

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT (SAR)

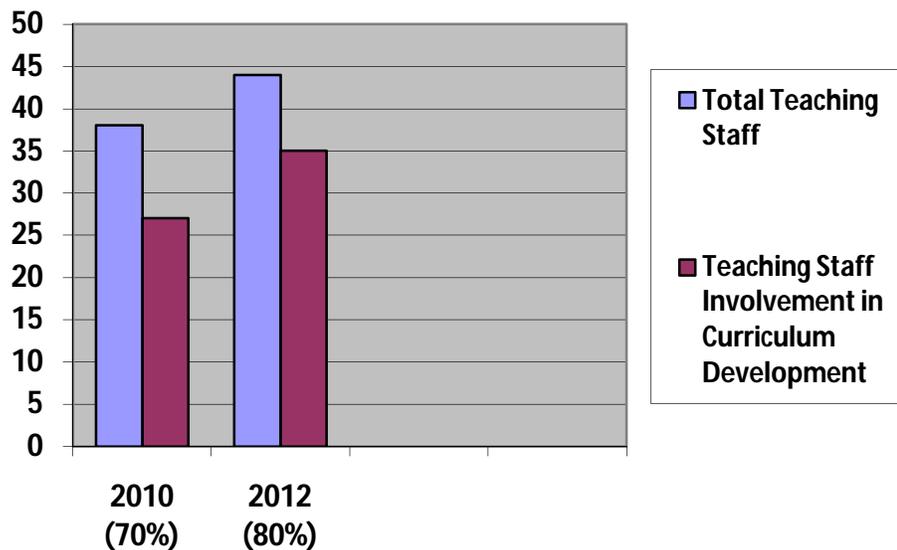
Quality assurance has received serious interest by the Faculty of English Linguistics and Literature (EF). In implementing the USSH's plan in quality assurance and assessment of its academic programmes and curricula (No. 74/KH-KT&ĐBCL, dated 31/Oct/2007) and also originated from the needs for improvement and upgrading of academic programmes, the EF has voluntarily participated in self-assessing the Bachelor program in English Linguistics and Literature (Regular program). The EF self-assessed this programme according to the USSH's Institutional QA guidelines in 2009 and according to the AUN-QA criterion in June 2010. The EF received the actual internal assessment by the USSH assessors and VNU-HCM assessors for the programme in 2009 and 2010, respectively. In September 2012, the EF received the revisit of the VNU-HCM assessor for the reviewing of what had been self-assessed, assessed and improved since 2010. Results from the three internal assessments have brought about the EF valuable experiences and suggestions on what and how to improve its programme to better meet the requirements of the AUN-QA criteria.

In response to the requirements of USSH as well as the external challenges and demands, the EF Quality Assurance Unit (EF QA Unit) was first formulated in 2008, originally comprising of 11 members including the Board of Deans, Department Chairs, Academic Assistants of the programmes, a few representative senior and junior teaching staff. The EF QA Unit was first in charge of analysing the QA guidelines, collecting and documenting the evidences and preparing the SAR. In 2008, one EF vice dean was assigned to take care of all matters related to self-assessment and quality assurance. He has updated latest information of the AUN-QA guidelines and requirements through training courses and workshops held by Ministry of Education and Training, Vietnam National University-HCM, CLMV-initiatives (Initiative for ASEAN integration – a training course on enhancing quality assurance in CLMV countries) as well as by USSH. During the last five years, though the members of EF QA Unit have been reformulated some times due to human changes and substitution, the organization of later EF QA Unit tends to expand to the a larger number of staff member, purposefully getting as many as possible involved in the self-assessment and quality assurance actions and initiatives. In connection with this intention, the EF and USSH's Office for Educational Testing and Quality Assurance recently held a workshop on implementation of AUN-QA guidelines to the EF staff, of whom 90% of the total staff and more than 10 student representatives successfully completed the training programme in March, 2012. Assignments of task related to the AUN-QA criteria were re-designated to all EF staff, raising more awareness and enhancing more commitment to quality assurance according to the AUN-QA guidelines. Five teams were formed among these EF staff., all of whom have worked together so hard since then to analyse and explore the basic principles of AUN-QA guidelines. Each team has prepared certain parts of the SAR, collected, and filed the

documents and evidences. Upon completion of this current SAR, the EF staff have found themselves more committed to the quality assurance initiatives being carried out.

