

Self-Assessment Report for AUN-QA

PhD in Applied Linguistics

**School of Liberal Art
King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi**

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PhD in Applied Linguistics, School of Liberal Arts, King Mongkut's university of Technology Thonburi

Background

The programme has been offered since 2007. In the Academic Year 2017, there were 3 students graduating from the programme. Currently, there are 24 students in the programme, 16 Thai and 8 foreign students. In this academic year, we have just launched the new curriculum. The new curriculum contains new learning outcomes which were derived from needs of our graduates, their bosses, feedback from current students. The university's missions and the current situations of the country, those of the ASEAN region and global situation are also taken into consideration.

Criterion 1

The Expected Learning Outcome

1	Expected Learning Outcomes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.1	The expected learning outcomes have been clearly formulated and aligned with the vision and mission of the university [1,2]			/				
1.2	The expected learning outcomes cover both subject specific and generic (i.e. transferable) learning outcomes [3]			/				
1.3	The expected learning outcomes clearly reflect the requirements of the stakeholders [4]			/				
	Overall opinion			/				

The programme committee rated criterion 1 based on the following evidence:

- 1.1. The expected learning outcome have been clearly stated and aligned with the vision and mission of the university

As King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi (KMUTT) strives to be a world class research university, the PhD programme was also designed to centre around research; i.e. how we can produce graduates with strong research skills who can produce qualified research outputs (See PhD curriculum). When the programme was firstly designed, a market research was conducted to find out desirable attributes of the PhD graduates in Applied Linguistics which is a broad field in that it covers a study of language and teaching foreign languages. PhD graduates in Applied Linguistics were perceived as those who would teach higher degrees and do research in the universities. Thus, the questionnaires were distributed to prospective bosses such as the Heads of English Departments in various universities as well as target customers who are university lecturers, M.A./M.Ed. graduates in those fields including the M.A. graduates from KMUTT.

The needs of stakeholders and the results of the research done in other international institutions which offer the PhD programme in Applied Linguistics, TESOL, TEFL and English Language Studies were used to formulate the outcomes of the programme.

It is widely known that the PhD graduates who will become university lecturers are expected to conduct research and the students in the PhD programmes are those working at the university. The expected learning outcomes of the programme have been continuously discussed and rechecked by taking into account KMUTT Students' Qualification Framework, views from stakeholders such as the graduates' bosses, support staff who work closely with the students; feedbacks from the graduates and current students; views from the teachers who teach in the PhD programme. In order to respond to the vision of the university in producing graduates who are proficient and continue to search for knowledge in order to be at the forefront of research in order to become a world-class university, we also look at the European Framework for Research Careers as a guideline for researcher's attributes so that our PhD graduates are able to work in the universities around the world.

According to the framework, there are 4 stages of researchers. The four broad profiles with the working titles are presented below:

R1 First Stage Researcher (up to the point of PhD)

R2 Recognised Researcher (PhD holders or equivalent who are not yet fully independent)

R3 Established Researcher (researchers who have developed a level of independence.)

R4 Leading Researcher (researchers leading their research area or field)

The European Framework for Research Careers builds on the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning⁴ (EQF) and the Bologna Framework for Qualifications in the European Higher Education Area⁵. The second profile (R2) of the researchers' framework

corresponds with completion of the highest levels of EQF (level 8) and Bologna (third cycle) (Retrieved from http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/pdf/research_policies/Towards_a_European_Framework_for_Research_Careers_final.pdf, 27/8/2015).

1.2. The expected learning outcomes cover both subject specific and generic (i.e. transferable) learning outcomes

We agreed that the expected learning outcomes of the PhD students should cover the generic and specific skills for R2 because they are expected to be qualified researchers who are able to make contribution in the field both nationally and internationally. How the expected learning outcomes of the PhD students are translated into the programme through courses offered, formal assessment and other activities provided to the PhD students is shown in the Appendix (See PLO in the new curriculum).

At first, the PLO included 7 areas. However, after the round table assessment, the assessors suggested us to merge some areas so that the assessment would be more practical. The revised PLOs are as follows:

1. Students will be able to demonstrate systemic understanding of applied linguistics research

- 1) Students will be able to explain issues in applied linguistics, theoretical principles of research, and objectives and procedures of different research paradigms in applied linguistics.
- 2) Students will be able to analyse issues in applied linguistics validly and appropriately select relevant issues to solve problems in real life situations.
- 3) Students will be able to identify appropriate research topics or identify scopes of research that are useful to the field of applied linguistics.

2. Students will be able to accurately analyse, evaluate, and design research in applied linguistics

- 1) Students will be able to validly and justifiably analyse, evaluate and critique research in applied linguistics.
- 2) Students will be able to synthesize arguments about applied linguistics research.
- 3) Students will be able to design and plan research that leads to the construction of new, valid and well accepted knowledge in the field of applied linguistics.
- 4) Students will be able to produce original and ethical research of high quality and value which contributes to the field of applied linguistics.

