Quality Audit Report of DDE, MANUU, Hyderabad
Year-2020-21

Quality Audit Committee

Sl. No.	Name	Designation
1.	Prof. V. Venkaiah	Chairperson
2.	Prof. Nikhat Jahan	Member
3.	Dr. Sayyad Aman Ubed	Member
4.	Mr. Shams Imran	Member
5.	Dr. Shafique Ahmed	Member, Convener

Introduction:

The Quality Audit Report aims to assess the academic planning of the Directorate of Distance Education (DDE) at Maulana Azad National Urdu University (MANUU) in Hyderabad. The audit was conducted by the audit team, which evaluated various aspects of academic planning, including curriculum development, instructional design, assessment and evaluation, and student support services. The report provides an overview of the findings, recommendations, and areas for improvement in the academic planning of DDE, MANUU.

The Preliminary Academic Auditwas conducted at DDE, MANUU in March 2021 by an eminent external expert, Prof. V. Venkaiah, who has vast experience at highest levels in academic administration including the positions of Vice-Chancellor of Krishna University, Andhra Pradeshand Pro-Vice Chancellor (Rector) of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Open University, Hyderabad, Telangana. He was assisted by Prof. Nikhat Fatema, Dr. Sayyad Aman Ubed,Mr. Shams Imran and Dr. Shafique Ahmed.

Introduction:

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self-reflection and self-improvement rather than compliance with predetermined standards. It was meant to improve theareas and encourage the faculty to evaluate their "education quality processes" – the key faculty activities required to produce, assure, and regularly improve the quality of teaching and learning. It is also aimed at examining the approach of the faculty in educational decision making and how they are organizing their work, using the resources available to them and working collegially to provide high quality education in the best interests of the discipline and student learning.

About DDE

The University has initiated its distance mode programmes from its year of inception, 1998. The DDE has set up 9 Regional Centres (Delhi, Patna, Bangalore, Bhopal, Darbhanga, Srinagar, Kolkata, Mumbai, Ranchi) and 6 Sub-Regional Centres (Hyderabad, Jammu, Amravati, Lucknow, Nuh and Varanasi) across the country so as to provide academic and administrative support to the students. The RCs/SRCs facilitate the students with support services; management of Study Centres and admission process. At present there are 143 Learner Support Centres and 20 Programme Centers within the purview of these RCs/SRCs. The DDE facilitates online admission throughMANUU IUMS.

It provides links of audio-visual material to the students and also Printed Self Learning Material. The University has established Instructional Media Centre for the preparation of audio-visual educational programmes. A large number of audio-visual educational programmes have been prepared by the Media Centre. These programmes can be viewed on YouTube (https://www.youtube.com/c/imcmanuu).

DDE offers 6 PG programmes (M.A. in Urdu, Hindi, Arabic, English, History and Islamic Studies), 4 UG programmes (B. A., B. Com., B.Sc. & B. Ed.); 2 Diploma Programmes (Diploma in Journalism & Mass Communication and Diploma in Teach English); and 2 Certificate programmes (Proficiency in Urdu through English and Functional English).

The Graduation, Post Graduation and Diploma Certificates awarded by the University are at par with the certificates of recognized Universities. Day-by-day the strength of the students is growing. Thus, the DDE is striving hard to reach the unreached.

Vision:

- To be an internationally recognized open and distance learning centre engaged in empowerment of Urdu speaking people through distance education programmes.

Mission:

- To enhance access to education and training programmes to Urdu speaking population through ODL, particularly to "reach the unreached"
- To provide focus on women's education and training through ODL
- To provide greater access to continuing professional education and training and more opportunities for lifelong learning
- To create capacity for the use of ODL technologies to enrich the learning process
- To undertake research studies in ODL for system development

Objectives:

- To generate employment opportunities through ODL within the NEP 2020 framework
- To make adequate efforts toward flexibility in learning
- To ensure quality higher education to the target group
- To enable blended learning with in-person and online counselling-cum-contact classes
- To facilitate greater vertical and horizontal mobility in higher education
- To integrate non-conventional Urdu learners into formal education system
- To enhance the gross enrolment ratio (GER) based on market needs, gaps and trends in addition to the societal demands

Strategic Intent

The strategic intent for the Directorate of Distance Education at MANUU Hyderabad could be to become a leading provider of high-quality distance education programs in India, with a strong focus on empowering learners through flexible and innovative approaches to teaching and learning.

To achieve this strategic intent, the Directorate focussed on the following key objectives:

1. Developing and offering a diverse range of high-quality distance education programs that are relevant to the needs of learners in India, with a focus on skill development and employability.
2. Investing in technology-enabled learning platforms and resources to enhance the delivery of distance education programs and provide learners with flexible and accessible learning opportunities.
3. Building strong partnerships with industry, government, and other stakeholders to ensure that the Directorate's distance education programs are aligned with the needs of the economy and society.
4. Fostering a culture of innovation and continuous improvement, by encouraging faculty and staff to explore new approaches to teaching and learning, and by continuously evaluating and refining the Directorate's programs and processes.
5. Building a strong brand and reputation for the Directorate of Distance Education at MANUU Hyderabad, by promoting its programs and services through targeted marketing and communications efforts, and by engaging with stakeholders to build support and advocacy for its mission and objectives.
6. Addressing the challenges posed by the Covid-19 situation.

By pursuing these strategic objectives, the Directorate of Distance Education at MANUU Hyderabad isstrengthening its role in distance education in India, and make a meaningful contribution to the development of a skilled and empowered workforce for the 21st century.

