International Quality Review of Amity University Uttar Pradesh

April 2018

Contents

About this review

This is a report of an International Quality Review conducted by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) at Amity University Uttar Pradesh. The review took place from 15 to 20 April 2018 and was conducted by a team of four reviewers, as follows:

● Professor Mark Davies
● Professor Mark Hunt
● Ms Dorte Kristoffersen
● Ms Leigh Spanner (student reviewer).

International Quality Review (IQR) offers institutions outside the UK the opportunity to have a review by the UK's Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA). The review benchmarks the institutions' quality assurance processes against international quality assurance standards set out in Part 1 of the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (ESG).[1]

In International Quality Review, the QAA review team:

● makes conclusion against each of the 10 standards set out in Part 1 of the ESG
● makes recommendations
● identifies features of good practice
● came to an overall conclusion as to whether the institution meets the standards for International Quality Review.

A summary of the findings can be found in the section starting on page 2. Explanations of the findings are given in numbered paragraphs in the section starting on page 7.

The QAA website gives more information about QAA and its mission.[2] A dedicated section explains the method for International Quality Review[3] and has links to other informative documents. For an explanation of terms see the glossary at the end of this report.

---

[1] www.enqa.eu/index.php/home/esg
[2] www.qaa.ac.uk/about-us
[3] www.qaa.ac.uk/training-and-services/review/international-quality-review.

Key findings

Executive Summary

Amity University Uttar Pradesh (the University) is part of the Amity Education Group which is a large provider of education in India and beyond. It currently has campuses in Dubai, London, Abu Dhabi, Singapore, New York, Mauritius, China, South Africa and Romania. It delivers education at all levels from pre-school to doctoral level higher education. The group has approximately 150,000 students across all of its provision.

The University was established through the 'Amity University Uttar Pradesh Ordinance, 2005' passed by the State Legislature and assented by the Governor, notified vide UP Govt. Gazette Notification No. 403/VII-V-I-I(Ka)/I/2005 dated March 24, 2005. It functions under the umbrella of the not for profit Ritnand Balved Education Foundation founded in 1986 by Dr Ashok K Chauhan, Chairman of AKC Group of Companies.

The University operates from three locations in the state of Uttar Pradesh: Noida, Greater Noida, Lucknow and an international location in Dubai. The University has 12 Faculty of Studies / Domains, 43 Research Centres and seven Research Directorates. Each Faculty/Domain has a number of institutes/departments/centres. Each institution runs a number of programmes. The University offers 327 programmes at Bachelor, Master and Doctoral levels in various disciplines at its various campuses. In the academic year 2017-18 the University had a total of 42,650 students. These were distributed across campuses as follows: Noida and Greater Noida, 35,739; Lucknow, 5,061; and Dubai, 1,-850

The University's vision is that of 'Building the nation and the society through providing total, integrated and trans-cultural quality education and to be the global front runner in value education and nurturing talent in which Modernity Blends with Tradition.' Its mission is 'to provide education at all levels in all disciplines of modern times and in the futuristic and emerging frontier areas of knowledge, learning and research and to develop the overall personality of students by making them not only excellent professionals but also good individuals, with understanding and regard for human values, pride in their heritage and culture, a sense of right and wrong and yearning for perfection and imbibe attributes of courage of conviction and action.'

For the period 2017-22 the University is pursuing ten broad based goals:

- ensuring educational excellence
- ensuring student development including physical and emotional health and well-being
- creating culture of excellence in research, scholarship, innovation and creativity for high impact
- enhancement of quality of faculty and staff for outstanding performance
- advancing internationalisation
- enhancing relations with industry, alumni and society
- enhancing employability and promote entrepreneurial initiatives
- committing to all aspects of social, economic and environmental sustainability
- enhancement of supporting resources
- ensuring excellence in organisational leadership and governance.

The University is led by the Vice-Chancellor supported by two Pro Vice-Chancellors, Campus Heads, 12 Deans/Deputy Deans, 126 Heads of Institutions/Departments and

Programme Leaders. The Vice-Chancellor, as the Principal and Executive Academic Officer steers the University in fulfilment of its vision, leading the competent team at all levels.

In pursuing its aim to provide quality education the University recognises a range of challenges, including those of fast changing technology and pedagogical innovations and the need to keep pace with global developments in higher education and research. Attracting competent faculty at Associate Professor and Professor levels presents a challenge in some subject areas that are less well-established in higher education. The University is also endeavouring to create a higher degree of awareness among students (and their parents) who are aspiring to enter the University about the breadth of academic programmes on offer that go beyond traditional university subjects. The University also notes that it can be challenging to match international standards while maintaining the requirements and norms of national statutory and regulatory bodies.

In reaching conclusions about the extent to which Amity University Uttar Pradesh meets the 10 ESG standards, the review team followed the handbook for *International Quality Review: Building a global reputation for your university or college (March2016)*. The review is an evidence-based process and the review team was supplied by the University with their self-evaluation and supporting documentary evidence. The review team visited three of the University's four campuses from 15 to 20 April 2018. The team spent one day at the Dubai campus, one day at the Lucknow campus and three days at the home campus in Noida.

During the visit, the team met with the Vice-Chancellor, Pro Vice-Chancellors, senior staff, members of senior governance committees, teaching staff, students past and present, work placement providers and employers. In addition, the review team toured the key teaching, learning and research facilities at each campus.

The review team concludes that Amity University Uttar Pradesh meets the ten ESG standards.

Three **recommendations** were made in total against two of the standards: *Standard 1.1, Policy for quality assurance*; and *Standard 1.5, Teaching staff*.

The review team identified 5 instances of **good practice** across three standards; *Standard 1.4, Student admission, progression, recognition and certification*; *Standard 1.6, Learning resources and student support*; and *Standard 1.7, Information management*

Two recommendations were made under *Standard 1.1, Policy for quality assurance*. These were to firstly 'clarify the *Policy Guidelines for Quality Assurance* to articulate how the various quality assurance processes are either discrete or integrate across Amity University Uttar Pradesh.' The University is a multi-campus university and the team concludes that while the University's *Quality Manual* and *Policy Guidelines for Quality Assurance* provide a solid quality assurance policy foundation they could be improved to explain more clearly how the various elements are either discrete or integrate. This is particularly important in the context of a multi-campus university. Secondly, the review team formed the view that minutes of committees were not always sufficiently detailed to facilitate the sharing of information and decisions and therefore recommends that the University strengthen the approach to minuting committee business so that discussion and decisions are captured consistently.

The third recommendation, under *Standard 1.5, Teaching staff,* identifies that new faculty are not required to undergo any training in learning, teaching and assessment, although there is some informal mentoring and opportunistic learning. The review team are of the view that the quality of learning, teaching and assessment could be enhanced by addressing this

and therefore recommends that the University develops and implements a scheme that facilitates the development of new faculty in learning, teaching and assessing in higher education.

Good practice was evident in a number of areas across the University's provision. The review team noted the University's efforts to facilitate the progression of students into employment under *Standard 1.4, Student admission, progression, recognition and certification*.

Under *Standard 1.6 Learning resources and student support*, the review team identified three separate examples of good practice. These were, firstly, the Academic Planning Worksheet, which allows students to design and manage course choices to meet their individual needs effectively. The Worksheet indicates students' core modules and outlines the electives available to them, indicating any timetabling restrictions.

Secondly, the University's main electronic interface for students and staff, is the in-house designed and operated Amizone. It provides students and staff with a single-point access to a broad range of information that supports the management and monitoring of learning. The team therefore identified as good practice, the bespoke Amity Intranet Zone (Amizone), which makes a substantial contribution to the effective management and monitoring of student learning (1.6).

Thirdly, the University places strong emphasis on supporting students' extracurricular development activities through skills acquisition and social responsibility initiatives, offering students 'value added' courses. This led the team to identify the embedding of 'value added' courses into programmes providing wide-ranging personal development opportunities for all students.

Finally, under *Standard 1.7, Information management,* the review team saw evidence that the University consults with and acts on a wide range of stakeholder feedback, including that from industry partners, students, parents, faculty staff and alumni. They, therefore, identified as good practice, the extensive use of stakeholder feedback, which makes a significant contribution to the continuous quality improvement of academic programmes.

