





**REPORT OF THE VISITATION PANEL
TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA**



December 2007



The Visitation Panel with colleagues from the University

Members of the Visitation Panel

- Sir John **Daniel**, President, Commonwealth of Learning (Chair)
- Prof. Akilagpa **Sawyer**, Secretary-General, AAU (Vice-Chair)
- Prof. Marian Ewurama **Addy**, University of Ghana
- Prof. Emmanuel **Akyeampong**, Harvard University, USA
- Mr Ato Pobee **Ampiah**, MD of Crystal Auto Ltd., Ghana
- Prof. Emeritus E.Q. **Archampong**, University of Ghana
- Prof. Uday B. **Desai**, Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay, India
- Prof. A.O. **Falase**, University of Ibadan, Nigeria
- Prof. Marlene **Hamilton**, University of the West Indies
- Prof. Bernard **King**, CBE, Principal and Vice-Chancellor,
University of Abertay Dundee, UK

Members of the Visitation Panel (continued)

- Mr. Robert Ahomka **Lindsay**, CEO
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- Prof. Daryl **Lund**, University of Wisconsin, USA
- Prof. Joseph **Nellis**, Cranfield University, UK
- Prof. Michael **Shattock**, University of London, UK
- Ms. Stamenka **Uvalić-Trumbić**, UNESCO
- Prof. Kathleen **Wicker**, Scripps College, USA

**Supported by an excellent Secretariat and Team of Facilitators
provided by the University of Ghana**

Terms of Reference

1. The **academic programmes** at the University of Ghana to determine their currency, quality and relevance to the mission of creating world-class human resources and capabilities to meet national development needs.
2. The **infrastructure and resources** currently in place and to advise on additional resources (physical, financial and human) required to enable the University adequately discharge its mandate to an internationally accepted standard.
3. The University's **administrative and governance** structures, its systems and procedures and to advise on their appropriateness and adequacy in relation to the twin goals of effectiveness and efficiency.
4. Any other matters which in the opinion of the panel, are relevant to the issues at stake.

Schedule of Work

- **One-week visit: 30 April to 4 May**
- Launch of Departmental Self-Assessments
- **One-week visit: 27 to 31 August**
- Individual visits by Prof. M. Shattock:
 - 27 May to 1 June & 25 September to 1 October
- Investigation of Financial Administrative System:
 - Messrs. J Hunt, John Klinogo and T.V. Mensah
 - 25 September to 1 October
- **Report drafting online – October/November**
- **Report submitted – 6 December**



Centre for African Wetlands

The Report

Preface

Executive Summary

1. University of Ghana: Background
2. The University of Ghana in its African and National Contexts
3. Analysis, Conclusions and Recommendations

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1. University of Ghana: Background



“My memory of the University of Ghana, from my student days in the early 1970s, is that of a serene, beautiful campus, a supportive learning environment, highly enthusiastic and dedicated professors, who took great interest in the development of individual students and inspired me to strive for outstanding academic performance.”

2. The University of Ghana in its African and National Contexts

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3.1.2 Role and Composition of Council

- Review of arrangements in South Africa, UK, Australia and New Zealand.

ANALYSIS

“In summary, current good practice calls for a governing body of between 15 to 30 members, with a lay (external) majority of about two-thirds to one third, with a significant proportion of the lay majority brought on to the governing body through a nominations committee process to ensure that there is expertise in areas such as finance, property management, legal matters, and human resource management.”

3.1.2 Role and Composition of Council

- Review of arrangements in South Africa, UK, Australia and New Zealand.

CONCLUSION

“Set against practice in countries that Ghana uses as comparators in higher education and against the emerging consensus about governance referred to earlier, the Council of the University of Ghana is unusual in three ways. First, at 15 members, it is smaller than the governing bodies of many universities of similar size, where a figure of around 25 might be more usual. Second, the Council membership is mostly nominated by external bodies or drawn from internal constituencies. Third, and most unusually, a majority of the membership is from these internal constituencies.”

3.1.2 Role and Composition of Council

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. The membership of the Council should be expanded to over 20 members and its composition should be substantially changed to enable it to play an effective role as the governing body of the University.***

- 3. The Council should have the following committees:***
 - (a) Audit***
 - (b) Finance and General Purposes;***
 - (c) Nominations;***
 - (d) Physical Development***

3.1.2 Role and Composition of Council

TO NOTE:

“The Panel believes that if, in recent years, the University of Ghana Council had had the role and composition that we recommend some of the problems that the University now faces, notably in its financial management, would have been avoided.”

