

ZIAUDDIN UNIVERSITY
GUIDELINES, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Policy Name	Academic Quality Assurance: Policy and Procedure
Policy Number	ZU/QEC/001
Approved by	Academic Council
Date of Original Approval	15th December, 2018
Date of Revisions	21 st January, 2023
Contact	Quality Enhancement Cell

INTRODUCTION:

The Quality Assurance Agency of Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan has mandated all the public and private sector universities in the country to develop Quality Assurance mechanisms for their academic programs. It has provided a comprehensive guideline with a focused approach to bring consistency in the process of the Quality Assurance & Enhancement in higher education in the country. The process is intended to “develop quality assurance processes and methods of evaluation to affirm that the quality of provision and the standard of awards are being maintained.”

Ziauddin University in its mission statement commits to render service “with the highest sense of moral uprightness and social responsibility to the nation, region and the world at large”.

With this moral commitment, the university strives to ensure a high standard of education in all its programs and develop quality assurance procedures that are compatible with national and international standards. ZU’s quality assurance process ascertains that all the constituent institutions of the University are taking deliberate steps to bring about continual improvement in the learning experience of the students.

Internal quality assurance is a regular activity and acts as a sustainable base for External Quality Monitoring. Self-Assessment being one of the tools used for achieving Quality Assurance is conducted by the institution itself. It is meant to assess whether the existing programs are able to meet the documented educational objectives and outcomes.

PURPOSE:

Ziauddin University has a commitment to improve and assure quality and enhance standards of its academic programs and research, and develop quality culture in its educational environment. To implement a strategy for continuous enhancement of quality, Self-Assessment, External peer review and/or review by HEC / regulatory bodies shall be carried out. All these evaluations shall be followed up with identification of problems and weaknesses, preparation of action plans and monitoring of implementation/ improvement carried out.

SCOPE:

This policy applies to all the University administration, faculty, staff and students of ZU.

POLICY STATEMENT:

Ziauddin University follows the HEC quality assurance framework for all its academic programs.

ZIAUDDIN UNIVERSITY
ACADEMIC QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY 2020

Definitions:

1. Academic Quality: a comprehensive term referring to how and how well universities manage teaching and learning opportunities to help students progress and succeed.
2. Improvement: the process by which deliberate systematic improvement in the quality of academic programs is carried out.
3. Internal evaluation: process through which academic programs carry out self-assessment.
4. External evaluation: validation of the self-assessment report by external evaluator/ assessor. External evaluator shall always be from outside the ZU.
5. Periodic program review: a reevaluation of a program after a specified period of time done to confirm that the program is conforming to the national/ international standards.
6. Academic program: a course of study leading to a certificate/ diploma/ undergraduate degree/ postgraduate diploma/postgraduate degree.
7. Quality Assurance: the systematic monitoring and evaluation of learning and teaching, and the processes that support them, to make sure that the standards of academic diplomas and degrees meet the expectation of the University, and that the quality of the student learning experience is being safeguarded and improved. Quality assurance is ultimately all about raising standards and ensuring students have the best possible experience at University.
8. Self-Assessment: A well-defined process of critically reviewing the quality of one's own performance and provision of a program in order to provide feedback to initiate an action plan for improvement.

Principles:

- a. Ownership: University administration, faculty, staff and students of ZU shall be collectively responsible for maintaining and enhancing the quality of its academic programs and learning environment for continual improvement in the learning experience of its students.

- b. Standards: University standards shall be set by the members of the ZU academic community at a level that meets or exceeds those determined by the relevant statutory bodies of ZU and regulatory or professional bodies in Pakistan.
- c. Accountability: ZU shall be accountable to its stakeholders regarding the quality and standards of its programs and award of its degrees are enhanced and safe guarded through a well-designed self-evaluation process.
- d. Continuous improvement: on the basis of feedback gathered from various sources (faculty, students, examination department and administration) and through interaction on quality outcomes with other DAIs, ZU shall improve its strategies.

Objectives:

- a. To ensure high standards and continuous improvement of all academic programs, research and educational processes within ZU.
- b. To ensure consistency in the quality assurance and improvement processes being used across ZU.
- c. To regularly enhance and improve academic practices across ZU through periodic program reviews.
- d. To conform to the rules and regulations of the concerned regulatory bodies.

Evidential inputs to the periodic program reviews:

Self-assessment report shall consist of the curriculum document of an academic program, teaching /learning processes employed and facilities provided along with feedback of faculty, students, graduating students, research students, alumni and employers. The outcomes of these reviews shall be documented and form part of the evidence in the program review and a part of the annual self-monitoring reports.

Periodic program review (SAR):

ZU as per the guidelines of QAA of HEC, shall carry out SAR of academic programs regularly on a three-year cycle. Each academic program is expected to undergo Self-assessment involving the following processes:

- Self-assessment
- External peer review
- Monitoring of improvement plans.

The periodic program review shall follow these principles:

- Program review shall begin with a self-assessment exercise carried out by a program team and followed by peer review by external assessors.

- Involvement of all the stakeholders including the program faculty, staff, alumni, students and administration is essential for the process.
- The deans along with the program head shall be responsible for ensuring periodic program reviews and annual self-monitoring reports are completed within the recommended time.