3. Students will be able to communicate effectively.

- 1) Students will be able to effectively and appropriately disseminate research in high quality academic conferences which are well accepted in the field.
- 2) Students will be able to write high quality research papers and academic papers.

4. Students will show the characteristics associated with a professional researcher.

- 1) Students will show themselves to be independent, self-motivated, responsible, and determined.
- 2) Students will be able to show awareness of research ethics and the effects of research on the communities and people involved.
- 3) Students will be able to work well with others, contribute and share ideas, accept the ideas and opinions of others, be enthusiastic in contributing, and manifest interpersonal leadership.
- 4) Students will be able to create networks for future cooperation and create a community of practice.

For each PLO, sub-skills were identified together with knowledge, attitudes and competences where appropriate. These sub-skills, knowledge, attitudes and competences are linked to courses and other activities on the PhD program to show how they are manifested and how they can be evaluated (See the link between the PLOs and courses and the website).

The programme has put more emphasis on research rather than taught courses. Therefore, the PhD programme offers two study plans, Plan A or those who do research only and Plan B or those who take 4 courses and do research. Plan A students are the candidates who have experiences doing research before and are ready to start their research right away. Their

proposals have to demonstrate their research-mindedness and their potential to develop the proposal into a more structured research proposal within one semester. Plan B students had two more semesters to search for their interest and they can develop their proposals in the third semester after finishing the course work. Because the focus of the programme is on producing graduates who are capable researchers, assignments of the four courses offered encouraged the students to develop small scale research which can be presented in the conferences.

1.3.The expected learning outcomes clearly reflect the requirements of the stakeholders

The requirements of the stakeholders who are university administrators are obvious in that they want their colleagues to acquire research skills to become independent researchers who can conduct good research and can publish in prestigious journals. We also did a survey with the graduates' employers and newly graduates through interviews in order to improve the programme (See Interview PhD graduate's employer and survey of newly graduates) . The curriculum which is used in the Academic Year 2018 is considered a revised curriculum which is done every five years. The process of revision involved obtaining feedback from the current students and graduates' bosses. The Reviewer from other institutions were invited to review the programme. We invited Prof. Christine Goh from National Institute of Education, Nanyang University to review the PhD programme and voices of the current students from her report helped us to provide more help to the current students because they expressed that they wanted more guidelines of how much they have to do in each semester when they start their research in order to make enough progress (See External reviewer report).

Criterion 2

Programme Specification

2	Programme Specification	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.1	The information in the programme specification is comprehensive and up-to-date [1, 2]			/				
2.2	The information in the course specification is comprehensive and up-to-date [1, 2]			/				
2.3	The programme and course specifications are communicated and made available to the stakeholders [1, 2]			/				
	Overall opinion			/				

In order to draft specification of the programme, the committee studied other PhD programmes in the university and curriculum standard of the Ministry of Education. Because it is designed to be a research-oriented programme, the credits offered are 48 credits, with 48-credit thesis for Plan A, and 12 credit-course work and 36-credit thesis for Plan B. The committee also discussed how the credits would be broken down in order to show students' progress in their research study

by combining process and products of research (See PhD handbook: Topic 8 Assigning credits on p. 10). Programme learning outcomes (PLO) was drafted and the courses as well as activities are linked with the PLO (See PhD curriculum).

The faculty has published all the programme specifications offered on the website through the programme profile. Therefore, stakeholders can access the information of the programme easily to the website if they want to know about the programme (See Appendix for SoLA website and Programme profile). In addition, the handbook of the PhD study was printed and given to the new students. (See a PhD handbook). However, the detailed information which links courses with the outcomes of the programme can be accessed in the PhD curriculum on the Website of School of Liberal Arts (See Website).

Criterion 3

Programme Structure and Content

3	Programme Structure & Content	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.1	The curriculum is designed based on constructive alignment with the expected learning outcomes [1]			/				
3.2	The contribution made by each course to achieve the expected learning outcomes is clear [2]			/				
3.3	The curriculum is logically structured, sequenced, integrated and up-to-date [3, 4, 5, 6]		/					
	Overall opinion			/				

