

## 事例 6 カンボジア

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### 1. Higher Education in Contemporary Context

From early 1990s onwards, a change in higher education in Cambodia has moved like a centipede's walk or an evolutionary process. In recent years, a quick look through the trends of higher education development could yield evidence that higher education development results from a rapid change in its natural way. The rapid change has resulted from all types of reforms, success of general education programs and the increase of social demands for higher skills, just some examples. Another challenging argument is that higher education sub-sector has been developed through a not-well evidenced-based plan and this is evidenced in the 2006-2010 Education Strategic Plan.

In response to the increasing population of higher school graduates and public demands of higher education, since early 1990s, the government of Cambodia has changed its policies towards private participation in the delivery of higher education services. Reflecting the sub-decree on the establishment and management of higher education institutions and specialized institutes dated 20 January 1992 (MoEYS, 1992), it did not define any minimum requirements for physical plants of a higher education institution or specialized institute or a private school. However, it encourages that an individual, a collective group or a private company is entitled to submit their proposals to the Ministry of Education for the establishment of a private class, a secondary private specialized school or a vocational and technical training centre or a higher education institution. Having this open policy in mind, one private university was established in 1997.

The establishment of private higher education institutions organized before 2002 was just to have ones without any consideration of minimum requirements for physical plants of higher education institutions. The policy may have been developed in response to the rapid development and establishment of private higher education institutions. In 2002, a sub-decree on the requirements for the establishment of universities was approved by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport. This policy recognizes the important role of private higher education institutions in contributing to the development of higher education system of the country, thus contributing to the promotion of national cultures and identity (MoEYS, 2002b). This policy also highlights the minimum requirements for the establishment of higher education institution in the Kingdom.

Despite such minimum requirements, those who ever visited some higher education institutions in Cambodia in late 2000s, could see that some institutions were too small in size and their physical plants were not fit with their names and academic programs. More often, until today, it is heard in official forums with representatives of higher education institutions that the institutions are given a space of about three years to be prepared to meet the minimum standards. Those who have their concerns over the quality of higher education by using physical appearance as an indicator would ask a question "why just a flat becomes a university?" Those who ever come to Cambodia and visit some libraries of most of higher education institutions during this period will have no questions of limited reading resources. Some are too small in size or smaller than reading rooms of some Cambodian individual scholars. Similar argument related to quality is still going on that the establishment of higher education institutions is more business-oriented and has less focus on long-term investment to become educational institutions that equip learners with higher skills to match market demands, especially in the area of development management.

From 2004 onwards, higher education sector in Cambodia has moved itself towards a more competitive manner as more and more private programs and institutions have been rapidly increasing. In 2004, 9 public higher education institutions and 18 private higher education institutions were registered by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS, HE statistics, 2005).

In early 2010, 76 higher education institutions had been registered in and licensed by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, 33 of them were public and 43 were private. In early 2010, 61 of 76 HEIs, excluded branches in different geographical areas (in such a category as institute and university) in Cambodia, are subject to accreditation to be provided by the Accreditation Committee of Cambodia. Twenty one of them are public HEIs and forty HEIs are private (ACC, accredited HEIS, 2009). By ASEAN regional comparison, all HEIs of Cambodia are very small in size, with narrow academic and resource bases, highlighting issues pertaining to low levels of institutional efficiency and quality. Among the newly established higher education institutions, very few are international investments. These universities and institutions are administratively and academically (to some extent) supervised by 9 different government ministries and they are subject to applying for accreditation status from ACC. There are more higher education institutions under the supervision of government ministries, but they are not subject to accreditation to be granted by ACC and they are not counted in this purpose.

No.	Parent Ministry	HE Institutions	
		Public	Private
1.	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport	8	40
3.	Ministry of Health	1	
4.	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery	3	
5.	Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts	1	
6.	Ministry of Economy and Finance	1	
7.	Ministry of Religious Affairs and Cults	2	
8.	Ministry of National Defense	4	
9.	Ministry of Interior	1	
<b>Total</b>		<b>21*</b>	<b>40**</b>

\*/\*\* excluded branches of main campuses in different geographical areas

Given the increased numbers of higher education institutions, access to higher education has been in significant progress and will continue to grow. This explains that the emergence of private universities from late 1997 was an inevitable development, and a necessary one, to assist in solving the problem of increasing demands for student's access and to reduce the burden of public expenditure on higher education. In 1997, only about 10,000 students or so enrolled in both public and private higher education institutions. Total enrolment (undergraduate students) in both public and private HEIs increased dramatically from 25,080 in 2000-2001 to 75,523 in 2004-2005 (MoEYS, 2005). In particular, the total enrolment (including degrees of Associate, Bachelor, Master and PhD) was 131,639 in 2007-2008 academic years (MoEYS, 2008); while females make up 33.68% of all students, and 168,003 in 2008-2009 academic years while females make up of 35.8% of all students (MoEYS, 2009).

The constant progress of higher education system in quantity terms and its quick expansion, since early 2000s, have caused a concern over the quality of the key service in the public, donor community and among policy makers. In response to this concern, the establishment of a quality assurance agency and the development of accreditation policy framework, and credit system and credit transfer policy have been in great needs to promote the culture of quality in Cambodia and the recognition of higher education learning provided by different higher education institutions in the country or maybe outside the country. This paper does not attempt to analyze the movement of curriculum development in higher education in Cambodia, from year-based block curriculum to credit-based curriculum development.

