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(Approved by AICTE, New Delhi & Affiliated to JNTUK, Kakinada)

## **Academic and Administrative Audit (AAA) Process**

### **Context:**

Dr.Samuel George Institute of Engineering & Technology established Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) in the year 2021 evaluate the performance of the various departments and Institution and give suggestions for further improvement of the quality of teaching, research, administration, and curricular and extra-curricular activities. The monitoring and evaluation of the institutional processes require a carefully structured system of internal and external review. The Institution under take continuous Academic and Administrative Audits (AAA) and undergoing External Quality Assurance process to continuously strive for excellence.

### **About Academic and Administrative Audit (AAA):**

The IQAC undertake AAA to monitor and evaluate the institutional process through systematic internal and external reviews. The AAA is a peer review process including a self-study and a site visit by peers from inside and outside the institution. The purpose of an academic audit is to encourage programs, departments and the institution to evaluate their quality processes and standards based on predetermined benchmarks and to suggest activities required to produce, assure, and regularly improve the quality of the whole system in place including curricular and co-curricular programmes and activities and the infrastructure and support services.

**Academic Audit:** Academic audit can be understood as a scientific and systematic method of reviewing the quality of academic process in the institution. It is related with the quality assurance and enhancing the quality of academic activities in HEIs.

**Administrative Audit:** It can be defined as a process of evaluating the efficiency and effectiveness of the administrative procedure. It includes assessment of policies, strategies & functions of the various administrative departments control of the overall administrative system etc.

### **Major objectives of AAA:**

- a. To understand the existing system and assess the strengths and weaknesses of the Departments and Administrative Units and to suggest the methods for improvement and for overcoming the weaknesses.
- b. To identify the bottlenecks in the existing administrative mechanisms and to identify the opportunities for academic reforms, administrative reforms and examination reforms etc.
- c. To evaluate the optimum utilization of financial and other resources.

- d. To suggest the methods for continuous improvement of quality keeping in mind criteria and reports by NBA, NAAC and other bodies.
- e. Designing effective teaching and learning processes
- f. Evaluation of Course and Program Outcomes
- g. Developing student assessment
- h. Assuring quality education by implementation of co-curricular and extracurricular activities.

### **Methodology:**

The institution has evolved its own guidelines and methodology by learning from good practices followed by leading institutions within and outside India. The successful practices are adapted to suit specific context and requirement of the institution on various aspects such as given below:

### **Periodicity:**

The institution undertakes the AAA exercise on bi-annual basis: An external peers once in a year.

### **Selection of Peers / Experts:**

Since peer review is backbone of AAA, the senior faculty members from the institution who command respect from faculty on the basis of their credentials such as academic distinctions experience in accreditation work such as NAAC and NBA or similar bodies and professionalism are selected as internal auditors for AAA.

### **Process:**

The institution has devised its own process and formats with some changes defined by the accreditation bodies like NAAC and NBA. The main focuses of the defined processes are:

- a) Teaching-Learning and evaluation process
- b) Define quality in terms of learning outcomes
- c) Develop research culture
- d) Continuity and consistency based on the vision and mission of the institution.
- e) Application of best practices suited to the institution and the departments.
- f) Community orientation and Public perception
- g) Alumni and placement
- h) Continuous improvement towards total quality development of the students, teachers and the institution.
- i) Good Governance

### **Composition of AAA:**

- a. Principal
- b. Vice-Principal
- c. Representative from management
- d. Representative from administration IQAC Coordinator
- f. Head of the Departments
- g. Internal auditors selected by IQAC in conjunction with the Principal

### **Criteria For Academic Audit**

With the approval of the authorities, the IQAC of the respective institution can evolve strategies and procedures for conducting the audit, on the basis of their requirements and in line with the seven criteria fixed by the accreditation bodies. The Internal Audit process might take 3-5 days to complete.

Areas for consideration by the Audit Panel:

#### **1. Institutional Mission, Aims and Objectives**

- a. Institution's mission is explicit and understood and owned by the staff
- b. Aims and objectives are in keeping with the mission and are realistic and achievable.