The review team came to the overall conclusion that Amity University Uttar Pradesh meets the 10 standards set out in Part 1 of the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area.*

QAA's conclusions about Amity University Uttar Pradesh

The QAA review team reached the following conclusions about the higher education provision at Amity University Uttar Pradesh.

European Standards and Guidelines

Amity University Uttar Pradesh **meets** all 10 ESG Standards and Guidelines.

Good practice

The QAA review team identified the following features of **good practice** at Amity University Uttar Pradesh.

- The wide-ranging initiatives that collectively support student progression into employment (1.4).
- The Academic Planning Worksheet, which allows students to design and manage course choices to meet their individual needs effectively (1.6).
- The bespoke Amity Intranet Zone (Amizone), which makes a substantial contribution to the effective management and monitoring of student learning (1.6).
- The embedding of 'value added' courses into programmes providing wide-ranging personal development opportunities for all students (1.6).
- The extensive use of stakeholder feedback, which makes a significant contribution to the continuous quality improvement of academic programmes (1.7).

Recommendations

The QAA review team makes the following **recommendations** to Amity University Uttar Pradesh.

- Clarify the *Policy Guidelines for Quality Assurance* to articulate how the various quality assurance processes are either discrete or integrate across Amity University Uttar Pradesh (1.1)
- Strengthen the approach to minuting committee business so that discussion and decisions are captured consistently (1.1)
- Develop and implement a scheme that facilitates the development of new faculty in learning, teaching and assessing in higher education (1.5).

Explanation of the findings about Amity University Uttar Pradesh

This section explains the review findings in more detail.

Terms that may be unfamiliar to some readers have been included in a brief glossary at the end of this report. A fuller glossary of terms is available on the QAA website, and formal definitions of certain terms may be found in the operational description and handbook for the review method, also on the QAA website.

Explanation of the findings about Amity University Uttar Pradesh

Standard 1.1   Policy for quality assurance

Institutions should have a policy for quality assurance that is made public and forms part of their strategic management. Internal stakeholders should develop and implement this policy through appropriate structures and processes, while involving external stakeholders.

Findings

1.1   The Department of Higher Education, part of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, is responsible for overseeing Higher Education in India. Universities are established by an act of state or central government and are recognised by the University Grants Commission (UGC), a statutory body charged with the coordination and determination of standards in higher education.

1.2   Amity University Uttar Pradesh (the University) was established through state legislature as a private institution in 2005. As such, the University must comply with the terms outlined in the Amity University Uttar Pradesh Act and guidelines specified by UGC.

1.3   It is mandatory for all universities recognised by the UGC to undergo accreditation by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC). The latter undertook a review of the University in 2012, which resulted in accreditation of the University for a five-year period until 2017, when the University began the process of re-accreditation. As well as periodic review, universities must also submit an Annual Quality Assurance Report to NAAC at the end of each academic year, demonstrating the University's growth in key quality areas

1.4   In addition to the NAAC, some University programmes are accredited by various professional councils in India, which conduct periodic visits to check compliance to norms and requirements. Programmes offered on the Dubai campus must be registered with the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA), the body responsible for regulating private education under the government of Dubai. AUUP Dubai submits its programmes for review and registration by KHDA on an annual basis.

1.5   The University Court is the body with supreme authority for standards and quality assurance. It delegates responsibility for overseeing institutional adherence to academic policies, processes and regulations to the Academic Council. In accordance with UGC guidelines, the University has also established Internal Quality Assurance Cells (IQACs) which oversee processes for the assurance and continual improvement of quality under Academic Council. University level IQAC has oversight of quality management at University level, with domain, campus and institutional IQACs having more detailed oversight of their respective levels. Until December 2017, the University operated various other committees which, together with IQACs, shared responsibility for different aspects of quality management. Following a review of its processes, the University has now rationalised these committees into a streamlined IQAC structure. At programme level, Programme Review and Outcomes Assessment Committee monitors and enhances the quality of programmes.

1.6   At an operational level, the Vice-Chancellor has responsibility for the oversight of quality within the University and is supported by a dedicated Quality Assurance and Enhancement Department (QAE), which coordinates the internal quality management structure, external reviews and accreditations.

1.7   The University assures the quality of its provision by implementing a comprehensive internal audit system. IQACs and QAE undertake regular audits of academic and quality management processes and the academic audit is conducted by internal auditors

(twice a year) and external auditors (once a year) to ensure compliance with university standards. In addition to this, the University conducts outcomes assessments which evaluate how far the University is achieving its objectives from programme through to university level.

1.8   The University engages internal stakeholders in quality management processes and makes extensive use of external experts through membership of committees and opportunities to input into programme development and quality audits (see also standard 1.7 also paragraphs: 3.2, 4.12, 7.1-7.4, 9.4 and 9.11).

1.9   The University's approach to quality assurance is set out in the *Quality Manual* and the *Policy Guidelines for Quality Assurance*, which are accessible to students and faculty through the Amity Intranet Zone (Amizone) (See paragraph 6.6 for further information about Amizone). While these documents provide a solid quality assurance policy foundation, they could be enhanced to increase transparency and accountability. For example, they could more clearly demonstrate the distinct functions of the University's committees and how they integrate into a coherent committee structure. Similarly, the specific remits of the various quality audits, their frequency, and how they link to committee decision making could be more explicit. The review team therefore **recommends** that the University clarify the *Policy Guidelines for Quality Assurance* to articulate how the various quality assurance processes are discrete and integrate across Amity University Uttar Pradesh.

1.10   The review team's discussions with senior faculty confirmed that the structures and processes in place for managing quality operate effectively. However, there are weaknesses in the University's approach to recording committee oversight of quality processes. Although there were examples of effective minute taking, minutes of committees did not always demonstrate a clear link between committee business, discussions, and action planning. They were not always sufficiently detailed to facilitate the sharing of information and decisions between levels of the committee structure. The review team **recommends** that the University strengthen the approach to minuting committee business to consistently capture discussion and decisions.

1.11   The University regularly reviews policies, structures and procedures relating to quality management. These reviews are conducted on an 'as needed' basis and, although this does not present an immediate risk, the review team thought that a more routine approach might be more effective for ensuring the quality management framework remains relevant to achieving quality objectives.

1.12   The University has in place processes for quality assurance that enable it to meet the statutory requirements prescribed by UGC. In addition to UGC requirements, the University has developed its own policy for quality assurance and associated procedures, as set out in the *Quality Manual* and *Policy Guidelines for Quality Assurance*. Although the University needs to address aspects of transparency and accountability in its policy documentation and reporting of committee business, the review team found that the processes the University has in place were operating effectively. Overall, the team concludes that Standard 1.1 is **met**.

Standard 1.2   Design and approval of programmes

Institutions should have processes for the design and approval of their programmes. The programmes should be designed so that they meet the objectives set for them, including the intended learning outcomes. The qualification resulting from a programme should be clearly specified and communicated and refer to the correct level of the national qualifications framework for higher education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.

Findings

2.1   The University has clear processes for designing and approving new programmes. The processes are described in *Guidelines for starting new Academic Programmes in the Existing Institutions/Department & Establishment of New Institutions*.

2.2   The initiative to develop a new programme rests with individual institutes. The Head of Institution is responsible for developing the programme following the University process and submitting the proposal to the Registrar using a standardised template. A Standing Committee undertakes a preliminary review of the proposal before it is submitted to the Academic Council, which is the body charged with the approval of new programmes.

2.3   The Academic Council is chaired by the Vice-Chancellor, who the review team learned from interviews with senior executives at the site visit, has delegated authority to approve programmes and to subsequently report decisions to Academic Council.

2.4   The course and programme curricula are developed after the approval of the programme. The curriculum development process is supported by *Regulations on Curriculum Design and Development and Guidelines for Curriculum Development*. The Guidelines include the membership of the various committees involved in the curriculum design process; that is, a Course Review Committee, Programme Review Committee, an Area Advisory Board and a Board of Studies.