## 2. Quality Assurance System

### (1) External quality assurance system and policies

A plethora of recent studies on quality assurance in higher education suggests that once a quality assurance mechanism is set up, it will encourage a culture of quality, self-assessment and quality self-improvement in educational institutions. In view of the importance of quality of higher education in economic competitiveness, Cambodia set up a quality assurance mechanism, Accreditation Committee of Cambodia (ACC), to administer accreditation in higher education in 2003. Is the young accreditation body, ACC capable enough to change the landscape of higher education quality, to encourage the culture of quality and to facilitate higher education institutions to effectively implement the credit system and credit transfer policy and accreditation framework? How does the accreditation in higher education move towards a level of good international practices?

As stated in the Royal Decree on Accreditation of Higher Education (Royal Decree NS/RKT/0303/129, 31 March 2003) and the Sub-decree on the organization and functioning of the Accreditation Committee of Cambodia (Sub-decree 46, dated 12 June 2003), accreditation is compulsory to both public and private higher education institutions in Cambodia.

#### Article 2 of the Royal Kret spelled out as below:

*"All HEIs which grant degrees in the Kingdom of Cambodia are subject to the accreditation of higher education. In order to obtain such accreditation status, each academic institution is subject to the evaluation of its management system, academic quality and curriculums. Only accredited HEIs may be entitled to issue the certificate of bachelors, Masters and PhD."*

The Accreditation Committee of Cambodia (ACC), a public and autonomous quality assurance agency, has its clearly mandated mission, which is to form the first step towards strengthening the culture of quality of higher education in Cambodia and then to change the landscape of higher education quality. However, having understood the minimum criteria for foundation year program accreditation dated December 2005 and its revised version (2009) and minimum standards for institutional accreditation issued by ACC dated February 2009, the mission is just to guide the higher education institutions in Cambodia to be prepared for submitting applications for ACC's accreditation. To those who are familiar with accreditation process in experienced and developed countries, they may have a question about the effectiveness of the accreditation process.



The Winners of Nobel Peace Prize, Muhammad Yunus's microcredit programs in addressing poverty issues in Bangladesh have been successful may be resulting from the quality of his program design and effective implementation as well as the capacity of his program implementers. Everyone in development fields understands the problem trees in development planning process. Having reflected the current issues, challenges and national quality standards in higher education in Cambodia, a veritable forest of problem trees in higher education system, especially in accreditation can be easily developed. Cambodia has started its accreditation process for foundation year program in 2006, three years after its inception. The challenges to be addressed in order to raise accreditation to a level of international good practices will include assessor capacity in the first place, self-assessment tools to be applied by higher education institutions, capacity of internal quality assurance units of higher education institutions and assessment process and methods to be undertaken by assessors. In addition to this, mobilization of the active participation of academic community in the accreditation process is of paramount importance. How has ACC been preparing itself to address the issues to promote the accreditation of higher education to a level of international good practices?

## **(2) Foundation Year Course Program (FYC) Accreditation**

### **① FYC accreditation process and achievements**

FYC program is the first year academic program of Bachelor Degree study. In order to obtain a bachelor degree, first year students of bachelor degree program have to complete FYC study for one academic year. After having successfully completed the program, students will be awarded with a FYC certificate of successful completion of all subjects in the FYC curriculum. With this FYC certificate, students are able to enroll in the second year of a Bachelor Degree program within the same higher education institution or in other accredited higher education institutions.

FYC accreditation is the first step in building a culture of quality improvement in higher education in the country. The FYC accreditation standards govern six criteria namely: 1. Establishment of the Department of Foundation Year Course Program; 2. Foundation Year Strategic Plan; 3. Foundation Year Course Curriculum; 4. Teaching Staff in Foundation Year Course Program; 5. Physical Facilities and Learning Resources; and 6. Student Admission.

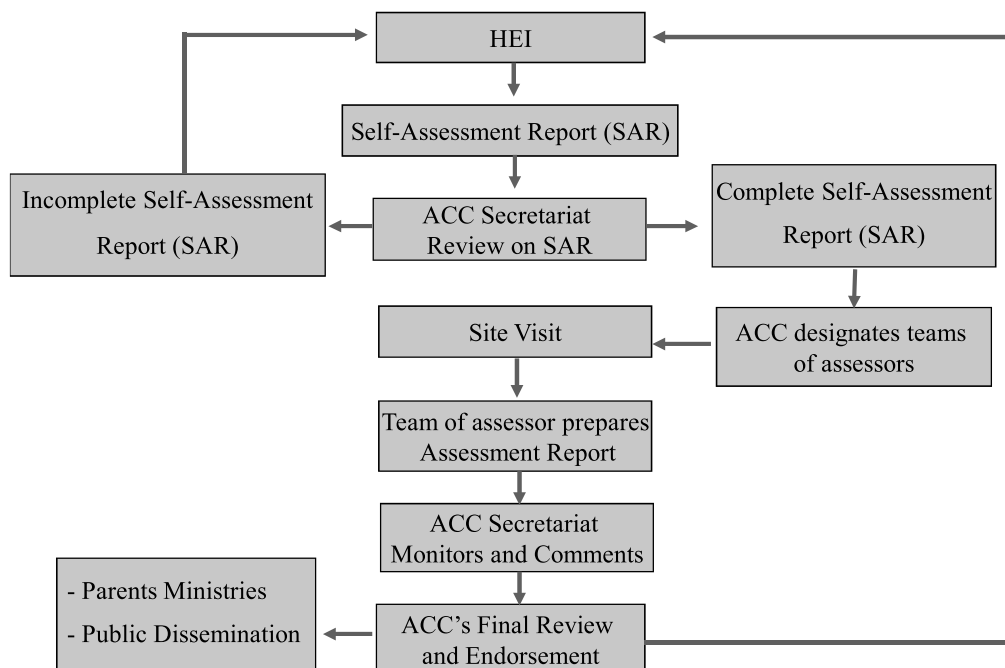
ACC started implementing its FYC accreditation policy in academic year 2005-2006. At this stage of accreditation development in Cambodia, Foundation Year Program Assessment is the basis for policy decision on quality assurance and higher education institutional assessment.