Quality Statement

"Our commitment to quality in distance education is demonstrated through our dedication to providing learner-centric programs that meet the highest standards of academic excellence, delivered through innovative and flexible approaches to teaching and learning. We strive to continually improve our programs and services to ensure that they are responsive to the needs of learners and society, and to build strong partnerships with stakeholders to promote lifelong learning and social mobility."

Outcome Based Education (Continuous Quality Improvement)

The Directorate of Distance Education at MANUU, Hyderabad has implemented Outcome Based Education as a tool for continuous quality improvement of its programs. This approach involves identifying clear learning outcomes that students should be able to demonstrate at the end of each course and program. These outcomes serve as the foundation for developing the curriculum, instructional methods and assessments to ensure that students achieve the desired outcomes.Each course or program outcome is well-defined and includes specific content or concepts that students should be able to demonstrate using a well-defined process.

At the end of each program cycle, program outcomes are assessed to determine whether students have achieved the desired level of performance. This ensures that the program is continuously improving, closing the loop and addressing any shortcomings and the programs offered by the Directorate of Distance Education at MANUU, Hyderabad continue to be of high quality and relevant to the needs of students.

Academic Audit Process

The Directorate of Distance Education, MANUU, Hyderabad, conducted an Academic Audit Process to assess the academic activities on 29th& 30th June, 2020. The two-day exercise focused on the functioning of the various administrative units. The purpose of the audit was to familiarize the stakeholders with the elements and process of academic audit for future benefits, especially to meet the requirements of Accreditation and Regulatory Bodies.

The audit provided deep insights into the working of the administrative units covering various aspects of curriculum designing, workshops and counselling, learning process, student support and evaluation processes in DDE. The process commenced with an address by Prof. Venkaiah to the entire faculty, emphasizing the need for quality assurance and explaining the elements and process of a comprehensive academic audit. Prof. Venkaiah had intense and wide-ranging discussions separately with faculty teams from different areas to understand the five focal areas of the educational process.

The audit exercise aimed to improve the quality of education in the Institute and prepare it for accreditation and regulatory bodies' requirements.

Audit Findings and Suggested Improvements

Based on the extensive one-to-one interactions with the faculty from differentUnits of DDE, the external experts recorded the following observations. The positive aspects of the current teaching, learning and assessment process and other academic practices and suggested improvements are given for each Unit.

Positive Practices

1. Interactive Learning: The DDE has implemented interactive learning for its B.Ed (ODL) programme through various mediums such as video conferencing, webinars, and online discussion fora. This allows students to engage in live discussions with faculty and other students, making the learning experience more dynamic and effective during the pandemic.

2. Self-Study Material: The DDE provides well-structured self-study material, which is designed to be self-explanatory and comprehensive.

3. Personal Contact Programs (PCPs): The DDE conducts Personal Contact Programs (PCPs) at various centers across India. These PCPs are designed to provide students with an opportunity to interact with faculty members, clear doubts, and get a better understanding of the course. However, during the Covid-19 restrictions, face-to-face contact-cum-counselling could not be held.

4. Academic Counselling: The DDE provides academic counselling to its students to help them overcome any challenges they may face during their academic journey. The counsellingclasses could not be held semester wise for students during the lockdown and the period of restrictions. The faculty members, however, always remained willing to help students in any way possible.

5. Digital Support: The DDE provides digital support digital, which includes a IUMS and an IMC MANUU platform. This provides students with access to course material, discussion forums, and assignments, while the IMC MANUU gives them access to a vast collection of online academic resources.

6. Continuous Assessment: The DDE implements a continuous assessment system, which involves regular assignments, quizzes, and projects. This helps students to keep up with their studies and ensures that they are well-prepared for their exams.

Overall, these practices have helped the DDE at MANUU, Hyderabad to provide quality distance education to its students and ensure that they receive a comprehensive learning experience.

Suggestions for Improvement:

To streamline and reactivate various units of DDE with the following broad functions;

Academic Affairs Unit (AAU):

1. Periodical revision of the curriculum to ensure it is up-to-date, relevant, and aligned with academic standards.

2. Continue to conduct regular assessments to monitor students' progress and evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum.

Staff Training, Research, and Quality Unit (STRAQU):

3. Enrich and enhance the training program for faculty and staff members to enhance their skills and knowledge.

4. Establish a research center to encourage and support research activities and provide funding for research projects.

Administrative and Finance Unit (AFU):

5. Develop and implement a financial plan to allocate resources effectively and efficiently.

6. Provide financial assistance to deserving students to enable them to complete their education.

Student Support Unit (SSU):

7. To conduct programmes to provide academic and career counselling to students.

8. Continue to provide a comprehensive support system for students, including academic support, emotional support, and career guidance.

Material Production and Distribution Unit (MPDU):

9. Continue to develop high-quality course materials that are engaging, interactive, and accessible.

10. Establish a system for students to provide feedback on the quality of study materials.

Technical Support Unit (TSU):

11. Provide technical support to students and faculty members to resolve technical issues.

12. Regularly update the online learning platform to ensure it's up-to-date and aligned with the latest developments in technology.

Post Audit Activities

Prof. Venkaiah, after completing the preliminary audit, suggested that all the faculty go through a format of comprehensive academic audit which he will be sharing with them and try to prepare a report which will be used for a comprehensive audit in the future. He suggested that the current exercise should be considered as a precursor for a comprehensive regular academic audit conducted by a peer review team at a later date.

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