2.5   The development of the course and programme curricula is led by the relevant institution. A Course Review Committee consisting of two or three faculty members and chaired by an Area Head/Stream Coordinator is responsible for the development of the course curriculum. The curriculum follows a common structure, the details of which are included in the Guidelines. The recommendations of the Course Review Committee are sent to a designated Area Advisory Board for review and finalisation. Membership of Area Advisory Boards includes faculty alumni, representatives of industry and internal and external subject expertise. It is an important part of the Area Advisory Board's role to review the curriculum with respect to the needs of the relevant profession/industry. An Area Advisory Board has the responsibility for developing pre-requisites, course objectives, student learning outcomes and the Assessment Plan.

2.6   The Programme Review Committee is responsible for the development of the programme structure according to the *Model Framework for a Programme*. In framing the Programme Structure, the committee considers feedback from industry and the Area Advisory Board regarding industry needs. The process also includes a trends analysis and benchmarking with national and international institutional good practices in accordance with the *Policy Guidelines on Programme Learning Outcomes and Assessment* and the *Benchmarking Policy Framework*.

2.7   The *Programme Model Framework* requires that Programme Educational Objectives and Programme Learning Outcomes be defined and documented. The Student Learning Outcomes at programme as well as course level must be developed in accordance with the *Policy Guidelines on Programme Learning Outcomes and Assessment.* The employability of students, defined as a set of programme level graduate attributes, is expected to be included in the curriculum. Graduate attributes are characterised as central to the design, development and delivery of the curriculum and in all the programmes offered by the University. The University supports student progression into employment through a range of means (See also paragraph 4.12).

2.8   The recommendations of the Course Review Committee, Area Advisory Board and Programme Review Committee are considered by a Board of Studies along with the final programme structure, curriculum and scheme of examinations before Academic Council's approval is sought. The Board of Studies is chaired by the Head of Institution and has membership drawn from the University as well as from both industry and academia.

2.9   Scrutiny of minutes of the committees involved in the programme, course and curriculum development processes, provided evidence that the established processes as provided for in relevant regulations and guidelines for design of programmes, courses and curriculum are followed.

2.10   The common template for the design of programmes includes the formulation of programme learning outcomes and student learning outcomes. From meetings with students and staff at all campuses, the review team formed the view that both staff and students were familiar with programme learning outcomes and student learning outcomes (See also paragraph 3.3). However, the students' knowledge of graduate attributes and how they add to the student experience was limited. The University may want to strengthen the information provided to students about the value and use of graduate attributes.

2.11   External feedback from industry and alumni, through membership of Area Advisory Boards, is an integral part of the implemented processes and industry involvement aims at ensuring that programmes meet the needs of the labour market. The review team heard that appropriate guidance and briefs are provided to staff and industry experts about their roles in the programme development process and feedback is provided to industry experts about the final programme structure (see also paragraph 7.4).

2.12   The review team concludes that the University has in place policies and processes for the design and approval of programmes, courses, and curriculum and that Standard 1.2 is **met**.

Standard 1.3   Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment

Institutions should ensure that the programmes are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process, and that the assessment of students reflects this approach.

Findings

3.1   The University has introduced a variety of teaching and learning techniques that includes self-learning, the flipped classroom system and the integrated learning management system in which part of courses are offered and assessed online. Other modes of delivery used by the University range from blended learning through to independent study and research. Student learning is also supported through the use of technology including: recorded lectures, webinars, video lectures and seminars all of which are uploaded to Amizone.

3.2   The Course Review Committee and Area Advisory Board determine the choice of teaching pedagogy at the time of the development of each course curriculum. The process includes input from industry experts and stakeholders, academic staff and students.

3.3   Each course programme is uploaded to Amizone using a Master Session Plan, the plan includes course content, pedagogy and assessment. A student handbook is available on Amizone and this is designed to enable students to understand academic processes, rules and regulations. To aid student understanding, a three-day orientation programme is provided by the University to introduce the systems, policies, guidelines, programme and student learning outcomes to students. The review team received a demonstration of the learning management system, Amizone, which has been developed by the University, the system provides an effective and integrated learning environment for students and staff (see also paragraph 6.6).

3.4   University Programme Leaders and Academic Mentors support students to enhance their learning experience. The University supports independent learning through a range of activities, including: the student Academic Planning Worksheet, flexible timetabling, the master session plan, self-work/field work, the learning management system, blended learning/flipped classes, the Amity Centre for Entrepreneurship Development and through the corporate resource centre.

3.5   In order to support students from different backgrounds the University has a published policy, the *Equity, diversity and non-discriminatory policy guidelines*. The University categorises students as 'slow learners' and 'advanced learners' (See paragraph 6.9 for further explanation of 'slow learners' and 'advanced learners') Action plans for 'slow learners' have been developed, which include a range of support including: counselling, extra-classes, individual consultation and projects. To support advanced learners, the students are provided with opportunities to undertake challenging assignments and to earn up to 15 per cent in extra credits.

3.6   The University provides a range of support for those students with academic difficulty. Students who fail any course undergo 'Guided Self Study Courses' to overcome identified weaknesses (see also paragraph 6.9 for further explanation).

3.7   The University analyses and considers the performance of students after every semester at department and institution level. Student feedback is discussed through meetings, counselling sessions and through the use of Amizone. Formative assessment is built into course assessment to improve student academic performance. Faculty mentors

also provide regular feedback. In addition, the University shares students' performance with parents.

3.8 The University examination regulations facilitate a consistent approach. An annual examination report, prepared by the examination department, reviews performance and considers future enhancements to process.

3.9 Course level assessment includes both continuous assessment (30-50 per cent) and end of semester examinations (50-70 per cent). End of term examinations are conducted by the central examination department. A 75 per cent attendance requirement enables students to enter the end of semester examinations. Model answer scripts are verified and approved by subject experts and uploaded to Amizone. Information on assessment is available on Amizone, in student handbooks, through staff briefings, the orientation programme and faculty mentor meetings.

3.10 Programme learning outcomes are assessed through a range of direct and indirect methods of assessment. A systematic process of collecting and analysing data on student learning outcomes is undertaken. The Outcome Assessment Committees at institution and programme level assess the quality and level of achievement of student learning and operational outcomes. Deans, Heads of Institutions and Programme Directors take required action to improve the quality of student outcomes. Through meetings with staff the review team did, however, learn that the completion of all learning outcomes is not mandatory for students.

3.11 The University has clear guidelines for determining the achievement of learning outcomes through assessment. Learning outcomes are designed in order that students can demonstrate achievement at the end of the course/programme. The University ensures that learning outcomes are measurable, are expressed clearly and identify the resource requirements. Learning outcomes are assessed by at least one direct and one indirect method. Direct methods include: examinations, tests, case studies, internships, portfolios, activity logs and attendance. Indirect methods include: questionnaires, surveys and analysis of the curriculum and assessment results.

3.12 Outcome Assessment Committees and the Institutional Research and Planning Committee (IRPC) at institution and programme level are constituted to assess the quality and level of achievement of student learning outcomes and operational outcomes. Assessment results are considered in an outcome assessment implementation report and gaps identified to be addressed are included in an associated action plan.

3.13 The University operates clear policy guidelines for the setting of examination question papers and for the moderation of question papers, which is undertaken by a panel of the moderation board. The moderation of results is undertaken by a separate board, the Result Moderation Board.

3.14 The University appoints external experts as evaluators at course and programme level in order to enhance academic quality. External evaluators are appointed to assess programme effectiveness and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Their role is to assess the academic delivery of the programme and provide input on curriculum content, balance and structure. External evaluators assess the standards of tutorials and assignments for students and advise on the standard of individual projects. Input also supports amendments to examination papers and the marking schemes for individual papers. The external evaluator role quality assures the decisions of internal examiners, the grading process, assessment criteria, scrutiny of model examination answers, overseeing practical examinations and the assessment of dissertations and projects.

3.15   The Amity Academic Staff College undertakes examination workshops to ensure that all faculty assessors are aware of all the methods and activities related to examination. A training calendar is prepared by the Amity Academic Staff College.

3.16   Processes for preventing, identifying, investigating and responding to unacceptable academic practice include: a pre-examination briefing and online training system for staff before the end of semester examinations. Examination question papers are provided on the day of the examination in sealed envelopes. Examination answer scripts are required to be submitted to the examination department within two hours of the examination. Students found to have used unfair means during examinations are given the opportunity to be heard by appearing before the Examination Discipline Committee. Decisions of the Committee are published online. The University ensures that any research material submitted by students undergoes a plagiarism check as detailed in the University's *Policy Guidelines for Plagiarism Prevention*.

