

MINUTES OF THE SIXTEENTH MEETING OF QUALITY ENHANCEMENT CELLS

1. A two day meeting of Heads of Quality Enhancement Cells of Phase I & II was held on 15th – 16th November, 2011 at HEC Regional Center, Peshawar wherein 26 QECs presented their ideas regarding Impact of Self-Assessment Process, additional responsibilities of the QEC other than the Self-Assessment mechanism and suggestions to bring improvement in the Self-Assessment process and processes other than Self-Assessment.
 - 1.1. During the second session, Ms. Mahwish Asmatullah, Assistant Director QEC, Frontier Women University, Peshawar shared with the participants the procedures adopted by their QEC for the implementation of Self-Assessment Process in the university. This effort was commended and discussion also took place.
2. The following attended:
 1. Prof. Dr. Azam Ali Khwaja, Managing Director, Quality Assurance Agency, HEC Islamabad
 2. Prof. Dr. Aamir Ijaz, Director QEC, University of Punjab, Lahore
 3. Ms. Iram Sohail, Director QEC, Government College University, Lahore
 4. Dr. Sohaila Javed, Dean QEC, National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad
 5. Dr. M. Zubair Siddiqui, Director QEC, Government College University, Faisalabad
 6. Dr. M. Farooq, Director QEC, Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan
 7. Prof. M. Sajidin, Director QEC, University of Karachi, Karachi
 8. Prof. Dr. Iftikhar Ahmad Khan, Director QEC, University of Engineering & Technology, Peshawar
 9. Eng. Riasat Ali Kubar, Director QEC, Sindh Agriculture University, Tandojam
 10. Prof. Dr. Ahrar Khan, Director QEC, University of Agriculture, Faisalabad
 11. Prof. Dr. Riaz Ahmad, Director QEC, PMAS Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi
 12. Dr. Hamid Khan Niazi, Director QEC, Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad
 13. Prof. Dr. Rahat H. Bokhari, Director QEC, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad
 14. Dr. Naheed Zia Khan, Director QEC, Fatima Jinnah Women University, Rawalpindi
 15. Mr. Sarfaraz Pirzada, Advisor QEC, COMSATS Institute of Information Technology, Islamabad
 16. Prof. Dr. Shafiq Ur Rahman, Director QEC, Kohat University of Science & Technology, Kohat
 17. Syed Dara Shikoh Amir, Director QEC, Balochistan University of Information Technology & Management Sciences, Quetta
 18. Dr. Ikram Ul Haq, Associate Professor, KPK Agriculture University, Peshawar
 19. Dr. Mohammad Asim, Associate Professor, University of Engineering & Technology, Lahore
 20. Ms. Suraiya Khatoon, Dy. Director QEC, Dow University of Health Sciences, Karachi

21. Lt. Col Salahuddin Adil Qazi (R) , Dy. Director QEC, National University of Science & Technology, Islamabad
22. Mr. Nasrullah Channa, Dy. Director QEC, Quaid-e-Awam University of Engineering, Science & Technology, Nawabshah
23. Mr. Khalid Feroz Channa, Dy. Director QEC, Mehran University of Engineering & Technology, Jamshoro
24. Mr. Rahmatullah, Dy. Director QEC, University of Sargodha, Sargodha
25. Mr. M. Iqbal Tareen, Dy. Director QEC, University of Balochistan, Quetta
26. Ms. Yasmeen, Assistant Director QEC, Kohat University of Science & Technology, Kohat
27. Ms. Maria Ibrar, Assistant Director QEC, Frontier Women University, Peshawar
28. Ms. Mahwish Asmatullah, Assistant Director QEC, Frontier Women University, Peshawar
29. Dr. Bilal Fazal Shaikh, Assistant Director QEC, Liaquat University of Medical & Health Sciences, Jamshoro
30. Mr. Muhammad Bilal, Assistant Director QEC, KPK Agriculture University, Peshawar
31. Mr. Abdul Khaliq, System Analyst QEC, University of Balochistan, Quetta
32. Mr. Salman Jan, Computer Operator QEC, University of Peshawar, Peshawar
33. Ms. Fakiha Zafar, Project Director, Quality Assurance Agency, HEC, Islamabad
34. Mr. Nasir Ali, Research Officer, Quality Assurance Agency, HEC, Islamabad

2.1. Representatives from Mirpur University of Science and Technology, University of Sindh, University of Veterinary & Animal Sciences didn't attend the meeting while University of Engineering & Technology, Lahore didn't make presentation during the meeting.