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3.1 The University as a Corporate Body: Governance, Management and Administration

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3.1.3 Academic Board Structure

ANALYSIS

*“The legal membership of the Board includes all associate and full professors, all heads of 92 departments and institutes, one elected member from each department and other elected members. Membership varies around a figure of 200 as senior lecturers become associate professors and new departments are created. Attendance at meetings is around 100. **An Academic Board of this size is simply too large and unwieldy to operate efficiently.**”*

3.1.3 Academic Board Structure

CONCLUSION

*“The whole structure is overlarge, inert and indecisive, over concerned with formalities, not much concerned with the tasks of managing the University through very difficult times, and not at all concerned with strategy and thinking about the future. Its highly representative nature also means that it is defensive in character, responsive to events, and not proactive. **These judgements should not be interpreted as indicating opposition to academics playing a significant role in university governance.**”*

3.1.3 Academic Board Structure

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. The membership of the Academic Board should be reduced to between 35 and 40, its composition comprising the Vice-Chancellor, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, the Provosts and deans and equal representation from faculty boards and schools on the basis of a balance in each representation between professors and non-professors.*

- 3. The following committees should have their functions changed:*
 - (a) The Academic Board Executive Committee should be revised to create a central Policy and Executive Committee for the University and should take over the functions of the Vice-Chancellor's Management Group...*

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3.1.4 The Organisation of Management and Administration

ANALYSIS

“The structures for managing the University, undermined by the managerial reforms introduced in 2003, have allowed the University, overwhelmed by student number expansion, to slide into a poor state of organisation and effectiveness.”

3.1.4 The Organisation of Management and Administration

CONCLUSIONS

“In 2003 the then Vice-Chancellor introduced a new organisational structure...

“... Whatever the theoretical merits of this reorganisation it clearly has not worked. The Vice-Chancellor needs what in some universities is called a Chief Operating Officer, a senior officer who integrates the management of the many services that are necessary to the running of the University...

“This reorganisation is all the more necessary because there are serious operational problems in the management of the Finance Office and in the physical maintenance of the campus and its facilities.”

3.1.4 The Organisation of Management and Administration

RECOMMENDATION

6. The Council should give the Registrar the responsibilities of Chief Operating Officer with a mandate: (i) to integrate and professionalise the services necessary to the running of the University and make them work; (ii) to present a new administrative structure chart to Council and the Academic Board after consultation with the Vice-Chancellor and the Policy and Executive Committee; (iii) to introduce modern human resources practices throughout the institution so that the operating units are empowered and supported in fulfilling their functions; and (iv) to implement an effective and transparent management information system.

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3.1.5 Student Representation

ANALYSIS

“Students are not well represented on the governance of the University particularly in areas where academic matters are discussed. They are not satisfied with the constitutional role of the Dean of Students and wish to represent themselves in discussions with the university authorities.”

3.1.5 Student Representation

- UNESCO Review of Student Participation in Governance (Europe)

CONCLUSIONS

“The Panel noted the almost universal Western practice of student involvement in University governance structures because they are universities’ key stakeholders. As payment of tuition fees becomes more and more universal this pressure for taking account of students’ views will only increase.

“The major strategic committees of the University should not be dealing with detail of student examination results and staff promotions – agenda items which are cited as a reason for excluding students from these bodies.”

3.1.5 Student Representation

RECOMMENDATION

That the University introduces student representation on the Council, the Academic Board, the Faculty Boards and committees of these bodies as appropriate.

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3.1.6 Improving Student Life

ANALYSIS

(Residential Accommodation)

“the Panel found that the living conditions in some of the halls were unacceptable and a health hazard. A major problem is ‘perching’, whereby students who do not officially have rooms in a hall find their way past security and fill rooms to double their capacity.”

3.1.6 Improving Student Life

CONCLUSIONS

(Residential Accommodation)

“The Panel considers that as soon as the new student accommodation that is being built starts to come on stream, the University should centralise the management of all residences. It is essential for the academic culture of the University and the health of the student body to put an end to ‘perching.’”

