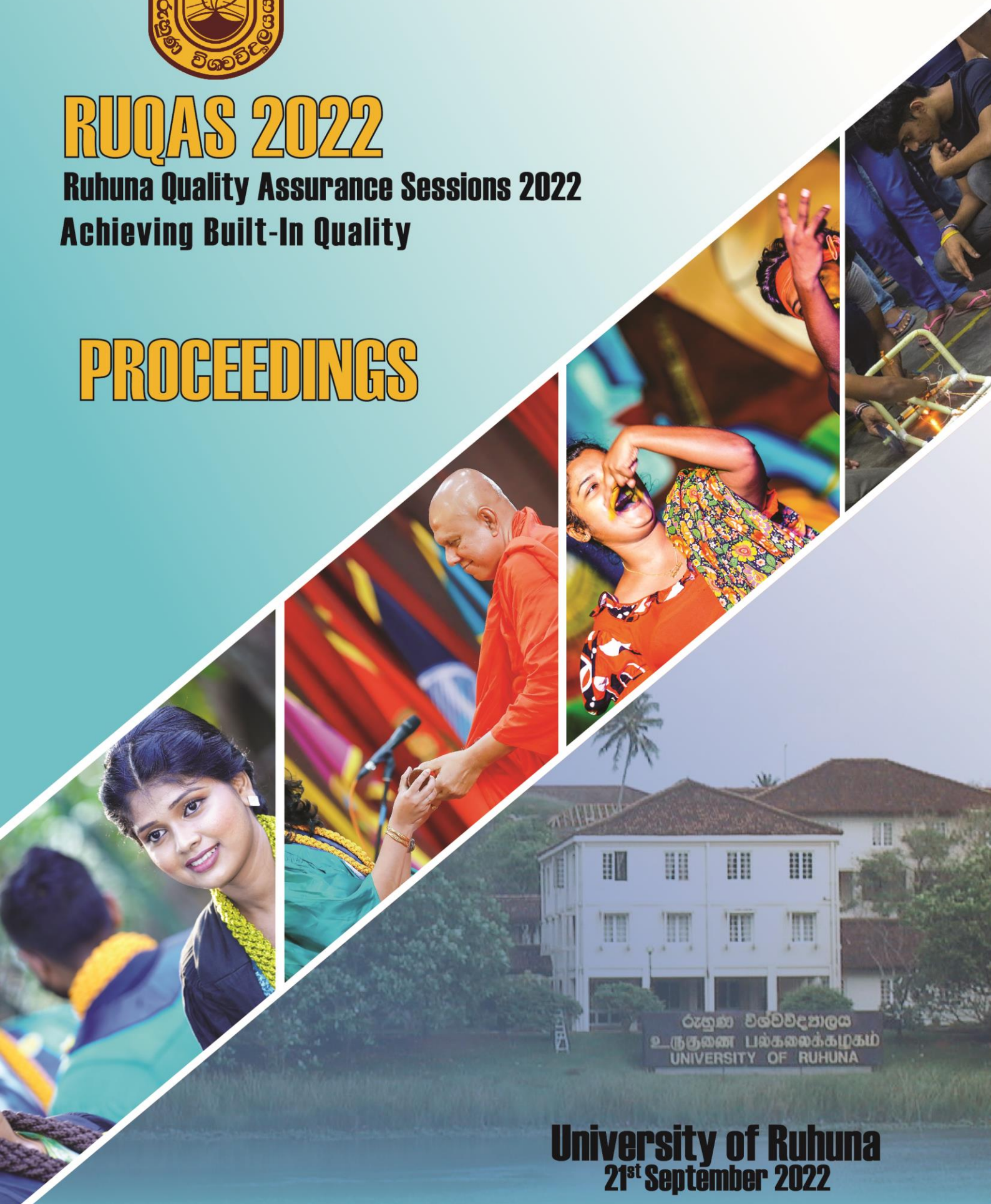
RUQAS 2022

Ruhuna Quality Assurance Sessions 2022

Achieving Built-In Quality

PROCEEDINGS



University of Ruhuna

21st September 2022

RUQAS 2022

Proceedings

Ruhuna Quality Assurance Sessions 2022

Achieving Built-In Quality

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Centre for Quality Assurance

University of Ruhuna

Sri Lanka

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Preface

The editorial board is very pleased to unveil the proceedings of the 2nd Ruhuna Quality Assurance Sessions – 2022 under the theme "Achieving Built-In Quality". At present, universities in Sri Lanka very actively engage in improving the quality of their final products, the graduates they produce, to satisfy varying societal needs. In order to produce a "Global Graduate", a university has to nurture critical thinkers, effective communicators, innovative problem solvers, and socially responsible global citizens. To produce such quality graduates, all study programmes, services, and extra-curricular activities that a university offers need to have quality built in at every level of planning and at every level of execution. As academics, administrators, and service providers it is our utmost duty and responsibility to assure such built-in quality in all university processes that we engage with. The Ruhuna QA Sessions 2022 is particularly aimed at awakening the university community of the need for such commitment and dedication.

