

7.2 Best Practices

D Y Patil Educational Society, Institution Deemed to be University, Kolhapur

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BEST PRACTICE 1

1. **Title of the Practice:** Annual Quality Assurance Exercise [AQuA-X]

2. **Objectives of the Practice**

Aim: To initiate a mechanism for a self-administered, quality audit of departments, addressing QA criteria & requirements with internal focus, converging with external QA systems and providing maximum benefit.

Objectives:

1. Create internal measuring tool
2. Get picture of Current reality
3. Strengthen internal systems
4. Improve QA practices
5. Identify indicators for institution
6. Incentivize performing units

Concept was based on 2 statements taken from the COLRIM Manual:

1. "It is essential to have some mechanism that encourages staff across the institution to take quality assurance seriously"
2. "Much of the value in quality assurance comes from self-assessments conducted within the institutions"

3. **The Context**

The AQuA-X 2018 was designed to be context-driven and acquire a distinctive understanding of the strengths, challenges and potentials of every unit or part thereof assessed.

AQuA-X	Contextual features	Challenges & Solutions
Initiation	After NAAC visit in 2017 September, brainstorming was done with key opinion makers in the institution Need for ongoing QA was recognized	Perceived work involved in QA by faculty
Planning	Time frame of activity was fixed Steps to facilitate faculty participation had to be found External validation of internal data to be done	Faculty incentivization apart from QA enhancement needed – cash awards determined for high performing departments Documentation processes needed to be strengthened
Preparation of evaluation Sheet	Had to be internally focused while converging with external QA [NAAC] and ranking [NIRF] systems. Peer evaluation of sheet was done within University External Peer team evaluated the sheet and made suggestions.	Finding right blend of quantitative and qualitative KPIs, mark allocation and weightages for different criteria. Addition of 2 criteria to strengthen documentation
Presentation for approval	To IQAC and Board of Management for information, input and approval	Final version of program was defined.
Implementation	Started in January 2018 with regular HOD meetings [Phase 1]. Annual external Peer Team validation of departmental work [Phase 2] in Nov' 18.	

7.2 Best Practices

D Y Patil Educational Society, Institution Deemed to be University, Kolhapur

4. The Practice

Practice:

Phase 1:

System of 2 monthly presentations of Heads of Department against a preset format of information required was initiated in January 2018. Presentations were held on 19th April, 29th June, 14th Aug & 8th Oct' 18.

Evaluation Sheet for final annual evaluation covering period from October 2017-Sept 2018 was given to Heads of Department with criteria-marks and weightages given to each criterion.

Phase 2:

Annual 2-day exercise was planned for 28th & 29th November. External Peer Team visited individual departments. Heads of department made departmental presentations [also marked] and took them around the department facilities. Documentation [also marked] was verified by the Peer Team. Feedback was taken from the faculty about the AQuA-X exercise and analyzed.

Assessment of the departments was done by the Peer Team based on

1. Submitted Evaluation Sheet
2. Presentation of HOD
3. Departmental visit

Result:

Final Score of each department was computed by the Peer Team and each department was given a CGPA Score. The Peer Team also did a SWOC Analysis of the University based on the departmental performance. Debriefing of the Peer Team was done in a function on 19th December' 18 when SWOC Analysis was presented and awards were given. Departments ranking in top 3 positions were awarded cash prizes of Rs 4, 3 & 2 Lakhs each.

Post Result:

One-on-one discussions with Heads of Departments on the assessment of their departments will be done. [After NAAC Pilot Study is over]. Strengths and areas for potential improvement will be identified. Mutually agreed upon steps will be identified and undertaken. IQAC will provide all support in form of ideas, training and input as required. Areas of improvement identified across majority departments will be addressed through lectures, training sessions and resource material.

Uniqueness:

Current reality of QA in HEI:

1. All quality assurance exercises are designed to suit a multitude of institutions and often diverse institutions. Thus, certain aspects of the assessment sheets given to individual institutions do not match the purpose, nature or function of that institution.
2. Assessment & Accreditation agencies can not give weightage to all efforts made in improving outcomes or quality in an institution.

AQuA-X Delivered:

1. Opportunity to strengthen specific processes that needed attention in our institution
2. Reward efforts being made to improve output and outcomes and not just the latter
3. Customization of the exercise to meet requirements of NIRF, NAAC and UGC

Limitations:

1. Institutional assessments average out the performances of departments with focused strengths and functions. However, when assessing such departments with the same evaluation sheet, advantages and/or disadvantages would obviously accrue to some departments.

7.2 Best Practices

D Y Patil Educational Society, Institution Deemed to be University, Kolhapur

2. As this was the first year, the evaluation sheet was not optimal and further improvements would be needed.
3. 2-day exercise limited time spent in individual departments

5. Evidence of Success

Some objective and subjective evidences of success of AQuA-X 2018 are:

- All departments participated in the exercise
- Out of 80 HOD presentations in bimonthly meetings, only 5 presentations were missed
- Faculty feedback was overall positive after entire exercise was completed
- Suggestions for improvement of AQuA-X from Heads of Departments were constructive and contributory
- SWOC Analysis of University, done by Peer Team was useful to Institution.
- Results delivered by Peer Team were well accepted as fair and judicious.