3.17   The University's Students Grievances Redressal Guidelines deals with issues in respect to examinations in order to resolve student issues. If a grievance is not addressed in three days, it is escalated to the next level. Grievances or complaints can relate, for example, to academic staff, admissions, scholarships, security, administration, fees, transport or the cafeteria. Complaints and grievances are analysed in each Domain every semester and measures are taken to make improvements. In meetings with staff and students the review team heard that issues can be escalated to both the Vice-Chancellor and the President for resolution.

3.18   The office of the Dean of Students Welfare provides non-academic services to the students and the office of the Dean, Students Academic Affairs and Support Services resolves academic student issues. Student class representatives provide a mechanism for students to voice their concerns and seek re-dress. The University faculty mentoring system is in place to address and support student academic and non-academic issues. In addition, students can raise their concerns with respect to course coverage and the quality of the teaching staff with the Academic Review Committee.

3.19   Examination issues can be raised with the examination cell of the University. A written grievance has a timescale of 48 hours to be resolved. An online system for student feedback to rate their academic experience is available prior to examinations being conducted. At institutional level the student voice supports quality assurance and promotes enhancement. Effective methods include the 'Class Representation System', communication through Amizone, the open-door policy operated by the Programme Leader and Head of Institution, student representation on University committees, office bearers of Clubs and Committees, and through student membership of the IQAC.

3.20   The review team concludes that the University supports and encourages students to take an active role in the learning process and has an effective approach to the assessment of students. The University has in place clear policies and guidelines for learning, teaching and assessment, supported by a deliberative committee structure which supports and empowers student learning. Overall, the team concludes that Standard 1.3 is **met**.

Standard 1.4   Student admission, progression, recognition and certification

Institutions should consistently apply pre-defined and published regulations covering all phases of the student "life cycle", e.g. student admission, progression, recognition and certification.

Findings

4.1 The University has clear regulations for student admission and enrolment, and follows UGC guidelines for the wide range of programmes it offers.

4.2 The University is committed to ensuring that its admissions policies and procedures are fair, transparent, ethical, timely and accessible for a diverse range of prospective students. Staff and students confirmed that admissions requirements focus on merit and fostering academic success, and that the University encouraged lifelong learning.

4.3 Admission counsellors are available to advise prospective students on the potential career opportunities available through the wide range of study programme offered by the University. The University provides information in brochures, available both online and offline, and through information centres throughout India and Dubai. The University provides a helpline number for prospective students to contact admissions counsellors. Students confirmed that admissions information was also provided from the University's website and was helpful in determining study choices.

4.4 Candidates seeking admission to an undergraduate programme must have completed twelve years of formal school education. Admission to PhD programmes are conducted twice a year (January and July) and offered in full time (three years) and part-time (four and a half years) modes. Course work is mandatory during the programme, thesis submission must be completed within a maximum of six years. The University encourages research scholars to conduct interdisciplinary research.

4.5 Admission to technical programmes is conducted through a Joint Entrance Examination (Amity JEE). The JEE is a computer-based test conducted by Pearson VUE on behalf of the University in various cities across India and overseas. The University actively attracts sport talent and offers Sports Scholarships, which offer up to a 100 per cent waiver of fees. For admission of students from other universities or institutions a University Equivalence Committee scrutinises degree, diploma or certificates based upon curricula and examinations outputs in order to determine the eligibility of candidates. Regulations also cater for students who require lateral admissions entry and the transfer of credits, this also includes research scholars. In addition the University has established clear policy guidelines to promote the retention of students.

4.6 A credit system enables students to opt for courses for which they are academically inclined. Students have a choice of opting for elective courses (Choice Based Credit System - CBCS) from across disciplines offered by the Schools of the University, application for these can be submitted on or off line. The range of courses on offer and eligibility criteria are available on the University website.

4.7 The University operates an 'Admission Microsite' - a two-way communication window between the applicant and the University. Students select their preferred date to undertake the admission process, the site also provides information on their admissions status. The University offers a career aptitude test in order for applicants to assess their capabilities. Admission outcomes and enrolment details are announced on the admissions microsite. Students the review team met confirmed that the admission microsite was effective and worked well.

4.8   A three-day orientation programme is provided for all students. Students confirmed that the programme was effective and that they were informed about a wide range of matters, including: university policies and procedures, attendance criteria, the evaluation system, mentor-mentee sessions, clubs and committees, annual sports meet, anti-ragging practices and military training camps.

4.9   Student Information is clearly accessible on Amizone and students are informed about what is expected of them. Key information for students is also available in the *Student Handbook*, which provides comprehensive information on all matters related to academic study, the conduct of examinations and its evaluation. The Block Academic Calendar provides information on all scheduled activities, internal assessments, semester examinations and all co-curricular activities.

4.10   Class representatives confirmed that they met on a monthly basis in order for students to discuss their teaching and learning, extracurricular activities, infrastructure and other general issues. Students are able to express their views and provide constructive feedback and offer ideas and suggestions for areas for improvement at programme level. Students met by the review team confirmed that most issues raised were resolved within a 24-hour period.

4.11   Clear communication channels are established between the University and the parents of students. Email and telephone communication is undertaken regarding the development and progress of the students, in particular attendance and results, parents are provided with a *Handbook for Parents* and also have access to Amizone to follow their child's progress.

4.12   The University places a strong emphasis on employability through developing skills and contacts. In attempting to nurture competitive and accomplished business leaders, entrepreneurs and professionals, the University developed the Corporate Resource Centre (CRC) to bring academics, leaders from industry and students together. The Centre, with branches in each campus, organises various schemes to allow students to gain work experience, confidence, and skills valued by employers, including summer placements, internships, visits by employers to campus, and networking opportunities for alumni, all with a firm slant on entrepreneurship. Working in concert with the CRC is the Amity Centre for Entrepreneurship Development (ACED), which coordinates a large and complex range of overlapping developmental activities for students. The ACED also encourages students to become job creators through entrepreneurship and has guided its students through the Amity Innovation Incubator to create 308 start-ups on campus since 2012, though in recent years there has been the recognition that many students are involved in family businesses and the emphasis has shifted slightly to ensure these students' career aspirations are also adequately supported. About three-quarters of students take up career development opportunities. The initiatives described here were complimented by students and alumni and, taken together, lead the team to conclude that the wide-ranging initiatives that collectively support student progression into employment is **good practice**.

4.13   International exposure is provided through a student exchange programme where credits from a foreign university are credited at the University. In addition, a three continent programme is designed for young explorers who want to innovate and interact with students from other nationalities. The study abroad programme enables those who participate to get hands on experience of gaining knowledge of a foreign culture, industry and economic dynamics.

4.14   Academic progression is embedded in University regulations and guidelines. To be eligible for an award, a student must successfully complete all specified requirements

for the programme on which they are enrolled. Clear progression criteria are in place to determine student progression from one year to the next.

4.15   Students are assessed at regular intervals, 30-50 per cent weighting is given to internal assessment covering class tests, vivas, quizzes, case discussion, presentations, analysis, home assignments, projects, seminars, term papers and attendance. Students' academic performance is an aggregate of continuous evaluation and end of term examinations. A ten-point letter graded scale is used by the University. A semester grade point average and cumulative grade point average is used by the University to calculate a student's overall performance.

4.16   Students who fail to meet progression criteria are placed on academic probation and not promoted to the next academic year. Students who are not eligible for progression (promotion) have the option to either repeat the year or take an academic break from the programme subject to approval. In order to support students who do not qualify for progression students are supported with 'guided self-study courses' in the form of assignments and tutorials to enable them to prepare successfully for supplementary examination.

4.17   Students who successfully complete their programme of study at undergraduate, postgraduate or doctoral level are conferred a degree at the annual convocation held each year. Additionally, the University awards honorary doctorates on a selective basis to distinguished individuals for their outstanding research contributions and leadership. The University provides certificates for students who successfully complete the requirements of their programmes of study. Although limited to a few programmes the University does offer some flexibility for undergraduate and postgraduate students to opt for a distance learning mode in the second or third year.

4.18   Merit and achievement awards are also available in various fields as well as awards for exemplary performance, such as the Shri Baljit Shastri Award for best in 'human and traditional values' and the award for best overall academic performance. Other awards include performance in academic committees, performance in placement or industry interaction, representing the University in outside events and for organising cultural activities.