Regular Monitoring:

- Each academic program shall be evaluated by the students and teachers and the teachers shall be evaluated by the students at the end of each semester/ year (depending upon the program calendar).
- Data shall be analyzed, reports generated and shared with the concerned Head of institution, relevant dean and Director Faculty affairs.
- It shall be the responsibility of the concerned Head of institution to take necessary action based on the feedback results for improving the program. In case the level of satisfaction is less than 70% then an action plan shall be made.

Institutional Performance Evaluation:

As per the requirements of HEC/other accrediting bodies, an extensive Institutional Performance evaluation of ZU shall be carried out, strength and weaknesses shall be identified and plan of action for future improvements shall be chalked out and followed through by QEC. This peer review process shall verify the robustness of the self-assessment process, deliver confidence to stakeholders and the public, and contribute to recognition and acceptance of the program. Members of the IPE team shall be from the accrediting body/s while for Internal IPE, the members shall be from ZU with one or two external, higher education quality assurance experts.

Program Review

The program review of MS/M.Phil. & PhD program shall be carried out by QEC each year. For this Internal and external reviewer shall be nominated by QEC with the approval of VC. The purpose of the review is to assist the postgraduate programs in enhancing the quality of teaching, learning and research. The review intends to assist in identifying strength and weaknesses of programs, promote good practices and ownership of quality assurance practices and also helps to fulfill the requirements of both internal and external accountability.

International Rankings

International rankings have become a significant quality measure tool influencing higher education, students, parents, policy makers and all other stakeholders. QEC will collect data for international ranking with the coordination and support of other departments and submit in relevant periods of time.

Legend:

- QEC: Quality Enhancement Cell
- AT: Assessment Team
- PT: Program Team
- SA: Self-Assessment
- SAR: Self-Assessment Report
- IPE: Institutional Performance Evaluation
- DAI: Degree Awarding Institution

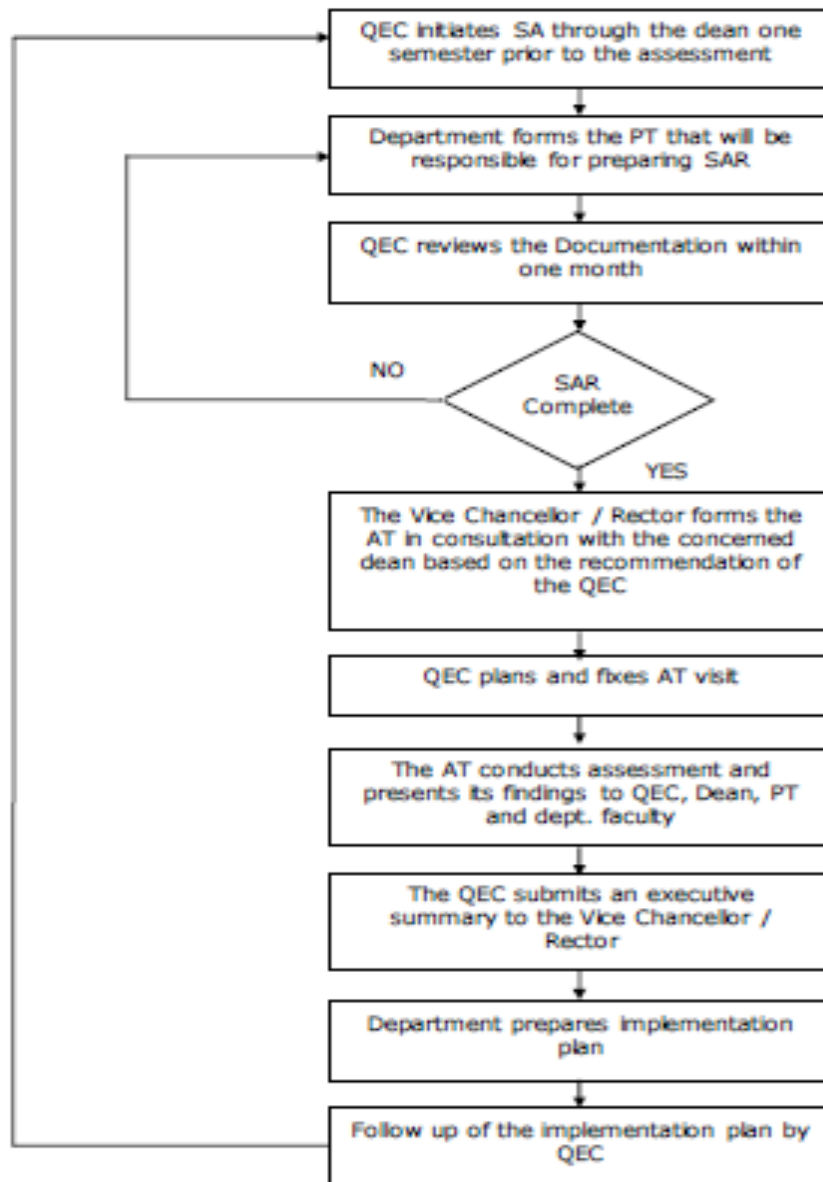


Figure – 1: Self-Assessment Procedure
 (adapted from HEC SAR Manual)