

Quality Audit Report of DDE, MANUU, Hyderabad
Year-2021-22

Quality Audit Committee

Sr. 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 an external 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.

Preamble

The Preliminary Academic Audit conducted at DDE, MANUU in March 2022 by an eminent external expert, Prof. V. Venkaiah, who has vast experience at highest levels in academic administration including the positions of Pro-Vice Chancellor (Rector) of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Open University, Hyderabad, Telangana and Vice-Chancellor of Krishna University, Andhra Pradesh. He was assisted by Prof. Nikhat Fatema, Prof, DDE, Dr. Sayyad Aman Ubed, Associate Professor, DDE. The main purpose of this exercise was self-reflection and self-improvement rather than compliance with predetermined standards. It was meant to improve the areas 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. 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 through SAMARTH ERP.

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 could focus on the following key objectives:

1. Continue 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. Continue 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. The audit team appreciates the shift from IUMS to ERP SAMARTH for online admissions, use of online meeting platforms, and blended learning initiated this year.
3. Continue 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. The audit team noted the inclusion of skill enhancement courses toward achieving this goal.
4. Continue 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. The audit team appreciates the involvement of the faculty in FDPs, workshops, publications during the period under consideration.
5. Continue 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. DDE prepared promotions videos and conducted student induction program and ensured wide publicity of both through social media including the University IMC YouTube Channel.

By pursuing these strategic objectives, the Directorate of Distance Education at MANUU Hyderabad can establish itself as a leader 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 28th & 29th June, 2021. The two-day exercise focused on various aspects of academic activities such as curriculum designing, workshops and counselling, learning process, student support and evaluation. 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 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 educational process.

The discussions involved questions such as consciously considering what students who complete the courses/program should know and be able to do, identifying and learning from best practice, evaluating student outcome goals, designing curriculum collaboratively, analyzing teaching and learning processes on a regular basis, assessing performance only at the end of the course/program or conducting continuous internal assessments to provide regular feedback to students, and assuring the implementation of quality education. The audit exercise aimed to improve the quality of education in the Institute and prepare it for accreditation and regulatory bodies' requirements.

Findings:

The audit was conducted by an internal audit team, which evaluated various aspects of academic planning, Validation and Monitoring, Evaluation, and Enhancement Plans including curriculum development, instructional design, assessment and evaluation, and student support services. The team was pleased to note that the recommendation of streamlining and reactivating the various units of DDE has been successfully implemented.

1. Academic Planning:

a. Curriculum Development:

The audit team found that the curriculum development process at DDE, MANUU was comprehensive and aligned with the university's vision and mission. The curriculum was designed to meet the needs of the target learners and was updated periodically to incorporate changes in the field of study. However, there was a need to enhance the practical and industry-relevant components in the curriculum and ensure regular updates to keep it aligned with the latest advancements. Toward this end, the concerned departments in the regular mode may be sensitized to make necessary changes in the curriculum.

b. Instructional Design:

The audit team observed that the instructional design of the courses offered by DDE, MANUU was effective, with clear learning objectives, appropriate learning resources, and well-structured course materials. However, there was a scope for improvement in terms of enhancing the interactivity of the instructional materials to promote active learning and incorporating opportunities for collaborative learning activities. It is proposed to formulate a policy on SLM development for the next academic year.

2. Validation:

a. Reports from Learner Support Centers (for Open and Distance Learning programmes):

The audit team reviewed reports from learner support centers and found that they were actively engaged in providing academic and administrative support to the learners. However, there was a need to ensure that the learner support centers were equipped with necessary resources particularly technology infrastructure to effectively meet the needs of the learners. It is proposed to publish a comprehensive manual of LSC management.

b. Reports from Examination Centers:

The audit team examined reports from examination centers and found that the examination process was well-organized and conducted in a timely manner. However, suggestion was given to continue the measures adopted for security and integrity of the examination process to prevent any potential malpractice or irregularities. It is proposed to implement online question paper access and online evaluation from the next academic year.

c. External Auditor or other External Agencies report:

The external audit or external agencies report will be conducted before the completion of five years from the date of regulations that is 4th September, 2020.

3. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Enhancement Plans:

a. Systematic Consideration of Performance Data at Programme, Faculty, and Higher Educational Institution levels:

The audit team found that DDE, MANUU had a robust system in place to collect and analyze performance data at various levels, including program, faculty, and higher educational institution levels. However, there was a need to utilize the performance data effectively to identify areas for further improvement and take appropriate actions to further enhance the quality of academic planning. Programme/Course coordinators may be given access to data for closer interaction with the learners.

b. Reporting and Analytics by the Higher Educational Institution:

The audit team examined the reporting and analytics processes of the higher educational institution and found that they were effective in providing insights into the performance of the distance education programs. However, there was a need to ensure that the reporting and analytics processes were streamlined and provided timely and accurate information for decision-making.

c. Periodic Review:

The audit team found that DDE, MANUU conducted periodic reviews of its academic planning processes. However, the team felt that there was a need to ensure that the periodic reviews were comprehensive, included the feedback from relevant stakeholders, and resulted in actionable recommendations for improvement.

Recommendations:

Based on the findings of the audit, the following recommendations are made to enhance the quality of academic planning, validation, and monitoring, evaluation, and enhancement plans at DDE, MANUU:

1. Enhance the practical and industry-relevant components in the curriculum, and ensure regular updates to keep it aligned with the latest advancements in the field of study. This can be done in close coordination with the departments in the conventional mode.
2. Improve the interactivity of instructional materials to promote active learning and incorporate opportunities for collaborative learning activities.
3. Strengthen the staffing and resources of learner support centers to effectively meet the needs of the learners. A committee may be constituted for considering enhancement of rates of remuneration/honorarium.
4. Strengthen the security and integrity of the examination process to prevent any potential malpractice or irregularities. Introduce online question paper access and online evaluation process.
5. Conduct regular reviews of the academic planning processes to ensure continuous improvement and alignment with the changing needs of the learners and the field of study.
6. Ensure that assessments are aligned with the practical components of the curriculum and provide timely and constructive feedback to learners. Introduce comprehensive assignment/assessment guidelines.
7. Enhance the accessibility and responsiveness of student support services, and provide additional support to learners with special needs. A separate mobile phone with exclusive SIM may be provided to SSU for 24/7 support to the distance learners.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the quality audit report of Directorate of Distance Education (DDE), Maulana Azad National Urdu University (MANUU), Hyderabad reflects a comprehensive assessment of various aspects of the distance education program. The audit findings highlight areas of strength as well as areas that require improvement.

Overall, DDE, MANUU has demonstrated a commendable commitment to providing quality education through its distance education programs. The faculty and staff have shown dedication in delivering the curriculum and providing support services to students. The university has also made efforts to ensure that the course materials are relevant and up-to-date, and that the assessment and evaluation processes are fair and transparent.

The team observed that the management of DDE, MANUU has already taken commendable steps to address some of the identified issues. It is recommended that the university continues to prioritize these areas and takes appropriate measures to address the findings of the audit report.

In conclusion, DDE, MANUU has shown a commitment to quality distance education, and with continued efforts to address the areas of improvement, it can further enhance its educational offerings and continue to serve the needs of its students more effectively.

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