In order to prepare the students to conduct their research successfully, the courses offered are separated into compulsory and optional courses (See PhD curriculum). The compulsory courses include Advanced Research Methodology, which all the Plan B students are required to take. Plan A students are also strongly recommended to take this course in order to lay foundation of how to do research. Therefore, Plan A students are encouraged to start their study in the second semester when the course is offered. The other compulsory is conducted as elective in that the students can choose between Theories in Language Learning and Linguistic Theory and Practice depending on their background in order to expand their perspectives and to develop their expertise as Applied Linguists (See PhD curriculum). Those who graduated in Linguistics have to take Theories in Language Learning so that they understand how the language is learned. Those who have background in teaching will take Linguistic Theories. The optional courses are offered according to the students' interests depending on the focus of their theses. The main problem of our programme is that there are only 3-5 students in each batch; therefore, we can't offer too many optional courses due to cost effectiveness even though there are more optional

courses listed in the programme content. Therefore, not all the students could enroll in the courses which are directly related to their topics but it is expected that they can use the knowledge gained in their future. However, the programme invites visiting professors to give workshop and consultation to the PhD students every year in order to expand their horizon to the area which they are not familiar with in order to develop breath of knowledge. The students can make an appointment to discuss about their thesis with them if they want to have suggestions for their thesis (See programme of the visiting professor, Dr. Heath Rose).

The design of the sequence of the courses offered in the programme is rather flexible because research is an independent activity. We tend to offer other out of class activities which enable the students to share and learn from one another. With regard to courses offered, the students are expected to learn research methodology as it is important for the development of their research design.

The comments from curriculum review by the external reviewer also reflects how the programme content was evaluated (See External reviewer report).

Criterion 4

Teaching and Learning Strategy

4	Teaching & Learning Strategy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.1	The educational philosophy is well articulated and communicated to all stakeholders [1]			/				
4.2	Teaching and learning activities are constructively aligned to the achievement of the expected learning outcomes [2, 3, 4, 5]			/				
4.3	Teaching and learning activities enhance life-long learning [6]				/			
	Overall opinion			/				

The educational philosophy is well articulated in the Programme Profile (See programme profile). The orientation for new students also covers PLOs and how the programme attempts to develop the students to research.

We are very careful about designing teaching process and activities. The teaching process includes discussion, presentation, and seminar (See PhD curriculum). Discussion is done both in class and online via a discussion board (see Appendix: PhD forum). The students are encouraged to develop their critical skills through attending research discussion which is conducted every other month. The research discussion includes both the PhD students and the teaching staff and it

is acted as a stage for them to share research they want to do and then the audience would discuss the feasibility of the research. Those who join the research discussion not only develop their critical skills, they also develop their research-mindedness. In addition, Research Clusters are established to help the students who do the research in the same area share the aspects they need more help from the group such as how to analyse the data (See documents showing how often research discussion and research clusters were organized and the topics covered). But in this academic year, the research cluster was not provided as often as it should be.

The students have to search for information by themselves. These skills are useful for life-long learning. In each course, the students are required to do small scale research as the main assignment. In this way, life-long learning skills are fostered throughout the programme. The evaluation of what the students think about the teaching and learning can be seen from the questions asked in the progress report (See example of the student's progress report) and how they evaluate supervisors (See report on supervision)

Criterion 5:

Student Assessment

5	Student Assessment	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.1	The student assessment is constructively aligned to the achievement of the expected learning outcomes [1, 2]			/				
5.2	The student assessments including timelines, methods, regulations, weight distribution, rubrics and grading are explicit and communicated to students [4, 5]			/				
5.3	Methods including assessment rubrics and marking schemes are used to ensure validity, reliability and fairness of student assessment [6,7]			/				
5.4	Feedback of student assessment is timely and helps to improve learning [3]			/				
5.5	Students have ready access to appeal procedure [8]		/					
	Overall opinion			/				

The assessment is criterion-referenced (See an example of criteria used in Theories in Language Learning course). Basically, the assessment method used in each course is the assignment which focuses on research. However, there are also other assessment methods used in the PhD courses;

e.g. students' presentation of the concept, students' progress of their research for dissertation courses. The criteria are presented to the students so they know what they are expected. One-on-one feedback is also provided to the student in order to give feedback in detail. The students can redo the assignment if they fail (i.e. getting the grade lower than a B) but the result of the rewritten assignment will not be higher than a B. Because the assessment process is conducted to evaluate if the students understand the concept and are able to apply it to do research, it covers the objectives of the programme as a whole. The department set up a channel for the students to appeal about their grade and other issues which are considered as serious complaints (see appealing procedure in the PhD handbook.). For formative assessment which is conducted ongoing, the feedback will be given right away. A summative assessment is given at the end of the course. For thesis courses, feedback procedure will be agreed between the supervisor and the supervisee. The normal practice is that it takes a week to give feedback if the written work submitted is not too long. But if it is the whole chapter, it may take up to 10 days to give feedback. The procedure of research supervision is the agreement between the supervisors and the supervisees (see the students' evaluation of supervision from the review by the External reviewer and evaluation of supervision).