4.19   Following graduation students either opt for higher studies, undertake a placement or prepare to take up a job. Some of students opt for further study at the University.

4.20   Through analysis of the documentary evidence and speaking to staff, alumni, industry mentors and students, the review team concludes the processes in place for admission, progression, recognition and certification are clear and robust. There is good practice demonstrated, particularly the wide-ranging initiatives that collectively support student progression into employment. The team therefore conclude that Standard 1.4 is **met**.

Standard 1.5   Teaching staff

Institutions should assure themselves of the competence of their teachers. They should apply fair and transparent processes for the recruitment and development of the staff.

Findings

5.1   The University maintains an overview of its teaching resource through the Manpower Planning subcommittee of the University IQAC as part of the University's annual resource planning cycle, information flowing from Institution level to University level through IQACs.

5.2   Through its *Policy Guidelines for Recruitment* the University specifies the constitution of selection committees and sets out a scheme for the shortlisting of teaching staff. Candidates complete up to three interviews and in some cases are asked to deliver a demonstration class to students as part of their evaluation. The review team viewed these arrangements as fit-for-purpose.

5.3   Faculty new to the University receive a comprehensive induction, held over three consecutive half-days, to the University's processes, including quality assurance and enhancement, student representation, and assessment processes. Shortly after the induction programme new faculty are assessed for their understanding of University processes by a senior staff member, typically the Deputy Dean (Academic) using a quantitative scale, scoring various elements of understanding. Any less than a satisfactory score prompts remedial action. New faculty also receive a comprehensive staff handbook, contextualised to each campus. New faculty are, however, not required to undergo any training in learning, teaching and assessing, though there is some informal mentoring and opportunistic learning. Accordingly, the team **recommends** that the University develops and implements a scheme that facilitates the development of new faculty in learning, teaching and assessing in higher education.

5.4   Of 1896 academic staff in 2016-17, 931 (49 per cent) have doctoral degrees and faculty are, in general, well-qualified in their respective subject areas. Faculty without doctoral qualifications may be supported by the University, through the provision of time, to undertake PhDs both at the University and at other institutions.

5.5   The University uses a competency mapping tool to evaluate teaching staff teams within cognate subject areas to inform staff development and recruitment. The tool includes for each faculty member her/his area of specialism, and teaching and industry experience. The tool, along with summary feedback from students and the relevant Head of Institute feeds into a competency enhancement matrix that gives direction to staff development opportunities.

5.6   The effectiveness of individual teaching staff is monitored through student feedback, including at class representative meetings, and through the annual monitoring process, in particular the Outcomes Assessment Plan Implementation Reports. Staff confirmed that they had the freedom to contextualise the syllabus and to devise their own methods of teaching, and many were able to cite recent use of 'flipped classroom' activities, which students also appreciated. Although the University's self-evaluation noted that IQAC has mechanisms and procedures for optimisation and integration of modern methods of teaching and learning, the review team was unable to find any evidence of IQAC acting in this way.

5.7   A commitment to enhance the professional and personal competency of academic staff is enshrined in the University's policy guidelines for its professional development programme, which clearly establish the framework supporting staff development activities, including needs analysis and impact assessment. The Amity Academic Staff College organises staff development activities for academic staff, including preparing faculty for their roles in curriculum and programme review and development processes; maintains a record of activities; and collects feedback from participants. A wide range of developmental workshops and other events is offered, and those that relate to teaching and supporting students show good attendance. In planning these events the University uses data collected from students, alumni and industry representatives, and through the faculty appraisal system. Staff are also encouraged to attend webinars on a diverse range of teaching and learning topics delivered by external providers.

5.8   Teaching staff may undergo peer review of teaching according to a process stipulated in policy guidelines. The reviews are not limited to the classroom and can include observations of developed resources, curricula and assessment tools, though the University did not provide any examples of these. In general peer reviews are developmental and take place for new staff, or for established staff in response to unsatisfactory reports from other faculty members or students, or poor student achievement. The reviewer completes a template that asks for ratings on a wide range of pertinent attributes and is copied to the Head of Institute, who may instigate a developmental meeting with the reviewer and reviewee. Data are archived at the relevant Institute, though at the Dubai campus some may be transmitted to the campus IQAC. Some staff reported completing peer observations each semester, but for other staff participation was less frequent; staff with long and strong records of teaching may not undergo review and some institutes do not yet have a system of peer review. The University provided no evidence that it systematically learns from these reviews, for example in the dissemination of good practice, and it may wish to ensure that useful data are captured that can be used to enhance the provision, and that there is more participation in the process. Running in parallel is a similar process conducted by managerial staff, with a performance management aspect that feeds into the appraisal system.

5.9   In accordance with University policy, academic staff have a responsibility to engage in scholarly and professional activities, and many staff have taken advantage of funds available from both within the University and externally to enhance their personal scholarship. Academic staff are involved extensively in research, contributing to many research projects, conference presentations, research publications, book chapters and books; for example, in 2016-17, University faculty published 3,027 research papers and 1,846 book chapters and books, and thus have a wealth of up-to-date information to inform their teaching practice. In addition, the University, through its faculties and institutes, organises many international conferences in which its staff participate. Staff were able to indicate convincingly in interviews with the review team how their research activities positively influence teaching delivery.

5.10   The University's Performance Based Appraisal System incorporates the performance assessment of teachers. Staff complete a pro forma annually and activity is numerically scored by immediate superiors and reviewed by the Head of the relevant Institute to create an Academic Performance Indicator that may additionally be used to inform promotion and pay increment decisions. The scoring is based on an extremely broad range of activities undertaken by each staff member, but focuses largely on the occurrence of activities, rather than the manner in which they were carried out or their quality, though there is scope for the score to reflect behavioural traits such as leadership skills, mentoring, attitude and adaptability. Teaching performance contributes to a proportion of the overall score. When teaching performance is graded unsatisfactory, counselling by the Head of Institute is triggered, no matter what the overall score. Faculty spoke confidently about how to gain promotion and the criteria involved.

5.11   To supplement its curricula the University makes extensive use of guest lecturers from various branches of industry, who give individual lectures relating to their personal experiences. This contributes to the good practice identified in paragraph 4.12 concerning the wide-ranging initiatives that collectively support student progression into employment

5.12   The University also employs visiting lecturers, some of whom make a large time commitment to the delivery of the curriculum. There is defined and detailed procedure for the appointment of visiting lectures, including a request to the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Academics), scrutiny of a curriculum vitae, and approval by a specially-constituted committee. Appointments may be renewed, subject to student feedback that is rated on average at least 'good'. Student feedback, including through class representative meetings is the main means of monitoring the performance of visiting lecturers; individual numeric score performance is compared to the University's overall means across a number of measures and suggestions for enhancing performance given as a result by the Head of Institute. Overall responsibility for visiting lecturers resides with Students' Academic Affairs and Support Services. The team concludes the University was making good use of, and managing well, its pool of visiting lecturers.

5.13   Overall the review team concludes that the University assures itself of the competence of its teachers. Additionally, there are fair and transparent processes in place for the recruitment and development of the staff and that, therefore, Standard 1.5 is **met**.

Standard 1.6   Learning resources and student support

Institutions should have appropriate funding for learning and teaching activities and ensure that adequate and readily accessible learning resources and student support are provided.

Findings

6.1   Overarching principles regarding learning resources and student support are enshrined in the *Guidelines for Student Support and Counselling System*, approved by Academic Council and Executive Council.

6.2   Resource planning for student support is both detailed and comprehensive, and is part of the broader annual academic planning exercise, where information on strengths and areas for improvement flows through the IQACs from Institution to Domain to University level and is ultimately considered by University IQAC and the Planning Committee. Institutional-level planning sensibly starts with actual and projected numbers of students, and resource allocation follows. Key bodies are the Library Resources Planning subcommittee and Laboratory Equipment and Software Planning subcommittee of University IQAC. An example of resource allocation in action is the University's recent response to a shift in student behaviour in accessing resources online, rather than in hard copy, by devoting more resource to electronic collections. Branch campuses contribute fully to the planning process.

