/furnished and adequate in capacity.

A.3) The management, maintenance, and operation of instructional facilities are adequate to ensure their continuing quality and safety necessary to support the educational programs and support services of the institution.

A.4) Facilities are constructed and maintained in accordance with legal requirements to ensure access, safety, security, and a healthful environment with consideration for environmental and ecological concerns.

A.5) When programs are offered off the primary campus, the physical facilities at these sites are appropriate to the programs offered.

A.6) When facilities owned and operated by other organizations or individuals are used by the institution for educational purposes, the facilities should meet the stated standards.

B) Equipment and Materials

Equipment and teaching materials are sufficient in quality and amount to facilitate the achievement of educational goals and objectives of the institution.

B.1) Suitable equipment (including computing equipment) and teaching materials are provided and are readily accessible at on- and off-campus sites to meet educational and administrative requirements.

B.2) Equipment and materials are maintained in proper operating condition, are inventoried and controlled, and replaced or upgraded as needed.

C) Physical Resources Planning

Comprehensive physical resources planning occurs and is based upon the mission and goals of the institution.

C.1) The institution undertakes physical resource planning which is linked to academic and student services and financial planning. It determines the adequacy of existing physical resources and identifies and plans the specified resolution of deferred maintenance needs. Space planning occurs on a regular basis as part of physical resource evaluation and planning, and is consistent with the mission, purpose and long-range educational plan of the institution.

C.2) Physical resource planning addresses access to institutional facilities for special groups including the physically impaired and provides for appropriate security arrangements.

Supporting Documentation/ evidences for Standard Five

Supporting documents and exhibits received for this standard are:

1. Campus map, and/or, if applicable, other educational site maps.
2. Policy statements concerning access to campus for various institutional members, visitor information, security, and public safety.
3. Schedule for replacement of instructional equipment and examples of inventories which are maintained.
4. Campus facilities master plan and accompanying maps that indicate changes over the past several years.
5. Annual and long-term plans for remodeling, renovation, and major maintenance.
6. Major property additions or capital improvements during the past three years and those planned for the next three years.
7. Measures utilized to determine the adequacy of facilities for the institution's programs and services.

Specific Physical Facility/Building Setting Requirements

The building settings and designs of an academic institution must generally provide enough space and convenience, and specific requirements could vary depending on the type of trainings offered by the institution. The buildings may be constructed in accordance to the availability of raw materials and the area's weather condition.

More specifically the facility requirements that need to be met are: (a) a building or compound entirely occupied and used for academic purpose only; (b) sufficient lecture rooms, computer centers, language laboratories, auditorium, as required; (c) Library; (d) academic and administration offices; (e) multipurpose assembly hall; (f) Toilet (Male and Female separated); (g) fire extinguisher and other safety and security precautions; and (h) various playing grounds and sport fields as necessary

i. Preferred conditions of academic buildings

The buildings constructed/developed or selected for academic or training purposes should consider sufficient lighting, ventilation, and load carrying capacity of the building floor. The architectural and sight selection process should consider the following:

- a) Vehicle drive/path ways
- b) Proper utility services (Electric/powers, water supply, and telephone network)
- c) Landscape free (or protected) from potential risk of flood, storm, sewerage and other related catastrophes.

The space standard of the buildings per student/trainee varies depending on type of training provided by an academic institution. The specific space requirements for those institutions offering qualifications in business areas are given below.

Table 3: Space Standard for Buildings in m²

No.	Description/ places of work	Area standard: m ² per student; (m ² in total)
1.	Class Rooms/ Lecture Rooms	1.2
2.	Computer Center	2.2
3.	Assembly Hall	*(426)
5.	Library	** (103)
6.	Cafeteria	0.6

* space standards indicated in brackets represent total or aggregate space requirements.

** the space standard for library should be in such a way that 25% of the total number of students can be accommodated at once.

Source: Accreditation Directive, MoE

ii. Classroom Condition

ii. Classroom Condition

The space and number of classrooms must be comparable to the number of students admitted in a college. As indicated above each classroom should provide enough space (1.2m²/student), lighting, and proper ventilation. Table 4 indicates details of furniture requirements in a classroom.

Table 4: Class Room Furniture Requirement

No.	Item Description	Size in Cm.			
		Qty.	Length	Width	Height
1	Desk (student)	1	55	100	74
2	Table (instructor)	1	80	120	74
3	Chair (instructor)	1	40	56	78
4	Chair (student)	Equal to no. of students	35	35	77
5	Black Board	1	-	240	120
6	Notice Board	1	-	500	220

Source: Accreditation Directive, MoE

General Notes about the Standards

The standards and their respective indicators are not checklists, nor are they exhaustive; they are broad descriptions of the kind of concerns and issues the Ministry considers when making a holistic decision on each standard/criterion. Further the Ministry recognizes that some aspects of an institution are always stronger than others. Thus not every indicator may be critical for every institution; many institutions could include additional indicators of their success in fulfilling the standards/criteria.

Another point noted is that Meeting the Standards does not guarantee the quality of individual programs, courses, or graduates, but serious weaknesses in a particular area may threaten the institution's accreditation.

The Ministry ordinarily deals with institutional differences in ways designed to protect both educational quality and individual philosophy and practice. The Standards are essentially qualitative criteria that measure the institution's current state of educational effectiveness. They allow the Ministry to appraise a wide variety of institutions, differing in purpose, size,

organization, scope of program, clientele served, support, and control. By design, the Standards do not preclude perceptive and imaginative experimentation aimed at increasing the effectiveness of higher education.

Institutions whose policies, practices, or resources differ significantly from those described in the Standards for Accreditation must present evidence that these are appropriate to higher education, consistent with institutional mission and purposes, and effective in meeting the intent of the Ministry's Standards.

According to an official in the Ministry, the Standards for Accreditation are developed by adopting from international experiences and through a lengthy participatory process which involved experienced individuals and concerned members of the higher education sector.

4.5. SPECIFIC POLICIES RELATING TO INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION

4.5.1. Appeals Policy and Procedure

Appeals in General. An institution that is dissatisfied or aggrieved by the accreditation decision of the Ministry may appeal.

- A. The institution must give written notice of its intention to appeal within thirty (30) days of the institution's receipt of the accreditation decision.
- B. The notice of intention to appeal shall set forth the specific grounds for the request, and shall include a statement of the reasons for each ground, along with any other relevant statements or documents the institution desires to include.
- C. The notice of intention to appeal must be filed with the Vice Minister of the MoE and a copy provided to the director of the evaluation and accreditation committee that made the decision being appealed.
- D. Upon appeal, the prior status of the institution, if any, shall be restored pending disposition of the appeal.