Criterion 6:

Academic Staff Quality

6	Academic Staff Quality	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.1	Academic staff planning (considering succession, promotion, re-deployment, termination, and retirement) is carried out to fulfil the needs for education, research and service [1]			/				
6.2	Staff-to-student ratio and workload are measured and monitored to improve the quality of education, research and service [2]			/				
6.3	Recruitment and selection criteria including ethics and academic freedom for appointment, deployment and promotion are determined and communicated [4, 5, 6, 7]		/					
6.4	Competences of academic staff are identified and evaluated [3]			/				
6.5	Training and developmental needs of academic staff are identified and activities are implemented to fulfil them [8]			/				
6.6	Performance management including rewards and recognition is implemented to motivate and support education, research and service [9]			/				
6.7	The types and quantity of research activities by academic staff are established, monitored and benchmarked for improvement [10]				/			
	Overall opinion			/				

6.1 Academic staff planning (considering succession, promotion, re-deployment, termination, and retirement) is carried out to fulfil the needs for education, research and service

PhD teaching staff belongs to the Department of Languages, which offer service courses to undergraduate students, MA students in Applied Linguistics (English Language Teaching) and MA in English for Professional and International Communications. Therefore, the teaching staff has to teach at all levels. However, the PhD teaching requires lecturers who have extensive research experience. Thus, the lecturers in this programme tend to teach only at the postgraduate level.

In order to prepare the lecturers to teach and supervise in the PhD programme, we design a system to help the junior staff who are PhD graduates as follows:

1. Preparing to teach PhD courses. In order to prepare qualified staff to replace the lecturers who are about to retire, the junior staff who have publications will be asked to attend the PhD courses and to teach some sessions which are related to their research under the supervision of the lecturer of that course (See TLL syllabus).
2. Involving in PhD assessment. The junior staff will be asked to be involved in the PhD programme by acting as a chairperson of the qualifying examination and the internal examiners.
3. Developing research skills. The junior staff can choose research mentor to develop research (See research mentoring programme).
4. The junior staff who have publications will pair with the more experienced staff to co-supervise the PhD students.

6.2 Staff-to-student ratio and workload are measured and monitored to improve the quality of education, research and service

The main problem of the PhD programme is the number of students per 1 supervisor. According to the OHEC regulations, one supervisor can take up to 5 supervisees. However, the regulations of the university allow one supervisor to supervise up to 10 students but the programme has to monitor that the supervisors can give adequate supervision. To monitor the number of supervisees, SoLA set up the rules that each lecturer can supervise 5 students. If they accept more postgraduate students (both in the MA and the PhD programmes), they have to submit the document to show the number of their students, the students' progress and publication and graduation timeline to the Postgraduate Committee of the faculty to consider before it is approved by the faculty committee (See Appendix: Documents for extra numbers of supervisees). Before the semester starts, the academic support staff will check if the lecturers have new students under supervision or not. The quality of supervision is evaluated by the supervisees every semester (see report on supervision). In this academic year, the students have graduated so there is no problem of one supervisor supervising more than 5 PhD students.

Figure 6.1 Number of academic staff and their FTEs in the last 5 academic years

Category	M	F	Total		Percentage of PhDs
			Headcounts	FTEs	
Professors	-	-	-	-	-
Associate Professors	1	3	4	4	75
Assistant Professors	1	4	5	5	100
Full time lecture	2	2	4	4	100
Part-time lecture	-	-	-	-	-
Visiting Professor/ Lecturers	1	-	1	1	100
Total	5	9	14	14	92.85

6.3 Recruitment and selection criteria including ethics and academic freedom for appointment, deployment and promotion are determined and communicate

The recruitment of PhD staff is mainly done through choosing the teaching staff who has extensive research, who are enthusiastic to develop new research methodology and shows their quality as good supervisors in the MA programmes. It is rather exclusive at present because the junior staff does not have experience. In the future, concrete criteria have to be made explicit.

6.4 Competences of academic staff are identified and evaluated

The qualifications of the PhD academic staff are mandated by the OHEC. The CV of staff will be updated every year. The co-supervisor from will also go through the same screening process (See PhD curriculum).

6.5 Training and developmental needs of academic staff are identified and activities are implemented to fulfill them

At present, the training and development focus more on junior staff. The more experienced staff receives training from the visiting professors who come to give workshop and research consultation every year. The more experienced staff identifies the areas which we lack and search for visiting professors in those areas.

6.6 Performance management including rewards and recognition is implemented to motivate and support education, research and service

The performance management uses the university system. In addition, the faculty has performance based budgeting system (PBBS) which includes paying for exceeding expected teaching load (this includes supervision) and publication to pay staff every six months. This can help motivate the teachers to teach/supervise and do more research. Research which the academic staff supervises is accounted for 60% when it is published and the academic staff can use it for promotion.

6.7 The types and quantity of research activities by academic staff are established, monitored and benchmarked for improvement

The faculty establishes academic staff's visibility criteria by looking at all the academic activities including research quality in order to use it to improve personnel. It can also be used to benchmark the staff (See Academic visibility measurement: criteria and results). Publications of the PhD academic staff is seen in the Appendix.