6.3   University IQAC has mechanisms and procedures, largely through its audit activity, for ensuring the adequacy, maintenance and functioning of the support structure and services. For example, in 2017 IQAC noted that a lack of equipment availability was impinging on some teaching and instigated a review to address this.

6.4   The range of student support services is clearly indicated in the Student *Handbook* and includes academic support, extra-curricular guidance and counselling, and a range of welfare services including a women's helpdesk, disability services, and medical clinic. The team viewed the services as comprehensive and they were praised by students.

6.5   The Student Handbook also shows clearly where students with a particular issue should go to seek help or redress, in many cases indicating primary up to tertiary contacts should issues not be resolved at lower levels. There are separate handbooks for each campus, which to ensure parity of student experience contain the same information but contextualised to each campus. The Handbook is supplemented by an individual Academic Planning Worksheet, available through Amizone, which indicates students' core modules and outlines the electives available to them, indicating any timetabling restrictions. Modules are briefly described with hyperlinks to full syllabuses. The Worksheet simplifies and explains the choices available to students, linking these with their core modules, streamlining the choice process. The Academic Planning Worksheet, which allows students to design and manage course choices to meet their individual needs effectively is **good practice**.

6.6   The University's main electronic interface for students is the Amity Intranet Zone (Amizone), developed in-house in response to student need to replace a commercial virtual learning environment (VLE) that was not considered to be sufficiently student-friendly for on-campus students. The commercial VLE is retained for some distance-learning students, though will soon be phased out. Amizone can be accessed both as a website and an app and is an intranet that operates as a learning management system and VLE that can store marks and release them to students. Students can access a dashboard giving ready and single-point access to a wealth of course information, including the library, mentoring, and their academic progress. Students can access their degree certificates; book and pay for accommodation and convocation; manage their placements and internships; and check

their timetables and programme structure. Amizone is also the main mechanism for students to feedback on their programmes and courses. The students the team met found Amizone to effectively support their studies. Amizone is common across all of Amity's HE provision, and the data are not disaggregated by University, but user privileges (role-based access) allow users to access data relevant to them. Amizone is also a key tool in the management and monitoring of student learning (See also paragraph 7.5) The team concludes that the bespoke Amity Intranet Zone, which makes a substantial contribution to the effective management and monitoring of student learning, is **good practice**.

6.7 Library services are clearly explained to students in the *Student Handbook*. There is one central library per site each with long opening hours, extended during examination periods. The libraries hold a large collection of relevant books and the University subscribes to a good range of e-journal packages, all of which are available to students off-site through Amizone. The libraries are managed by a library committee chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic) or the Dean of Students' Academic Affairs and Support Services. Academic staff, departments and institutes can request the library committee consider new items to be stocked in the library, often through their respective library subcommittees as part of the annual resource planning cycle, and decisions take account of the University's overall portfolio of holdings, usage statistics and benchmarks with other institutions' libraries, but typically result in recommendations for purchase, ultimately sanctioned by the Vice-Chancellor. Students reported satisfaction with the provision of library services.

6.8 The University operates the Amity Centre for Guidance and Counselling, based at the Noida campus, which provides counselling services for students, staff and faculty. In addition to booked appointments, trained counsellors are available at any time via a helpline. The Centre compiles annual statistics on its usage to inform future development. Students reported satisfaction with these services, which are prominently flagged to them as a banner advertising the toll-free number on the Amizone student homepage.

6.9 On the basis of their academic achievement and academic path students are classified as slow learners and/or advanced learners. A student can be simultaneously a slow learner and an advanced learner, for example a student may be an advanced learner in her/his main field of study but is classed as a slow learner in a subsidiary subject where s/he may receive remedial or bridging classes to facilitate effective learning. Those who are at risk of failing an examination, or who have failed an examination are also slow learners and receive special support. Those who have not passed all their modules, are required to complete remedial courses known as Guided Self-Study Courses, as specified in the University's regulations, and may also receive other forms of support, such as counselling, additional classes, and the provision of extra reading material. For planning purposes, the University keeps a record of students classified as slow learners.

6.10 Concomitant with the University's Mission, Core Values, graduate attributes and broad-based goals as get out in its Strategic Plan 2017-2022, the University places strong emphasis on supporting students' extracurricular development activities through skills acquisition and social responsibility initiatives, offering students 'value added' courses. The courses fall into two groups, soft skills and an Outdoor Activities-based Course. Credit-bearing soft skills courses are offered in three categories: behavioural science, communication skills, and foreign business language. It is mandatory for undergraduate and taught postgraduate students to take one course from each category per semester. The one-credit Outdoor Activities-based Course can be taken in any semester and is effectively an umbrella term for a wide variety of activities including, for example, those related to Human Value and Community Outreach, performing arts, sports, entrepreneurship and military training. Assessment is typically by oral examination and portfolio. Students reported the 'value added' courses as complementing their academic curriculum and

contributing positively to developing employability skills. The embedding of 'value added' courses into programmes providing wide-ranging personal development opportunities for all students is **good practice**.

6.11   Students are encouraged to make use of the University's mentoring scheme, which includes mentors drawn from academic staff, alumni, industry and parents, and the University's self-evaluation noted that mentors from the first three groups are allocated by the University. The University issues a useful guidance document to mentors; academic staff mentors are expected to meet their mentees monthly and they keep detailed records of the interactions, with summary reports presented to the Dean of Students' Welfare office. In addition, all first-year students are assigned a more experienced student 'buddy' for the initial period of transition to University life. Students confirmed that faculty mentors were always allocated (often the programme leader fulfils this role) and were valued, but in some cases, particularly at the Lucknow campus, alumni and industry mentors are not always allocated, and the University will want to rectify this to promote equality of opportunity.

6.12   The *Student Handbook* contains useful practical information to support international students and the University has a guidelines document indicating how international students should be embraced into the University community, with due regard to their welfare, including the appointment of a student 'buddy' with international experience to act as a guide. International students the team met were supportive of the University's arrangements.

6.13   The University has a specific policy for the support of disabled students. A committee considers requests from students for specific accommodations, such as a change in study pattern. Any recommended accommodation is approved by the Vice-Chancellor. More general accommodations include access ramps, lifts and specialised toilet facilities. Disabled students typically are provided with an extra 33 per cent time in examinations, and if necessary a scribe. The University has made good progress in creating accessible campuses, though this programme is not yet complete.

6.14   Professional support staff can access developmental training, which the University recognises as important, and staff the team met confirmed they were well-trained for their roles.

6.15   To support teaching the laboratory and lecture facilities are generally well-equipped and fit-for-purpose. Wi-fi is fully available across all campuses and students reported no issues with Information Technology (IT) facilities. In general, the students have good access to safe, secure and supportive academic and social learning environments, including adequate study spaces, and a wide range of specialist equipment, especially in technical subjects. The University also supports a considerable number of students financially through a range of scholarships and awards.

6.16   However, while the University's learning resources and support for students are broad, their effectiveness is largely gauged retrospectively through the surveys of students and the team were advised that, for example, the University measures whether the support it offers to weaker students is successful by measuring how many students take up the opportunities and subsequently pass their assessments. The University may wish to enhance its support offer, tailoring more to the needs of students through a more sophisticated and formal review mechanism.

6.17   Overall the review team concludes that the University has appropriate funding for learning and teaching activities and ensures that learning resources are adequate and readily accessible. The range and quality of the student support is effective and therefore Standard 1.6 is **met**.

Standard 1.7   Information management

Institutions should ensure that they collect, analyse and use relevant information for the effective management of their programmes and other activities.

Findings

7.1   NAAC requires all accredited universities to submit an Annual Quality Assurance Report (AQAR) that includes information on institutional performance in seven quality areas, including learning resources, curriculum development and research activity. The University has also established an outcomes assessment process, through which programme, institution, domain and university level objectives are assessed against a wide range of operational and educational outcomes information, such as feedback from stakeholders, student performance and progression, and faculty professional development.

7.2   The Institutional Research and Planning Department, with support from the IT team, coordinates the collection and analysis of information from various sources, including teaching faculty, senior faculty, students, external stakeholders and university departments. Amizone facilitates the collection of data and acts as a single point of access for relevant information for students, parents, faculty and administrative staff.

