



Institutional Quality Assurance Audit

Peer-to-Peer Quality Review

External Audit Report

**Open School
Bangladesh Open University**

1st August – 5th August 2018

Submitted by

**The External Quality Assurance Review Team
National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS), India**

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Table of Contents

| | |
|---|--|
| Acronyms | |
| 1. Introduction | |
| 1.1 Open school, Bangladesh Open University | |
| 1.3 Programme wise enrolment | |
| 2. Aims & Objectives of P2P Review | |
| 3. The scope of the Quality review | |
| 4. Quality review approach | |
| 5. The Audit Team | |
| 6. The Audit Schedule..... | |
| 7. Findings and Recommendations | |
| 8. Conclusions..... | |

Acknowledgement

NIOS review team conveys its sincere thanks and acknowledgement to Prof. C B Sharma, Chairman, NIOS for initiating quality assurance in open schooling and to Prof (Dr.) Asha Kanwar, President, Commonwealth of Learning for supporting the endeavor technically and financially.

The team also acknowledges Prof. M A Mannan, Vice Chancellor, BOU, Prof. Sabina Yeasmin, Dean BOU-OS, all the faculty members and staff of Bangladesh Open University for their kind support in the peer evaluation process.

We would also like to thank the Quality Assurance team of BOU-OS for their continuous assistance in coordinating the peer-evaluation exercise and providing the self-evaluation report.

NIOS believes that the BOU-OS at large will benefit from the recommendations of this peer-evaluation endeavor and quality improvement plans will be developed to bring to action all the agreed recommendations.

Acronyms

BOU - Bangladesh Open University

COL- Commonwealth of Learning

f2f - face-to-face

HSC - Higher Secondary Certificate

ICT - Information and Communication Technology

JSC - Junior School Certificate

NCTB- National Curriculum Textbook Board

NGO - Non-Government Organizations

NIOS - National Institute of Open Schooling

OER - Open Educational Resources

QA -Quality Assurance

SLMs - Self-Learning Materials

SRC - Sub Regional Centers

SSC - Secondary School Certificate

1. Introduction

1.1 Open School, Bangladesh Open University

Open school is one of the largest schools among six schools of BOU in terms of the number of student enrollment. Every person has the opportunity to be admitted irrespective of age, gender, disability and profession in any program of the school. Currently, the school is offering five programs namely Secondary School Certificate (SSC), SSC Niche 1, Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC), HSC Niche 1 (Army, Navy, Air Force) and Bachelor of Business Studies (BBS). This school initiated SSC program from 1995 and HSC programs from 1998. Business Studies program has been initiated from the 2005-2006 session.

The Open School mainly works for the pre-University programs for the dropouts at the school and college level. In addition, it also runs the tertiary programs considering the needs of the existing learners.

At present, Open School has core faculty of Bangladesh Open University (BOU) which runs programs through open schooling using the self-learning materials (SLMs), radio-TV broadcasts (RTBs) and face-to-face (f2f) contact at the learners' corners. Open School, thus, has the experience of two kinds of programs – pre-University and tertiary programs.

1.2 The Educational Programs

The Open School runs two pre-University and one tertiary program – discussed below:

- **Pre-university programs**

From 1996, Open School has been successfully running the SSC and HSC as pre-University programs for the dropout learners from the formal stream.

- **General Programme**

Secondary School Certificate (SSC) and Higher Secondary School Certificate (HSC). Being equivalent programme as per National regulations (NCF/NCTB), BOU follows the national standard of Curriculum, Syllabus, Course, Mark distribution, etc. But, other characteristics of open schooling (Age, SLM etc.) are followed effectively.

- **Niche-1 Programme**

Secondary School Certificate-SSC (Niche-1) and Higher Secondary School Certificate-HSC (Niche-1) programmes are offered only to Bangladesh Army, Navy and Air Force as per their needs and demands. Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed to run these programme. Some courses i.e Military Studies, ICT and Ocean Geography have been offered for the learners as per their needs. These programmes are also equivalent to BOU's general programme (SSC/HSC) and as per National regulations (NCF/NCTB).

1.3 Programme wise Enrolment

Table 1: Program wise total student's enrollment on 31/12/2017 in 2016-2017 Session (SSC & HSC 2017-2018 session)

| Schools | Name of the Program | Year/ Semester | Total Enrollment | | |
|-----------------|--------------------------|-------------------|------------------|--------|-------|
| | | | Male | Female | Total |
| Open School | SSC (Humanities) | 1st (2017) | 24722 | 16345 | 41067 |
| | | 2nd | 15952 | 11034 | 26986 |
| | SSC (Science) | 1st (2017) | 300 | 153 | 453 |
| | | 2nd | 144 | 87 | 231 |
| | SSC (Business Education) | 1st (2017) | 2872 | 1366 | 4238 |
| | | 2nd | 1185 | 681 | 1866 |
| | SSC Niche-1 | 1st | 221 | 0 | 221 |
| | | 2 nd | 151 | 0 | 151 |
| | HSC (Humanities) | 1st (2017) | 43890 | 35508 | 79317 |
| | | 2 nd | 29072 | 18899 | 47971 |
| | HSC (Science) | 1st (2017) | 590 | 194 | 784 |
| | | 2 nd | 265 | 129 | 394 |
| | HSC (Business Education) | 1st (2017) | 3445 | 2084 | 5529 |
| | | 2 nd | 1829 | 1045 | 2874 |
| | HSC Niche-1 | 1 st | 6391 | 50 | 6441 |
| 2 nd | | 3384 | 255 | 3639 | |
| BBS | 1 st | 1595 | 453 | 2048 | |
| | 2 nd | 956 | 256 | 1212 | |
| | 3 rd | 404 | 89 | 493 | |

2. Objectives of Peer-to-peer quality review

- to encourage the partners to ensure that policies, systems, processes and procedures for the development, maintenance and enhancement of quality are functioning effectively;
- to enable the two partners to identify areas of strength and excellence as well as areas in need of focused attention for improvement in the short, medium and long term;
- to provide consistency in quality assurance and transform the partners' quality assurance systems into international best standards;
- to enable the partners to assess the overall quality of their products and service delivery mechanism; and
- to develop an institutional peer-to-peer quality assurance audit model for Asia.

3. Scope of the Audit

The audit focused on policies, systems, structures, resources and activities in relation to:

- learner information and accessibility
- admission and registration
- administrative support
- programme and course development
- learner evaluation
- academic support and materials development
- human resource and capacity building
- financial audit

Issues of governance, management and other institutional operations were looked at only in relation to their impact on the above areas. Benchmarking was regarded as a cross-cutting theme in the audit.

On the whole, the audit assessed the integration of quality assurance with institutional planning and resource allocation.

4. Quality review approach

In May 2017 a workshop on peer-to-peer Quality Assurance Audit Framework was organized at NIOS under the aegis of COL. The objective of the workshop was to develop a set of Common Quality Assurance Criteria for the two institutions. As per modalities of the Audit Framework, an institutional audit has been carried out between 1st August–5th August 2018 by NIOS for BOU-OS. The self-evaluation report prepared by BOU-OS formed the basis for the external quality assurance audit.

