Executive Summary
Self-Assessment Report (SAR) of Program MA Mass Communication
Directorate of Quality Enhancement (DQE)
Virtual University of Pakistan

The Virtual University of Pakistan established in 2002 with the aim to provide extremely affordable world class education to aspiring students all over the country regardless of their physical location. The University also seeks to alleviate the lack of capacity in the existing universities while simultaneously tackling the acute shortage of qualified professors in the country using free-to-air satellite television broadcasts and the Internet. To pursue this aim, the department of Mass Communication is designated to initiate and implement Self-Assessment process designed by Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) of HEC. The current document summarizes the findings of self-assessment process of MA Mass Communication program.

The department is committed to producing graduates having knowledge about mass communication and who would understand and value the strongly needed morals of human rights, social justice, equality and tolerance to deal with the rapidly changing and diverse world. The department follows its mission in all of its courses and areas of specialization that offered at both Masters and Bachelors levels. The department feels satisfied upon completion of the following list of tasks:

1. Development of *Self-Assessment Report (SAR)* by Program Team for **MA Mass Communication** program

2. Conduct of critical review and submission of *Assessment Report (AR)* by Assessment Team for MA Mass Communication program

3. Development of *Rectification Plan* by Head of Department

4. The tasks were completed according to the set methodology through Program and Assessment Teams nominated by the Rector on the recommendation of the Department.

Methodology

The following methodology is adopted to complete the whole SAR cycle:

1. HOD of the concerned department nominated a program team (PT) for the current program. The composition of PT is given below. DQE also arranged initial orientation and training sessions for all PT members:

Table 1: Program Team

Sr.#	Name	Designation
1.	Ms. Aisha M. Din (Coordinator)	Lecturer (Department of Mass Communication)
2.	Ms. Munazza Qamar	Instructor (Department of Mass Communication)

2. All the relevant material such as SAR manual, survey forms, etc. was provided to PT.

3. Continuous support, guidance, and feedback were provided to PT members to prepare the SAR for said program.

4. After completion and submission of the final SAR by PT, the Rector on the recommendation of the HOD approved the formation of an Assessment Team (AT) for critical appraisal of program and SAR. It is also ensured that a Subject Specialist from other institution become part of this team. The composition of AT is given below:

Table 2: Assessment Team

Sr.#	Name	Designation
1.	Mr. Rana Faizan Ali	Assistant Professor & Head of Department, School of Media & Mass Communication, Beaconhouse National University, Lahore
2.	Ms. Nadia Saleem,	Lecturer (Department of Mass Communication)

5. The SAR developed by PT was forwarded to AT for critical review.

6. After completion of critical review and assessment of the SAR, AT members visited the department and had a meeting with PT.

7. After the visit, AT submitted a report and feedback form (Rubric Form) to DQE.

8. DQE forwarded the observations & findings of AT report to the Head of Department for developing a rectification plan.

9. DQE will now monitor implementation of Rectification Plan.

Parameters for the SAR:

Following eight (8) criteria prescribed by the HEC are used to develop SAR:

- Criterion 1: Program Mission, Objectives and Outcomes Criterion
- Criterion 2: Curriculum Design and Organization Criterion
- Criterion 3: Laboratory and Computing Facility Criterion
- Criterion 4: Student Support and Advising Criterion
- Criterion 5: Process Control Criterion
- Criterion 6: Faculty Criterion
- Criterion 7: Institutional Facilities Criterion
- Criterion 8: Institutional Support

Key Findings of the SAR:

Following is the summary of the key SAR findings:

Academic Observations:

1. HEC is going to phase out two years M.A/M.Sc. in 2020, so the Virtual University of Pakistan must upgrade 2 Years M.Sc. program with a vision to continue these courses in MS.

2. It is suggested that offering order of few courses is inappropriate and there is a need to swap those courses. The details of those courses are available in the AT report.

3. A course related to 'Social Media' should be added in the study scheme.

4. There is a proposal that students of MA. Mass Communication should also be offered to do an internship in VTV for enhancing their practical know-how.

5. Currently, no Ph.D. faculty member available in the department and their presence must be ensured so that current faculty members can seek guidance.

6. Formal career counseling is absent. For the career counseling of student's seminars and workshops should be organized at least once in the semester and experts from industries and organizations should be invited.

7. The faculty is overburden and lack of time for research activities is identified as a main weak area of the job description of faculty associated with the Virtual University of Pakistan.

8. The physical library is needed to fulfill the academic and scholarly needs of students and faculty members as well. Links to the different databases in the digital library need to be functional. There is dire need to develop a database of e-books (in some cases these books are available online free of cost).

9. Being a media teacher, it is very important to keep an eye on the current affairs, and in this regard, networking department is required to unblock the current affairs programs that are online available.

Conclusion and Recommendations:

While analyzing Criteria Referenced Self-Assessment, it has been found that performance of the department is satisfactory but still there are some areas in need of improvement. It is reflected in terms of moderate overall assessment score (70/100) reported by AT. This average score demands that the rectification plan should be implemented immediately.

In the report, AT has identified some need improvement areas. Most of the criteria are rated low and become a major reason for this moderate score. The criteria rated low are: Criterion 6 (Faculty) and Criterion # 8 (Institutional Support). The early response of AT echoed that they have significant concerns about the absence of any incentive plan to retain quality faculty, non-availability of enough Ph.D. faculty members, least time for research and limited access to digital resources and physical library.

The Need Improvement areas identified during self-assessment process have been reported to the Head of respective Department, and the particular rectifications have also been requested. DQE will follow up the implementation plan as per the specific time-frame.

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Director DQE:　　　　_____

The Rector:　　　　_____