#### **2. Institutional Approach to Quality Assurance**

- a. The institution has adopted a working definition of quality assurance which is compatible with its mission.
- b. A systematic and comprehensive approach to quality assurance affecting all the essential services of the institution is being implemented.
- c. A quality assurance handbook addressing all the affected activities is in evidence.
- d. The quality assurance handbook is available to all departments for consultation by all staff members.

#### **3. Administrative and Management Issues**

##### **a). Governance**

- i. Principles of good governance are evident and they are translated into
  - Working in an open manner so as to facilitate access to its policies and decisions by the public
  - encouraging institution wide participation in the formulation of policies.
  - ensuring that specific responsibilities are clear and are assumed appropriately by members according to their hierarchy.

- timely implementation of policies and monitoring thereof.
- Governing body being cohesive in its approach

ii. Top management Leadership is demonstrable through

- Developing and communicating the institution's strategic plan with Identifiable short term and long term goals and objectives
- Developing and communicating the institution's mission and plan
- Establishing effective links with external stakeholders
- Developing and organizational structure which reduces bureaucracy and Improves communication, efficiency and effectiveness

**b). Management of funds through**

- Transparency and accountability
- Proper budgeting and rationalization of funds with justification, taking into account short term and long term goals
- Ensuring cost effectiveness of programmes
- Effective internal auditing

**c). Management of academic activities through:**

- Ensuring that programmes are relevant
- Ensuring that academic standards are continuously monitored and improved
- Ensuring that the institution's awards are recognized nationally, regionally and international.

**d). Admissions**

- Policies regarding admissions are clear, transparent and accessible by the public
- Policy on equal opportunities is implemented consideration is given to physically disabled and mature students

**e). Students Council**

A body such as a Students Council is operational to represent students in various committees, including the Academic Board.

The Council's voice is taken to the management and appropriate action taken.

**f). Students Welfare**

- An office for students welfare is operational and it is actively supported by management
- There is evidence that students are encouraged to use the services providedg.

### **g).Staff Council**

- A body fitting the description of staff council is active with full participation of staff.
- It caters for the needs of all the institution's staff, ensuring that their rights are respected.
- It positively contributes to the effective management of the institution.

### **h. Staff Welfare**

- Provision is made to have an office or an association to provide support to staff
- It takes an active role in ensuring that staff are listened to and their needs are acted upon in the most appropriate manner

### **i).Staff Appointments, Appraisal and Promotion**

- The institution has well established policies for appointment, appraisal and promotion of staff and that these policies are effectively implemented
- These policies are reviewed to reflect changing circumstances
- Staff resources are effectively deployed: roles and relationships are well defined and understood; duties allocated are appropriate to qualifications, and experience

### **j).Staff Development**

- Performance appraisal is undertaken periodically in a transparent manner with the employment of clearly developed policies.
- Staff are informed of management's recorded perception of their strengths and weaknesses
- Appropriate support and training is given to staff concerned to enable them to overcome weaknesses so as to perform more effectively.
- Opportunities are given to deserving members to further their career.
- Continuing professional development is actively promoted
- Ancillary facilities-staff accommodation, storage space, preparation rooms, amenity accommodation etc. are adequate.
- The teaching staff establishment is sufficient to deliver the curricula
- Staff development needs are systematically identified, in relation to Individual aspirations, the curricula and institutional requirements.
- All staff, academic and non-academic, are given the opportunity with necessary support to undertake appropriate staff development related to identified needs: induction, in-service training,, consultancy, research and other scholarly activities

### **k). The Teaching and Learning Environment**

- The academic environment, physical and social, is generally conducive to learning, and the level of research and other scholarly activities is appropriate to the level of teaching.
- Teaching accommodation is sufficient in quantity and is appropriate for the curricula on offer and for the full range of students.
- The physical environment is adequately maintained in terms of safety, cleanliness, repairs and decor.
- Accommodation, especially specialist accommodation, is optimally used as evidenced by suitable plans, schedules, timetables and control systems.
- There is adequate support in terms of library, technician, administrative, student services, staffing, etc.

