

MINUTES OF THE FOURTEENTH MEETING OF QUALITY ENHANCEMENT CELLS

1 A two day meeting of Heads of Quality Enhancement Cells was held on 12-13 March, 2010 at HEC Regional Center, Peshawar wherein 25 QECs provided updates regarding the Self Assessment Process being undertaken in the universities.

1.1 The following attended:

1. Prof. Dr. Azam Ali Khwaja, Managing Director (QAA), HEC, Islamabad
2. Dr. M. Daud Awan, Director QEC, Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad
3. Air Commodore (R) Muhammad Ismail, Director Quality Assurance, National University of Science and Technology, Rawalpindi
4. Dr. Anwar- ul- Hassan, Director QEC, Agriculture University, Faisalabad
5. Dr. Mohammed Sajiddin, Director QEC, University of Karachi, Karachi
6. Dr. M. Taimur Khan, Director QEC, University of Peshawar, Peshawar
7. Dr. Muhammad Sarwar Ahmed, Director QEC, Mirpur University of Science and Technology, Mirpur. AJ&K.
8. Dr. Aamir Ijaz, Director QEC, University of Punjab, Lahore
9. Dr. Faisal Ghani Siddiqui, Director QEC, Liaquat University of Medical & Health Sciences, Jamshoro
10. Dr. Arif Aga, Director QEC, University of Balochistan, Quetta
11. Dr. Abdul Wahid Usmani, Director QEC, Dow University of Health Sciences Karachi
12. Prof. Dr. M. Afzal, Director QEC, NWFP Agriculture University, Peshawar
13. Dr. Iftikhar Ahmad Khan , Director QEC, NWFP University of Engineering and Technology, Peshawar
14. Dr. Abdul Sami Qureshi, Director QEC, Mehran University of Engineering & Technology, Jamshoro
15. Dr. Riaz Hassan, Director QEC, National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad
16. Prof. Dr. Riaz Ahmad, Director QEC, University of Arid Agriculture, Rawalpindi
17. Engr. Riasat Ali Kubar, Director QEC, Sindh Agriculture University, Tandojam
18. Mr. Sarfaraz Pirzada, Director QEC, COMSATS Institute of Information Technology, Islamabad
19. Ms. Iram Sohail, Director QEC, Government College University, Lahore
20. Dr. Muhammad Qasim, Director QEC, Government College University, Faisalabad
21. Dr. Rafique Baloch, Director QEC, Balochistan University of Information Technology and Management Sciences, Quetta
22. Syed Abbas Hassan Gilani, Deputy Director QEC, Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan
23. Mr. Nasrullah Channa, Deputy Director QEC, Quaid-e-Awam University of Engineering, Science & Technology, Nawabshah
24. Ms. Fareena Iqbal, Deputy Director QEC, Fatima Jinnah Women University, Rawalpindi
25. Ms. Asiyah Bukhari, Deputy Director QEC, Kohat University of Science and Technology, Kohat

26. Ms. Fouzia Bangash, Assistant Director QEC, NWFP Agriculture University, Peshawar
 27. Ms. Mahwish Asmatullah, Assistant Director QEC, FRONTIER Women University, Peshawar
 28. Ms. Madiha Ilyas, Assistant Director QEC, FRONTIER Women University, Peshawar
 29. Mr. Jabbar Ahmad Khan, Data Analyst, University of Engineering & Technology, Lahore
 30. Ms. Fakiha Zafar, Program Coordinator (QAA), HEC, Islamabad
 31. Ms. Tahreem Aslam, Training Coordinator (QAA), HEC, Islamabad
 32. Mr. Amjad Hussain, Office Manager (QAA), HEC, Islamabad
- 1.2 Representatives from Quaid – i- Azam University, Islamabad; University of Sargodha; University of Sindh, Jamshoro; and University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Lahore did not attend the meeting while University of Engineering & Technology, Lahore didn't make presentation during the meeting.
- 2 Proceedings of the meeting started with recitation from Holy Quran, followed by brief introduction of the participants. The Managing Director, Prof. Dr. Azam Ali Khwaja chaired the meeting.
- 2.1 Dr. Azam Ali Khwaja, Managing Director (QAA) welcomed all the participants. He informed that the QECs family has now been extended to 62 universities. This includes 16 private universities also. Soon all universities of the country would be establishing the Quality Enhancement Cells. He stressed upon improving the quality of education and mentioned that in the recent meeting of Vice Chancellors, the sole agenda was discussion on the quality of education.
- He expressed his concern at the slow progress of some QECs and shared the cumulative data on targets achieved. He informed that the National Quality Assurance Committee now requires QAA to regularly submit the progress of the QECs through a scorecard presentation and on this basis rating is to be assigned to the QECs. At the same time compliance with quality standards by the universities would now be a prerequisite for consideration of any PC-I. Amount of recurring grant to be disbursed would also be dependent on quality standards.
- 2.2 The Executive Director HEC addressed the participants of the meeting through video conferencing. He said that the universities are responsible for providing quality education and each QEC has to play its role in achieving this objective. Quality education now demands evidence. We desire that the claim of quality should be substantiated and it should be quantifiable. The sense of accountability needs to be developed as public money is being invested. Implementation of quality criteria would now be prerequisite for disbursement of funds to the universities. Considering the international best practices an important role has been assigned to all of you. It is not about intrusion of anyone into your affairs rather intrusion of yourself in to your affairs to judge and validate.