7.3   Reports from ongoing information analysis are considered by the Vice-Chancellor, senior faculty and several internal committees including IQACs and Programme Review and Outcome Assessment Committees. These committees produce action plans in order to address any gaps and inform annual planning and programme review.

7.4   Institutional Research and Planning Department conducts annual stakeholder satisfaction surveys for students, parents, industry partners, faculty, staff members and alumni. In addition to this, a wide range of stakeholders and experts from industry, research and academia input into programme development and various quality audits and are represented on key university committees, including IQACs. Student feedback is gathered through a variety of formal and informal mechanisms, including regular online feedback surveys, course representative meetings and a suggestion box on Amizone. Through meetings with a variety of internal and external stakeholders, supplemented by documentary evidence, the review team saw evidence of the significant impact that consistent and widespread use of stakeholder feedback has had on the quality of programmes at AUUP. The review team concludes that the extensive use of stakeholder feedback, which makes a substantial contribution to the continuous quality improvement of academic programmes, is **good practice**.

7.5   The review team were provided with a demonstration of Amizone (see also paragraph 6.6). Among its wide range of functions, Amizone incorporates an interactive dashboard which facilitates data analysis and visualisation. The dashboard provides the Vice-Chancellor, senior faculty, teaching faculty and administration staff with real-time information and statistics about academic programmes, faculty and students. For example, there are detailed reports of student attendance, class coverage and student performance against learning outcomes. Role-based access allows students to view information about their individual performance and faculty to view aggregated data at relevant levels of granularity. The students and faculty who met with the review team confirmed that Amizone is a powerful tool for overseeing student progress and recognising areas for improvement. The way in which Amizone supports the management and monitoring of student learning is recognised as making a significant contribution to the good practice identified in paragraph 6.6.

7.6   The University ensures that relevant data and information are collected, analysed and used to inform the management and continual improvement of programmes, allowing Standard 1.7 to be **met**. The substantial contributions made by the bespoke Amity Intranet Zone and stakeholder feedback to the effective management of programmes and student learning contributes to the good practice identified in paragraph 6.6.

Standard 1.8   Public information

Institutions should publish information about their activities, including programmes, which is clear, accurate, objective, up-to date and readily accessible.

Findings

8.1	The University's website provides a publicly available core information set concerning University governance, management and its statutory bodies. While this information is useful, it is not readily apparent from the website which of these items apply to the Amity University Group as a whole, and which to Amity University Uttar Pradesh, and, more generally, how the various constituent universities in the Amity group are delineated. For example, the University's self-evaluation claimed that the 'University Vision, Mission, Core values and objectives' were online, but when the team asked to see these it was directed to a website that though referring to 'the University', did not specify which University within the Amity Group it was referring to, or whether it was referring to them collectively. Also, while the individual institutes of the University and other Amity bodies have generally clear websites, it is often not readily apparent which institutes are associated with which Amity body. The downloadable brochure for prospective students also blurs the distinction between the various Amity universities, and not all students the team met at Dubai and Lucknow were clear that they were studying at Amity University Uttar Pradesh, as opposed to 'Amity' more generally. The team noted that although Amity University Uttar Pradesh is discrete by statute, not all its publicity material and internal documents reflect this and the University may wish to make clearer for students, prospective students, graduates, employers and the public, the boundaries of the University within the overall Amity Group.

8.2	Information for prospective students provided through the University's website is accessible, utilitarian and clear, including comprehensive details of all programmes and a clear exposition of the application procedure, allowing applicants to make informed choices. Students confirmed the accuracy and completeness of information presented and praised the information issued to them on open days.

8.3	There is a clear system of ultimate responsibility for the sign-off of publicly available information as follows. University level, Vice-Chancellor; Admissions, Director Admissions; Campus, Heads of Campus; Faculty, Deans; Institute, Heads of Institutes. Operationally local heads of marketing or Information Technology have delegated responsibility at the Dubai and Lucknow campuses and various committees at institute level are created to address problems. The Admissions Department is responsible for the accuracy of publicity and admissions information; likewise, Human Resources for employment information. While the University has Policy Guidelines for Privacy and Disclosure of Information that are fit-for-purpose, it lacks published procedures for maintaining accurate information and may wish to address this.

8.4	Notwithstanding the points above, the University does publish information about its activities, including programmes. The information is generally clear, accurate, objective, up to date and readily accessible and therefore the review team conclude that Standard 1.8 is **met**.

Standard 1.9   On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes

Institutions should monitor and periodically review their programmes to ensure that they achieve the objectives set for them and respond to the needs of students and society. These reviews should lead to continuous improvement of the programme. Any action planned or taken as a result should be communicated to all those concerned.

Findings

9.1   The First Statutes (2005) governing the establishment of Amity University Uttar Pradesh stipulates that the Academic Council undertakes periodic reviews of the academic activities of the University with a view to enhancing standards of education.

9.2   Furthermore, the University Grants Commission and other national as well as international regulatory bodies that the University has chosen to be accredited by require that the University review its programmes and course curricula regularly. The University conducts the main reviews of its programmes, which includes a review of the course curricula, every three years. The purpose of the three-yearly reviews is to assess a programme/discipline as a whole and how the students are learning. An annual review, the Annual Outcomes Assessment, is conducted to ensure that outcomes and targets are met (See Standard 1.7). The annual assessment process focuses on improving the teaching by analysing the achievement of student learning outcomes. If need for minor changes are identified in the annual assessment process (for example, based on changes in the regulatory environment or industry needs) these may be made in-between the three-yearly reviews. The results of the annual assessments feed into the programme review process.

9.3   The purpose of and process for the three-yearly programme reviews are stipulated in the *Regulations on Curriculum Design and Development* and *Guidelines for Curriculum Development*. Similar to the process in place for the development of a new programme, the programme review process is led by the relevant Head of Institution who is required to set up the three core committees to undertake the programme review: Course Review Committee, Area Advisory Board, Programme Review Committee and a Board of Studies. The programme review process covers the elements in the *Model Framework* for a programme that includes students' workload in the form of credit, progression and completion data as well as effectiveness of assessments.

9.4   The Course Review Committee is responsible for the review of the course curriculum and it takes input from the main stakeholders into consideration. The Course Review Committee consists of faculty members and faculty are asked to provide feedback on the course curriculum. The faculty feedback is posted on Amizone and the Head of Institution is responsible for considering it. Feedback is sought from alumni and industry representatives (recruiters). Any changes in requirements from regulatory bodies are also considered at this point. The Course Review Committee's review is considered by a stream Area Advisory Board. The Boards views will form part of the Board of Study analysis of the proposed programme changes (see paragraph 9.9).

9.5   Students are defined as the most important stakeholders in the delivery of the academic programmes and therefore student feedback is sought in a number of ways in the course and programme review process. Students can provide suggestions for change, including course change, directly on Amizone. The University operates a system of Class Representatives (see also paragraphs 3.18 and 3.19). The purpose of monthly meetings of Class Representatives is to review the programme progress. Student exit surveys are conducted programme-wide to analyse whether Student Learning Outcomes have been met. The review team learned from the presentation of Amizone that these Student Learning

Outcome data are analysed in three-year series to feed into the three-year programme reviews.

9.6 It is an integral part of the programme review for the Course Review Committee to consider the current labour market trends and analyse and understand the market for graduates. The analysis includes the impact of developments in the economy and labour market on the programmes.

9.7 The Course Review Committee is also responsible for benchmarking with other national and international institutions / universities. The University has developed a *Benchmarking Policy Framework*. There is a level of flexibility in the scope and type of benchmarking that an institution can conduct as well as how benchmarking institutions can be selected. It is a requirement that improvements are considered and reported.

9.8 The Programme Review Committee's role in the programme reviews focuses on the programme-wide structure and content. The Programme Review Committee takes the feedback from the Course Review Committee as well as students into account. The Programme Review Committee is also responsible for considering the feedback from the Area Advisory Board in relation to, for example, demand for the programme; industry competencies/graduate attributes. The report from Programme Review Committee includes suggestions for improvements.

9.9 The reports from the Area Advisory Board and the Programme Review Committee are considered by the Board of Studies, which makes a recommendation about any course and/or programme changes to Academic Council. The Academic Council decision-making process is similar to that for the approval of a new programme described under Standard 1.2 in this report. The amended programme information is uploaded on Amizone.