The main purpose of the visit was to conduct a review of operations of the institution to validate the self evaluation report in respect of the:

- quality of the information and analysis presented;
- claims made and evidence presented in respect of the effectiveness of the QA systems that are in place;
- claims made and evidence presented in respect of plans for improvement of quality and QA systems;
- non conformities claimed to have been addressed.

5. The Audit Review Team

The external audit team from NIOS comprised senior members as follows-

- Mr. S K Prasad, Director, Student Support Services Department (Team Leader)
- Ms. Bhawana Dhyani, Joint Director, Student Support Services
- Dr. Sandhya Kumar, Deputy Director, Academic Department
- Dr. Manoj Thakur, Research and Evaluation Officer
- Ms. Anshul Kharbanda, Academic Officer
- Ms. Priya Gupta, Assistant Director, Administration (Member Coordinator)

6. The Audit Schedule

Peer to Peer Quality Review Programme 2018

Organised by: Open School of Bangladesh Open University (BOU) and

National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS), India

Supported By: Commonwealth of Learning (COL)

(1st – 5th August, 2018)

| Date | Time | Activities | Participants | Venue | |
|--|-------------|--|---|---|--|
| Day 00 Tuesday 31 st July, 2018 | 01.45 pm | Arrival of NIOS delegation Welcome by Mr. Masud Talukder, Lecturer, OS-BOU (01616-160507) | | International Airport | |
| | 03.0 pm | Arrival at Hotel | | Amborsia Guest House, Dhanmondi | |
| Day 01 Wednesday 1 st August, 2018 | Session One | 9.00-9.30 am | Official welcome | NIOS team, Dean & Faculties OS-BOU, | Dean Office, Open School, BOU Campus, Gazipur |
| | | 9.30-10.30 am | Seminar on Introductions, Statement of Purpose and Adoption of program | NIOS team, Deans, Directors of BOU & OS Faculties | Seminar Hall, BOU Campus |
| | | 10.30 -11.00 am | Tea Break | | |
| | | 11.00- 12.00 pm | BOU Campus Tour | NIOS team & OS-BOU team | BOU Campus |
| | | 12.00-12.40pm | Discussion 1: With Registrar | NIOS team (A) & OS-BOU team (A) | Office of the Registrar, BOU Campus |

| Date | | Time | Activities | Participants | Venue | |
|--|-------------|-----------------|---|--|---|--|
| | Session Two | 12.00-12.40pm | Discussion 2: With Finance & Accounts Division | NIOS team (B) & OS-BOU team (B) | Finance & Accounts Division, BOU Campus | |
| | | 12.40-01.00pm | Discussion 3: With Computer Division | NIOS team (A+B) & OS-BOU team | Computer Division, BOU Campus | |
| | | 1.00 - 1.40 pm | Lunch Break | | | |
| | | 1.40- 2.20pm | Discussion 4: Publication, Printing & Distribution Division | NIOS team (A) & OS-BOU team (A) | Office of the PPD Director, BOU Campus | |
| | | 1.40- 2.20pm | Discussion 5: Media Division | NIOS team (B) & OS-BOU team (B) | Media Center, BOU Campus | |
| | | 2.30 - 3.10 pm | Discussion 6: Student Support Service Division | NIOS team (A) & OS-BOU team (A) | SSS Division, BOU Campus | |
| | | 2.30 - 3.10 pm | Discussion 7: Examination Division | NIOS team (B) & OS-BOU team (B) | Exam Division, BOU Campus | |
| | | 3.20 - 3.40 pm | Experience Sharing | NIOS team (A+B) & OS-BOU faculty | Dean Office, Open School, BOU Campus, Gazipur | |
| Day 02 Thursday 2 nd August, 2018 | Session One | 9.00-10.30 am | Visit & Discussion 8: Regional Center (Staff) | RD,SRDs, RC Officials, NIOS Team & OS-BOU Team (A+B) | Regional Center, Dhaka | |
| | | 10.30-11.00 am | Tea Break | | | |
| | | 11.00 - 1.00 pm | Discussion 9: Regional Center (Learners, Coordinator/Tutors of SSC & HSC programs) | Learners, Coordinator/Tutors of SCs, NIOS Team & OS-BOU Team (A+B) | Regional Center, Dhaka | |

| Date | | Time | Activities | Participants | Venue |
|---|--|------------------|--|---|--|
| | Travel | 1.00 - 2.00pm | Lunch Break | | |
| | | 2.45 pm | Travel to Cox's Bazaar by Air | | |
| | | 4.10 pm | Reached Cox's Bazaar : Welcome by Mr. Shyam Ranjan, DRD, Cox's Bazar | | |
| Day 03 Friday 3 rd August, 2018 | Session One | 9.00- 11.00 am | Visit & Discussion 10: HSC Study Center | Coordinator, Tutors, Learners, DRD of SRC, NIOS & OS-BOU Team | Cox's Bazar Govt. College |
| | | 11.00-11.30 am | Morning Break | | |
| | | 11.30 - 01.00 pm | Visit & Discussion 11: SSC Study Center | Coordinator, Tutors, Learners, DRD of SRC, NIOS & OS-BOU Team | Cox's Bazar Govt. High School |
| | Session Two | 1.00 - 2.00 pm | Lunch Break | | |
| | | 2.00- 4.00 pm | Collating findings and compiling report | NIOS Team & OS-BOU Team (A+B) | Cox's Bazaar center |
| | Travel | 4.00 - 8.00 pm | Travel to Chottogram by Micro-bus (Driver Mr. Mahmud, 01835-614955) | | |
| | | 8.00 pm | Check in Hotel, Chottogram | | |
| | Day 04 Saturday 4 th August, 2018 | Session One | 9.00- 10.30 am | Visit & Discussion 12: HSC (Niche-1/Army) Study Center | Coordinator, Officials, Tutors, Learners, RD of RC, NIOS & OS-BOU Team |
| 10.30- 11.30 am | | | Travel to Bangladesh Air Force SC | | |

| Date | | Time | Activities | Participants | Venue | |
|--|--|------------------|--|---|--|------------------------|
| Day 04 Saturday 4 th August, 2018 | | 11.30 - 12.30 pm | Visit & Discussion 13: HSC (Niche-1/ BAF) Study Center | Coordinators, Officials, Tutors, Learners, RD of RC, NIOS & OS-BOU Team | BAF Shaheen College, Chottogram Study Center | |
| | | 12.30 - 12.45 pm | Travel to Bangladesh Navy SC | | | |
| | Session Two | 12.45 - 5.00 pm | Visit & Discussion 14: SSC & HSC (Niche-1/Navy) Study Center <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tutorial Class Visit• Lunch break• Discussion• Site seeing | Coordinators, Officials, Tutors, Learners, RD of RC, NIOS & OS-BOU Team | BNS Isha Khan, Chottogram Study Center | |
| | | Travel | 8.40 pm | Travel to Dhaka by Air | | |
| | 9.40 pm | | Reached Dhaka (Amborsia Guest House, Dhanmondi) | | | |
| | Day 05 Sunday 5 th August, 2018 | Session One | 9.00- 10.30 pm | Compile, Consolidate and Finalize draft Review Report | NIOS & OS-BOU team (A+B) | Regional Center, Dhaka |
| 10.30-11.00 am | | | Tea Break | | | |

| Date | Time | Activities | Participants | Venue |
|--------------|----------------|---|-------------------------|--|
| | | Final layout on draft report | NIOS & BOU OS Faculties | Regional Center, Dhaka |
| | 11.00- 1.00 pm | Lunch Break | | |
| | 1.00 - 2.00 pm | Submission of Exit report by NIOS team & Closing meeting: Discussing partnership, cooperation and way forward | NIOS & BOU OS Faculties | Regional Center, Dhaka |
| 2.00-4.00 pm | | | | Day 06 Monday 6 th August, 2018 |
| 9.30 am | | Departure: NIOS delegation | | |

7. Findings and Recommendations

A. LEARNER SUPPORT

1 Learner Information and Accessibility

1.1 Criterion: The Institution (Open School) finalizes information about the programmes and publishes those at appropriate time through effective means for the benefit of public and prospective learners.

| 1.2 Elements of the Criterion | Assessment | Evidence Presented | Recommendations |
|---|---|--|--|
| 1.2.1 The Institution publishes information guides/prospectus through print and/ or electronic media which shall contain all necessary information including Admission forms. | Prospectus is published and updated every year which is also available through print and electronic media. Prospectus contains all necessary information regarding admission procedure. | Prospectus and website link https://www.bou.edu.bd/index.php/academic-info/admission | Good initiative to move from offline to online mode. Using ICT is laudable and all programmes should be covered through online mode. |

| 1.2 Elements of the Criterion | Assessment | | Evidence Presented | Recommendations | |
|--|----------------|--|--------------------|--|---|
| 1.2.2 The Institution has an academic calendar for each programme with the specific time for every year for all activities from admission to certification and should always be available through print and/or electronic media. | General | Academic calendar has been developed but not followed strictly due to extension of admission time on a needs basis. | General | Academic Calendar of SSC & HSC programme. | Efforts may be made to adhere to the Academic Calendar. In order to streamline the admission process, Study centres may submit forms periodically to Regional Centres processing. Provision for admission may be made available for learners round the year in two or three blocks and through online mode. |
| | Niche-1 | Academic calendar has been developed separately for each programme with specific time for every year. It covers all activities from admission to result publication and it is available through print and/or electronic media. | Niche-1 | Academic calendar and website link https://www.bou.edu.bd/images/acca_calendar/niche_acc_300118.pdf | Conformance is noted. |

| 1.2 Elements of the Criterion | Assessment | | Evidence Presented | | Recommendations | |
|--|----------------|--|--------------------|---|-----------------|---|
| 1.2.3 Information campaigns/awareness programmes/admission camps are organised in all target regions among all target populations to cover all activities of open schools. | General | Advertisement of admission, examination routine and information for result publication are being published for every program in national and local newspapers. | General | Copies of advertisement of admission, examination routine and information for result publication in national and local newspaper. | General | Efforts appreciated. However, social and other electronic media may be explored for wider publicity. |
| | Niche-1 | This is a program for a special group, thus, all information campaigns/awareness programmes/admission camps are being done at training centres of all three respective forces. | Niche-1 | Verified after visiting study centres at all three arms of the defense forces. | Niche-1 | As this is a special programme, the advocacy may be done as per the mutual understanding of BOU and target group. |

| 1.2 Elements of the Criterion | Assessment | Evidence Presented | Recommendations |
|---|--|--|--|
| 1.2.4 The information be disseminated through appropriate ways (e.g. advertisements in newspapers/magazines/electronic media/face to face interaction through exhibitions/fairs; banners/hoardings on public places e.g. airports, railway stations and bus terminals). | The information is being disseminated through advertisements in newspaper/electronic media/ banners. | <p>Website link https://www.bou.edu.bd/index.php/academic-info/admission https://www.bou.edu.bd/index.php/academic-info/examination https://www.bou.edu.bd/index.php/academic-info/registration-class https://www.bou.edu.bd/index.php/news-notice/administrative</p> <p>Copies of advertisement of admission; examination routine and information for result publication in national and local newspaper. Picture of banners that were displayed by RRC and SC.</p> | Efforts are appreciated and may be carried on further through face to face interaction, exhibitions/fairs, banners/hoardings in public places. |
| 1.2.5 Sufficient Brochures/handouts are being printed. | Sufficient Brochures/Handouts should be printed. It should be made available online as well as at all RCs and Sub RCs. | Brochures/Handouts, but found to be insufficient in number. | Printed Brochures/handouts may be developed in sufficient quantities and may also be placed on BOU website. |

| 1.2 Elements of the Criterion | Assessment | | Evidence Presented | Recommendations | | |
|---|---|--|--|---|----------------|---|
| 1.2.6 Social media is used appropriately for the dissemination of information. | Social media is used for the dissemination of information but not on large scale. | | https://www.facebook.com/Bdopenuniversity/ https://twitter.com/bouedu | An appropriate Social Media policy may be developed. It may be beneficial to create a Cell for Social Media at BOU/OS which can take care of social media campaigns on a regular basis for open schooling as well as reply to the queries raised by learners. | | |
| 1.2.7 All queries received through email, telephone, social media, IVRS are responded to immediately and a 24/7 support facility is made available to learners. | General | All queries received through telephone or face to face are responded to immediately but during office time and on office days only. Examination related problems are being received through online. | General | Exam Division website for problem solving: OSAP website for problem solving: http://osaps.bou.edu.bd/ | General | A Learner Support Centre (LSC) on the pattern of a Call Centre may be established for providing information 24*7 to resolve queries of general public and learners in particular. Staff of LSC need to be trained with IVRS facility for both software skills and providing |

| 1.2 Elements of the Criterion | Assessment | Evidence Presented | Recommendations |
|---|--|---|--|
| | | | information. of open schooling. |
| | Niche-1 All queries received through email and telephone responded immediately during office hours only. | Niche-1 Queries/Response through Emails | Niche-1 LSC will work for this programme also. |
| 1.2.8 Dissemination of information is provided in local languages. | Dissemination of information is provided in Bengali language only. | Copies of advertisement of admission, examination routine and information for result publication in national and local newspaper. | Efforts are appreciated. |
| 1.2.9 Those involved in tending to queries are given appropriate training with updated information. | Appropriate training is given to concern staff. | Schedule of training/ workshops organized. | Efforts are appreciated. |

2. Admission/ Registration

2.1 Criteria

- 2.1.1 The admission process is in accordance with programme regulations.
 2.1.2 All documents and information are checked before confirmation of admission.
 2.1.3 Learners are admitted through a transparent system.