In the beginning of FY program assessment in the academic year 2005-2006, 54 FYC programs of 38 higher education institutions (including branches of main campuses) were eligible to submit their accreditation applications to ACC for FY assessment. 52 higher education institutions received provisional accreditation status and two received non accreditation status.

In the academic year 2006-2007 FYC assessment, 64 FYC programs of 42 HEIs (including branches of main campuses) were eligible to submit their applications to ACC for foundation year assessment for accreditation. Through the assessment process, 33 FYC programs of 26 higher education institutions received full accreditation status (three-year term) and 31 FYC programs of 19 higher education institutions received provisional accreditation status (one-year term). It is worthy to note that some programs of some higher education institutions received full accreditation status and some others of the same higher education institutions (located in different geographical areas) received provisional accreditation status.

In the academic year 2007-2008 FYC assessment, 40 FYC programs of 20 HEIs were eligible to submit their FYC accreditation applications to ACC for accreditation. Through the assessment process, 5 FYC programs of 5 HEIs received full accreditation status and 32 FYC programs of 17 higher education institutions received provisional accreditation status and 3 FYC programs of 3 higher education

### FYC Accreditation Process



institutions received non-accreditation status. It is also worthy to note that some programs of some higher education institutions received full accreditation status and some others of the same higher education institutions received provisional accreditation status. This refers to higher education institutions which have more than one branch in different geographical areas.

In the academic year 2008-2009 FYC assessment, 35 FYC programs of 23 HEIs were eligible to submit their accreditation applications to ACC for accreditation. Through the assessment process, 19 FYC programs of 15 HEIs received full accreditation status and 16 FYC programs of 10 HEIs received provisional accreditation status.

Analyzed HEI self-assessment reports, the 2006-2010 ACC accreditation reports and 2009 FYC impact assessment, the change of understanding of quality self-improvement among higher education institutions exist. The results of FYC accreditation cause considerable changes in quality improvement in higher education institutions, but not limited to the subsequent examples. Qualifications and experiences of faculties and, management and administrative staff working in the department of FYC have been improved to meet the minimum standards of FYC. In the 2006-2007 assessment, 51.5 percent of all FYC programs did not meet the minimum requirements for full accreditation and 37 per cent of ACC accreditation recommendations to higher education institutions were to improve the qualifications and experience of faculties and management and administrative staff of FYC programs. About 46 percent of HEIs institutions did not have clear strategic FYC development plan and the implementation of the plan was still in doubt. Thus, 67 percent of recommendations were to ensure the effective implementation of the FYC strategic development plan.

Another key observation related to the quality improvement in higher education institutions is the development of library and teaching-learning resources as well as physical plants. The culture of quality self-improvement has been built through the FYC accreditation process. Most of the provisionally accredited FYC programs of 2006-2007 FYC assessment, but lately, fully accredited in the 2008-2009 FYC assessment, improved the physical conditions of their libraries and teaching-learning resources, including computer labs and internet services. Those who ever visited libraries and computer labs of those provisionally accredited FYC programs in 2007 both in provinces and Phnom Penh city, would ask themselves of some quality related questions.

## ② Assessors capacity development and management

In view of the important role of assessors in accreditation process, assessor capacity development and management are key pillars. Accreditation in Cambodia is a very new concept and mobilizing the participation of scholars and academia in accreditation process is quite difficult. However, from 2004 up to early 2010, ACC have been forming a pool of 104 assessors.

It is worthy to note that the assessors, called external assessors, are recruited from different sectors, including public sector, private sector, non-governmental organizations and higher education institutions. Though the selection process is transparent, ACC is still confronting with complaints from different corners regarding the age and experience of assessors. All the recruited assessors must go through a one-week training workshop on assessment process and methods. The workshop aims to equip the assessors with research skills, critical and analytical thinking, and communication skills, which are required to be applied in the accreditation process, especially FYC accreditation process. The training program, in addition, is a combination of theory and real practice of site visits during the training. That means, at the end of the training program, all assessors have full opportunity to actually put all of their learning theories into practice. They are allocated into teams of site visits to higher education institutions and under the guidance of training facilitators, conduct mock assessments.

## (3) Institutional accreditation

As Institutional accreditation in Cambodia is compulsory by law, all HEIs which grant Bachelor, Master and PhD Degrees are subject to the accreditation to be granted by ACC. Institutional accreditation standards, approved by ACC Board in February 2008, focuses on 9 standards namely 1) Mission; 2) Governing Structure, Management and Planning; 3) Academic programs; 4) Teaching staff; 5) Student and student services; 6) Teaching and Learning Resources; 7) Physical Facilities; 8) Financial Management and Planning; and 9) Dissemination of Information.

- ① The institution's mission defines types of the institution, its classification, its educational activities, and its role within the higher education community of the Kingdom of Cambodia. An assessment of the quality of higher education provided by a HEI shall be conducted to measure how well it is to achieve its defined mission with respect to its resources. The primary purpose of the assessment is to find out and determine the clarity, appropriateness and accuracy of its publicly disseminated mission.

