

New varsity testing method to be reviewed

DECISION TO BE MADE BY JUNE ON USING U-NET FOR EVALUATING HIGHER EDUCATION

**SUPINDA NA MAHACHAI,
CHULEEPORN ARAMNET**
THE NATION

The Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (Onesqa) will first review the University National Education Test's testing methods before deciding by June on whether to use U-Net for evaluating higher education.

"Whether Onesqa will use U-Net as its college assessment indicator will depend on whether it was in line with the TQF (Thailand Qualifications Framework)," director Channarong Pornrunroj said yesterday after the board meeting.

Onesqa would soon discuss U-Net with the Education Ministry, Higher Education Commission and National Institute of Educational Testing Service (NIETS).

Education Minister Chaturon Chaisang said that in his initial talks with NIETS, they cautioned that they might not be able to complete the first

U-Net, which will test four subjects, in time for the start of Onesqa's fourth round of external quality assessment of education institutions next October.

He instructed NIETS to complete U-Net and then table the matter for discussion with the other agencies so all sides deemed the test acceptable.

The assessment of universities would be within the TQF's covering of five aspects – morality and ethics; knowledge; intellectual skills, interpersonal skills and responsibility; and analysis, communication and IT usage skills.

They would also take into consideration TQF by vocational fields, so the use of U-Net scores would also depend on whether the test met the demands of prospective employers.

Onesqa would announce the criteria for the fourth round, which would be held on October 1, one year ahead of the actual assessment.

If U-Net remained unclear,

THE ASSESSMENT OF UNIVERSITIES WOULD BE WITHIN THE TQF'S COVERING OF FIVE ASPECTS – MORALITY AND ETHICS; KNOWLEDGE; INTELLECTUAL SKILLS, INTERPERSONAL SKILLS AND RESPONSIBILITY; AND ANALYSIS, COMMUNICATION AND IT USAGE SKILLS.

Onesqa would use the TQF as the assessment indicator.

Onesqa also took up the concern of the Higher Education Commission that TQF should be used for colleges' internal quality assessment only, so the Onesqa board would consider this in its future meeting.

Monthon Sanguanserm Sri, the rector of Phayao University, said his university did not need U-Net, so it would not join the U-Net bandwagon because students already had so many tests to take.

Universities' instruction and graduate quality were already controlled by individual University Acts via the administration of university councils. Students would be forced to get extra tutoring for U-Net.

Mae Fah Luang University in Chiang Rai recently refused to join U-Net.

U-Net is a pre-graduation test designed to assess proficiency in four core areas, including Thai and English language for communications and the application of information and general technology in everyday life.

The other two areas are media literacy, or awareness of the media and analytical and problem-solving skills, and critical thinking. Two more areas will be added in the following semester – morality and ethics.