Actions Which May Be Appealed. The Ministry provides institutions the opportunity to appeal all adverse actions including :

- A. denial of candidacy;
- B. termination of candidacy;
- C. denial of advancement to accredited status;
- D. termination of accredited status.

Grounds for Appeal. An appeal shall be based on one or more of the following grounds:

- A. the evaluation committee and/or the Ministry made substantial errors or omissions in carrying out prescribed procedures which affected the decision of accreditation;
- B. the evidence before the Ministry at the time the accrediting decision was made was materially in error;
- C. the decision of the Ministry was not adequately supported by the facts before it at the time, or it was contrary to the substantial weight of evidence before the Ministry.

Vice Minister's Role. In handling properly filed appeals, the Vice Minister of the MoE appoints a special Appeal Board to consider the grievance and designate a chair.

The Vice Minister then sets the date, time, and place of the Appeal Board. The hearing will be no later than one hundred twenty (120) days after receipt of the appeal and at least thirty (30) days' notice of the hearing will be given to the parties in writing.

In carrying out its duties the Appeal Board:

- A. considers the grounds for the appeal as alleged by the institution;
- B. studies the evidence submitted by the institution in support of its allegation;
- C. considers the report of the evaluation committee, the institution's response, and other supporting statements and documents;
- D. prepare a report of the meeting of the Appeal Board, including a final judgment of the Board, within twenty (20) days after the end of the hearing; and
- E. forward a record to the Vice Minister, including a report of the hearing of the Appeal Board, the appeal filed by the applicant, and other relevant statements and documents considered by the Board.

4.5.2. Conflict of Interest and Evaluation Committee

Conflict of Interest

In carrying out its accreditation responsibilities, the evaluation committee of the Ministry seeks to ensure that its decisions are based solely on the application of professional judgment to the information resulting from its evaluation procedures. Therefore, it seeks to avoid both the reality and the appearance of a conflict of interest.

The conflict of interest is defined as:

a circumstance in which an individual's capacity to make an impartial or unbiased accreditation decision may be affected because of prior, current,

or anticipated institutional affiliation(s), other significant relationship(s) or association(s) with the institution under review.

The following are examples of affiliations identified by the Ministry that can be disclosed for discussion and evaluation.

- ☛ employee, former employee, board member, appointee, consultant, or graduate;
- ☛ having a close relative affiliated with the institution under review;
- ☛ sought or seeking a position at the institution under review;
- ☛ knowledge or personal interest concerning the institution under review from whatever source, including competitive geographical proximity, which might prejudice decision-making.

Evaluation Committee Members

In selecting evaluation committees, the Ministry avoids individuals who have, or appear to have, a conflict of interest in participating in a specific institutional review. However, the Ministry also recognizes that it is not possible to be aware of all circumstances where a conflict, or the appearance of a conflict, may obtain. Therefore, institutions, in reviewing proposed evaluation committees, are encouraged to bring to the attention of the Ministry any conflicts of interest or the appearance of such. Individuals invited to participate in the evaluation process are also expected to decline to serve in the evaluation of an institution where they have, or where it might reasonably appear that they have, a conflict of interest; potential evaluators are expected to disclose possible conflicts or appearance of conflict to the Ministry.

In addition, an evaluator is expected to refrain from serving as a consultant, paid or otherwise. The Ministry also views as conflict of interest an evaluator's intent to use an institutional evaluation visit as an opportunity to seek employment.

One important approach stated by the Ministry official to deal with conflict of interest is the separation of duties. He stated that staff responsible for managing the accreditation process and for ensuring that all policies and procedures are carried out fairly should not engage in the evaluation of institutions, nor should it take responsibility for operating the accreditation process at individual institutions. However, it may be responsible for providing advice and assistance on request, and could otherwise also be involved in developing and providing services to assist institutions in structuring their own use of accreditation procedures. And he said, this is partly what the Ministry is trying to do with

the establishment of the Quality and Relevance Assurance Agency (QRAA) in the near future.

4.5.3. Public Disclosure of Information Regarding Type of Accreditation Granted, Criteria, Accreditation Procedures

The Ministry makes publicly available through published proclamations, accreditation directives, newsletters, and other publications the following information:

1. Each type of accreditation and preaccreditation granted by the Ministry;
2. The Ministry's procedures for applying for accreditation or preaccreditation;
3. The criteria and procedures used by the Ministry for determining whether to grant, reaffirm, reinstate, deny, restrict, revoke, or take any other action related to each type of accreditation and preaccreditation that it grants;
4. The institutions that the Ministry currently accredits or preaccredits and the date when the Ministry will review or reconsider the accreditation or preaccreditation of each institution.

4.6. VIEWS OF PHEIS ON THE QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION PRACTICES OF THE MINISTRY

For purpose of enriching the scope of analysis and understanding on the present system of accreditation of the Ministry, this section has incorporated responses and views obtained from academic deans of four major PHEIs found in Addis.

The institutions are:

- St. Mary's College (1991)
- Unity University College (1991)
- Admas College (1991)
- Royal College (1992)

They are all accredited institutions primarily offering qualifications in Business, law, and IT.

The researcher believes that the views obtained from these institutions may not represent the entire private higher education system in country, but they still could reasonably enhance the perspective for making assessments and evaluation on the present accreditation system of the ministry.

In many respects or areas of inquiry considerable similarities have been observed on the responses of the academic deans interviewed. For convenience, an attempt is made to present

the responses under different classes, principally framed in accordance to the interview questions directed to the academic deans. The study presents open-ended questions so that respondents can freely give their opinions about the strengths of practices, weaknesses of practices, weaknesses of practices and recommendation to improve.

Principal purpose of quality assurance and accreditation

Based on the responses obtained from the academic deans, accreditation has two fundamental purposes: to clarify the quality of the institution or program and to assist in the improvement of the institution or program. When seen from the Ministry's side, however, the academic deans have commented that accountability tends to predominate over improvement as the fundamental process for accreditation, unlike their internal process which tend to be linked to continuous quality improvement and innovation.