Research publication is getting better and there are more varieties of publications. This can help raise visibility of the programme.

Criterion 7 **Support Staff Quality**

7	Support Staff Quality	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7.1	Support staff planning (at the library, laboratory, IT facility and student services) is carried out to fulfil the needs for education, research and service [1]			/				
7.2	Recruitment and selection criteria for appointment, deployment and promotion are determined and communicated [2]		/					
7.3	Competences of support staff are identified and evaluated [3]			/				
7.4	Training and developmental needs of support staff are identified and activities are implemented to fulfil them [4]			/				
7.5	Performance management including rewards and recognition is implemented to motivate and support education, research and service [5]			/				
	Overall opinion			/				

7.1 Support staff planning (at the library, laboratory, IT facility and student services) is carried out to fulfil the needs for education, research and service.

The support staff planning is at the faculty level (See the plan and revised plan to improve support staff in the appendix). However, the academic support staff who is directly involved in the PhD and other postgraduate programs will be overseen closely about her work load because she has to deal with many students. She can request for more staff to help her. In the previous academic year, the new support staff was hired to help (See job description of the support staff who deals with the PhD programme in the Appendix).

7.2 Recruitment and selection criteria for appointment, deployment and promotion are determined and communicated

The recruitment process is done at the university level using the university criteria but we can write job specification and can do the interview to get the support staff who is likely to fulfil our job and fit out organizational culture (See regulations in the Appendix).

7.3 Competences of support staff are identified and evaluated

There is a job description of each position. This identifies their responsibility which is related to their competence. Their evaluation takes into account their competence by looking at their performance (See job description of the support staff who deals with the PhD programme in the Appendix).

7.4 Recruitment and selection criteria for appointment, deployment and promotion are determined and communicated

The recruitment and selection criteria as well as promotion are based on the university system (See regulations in the Appendix). The faculty only submits the job description of the position we need and involve in the interview stage after the candidates pass the first round of screening process which focuses on the core competency required by the university. The new support staff has to go through the training programme offered by the university. A work mentor and a social mentor are assigned to take care of the new support staff so s/he can help clarify the unclear points.

7.5 Performance management including rewards and recognition is implemented to motivate and support education, research and service

The system is based on the university system but the faculty links bonus with their performance.

Table. 7.1 Number of Support staff

Support staff	Highest Educational Attainment				Total
	High school	Bachelor's	Master's	Doctoral	
Library Personnel	-	1	1	-	2
IT Personnel	1	2	-	-	3
Administrative Personnel	-	1	-	-	1
Students Service Personnel	-	4	3	-	7
Research Personnel	-	1	-	-	1
Total	1	9	4	-	14

The support staff who are at high school level are not permanent staff and they only do routine jobs such as borrowing and returning books or check condition of computers. Not all of the support staff have to directly contact the students in the programme. The ones who have to contact the students can communicate in English. They can contact the Programme Chair for help if the communication with foreign students are not successful. The quality of support staff is evaluated by the students at the end of the academic year (See Support staff quality evaluation).

Criterion 8

Student Quality and Support

8	Student Quality and Support	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8.1	The student intake policy and admission criteria are defined, communicated, published, and up-to date [1]			/				
8.2	The methods and criteria for the selection of students are determined and evaluated [2]			/				
8.3	There is an adequate monitoring system for student progress, academic performance, and workload [3]				/			
8.4	Academic advice, co-curricular activities, student competition, and other student support services are available to improve learning and employability [4]				/			
8.5	The physical, social and psychological environment is conducive for education and research as well as personal well-being [5]				/			
Overall opinion					/			

8.1 The student intake policy and admission criteria are defined, communicated, published, and up-to date.

The intake policy and the admission criteria are clearly specified in the programme and the website (See the PhD programme and the website). The selection criteria focus on academic background (a master's degree, with a GPA of at least 3.25), English proficiency (valid TOEFL or IELTS scores--within 2 years) and research mindedness as shown by their research proposal and the performance in the recruitment interview. This is to ensure the quality of the entering students.

There were fewer applicants last year and this year but the selection process was still rigorous. It can be seen from the number of students who have been accepted for the last five years that we would accept only when the students were qualified. Therefore, the numbers of students did not reach the number which we aimed for in some years. However, the programme committee also discussed PR plan so that we can have more application and can raise selectivity.

Figure 8.1 Intake of First-Year Students (last 5 academic years)

Academic Year	Applicants		
	No. Applied	No. Offered	No. Admitted/Enrolled
2557	7	3	3
2558	19	5	4
2559	22	3	3
2560	9	4	3
2561	8	5	4

Figure 8.2 Total Number of Students

Academic Year	Students					Total
	1 st year	2 nd year	3 rd year	4 th year	>4 th year	
2557	3	5	4	6	12	30
2558	4	1	4	4	17	30
2559	3	4	1	4	19	31
2560	3	2	3	1	15	24
2561	4	3	2	3	8	20

Figure 8.3 Percentage of foreign students

Curriculum	Total number of students	Number of foreign students	% of foreign students
PhD.D.	20	10	50

8.2 The methods and criteria for the selection of students are determined and evaluated.

The methods and selection criteria are clearly determined and the selection methods and criteria are effective enough but there is no formal evaluation of the selection methods (See proposal evaluation form).

