

Executive Summary
Self-Assessment Report (SAR) of Program
Associate Degree of Database Management System
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 aimed 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 Computer Sciences is designated to initiate and implement the Self-Assessment process designed by Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) of HEC. The current document summarizes the findings of self-assessment process of Associate Degree program in Database Management System.

The department is committed to producing graduates who can lead organizations towards success and prosperity in the global marketplace. The department follows its vision 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. The development of **Self-Assessment Report (SAR)** by a Program Team constituted for **Associate Degree of Database Management System**.
2. The conduct of critical review and submission of **Assessment Report (AR)** by an Assessment Team for Associate Degree of Database Management System.
3. Development of a **Rectification Plan** by Head of Department

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

Table 1: Program Team

Sr.#	Name	Designation
1.	Ms. Amna Bibi (Coordinator)	Lecturer (Department of Computer Sciences)
2.	Ms. Umra Naeem	Instructor (Department of Computer Sciences)

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, an Assessment Team (AT) was formed by the Rector on the recommendation of the Department. Accordingly, a Subject Specialist from other institution was also included. The composition of AT is given below:

Table 2: Assessment Team

Sr.#	Name	Designation
1.	Dr. Muhammad Aslam,	Associate Professor, Department of Computer Science & Engineering, University of Engineering & Technology, Lahore
2.	Mr. Muhammad Summair Raza	Assistant Professor (Department of Computer Science)

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:

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:

1. Currently, the program's mission is missing in the SAR document. There is a need to formulate and publish the mission statement, learning objectives and outcomes of the program.
2. Department performance in terms of scholarly contribution of the faculty through publication is not encouraging.

3. The PT has not followed the quality assessment manual of HEC appropriately. The contents of the report are mismatched and incorrectly presented.
4. The mapping of learning objectives and outcomes is inconsistent.
5. Physical inspection of infrastructure and facilities at VU campuses is not possible, therefore VU should adopt a mechanism of periodic audits and make available the audit reports to AT as an evidence.
6. One of the important support services a University must provide to students is the professional counseling which is missing at VU.
7. For Skype or TeamViewer sessions, separate infrastructure is suggested to make sessions more conducive for learning.
8. Funding from HEC is available for establishing physical as well digital libraries. The University must pursue and present its case to HEC as currently there is a shortage of reference books in the digital library. Department has the deficiency of e-resources for the students and faculty.
9. According to AT, the required formal career counseling for students is not sufficient. For career counseling of students, seminars and workshops should be organized at least once in a semester and experts from industries and organizations should be invited for live interaction and discussion.
10. Shortage of Ph.D. faculty has a negative impact on the performance of the department.
11. There is a need for devising a standard Faculty promotion policy and providing them with job security (regularization) as well as other benefits as per rules of public sector Universities.
12. Faculty offices should be provided for high productivity.

Conclusion and Recommendations:

While analyzing the Rubric proforma provided by HEC for Self-Assessment, it has been found that performance of the department is relatively good. AT awarded overall assessment score (78/100).

In the report, need improvement areas are identified by AT. The criterion # 8 is rated low and becomes a major reason for this score. The criterion is about 'Institutional Support' which is about the retention of quality faculty members. The response of AT reflected that they are not satisfied with the existing incentive plan to retain quality faculty. The shortage of Ph.D. faculty members, the contribution of faculty members for scholarly activities and the limited access to digital resources and physical library are other areas about which AT has shown concerns.

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

Prepared by:

Mubashar Majeed Qadri
Manager, QA

Reviewed by:

Rizwan Saleem Sandhu
Deputy Director, DQE

Director DQE:

The Rector:
