

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CONSULTANCY SERVICES FOR THE ENHANCEMENT

OF THE REGULATORY FRAMEWORK FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF OPERATIONS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GUYANA

1. BACKGROUND

1.01 The University of Guyana (UG) was established by an Act of Parliament in April 1963. Its aim was “to provide a place of education, learning and research of a standard required and expected of a University of the highest standard, and to secure the advancement of knowledge and the diffusion and extension of arts, sciences and learning throughout Guyana”¹. UG is the national University of Guyana and its major intake is from the secondary school sub-sector in the country. The main matriculation requirements are five Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate passes at one sitting or six at two sittings. Most of the programmes offered are at the undergraduate level and are primarily of four years’ duration. UG offers approximately 50 programmes across nine faculties, schools and institutes. These programmes range from certificates and diplomas to associate, bachelors’ and master’s degrees and post-graduate diplomas. Business Studies attracts the highest enrolment.

1.02 UG has two campuses, with the main campus situated at Turkeyen, approximately 8 kilometres east of the centre of the capital, Georgetown. In 2000, the second campus was established at Tain, Berbice (Region 6²), to expand services beyond Region 4 and to facilitate an expansion of access.

1.03 Total student enrolment showed an annual decline of 8% between 2005 and 2009. In 2009-2010, there was a modest increase of 4% over the previous year, but this still represented a 5% decline from the enrolment figure for 2005-2006.

2. ISSUES AND CONSTRAINTS

2.01 Despite the fact that there are a number of positive developments in programme execution and the formation of partnerships by UG, there are still a number of issues which constrain the institution from operating at its optimum level. The most significant of these relate to the university structure, staff quality and financing, but there are other issues including the communication process, both within and outside the organisation; the absence of proper records management structures; and institutional response to change, which also inhibit the efficacy of the institution’s operations and impact on the image of UG as an institution of higher learning.

2.02 The regulatory framework of UG conforms to the British model. The final decision-making body is the University Council made up of 26 members, with eight members constituting a quorum. The day-to-day operations are undertaken by the statutory offices of the Principal and Vice Chancellor, Registrar, and Bursar. These offices are responsible for overseeing all of the University’s academic and administrative operations. They are guided by a regulatory framework which was developed and adopted at the commencement of the university in 1963. This framework has undergone very few amendments since then, and as a result, does not address many of the issues which affect the operation of a modern university. These issues include intellectual property rights, programme development, changes in academic organisation and institutional assessment and evaluation, among others. In fact, since the commencement of the university, there has been no major evaluation of the administrative and regulatory

¹ University of Guyana Act, Chapter 39:02, Act 6 of 1963 amended by 5 of 1965, O.14/1965, Section 4

² Guyana is divided into ten administrative regions and Georgetown

framework to adequately position the University to perform its role in the national development process in the 21st Century.

2.03 The University, therefore, finds itself operating within a regulatory structure that is out of sync with the context in which it should now operate. Many of the systems are unclear and its administrative arrangements and managerial practices pre-date contemporary systems. These combined deficiencies lead to dysfunctional operations and inhibit efficiency in the fulfillment of the institution's contribution to national development targets.

2.04 Historically, the Government of Guyana (GOGY) has played a pivotal role in financing UG. Since 2003, government's contributions have accounted for over 90% of UG's income, with salaries and related costs accounting for approximately 70% of total recurrent expenditure. A critical issue for the university is its limited ability to raise income from tuition fees. In 1994, a cost recovery programme was instituted with a basic annual tuition fee of GYD127,000 (USD635.00) for all Bachelor's Degree programmes except dentistry, law, tourism, medicine and nursing. This has remained unchanged and the power to adjust it is only within the authority of GOGY.

2.05 Further, the cost to maintain and operate the University has outweighed the income generated, resulting in net deficits for the last three years. The high reliance on Government to meet recurrent and capital expenditure is expected to remain the same over the medium term, even though UG has outlined a number of activities for independent fund-raising over the period of its strategic plan. To date, however, no plans have been operationalised to generate funds, and despite the significant inflow of funds from GOGY, expenditure continues to exceed the provisions of the Government, suggesting that in the medium term, the institution will remain inadequately funded.

2.06 Other critical issues inhibiting the progress of the University are:

- (a) recruitment and retention of quality faculty;
- (b) inadequate faculty qualifications;
- (c) ineffectively structured systems at both the academic and administrative levels; and
- (d) ineffectively focused and targeted programmes.

2.07 These combined deficiencies lead to dysfunctional operations and inhibit efficiency in the fulfillment of the institution's contribution to national developmental targets. In addition, even though the institution has benefitted from a number of partnerships in recent times, its dysfunctional operations may be impeding it from accessing private sector resources.

3. STRATEGIC DIRECTION

3.01 Against the background of a need to re-position the institution, UG has prepared a Strategic Plan for the period 2009-2012 that has been approved by its Council and endorsed by GOGY. The Plan – **Advancing Management, Infrastructure and Quality**—has four strategic goals:

- (a) achieve higher quality teaching and learning aligned with expanded national needs, especially in science and technology;

- (b) improve institutional regulation, administration and management by statutory and structural adjustments;
- (c) broaden the financial base of the University and enhance its ability to recruit and retain high quality staff; and
- (d) improve the teaching, learning and service environments.