- ② Governing structure, management and planning are some keys to quality improvement. A HEI shall have a governance system that enables the successful accomplishment of its mission. The governing board and its chief executive play a very important role in defining institutional development goals, identifying prioritized issues to be addressed and developing viable plans. The administrative staff has an important role in providing support to the teaching-learning process. To facilitate the effective performance of these roles and to be more productive, it is essential that the HEI clearly defines its governance and administration.
- ③ The achievement and maintenance of high quality of academic programs are under the primary responsibility of accredited HEI. The evaluation and development of academic programs are the continued tasks of higher education institutions. As the change of conditions and needs frequently occur, the institution needs to redefine its academic programs to ensure and enhance the quality of education it offers. To this end, planning for the development of academic programs shall be based on regular assessment of its Mission including the employment market and students' needs, as well as its relevance to national development goals.
- ④ Faculty development is one of the keys to promote the efficiency of a higher education institution. The recruitment, hiring and retention of faculties and their continuous professional development are of paramount importance to every higher education institution. The empowerment, academic freedom and the practices of the rights by the faculties will contribute to the maintenance of the quality of the educational programs of the institution.
- ⑤ Students and student services support the achievement of the institution's mission. They contribute to the development of knowledge, competence and skills of students, who enroll and study and would eventually, earn their diplomas and employment in the labor market.
- ⑥ Learning services such as library, computer lab, laboratory, experimental room, research stations, Internet, textbooks, journals, research papers, and so on are to support teaching and learning process and research to be performed by students and faculties in response to the institution's mission. The academic services shall be adequate and appropriate for the degree programs offered by the institution and shall support the cultural, technical and intellectual development of students.
- ⑦ HEIs shall have adequate physical plants, facilities and other necessary equipments and they shall effectively manage these for proper use to achieve

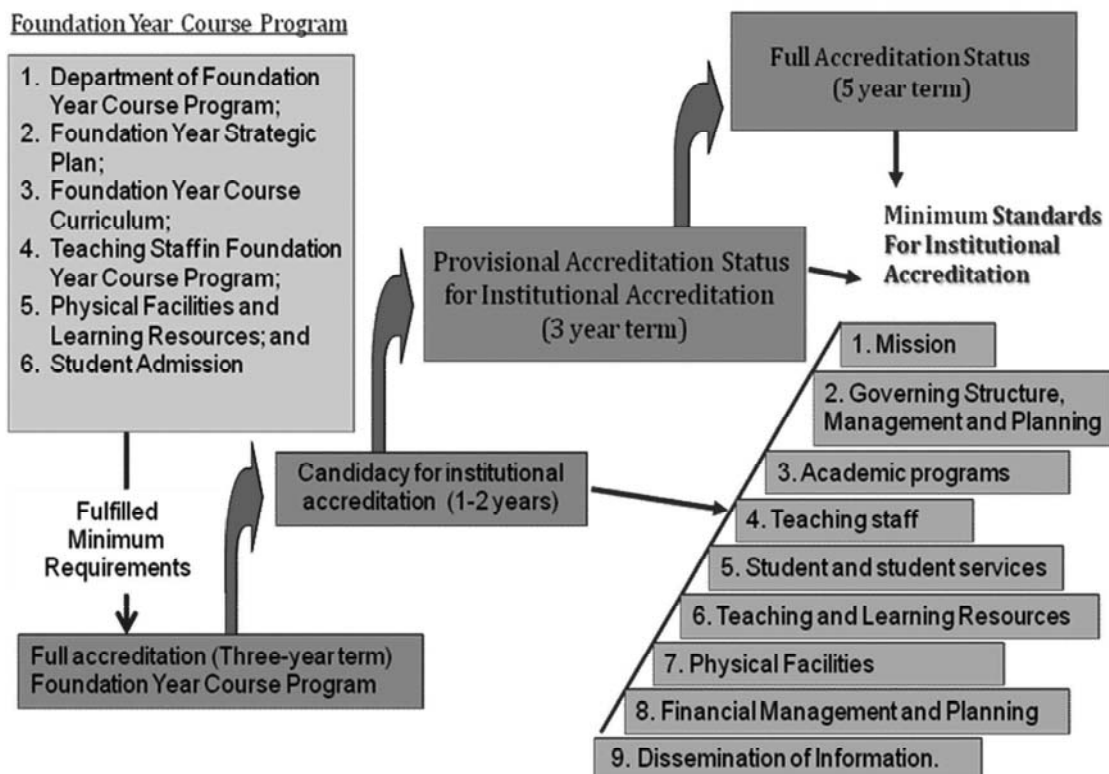
the institution's Mission. The HEI shall develop a comprehensive plan to promote the quality and optimum utilization of these physical facilities.

- ⑧ Financial plan and financial management system shall be in place. The institution shall ensure an effective mechanism for financial controls. These shall provide a basis for sound decision-making on the development of the higher education institution. The adequacy of its financial resources is judged based on the Mission of the institution, the scope and diversity of its programs and services, and the number and types of its enrolled students.
- ⑨ Information is a key to informed decision making. It is therefore that HEI shall publicly and widely disseminate, by any means such as newsletters, magazines, handbooks, and website about its achievements and continuing development. This dissemination is an important mean to promote public awareness on the development of the higher education institutions. The assessment of higher education quality for granting accreditation aims at certifying that the education quality of any HEI suits in any level and provides helpful information for students, parents and donors to make decisions on selection of any institution for studies and support. It also provides information to employers for their decision on the recruitment of employees to work in their companies or organizations as well as recommendations to HEIs for quality improvement, relevant ministries/agencies and the Royal government on the improvement of the quality of education in their endeavors to prepare policies and reforms of higher education system.



