

Executive Summary
Self-Assessment Report (SAR) of
Program Master of Public Administration (MPA)
Directorate of Quality Enhancement (DQE)
Virtual University of Pakistan

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 locations 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 Public Administration 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 Master of Public Administration (MPA) program.

The department is committed to produce graduates who can lead both public and private organizations towards success and prosperity in the global market-place. The department follows its vision in all of its courses and areas of specialization 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 MPA program
2. Conduct of critical review and submission of **Assessment Report (AR)** by Assessment Team for MPA program
3. Development of **Rectification Plan** by Head of Department

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

Methodology

The methodology adopted to complete the whole SAR cycle is described below:

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

Table 1: Program Team

| Sr.# | Name | Designation |
|-------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. | Ms. Aasia Rasheed (Coordinator) | Lecturer (HRM/MGT/PA) |
| 2. | Mr. Muhammad Asad Ahmed | Instructor (HRM/MGT/PA) |
| 3. | Ms. Ayesha Tariq | Instructor (HRM/MGT/PA) |

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 SAR for the said program.
4. After completion and submission of the final SAR by PT, an Assessment Team (AT) was formed by the Rector upon recommendation of the Department. Accordingly, a Subject Specialist from other institution was also included. The composition of AT is given below in Table 2:

Table 2: Assessment Team

| Sr.# | Name | Designation |
|------|------------------------|---|
| 1. | Ms Seemi Waheed | Assistant Professor, University of Management and Technology, Lahore |
| 2. | Dr. Syed Salman Hassan | Assistant Professor (Management Sciences), Virtual University of Pakistan |
| 3. | Ms. Mariam Ahmad | Lecturer (Management Sciences), Virtual University of Pakistan |

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 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 findings of SAR:

Academic Observations:

1. The tools and assessment mechanism to measure objectives and learning outcomes need to be redesigned for inculcating analytical and research skills with reference to Public Administration among students.

- The University is deficient in offering enough number of core courses specific to public administration. It is reflected in the approved HEC curriculum.

| Program MPA 2 Years | Core Courses | | Elective Courses | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| | Public Administration | Basic Management | General Education | Internship/Project |
| As Per VU Curriculum | 3 | 6 | 14 | 2 (Choose any one among both) |
| Total | 9 | | 15 | |
| As per UGC Curriculum | 12 | | 12 | |

- The courses like Public Finance, Governance, Local Government Structures, and Public Management & Organizations etc. need be developed in this degree program to make it more comprehensive and relevant. The course of Entrepreneurship should not be offered in this degree program as it is not included in HEC approved curriculum of MPA.
- There are no elective courses offered in this degree program. Elective courses should be offered in this degree program.
- The specializations are not being offered in this program. The University may offer different areas of specialization relevant to Public Administration in this degree program and can offer specialization courses as elective courses in it.
- Presently, there is only one PhD faculty member. It is required to hire more PhDs from relevant domain of Public Administration. There is also shortage of faculty members of Public Administration.
- This degree program should be converted to 18 years program of Public Administration by enriching its study scheme and by offering new research based courses as Virtual University is already offering 4 years (BS) degree program in Public Administration.
- There is shortage of reference books in digital library. The department has the deficiency of e-resources for the students and faculty.

Administrative Observations:

- Faculty development incentives are not sufficient; for instance, no proper mechanism is available to retain quality faculty members.
- No evidence is available which can predict periodic review or revision of various policies about admission criteria, study scheme, faculty assessment or program evaluation.
- Insufficient research activities are designed for students as well for faculty. Time constraint is also reported as a major factor for this unsatisfactory research performance.

Conclusion and Recommendations:

While analyzing Criteria Referenced Self-Assessment, it has been found that performance of the department is unsatisfactory and there are many gray areas due to which the department's performance is under question. It is reflected in terms of overall low assessment score (47/100) reported by AT. This low score demands that the rectification plan should be implemented immediately.

In the report, need improvement areas are identified by AT in all criteria as all criteria are rated very low. The early response of AT demands revision of curriculum, study scheme and learning objectives/outcomes of current program as well as courses. The other most important aspects emphasized by AT are lack of scholarly activities, insufficient digital library access, and demand for semester break as these aspects are serious impediments that need to be rectified.

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

Rizwan Saleem Sandhu
Deputy Director, DQE

Advisor QEC: _____

The Rector: _____