

Quality Enhancement and Assurance System of Higher Education in Pakistan

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The standards of Quality in Higher Education needed improvement in Pakistan. To bridge the gap of Quality Assurance in Higher Education, there was a dire need to develop and sustain a quality culture in the Higher Education Institutions of Pakistan. In order to achieve the objective of quality education, the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) was established within the Higher Education Commission in Islamabad, Pakistan. The Quality Assurance Agency established Quality Enhancement Cells in Public and Private sector Universities with a project funding for one year. After completion of the project period, the Quality Enhancement Cells were shifted to the recurring budget of the University.

QAA took three main initiatives:

Development of QECs at National level, and more than 178 QECs established at local levels. QAA developed and implemented Quality Criteria for Academics and Research, and implemented these through QECs.

The second major initiative was to evaluate the Performance of Universities on Institutional Performance Evaluation Standards and review the M.Phil. and PhD Programs offered at HEIs. The QAA evaluated the majority of universities of Pakistan and closed those universities and programs not fulfilling quality parameters.

The third initiative was through program evaluations through QECs of universities, and all academic programs are assessed for assurance of quality and remedial action. Apart from these major initiatives, the HEC linked development grants with the establishment and functional QECs of HEIs. In a period of ten years, HEC has successfully achieved its targets and is now expanding its quality assurance setup in campuses and affiliated colleagues of universities / institutes. It is pertinent to mention that success of the quality assurance setup in HEIs is the monitoring of QAA to the Quality Assurance mechanism and follow-up and annual

performance evaluation of QECs by HEC. This annual performance evaluation is motivation for the management of HEIs for healthy competition among HEIs.

This talk will be covered the following aspects:

- Background of Quality Education in Pakistan at Higher education.
- Establishment of Quality Enhancement Cells by HEC in Public and private Sector HEIs.
- Annual Performance Evaluation of QEC by QAA.
- Role of the HEC to create a Quality Culture at National level.
- Impact of Quality Enhancement Practices in Pakistan.