In principles they stated that the institution of higher education could benefit from accreditation through:

- a) the (external) stimulus for self-evaluation and self-directed institutional improvement;
- b) the strengthening of institutional and program self-evaluation by the (external) review and counsel provided through the accrediting body;
- c) the application of criteria of accrediting bodies, generally accepted throughout higher education, which help guard against external encroachments harmful to institutional or program quality by providing benchmarks independent of forces that impinge on individual institutions;
- d) the enhancing of the reputation of an accredited institution because of public regard for accreditation;
- e) the use of accreditation as one means by which an institution can gain eligibility for the participation of itself and its students in certain programs of governmental aid to postsecondary education; accreditation is also usually relied upon by private foundations as a highly desirable indicator of institutional and program quality.

According to Ato Tedla (Academic Dean of St. Mary's College) quality assurance involves more than the enforcement of agreed standards of operation. The standards the Ministry develops and uses to inspect and evaluate institutions and programs are important, but are minimum criteria. He stated that educators should strive for more than basic recognition. The

aim should be to achieve and work for excellence (a far less definable goal but an important one).

The others also share the idea of excellence by stating that quality is not actually defined by regulations or negotiated standards. It ranges from the achievement of good results in traditional areas and processes to innovations that advance the state of art.

Another important point raised is that accreditation by itself is not a guarantee for quality education. Lessons from world experience have indicated time and again that many institutions exist with no accreditation status and yet providing a much better quality education than those working with accreditation certificate.

Naturally, market forces ensure that those institutions that deliver outstanding quality education will make profit and those that are not able to match this quality will incur losses and be forced out of the market by a process of natural selection. According to Ato Yibrah (Academic Dean of Admas College), there exists no better check-and-balance mechanism as to the quality of education than that of the market.

He views in circumstances where there are many providers of education, the competition in the private sector itself is able to ensure that standards of education are maintained. In fact he stated that the people's eyes are not open to the fact that the cost of ignorance is immeasurable and cannot be compared with the cost of tuition in higher educational institutions. So, they are ready to pay reasonable amounts of money to acquire high quality education.

Need for an Independent Accreditation Body

Regarding to opinions about who should do accreditation and how, all the respondents have strongly shown their position and preference for the need to shift the accreditation responsibility from the MoE to an independent organization/body, or else the need to involve self-evaluating and peer evaluation before MoE is to assume the task of accreditation.

In a free market economy and Liberal practice, the government's role and relationship with higher education institutions should become more indirect than direct, more supervisory than interventionist. It does not mean that the role of the state is less important, but rather than continuing to be the main, if not exclusive financier and provider in the higher education

sector, the most important responsibility of the state should increasingly stress on the development of an enabling policy framework.

With this sense, therefore, it becomes high time for the government to establish an independent organization that will take charge of accreditation of both government and private higher institutions. This is necessary in order to strengthen the transparency and accountability of both the government and the private institutions of learning. The respondents stressed that the accreditation institution should not in any way be directly responsible to the Ministry of Education, so as to make its work free and fair. The institution should be given the power to determine which higher institution should run which course and the criteria should be made very clear to all stakeholders.

It is also recommended to see ways where professional associations could be permitted to handle specialized accreditation responsibilities for specific programs and fields of study. There is no doubt that the associations can clearly understand and set standards which would ensure the requirements for accreditation are closely related to the current requirements for professional practice.

Opinions on the Accreditation Standards

Respondents are more skeptical about the achievability of standards to validity of the standards. According to Ato Abdul Razak (Academic Dean of Royal College) the accreditation standards are highly ambitious and unrealistic considering the present condition of the country. He is so particular for instance about the staff profile requirement where they are even infeasible at the moment in some accredited public institutions.

According to the view forwarded by the other respondents, the standards set are very much high that, if they were strictly followed, no PHEI today could have secured accreditation. The implementation by the MoE has geared up the minimum standards into maximum standards.

The respondents stated that the directive has of course solved the problem of arbitrariness which was a problem before the issuance of the directive. In addition they indicated that it is a positive thing that the government has been reasonably lax (flexible) in enforcing the standards. With this respect it can be stated that the accreditation system of the ministry has taken more of developmental position as contrasted to exposing of and acting against poor quality (a fault finder approach).

Nonetheless, respondents have reservations about having common minimum standard set for both private HEIs and public HEIs. Private HEIs are not an equal footing with public HEIs, even if common role is played. Basic disparities are obvious between the two sub- sectors in terms of evolution (year of establishment/experience), finance, student profile, and societal attitude (established reputation for public institutions). With this considerable disparity, it becomes less pragmatic to set a common standard for both types of institutions. Perhaps, the manifestation of flexibility by the MoE in giving effect to the standards may be a sort of redress to the existing disparity. But respondents stated that why the need to set regulations prone to implementation in the first place.

Process and Procedures of Accreditation

The majority of respondents have the opinion that the process of accreditation is long and time consuming. According to the respondents this problem is attributed to lack of separate accrediting body and shortage of skilled/experienced personnel. It has been indicated that the accreditation process is being handled by members of the Ministry who are assigned to do the job as additional task to their ordinary office works. This situation coupled with the flooding of accreditation requests coming from continuously emerging institutions, has brought the Ministry to a position where it is now 'totally incapacitated' to properly handle the job.

The regulations and procedures for the accreditation process are not strictly followed. The respondents indicated that sites visits are mostly done as per the convenience of the officials and results for accreditation are communicated long after making applications. These have put the institutions in a difficult position where they have to wait for extended time after making significant investment in the educational sector. According to Ato Tariku (Faculty Dean of Unity University College) results for accreditation may sometimes be granted late after the advantage is lost; that is after instructors are hired but student market is lost. This is 'a very disappointing situation' he said.

It has been indicated by some respondents that the pre-accreditation approach seems to partly solve the delay problem in the accreditation process. But even with this system, it is stated that the cut-off date for applications is not properly communicated, and once the application date is lost the institutions are forced to wait for the next term.

In many respects there is lack of transparency in the system; the medium of communication used is so narrow that the institutions' officials are in many cases forced to directly go in person to the Ministry to address their requests and problems.

Government/Ministry Support to PHEIs

As it has been stated by all the respondents, support from the government/Ministry do not go beyond providing of curricula guides, issuing of regulations and directives, and probably the lax attitude it has shown in enforcing the standards at the initial stage. There may also be some special incentive cases where allocation of land at concession rate, and reduction of tax on machinery, equipment and other educational resources are observed. But in most respects the respondents have indicated that their colleges are not given any substantial support from the government which, on the other hand, controls their standards, and other expansion initiatives. They said the intervention would have been worthwhile if some kind of support through financial assistance and subsidies had been considered.