The Ruhuna QA sessions is a platform for researchers to share their concepts, good practices, innovative models, and research outcomes in the context of improving and assuring quality in all levels of engagements. The Centre for Quality Assurance and all Internal Quality Assurance Cells of the University of Ruhuna present their quality assuring activities that were taken place during the past year, mainly to recognize and appreciate efforts by all involved, to share innovative ideas with others, and to motivate the university community to continue its quality improving engagements in the coming years. This year, the editorial board extended its invitation of call for papers beyond University of Ruhuna, to other public and private higher education institutions in the country widening the forum to share quality aspects. From the eighteen manuscripts received, eleven have been accepted after a thorough review for presentation at the sessions together with publication in the proceedings.

The editorial board extends its sincere appreciation for all authors who submitted their manuscripts in varying aspects of quality assurance to make the sessions a success. The exhaustive effort by reviewers in attending to the review process promptly and giving suggestions and comments for further improvement of manuscripts is deeply appreciated. The editorial board sincerely wishes that these proceedings will help the university community to achieve built-in quality in all aspects of services, processes and deliveries.

Editorial Board
Ruhuna Quality Assurance Sessions 2022 (RUQAS 2022)
University of Ruhuna
Sri Lanka.
21st September 2022

Message from the Vice-Chancellor, University of Ruhuna

It gives me great pleasure to send the Vice Chancellor's message to the second Ruhuna University Quality Assurance Session this year (RUQAS-2022) under the theme "Achieving Built-In Quality." As the Vice Chancellor, it is one of my duties to promote the University of Ruhuna as a Lean Management Organization, which needs continuous quality improvements. This approach relies on the use of continuous quality improvement tools to improve processes rather than quality inspections to identify deficiencies following event or process implementations. Built-in quality will identify issues as they emerge.

The specific objective to establish a Centre for Quality Assurance (CQA) at University of Ruhuna was to enhance the quality and maintained that enhanced quality in each section of the university with the ultimate goal of providing the highest quality education not only to the nation, but also for the worldwide. During that effort, CQA will follow necessary procedures to expand access to education to meet the needs of the country and align with national educational policy frameworks, ensuring justice, transparency, and equity functions and processes, contributing towards good governance, and inculcating the culture of quality enhancement among students and staff.

RUQAS is a platform that facilitates a stimulating environment for academics and administrators to share their newly created knowledge by engaging in research and futuristic ideas under the broader thematic areas of quality higher education. Conducting these kinds of sessions is important to disseminate knowledge and establish channels of communication among researchers and professionals.

I believe that the knowledge everyone shared and received from this session would be helpful for the betterment in providing the best quality higher education for future generations.

I profoundly appreciate the enormous effort of the Director, Centre for Quality Assurance, and the committee for organizing RUQAS-2022. I wish to extend my wholehearted wishes for RUQAS 2022 to be successful.

Senior Professor Sujeewa Amarasena
Vice-Chancellor
University of Ruhuna
Sri Lanka.

Message from the Director, Quality Assurance Council, University Grants Commission

Learning is a lifelong process where we gather knowledge, skills, and competencies intentionally or unintentionally. Education is a man-made, systematic process to facilitate learning by transmitting knowledge and fostering skills through purposeful activity to achieve certain aims. In this context, universities aim to provide higher education to those who have completed their secondary education and can obtain higher level of knowledge, skills, and competencies in a specific discipline, and get a degree to recognize this.

We are now living in a postmodern society that is different from modern society which is considered to have ended in the late 20th century, in the 1980s or 1990s. The value system of the postmodern society is different from the modern era. These changes are demanding skills that are different to the skills needed in the past.

Though learners who obtained their degrees through formal higher education systems are valued socially, their knowledge and skills are different from what is currently in demand. This skill mismatch refers to the gap between skills supplied by the education process and the skills in demand. This skills gap between graduates and employer expectation is a key issue in university education as its knowledge contribution is intricately linked with the economic growth of a country. In examining the contribution of higher education to economic growth, the mismatch between supply and demand, rise in graduate unemployment, and a growing trend of key qualifications can be identified as common issues in many countries.

Transforming education to address the skill gap requires serious attention and must be underpinned by strong political commitment, sound planning, and assurance of its quality based on a robust evidence base. In that sense, Sri Lanka's Higher Education system has a long way to go in order to address the skill gap. Quality Assurance serves three main purposes: commitment to maintain and improve the performance quality of higher education institutions; accountability to provide accountability to society for the use of public funds and compliance; and control to ensure that higher education institutions do what public and governments want them to do.

The Quality Assurance Council (QAC) of the University Grants Commission (UGC) has taken every step to address the skill gap issue through its QA tools and has noted some improvements in the state sector higher education. Also, it has given its recommendations to transform future educational landscape fitting the forecasted demand areas.

The University of Ruhuna has shown its interest to comply with the national QA framework better than any other university. At the recent Institutional Review conducted by the QAC, the university has

shown its competency as a higher education provider and has obtained a very good grade. During the last few years, the university has been able to increase diversity of its programmes, providing more opportunities for students to follow more demanding programmes. I hope this academic session on QA will help review the experience gathered in the past and apply them better to ensure the quality of its education provisions. I extend my best wishes to this influential academic event, Ruhuna QA Sessions 2022!

Senior Professor Tilak P. D. Gamage
Director
Quality Assurance Council
University Grants Commission
Sri Lanka.