So far the selection process has help the programme get qualified PhD candidates as the selection criteria focus on language proficiency, academic background, and research mindedness which are the key attributes required in the programme. Only qualified applicants will be accepted for the programme.

The recruitment process starts at the university level. The university admission office will send the applicant's basic information to the faculty and then the PhD programme committee. Only the applicants who meet all the required qualification will be eligible for the next selection process. For those who do not have TOEFL or IELTS scores, they can choose to take the written exam (focus on English and academic background) provided by the School of Liberal Arts. The exam is marked by an evaluator using clear marking criteria. The scores from the written exam will be sent to the graduate studies committee (GSC) for consideration. Then, only candidates who pass the written exam will be invited for the interview which will be done by 3 appointed recruitment team who are the PhD committee. Only applicants with research-mindedness and those with sufficient academic background will be accepted. As for Plan B applicants, only the ones with publications and strong research background would be selected. The recruitment results will be presented to the PhD committee and the GSC to determine and announce the final results (See admission procedure in the Appendix).

8.3 There is an adequate monitoring system for student progress, academic performance, and workload.

While doing research, the students are required to meet the supervisors at least 2 times each semester (See PhD Handbook: the requirement of presence p. 3). They have to fill in the progress form and do oral presentation at the end of the semester (See PhD Handbook: progress report forms). The PhD progress report of each semester is set in the GSC schedule and announced to all staff and students. The supervisors and the internal examiners read the progress reports and listen to their presentations which is an open session. Questions, comments and suggestions from general audiences and the internal examiners are encouraged in at the end of each student's progress presentation.

There is a system for assigning credits to the students' theses. Students will earn the credits from both the process and the products or the chapters that they could finish writing. For examples, credits will be assigned for the proposal, the data collection and analysis, and the chapters and the viva (See PhD Handbook: assigning credits). The thesis supervisor will be the ones who determined the numbers of credits that the students should earn in each semester at the end of each semester. The credits earned will be recorded and submitted to the registration office.

Self-assessment is also used to monitor students' progress. Each semester, the students would evaluate their satisfaction about their progress and performance semester (See PhD Handbook: PhD student evaluation form). From the evaluation process, students are satisfied with adequate supervision and their own progress and performance.

Regulations on the numbers of supervisees that each PhD staff can supervise are also strictly followed. The programme does not allow one supervisor to have more than 10 students.

As for the workload for each semester, the programme follows the study plan outlined in the curriculum. The students take one or two courses in each semester depending on their track (Plan A or B). They then will be encouraged to take the qualifying exam and the proposal defense in the first year. The students will discuss the research plan with their research supervisors. With these monitoring processes, the

programme can take care of the students' progress and performance. However, most of the students take more time to finish the programme. An average student takes 4-5 years to complete because of the publication requirements in a Q1 international journal.

Being aware of this issue, the PhD committee discussed some measurements to solve the problems, such as to provide a clearer plan and timeline for each student, and to encourage the students to write the chapters at the same time as the research papers and gave workshops related to writing a paper when the students start to do the writing up. This area was also covered by the visiting professor (See schedule of Dr. Heath Rose).

8.4 Academic advice, co-curricular activities, student competition, and other student support services are available to improve learning and employability.

The main concern of the programme is developing the students to become professional researchers. Therefore, extracurricular activities such as research discussion, research cluster, and workshops on demand are provided. Students are also encouraged to sit in and participate in PhD courses arranged for their juniors or to take part in optional courses, although they are not the requirement of the programme so that they could share ideas and learn more from the class discussion and the issues explored in different cohorts.

Furthermore, students will also gain academic advice from their academic advisor. In case of new students whose research topics have not been completely developed, they would be assigned one or two pre-supervisors to provide additional supports until they gain a clear focus.

