

The Impact of Self-Assessment in Education Quality Inspection on Quality Improvement Activities at Van Hien University

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Abstract: *Self-assessment is the basic and first stage of the quality accreditation process. Through the self-assessment process, the school recognizes strengths and weaknesses that need to be overcome and plans to improve specific quality for each field of work in the school, thereby creating motivation and encouragement to leaders, lecturers and staff of the university to continue improving the quality of teaching and training better and better. Since then, the training quality has been constantly improved, contributing to the development of the university in accordance with the trend of international integration and meeting the requirements of the society. In the process of conducting self-assessment of educational institutions, at Van Hien University, many activities have been carried out to improve the quality of the university's weaknesses through the discovered self-assessment process and enhance the quality of the school which also meets the set of quality assessment standards issued by the Ministry of Education and Training.*

Keywords: self-assessment, quality accreditation, improve, quality, Van Hien University

1. Introduction

Self-assessment is an important tool in the quality accreditation of universities, colleges and professional secondary schools. It is a process that the school itself considers and researches on the basis of quality evaluation criteria issued by the Ministry of Education and Training to report on the status of quality, effectiveness of training and research activities, human resources, facilities as well as other related issues, thereby making adjustments to resources and implementation processes to meet quality standards [2]. Through self-assessment, the school has the basis to identify strengths and shortcomings from which to implement measures to improve the school's quality [3]. Right in the process of conducting self-assessment activities, the school also conduct the quality improvement of activities to meet the quality assessment standards issued by the Ministry of Education and Training. As a result, the field activities of the University are improved as well.

In the process of implementing self-assessment of educational institutions, most universities in general and Van Hien University in particular has conducted quality improvement of activities to overcome shortcomings to meet the criteria for evaluating the quality of educational institutions. Consequently, through the process of implementing self-evaluation of educational institutions, the quality of activities of Van Hien University has been improved.

2. The role of educational quality accreditation in Vietnam

The trend of globalization, international integration and the development of Industry 4.0 requires training to provide high quality human resources to ensure the sustainable development of the country. To accomplish this task, education and training in general and higher education in

Vietnam in particular must not only expand the scale but also constantly improve the quality of education and training. While the education process is gradually shifting from the state-oriented education or the school's academic orientation to the labor market-oriented education, quality accreditation becomes an effective tool in many countries around the world to maintain the quality standards of education and continually improve the quality of teaching and learning in educational institutions [3].

Firstly, educational quality accreditation helps universities guide and define quality standards for each activity.

Secondly, educational quality accreditation gives universities the opportunity to systematically revise their entire activities so that they can adjust their activities to a certain standard.

Thirdly, educational quality accreditation is a firm statement to stakeholders about the quality of the school. The registration of educational quality accreditation is considered a commitment of the quality of training that the school offers to learners and other stakeholders such as employers, and society. In addition, external reviews are conducted through third parties who are experts in higher education, research and management with certified auditor training and or card training. Educational quality accreditors will be highly impartial in recognizing school quality. Therefore, the test results provide the parties with timely and accurate information to confirm the training quality of the educational institution, thereby having the basis for selecting appropriate services.

Fourthly, educational quality accreditation creates the basis for building a quality culture for educational institutions. Educational quality accreditation activities are based on indicators and criteria for evaluation, so that this information will help each member of the institution better understand their work and involved parties. Thereby, they know how to proactively improve the quality of their work, contribute

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with related people to act on quality, then quality culture will gradually form at the higher education institution [3].

In the process of educational quality accreditation, self-assessment is especially important. Self-assessment is an important step in ensuring quality and building a quality culture within the school. Self-assessment helps educational institutions self-review, evaluate and assess the situation; developing and implementing action plans to improve and expand the quality of training, then adjusting the target for the next stage towards a higher level. In addition, self-assessment is a necessary condition for an educational institution to register for external evaluation and request recognition of quality standards with an educational quality accreditation organization. In addition, self-assessment demonstrates the autonomy and self-responsibility of educational institutions in all training, scientific research and community service activities according to assigned functions and tasks with the mission and goal defined [2].