### **The curriculum is developed by all teaching staff members**

Every year, the EF Academic Council requires the five departments to design new courses or review their syllabi to make necessary changes according to stakeholders' requirements. The department chairs then hold meetings with department members to assign groups or individuals to design or review and revise syllabi. Normally, teachers are supposed to initially teach the course they have designed so that they can have an opportunity to amend their syllabi. After other staffs have taught the courses, they contribute to the curriculum development by giving feedbacks and revising the syllabi. Figure 1 below signifies the increase of teaching staff members involvement in the two years 2010 and 2012. EF current curriculum has been developed by **35/44** teaching staff members.



*Figure 1- The increase of teaching staff involvement in curriculum design*

### **The curriculum development involves all students**

Students are involved by giving their feedback through the four official channels:

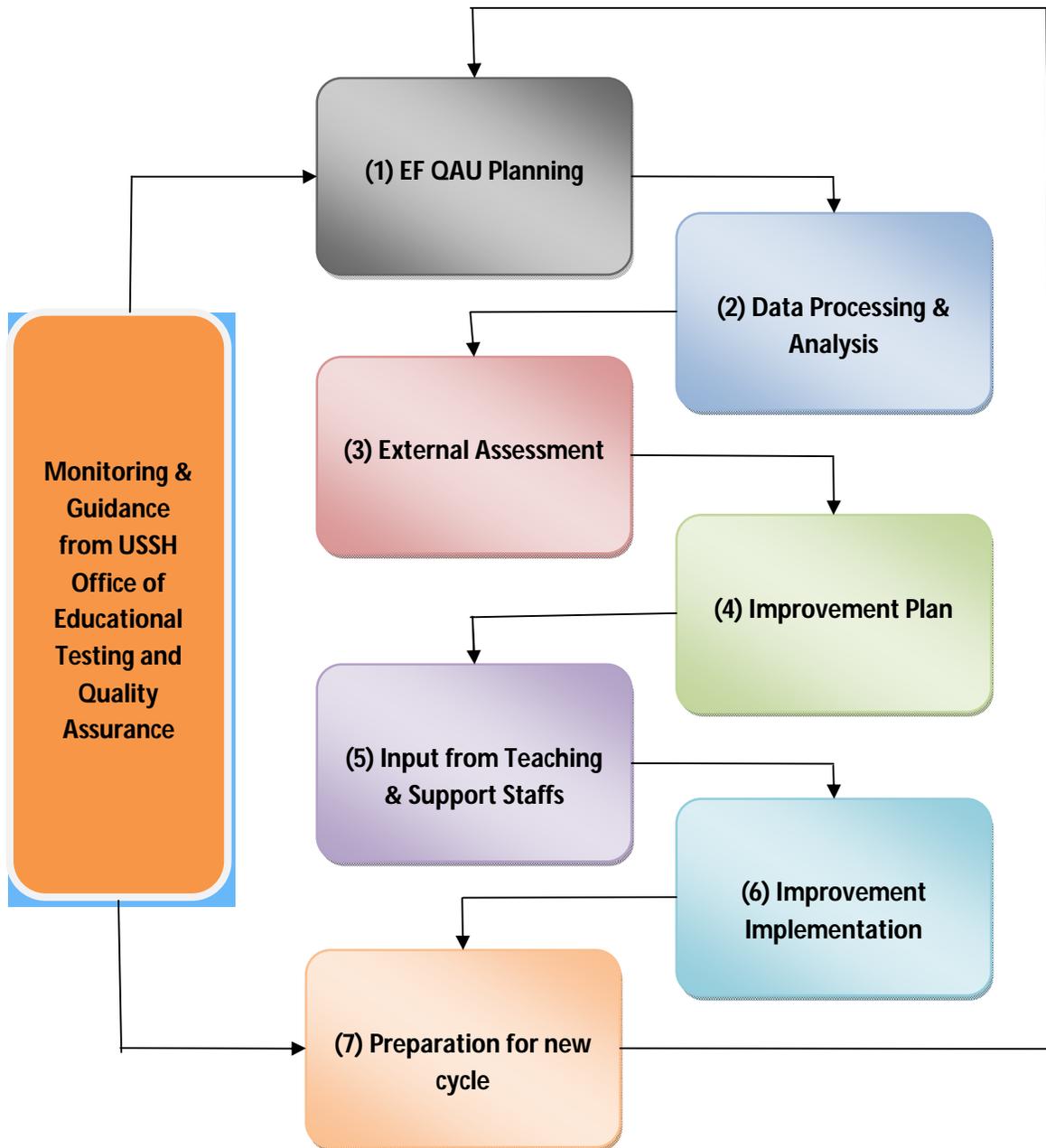
1. In *Share With You* direct talks which are held annually at the beginning of each academic year between EF students and the Board of Administrators, apart from the main themes for discussion, students are encouraged to ask questions related to curriculum, course books, teaching and support staffs and other problems they may encounter during the previous academic