| 2.2 Elements of the Criteria | Assessment | Evidence Presented | Recommendations |
|--|--|---|--|
| 2.2.1 The learners receive acknowledgement of their admission through electronic and/or print medium as per laid down timeframe in the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). | There is an acknowledgement part in the application form for admission and for OSAP (online). There is an inbuilt mechanism in the software for acknowledgement. | Copy of application form for SSC & HSC admission. OSAP (online) guidebook. | Efforts are appreciated. However, detailed Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) |

| 2.2 Elements of the Criteria | Assessment | Evidence Presented | Recommendations |
|--|--|---|--|
| | | | may be developed for the entire admission procedure. |
| 2.2.2 The admission is confirmed after verification as per laid down timeframe in the SOPs. | Students have been given enrollment number just after completion of admission process. | Sample of table to send information about learner where enrolment number is included. | All documents may be uploaded at the time of submission of forms and verification. Confirmation of admission may be done online to expedite the process. |
| 2.2.3 After confirmation of admission, data of the learners is sent to the department concerned for dispatch of materials to the learners. | Process is carried out as per laid criteria. | Copies of sending of data to department concerned (PPD, SSS & RRC). | Some stock of SLM may be maintained at every study centre for learners to be made available immediately after admission. |
| 2.2.4 After confirmation of admission, learners are provided with information regarding their enrolment number and important dates through print and/or electronic media within a certain timeframe as per the SOPs. | <p>Process takes place as per the norms in practice.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">General</p> | <p>Sample information about learner where enrolment number is included. Academic Calendar of SSC & HSC programme.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">General</p> | <p>As recommend in 2.2.2. Further, such information may be uploaded on BOU website.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">General</p> |

| 2.2 Elements of the Criteria | Assessment | Evidence Presented | Recommendations |
|--|--|--|---|
| | <p>Process takes place as per MoU with Defense Forces</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Niche-1</p> | <p>Visit to study centre at Defence establishments.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Niche-1</p> | <p>As recommended above for general programme.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Niche-1</p> |
| <p>2.2.5 Identity cards are issued to the learners within a certain timeframe as per the SOPs.</p> | <p>Identity cards are issued to the learners within the given timeframe after the completion of admission process.</p> | <p>Visit to study centre; discussion with Study Center Coordinator and learners.</p> | <p>Proper schedule may be maintained for dispatch of Identity Cards. In case of Online admission, I-cards may be made available online.</p> |
| <p>2.2.6 Any correction required in learners' database is attended to as per the timeframe in the SOPs.</p> | <p>Correction required in learners' database is attended.</p> | <p>There is a norm for correction of learners' database, but there is no written document for timeframe.</p> | <p>As recommended earlier, these may be covered strictly as per SOPs for admission. In case of online admission, e-services may be facilitated/introduced for resolving all such queries.</p> |
| <p>2.2.7 The learners are informed in timely basis about shortcomings in their admission form through print and/or electronic media.</p> | <p>Process is being done as per existing practice followed</p> | <p>Emails/letters</p> | <p>Shortcomings may be informed during verification process through BOU website. Learner's</p> |

| 2.2 Elements of the Criteria | Assessment | Evidence Presented | Recommendations |
|--|--|---|---|
| | | | email/sms. |
| 2.2.8 The learners are informed about their rejection of admission as per the time frame in the SOPs through print and electronic media. | The learners are informed about their rejection of admission just after checking their documents. | Letter of rejection/cancellation of forms. | As recommended above in 2.2.7. Specific time frame may be given to learner to rectify such problems. |
| 2.2.9 The admission data is made available to study centres and all concerned for their use. | The admission data is made available to study centres and to all departments concerned (Examination and PPD division) for their use. | Visit to respective departments | Access to admission data may be made available online for quick redressal. |
| 2.2.10 Learners' data is protected from misuse. | Only concerned officer of examination department has access to learner data. | Visit to respective department Documents for the responsibilities of concerned officer. | Data security is very important. Access to the data may be restricted to only concerned officials to avoid any misuse of data. |
| 2.2.11 Orientation sessions are arranged for all the learners before the start of an academic programme. | Process is carried out as per existing practice | Circulars/office orders | PCP schedule may be developed and shared online for the benefit of learners. The orientation programme can be part of PCP schedule. |

| 2.2 Elements of the Criteria | Assessment | Evidence Presented | Recommendations |
|------------------------------|------------|--------------------|---|
| | | | Monitoring by officials concerned / academic facilitators shall help in qualitative improvement. ICTs may be leveraged for the purpose. |

3 Administrative Support

3.1 Criterion

The administrative support is provided to the learners in an effective manner which includes providing learning material, attending to their requests/complaints/queries and giving them a memorable experience of open schooling.

| 3.2 Elements of the Criterion | Assessment | Evidence Presented | Recommendations |
|--|---|---|---|
| 3.2.1 Packaging and dispatch procedures of Self Learning Material (SLM) are revised and updated to ensure continuous improvement. | Done on routine basis. | Minutes of joint meeting among OS, PPD and SSS. | SLMs may be sent to the learners through RCs directly to Study centres. |
| 3.2.2 Study materials, stock (e.g. consumables and study aids) and equipment are provided to centres in advance to support the learners effectively. | Study materials, and equipment are provided to centres before starting of class but not in sufficient quantity. | Visit to Regional and Study Centres | Advance stock may be arranged at SCs to facilitate learners. |

| 3.2 Elements of the Criterion | Assessment | | Evidence Presented | Recommendations | |
|---|---|--|---|--|--|
| 3.2.3 The electronic copies of the SLM are available and have easy navigation. | The electronic copies of the SLM are available on BOU website and have easy navigation. | | Website link http://www.ebookbou.edu.bd/ | Efforts are appreciated. | |
| 3.2.4 The suggested support material is an Open Education Resource (OER). | The support material is an Open Education Resource (OER). | | Website link http://www.ebookbou.edu.bd/ | Efforts are appreciated. | |
| 3.2.5 Enquiries, application and complaints are dealt with quickly and clearly as per the time frame in the SOPs. | General | All queries received through telephone or face to face are responded to immediately but during office time and on office days only. Examination related problems are also being received online. | General | Registration page of learner from One Stop Service. Exam. Division website for problem solving: OSAP website for problem solving: http://osaps.bou.edu.bd/ | Learner Support Centre (LSC) on pattern of Call Centre may be established for providing information 24*7 to resolve queries of general public and learners in particular. Staff of LSC may be trained with IVRS facility for both software skills and information of open schooling. |
| | Niche-1 | All queries received through email and telephone responded immediately during office hours only. | Niche-1 | Queries/Response through Emails | For this programme also, LSC will work. |

| 3.2 Elements of the Criterion | Assessment | Evidence Presented | Recommendations |
|--|---|------------------------------|---|
| 3.2.6 Administrative and professional support is provided to educators/tutors. | Support is provided as and when required along with administration and professional support. | Office orders and circulars. | Efforts are appreciated. |
| 3.2.7 A cell for counseling and problem solving for the learners is available at the Regional Centres, and at the headquarters | A cell for counseling and problem solving for the learners is available at the headquarters of BOU. | Visit to counseling cell. | Efforts are appreciated. A Cell for guidance and counselling may be created to benefit learners. |
| 3.2.8 Learners who have completed their studies are supported/guided in their career advancement and tracked. | Assessment could not be done as no routine exercise/ research work is being done. | No evidence could be traced. | A database of alumni may be created and a Cell for guidance and counselling may be created to benefit learners. |

4 Academic Support

4.1 Criterion

There is mechanism to ensure effective academic support with the use of a wide range of open learning methodologies.

