



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
HON. ASERI RADRODRO
MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

FRIDAY 14 MARCH 2025

13/2025

WRITTEN QUESTION

Hon. Rinesh Sharma to ask the Minister for Education – In November 2023, the Higher Education Commission Fiji appointed an external review committee to assess three universities. Can the Minister update Parliament on the committee’s activities and findings to date.

Response :

The External Review Committee (ERC) is a body established by the Higher Education Commission under the Higher Education Act 2008, tasked with reviewing universities in Fiji and assessing the quality of their programs against Quality Assurance Standards.

Its primary objectives include evaluating the overall quality of education and research, governance and administration effectiveness, academic and support services, and providing recommendations to improve the standards and overall quality of our institutions.

The Commission appointed five members to ERC on 30th May 2024 after being re-advertised in March 2024. On Friday 24 May, 2024, I assured this august house that upon the conclusion of the stakeholder consultations, the ERC will meticulously synthesize the gathered insights into a comprehensive report which would be finalized by 30th October 2024.

To date, the ERC has completed its initial report, which has highlighted several findings. However, some areas in the report remain ambiguous and require further clarification.

There has been a degree of disagreement amongst the ERC members regarding some of the recommendations given, questioning the integrity of certain findings. This has led to concerns about the objectivity of the review process.

To address these issues and ensure a thorough and impartial evaluation, an independent consultant will be engaged to audit the review process, including financial management and decision-making, to ensure fairness and accountability.

The final report, which will address the grey areas and incorporate the audit findings, is expected to be ready by May 2025. Once finalized, the report will be shared with relevant stakeholders, including Parliament, to ensure transparency and informed decision-making moving forward.

-ENDS-