year. In answering those questions and listening to students, the Board of Administrators can incorporate students' opinion in curriculum design and revision.

2. Through the *Suggestions Form*, EF senior students can contribute their suggestions to the curriculum, course books, teaching and support staffs, students' activities and other issues. This form has been in use for three intakes 2007, 2008 and 2009 and proved to be a timely and helpful source for EF to improve not only the curriculum but also other operations.

3. Upon the completion of the whole undergraduate programme, students are required to write *Internship Reports* in which the *Reflection Paper* is an important part for students to raise their suggestions for the improvement to the courses at the EF.

4. The Office of Education Testing and Quality Assurance distributes *Training Programme Evaluation Questionnaire* to students of all faculties by the end of the programmes. Results of the survey and recommendations are sent to all faculties as the basis for improvement in relevant fields.



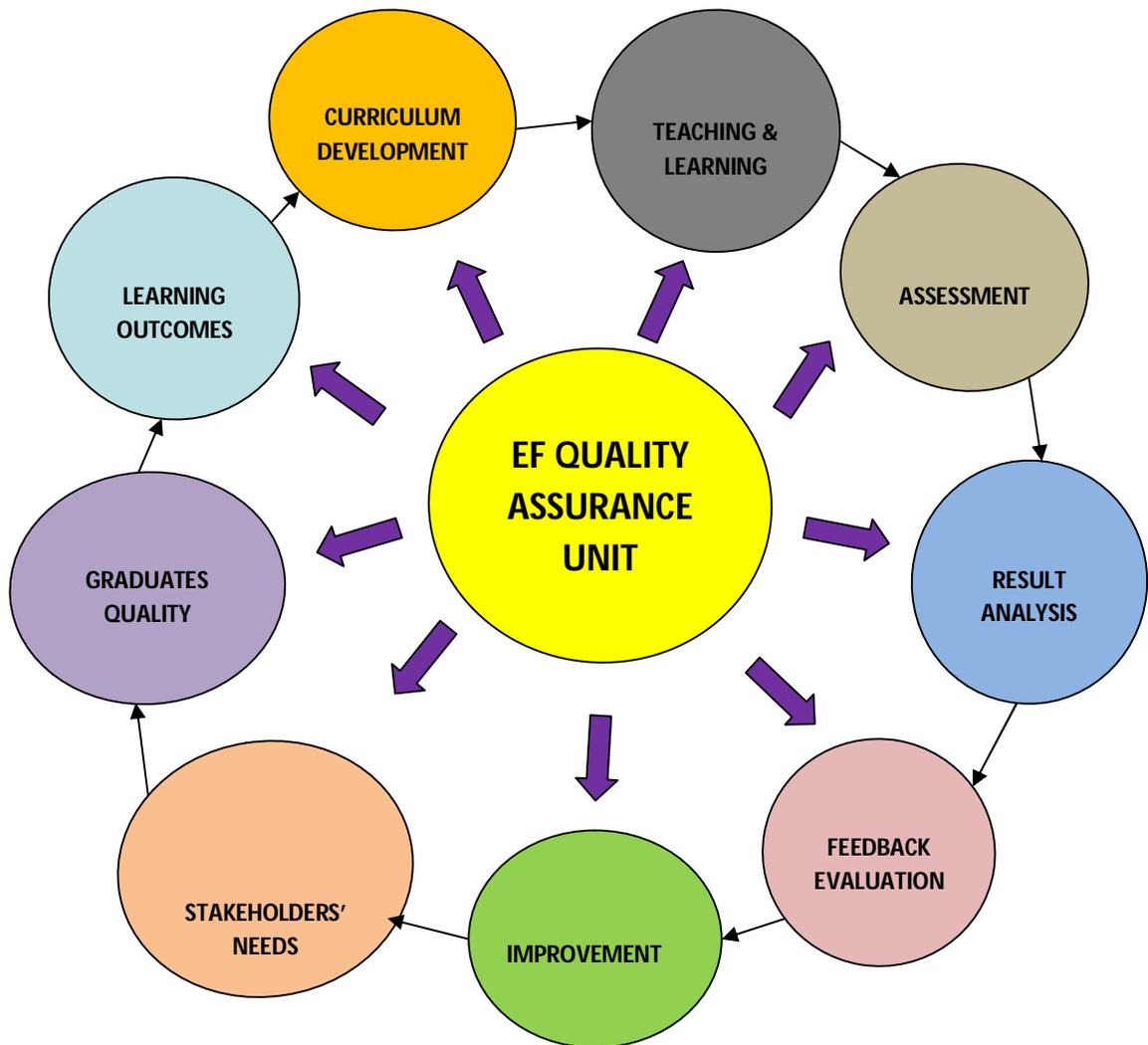
*Figure 2 - EF Quality Assurance Unit Function Cycle*

**The curriculum development involves the labour market**

Realizing the important role of the labour market in developing the curriculum, EF regularly collects feedback and opinions from the labour market by means of online feedback questionnaires, annual face-to-face meetings and telephone in-depth interviews with employers. All of the feedback gained from both questionnaires and interviews are seriously taken into consideration afterwards. The feedback in principle is analyzed and exhaustively discussed in a

series of meetings to ensure that necessary amendment to the curriculum would be made promptly. As a result, the two new courses have recently been offered, which are those in English Business (for all students), and Communication Skills (specially designed for students in the Honours Programme). Recently, the deficiency in