| 4.2 Elements of the Criterion | Assessment | Evidence Presented | Recommendations |
|--|---|---|---|
| 4.2.1 Learners are supported to take responsibility for their own learning through the use of facilitative learning and peer learning. | Learners are supported for their own learning through the use of various learning modes. | SLM/OER/E-books/Media | Along with SLM, peer learning during PCP may be encouraged. Supporting materials such as audio and video aids may be developed and provided to SCs. |
| 4.2.2 Learners have access to multi-dimensional learning resources (e.g. print-based and e-learning). | Learners are able to access multi-dimensional learning resources such as SLM, audio and video lecture broadcast, BOU tube, E-books. | SLM, Documents of audio and video lectures broadcast Program schedule of audio and video from OS. http://www.boutube.edu.bd/ http://www.ebookbo u.edu.bd/index.php | E-learning platform may be developed to facilitate learners, specially those living far from SCs. |
| 4.2.3 The teaching-learning processes have inbuilt mechanisms for the assessment and evaluation of learners at all stages. | The SLM is developed in modular form and there is an inbuilt mechanism for the assessment and evaluation of learners at all stages. | SLM. | Assignments, as a tool for formative assessment, are helpful for learners. |

| 4.2 Elements of the Criterion | Assessment | | Evidence Presented | Recommendations | | |
|--|--|--|---|--|----------------|---|
| 4.2.4 There is a mechanism for preparing learners for summative assessment of the courses, module, or topic and ensuring the security of all assessment tools. | There is an inbuilt mechanism in the SLM for preparing learners for summative assessment of the courses, modules, or topics. As Government regards these programmes as national programmes, the responsibility for security has been taken and ensured both by BOU and Government and regulated by institutional bylaws/Acts. | | SLM, Exam bylaws and Press rules. | Efforts are appreciated. | | |
| 4.2.5 Feedback is provided to the learner on his/her progress. | Feedback is provided to the learners on their progress after summative assessment only in the form of result declared. | | http://exam.bou.edu.bd/ | For continuous progress and feedback, assignments may be considered during PCP classes as per academic calendar. | | |
| 4.2.6 The assessment activities are designed and administered in ways that are not out of contexts. | There is a mechanism for ensuring quality of assessment activities. There are check procedures at many stages during development. | | Examination regulation. | Efforts are appreciated. | | |
| 4.2.7 Academic calendar is prepared and followed. | General | Academic calendar is being prepared but not strictly followed. | General | Academic calendar. | General | Efforts are to be made to adhere to the Academic calendar to facilitate learners. |
| | Niche-1 | Academic calendar is prepared and followed. | Niche-1 | Academic calendar. | Niche-1 | As recommended above. |
| 4.2.8 Self-Learning Materials (SLMs) are prepared in time so that learners receive | New curriculum (SSC & HSC programs) introduced from the year 2017 for both | | http://www.ebookbou.edu.bd/index.php | SLM distribution may be done as per academic | | |

| 4.2 Elements of the Criterion | Assessment | Evidence Presented | Recommendations |
|--|--|--|--|
| them as per academic calendar. | years (1 st & 2 nd year). Some delay in printing and dispatch of revised SLM was observed, although E-books were available on BOU website. | Discussion with learners at SCs. | All efforts may be made to avoid delay in dispatch of SLM to learners. |
| 4.2.9 Feedback is sought from both tutors and learners for teaching and learning improvement. | This practice is not being followed at BOIU-OS | No evidence found | Proper feedback performance may be developed for learners/tutors/academic facilitators. This will help in improving quality of the materials and delivery of programmes. |
| 4.2.10 Tutors are selected and trained for their role of facilitating learning and assisting learners to apply independent learning. | Tutors are selected every year but not trained on regular basis. | Tutor selection criteria and letter of appointment. | Provision for induction programme for tutors may be made. |
| 4.2.11 The turn-around time on assignments is well defined and adhered to. | There is no provision for assignments for general candidates at present. | Prospectus of SSC & HSC programme and academic Calendar of SSC, HSC, SSC (Niche-1) & HSC (Niche-1) | Schedule of assignment may be developed and its submission should be part of academic calendar. |
| 4.2.12 Tutor and learner performance is monitored regularly and corrective measures are taken. | Tutor and learner performance is being monitored but not regularly | Tutor selection criteria & Academic Regulation | Mechanism for monitoring teaching learning process during PCP and at study centre |

| 4.2 Elements of the Criterion | Assessment | Evidence Presented | Recommendations |
|--|---|-------------------------|---|
| | | | may be developed. For this academic facilitator faculty of BOU may be appointed for the purpose. |
| 4.2.13 Learners have access to the facilities (such as libraries, resource centres, open learning centres, etc.) and equipment that are necessary for their successful learning. | Study Centres have these facilities. However, learners may not have access to these facilities. | Visit to Study Centres. | Notification regarding norms and procedures of study centres may be strictly issued by BOU to facilitate learners to use such facilities. |
| 4.2.14 Learners are introduced to educational technology hardware, software, and delivery systems required in a programme. | Study Centres have these facilities. | Visit to study centres | As recommended above in 4.2.13. |

B. PROGRAMMES, MATERIALS AND EVALUATION

5 Programmes and Course Development

5.1 Criterion: The flexible and need-based programmes/courses are designed in consonance with the National regulations (Curriculum Framework (NCF)/National Curriculum Textbook Board (NCTB)).

| 5.2 Elements of the Criterion | Assessment | Evidence Presented | Recommendations |
|--|--|--|--|
| 5.2.1 Programmes and qualifications offered are aligned with the national qualifications framework of the country. | Since there is no defined national qualifications framework, OS-BOU designs its programme and develops syllabus following the Government education policy and National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB). | Education policy (https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/02.National-Education-Policy-2010-English.pdf), NCTB Syllabus & BOU Syllabus | Efforts are appreciated. |
| 5.2.2 Programme development always starts with the learner profile in mind and in open schooling, three main categories are envisaged, namely school-age children, out-of-school youth and adults. | Only existing educational qualification of learners is defined in programme regulation. | Programme regulation Circular and notice of admission | Target group of various programmes need to be clearly defined. |
| 5.2.3 The programme is developed after an appropriate needs analysis. | General There is a little bit scope of need analysis. Due to equivalency, BOU follows the national standards (Curriculum, Syllabus, Course, Marks distribution, etc.) | General Education Policy National Curriculum and Textbook Board | Need analysis may be done for the development of courses. |

| 5.2 Elements of the Criterion | Assessment | | Evidence Presented | | Recommendations |
|---|---|---|------------------------------|---|--|
| | Niche-1 | This programme is offered based on the need of Bangladesh Army, Navy and Air Force. Some courses are also offered based on their need/demand. | Niche-1 | Copies of MOU with Bd. Army, Navy & Airforce; Admission form. | |
| 5.2.4 Wherever possible, the courses are in modular format so that they may be used in more than one programme without the need of duplication and to ensure consistency. | The courses are in modular format and can be used in more than one programme. | | SLM of OS-BOU | | Efforts were appreciated. |
| 5.2.5 Learning outcomes/objectives, content and assessment methods in the programme are appropriate for the level and purpose. | Learning outcomes/objectives are accommodated in SLM. Some evaluation tools are available at the end of the lesson or unit for measuring the learning outcomes only through summative assessment. | | SLM of OS-BOU. | | Efforts were appreciated. However, purpose of the programme and formative assessment may be defined and practiced. |
| 5.2.6 Various courses of the programme are integrated (Academic/Vocational). | In academic, various courses of the same programme are integrated among the Humanities, Science and Business Education groups. There is no Vocational programmed in OS- BOU. | | Admission form and brochure. | | Efforts are appreciated. Vocational courses may be introduced to enhance skill development of learners. |
| 5.2.7 Entry requirements for the programme are as open as possible, and include recognition of prior | General | Only minimum educational qualification is required (Class 8 or JSC for SSC & SSC for HSC). There is no barrier of age, sex, gender, | General | Learner's Guide, Circular of Admission. | Condition of |