## Quality Assurance in Higher Education in Cambodia

### Foundation Year Course Program



#### (4) Credit system and credit transfer policy

##### ① Practices of Credit system and credit transfer policy

Credit transfer refers to the process by which credits that were awarded by one college are accepted or not accepted by another college (John, 2005, P. 563). Credit has an increasingly important role to play in recording student achievement and providing support for students and their progression both into and within higher education system. It is a key tool for promoting lifelong learning and student mobility (QAA, 2008). Put it into a simple language, credit transfer means that study at one higher education institution can be recognized at others through credit transfers. The practice of credit recognition will create a culture of cooperation among higher education institutions, encourage the sharing of quality assurance mechanisms and allow students to choose subjects of studies from a broader range of subject combinations (MoEYS, Consultant's Report, 2008).

The implementation of credit system and credit transfer has been moving in difficult circumstances and confronting with multidimensional challenges. This has happened to Cambodian higher education system due to the fact that the system has moved very rapidly from year-based block curriculum to credit-based curriculum.

From an academic point of view, the existing policies and guidelines on credit transfer or on curriculum development, to some extent, are not clearly defined. More complicated, if one looks deeply into the transfer of students of associate degree into bachelor degree program. This may require an in-depth analysis and a careful study. Currently, there is no regulation on admission to study at associate degree level and to continue to bachelor degree at a higher education institution and regulation on education recognition (all kinds and levels of education and offering a certificate equivalent mechanism for higher education (MoEYS, Consultant's Report, 2008).

In view of the importance of the mobility of students in the spare of higher education system in Cambodia or maybe in the region/ international arena, the credit system and credit transfer policy was approved by the Board of the Accreditation Committee of Cambodia in November 2004. The key implementers of the policy are higher education institutions. The policy means to facilitate part-time studies or combination of full-time and part-time studies.

Having reviewed ACC FYC guideline (Indicator 4 of Criteria 6) and Minimum Standards for Institutional Accreditation (Standard 3) ACC requires higher education institutions to have a clear policies and standards related to credit transfers and student admission. The policies do not involve making judgments about the academic quality, comparability, appropriateness and applicability of the prior academic experience to the intended program of study as it leaves this to higher education institutions.

FYC program explains the possibility for student mobility within the higher education system in Cambodia. The FYC curriculum, as guided by ACC 2007 FYC manual, shall cover at least ten subjects and govern at least 30 credits. The FYC manual also puts its strong emphasis on the credit accumulation. One indicator of the FYC accreditation standards orders higher education institutions to comply with the contents of the Credit System and Credit Transfer Policy dated November 2004.

*FYC guideline:*

*Higher education institution shall have clear policies and requirements for student admission for both part-time and full time, into its FYC program. The policies and requirements shall be in compliance with legal framework of MoEYS and ACC decision on Credit System and Credit Transfer dated November 2004.*

*Higher education institution shall have clear policies on credit transfer and student admission. The policies shall be widely disseminated to students and stakeholders.*

*Minimum Standards for Institutional Accreditation*

*(Standard 3, selected indicators)*

*The curriculum shall be designed in consistence with the ACC Decision on Credit System and Credit Transfer dated 19 November 2004.*

*HEI shall establish a credit-based training curriculum that allows part-time attendance or a combination of full-time and part-time attendance.*

*HEI shall have a credit transfer policy whereby credits gained within the institution or between accredited HEIs, depending on the academic requirements of each academic program.*

*Credit arrangement for subjects and courses, and credit transfers shall comply with the ACC Decision on Credit System and Credit Transfer dated 19 November 2004.*

The policies also provide a clear guide or directions to higher education institutions to prepare credit based curriculum and recognition of credits within higher education system. As stated in Chapter 2 of Credit System and Credit Transfer, Curriculum in higher education shall be divided into three categories namely:

- *Lecture: One credit in a lecture is a one-hour lecture in a class per week or not less than 15 hours per semester.*
- *Laboratory/workshop: A credit in a laboratory/workshop equals to a training workshop or an experiment in a lab of at least 2 hours per week or at least 30 hours per semester.*
- *Field work: a credit gained from a field work is a training conducted in farms, companies, hospitals, or other places which has at least 3 hours a week or at least 45 hours a semester.*

The policy further explains the characteristics of both part-time and full-time studies of bachelor degree programs, master degree programs and doctoral degree programs. A bachelor degree student can take the four to six year program studies in order to have completed their studies for bachelor degree. A master degree student can take the two or three year program of studies in order to have completed their studies for master degree. A PhD. student can take a program of doctoral degree studies not over eight years. This policy further explains in details as per below:

In addition to the ACC's Decision on Credit System and Credit Transfer, a Decision on Credit Transfers in Higher Education Institutions issued by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport dated May 2009. The Decision aims to facilitate student's learning and transferred, and improve the effectiveness of the management of higher education institutions in the Kingdom of Cambodia.

The Decision allows only fee-based students in both public and private higher education institutions to transfer from one higher education institution to another and the Decision does not cover any clear guideline on or the recognition of international credits. The Decision does not spell out about the transfer of student from an accredited or non-accredited higher education institution. The Decision continues to have further guidelines regarding the case of transfer of student. In case of transfer of students, the recipient higher education institution must submit a letter of request of transfer, on behalf of student and with student's request, to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport in an ordered schedule. The schedule of transfer falls into two periods: (1) schedule one begins on 01 June and ends on 31 July, and schedule two begins on 01 July and ends on 31 December. How simple or complicated or viable for higher education institutions and students to implement the policy requires further studies.

With these policies and guidelines, students are still confronting a lot of issues related to transfer of their credits from accredited higher education institutions to another. The credit transfer related problem may range from the delay of transfer of credits to unclear guidelines on the development of credit-based curriculum and to system of credit conversion. Currently, the majority of higher education institutions in Cambodia do not have clear guidelines and criteria of credit conversion. However, having reviewed FYC curriculum submitted by higher education institutions for ACC approval, credit conversion is primarily based lecture hours and examination.