It is the idea of all respondents that the government should understand the responsibilities that PHEIs are shouldering. PHEIs have created access, new opportunities and possibilities for those who didn't have any or all of these. PHEIs now share the responsibility of the government in creating a highly trained work force with no financial and special aid accorded to them. All of these suggest that PHEIs can no longer be considered as a 'marginal academic appendix' to the public sector. The government should begin to treat the emerging PHEIs more as reliable partners (አጋሮች) than as rivals, and as an alternative than as an addition to the existing higher education system. It should thus continue to stimulate private efforts in promoting higher education in Ethiopia.

It is also indicated that regulations that the government issue should be done in the same spirit and in consultation with PHEIs which should be given an important place as stakeholders. Such regulations should also consider the effect that they might have on the existence and eventual growth of the sector.

Another areas indicated where government assistance could be accorded is in the area of faculty training. The government's effort in expanding post-graduate programmes indirectly enhances the faculty profile of PHEIs as it creates the available workforce. On top of this, it is stated that the government should create opportunities for faculty members and leaders of

PHEIs to further their studies, join seminars and training courses, and secure government scholarships.

As a final remark, the respondents stated that providing encouragements (though moral and material incentives) to institution already established and accredited, can inspire others that have just sprouted and are on the process of accreditation to emulate fore runners, and thereby minimizing the burden of the government.

4.7. PHEIs: Threats and Challenges

Many of the challenges facing the Ethiopian PHEIs are similar to those confronting the public institutions, though often in different ways and magnitude. Some of these major challenges and threats are outlined below.

Financing PHEIs. one special characteristic that distinguishes private challenges from the public ones is the fact that private institutions are funded by their own efforts.

The Ethiopian PHEIs scenario is best defined by an exclusive reliance on student tuition fees. This trend may continue for years to come as currently there exist no policy program to institute a mechanism where by government assistance can be infused. To a large extent the business sector has not yet acquired the strength and the culture to provide contributions and donations to PHEIs. Any danger with regard to finance will have thus to be met by the PHEIs themselves.

Issue of quality and relevance. Many PHEIs in Ethiopia concentrate in fields of study relatively in expensive to offer or fields that are in high demand and have rather rapid pay-off in the job market. Natural and physical sciences, engineering, and technology remain largely peripheral, however much they are core to national development.

Private higher education institutions in this sense face the challenge of offering diverse disciplines if they want the status of universities and higher learning institutions of repute.

Similarly whether or not many of the private institutions will attract top students, a pressing challenge is to exchange traditional curriculum development for new and innovate models. If they are to provide real program differentiation, private institutions need to determine social needs and develop curricula accordingly. Such curricula should then withstand the proof of quality maintenance and assurance while continuing to adapt

to local needs and labor market demands. Broadly, the private institutions seek to strive for international competitiveness with curricula that take cognizance of universal graduate standards. In the midst of these challenges, some institutions grapple with requirements of their owners, who often interfere with governance, recruitment of personnel, and academic progress.

Infrastructure Problems. PHEIs in Addis or in Ethiopia for that matter face similar infrastructure problems. One of these problems is the acquisition of buildings in a manner that suits the institutions. Most of the Ethiopian PHEIs function in buildings rented. There are only few institutions, which work on their own buildings. Many spend huge amount of money for this purpose. Most of the buildings have not been constructed for educational purposes and thus lack the needed size and comfort. Among the public opinions gathered by the MoE (2003) the following relate to such problems.

- Some institutions share a compound or building with other offices/or institutions, and in many cases the buildings rented are exposed to traffic noises.
- There is also lack of sufficient and convenient place where students can meet and spend time together after class.

Related to the issue of buildings is the problem of equipment and facilities. Where buildings are not able to support the required facilities, and people renting the buildings feel reluctant to go through the setting up of proper conditions for installation, it appears difficult to use equipment and facilities.

The other infrastructural problem noticed in Ethiopian PHEIs relate with the availability of books and resources in the libraries. The public opinion gathered by the MoE cites the following related issues as weaknesses of PHEIs in Ethiopia.

- Many institutional libraries are not well organized in terms of shelving, cataloging, and users' ease of accesses and retrieval.
- All are with a very limited number of books and spaces compared to the number of students they accommodate.
- Many of the library books and resources are in poor conditions, most are of old editions and lack relevance to the type of education and training provided by the institutions.

Faculty. One other impediment to the success of PHEIs is related to hiring highly qualified faculty on permanent basis. Especially in countries like Ethiopia where skilled staff is considered to be meager, it appears difficult to employ faculty at a level that the institutions require.

Despite the rules of the MoE which requires that seventy percent of faculty should be permanently employed, most of the PHEIs have especially at their initial stage relied on part-time staff. The experience of many shows that the private institutions are forced to engage mostly part-time professors who are reluctant to leave the security of their full-time positions at public universities for risky private-sector jobs.

The lack of staff development strategies have largely ensured continued reliance on public institutions for trained staff. This is 'self-crippling' to the sustainability of quality; a problem many private institutions are actually aware because some of their personnel are retired professors from public institutions. Some critics, however, regard employment of retired professors as an indictment of quality. There is often steam from fear of change and competition on the part of mainstream institutions. Indeed, improvement of quality education and services can make private HEIs better alternative to public institutions.

Other challenges. Other challenges facing PHEIs are:

- i. *Government regulations:* (strict regulations and cumbersome institutional governance discourage innovation and change).
- ii. *Public/societal attitude:* a notion that profit motive of PHEIs undermining quality; studies show that public post secondary institutions are by far the first choice of the people.
- iii. *Low student profit:* public institutions enjoy selected/screened best students, leaving behind relatively weaker students to the private institutions.
- iv. *Lag from information technology, and problems of co-ordination.* The private public partnership in the provision of higher education and the establishment of closer collaboration between the work place and training institutions are tasks that are left ahead.

As a final point it is important to note that information and knowledge lead the world economy of the 21st century. Private institutions, and the higher education sector in general, will need to adapt to the new realities. The PHEIs will be called on to produce the competent and highly trained personnel required not only for national development but also to ensure communication with the rest of the international community. The institutions will be forced to be many things at the same time. They will be called on to serve local needs while operating as part of the international knowledge system. They will be pulled in different directions while attempting to launch their own communities in to orbit in the vital global political, social, and economic universe.