| 5.2 Elements of the Criterion | Assessment | | Evidence Presented | | Recommendations |
|--|---|--|---|-------------------------------------|---|
| learning and experience. | | race, religion, occupation etc. | | | class 8 or JSC pass for SSC may be relaxed. |
| | Niche-1 | Open only for the members of Army, Navy and Air Force. Recognition of prior learning and experience are included here. | Niche-1 | Copies of MoU and Admission Notice. | |
| 5.2.8 The programme design allows for flexible logical and complete exit points. | The learners can complete the programme within 2 years. If needed candidates can take maximum 5 years. If they passes in some courses then they appear only for rest of the subject(s). | | http://www.bou.edu.bd/images/student_guide/ssc_guide_17_220318.pdf ; http://www.bou.edu.bd/images/student_guide/hsc_lnr_guide_100718.pdf , Regulations | | After expiry of validity of 5 years of admission, provision of readmission with transfer of credit may be considered. |
| 5.2.9 Learners are able complete the course within a flexible time-period. | Learners are able complete the course within a flexible time-period (Five Years). | | | | Efforts appreciated. |
| 5.2.10 The transfer of credit facility is made available within the organization and with/ between other recognized education providers. | There is no credit transfer system. | | No evidence was presented. | | OS-BOU may consider instituting the credit transfer system. |
| 5.2.11 Procedures for the approval of programmes are systematic. | Curriculum committee proposes the program, School committee recommends and then Academic council approves. | | http://www.bou.edu.bd/images/pdf/bou_act_1992.pdf (BOU Act), MOU, Approval letter of Academic Council | | A systematic process is followed. Conformance is noted. |

| 5.2 Elements of the Criterion | Assessment | | Evidence Presented | Recommendations | |
|---|--|--|---|---|-----------------------|
| 5.2.12 Programmes are innovative and flexible. | Niche-1 | Programmes are flexible. | General | http://www.bou.edu.bd/images/student_guide/ssc_guide_17_220318.pdf ; http://www.bou.edu.bd/images/student_guide/hsc_lnr_guide_100718.pdf , Regulations | Conformance is noted. |
| | General | Programmes are innovative and flexible | Niche-1 | Regulation and MoU | |
| 5.2.13 Programme/course development involves planning for course teams, resources and other related issues. | Process is being followed as per laid criterion. Panel for Resource person and course development are prepared followed by training and workshop. | | List of course development team, panel of resource persons. Schedule of workshop. | Conformance is noted. | |
| 5.2.14 Appropriate ICT and media are used in the development of programme/courses. | Resource persons/writers use ICT i.e. internet , YouTube etc., for the course development. Supplementary audio and video programs are incorporated in developing the programs/courses. | | SLM, Audio and Video programmes. | OER may be developed for courses/programme. More video support material may be developed and placed on BOU website. | |

6. Materials Development

6.1 Criteria

6.1.1 The content, assessment, teaching and learning approaches in the Self- Learning Materials support the objectives and learning outcomes.

6.1.2 The Self-Learning Materials (SLM) are presented in a way that engages the learners.

6.1.3 There is an identified process of development, review, and validation of Self-Learning Materials.

| 6.2 Elements of the Criteria | Assessment | Evidence Presented | Recommendations |
|---|---|---|---|
| 6.2.1 Clear procedures are in place for the design and development of Self-Learning Materials (SLM). | SLMs are developed by following unwritten norms/procedures. | No evidence was presented. | Detailed, written Standard Operating Procedures are helpful in quality assurance. SOPs may be developed for production of SLMs. |
| 6.2.2 SLMs have a balance of knowledge, life skills and values that are presented appropriately using relevant media. | SLMs are being developed as per set criterion. | SLM, media programmes etc. E-books Website link (http://www.ebookbou.edu.bd/) . | Conformance is noted. |
| 6.3.3 Self-Learning Materials contain access devices such as content pages, headings, introduction, objectives, overview, instructions how to use the materials and layout to help learners in their studies. | SLMs are being developed as per set criterion | SLM of various subjects was presented. | Conformance is noted. |

| 6.2 Elements of the Criteria | Assessment | Evidence Presented | Recommendations |
|---|---|---|--|
| 6.3.4 The development of course material is based on a project plan and a production schedule. | Development of course follows a specific plan and production schedule. | Circulars, letters and form of SLM demand for printing. | Conformance is noted. SOPs may be developed for production of SLM. |
| 6.3.5 The material development plan includes provision for evaluation, review, editing, and field testing during the development process. | There is provision for review and editing; provision of evaluation is minimum; there is no practice of field testing. | No evidences were presented. | Field testing may be adopted as an essential part of SOP for development of SLM. |
| 6.3.6 There are mechanisms to allow for periodic revision of the material in the light of ongoing feedback from learners and tutors, changes in syllabus, and advances in knowledge and research. | The syllabus of materials is revised periodically (at least 5 years) to conform to National Education Policy and syllabus of NCTB. | 54 new SLMs have been written in the last two years. | Periodic revision of SLM may also be done on the basis of feedback received from all stakeholders. |
| 6.3.7 The content of the course is sufficient, accurate, up-to-date, and relevant to aims and outcomes/objectives, free of any kind of discrimination, and reflect awareness of the multicultural reality of society. | The content of the course is sufficient, accurate, up-to-date, and relevant to the objectives and free from any kind of discrimination. | Report of the writers, editors and reviewers of the relevant SLM. | Conformance is noted. |
| 6.3.8 The design of courses encourages the learners to explore, be creative, and construct knowledge. | Design of courses are being developed as per set criterion | Syllabus/content/Question papers of SLM. | Conformance is noted. |

| 6.2 Elements of the Criteria | Assessment | Evidence Presented | Recommendations |
|--|---|--|--|
| 6.3.9 Interactive learning and teaching approaches are used to engage learners intellectually and practically, promote learner responsibility, and cater for individual needs. | Interactivity is interwoven into the materials. | Visit to tutorial classes at Study Centres. | Conformance is noted. |
| 6.3.10 Appropriate ICT and media are used in the development of course materials. | An effort is made to use ICT and media in the development of courses materials. | SLM, Audio and Video programmes. | OER may be developed for courses/programme. More video support material may be developed and placed on BOU website. |
| 6.3.11 Course materials are made available to learners in electronic forms. | Course materials are available as e-books on BOU website | E-Books Website link (http://www.ebookbou.edu.bd/) | OER and MOOCs may be developed and be made available through Mobile App also. DVDs of the course material may be sent to learners. |
| 6.3.12 Translation also follows the rigor of course development. | As per government policy, all courses are offered in one language only. | SSC: Bangladesh and Global Studies (Unit-1) HSC: Sociology 1 st Paper (Unit-1) | May be followed rigorously in case of translation/s done at a future date. |

7 Learner Evaluation

7.1 Criteria

7.1.1 Both formative and summative assessments are essential parts of the course design as well as teaching and learning processes.