#### **A. Bachelor Degree Program**

*A four-year bachelor degree program, including foundation year program, must have at least 120 credits. The duration of the studies from the first enrollment is not going beyond 6 years for full-time students and 8 years for part-time students.*

*A five-year bachelor degree program, including foundation year program, must have at least 140 credits. The duration of the studies from the first enrollment is not going beyond 7 years for full-time students and 10 years for part-time students.*

*A six-year bachelor degree program, including foundation year program, must have at least 160 credits. The duration of the studies from the first enrollment is not going beyond 8 years for full-time students and 12 years for part-time students.*

#### **B. Master Degree Program**

*A two-year master degree program must have at least 45 credits or so. The duration of the studies from the first year enrollment is not going beyond 4 years for full-time students and 6 years for part-time students.*

*A three-year master degree program must have at least 57 credits or so. The duration of the studies from the first year enrollment is not going beyond 6 years for full-time students and 8 years for part-time students.*

### C. Doctoral Degree Program

*Doctoral degree program must have a period of research studies at least 54 credits and over. The duration of the studies from the first year enrollment is not going beyond 8 years. For other reasons, there must be an approval from the Committee of Science Research of the higher education institution.*

Having reviewed the policy, credit transfer in the context of Cambodia is the process whereby credit already achieved for an incomplete qualification at an accredited higher education institution is recognised towards another qualification. The process also involves the evaluation of a student's transcript, course outlines and other information relevant to the application for the mobility of students. However, it does not have a clear decision about the credit transfer with international universities and it does not prohibit such a transfer as it leaves this decision to higher education institutions. Based on current practices of credit transfer among higher education institutions in Cambodia, the student in case of transfer can transfer from one accredited higher education institution to another, until she/he accept the offer by the recipient higher education institutions or until another higher education institution accepts her/his transfer credentials.

The policy states that:

*Each higher education institution shall accept credits of another accredited higher education institution. However, the final decision to accept credits of a student in case of transfer into another accredited higher education institution comes at the discretion of the recipient higher education institution.*

*And to facilitate the student in case of transfer, the policy also orders higher education institutions to:*

- *Produce transcripts for students, with clear description of studied subjects, credit values, detailed scores of each completed subjects and detailed explanation of the calculation of scores and grade point average (GPA) upon students' request,*
- *Clearly define the requirements to be applied for the acceptance of student's credits from another accredited higher education,*
- *Accept the credit values of all subjects once the student in a case of transfer has completed her/his studies at another accredited higher education institution.*

## ② Scoring and grading policies

The credit system and credit transfer policy also provides a guide for higher education institutions to apply the standards of scoring and grading system. The system deems necessary as it facilitates the mobility of both local and international students within and beyond the higher education system in Cambodia. Furthermore, the policy opens for higher education institutions to have different scoring system, however, they have to clarify it and compare it with the below-mentioned system.



### Scoring and grading system

Scores Obtained % Meaning	Grade	Grade Point	Grade Point
85%-100%	A	4.00	Excellent
80%-84%	B+	3.50	Very Good
70%-79%	B	3.00	Good
65%-69%	C-	2.50	Fairly Good
50%-64%	C	2.00	Fair
45%-49%	D	1.50	Poor
40%-44%	E	1.00	Very Poor
<40%	F	0.00	Failed

### 3. National University of Management (NUM)

#### (1) Background

This higher education institution was originally established as an Economic Institute in 1983 (CoM, Decision on Establishment of Economic Institute dated 18 June 1983) and 6 years later, the institute was renamed as the Economic Science Institute (CoM, Sub-Decree on the Change of the Name of the Economic Institute to Economic Science Institute, dated 18 July 1989). During 1984-1992, the institute received assistance from the National Economics University of Vietnam and the main language of instruction at the time was in Vietnamese. In 1994, the Economic Science Institute was divided into two faculties, namely Faculty of Business, and Faculty of Laws and Economic Science in its by-laws (MoEYS, Promulgation on dated 20 July 1994). In 1998, the Institute of Business was renamed as the National Institute of Management (MoEYS, Decision on the Change of Name of the Institute of Business to National Institute of Management dated 15 July 1998) and in 2004 the National Institute of Management was renamed as the National University of Management (NUM) in its by-laws (MoEYS, Sub-Decree on the Change of Name of the National Institute of Management to National University of Management dated 16 April 2004). NUM is a public higher education institution, under the direct supervision of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport and has 9 faculties namely:

1. Faculty of Management;
2. Faculty of Business- Economics;

3. Faculty of Marketing;
4. Faculty of Laws;
5. Faculty of Accounting and Finance;
7. Faculty of Information Technology;
8. Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality
9. Faculty of English Language.

The university provides a broad array of academic programs leading to undergraduate and graduate degrees in business administration. Language of instruction of all academic programs across all levels is in national language, Khmer, except English language degree program. In the academic year 2009-2010, the university enrolled nearly 15,000 students in all degree programs including Bachelor Degree, Master Degree and Doctoral Degree programs. Currently, international students enrolled in English language degree program and it has not absorbed transferred or exchanged international students. However, the university has its policy on credit system and credit transfer, which has conditions to accept students in case of transfer from other local universities and international universities and organized credit credentials for its students to transfer to both national and international universities.

Degree level Academic Year	Bachelor Degree		Master Degree		Doctoral Degree	
	Total	Female	Total	Female	Total	Female
2006-2007	8,424	4,120			127**	18
2007-2008	11,060	4,312			0	0
2008-2009	11,981	5,526	617	173	0	0
2009-2010	14,091	6,256	565	143	0	0

Number of Students by degree level

*Source: - MoEYS, Series of Statistics of Higher Education*

*- NUM, Statistics of Teachers and Students,*

*\*\* All students of Doctoral Degree program enrolled in the program in the academic year 2006-2007 and university never enrolled other students in subsequent academic years. The students are still on their courses towards their graduation.*

## (2) Academic Credit System

Academic credit system was introduced by the university and the enrolment of a student in a case of transfer in the bachelor degree program has been implemented since the introduction of FYC program accreditation in 2006. The system was

developed in response to the criteria of FYC program accreditation. For the admission into the second and/or the subsequent years of a student of bachelor degree program from a university in the country required valid credit credentials such as transcripts and certificate of foundation year as well as other required credentials. In present situation, Cambodia higher education system as well as other public sector entities is very much centralized. Higher education institutions, in the case of implementation of credit system and credit transfer policy, are required to follow the existing policies issued by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport and Accreditation Committee of Cambodia.

The university is entitled by laws to enroll students in all its academic programs twice a year. Its first enrolment for the academic semester begins on 01 September and the semester ends on 31 January, and its second enrolment for the next semester starts on 15 February and the semester ends on 30 June. However, this practice has ended since the academic year 2006-2007 due to overpopulation of students, and university's physical plants and other resources do not match with the overcrowded student population. From the academic year 2006-2007 onwards, the university decided to enroll students in all its academic programs in September only. All Bachelor Degree programs require four academic years, two semesters per academic year, ranging from 120 to 135 credits and Master Degree Programs require two academic years, two semesters per academic year, ranging from 54 to 60 credits and Doctoral Degree Programs require three academic years, two semesters per academic year with 84 credits.

#### ① Bachelor Degree Program

The university provides four-year bachelor degree program of business administration in different specialized fields namely: management, marketing, accounting, finance and banking, business-economics, tourism and hospitality, English language, laws and computer science. All specialized fields of studies required 129 credits, except computer science requires 135 credits. Its academic programs provide learners with knowledge, capability and ethics in leading organizations and equip learners with higher competence in critical thinking, analysis and problem-solving skills. The bachelor degree program in all fields is divided into four academic years, including foundation year program. For a student to have a foundation year program certificate, she/he must have successfully completed ten subjects within four fields of studies namely humanity, social science, computer science and foreign languages and a total of 30 credits.

*In January 2010, Student Mirina successfully completed the first semester of her third year in business administration with a higher education institution in a far remote province. She was offered with a FYC certificate, transcripts of all subjects of her studies in FYC program (year one), in year two and year three by the institution after she had submitted an application form for credit credentials from the institution. She, by no choice, has to move to Phnom Penh and she also needs to continue her bachelor degree studies in a higher education institution in Phnom Penh. Is she able to continue her studies at the intended higher education institution in Phnom Penh at the second semester of year 3 study? This case explains that Student Mirina has completed about 90 credits of 120 to 135 credits (total credits of bachelor degree program).*

Student Mirina has been for a few weeks seeking information from different higher education institutions in Phnom Penh and she prefers the National University of Management. If Student Mirina decides to transfer into the National University of Management, will she be able to continue her year-three study? The enrolment of Student Mirina in case of transfer into the National University of Management in its Bachelor Degree program requires application forms, certificate of FYC and approved transcripts of all her subjects of all years. If she accepts the offer by the university, she will be enrolled in the second semester of year 2. The Student Mirina, if decided to transfer to any university in Phnom Penh, will lose her time and huge resources. The case of Student Mirina may have happened and will continue to happen and similar case may happen to other students. This may require certain and clear guidelines to be applied by both higher education institutions and students.

YEAR I (Foundation Year Program) = 10 courses and = 30 credits			
SEMESTER I		SEMESTER II	
Subjects	Credits Hours	Subjects	Credits Hours
Khmer History	3/48	Khmer Culture and Civilization	3/48
Mathematical Analysis	3/48	Basic Computer	3/48
History of Economic Thoughts	3/48	Public Administration	3/48
English Part I	3/48	English Part II	3/48
Principles of Management	3/48	Principles of Marketing	3/48
YEAR II = 12 courses and = 36 credits			
SEMESTER I		SEMESTER II	
Subjects	Credits Hours	Subjects	Credits Hours
Introduction to Business	3/48	Marketing Management	3/48
Marketing for Services	3/48	Macro-economics	3/48
Principles of Accounting	3/48	Contract Laws	3/48

Business Statistics and Forecasting	3/48	Organizational Behaviors	3/48
Micro-economics	3/48	Managerial Accounting	3/48
Business English	3/48	Business English	3/48
Computer*	3/48	Computer*	3/48

**Bachelor of Business Administration in Management**

YEAR III = 12 courses and = 36 credits			
SEMESTER I		SEMESTER II	
Subjects	Credits	Subjects	Credits
Marketing Research	3/48	Cross-cultural Management	3/48
Financial Management	3/48	Environmental Business Management	3/48
Inventory Management	3/48	Office Management	3/48
Human Resource Management	3/48	Commercial Transactions	3/48
Production/Operations Management	3/48	Corporate Finance	3/48
Business English	3/48	Business English	3/48
Computer*	3/48	Computer*	3/48
YEAR IV = 9 courses and = 27 credits			
SEMESTER I		SEMESTER II	
Subjects	Credits	Subjects	Credits
Research Methodology	3/48	Business Ethics	3/48
Management of Technology	3/48	Entrepreneurship	3/48
Investment Management	3/48	International Business Management**	3/48
Project Management	3/48	Strategic Management**	3/48
Total Quality Management	3/48	Writing Research and Presentation***	3/48

*\*\* Required for graduate examination*

*\*\*\* Not required to take any course in year 4, semester 2*

*\* Optional course*

**② Master Degree Program**

With the permission of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS, Decision 736, dated 30 September 2002), the university is entitled to provide Master Degree program in Business Administration specialized in different fields ranging from general management, finance, tourism management, marketing and accounting, language of instruction of this program is in national language, Khmer and credit points of each specialized field range from 60 to 66 credits. Currently, 1,182 students are enrolled in its programs. The program aims to prepare students for management leaders in business administration and equip learners with managerial skills and research capacity.