3.02 Each of the strategic goals is defined by a number of key initiatives/strategies. The goals have all been deemed to be critical to the future development of the University, but the goal related to institutional regulation has been identified as the one that is necessary for the undergirding of the new strategic direction which must be taken by UG. Underpinning this activity is the need for re-formulation and re-development of the structures to improve organisational efficiency and institutional effectiveness, and to meet the operational needs of the University.

4. OBJECTIVE

4.01 The overall objective of this technical assistance is to enhance UG's capacity to carry out its day-to-day operations and to enhance its capacity to undertake its role as a national tertiary education institution in the 21st Century.

5. METHODOLOGY

5.01 The Consultant(s) will perform all investigative work and analyses to realise the objectives stated above. They will use participatory and consultative methodologies in working closely with UG and other critical stakeholders of the University. These will include, but are not limited to, the Ministries of Education, Finance and Labour, senior administration, academic staff, students, financial contributors, corporate Guyana, and other external Contractors, as necessary.

5.02 The assignment will include, but is not limited to, a review of all relevant documentation including the current regulatory framework, the Strategic Plan for the period 2009-2012, all available annual reports, as well as other reports previously commissioned on the development of the University. The Consultant(s) will also examine best practices used in other universities to determine whether they can be applied in the case of UG.

5.03 The Consultant(s) will initiate discussions with major groups/individuals both within and outside of the University to establish views on the efficacy of current procedures and structures, as well as views on the usefulness of procedures and structures recommended. In addition, prior to dissemination of the draft report, a review workshop for stakeholders will be held to discuss the recommendations and gather feedback for inclusion in the report.

6. SCOPE OF SERVICE

6.01 The consultancy will assess the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the corporate systems and operational procedures of UG. It will also assess the capacity of the University to respond to the changing development needs of the country, and will recommend how the institution can best position itself to ensure its activities are relevant to those needs and can be sustained. Specifically the Consultant(s) will:

- (a) review the effectiveness and efficiency of the University in the context of its mission and current regulatory structure, and where necessary, recommend processes, systems, structures and

procedures for alignment of the University's operations with its mission and with a relevant regulatory framework;

- (b) evaluate the operational relationship between the Turkeyen and Tain campuses and recommend structures for:
 - i. enhancing the relationship; and
 - ii. establishing a unitary operational framework.
- (c) assess the budgetary and financial structures, determine the strengths and weaknesses of, and the gaps in such structures, and recommend systems for strengthening the financial operations;
- (d) review current methods of funding the University, including the fee structure, and assess the adequacy and sustainability of such methods, and make recommendations for improved financing of the University;
- (e) assess the nature of current structures for mobilising resources and make recommendations for enhancing such structures to maximize the inflow of non-governmental resources;
- (f) develop a resource mobilisation plan for the University;
- (g) assess the organisational climate for adjusting to change and advise on the steps needed to support the change management process;
- (h) develop an appropriate change management programme; and
- (i) participate in a stakeholder review workshop to share findings with and elicit feedback from key stakeholders.

6.02 The consultant(s) will also formulate a plan of action for implementation of the recommended structures and procedures, including a mechanism for the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of progress.

7. TIMING AND QUALIFICATIONS

7.01 It is anticipated that the consultancy will require a total of 200 person days over a period of 8 months. The consultancy should ideally be executed by a multi-disciplinary team with skills in organisational management and assessment, higher education leadership and planning, financing of higher education institutions, and in finance and process improvement. They will also require experience in higher education administration, specifically in activities related to institutional effectiveness and operations. A legal background is also required. Members of the team should also possess demonstrated capacity for strategic thinking as well as excellent communication and analytical skills. The team must also be proficient in the use of qualitative and quantitative organisational assessment tools. Knowledge of Guyana and the region would be an asset.

8. REPORTING

8.01 The technical proposal of the selected firm shall have already outlined a work plan and approach to the assignment, the scope and methodology, the tasks and responsibilities of the different team members, and a time schedule for the completion of the assignment. The following reports, one bound

copy each, along with an electronic copy either by email or on CD Rom, shall be submitted to the CDB, UG and GOGY at the times indicated below:

- (a) an Inception Report within ten (10) working days of commencement of the assignment;
- (b) a report six (6) months after commencement of the assignment. The report should answer the key assessment areas of the effectiveness and efficiency of the university's operations in the context of its mission and within its current regulatory framework. The Report should recommend processes, systems, structures and procedures for improving the university's operations, including a relevant regulatory framework. The report should also include an action plan for the implementation of recommendations as well as a plan for monitoring and evaluation of the recommendations. CDB, UG and GOGY will provide feedback within two (2) weeks of receipt of the draft report; and
- (c) a final report containing all of the elements required at (b) above, and incorporating the comments of CDB, UG and GOGY. This report should be presented one month after receiving feedback on the draft report from CDB, UG and GOGY.