3. During the inaugural speech, Managing Director (QAA) welcomed all the participants. He informed that the next scorecard of QEC progress will be published till the period December 2011.

4. The meeting then followed the following agenda.

4.1. Impact of Self-Assessment Process in universities

During the meeting, QECs shared the impact of Self-assessment process in their university. The summary is given below:

4.1.1. Quality Culture

Awareness and sensitivity regarding Quality and the Quality Assurance measures has increased amongst the stakeholders.

4.1.2. Feedback System

The process of taking feedback from the stakeholders (i.e. student, teacher, alumni, employer etc.) is providing a factual basis for decision making. It has

also improved the sense of accountability among the University management and the faculty members.

4.1.3. Improvements in the Academic Process

- i. Course objectives and the intended learning outcomes have been documented.
- ii. Lesson plans based on learning outcomes have facilitated the completion of the courses within the time and has thus led to completion of semester and the program according to the schedule.
- iii. Student evaluation process has been revised.
- iv. Course Files are now being maintained in many HEIs.

4.1.4. Improved Environment for the Faculty

- i. Based on recommendations in Executive summary and Implementation Plans of SAR process, offices and proper IT facilities are being provided.
- ii. Faculty surveys have helped the University management to take remedial measures.
- iii. New faculty members have been appointed to improve the student – faculty ratio. Moreover, the percentage of faculty members with PhDs has increased.
- iv. Faculty development programs have been initiated.

4.1.5. Better Learning Environment for the Students

- i. Student counseling system has been introduced in most cases.
- ii. Regularity and punctuality of the students has improved due to introduction of new discipline measures.
- iii. Students have been provided more access to the laboratories.

4.1.6. Improved Infrastructure

- i. More laboratories, libraries and seminar rooms have been built.
- ii. Laboratories have been updated in terms of space, equipment and the supporting staff.
- iii. Multimedia projectors and other IT equipment have been purchased to integrate the ICT in the classrooms.
- iv. Libraries have been provided updated editions of the text books. Moreover, many new books have also been made available for the faculty members as well as for the students.
- v. Access to digital libraries has also improved.

4.1.7. Increased International Recognition

Universities have started to avail membership of many international bodies like INQAAHE and APQN. Some QEC representatives have started to participate in international conferences/seminars/workshops

4.1.8. Research Facilitation

Both the Faculty members and the research students have been given access to more research facilities.

4.2. Additional Responsibilities of QECs other than Self-Assessment Process:

Responsibilities are not uniform in all QECs. They include:

- 4.2.1 Implementation of Plagiarism policy (Turnitin).
- 4.2.2 Checking of M.Phil. /M.Sc. and Ph.D. thesis reports.
- 4.2.3. Maintenance of publication database.
- 4.2.4. Accreditation of degree programs from respective accreditation bodies.
- 4.2.5. Collection of data for ranking by HEC & QS ranking.
- 4.2.6. Institutional Performance Evaluation (IPEs).
- 4.2.7. Designing the vision & mission of the university.
- 4.2.8. Responsible for nominating faculty for best teacher award and tasked assigned by the VC office.
- 4.2.9. Organizing professional development programs for the university faculty and planning, organizing international conferences on assessing quality in higher education.
- 4.2.10. Preparation of the annual reports of the university.
- 4.2.11. In few universities Director QEC is also a faculty member of their respective depts., appointed as member of various committees and given additional charges of administration.
- 4.2.12. Responsible for maintaining subject level database of departments.
- 4.2.13. Involved in the admission and examination process.
- 4.2.14. Involved in the ensuring the curricula standards for national & international levels.
- 4.2.15. Monitoring the academic activities through course file development, departmental review meetings and faculty development review committee.
- 4.2.16. Review all applications for appointment for eligibility determination and to ensure quality induction in human resource.
- 4.2.17. Collaboration with national & international institutions to facilitate students & faculty members leading to signing of MOUs and linkages with educational and research organizations.
- 4.2.18. Processing and monitoring of overseas Ph.D. scholarships for various development projects.

4.3. Suggestions to bring improvement in the Self-Assessment Process:

The presentation session was followed by a group activity regarding recommendations for bringing improvement in the Self-Assessment process and activities other than SA.

Following suggestions were put forth:

4.3.1. Modification of Self-Assessment Manual

SAM may be revised, simplified with program specific guidelines. Criterion for research may be added to already existing standards in the manual. Number of self-assessment proforma may be revised as well as the questions and made part of SAM. Relationship between criteria and standard may be defined. Quantitative criteria may be added. Online filling and evaluation of Proforma to be carried out.

4.3.2. Statutory status of Quality Enhancement Cell /Empowerment of QEC

QEC may be given statutory status in the university with appointment of additional staff. Director QEC may be made a voting member of statutory bodies of the university

4.3.3. Revise the eligibility criteria for QEC Staff (specially Director QEC)

A well-defined Job structure of the QEC staff may be prepared and shared with QECs

4.3.4. Effective Utilization of Vice Chancellors forum/ follow up by VCs

Vice Chancellors committee forum may be utilized effectively for strengthening the role of QECs. The Vice Chancellors may be requested to ask the Chairpersons / Directors of the departments / institutes about the progress of SA process and issue letter of appreciation/ certificates to the departments/PTs/ATs that are following the SA process. Implementation plan & corrective actions should be presented /discussed at VCs Committee etc. The findings of the assessment teams followed by the recommendations by the QEC may be made mandatory for implementation by the management. IPs may be presented in VC meetings

4.3.5. Capacity building of QA personnel

Workshops/Trainings may be organized for the supporting staff of the QECs as well.

4.4. Decision: During the presentation delivered by the Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad it was mentioned that AIOU has established a quality committee for reviewing the SAM as per requirement of the programs offered in the University. Allama Iqbal Open University offers courses related to distance education so the SAM may be amended accordingly. Dr. Azam advised the AIOU participant to establish a committee at the University for bringing changes in the SAM as per requirement and the same may be shared with HEC for further refinement

5. During the closing session, Managing Director QAA shared the following action plan with the QECs for the period till June 2012.

5.1. Action plan for Quality Enhancement Cell (till June 2012) in continuation to the previous targets

5.1.1 Preparation of assessment team reports, rubric reports, executive summaries, implementation plans for fifteen programs (twelve existing and three new programs).

5.1.2 Director QECs to request the VCs to get the QEC status approved through the university statutory bodies.

5.1.3 Program teams and assessment teams to be appointed separately for each program.

5.1.4 Submit Quarterly progress reports to HEC along with supporting documents (self-assessment reports) as per the format already provided.

5.1.5 Adoption of communication strategy to disseminate information in media about quality assurance measures introduced in the university

5.1.6 Appointment of full time staff for QEC.

5.1.7 Disseminate information in media about quality assurance measures introduced in your university. (At least one publication/article etc.)

5.1.8 Conduct at least two local seminars /workshops on SA

5.1.9 Coordinate with regional universities for enhancing further collaboration and cooperation on quality issues.

5.1.10 Update QEC website on regular basis.

6. The efforts of Managing Director, QAA, his team and the team at HEC Regional Center, Peshawar were highly appreciated by the participants.

The meeting ended with mutual thanks.

Quality Assurance Agency
Higher Education Commission
Islamabad