Up to now, the Ministry of Education and Training has issued licenses to 05 educational quality accreditation centres, namely VNU Hanoi Education Quality Accreditation Centre and Ho Chi Minh National University's Education Quality Accreditation Centre. Ho Chi Minh City, Centre for Educational Quality Accreditation, Da Nang University, Centre for Educational Quality Accreditation of Vietnam Association of Colleges and Universities and Centre for Education Quality Accreditation. The Ministry of Education and Training has implemented a set of standards for quality accreditation of training programs according to AUN-QA with 11 standards and 50 criteria (Circular No. 04/2016). AUN-QA with 25 standards and 111 criteria (Circular No. 12/2017). The criteria of the standards are evaluated on a 7-level scale, from unsatisfactory to excellent performance, reaching the level of the world's leading educational institutions.

3. Overview of Van Hien University

Van Hien University was established under the Prime Minister's Decision No. 517 / TTg of July 11, 1997 and officially operated in November 1999 under Decision No. 4833 / QD - BGD & DT of November 8, 1997. 1999. At the end of 2012, Hung Hau Development Joint Stock Company (HungHau Holdings) became the only comprehensive strategic investor of Van Hien University. On January 28, 2016, according to Decision No. 58 / QD-TTg of the Prime Minister, Van Hien University was transformed to private. The mission of the University is defined: "Van Hien University is an application-oriented higher education institution with diverse training disciplines. The university always renews its training program in the direction of international integration, focusing on preserving and promoting the Vietnamese cultural identity and flexibility according to the country's socio-economic development requirements. "The school's vision is: "By 2030, Van Hien University will become one of the highly respected application-oriented higher education institutions in Vietnam, regional integration and international standards". The school defines the educational philosophy: "Success first

to fame" and specific core values: "Sustainable development; Standardized quality of education; Effective management; Professional service; Responsibility to yourself and to the community; Friendliness and modern" [7].

From the beginning of its foundation, the University has had a policy of building Van Hien University in a multidisciplinary direction, with a variety of programs, types and training levels, with a focus on the economics, tourism and information technology, society, foreign languages and culture, and agriculture fields. Through the prestigious cooperative relationship, students are guaranteed to apply and practice at prestigious businesses and organizations in Ho Chi Minh City and the Southern region. The University currently has 2 majors with Master's degree (Business Administration, Vietnamese Literature) and 21 majors at University level [7]. With the philosophy of training "Success first to Fame", in addition to teaching professional knowledge and skills, Van Hien University also integrates many extracurricular activities to help students practice morality and cooperation, fostering and studying soft skills so that after graduation, they will become a good citizen, having a sense of responsibility, self-control and contributing parts of their efforts to the country's development.

4. Challenges and difficulties in the process of self-evaluation of educational institutions of Van Hien University

4.1 Challenges

Firstly, the fierce competition between domestic and foreign higher education institutions, especially between domestic private higher education institutions in Ho Chi Minh City area. In addition, public universities have increasingly become financially autonomous, so they have promoted their branding, and introduced the University's image to attract and compete with private higher education institutions. Facing that situation, the university's leaders identified the training quality objectives as a key and important factor to help Van Hien university develop sustainably and step by step integrate into the world, gradually improve the training quality of the school to create a foundation, a healthy competitive position with domestic and foreign higher education institutions.

Secondly, employment issues are for graduated students. Every year, the number of graduates from higher education institutions in general and the university in particular is very large, creating job competition in the labour market. The University has established a Business Collaborative Centre with the function of supporting internships and employment for students to have good relationships with businesses in industrial parks and export processing zones in Ho Chi Minh City and the surrounding provinces which has created favourable conditions for the University's graduates to have a stable job and a suitable training career.

Thirdly, meeting the employment requirements of graduates. The results of the enterprises' feedback survey show that when receiving new graduates from higher education institutions to work in enterprises, it takes time for training,

further training and retraining to satisfy the required work. The University leaders pay attention to directing the specialized faculties, focusing on improving the training program in the direction of career application to ensure that the graduates of the University can access practical, easy, and fast way.

Fourthly, the impact of international integration and the industrial revolution 4.0 greatly affects domestic education in general and the school in particular. The school leaders are acutely aware that the international integration of the school needs to be done through improving the operation quality of the internal quality assurance system as well as conducting quality accreditation at the education and training program. In addition, the University's leaders deploy solutions to apply information technology in training, scientific research and community service to gradually modernize and technologize the activities. The university provides students with access to modern and advanced technology in the process of learning and researching at the school.

4.2 Difficulties

Firstly, the members of the self-assessment council often are the managers or part-time lecturers who are busy with many jobs at the school; therefore, it is unsuitable for them to invest time to afford it. self-assessment activities. Specialized groups who are experts involved but have not been trained in the techniques of collecting, processing information, demonstrating, not knowing how to write criteria reports. In addition, there is a lack of coordination among specialized groups in the self-assessment process.