So far, there is no problem of employability because most of the students who study in this programme already have a job, and from the interview with graduates' employers, the results are very satisfactory (See survey with employers)

8.5 The physical, social and psychological environment is conducive for education and research as well as personal well-being

To enhance students' learning and to promote the academic atmosphere in the programme, a PhD community has also been developed physically. The room is equipped with four computers, two printers, tables, chairs and a small refrigerator. For those who would like to have a quiet area to study, they can work in the resource centre which is in the same floor as the common room, or reserve a study room on the ninth floor. The students share information with each other and they have good relationship in their community. In addition, an on-line discussion channel is provided through a discussion board (See Appendix: Applied Linguistics Forum)

Criterion 9

Facilities and infrastructure

9	Facilities and infrastructure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9.1	The teaching and learning facilities and equipment (lecture halls, classrooms, project rooms, etc.) are adequate and updated to support education and research [1]				/			
9.2	The library and its resources are adequate and updated to support education and research [3, 4]			/				
9.3	The laboratories and equipment are adequate and updated to support education and research [1, 2]			/				
9.4	The IT facilities including e-learning infrastructure are adequate and updated to support education and research [1, 5, 6]				/			
9.5	The standards for environment, health and safety; and access for people with special needs are defined and implemented [7]		/					
	Overall opinion			/				

9.1 The teaching and learning facilities and equipment (lecture halls, classrooms, project rooms, etc.) are adequate and updated to support education and research

The class is spacious and equipped with a computer and an opaque. The PhD common room is provided for students. Quiet private study rooms are also available. Since all of the students have their own laptops, four desktop computers linked with two printers are provided for the students to search for online information. The survey is done at the end of each academic year with the students for their satisfaction of the support staff and facilities provided (See Appendix: Support Staff Quality, Facilities and Infrastructure survey result)

In addition to the computers, the department provides licensed computer programmes which can be used to analyse data such as NVivo, SPSS or various corpuses. The Centre for Research and Services (CRS) has those programmes to support research but they have not been installed in the common room.

The technicians check condition of the computers provided for the students in the common room at the beginning of every semester and if technical problems occur, students can contact the technicians. The desktop computers are scheduled to be changed every five years. In addition to the computers provided in the common room, there are more computers in the Resource Centre, which the students can use to search for the books and the journals in the Resource Centre. Four computers are available for typing. However, most students prefer to use their own laptops. Wi-Fi signals and sockets for the electronic equipment are sufficiently provided.

9.2 The library and its resources are adequate and updated to support education and research

The Resource Centre (RC) is a specialized library belonging to the School of Liberal Arts. It has been established for 30 years and contains more than 1000 books and journals in Applied Linguistics. The students can request the RC to buy the books they need by giving the names of the book to their supervisors. The RC is widely known among those who work and study in the field of Applied

Linguistics. However, if there are some journals which are not subscribed either by the RC or the main library, inter-library loan can be done through the main library. The faculty has tried to work with the main library in order to subscribe more journals in our field because the journals can be accessed online if they are subscribed through the main library. The students request for more online journals but this problem has not been solved yet because the budget too high.

9.3 The laboratories and equipment are adequate and updated to support education and research- this question is not applicable.

9.4 The IT facilities including e-learning infrastructure are adequate and updated to support education and research.

Computers and other IT facilities are well equipped. The Department also bought and created databases to support research e. g BNC, AntConc, BALD, and a research method database to facilitate students' learning. The evaluation of those facilities is provided in the progress report which the students will fill in every semester (See evaluation of facilities in the Appendix)

9.5 The standards for environment, health and safety; and access for people with special needs are defined and implemented.

People with special needs can access the building easily. There are toilets for disable people. Fire extinguishers are available on every floor.

Criterion 10

Quality Enhancement

10	Quality Enhancement	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10.1	Stakeholders' needs and feedback serve as input to curriculum design and development [1]			/				
10.2	The curriculum design and development process is established and subjected to evaluation and enhancement [2]			/				
10.3	The teaching and learning processes and student assessment are continuously reviewed and evaluated to ensure their relevance and alignment [3]				/			
10.4	Research output is used to enhance teaching and learning [4]				/			
10.5	Quality of support services and facilities (at the library, laboratory, IT facility and student services) is subjected to evaluation and enhancement [5]			/				
10.6	The stakeholder's feedback mechanisms are systematic and subjected to evaluation and enhancement [6]		/					
	Overall opinion			/				

10.1 Stakeholders' needs and feedback serve as input to curriculum design and development

The needs of stakeholders for the PhD programme are quite obvious as the PhD programme aims at producing professional researchers. The feedback which we obtained from the graduates' employers also assures us that we are on the right track. They have been satisfied with the quality of our graduates (See graduates' employers' survey). Teachers, supervisors, and the programme also use feedback obtained from students' progress reports (See sample from Sachiko), course and programme evaluation, as well as informal talk to adapt the courses and the teaching and learning styles regularly. The information from external reviewer's report is also used as inputs (See external examiner's report).

10.2 The curriculum design and development process is established and subjected to evaluation and enhancement.

It is required by OHEC that every five years, any curriculum has to go through reviews. This procedure ensures that evaluation from external reviewers is needed and it helps improve the quality of the curriculum. At the end of the semester, the course and the teaching evaluation is done based on the university regulation. The programme also run an academic interview twice a semester to collect students' feedback about the course and at the end of the academic year, the Programme Chair collects data about the programme evaluation to write a programme report.