### **l). Learning Resources**

- There are adequate specialist facilities - including practical and experimental learning facilities for the curricula given by JNTUK.
- There are sufficient physical resources to deliver the curricula, including equipment, materials and Information and Communications Technology.
- Equipment is up-to-date, readily available and effectively deployed.
- Library, audio-visual, internet access, appropriate software and hardware and other academic services are adequate for the curricula.

### **m). Programme Organization and Delivery**

- Learning programmes are effectively organized and managed.
- Teaching programmes are clearly articulated, made known to students and regularly monitored.
- Coursework and assessment are systematically scheduled.
- Feedback is regularly obtained from students, employers, parents and Alumni and analyzed and acted upon as appropriate.

### **n). Teaching and Learning**

- Teaching and learning are based on explicit learning outcomes which are consistent with programme/course objectives.
- Teaching methods are innovative, varied, and appropriate to the stated learning outcomes and make effective use of available facilities, equipment, materials and aids.
- Teaching is well planned and prepared and effectively performed, taking account of the needs of all categories of students.
- The style and pace of teaching and learning takes due account of the nature of the curricula, students' varied abilities and prior learning, and the specific needs of the very able or weak students equally.

- Teaching approaches encourage independent learning with critical thinking and students take responsibility for their own learning.
- Learning is enriched by appropriate reference to cross-curricular links, current research, industrial applications and development of generic skills such as communication and teamwork.

#### **o). Student Support**

- Students' needs for guidance and support are recognized and provision made for advice and assistance in the curricular, vocational and personal domains.
- Adequate provision is made for information and advice to potential students during the application and enrolment phases.
- Students are effectively supported during their studies by systems of induction, counseling, and provision for remediation and curricular choice.
- Students are adequately prepared for the next stage of study or employment by appropriate contacts, information, advice and training.

#### **p). Monitoring and Assessment**

- A range of assessment methods including coursework, projects, research and examinations etc is used in a planned manner to serve diagnostic, formative and summative purposes.
- Assessment schemes are compatible with the aims and aspects of the curricula as taught.
- The scope and weighting of assessment schemes are clear and known to all concerned and the standards applied are explicit and consistent across the curricula.
- Coursework is regularly set and assessed and is at the appropriate level of attainment.
- Coursework faithfully reflects the full range of curricular aims, including the development of generic skills.
- Student achievement, as represented by their coursework, is comparable with that of students on similar courses elsewhere.
- Students' performance and attitudes indicate a positive and successful learning experience.
- A systematic procedure for keeping record of student progress, for providing feedback to students and taking corrective action where necessary is effectively employed.
- Students have ready access to reasonable appeal procedures.

#### **q. Output, Outcomes and Quality Control**

- Performance indicators are regularly used to inform institutional assessment of achievement in relation to educational aims and learning outcomes.
- Results are monitored and analyzed and appropriate action taken.
- Quality Control arrangements at institutional, department, subject and/or course level are consistent and coherent.

- Quality standards, policies and strategies, are consistently applied and periodically reviewed within the cognate area.
- There is a general commitment to excellence in teaching and learning. apparent in staff and student attitudes in all aspects of provision.

#### **r. Industrial Links/Work-based Experience**

- A committee comprising the institution and industry and other principal stakeholders meets regularly for the purposes of manpower planning.
- An active interface exists with industries for the purposes of identifying programmes of study and suitable work experience compatible with the students' programme.

#### **s. Community Service and Good Citizenship**

- The institution plays an active role in inculcating the spirit of a healthy community and in providing its services and expertise to it to promote psycho-socio-economic integration and development.
- Deliberations and Decision of the Audit Panel.

The audit panel takes note of all the findings. Members discuss their observations and decide on their conclusion, ensuring that it is a true reflection of the state of affairs at the institution. At the end of the audit the panel gives an oral feedback to the top management. Thereafter the institution is given a copy of the draft report within two months of the visit. This is followed by the final report which is sent within a period of 15 days.

### **Types of AAA**

Generally, there are two types of AAA- 1).Internal AAA and 2).External AAA.

#### **Internal AAA**

- i. Internal Audit shall be done by IQAC of the institutions.
- ii. Every Institution is expected to conduct internal AAA at regular intervals to review the programmes and activities at the department level and the institution as a whole. The Internal Audit process might take 3-5 days to complete.