The indications from the results:

1. QA processes are being adopted by departments
2. Departmental strengths and weaknesses can be identified
3. Institutional attention needs to be given to two key areas – improving documentation & enhancing use of research facilities in campus. Improving media exposure of University activities was another suggestion of Peer Team.

6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required

Problems Encountered: None apart from those mentioned in the Challenges and Solutions

Resources Required:

1. Pro-active, well-supported IQAC
2. Cooperative faculty
3. Individualized Assessment Sheets – reviewed by internal and external Peers
4. Expert Peer Team to be appointed and hosted.

BEST PRACTICE 2

Title of Practice:

COMPREHENSIVE RESEARCH PROMOTION PRACTICE

Aims & Objectives:

The aim was to foster research participation amongst undergraduate and post graduate students of the university and contribute to the national pool of young scientists. Objectives are:

1. To institutionalize a comprehensive system for promotion of research at all levels of educational training.
2. To enhance student participation in research activities
3. Facilitate and provide enhanced support and opportunity for research
4. To provide a platform to emerging researchers to express their own innovative ideas and creativity leading to research initiative
5. To give an opportunity to scholars to gain interim feedback on the research projects from senior experienced faculty and experts in the field.
6. Provide opportunity to research scholars to interact with Eminent Scientists & Teachers.

7.2 Best Practices

D Y Patil Educational Society, Institution Deemed to be University, Kolhapur

Context:

The need to generate scientific temper and inquiry amongst students to create tomorrow's researchers was felt along with a recognition of the scope for improvement in the research output of the University. A focused planning to improve the research in the University was made. A commitment had been made to the visiting NAAC Peer team to improve our research output and recommendations made in the Peer Team Report referred to strengthening research efforts.

The Practice:

A **Comprehensive Research Promotion Practice** was designed and instituted in 2013 in definitive steps. The Research Policy of the University provided the vision and mandate. Standing mechanisms were put in place for different practices:



Research Education: Workshops for UG, PG and PhD students are conducted by internal and invited faculty each year.

Research Publications: 'Research Methodology of PG students' was published by University in 2017 for researchers in medical and nursing fields. University also has the Research Policy, Ethics Policy, Thesis writing guidelines, IPR ordinances to help students.

Assistance and Coordination: Provided through a Research Guidance Cell, RICH Cell and Institutional Research Committee in addition to individual research guides, faculty and statutory bodies. Appointments of Research

Director, Associate Dean for Research, Research Coordinator, RICH Cell Coordinator, Biostatistician all have been made. MOUs with national and international institutions have been signed to facilitate interaction, collaboration and exchange of faculty, student and ideas.

Facilities: Advanced Research Facility, Research in Comprehensive Health [RICH] Cell, Animal House, Cadaveric BioSkill Lab, Yoga Lab, Central Hospital Laboratory, Clinical Skill Lab, Digital Computer Labs, Software like SPSS, Turnitin, Learning Management System all are available.

Research Committees: 2 research bodies Research and Recognition Committee and the Board of Postgraduate teaching and Research function in addition to the Institutional Research Committee.

Uniqueness:

Unique is the practice of Research Platforms at the level of Undergraduate, Post-Graduate and Doctoral studies providing budding and career scientists an opportunity to train and present their work and interact with senior researchers. These are

- Institution of Basic Introduction To Medical Research [BITMER] Certification : UG students in MBBS program conduct one clinical research and one community-based research and undergo specified hours of research training. Community interventions are also done based on the research promoting evidence-based practices.
- SMART (Second MBBS Alliance for Research and Training) for UG students
- COURT (Campaign on University Research and Training). for PG students
- Anveshan, the annual competition event by Association by Indian Universities for UG, PG and PhD students is hosted by our University for last 4 years.

Limitations:

Lack of optimal utilization of the potential of facilities within campus.

7.2 Best Practices

D Y Patil Educational Society, Institution Deemed to be University, Kolhapur

Evidence of Success:

1. 70 Scopus Publications in last 2 years against a total of 200 since 2010
2. 1 international patent awarded, 4 National Patents published in 2017-18
3. 49 faculty training programs organized viz. conferences, workshops, seminars, etc.
4. 293 research publications in national and international journals in last two years.
5. Rs 104 lakhs received from funding agencies (60,59,603/- in University accounts) for research with total sanction of over Rs 270 lakhs
6. 2 faculty have gone abroad for fellowships:
 - a. Dr Manisha Phadtare for Post Doctoral Fellowship awarded by Swedish Government
 - b. Dr Raghavendra Bohara for Irish Post Doctoral Fellowship by Ireland Government.
7. University has with it 2 prestigious faculty
 - a. Dr Umakant Patil- DST -Inspire Fellow for 5 years
 - b. Dr J L Gunjkar – Ramanujan Fellow for 5 years
 - c. