

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

The Virtual University of Pakistan established in 2002 with aim to provide extremely affordable world class education to aspiring students all over the country regardless of their physical location by alleviating 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 Management Sciences is designated to initiate and implement Self-Assessment process designed by Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) of HEC. The department is committed to produce graduates who can lead organizations towards success and social environmental responsibilities in global market place. Department follows its vision in all of its courses and specializations that are being offered at both Masters' and Bachelors' levels. The department feels contentment on the completion of following list of tasks.

1. Development of **Self-Assessment Report (SAR)** by Program Team for BS (Mass Communication) program
2. Conduction of critical review and submission of **Assessment Report (AR)** by Assessment Team for BS (Mass Communication) program
3. Development of **Rectification Plan** by Head of Department

The tasks were completed according to set methodology through Program Teams and Assessment Teams nominated by DQE.

Methodology

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

1. A Program Team (PT) was nominated for the program. Initial orientation and training sessions for all members were arranged by DQE. The formation of PT is given in Table 1:

Table 1: Program Team

Sr.#	Name	Designation
1.	Ms. Aisha Muhammad Din	Lecturer (Mass Communication)
2.	Ms. Saba Sadiq	Instructor (Mass Communication)
3.	Ms. Zakia Mushtaq	Lecturer (English)

2. All the relevant material such as SAR manual, different 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.

- After completion and submission of the final SAR from PT, an Assessment Team (AT) was formulated by Director DQE with the consent of worthy Rector and a Subject Specialist & Expert from outside was also included. The formation of PT is given in Table 2:

Table 2: Assessment Team

Sr.#	Name	Designation
1.	Ms Javeria Nazeer	Lecturer (Mass Communication - Lahore Garrison University)
2.	Ms Amna Amin	Instructor (Mass Communication)
3.	Ms Hira Farooq	Instructor (Mass Communication)

- The SAR developed by PT was forwarded to AT for the purpose of critical review.
- After completion of critical review and assessment of the SAR, AT team members were made a visit in the department and hold a meeting with PT.
- After the visit, AT submitted a report and feedback form (Rubric Form) to DQE.
- DQE forwarded the observations & findings of AT report to the Head of Department for developing a rectification plan.
- DQE would now monitor implementation of Rectification Plan.

Parameters for the SAR:

The SAR is prepared on the following eight (8) criteria prescribed by the HEC:

- 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:

- Department has energetic, innovative and self-motivated faculty but is lacking highly qualified senior PhDs subject specialist faculty and this nonexistence of senior faculty resultantly reflects in the form of limited in-depth theoretical expertise in research activities.
- Department has the deficiency of updated books and physical library relevant to their programs. E-book, E-Journal access/facility should be provided to the faculty members as current access is very limited.

3. Lacking labs with media tools at VU owned and Private Campuses (PVC) for the students of mass communication. Due to this reason, the aim of practical exposure and development of different skills which are the essence of this degree program cannot be achieved.
4. Few courses especially in fifth semester offered by VU in BS Mass communication are not according to HEC prescribed curriculum. Spilt of courses in different semesters must be made in a manner that it must create coherence with actual study program.

Administrative Observations:

1. Due to the fact that Virtual University is distance learning, IT-based University so the phenomenon for evaluation needs to be revised.
2. The number of campus-based activities for the students must be increased so that the students become able to cope new challenges of media.
3. There is intensive demand for semester break.
4. Non-existence of proper faculty offices & inappropriate office environment is hitting unfavorably and affecting the motivation level of faculty.
5. Shortage of faculty members which results in over burdening of existing faculty members.

Conclusion and Recommendations:

While analyzing Criteria Referenced Self-Assessment, it has been observed that Department's performance is very good (80/100 – overall assessment score reported by AT) but there are few gray areas due to which the department's performance is question marked by assessment team. The low scores are in Criterion # 2 (Curriculum Design & Organization), Criterion # 6 (Faculty) and Criterion # 8 (Institutional Support). The low scores reflect that there is need to revisit curriculum or reallocation of courses in different semesters, ease pressure on overburden faculty members, and provide sufficient institutional support for faculty as well as for students. It is necessary that these criteria should be addressed immediately and evaluated periodically. One most important aspect emphasized by AT is the fact that separate identity must be provided to the department and along this the department must be led by an individual as a department head who is a PhD or senior subject specialist faculty member. Lack of library, privacy, inappropriate office environment and nonexistence of faculty offices are other serious impediments that need to be rectified.

The deficient areas identified during SAR process have been reported to the Head of Department of respective department and rectification for each has also been suggested. DQE will follow up the implementation plan as per time frame given by DQE.

Rizwan Saleem Sandhu
Deputy Director, DQE

Director QEC: _____

Worthy Rector: _____