practical knowledge of economics as well as other fields, and necessary soft skills, which was pointed out by labour market, has been improved by the introduction of such new courses into the curriculum as *Business English*, *English for the Office*, *English for Business Correspondence*, *English for Banking and Finance*, etc..

Besides, the Major Orientation Days are annually held to help the juniors have a better look at the teaching curriculum and be able to make wise choices related to their future careers. The EF Youth Union and Students' Association carry out many extra-curricular activities and competitions every school-year for the students to better their own soft skills as well as broaden their common knowledge.



*Figure 3- EF' Curriculum development cycle under the monitoring of EF QAU*

**The curriculum is regularly evaluated at reasonable time periods**

The quality of the curriculum is always considered a significant factor to gain great satisfaction of the stakeholders; the faculty, therefore, finds it crucial to evaluate the curriculum regularly.

At department level, during each semester, meetings of each department would be held periodically at least twice, once upon the results of Teaching Observation Checklists and once upon the results of Students Course Appraisal. Irregular meetings can be held whenever there is any problem raised by relevant sides. The purpose of those meetings is for the teaching staff to discuss peer's and student's feedback to improve teaching quality and curriculum content.

At faculty level, the results of all the department meetings would be discussed once again at the end of each school-year during the Faculty's meeting to improve all aspects of administrative operation. Additionally, meetings concerning evaluating the teaching curriculum are held twice a year by the EF Academic Council. Major curriculum revisions have been made in 2009, 2012 and are planned to be implemented biannually from 2012 in accordance to USSH regulation .

