

Executive Summary
Self-Assessment Report (SAR) of Program MIT
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 Computer 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 develop computer applications/processes to enhance efficiency & effectiveness of organizations to lead 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 MIT program
2. Conduction of critical review and submission of **Assessment Report (AR)** by Assessment Team for MIT 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.	Mr. Shakeel Saeed (Coordinator)	Instructor (Computer Science)
2.	Ms. Noureen Hameed	Instructor (Computer Science)
3.	Mr. Muhammad Zafar Ullah	Instructor (Computer Science)

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.
4. 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.	Prof. Dr. Muaz A. Niazi	ORIC, Bahria University, Islamabad
2.	Mr. Israr Ullah	Lecturer, CS Department, VU
3.	Mr. Summair Raza	Instructor, CS Department, VU

5. The SAR developed by PT was forwarded to AT for the purpose of critical review.
6. 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.
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 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:

1. Mission statements of the department and program are not aligned with Vision of the University and also not available on University's official website. Similar is the case of program objectives and outcomes of program as well as of each courses are not aligned.
2. Computer Labs at virtual campuses are a basic requirement and necessary measures need to be taken to ensure that these Labs are well equipped in all campuses.
3. The stated objectives of the program are met via assignments whereas assignments are given very low weight in the grading scheme. Moreover, in distance learning, most of the students tend to rely on cheating/copying. Keeping this in mind, there is a need to increase the assignment weightage in the grading scheme along with measures to control cheating/copying.

4. 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.
5. There should be a proper way of interaction between students and teachers by arranging proper counseling and tutorial programmes.

Administrative Observations:

1. The research and development policy for faculty members may encourage their active participation in research activities, publication across variety of panels, co-curricular events, and capacity building, etc. to keep them update with the rapid knowledge generation in contemporary scenario.
2. There are no collaborative initiatives with reputed National and International universities for exchanging academic resources helpful both for students and faculty.
3. Due to the fact that Virtual University is distance learning, IT-based University so the phenomenon for evaluation needs to be revised.
4. There is need to maintain a database of Employers via Alumni student serving in various organizations to get their feedback which will be helpful in program assessment and further improvement.
5. Non-existence of proper faculty offices & inappropriate office environment (lighting, noise, too much movement, interruption, lack of privacy etc.) is hitting unfavorably and dropping the motivation level of faculty. To conduct Skype sessions or research activities such environment is great barrier.
6. Demotivated and less satisfied faculty due to fewer opportunities for career development and professional expertise is not encouraging for any university.

Conclusion and Recommendations:

While analyzing Criteria Referenced Self-Assessment, it has been observed that Department's performance is satisfactory but there are few gray areas due to which the department's is perceived as underperformed. This perception is reflected in terms of moderate overall assessment score (50/100) reported by AT. This low score is due to unsatisfactory performance in almost all Criteria. The low score reflects that each criterion is not periodically evaluated and it is necessary that these problems in each criterion should be addressed immediately. Ineffective academic assessment techniques, insufficient lab facilities at campuses, lack of library, demotivated faculty, 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: _____