Secondly, the data storage of the school has not performed well for some time. Therefore, collecting evidence for the 5-year period of the evaluation cycle is a significant difficulty for the school's self-assessment.

Thirdly, the investigation of surveys and collecting feedback from stakeholders is still limited. Although the school has paid attention to implementing opinions of stakeholders, the number of questionnaires collected is very small. Hence, it does not guarantee the reliability of the survey results. Moreover, the survey results have not been focused on using to improve the quality of activities. In particular, universities have many difficulties in developing survey or interview questionnaires so that they meet the requirements of self-assessment according to criteria or standards. When collecting evidence, the expert encountered difficulties in determining the appropriateness of the evidence with the content of each level of each criterion.

Fourthly, the requirements of the self-assessment report are a unified whole, the standards and criteria are relatively independent that stick together into a system to highlight the characteristics, so that when reading, it is necessary for us to clearly see the strengths and basic existence in the training activities of the school. Finding human resources who are both knowledgeable about the set of standards for evaluating the quality of higher education institutions as well as the

status of the school's activities and having the capacity to write reports is difficult.

Fifthly, during the implementation of self-assessment, it is necessary for school to apply training activities, scientific research and community service. Therefore, it is very difficult for the school to devote resources to maintain and ensure the quality of activities and to improve the quality of the problems discovered through the self-assessment process of educational institutions.

Sixthly, the perception of university leaders on quality accreditation in general and self-assessment in particular is very different. It is experienced that schools where the Principal, the Board of Directors have the right perception, really care, invest effort and closely follow, the school's self-assessment activities are carried out effectively. For example, implementing self-assessments is the same time, but degrees of accomplishment are varied. Some schools only have self-assessment reports after 6 months as the others were unsatisfactory and had to be repeated many times.

5. Impact of self-assessment of educational institutions on quality improvement activities of Van Hien University

While implementing the self-assessment of educational institutions, Van Hien University also implemented quality improvement to overcome the problems discovered through the self-assessment process compared to the set of quality assessment standards of higher education institutions.

Firstly, the awareness of managers, lecturers and staff about the quality of education in general and the importance of educational quality accreditation in particular has been raised. Since then, the members of the school voluntarily participated in self-evaluation as well as performed assigned work with significantly improved quality.

Secondly, the units and members of the school perform culture of evidence. The school thoroughly corrects the deployment work in verbal form or email. The school's activities are employed in the form of documents and archived into a system to facilitate the search, extract as well as an important basis for the implementation.

Thirdly, the school develops and promotes key targets (KPIs) for all areas of activities. On that basis, the school announced and implemented the application throughout the school.

Fourthly, the school promotes the supervision and measurement of performance results as well as improvement results compared with the main targets to promptly apply measures which had unsatisfactory results or progress.

Fifthly, the school perfects the internal quality assurance system in order to deploy training, scientific research and community services effectively and systematically.

Sixthly, the school has built an internal quality assurance information system to manage information in a consistent and accurate manner, while ensuring that the information is used for training activities, scientific research and community service.

Seventhly, the school prioritizes resources for internal and external quality assurance activities to increase the quality of training, scientific research and community service activities.

Eighthly, the school develops the training programs according to AUN-QA, deploys diverse training activities to equip learners with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to meet the requirements of the labour market and the needs of society.

Ninthly, the school has implemented many policies to encourage staff, lecturers and students to participate in scientific research and innovation, and held many national and international conferences and seminars.

Tenthly, the school is interested in focusing on organizing many activities to serve the community, establishing a Learning Support Centre to serve the maximum learning needs of learners.

6. Conclusion

Education quality accreditation has long been established and developed. Currently, this activity is increasingly popular because it is an effective tool to help universities control and ensure the quality of training, and improve competitiveness for educational institutions. Self-assessment of university quality is a link of the quality assurance of higher education, and is the first step in the process of implementing educational quality accreditation. The key of self-assessment is that universities have basis for identifying quality improvement plans and measures, conducting quality improvements in order to overcome existing problems, as well as meeting the set of standards of higher education institutions. In the process of self-assessing the quality of educational institutions, Van Hien University has applied many measures to perfect the quality of its operational fields. As a result, the quality of the school's education has improved significantly, especially for training, scientific research and community service activities. In addition, the quality of the school's education is improved according to the requirements of the higher education quality assessment standards issued by the Ministry of Education and Training.

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