Chapter Five

Summary, Conclusion, and Recommendation

5.1. SUMMARIES AND CONCLUSIONS

Quality and quality assurance have become key issues for higher education internationally in the 1990s. The quality assurance movement has sprung from a variety of factors. Particularly important have been community and government concern about academic standards and the levels of achievement of graduates in a time of major expansion/enrollment/in students numbers associated with a decreasing (trend in) government funding support per student unit. The quality assurance effort has also been driven by the impact of increased international competitiveness, the need for increased mobility of professional labor, demands for greater accountability by public institutions, concerns related to expansion of private higher education, and pressure from employers and the professionals for higher education courses to become more relevant to work place needs. Issues of quality and accountability thus have become key elements in the efforts of many countries, including Ethiopia, to become and remain internationally competitive in a world where interdependence in trade is rapidly growing. As craft (1994, pvii) points out:

'Globalization' and international migration mean that academic and professional qualifications need to be 'portable' across national borders, and so both institutions and nation states are keen to learn more about each other's procedures for assuring the quality of tertiary education provision.

This fact has urged the adoption by governments of mechanisms to achieve more control over the work that higher education institutions do.

In Ethiopia the quality assurance of higher education (system) has particularly become of great importance as a result of increased government policy emphasis on competition, market forces and encouragement of private providers, which in turn resulted in community concern about the possibility of quality being sacrificed in the search for profits.

The Ethiopian PHEIs basically have attracted both the public interest and mistrust. Many have admitted the opportunities they have created and the gates they have opened. Many others have abhorred them as 'diploma mills' and 'Certificate shops'. Notwithstanding

the hurdles and challenges they face, the private institutions continued to grow in number from time to time. This rapid proliferation of PHEIs is commonly attributed to the growing demand of higher education exceeding the supply of public higher education and the ambivalent attitude that the government has assumed over the last couple of years.

Among other things the Ethiopian PHEIs are blamed for offering similar lines of training (issue of relevance), concentrating in fields of study relatively inexpensive to offer or fields that are in high demand, and have rather rapid pay-off in the job market. In terms of the quality of trainings offered also studies by the Ministry indicated that the institutions have not been without problems. The fact that many have grown from language schools and computer centers with limited human, financial and material resources must have contributed to the lack of quality in their provision.

In view of certifying the quality of higher education and providing public assurance of the external evaluation of institutions' compliance to standards, the MoE recently issued a directive on the nomination, standard evaluation and accreditation of higher education institutions. Despite the directive sets minimum standards of higher education and accreditation for both private and public institutions, response obtained from the Ministry official is a clear indication that the directive was basically enacted to regulate and react on private HEI. According to the official, " the urgency of the need to issue the directive is attributable to the radical and rampant participation/involvement of the private sector in higher education.

To issue on accreditation permit to PHEIs, the MoE (which is the sole accrediting authority in the country) evaluates program/curriculum effectiveness, staff profile, physical facility, financial viability and other attributes against the standard set in the directive. The accreditation system has two phases, pre-accreditation temporarily granted for one year and full-fledged accreditation to be provided later. The one-year gap between the two phases is necessitated for the Ministry to make proper inquiry and evaluation for the sake of quality assurance. Till then, institutions can without delay run their activities by the temporary pre-accreditation permit.

The views obtained from academic deans of some PHEIs as well as prior studies done on accreditation matters demonstrate that the Ministry's quality assurance and accreditation effort tend to predominantly stress on accountability over concerns for improvement and

renewal. In this respect the respondents indicated that quality is about a change in culture, which involves a slow process of evolution. The dominant 'delegated accountability' approach to 'quality' that emphasizes 'procedures' and 'list of standard' has led to a degree of 'skepticism' about 'quality' that is counter productive in the development of a quality culture with in the private institutions. The respondents stated that it is crucial that both regulatory and procedural balances are reached. An environment must be created that neither suffocates educationally sound and sustainable private institutions with state over regulations and standards, nor allows a plethora of poor quality unsustainable operators into the higher education market.

Below is presented the summary of responses obtained for the interview questions directed to the academic deans of selected PHEIs: (for convenience, attempts are made to present responses in terms of strengths and weaknesses of the present accreditation system of the ministry)

Summary of Responses Obtained from Academic Deans of Selected PHEIs

❖ Strengths

A) Development concern

- Encourages the involvement and growth of PHEIs (ambivalent attitude).
- Takes more of a developmental position.
- Considers state policy priorities; address national demands, and diversified interest.
- Considers equity of access, success, redress, and affordability.
- Promote enrollment figure of students.

B) Regulation

- Provides organized/structured document for the regulation of higher education.
- Assistance in terms of issuing curricula guides, regulations, and directives.
- Solves problem of arbitrariness.
- Directive sets minimum standards and plays a regulatory role.
- Provides quality assurance to the public.
- Moderate regulatory aspect.

C) Procedure

- Standards clearly and timely communicated.
- Lax attitude in enforcing the standards.
- Flexibility of the system (issue accreditation up on 80% or even below fulfillment of standards).
- Two-phase accreditation system. Pre-accreditation solve possible delay problems in the accreditation process.

D) Market Orientation and Institutional Autonomy

- Encourage competitive environment.
- Provide room for market forces to regulate cost of PHEIs.
- Ensure that there is increased management autonomy for PHEIs. Respects institutions' autonomy in terms of human resource management, financial administration, and institutional relationship and links.

❖ Weaknesses

A) Structure

- Emphasis on accountability and recognition over concern for excellence, improvement and renewal.
- Lack of continuous evaluation and supervision.
- Unrealistic and ambitious standards
- Set common minimum standards for both private and public higher education institutions (neglects elements of disparity between the two)
- In consistency in enforcing the standards and requirements over private and public institutions. Absence of equal ground and fair dealings for PHEIs to cope with their public counter parts.
- Encourages 'best' students to go to public colleges and universities.

B) Support and Consultation

- Lack of support in terms of financial, faculty training, and other education inputs to PHEIs
- Tendency of viewing established PHEIs as rivals instead of reliable partners.

- The consultation and cooperative mode of the system is not well developed. Virtually no grounds provided for symposiums, seminars, and workshops where important stakeholders of the education sector meet and discuss.

C) Procedures and processes

- Absence of independent/separate accrediting body.
- Professional associations not permitted to participate in the accreditation process.
- Lack of capacity in handling the accreditation job.
- Shortage of skilled/experienced personnel to process accreditation (office workers of the Ministry doing the job)
- Regulations and procedures not strictly followed (opens gates for great differences among accredited institutions)
- Site visits done as per convenience of the officials. Not enough staff to go to different places for accreditation.
- Accreditation process too long. Results communicated long after application is made.
- No ready made application form is provided

D) Others

- Lack of transparency in the system.
- Narrow medium of communication used
- Notion that profit and education are incompatible.