#### **External AAA**

The external audit is to be done in the institution by external peers/experts.

##### **a) Composition of External AAA team**

External Audit team consists of a 2 experts, faculty members who have experience and/or training on academic quality systems, processes and strategies and audit tactics and methodologies.



## **b) The Process of External AAA**

The External Audit needs 2 days to complete.

- i. The External Audit team, in the beginning, will meet and interact with the Principal and the IQAC team to collect the details of the programmes and activities being conducted/undertaken during the period of audit.
- ii. Auditors will then visit all departments and facilities and generally verify the Self Study Report along with supporting documents. They will interact with the HoD and the teacher in charge of quality assurance and will seek for doubts and clarifications if any.
- iii. After conducting the audit in all the departments and facilities, the audit team will sit with the IQAC team to obtain further details, documents and clarifications.
- iv. Before the exit meeting, the external audit team will again interact with the Principal and the IQAC coordinator and present the brief observations and findings of the audit. Both parties (the Principal, the IQAC Coordinator and the Audit Team) can express their views and analysis on the observations and findings of the audit.
- v. Finally, the External Audit team meets the teachers and staff and the Chairman of the Audit team will present a brief summary of the observations and findings of the audit.
- vi. Implementing the suggestions and recommendations of the external peer audit
- vii. The Principal after careful check and review will pass it on to the IQAC for Implementation of the suggestions and recommendations.

## **c) Preparation of Self-study Report**

Each department shall prepare a self-study report, and shall include all the programmes and activities of the department with supporting documents/ evidence giving emphasis to the following points:

- i. The Course plan and Teaching plan along with the programme architecture and logic prepared in the Annual Academic Planning meeting is to be given with due importance
- ii. Innovations implemented for the teaching, learning and evaluation
- iii. Work Diary, Class Diary and Monthly Performance Report (MPR) along with its analysis of the teachers
- iv. Strategies put into practice for the implementation of Outcome-Based Learning (OBE) and PO, PSO and CO mapping
- v. Remedial coaching, Mentoring and counseling, programmes and activities
- vi. Research (including Major and Minor Research), Publication, Consultancy, Project, Tie-ups and collaboration, Joint programmes, etc.
- vii. Seminar/ Conference/ Workshops conducted by the department as well as attended by the staff and students outside the college including paper presentation and chairing the sessions, Start-ups by students and alumni, etc
- viii. Teacher Performance Appraisal, Feedback Analysis of teachers along with Action Taken Report, Department Growth Plan and Personal Growth Plan, Satisfaction Survey and Need-

analysis of students

- ix. Placement activities/initiatives including Soft-skills, Life-skills, Career Skills, Time Management, Image Building, Personal Grooming, etc
- x. Best/ exemplary Practices, Green initiatives, Waste management, Gender sensitivity, Swatch Barat, Ek Bharath Shrestha Bharath, Interdepartmental competition', 'Interdepartmental cooperation, Facilities for the Differently Abled, etc
- xi. Department Icon activities and Celebration of Great Indian Personalities, Minutes of the department meetings, Staff and students welfare activities
- xii. Institutional Extension Activities and Campus Community Initiatives, Campus Industry interactions, etc
- xiii. Alumni Association programmes, activities and interaction and the Resource mobilization through the Alumni.
- xiv. Strengths, weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats/ Challenges of the department describing initiatives to address practices that need improvement
- xv. Future plans, and its implementation strategies and priority-wise plans for Improvement.

Once the Self Study Report is prepared, the external audit team will be invited to conduct the external Academic and Administrative Audits (AAA), IQAC will prepare a schedule for the AAA and will conduct the AAA accordingly in all the departments, administrative units and facilities. On the basis of their visit and observations and discussions with the IQAC Coordinator and the Principal, the external audit team will give a report to the Principal usually in an exit meeting.

#### **d) Implement recommendations from the audit**

The Principal after careful check and review will forward the report of the External Audit team to the IQAC for implementation of the suggestions and recommendations. A detailed plan of action may be prepared to implement the suggestions in a phased and organized manner.