He said that this meeting should not only be a forum to share issues and problems but the solutions to those problems also need to be thrashed out. If needed, we will enhance the scope of this forum by inviting experts to discuss issues dealing with quality and expressed the hope that QECs should obtain memberships of the international bodies.

2.2.1 Responding to a query raised by Ms. Asiyah Bukhari, Deputy Director QEC Kohat University of Science & Technology, the Executive Director said that when QAA was established we faced a lot of problems. Whenever a new initiative is undertaken impediments occur and we have to face them. Issues such as lack of permanent staff will be solved as now the formula for disseminating the recurring grant and the Quarterly Progress Reports of QEC has been made integral. It is a generic problem and will be tackled at both levels i.e. of VC and QAA.

2.2.2 Dr. Riaz Ahmad, Director QEC, University of Arid Agriculture, requested that HEC should develop uniform criteria for the appointment/ selection of QEC personnel. ED responded that although QAA has disseminated the approved criteria, a committee from this forum may further look into the matter, if required.

2.2.3 Dr. Iftikhar Ahmad Khan, Director QEC UET, Peshawar appreciated the role of QAA and the leadership of the Executive Director which is definitely leading towards a positive change in the universities. Dr. Naqvi said that lot of work has been done, but sustained efforts are still needed to achieve our common objective of quality in education.

3 The two day meeting was divided into five sessions chaired by Air Commodore (R) Muhammad Ismail, Dr. Riaz Hassan, Mr. M. Taimur Khan, Dr. Aamir Ijaz and Ms. Iram Sohail respectively. Each session contained presentations of the QECs followed by the website review of each university.

3.1 During the review the website of QEC NUST, UAAR, GCUL and DUHS were found up to the mark. All other QECs were requested to define proper contents and continuously keep updating the QEC website as it will be included as one of the major parameter of QEC ranking. The University of Balochistan and Government College University, Faisalabad were advised to formulate separate Assessment Teams for each department.

Decision 3.1.1: QECs need to expedite the process of Self Assessment and should now initiate the process in at least another three departments of the university by December 2010.

Decision 3.1.2: QECs will develop time bound action plan on the SA process and ensure its execution in consultation with the VC. It was decided that QECs will constantly upload their updated status in terms of SA process, awareness events etc. on their websites.

Decision 3.1.2: In case where the performance of the Assessment Teams is delaying the SA process, new teams may be constituted in consultation with the VC.

- Decision 3.1.3: Necessary staff for QEC as outlined in the PC-1 should be appointed on priority basis by the universities. In cases where workload of the QEC's has been increased, additional staff should be appointed.
- Decision 3.1.4: The Quality Enhancement Cells will share their performance/ progress for the score card being prepared by QAA on regular basis.
- Decision 3.1.5 Meetings/Seminars/ workshops will be arranged by respective QEC's to sensitize the stakeholders about SA process.
- Decision 3.1.6 Committee formed in the 13th meeting for determining the appointment criteria of Director/Deputy Director should finalize their recommendations at the earliest. Dr. M. Daud Awan will act as Convener of the committee.
- 4 During the closing session, Managing Director QAA welcomed the Vice Chancellor of NWFP Agriculture University, Peshawar. He said that the primary purpose of the QEC is to help the head of the institute identify the strengths/ weaknesses of the departments. Implementation plan/ Executive summary is the crunch of the SA exercise shared with the VC/Rector so that remedial measures are undertaken. The QECs should cooperate and coordinate with each other and develop an active communication strategy. He said that QECs should make presentations/ contributions at the local and international level on quality issues. He thanked the VC on his continued interest in propagating the concept of quality assurance. The role of Prof. Dr. Muhammad Afzal, Dr. Muhammad Taimur Khan and HEC Regional Center Peshawar was appreciated.
- 4.1 Prof. Dr. Said Khan Khalil, Vice Chancellor NWFP Agriculture University, Peshawar expressed his gratitude for arranging the meeting in Peshawar. He appreciated the role of HEC and said that organizations like these can change the entire system of the country. Even on foreign tours, he has observed that the role of the Higher Education Commission Pakistan is being acknowledged and the reforms undertaken by HEC highly appreciated. The QECs are doing a notable job and the responsibility assigned to them will lead to a progressive improvement in quality of higher education system in Pakistan.
- 5 The efforts of Managing Director, QAA and his team were highly appreciated by the participants.

The meeting ended with mutual thanks.

Prof. Dr. Azam Ali Khwaja
Managing Director QAA
Higher Education Commission
Islamabad