7.1.2 Assessment is well managed in accordance with institutional examination bylaws/Acts to meet the national requirements.

| 7.2 Elements of the Criteria | Assessment | Evidence Presented | Recommendations |
|--|---|---|--|
| 7.2.1 Assessment measures achievement of learning outcomes. | Achievement of learning outcomes is assessed. | Result data; Learning outcomes from Curriculum/Subjects. | Conformance is noted. |
| 7.2.2 Assessment is integral to and integrated into every learning and teaching strategy adopted, and includes formative as well as summative processes. | Assessment is integrated into learning and teaching strategy. OS-BOU conducts only summative assessment through written, practical and <i>viva voce</i> examination following National Curriculum. | SLM and Question papers. | Mechanism may be developed for ensuring formative development as well. |
| 7.2.3 A range of parties, besides the institution and examination bodies, are involved in the assessment of learners. | External teachers are involved in every stage of assessment process (Question paper setting, moderation, answer script evaluation). | Approved Examination Committee, Examiners and panel of Question papers setters. | Conformance is noted. |
| 7.2.4 Assessment information (including learning outcomes, assessment criteria as well as assessment procedures), sample questions papers, marking scheme are provided in all courses and are available to assessors and learners. | Assessment information, sample questions, marking scheme are provided in all courses and are available to assessors and learners. | SLM, Exam-routine, Cover page of Answer Script, Instructions to the learners and examiners. | Conformance is noted. |

| 7.2 Elements of the Criteria | Assessment | | Evidence Presented | | Recommendations |
|--|---|---|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| 7.2.5 The process and results of assessment are relevant to the needs of the stakeholders, community, educational providers, and government departments. | General | Process and results of assessment are relevant to the needs of all stakeholders. | General | Circular of the results of assessment of Education Board and OS-BOU | Conformance is noted. |
| | Niche-1 | According to the demand of stakeholders, Answer scripts are assessed through spot evaluation process. Results are being published within 15 days. | Niche-1 | MoU, Regulations and Instructions for Spot Evaluation. | |
| 7.2.6 Examination system is reliable and valid and is well regulated by institutional bylaws/Acts. | Examination system is reliable and valid and is well regulated by institutional bylaws/Acts. | | Examination Regulations | | Conformance is noted. |
| 7.2.7 Records of course results are analysed to give completion rates for each group of learners. | Final result of Semester/Yearly examination is published and detailed Mark sheet is provided to the learners in digital format. | | Mark sheet of 1st year examination. | | Analyses of results may be done to gain insights on areas needing strengthening. |
| 7.2.8 Formative assessment prepares learners to meet the requirements of the final summative assessments. | There no formative assessment. | | No evidence presented. | | Mechanism may be developed for ensuring formative development as well. |
| 7.2.9 ICT is used for better regulation and conduct of examination. | General | OMR sheets are used in result processing and corrections. Semester and final result are being published online and available on BOU website. | General | http://exam.bou.edu.bd/ | Conformance is noted. |
| | Niche-1 | Attendance, marks entry, result processing are being managed online | Niche | Niche-1 software http://180.211.206.94:3000/ssc_niche_1103.103.100.31:3000/bou_sms | |

| 7.2 Elements of the Criteria | Assessment | | Evidence Presented | | Recommendations |
|--|--|---|------------------------|---|--|
| 7.2.10 Provision of ICT based examination system enables learners to appear in the examination as per their wish and preparation (ODES). | Presently, OS-BOU does not offer flexibility in examination to its learners. | | No evidence presented. | | OS-BOU may consider flexible examination system where learner may get more than one chance to appear in the exam. The introduction of the On-Demand-Examination System(ODES) may be considered for adoption. |
| 7.2.11 Assessment and evaluation should be aligned with stated cognitive, psychomotor and effective learning objectives/outcomes. | Assessment and evaluation have been aligned with the stated cognitive, psychomotor and effective domain. | | Questions Papers. | | Conformance is noted. |
| 7.2.12 After successful completion of the course and assessment the certificate is issued to the learner in both printed and digital format. | General | Printed and digital mark sheet/certificate is being issued to learners. | General | Printed and digital mark sheet/certificate. | Conformance is noted. |
| | Niche-1 | Only printed mark sheet & certificate are being issued to learners. | Niche-1 | Printed mark sheet/certificate | |

C: Human Resource Management and Financial Management

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|--|
| <p>8 Human Resources</p> <p>8.1 Criteria</p> <p>8.1.1 There is effective, transparent and democratic management of human resources.</p> <p>8.1.2 Systems are in place to provide for selection and recruitment, training and development and employee relations.</p> |
|--|

| 8.2 Elements of the Criterion | Assessment | Evidence Presented | Recommendations |
|---|---|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 8.2.1 A recruitment policy is in place to ensure appointment of qualified staff. | There is detailed recruitment policy for teachers, officers and other staff. The policy is strictly followed in the process of recruitment to ensure appointment of qualified staff. | Recruitment policy on BOU website | Conformance is noted. |
| 8.2.2 The institution has effective recruitment systems guided by the central policy (government and/or UGC). | The recruitment systems are guided by the Ministry of Education (MoE). | BOU Recruitment policy | Conformance is noted. |
| 8.2.3 Staff selection and promotion criteria give priority to quality of performance. | Staff selection and promotion criteria are transparent to ensure quality of performance. All staff are required to pass written test, computer-knowledge test and personal interview. | BOU Restructuring rules | Conformance is noted. |

| 8.2 Elements of the Criterion | Assessment | Evidence Presented | Recommendations |
|---|---|---|-----------------------|
| 8.2.4 There is an effective performance management system and appraisal instrument for staff. | BOU assesses academic staff on their research papers/articles published and other academic performance. Officials are appraised through ACR-Annual Confidential Report. | BOU Restructuring rules | Conformance is noted. |
| 8.2.5 A system is in place to award/reward exemplary performance and to address poor performance among staff at all levels. | Certificate of appreciation is awarded for good performance and poor performances are being addressed through training program. | No evidence presented | Conformance is noted. |
| 8.2.6 The criteria for the responsibilities of all staff of the institution are well formulated as per laid down guidelines. | The BOU Act indicates the criteria for the responsibilities of all staff. | BOU Act/Policy | Conformance is noted. |
| 8.2.7 The selection and recruitment system comply with the Equity/Human-rights Commission and/or Acts related to employment. | There is a detailed central recruitment policy which complies with the Equity/Human-rights Commission as well acts related to employment. BOU - OS has also developed Gender Policy to ensure equity in the school. | BOU Act/Policy & Draft of Gender Policy, OS-BOU | Conformance is noted. |
| 8.2.8 The Institute measures the actual performance of all staff and compares with the standards set as a basis for continuous improvement of operations. | Being followed as per existing set of standards to improve performance of staff. | BOU Act | Conformance is noted. |
| 8.2.9 The organizational structure (hierarchy) distinctively reveals the leadership, administration and governance of the Institution. | Developed organizational structure reveals the reporting systems, administration and governance of the university. | BOU Act | Conformance is noted. |

| 8.2 Elements of the Criterion | Assessment | Evidence Presented | Recommendations |
|--|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 8.2.10 The position descriptions of all staff are clearly designed and distributed, and used as the basis of operations. | Detailed descriptions are available for all staff by positions and distributed accordingly. | BOU Act and regulations | Conformance is noted. |