9.10 The review team heard consistently during the site visit and noted from the evidence presented that the three-year programme review follows the process stipulated in the *Regulations on Curriculum Design* and action is taken and communicated to relevant stakeholders who have been contributing to the review. However, the requirement to conduct three-yearly programme reviews is not specifically mentioned in the Regulations. The University may in order to increase transparency and understanding of the Regulations want to make specific mention of the regular programme reviews in its Regulations.

9.11 The University's programme review approach builds on substantial input from stakeholders. The meeting minutes and survey outcomes that the review team had access to showed that the institutes actively consider feedback collected from students, staff alumni and industry and what action is taken on this basis. The review team also saw examples of how reports reflect on the improvements made on the basis of the documented actions. The review team saw multiple examples of how Area Advisory Boards provide external input to course content and programme structure. The full range of feedback is integrated into the review process and forms part of the information used by Boards of Study to consider the review outcomes before making a recommendation to Academic Council for changes to the programme. This extensive use of stakeholder feedback, which makes a significant contribution to the continuous quality improvement of academic programmes contributes to the good practice identified in Standard 1.7, (see paragraph 7.4).

9.12 The review team concludes that the University monitors and regularly reviews its programmes with the aim to continuously improve the quality of the academic programmes, and curricula and that therefore Standard 1.9 is **met**.

Standard 1.10 Cyclical external quality assurance

Institutions should undergo external quality assurance in line with the ESG on a cyclical basis.

Findings

10.1   In accordance with conditions set by the UGC, the University undergoes an accreditation evaluation by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) every five years. NAAC evaluated the University in 2012 and awarded the University the highest prevalent A grade accreditation. The University is currently undergoing its second cycle of accreditation by NAAC, which began in December 2017.

10.2   As part of the accreditation process, NAAC undertakes a peer review visit and considers a self-study report, statistical analysis of quantitative data and an online student satisfaction survey. NAAC assesses a broad scope of educational aspects, including: curriculum, teaching-learning, research, infrastructure and learning resources, student support, governance, and leadership and management.

10.3   In addition to periodic review, University IQAC submits an Annual Quality Assurance Report to NAAC at the end of each academic year, demonstrating the University's growth in key quality areas. The University also undergoes continuous assessment, facilitated by an online NAAC self-assessment tool.

10.4   Some programmes offered by the University are accredited by national professional councils including the National Council for Teacher Education and the Council of Architecture. These bodies conduct periodic visits to check the University's continued compliance to the norms and requirements of accreditation. After each visit, the councils send a report of their findings and the University acts on recommendations and submits a compliance report.

10.5   Programmes offered at the Dubai campus are registered annually by the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA) in Dubai. KHDA primarily uses evidence from external quality assurance of programmes to check the University's alignment with KHDA standards.

10.6   Through meetings with senior faculty, in conjunction with documentary evidence, it was clear to the review team that the University actively pursues external quality assessment of both the institution and its programmes and engages positively with this process. In addition to external assessment by statutory authorities, the University has undergone review by several international accreditation bodies such as The Western Association for Schools and Colleges (WASC) and The International Accreditation Council for Business Education and has been awarded ISO certification by the British Standards Institution in six service areas.

10.7   Although the University demonstrates a commitment to external quality assurance, the review team agreed that the quality of the evidence and self-evaluation document submitted for International Quality Review could be greatly improved. For example, the self-evaluation document was predominantly descriptive and lacked reflection and discussion on how the University meets the European Standards and Guidelines. Furthermore, there were inconsistencies between the assertions made and the evidence provided. The University may wish to consider ensuring that it adequately prepares for the unique requirements of each external assessment.

10.8   However, through meetings with faculty, staff, students and external members of committees, it was evident to the review team that the University has developed a quality

culture that embraces international benchmarking and continuous improvement. It also actively seeks the input of external experts from industry and academia, students and other stakeholders (see paragraph 1.7). The review team saw a number of examples of improvements that have been made as a result of cyclical quality review, such as the introduction of the outcomes-based education system in response to the WASC Senior College and University Commission Eligibility Review in 2014 and the development of an online tool which allows each department to assess its performance against NAAC criteria.

10.9   Based on the evidence provided, including feedback from industry experts and students, external statutory reporting requirements to NAAC and a number of international reviews, the review team concludes that there is an effective cyclical quality assurance in place, and that consequently Standard 1.10 is **met**.

Glossary

Action plan
A plan developed by the institution after the QAA review report has been published, which is signed off by the head of the institution. It responds to the recommendations in the report and gives any plans to capitalise on the identified good practice.

Annual monitoring
Checking a process or activity every year to see whether it meets expectations for standards and quality. Annual reports normally include information about student achievements and may comment on the evaluation of courses and modules.

Collaborative arrangement
A formal arrangement between a degree-awarding body and another higher education provider. These may be degree-awarding bodies with which the institution collaborates to deliver higher education qualifications on behalf of the degree-awarding bodies. Alternatively, they may be other delivery organisations who deliver part or all of a proportion of the institution's higher education programmes.

Degree-awarding body
Institutions that have authority, for example from a national agency, to issue their own awards. Institutions applying to IQR may be degree-awarding bodies themselves or may collaborate to deliver higher education qualifications on behalf of degree-awarding bodies.

Desk-based analysis
An analysis by the review team of evidence, submitted by the institution, that enables the review team to identify its initial findings and subsequently supports the review team as it develops its review findings.

Enhancement
See **quality enhancement**.

European Standards and Guidelines
For details, including the full text on each standard, see www.enqa.eu/index.php/home/esg.

Examples of practice
A list of policies and practices that a review team may use when considering the extent to which an institution meets the standards for review. The examples should be considered as a guide only, in acknowledgment that not all of them will be appropriate for all institutions.

Facilitator
The member of staff identified by the institution to act as the principal point of contact for the QAA officer and who will be available during the review visit, to assist with any questions or requests for additional documentation.

Good practice
A feature of good practice is a process or way of working that, in the view of a QAA review team, makes a particularly positive contribution to the institution's higher education provision.

Lead student representative
An optional voluntary role that is designed to allow students at the institution applying for IQR to play a central part in the organisation of the review.

Oversight
Objective scrutiny, monitoring and quality assurance of educational provision.

Peer reviewers
Members of the review team who make the decisions in relation to the review of the institution. Peer reviewers have experience of managing quality and academic standards in higher education or have recent experience of being a student in higher education.

Periodic review
An internal review of one or more programmes of study, undertaken by institutions periodically (typically once every five years), using nationally agreed reference points, to confirm that the programmes are of an appropriate academic standard and quality. The process typically involves experts from other higher education providers. It covers areas such as the continuing relevance of the programme, the currency of the curriculum and reference materials, the employability of graduates and the overall performance of students. Periodic review is one of the main processes whereby institutions can continue to assure themselves about the academic quality and standards of their awards.

Programme of study
An approved course of study that provides a coherent learning experience and normally leads to a qualification. UK higher education programmes must be approved and validated by UK degree-awarding bodies.

Quality enhancement
The process by which higher education providers systematically improve the quality of provision and the ways in which students' learning is supported.

QAA officer
The person appointed by QAA to manage the review programme and to act as the liaison between the review team and the institution.

Quality assurance
The systematic monitoring and evaluation of learning and teaching, and the processes that support them, to make sure that the standards of academic awards meet the necessary standards, and that the quality of the student learning experience is being safeguarded and improved.

Recognition of prior learning
Assessing previous learning that has occurred in any of a range of contexts including school, college and university, and/or through life and work experiences.

Recommendation
Review teams make recommendations where they agree that an institution should consider developing or changing a process or a procedure in order to improve the institution's higher education provision.

Reference points
Statements and other publications that establish criteria against which performance can be measured.

Self-evaluation document
A self-evaluation report by an institution. The submission should include information about the institution as well as an assessment of the effectiveness of its quality systems.

Student submission
A document representing student views that describes what it is like to be a student at the institution, and how students' views are considered in the institution's decision-making and quality assurance processes.

Validation
The process by which an institution ensures that its academic programmes meet expected academic standards and that students will be provided with appropriate learning opportunities. It may also be applied to circumstances where a degree-awarding institution gives approval for its awards to be offered by a partner institution or organisation.