3.1.6 Improving Student Life

RECOMMENDATIONS

(Residential Accommodation)

- 2. A new post of Director of Student Residences should be established, reporting to the Registrar, to take control of the management of the residences, including particularly their physical maintenance and upkeep...*

And from 3.3.11:

- 1. The halls, particularly Commonwealth Hall, should be evacuated and rehabilitated before things degenerate further.*
- 2. Thereafter, re-population of the halls should be done in a way that ensures there is no overcrowding and no 'perching.'*

3.1.6 Improving Student Life

ANALYSIS

(Dean of Students)

“The Dean of Students under the present remit is required to undertake responsibilities which involve inherent conflicts of interest: he is required to act in a disciplinary capacity, a welfare capacity and as an intermediary between the University and the Student Representative Council.”

3.1.6 Improving Student Life

CONCLUSIONS

(Dean of Students)

“the Panel recommends that the Dean of Students concentrate on the welfare role.”

“the Panel proposes that a legally qualified officer be made responsible for discipline for major offences or for appeals against discipline administered in faculties or halls of residence.”

“...formal communication between the University and the student body would be better handled by a Pro-Vice-Chancellor.”

3.1.6 Improving Student Life

RECOMMENDATIONS

(Dean of Students)

3. *The post of Dean of Students should be made full-time – possibly re-titled Director of Student Services...*
4. *The office of Dean of Students should hand over its responsibilities for student discipline to a legally qualified officer...*
5. *To better represent the interests of students to the University students should be represented appropriately in the committee structure of the Council and the Academic Board and a Pro-Vice-Chancellor should be given responsibility for communication between the student body and the University administration.*

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3.2.2.2 Balance of Science & Technology and the Humanities

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3.2.3.3 Academic Organisation

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3.2.4 Elements of Quality Assurance

3.2 The University of Ghana as an Academic Institution

Introduction

“The core obligation and defining feature of the University of Ghana will continue to be its commitment to the advancement of knowledge and the production of graduates who have developed critical thinking capacities, oral and written communication skills, an appreciation for the arts and the humanities, and a commitment to lifelong learning.”

3.2 The University of Ghana as an Academic Institution

Executive Summary

3.2.2 Student Population

3.2.2.1 Enrolment Explosion

“The enrolment explosion is the cause of many of the University’s problems. The Panel recommends reducing the intake of students; placing a limit on class size; balancing student numbers with physical infrastructure and faculty capacity; introducing stronger policy for gender parity; promoting distance learning to absorb continuing demand; and expanding Accra City Campus.”

3.2 The University of Ghana as an Academic Institution

Executive Summary

3.2.2 Student Population

3.2.2.2 Balance of Science & Technology and the Humanities

“The University does not produce adequate numbers of graduates competent in science and technology. To raise the quality of science teaching and create a better balance between Science and Technology and the Humanities, the Panel recommends: improving laboratories; including science and technology in university-wide courses for non-science majors; and granting advance credit for students from secondary schools that offer electives in the sciences.”

3.2 The University of Ghana as an Academic Institution

Executive Summary

3.2.3 The Academic Core

3.2.3.1 Faculty

*“To strengthen the **faculty**, key recommendations are: to enforce the Ph.D. requirement for appointment to lectureships; to have a proactive policy to attract and retain qualified faculty through new incentives; special support for female faculty to complete terminal degrees; and to strengthen teaching and research in various ways such as orientation programmes, teaching innovation funds, start-up research grants, and mentoring young lecturers.”*

3.2 The University of Ghana as an Academic Institution

Executive Summary

3.2.3 The Academic Core

3.2.3.2 Curriculum

*“The Panel found that in some departments the **curriculum** had not been reviewed for many years.*

Recommendations include: departmental and curriculum reviews every five years; student evaluation of courses and instructors; new interdisciplinary courses; a course on Gender and Development for all students; and the internationalisation of student experience.”

3.2 The University of Ghana as an Academic Institution

Executive Summary

3.2.3 The Academic Core

3.2.3.3 Academic Organisation

*“The Panel found that the **academic organisation** needed improvement and urges that any move to a collegiate structure be postponed at least until the other recommendations in the Report have been implemented. These include: delegating greater power to the faculties for appointments and promotions; reviewing the semester and course/credit system and its associated examinations; allowing the flexibility to hold examinations only at the end of year for courses that are not yet properly modularised; expanding intranet and internet facilities; encouraging the use of audio-visual technology in teaching; and improving lines of accountability.”*

3.2 The University of Ghana as an Academic Institution

Executive Summary

3.2.3 The Academic Core

3.2.3.4 Graduate Study

*“Concerning **graduate study** the Panel recommends: an urgent review of graduate programmes by departments for relevance and breadth of courses; more use of visiting professors and professionals from outside the University; strategic fundraising from industry for research; rethinking the graduate school administration; and creating more synergy between Institutes and Centres and academic units.”*

3.2 The University of Ghana as an Academic Institution

Executive Summary

3.2.3 The Academic Core

3.2.3.5 Examinations

*“Since the **examinations system** has borne the brunt of the excessive expansion of student numbers the Panel recommends: an in-depth study of the semester-course/credit system with a focus on examinations; that the Academic Quality Assurance Unit carry out staff development to embed a culture of quality assurance and quality enhancement; and that faculty be given full responsibility of assessing and assigning grades for courses they teach.”*

3.2 The University of Ghana as an Academic Institution

3.2.4 Elements of Quality Assurance

ANALYSIS

“It is essential that quality assurance be treated as an overarching, cross-cutting issue, driven by dedicated full-time professional and support staff. Special training will be essential for such staff, as will membership of professional associations, which will provide useful insights and networking opportunities.”

3.2 The University of Ghana as an Academic Institution

Executive Summary

3.2.4 Elements of Quality Assurance

“To mainstream elements of quality assurance the Panel recommends: strengthening the Academic Quality Assurance Unit, which should report to a new Academic Quality Curriculum, Quality and Staff Development Committee to be Chaired by a Pro-Vice Chancellor; departmental reviews every five years to be preceded by self-assessment exercises and quality audits; and annual exit surveys of the graduating class with periodic surveys of employers.”

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3.3.1 The Financial Administrative System

- Report of the Investigating Team

ANALYSIS

“The team’s view is that the financial administrative system at the University of Ghana is in a very bad state, is not providing anything approaching the services needed by the University, and needs radical change.”

3.3.1 The Financial Administrative System

- Report of the Investigating Team

CONCLUSIONS

*“The Finance Office needs new leadership as soon as possible.
The current direction of the Office’s work is wrong.”*

*“The ITS financial software can be made to serve the
University’s needs, probably serve them well, so should be
retained.”*

*“Budgeting, reporting and accounting by the Finance Office has
to be transformed by new practices, so that the University’s
financial position and prospects are understood at all levels of
management.”*

3.3.1 The Financial Administrative System

- Report of the Investigating Team

RECOMMENDATIONS

(a) The Finance Office should have new leadership at an early date. This is very likely to involve the recruitment of a new Finance Director.

(b) The ITS system should be retained, and the University should re-affirm its commitment to implementation.

(d) The Finance Office should be required to produce, in consultation with Faculties and units, a suite of standard reports on Faculty and unit finances, to help Deans and Heads. These reports should be on-line on ITS when that is rolled out, and should be produced on paper in the meanwhile.

3.3.1 The Financial Administrative System

- Report of the Investigating Team

THE GOOD NEWS...

Most institutions with such weaknesses find they are in a financial hole; but the University of Ghana has significant unspent balances – which could be harnessed to the agenda for change.

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3.3.2 ICT and Management Information Systems (ICT-MIS)

ANALYSIS and CONCLUSIONS

“Preliminary ICT is in place. Nevertheless, it is grossly inadequate for the present and envisaged scale of operation...”

“An ICT strategy had been prepared by the ICT Directorate... the strategy needs a review and up-grading because ICT technology has moved ahead in the last two years. The University should put the emphasis on wireless access since this is more efficient and affordable.”

“The Management Information System (MIS) is inadequate. Currently, MIS and ICT are separate entities which need to be integrated for efficiency. Moreover, what little is there is not effectively utilised by the University community.”

3.3.2 ICT and Management Information Systems (ICT-MIS)

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2. The Management of MIS and ICT Directorates should be integrated and their equipment made compatible.*

- 5. Extensive use of wireless technology should be made to leapfrog the use of ICT over the barrier of inadequate wired infrastructure and the lack of smart buildings.*

- 10. ICT facilities should be provided to members of staff. This helps to reduce cost and by phasing out secretaries, reduces the salary bill.*

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3.3.3 Balme Library

ANALYSIS and CONCLUSIONS

“Our overall findings indicate that the Library is in poor shape and the collection of books in the Library is inadequate for the scale at which the University operates and would like to operate. The Panel believes that the University Library requires a complete paradigm shift in its operations away from the current emphasis on books and towards e-books and online data access.”

3.3.3 Balme Library

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. The University Library should make a major paradigm shift by moving its focus of operation from books to e-books and online data access. Facilities for these should be available University-wide since this will help to alleviate the space problem within the Library.*
- 4. The operations of all the unit libraries should be integrated with the Balme Library, so as to avoid duplication and enhance efficiency.*
- 5. Library staff should undergo continuous training, particularly in the use of e-learning.*

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3.3.4 Human Resources

ANALYSIS and CONCLUSIONS

“The University of Ghana as an organisation does not have an up-to-date Staff Establishment; and most of the schedules of duties (job descriptions) are also out of date for staff at all levels. Performance management has therefore been compromised.”

“A look at the Staff Establishment showed that 75% of the human resources of the University are support staff and most of their functions are not directly related to the core business of the University. This obviously does not allow the University to allocate more resources to the teaching and research which are its primary functions.”

3.3.4 Human Resources

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2. The Manpower Audit now underway should be completed by July 2008. The ultimate aim of the University should be to have an efficient, cost-effective, slim personnel force equipped with modern facilities to perform their duties.*
- 3. The University should negotiate with the Government the possibility of outsourcing some non-core services such as waste disposal, office cleaning, grounds and security...*
- 4. The Government should make such savings available to the University to fund the expansion and modernisation of areas like the ICT, quality assurance, science laboratories, teaching aids etc.*

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3.3.5 Water, Electricity and Sewerage

ANALYSIS

*“Since the University budget does not contain allocations for payment for **electricity and water consumption**, there is a mistaken belief that the University does not pay for them.”*

“New building developments in the University are planned and executed without due consideration for water and electricity supply.”

*“**Water** available per day has been estimated at 14 litres per day – the average daily allocation of water per person in Africa is 47 litres.”*

*“On **electricity**, it has been reported that “a recent load monitoring exercise showed that 11 sub-stations are over-loaded”.*

3.3.5 Water, Electricity and Sewerage

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. An infrastructural master plan has become mandatory to guide future developments.*
- 2. Expansion of sewerage, water and electricity infrastructure and an increase in supply of water and electricity is urgently required.*
- 5. New building developments must not commence without a thorough examination of the availability of water, electricity supply and sewage disposal.*

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3.3.6 Security

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. *The Panel recommends:*
 - (a) *Fencing of core parts of the campus.*
 - (b) *Improving street lighting.*
 - (c) *Providing adequate facilities and good pay for security staff. These should include boots, vehicles, motorcycles, and communication facilities.*
 - (d) *Training the staff on security duties. This should include psychology of handling of young people.*
 - (e) *Improving intelligence gathering. An efficient security unit relies on a good intelligence unit and good crime investigating capability.*

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3.3.8 Epidemics

ANALYSIS

“The Panel was told that chicken pox occurs every first semester among students.

“We were also concerned about overcrowding in the residential facilities because of the risk of cholera and the absence of any plan for dealing with a cholera epidemic, should one break out.”

3.3.8 Epidemics

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. An isolation ward for infectious diseases is urgently required.*
- 2. Voluntary testing for HIV should be implemented.*
- 3. Since epidemics are frequent, the hospital must work out a strategy for dealing with them.*
- 4. The planned new Hospital administrative block building should be constructed without delay.*
- 5. The University plan to accommodate 6,000 more students in new housing facilities should also be pursued with vigour as this will reduce pressure on the existing facilities and reduce health risks.*

3. Analysis, Conclusions and Recommendations

3.3 Infrastructure and Resources

3.3.1 The Financial Administrative System
Report of the Investigating Team

3.3.2 ICT and Management Information Systems (ICT-MIS)

3.3.3 Balme Library

3.3.4 Human Resources

3.3.5 Water, Electricity and Sewerage

3.3.6 Security

3.3.7 Health Service

3.3.8 Epidemics

3.3.9 Counselling and Psychiatric Illness

3.3.10 Gender Issues

3.3.11 Halls and Hostels

3.3.12 Academic Infrastructure

3.3.10 Gender Issues

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. Provide housing for new junior women faculty and women managers to assist them in carrying out their responsibilities more effectively. Flats attached to halls of residence could, for example, be set aside exclusively for female faculty and managers.*
- 2. Establish a nursery and an after-school day care centre on campus, under private management but with the University providing the necessary environment for such an enterprise to succeed.*

3. Analysis, Conclusions and Recommendations

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RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. Provide/maintain new/existing physical facilities to support teaching and learning.*
- 2. Reduce the number of students to fit the facilities available.*
- 3. Improve teaching infrastructure and introduce audio-visual aids, ICT facilities and public address systems especially in the large lecture halls.*







Thank you and best wishes for success