9. Capacity Enhancement

9.1 Criterion

There are supportive mechanisms that are used to develop skills and competencies of staff and resource persons.

| 9.2 Elements of the Criterion | Assessment | Evidence Presented | Recommendations |
|---|--|-----------------------------------|---|
| 9.2.1 Training needs assessments are conducted and reports produced. | There is no formal training needs assessment- it is done through the performance appraisal reports. | Annual Confidential Report (ACR). | A policy to develop capacity/ training maybe developed. |
| 9.2.2 New staff, functionaries and resource persons is properly oriented with the institutional objectives, systems, functions, policies, rules & regulations, government statutes and duties & responsibilities. | Informal orientation is done through respective departments/schools which may be insufficient for new staff. | Training manuals and reports. | Adequate training modules may be developed by a Capacity Building Cell. |

| 9.2 Elements of the Criterion | Assessment | Evidence Presented | Recommendations |
|---|--|--|--|
| 9.2.3 Training workshops are provided to make staff aware of emerging technologies. | Necessary workshops are conducted to keep staff updated with emerging technologies. | Training manuals and reports. | Training kits/ modules/ materials may be developed by Capacity Building Cell for induction programme including ICT training for all staff. |
| 9.2.4 Toolkits are made available for training purposes. | No training module is used; only handouts are given. | Printed handouts. | Training kits/ modules/ materials may be developed by Capacity Building Cell. |
| 9.2.5 Operating manuals, guidelines and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are available for all functional units of the institution. | Not many operating manuals/ guidelines/ standard operating procedures are available for the functional units of the institution. | SOP for two functional units. | SOPs may be developed for all divisions/ units/ RCs/ SRCs/ SCs. |
| 9.2.6 Continuous development programmes (CDP) are functional. | It is functional but not on a routine basis. | Training manuals and reports. | Programmes may be organised by Capacity Building Cell. |
| 9.2.7 The institution has a transparent system of providing scholarship, fellowship and training grants for staff. | Being followed as per existing OS-BOU rules and regulations | Training manuals, reports and draft OS-BOU rules & regulations. | Norms may be developed for such activities to ensure transparency. |
| 9.2.8 The institution promotes professional growth of staff through attending national and international visiting lectures, symposia and seminars; and experiences are shared with rest of the staff. | Staff is given international academic exposure but experience sharing is lacking. | Annual Report, circulars and office order for staff participation. | The experience may be shared in the form of presentations in internal seminars and good practices may be adopted. |

10 Finance

10.1 Criterion

The institution complies with national and international financial management practices and reporting standards.

| 10.2 Elements of the Criterion | Assessment | Evidence Presented | Recommendations |
|--|---|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 10.2.1 The annual budget of the institution is approved in accordance with statutory requirements. | The annual budget of the university is approved by the BOG. | Annual budget. | Efforts are appreciated. |
| 10.2.2 Budgetary processes are in place to ensure that the allocation of resources reflects goals, values and principles of the institution. | Being followed as per existing criterion. | Pre-budget meeting minutes. | Conformance is noted. |
| 10.2.3 Financial rules in dealing with financial matters are followed, in line with national and international practices. | Internal audit system ensures compliance with financial rules in line with national and international practices. | Annual budget. | Conformance is noted. |
| 10.2.4 The budgeting procedures are flexible to promote and enable autonomy in design and delivery methods. | The procedures allow flexibility as per need. | Annual Budget. | Conformance is noted. |
| 10.2.5 Internal and external audits are in place to check and counter check the financial transactions. | University has specialized internal audit section to check and counter check the financial transactions. External audits also take place. | Audit report by audit cell. | Conformance is noted. |

| 10.2 Elements of the Criterion | Assessment | Evidence Presented | Recommendations |
|--|---|--------------------------|---|
| 10.2.6 Clear decision making structure and delegation of financial power exists for seeking and receiving funds and allocation and control of resources. | The government PPR is followed in receiving funds and allocation and control resources. There is delegation of financial power. | PPR booklet, BOU Act | SOPs may be developed for delegation of financial powers to Study Centers as well. |
| 10.2.7 Periodic and annual financial reports are prepared. | Periodic (mid-year) and annual financial reports are mandatory. | Annual budget. | Conformance is noted. |
| 10.2.8 Accounting systems are electronically managed, periodically reviewed and updated. | Accounting systems are manual but periodically reviewed and updated. | No software is used. | In order to ensure transparency, an accounting information system may be used and all transaction be made electronically. |
| 10.2.9 Cost benefit analysis for all the institution's programmes are conducted to establish their viability. | Host programs are subsidized. No break-even-analysis is held while developing programs. | Annual Budget/ Analysis. | Cost benefit analysis ensures effective utilization of public funds. |

8. Conclusion

The Quality Assurance Peer to Peer Audit team interacted with various departments and personnel at the BOU-OS. The general observation is that most of the common criteria to assure quality in open schooling are being satisfactorily met by BOU-OS. Some recommendations have been made against the criteria.

Some general recommendations for the Open School are-

- Although general procedures are followed as the unwritten norm, it will be helpful to develop comprehensive standard operating procedures (SOPs) since they ensure detailed steps of any procedure. BOU-OS may develop SOPs for all its functions-
 - ✓ Admission Procedure
 - ✓ Development of Learning Materials
 - ✓ Production of materials
 - ✓ Administration and Human Resource
 - ✓ Evaluation
 - ✓ Handbook for Regional Centres/ Study Centres
 - ✓ Student Support Services
 - ✓ Finance
 - ✓ Capacity Building Cell
 - ✓ Research and Development
- BOU-OS may also develop bylaws that are duly approved by the competent body and are made available on the public portal. Examples are-
 - ✓ Admission bylaws
 - ✓ Examination bylaws
- BOU-OS may make its programmes truly “open” by extending to its learners, the benefit flexibility of choice of
 - ✓ Courses
 - ✓ Subjects
 - ✓ medium of instruction
 - ✓ time of appearing for exams, i.e, twice a year
- BOU-OS may consider introduction of its courses in English medium, for the benefit of learners wishing to move internationally
- The On demand examination system of NIOS may be considered by BOU-OS to facilitate their learners. It is a unique examination system based on a comprehensive question bank for each subject, which makes possible an examination in all subjects

on every day, round the year. The learners will get ample opportunity to cope with examination process and avoid stress. It will also and will save valuable time of the learners.

- BOU-OS may consider offering a Transfer-of-credit facility to the learners, many students, many of whom may be drop-outs from formal schools or other Boards. This will facilitate retention of credits earned earlier.
- As Bangladesh also faces the problem of geographically dispersed learners, especially in the hill areas that face a paucity of qualified teachers, BOU-OS can optimize their reach to quality education by offering MOOCs and/or OERs. The unique features of ICTs can easily be leveraged for the purpose.
- Some of the features of the NICHE-1 programme can also be opened to general public and family/dependents of armed forces.