10.3 The teaching and learning processes and student assessment are continuously reviewed and evaluated to ensure their relevance and alignment

It is required by the university that all the courses offered in each semester have to submit the teaching plan before the semester starts and to report the results after the semester ends; the report includes assessment and how the teachers evaluate the course. Programme report is conducted at the end of the academic year by the Programme Chair. The Programme Chair will analyse if there are any problems from teaching, activities provided and assessment. The analysis can provide information for further improvement.

10.4 Research output is used to enhance teaching and learning

On average, 10 references to research or academic papers by KMUTT staff are included in the reference lists for courses, implying that the research output influences the content of teaching and learning.

In addition, the teaching/ learning process in some courses includes using computer programs or applications (such as CEEM and KeyBNC) produced as part of KMUTT research for experiential learning on the PhD.

10.5 Quality of support services and facilities (at the library, laboratory, IT facility and student services) is subjected to evaluation and enhancement.

Survey is conducted every academic year on support services and facilities and at the end of the academic interview sessions (See Support Staff Quality, Facilities and Infrastructure survey result). The results are used to improve the service, e.g. the books in the library are ordered from the students' request. The computers in the common room are replaced with the new ones every five years. Students can also contact the technicians when help is needed. There are also a Learning Technology Units to provide technological support to students. The programme also invited guest lecturers to run workshops about useful programmes for students to support their data analysis, presentation, and statistical interpretation.

10.6 The stakeholder's feedback mechanisms are systematic and subjected to evaluation and enhancement

The survey to get feedback from the students on the courses provided and supervision is conducted every semester so that we can see if the students have improved and we can respond to their needs. The feedback obtained would be sent to the Programme Chair and to the people involved, for example, the teacher, the supervisor, the head of Department, etc. so that each person could use the feedback to check the action and react appropriately.

Feedback from the employers of the graduates is conducted only when we have student graduates from the programme.

Criterion 11

Output

11	Output	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11.1	The pass rates and dropout rates are established, monitored and benchmarked for improvement [1]		/					
11.2	The average time to graduate is established, monitored and benchmarked for improvement [1]		/					
11.3	Employability of graduates is established, monitored and benchmarked for improvement							
11.4	The types and quantity of research activities by students are established, monitored and benchmarked for improvement [2]			/				
11.5	The satisfaction levels of stakeholders are established, monitored and benchmarked for improvement [3]		/					
	Overall opinion		/					

11.1 The pass rates and dropout rates are established, monitored and benchmarked for improvement.

The dropout rate of the programme is quite low and all the cases appeared to be because of uncontrollable factors such as family problems and other personal issues. Students in the programme are well aware of the philosophy and the aim of the programme which is research oriented and it takes time to publish in an international journal. However, the programme is well aware of the problem so we established some measures such as setting up time lines and setting a clear schedule for meeting the supervisors to speed up graduation.

The programme prevents dropout rates by seriously screening the applicants both in terms of academic background and research mindedness. In the interview, the recruitment team makes sure that the applicants understand the programme philosophy and they share the same passion in developing themselves as professional researchers.

Figure 11.1 Pass rates and dropout rates

Academic year	Size cohort	No. of completed first degree in			No. of dropout during			
		3 years	4 years	>4 years	1 years	2 years	3 years	4 th years & Beyond
2557	3	-	-	-	2	-	-	-
2558	4	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
2559	3	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
2560	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2561	4				1			

11.2 The average time to graduate is established, monitored and benchmarked for improvement.

It appeared that most of our students spend more than 4 years to complete. We are well aware of the problem and are concerned about this issue so we established more concrete measures such as setting up time lines and fixing a clear schedule for students to meet the supervisors to speed up graduation. We also provided suggestions for students to start working on the papers as soon as possible. It is very hard to balance 'learning by publishing in a Q1 level which is very demanding' and 'speeding up graduation' by publishing in any international journals.

11.3 Employability of graduates is established, monitored and benchmarked for improvement.

Employability of graduates is not a problem. All graduates and the students have jobs and there are opportunities for work in many institutions so right now there is no need for monitoring and benchmarking for improvement. Quality of the programme is the factor that helps keep and ensure the level of graduate employability.

11.4 The types and quantity of research activities by students are established, monitored and benchmarked for improvement.

Levels and numbers of research outputs and activities have been established and monitored (See information about students' research). The programme requires students to publish internationally and Q1 is set as the target. Students are encouraged to send their paper to a Q1 journal first. Only if serious rejection is experienced, they could lower their international publication to a lower quartile. Research clusters and discussions have been set up to monitor students' learning about research and the outputs.

11.5 The satisfaction levels of stakeholders are established, monitored and benchmarked for improvement.

The programme focuses on producing qualified researchers and we made it clear in the programme profile and in the survey or interview with the graduates' employers. In the progress report of each semester, the answers are collected and we plan to make a chart to see students' improvement.