YEAR I			
SEMESTER I		SEMESTER II	
Subjects	Credits Hours	Subjects	Credits Hours
Applied Statistics and Forecasting	3/48	Human Resource Management	3/48
Managerial Economics	3/48	Operational Management	3/48
Financial and Cost Accounting	3/48	Corporate Finance	3/48
Management and Organizational Development	3/48	International Economics	3/48
Marketing Management and Strategy	3/48	Management Information Systems	3/48
YEAR II			
SEMESTER I		SEMESTER II	
Subjects	Credits Hours	Subjects	Credits Hours
Communication and Public Opinion	3/48	Strategic Management	3/48
International Business Management	3/48	Leadership	3/48
Entrepreneurship	3/48	Management of Change	3/48
Government and Business	3/48	Total Quality Management	3/48
Research Methodology	3/48	Or Research Thesis	3/48

### ③ Doctoral Degree Program

With the permission from the Minister of Education, Youth and Sport, (Promulgation on the PhD. Degree program at the National University of Management dated 29 December 2004), the university started its Doctoral Degree Program in Business Administration in 2005 to upgrade the qualifications of its lecturers and expanded to enroll managers from public and private sectors. The program requires a minimum of three year intensive full time study beyond master degree with 84 credits. The university enrolled 145 students into this Doctoral Degree program in the academic year 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 and no more enrolment in the subsequent academic years and the program aims to equip learners with management knowledge and research skills. This program is expected to contribute to the improvement of quality of management in Cambodia.



YEAR I			
SEMESTER I		SEMESTER II	
Subjects	Credits Hours	Subjects	Credits Hours
Statistics of Management	3/48	Financial Management and Accounting	3/48
Business Decision Methods	3/48	Organizational Theory and Behavior	3/48
Economic Foundations for Management	3/48	Research Methods for Management	3/48
Workshop	3/48	Workshop	3/48
YEAR II			
SEMESTER I		SEMESTER II	
Subjects	Credits Hours	Subjects	Credits Hours
Strategic Management and Corporate Governance	3/48	Change and Consulting Strategies	3/48
Advanced Production and Operations	3/48	Investment Theory and Analysis	3/48
Marketing Theory and Practice	3/48	International Management	3/48
Workshop	3/48	Workshop	3/48
YEAR III			
SEMESTER I		SEMESTER II	
Subjects	Credits Hours	Subjects	Credits Hours
Thesis and Presentations	18	Thesis and Presentations	18

Academic credit system is not well understood among practitioners in higher education system in Cambodia, as it is a new concept and credit-based curriculum has just moved from year-based block curriculum for few years. Reviewed the curriculum of each degree level of the university as above-tabled, it is to a larger extent, more course-based credits. Given these, students may have difficulties in transferring their credits or in choosing subjects of studies from a broad range of subject combinations.

### (3) Grading and Scoring System

The students are evaluated throughout each academic semester based on course work (essay, projects, practical work, tests and other assignments). The grading system applied by the university is explained as below:

Grade	Mark Scale	Grade Point
A Excellent	= 90-100	4.00
A- Very Good	= 80-89	3.75
B+ Good	= 70-79	3.50
B Fairly Good	= 60-69	3.00

B-	Almost Good	=	50-59	2.75
C+	Fair	=	40-49	2.50
C	Almost Fair	=	30-39	2.00
C-	Poor	=	20-29	1.75
D	Very Poor	=	10-19	1.50
F	Fail	=	0-09	1.00

#### 4 . Conclusion

To a certain extent, the development of Cambodia higher education system has moved like a centipede's walk and it is striking towards a better one with multidimensional challenges. The challenges may range from credit-based curriculum development to quick mushrooming of higher education institutions, institutional management and quality assurance. Addressing the challenges requires more systematic management in higher education institutions – the credit system and the quality assurance to ensure both quantity and quality provided by those institutions and concerted efforts and strategic moves from all levels and across the board.

In the current situation, Cambodia credit transfer in higher education has a very close link with accreditation. Accreditation in Cambodia required further capacity building at all levels. Capacity in undertaking accreditation policy framework is limited. This limitation ranges from capacity of assessors and higher education institutions in the accreditation process to institutional capacity of the Accreditation Committee of Cambodia and to limited resources. It is therefore that accreditation process requires long-term strategies. This may require a balanced approach in which the capacity of internal quality assurance unit of higher education institutions needs to be developed and the capacity of external assessors need to be strengthened and matured. In addition to this, ACC institutional capacity needs to be further strengthened in administering accreditation process, especially to ensure transparent decision on accreditation.

As the report indicates, each higher education institution introduced the credit system for its own purposes – indicating the number of credits that the students should collect over a period of time in order for them to complete the course initially enrolled in a particular program. The application of the system beyond such a purpose is far from practice. Credit transfer – be it internally or externally is a more challenging step that Cambodian Higher Education Institutions have to move next. The review of the national and international system reveals that Cambodia Higher Education Institutions need to develop more concrete academic network within or outside the country in order to learn how important the credit transfer is for the students and how that transfer is applicable. From the management and academic

perspectives, this will have to start with building of the capacity of all stakeholders—the capacity to strongly believe that the benefits of the credit transfer practices will overcome the challenges that each institution is reluctant to embark.