❖ Challenges identified in PHE System

- Finance (exclusive reliance on student tuition fees)
- Constraints in providing program differentiation and offering diverse disciplines (mainly due to absence of established curriculums).
- Difficulties in exchanging traditional curriculum for new, relevant and innovative models.
- Public mistrust. Stigmatic (pessimistic) societal attitude.
- Dominance and established reputation of public institutions.

- Infrastructure problems.
- Shortage of full-time qualified faculty
- Low student profile (public institutions enjoy selected students)
- Government regulations
- Lag from information technology and international standards.

5.2. RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Following recommendations and suggestions are forwarded on the present condition of private higher education system and the MoE's quality assurance and accreditation practices; the recommendations are mainly based on lessons drawn from international experiences as well as the responses and views obtained from the academic deans of surveyed PHEIs.

- *Viewing Quality as a process.* Educational quality does not depend on system inputs, such as infrastructure, student-instructor ratios, and on curricular content alone. Therefore, more attention should be paid to the educational *process*- how instructors/teachers and administrators use inputs to frame meaningful learning experiences for students. Thus, continuous professional learning of instructors, instructors' competence and work efficiency, relevant on-going professional development, continuous support for student-centered learning, instructors' working conditions, supervision and support services should be strengthened. It should be made sure that the learning environment, content and process that learners encounter are expected to meet the national goals and profiles set in the policy.

To ensure that the quality of education is not only sustained, but also is strengthened, instructors and other educational personnel at various levels need to be provided with manuals, teaching aids and other support materials required to effectively implement the curriculum. To also make higher education relevant and maintain its quality, special attention must be given to academic preparation, research capacity and teaching experience of the academic staff. Thus, pedagogical training, refresher and staff exchange programs, both locally and

internationally, need to be strengthened and expanded in the present private higher education system.

In similar sense, when we talk about quality of education in terms of input, process, and out put of the education system, it is important to realize that the output of one educational level becomes the input of the next level. With out sound primarily and secondary system the higher education has no solid basis. To improve the quality of education, therefore, we need to overhaul the whole system and not just tinker with certain parts of the system. This can be done through maintaining greater vertical integration among programs ranging from, technical and vocational, secondary and all levels of higher education. The need to maintain an efficient vertical integration between different sectors of education to meet economic development needs, compels further expansion of higher education in terms of its intake capacity and diversity of the programs offered.

- *Development of enabling policy framework, standards and regulations.* Even if the Higher Education proclamation appreciates maximum role of PHEIs, some regulatory impediments, ambitious standards, and bulky procedures make this role illusory. Of course, the government has the duty to project the consumer through regulatory aspects on PHEIs by issuing polices, regulations and quality standards. But the regulations and standards should neither be loose nor strict/tight. Both extremes do not work. Standards and regulations should be fair, flexible, moderate and reasonable. They should encourage competitive climate, promote innovation, and enhance quality with a sense of transparency and accountability. Especially in a market driven economy that we now confront policy frames and standards should seek to balance and give room for the market to regulate.

The Ethiopian government presently employs a dualistic approach, using input of policies and regulations along with market forces, in its regulatory aspect. The government particularly employs the input of the market in regulating the cost of PHEIs. The dualistic approach being used at the moment is recommendable. However, even with this approach used, the excessive procedures and state regulatory aspects have certain repercussions on the prospect and quality of

PHEIs. Particularly the bulky procedures and 'unrealistic' accreditation standards that do not take in to account elements of disparity between public HEIs and private HEIs are impediments worth lifting or improving upon detail research analysis. Or else, incentives and other required supports should balance certain impediments so that fair and equal playing fields would be created for PHEIs when coping with their public counterparts.

- *Providing of appropriate government support and encouragement.* Currently, the Ethiopian education package manifests significant government absorption of higher education and seems to under score the role of private higher education institutions in the expansion of the sector. In this regard, some degree of incoherence is observed with some of the provisions of the general educational policy and the proclamation on Higher Education, where these instruments apprehend the need for maximum role of the private sector in higher education. It doesn't of course mean that the government should not invest much on higher education, but the issue is the government should also open a wider gate to the maximum participation of the private sector in meeting the ever-rising social demand for higher education. In a country such as Ethiopia where the sector is negligible in its development, where there is a huge demand for graduates, and where not only the current but also the future demand for highly trained personnel to serve the public sector as well as the growing business sector is large, it will be a dire necessity to develop, encourage and support investment on higher education.

Despite the complementary role that the private institutions are now playing in creating access, new opportunities and possibilities in higher education, it has been indicated that the institutions do not receive any substantial government support towards their effort in providing quality education and meeting required standards.

The assistance that the government could offer to PHEIs should extend from issuing regulations and directives. Government intervention would be worthwhile if some kind of support through financial assistance and subsidies, tax reduction, promotion, faculty training through seminars and government scholarships are provided. At the same time for quality effort to materialize and grow conducive

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Despite the complementary role that the private institutions are now playing in creating access, new opportunities and possibilities in higher education, it has been indicated that the institutions do not receive any substantial government support towards their effort in providing quality education and meeting required standards.

The assistance that the government could offer to PHEIs should extend from issuing regulations and directives. Government intervention would be worthwhile if some kind of support through financial assistance and subsidies, tax reduction, promotion, faculty training through seminars and government scholarships are provided. At the same time for quality effort to materialize and grow conducive

policy environment and transparent work procedures should be created for PHEIs to secure land, obtain license and appropriate information and technical support.

Moreover, the regulations and standards that the government issue should be done in the same spirit and in consultation with PHEIs which should be given an important place as stakeholders and reliable partners in the existing higher education system.

- *Participation of Relevant Stakeholders.* Participation of all relevant stakeholders from the time policies emanate, develop and are implemented is important for the success of achieving the quality goals set out. In this respect, transparency in the overall undertaking is of paramount importance to bring on board the many skeptical academics or members of the higher education community and the public at large. Active involvement and participation at all stages will develop and ensure ownership of the quality agenda. It will also assist in inculcating creativity and innovation, and facilitate mobilization of the community for successful implementation of the quality initiatives.

Participation should go as deep as the level of department heads at institutional level, the beneficiary students, parents, opinion leaders and the public at large.