The fact that meetings are held periodically and timely helps EF not only improve teaching quality in specific but also gradually perfect its curriculum in general. The current curriculum is recently revised so as to take over the year-based curriculum and at the same time update credit-based curriculum with a larger number of courses for three specializations, which provides learners with more professional knowledge suitable to their career's specific requirements.

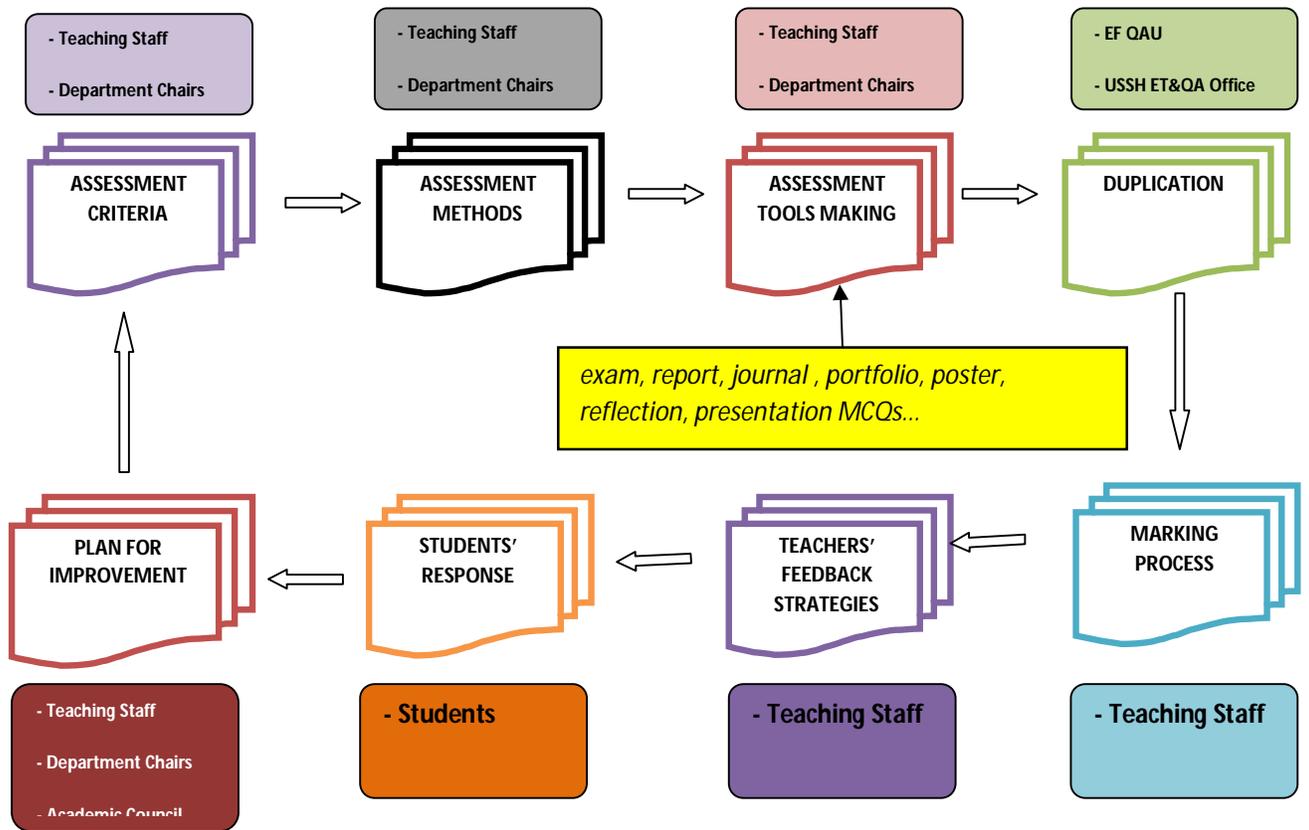


Figure 4 - EF Assessment Process