- *Other suggestions forwarded by the PHEIs*

- ⇒ The private institutions recommended that the purpose of accreditation should basically be that of encouragement and facilitation as well as improvement and renewal rather than that of control and accountability so that the institutions can feel more confident and responsible for what they do.
- ⇒ The institutions also recommended that alternative accreditation agency should be established to take over the responsibility of accreditation. They all stated with a common word that the issue of accreditation need to be a joint venture forth coming from different stakeholders and that it can't be left to the province of either the state or owners. More specifically respondents indicated the involvement of credible citizens, private professionals and associations, government bodies, and other experts.
- ⇒ It is also recommended that the government/ MOE should be less demanding in its expectations and should set reasonable criteria for assessment. Moreover, it should

evaluate institutions on the basis of their own experiences rather than adhering to normative assessment every time. No matter how the assessment is conducted, it should focus on the process; not just on input and output. The assessment should also be continuous and should be complimented with all necessary support.

⇒ In addition, there is long and arduous task to pass through varied process in getting the accreditation certificate. Thus, it is imperative to revisit and improve the legal and organizational frame-works of the Ministry. Particularly the MoE should upgrade its capacity in terms of manpower and organizational matters, and should try to learn a lot from international experiences.

Suggested improvements on part of PHEIs

Ethiopian PHEIs, as their counterparts in other parts of the world, face considerable challenge of ensuring that the emerging sector is effective, well managed, and serving national goals. This requires an overall evaluation of their current capacities and future abilities.

- *Diversifying financial resources.* Among other things the PHEIs need to diversify and strengthen their financial resources. As a strategy to diversify financial resources, as well as meeting community services, the PHEIs should seek multiple income generating activities such as short courses, contract research, consultancy services, bookshops, publishing houses, cafeteria, and other possible sources. The PHEIs should also attempt to forge links with industries and productions units in order to generate physical and financial resources. To anticipate positive results for their income generation efforts, PHEIs should also learn to allocate resources they generate mainly on educational purposes that would ensure improvement in their infrastructure, and staff and faculty profiles.
- *Creating link/relationships.* PHEIs ought to develop strong relationships and cooperation among each other, and with public institutions. In addition to the leverage that the cooperation might offer it could allow to put national resources to optimum utilization. PHEIs can initiate teacher exchange programs, exchange or share of resources and facilities as well as joint-research projects which could enhance their development and capacity.

PHEIs also need to understand and address the needs of employers, (i.e., the productive sectors and industries in the economy). This requires communication

and cooperation between the employers and educational leaders. An ongoing dialogue between employers and PHEIs is necessary if students are to excel in their chosen careers; if current and future businesses are to be competitive in an increasingly complex national and worldwide economy; and if the state is to emerge as one of national and international multi-industrial strength. Ideally, employers would work with PHEIs to address mutual issues such as training assessment, on-the-job training (apprenticeship), financial aid programs that enhance access to education, changing technology, and the impact of globalization on education and business.

Effective institutions are also open to international exchanges (links) and rely on sound evaluation mechanisms for assessing and improving the quality of teaching and research.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS/ LESSONS FROM INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

In reviewing recent international practice with regard to the management of quality assurance, especially for academic activities, the following observations can be pointed out:

- ④ In many countries, the main emphasis at the national level has been on academic audits and institutional evaluations, and reviews of disciplines and professional areas. The current experimentation seems likely to continue, especially with the effects of increased trends towards globalization and increased economic competition between nations. Many of the experiments appear to have produced positive benefits, including improvements in academic programs, closer links with employers and professions, and increased confidence among key stakeholders. On the other hand, questions are being asked about the financial and administrative costs of quality assurance mechanisms in relation to the benefits derived.
- ④ As a result of the experimentation of the past decade, there is now a growing body of experience and evidence available about how well different approaches are working in particular settings. Such information can be of considerable assistance to national higher education systems or institutions interesting in developing new quality assurance systems, or modifying existing systems. One lesson to be learnt is that great care should be taken in selecting mechanisms likely to enhance credibility both nationally and internationally and in estimating resource implications. A number of the methodologies in use can prove expensive to implement in terms of both personnel time and financial resources, although with most methodologies there are usually ways of keeping administrative costs in check, at least to some extent. (See Appendix C for different approaches of quality assurance)
- ④ International experience demonstrates well the value of placing a major emphasis on quality improvement within a quality assurance program. While most quality assurance programs quite understandably have accountability as a major driving requirement, it is highly desirable that all quality assurance programs be deliberately designed to achieve improvement and renewal.

Ⓕ) In order to succeed and produce major benefits at either institutional or system levels, any quality assurance program needs the support of the higher education community. In particular, the benefits will be disappointingly limited unless academic and administrative staff can be persuaded to participate and provide support. Gaining this support may not be easy, since in a number of the recently introduced quality assurance programs academics have seen the particular initiative as constituting a threat to their professional independence and work.

Ⓕ) In developing a new quality assurance program or evaluating an existing program, the following criteria are suggested as constituting highly desirable features:

- The purposes of the program are explicitly stated, with the overall direction fitting well with the culture and values of the particular system or institution;
- Approaches and methodologies are congruent with the stated purposes of the program, and likely to be cost effective and attract the support of staff;
- The methodology incorporates elements of self-study, peer review, and external reporting;
- Guidelines are clear and provide for a transparent process, where judgments will be based on analysis of evidence and the procedures will be fair to all parties involved;
- Guidelines provide for checklists to assist review panels, and for the institution or unit being reviewed to have input into the choice of external panel members;
- Administrative arrangements provide for an overseeing committee or group to have responsibility for the organization of any review, including the appointment of panels, and review of the reports of panels;
- Clear external reporting arrangements are specified in the guidelines, or the procedures provide for reporting arrangements to be agreed by the parties concerned prior to commencement of any review; and
- The program places major emphasis on improvement, renewal and the application of 'good practice'.

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Important Webs

<http://www.chea.org>

<http://www.dest.gov>

<http://www.che.ac.za>

<http://www.esib.org>

Appendix A

Interview Questions Directed to Head of the Accreditation and Certification office in the MoE

Please answer all questions with reference to private business colleges

1. How long has it been since the MoE started to implement the quality assurance and accreditation practices? What were the main driving forces for this?
2. What are the purposes (vision and mission), principles and values of the ministry for higher education quality assurance and accreditation?
3. Central to its mission statement, how are the quality assurance policies and procedures outlined and described in terms of:
 - design and approval of new programs?
 - monitoring on going programs?
 - selection, appointment, appraisal, and staff development?
 - evaluating services related to the programs of higher education?
 - Student learning and effective teaching?
4. What is the ministry's definition of quality assurance and accreditation? What important dimensions are addressed in the definition?
5. What are the major levels of quality review and accreditation by the ministry? How is each level approached?
6. What quality measures and standard framework are employed by the ministry to assess and review the performance of higher private academic institutions?
 - Definition and classification of standards?
 - Requirements of each standards?
 - Methods and techniques of ensuring compliance with the standards?
 - Flexibility and other features of the standards?
7. What bases/benchmarks are used for developing/determining standards?
 - Educational policies
 - International standards
 - Feedback from practitioners
 - Expert ideas, student opinions, and other stakeholders
 - Others, please specify

8. What guidelines and basic requirements are there to apply for accreditation as a private provider of higher education qualifications in the field of business?
9. Is accreditation voluntary or compulsory process? Does the ministry have influence in the licensing/start up of private colleges? If so, what regulatory requirements are involved in relation to this?
10. How can the present accreditation system of the ministry be highlighted?
 - what will be reviewed in the accreditation process?
 - What are the ministry's requirements (criteria) for program and institutional accreditation?
 - How each core component reviewed is analyzed as presenting a reasonable and representative evidence of meeting the criterion?
 - What is the legal base for accreditation of private providers and for the ministry's accreditation activities?
 - What degrees/ categories of accreditation are there? What are the differences among each category?
 - How responsive is the system in rewarding best performance, and in exposing and acting against persistent and unchanging poor quality provision?
11. What provisions are there to prevent the private colleges from providing fictitious information/representation, which would favor their accreditation?
12. Once a review is made, how soon will the result be informed to the academic institutions and to the general public?
 - What means of communication are used for this purpose?
 - How does the ministry make sure that the colleges give clear and accurate information about their accreditation status to the public?
 - What compliant handling system is used to accommodate any dissatisfaction or reservations about the accreditation process and outcomes?
 - How guaranteed is the accreditation system?

13. How long will the accreditation /or certification result remain effective before expiry?

During this interval what mechanisms are used for a continuous follow up and improvement of the academic institutions and their programs?

14. In relation to the previous question, what support does the ministry provide the academic institutions toward insuring continuous improvement of quality education and meeting the standards?

15. What efforts have been made so far to work in partnership and consultation with higher education and training stakeholders? What is the level of involvement of academic deans, administrative staff, instructors, students, parents, quality education experts, etc.?

16. What is the profile of the people hired/authorized to review the quality and standards of private provision of higher education and training?

- How well trained and motivated are they in discharging their responsibilities?
- How are the major duties and responsibilities defined?
- How are the ethical issues addressed? How and who will audit, verify and control their work?

17. Is there any attempt made so far to work and share experience with internationally recognized accreditation agencies for quality assurance implements?

Similar to this question, is there any thought of permitting autonomous private accreditation institutions in Ethiopia, which could work on different fields of specialization?

18. It is a known fact that schools feed students to colleges and universities. What system is used to ensure that quality of education flows from the lower levels?

19. Is there any belief that the quality assurance and accreditation system employed by the ministry has brought any significant improvement in the quality of higher education? What methods/techniques are used to measure the outcomes of the system?

20. Finally, what are the recent progress, challenges and achievements of the ministry in the quality assurance efforts?

Appendix B

Interview Questions Directed to Academic Deans of Selected Private Colleges

- What do you think is the *principal* purpose of ensuring and monitoring quality in higher education?
 - *Accountability*: compliance to standards and requirements;
 - *Improvement*: meeting changing needs, be more responsive to range of stakeholders; or
 - *Information*: generation of information for owners, staff, and users
- Who do you believe should be primarily responsible for the maintenance and enhancement of the quality of private higher education?
- What strengths and weaknesses do you see in the MoE's present guidelines and criteria for quality assurance procedures in higher education?
 - How clearly and timely are the requirements and standards informed to you?
 - How do you see the consultation and cooperative mode of the system with you and with other stakeholders?
 - How do you evaluate the responsiveness (flexibility), coherence, and relevance of the system to the values and objectives of policy framework?
 - What is the level of the system's independence, objectivity, fairness and consistency?
 - How transparent is the system? Is appropriate audit and evaluation information readily/and timely available to you and to the public domain? How open is the system in receiving and responding to any questions, doubts, and complaints that could be raised by the service providers and other stakeholders?
 - What efforts and provisions are there in the system to compliment and enhance any internal quality procedures established within your college?

- Do you see the present system of the ministry as *mainly* concerned with (i) exposing and acting against poor quality provision (*a fault finder approach*)? or (ii) as a strong developmental tool and formative approach to quality?
- What particular support (technical, material, and moral support) does the ministry provide to you for insuring improved quality education and compliance to the standards and requirements?
- How easy (or lengthy) are the formalities and bureaucracies in applying for accreditation as private provider of higher education? And what can this imply to the quality development initiatives?
- As it can be seen in the experiences of some countries, what do you suggest about permitting autonomous private accreditation institutions (auditors) in Ethiopia, which could work on different fields of specialization?
- Other things you want to add, please specify?

Appendix C

Main approaches and methodologies of quality assurance at national level

A Responsible agency/unit

- Unit or section within a Government agency
- Separate quality assurance agency established by Government
- Separate agency established collectively by higher education institutions
- Agency established jointly by Government and institutions

B Participation in reviews and other activities

- Voluntary
- Compulsory
- Voluntary, with some measure of pressure/persuasion

C Methodologies of review and assessment

- Self study or self-evaluation
- Peer review by panels of experts, usually with use of external panel members and site visits
- Analysis of statistical information and/or use of performance indicators
- Surveys of students, graduates, employers, professional bodies
- Testing the knowledge, skills and competencies of students

D Focus

- National reviews of disciplines
 - reviews of research only
 - reviews of teaching only
 - reviews of combination of research, teaching, and other activities
- Institutional evaluations
 - reviews of teaching only
 - reviews of research only
 - reviews of quality assurance processes
 - comprehensive reviews usually including teaching, research, management, and quality assurance processes
- Comprehensive national evaluations of higher education system

E. Purposes

- Accountability
- Improvement and renewal
- Combination of purposes

F. Reporting and follow-up activities

- Report provided solely to the institution or unit concerned
- Report provided to the institution or unit but also published or made more widely available
- Formal reports provided to the Minister, Ministry, or coordinating board
- Public reporting
- Use of ranking and wide publication of the results of such ranking
- Performance funding
- Accreditation or validation
- Improvement and renewal activities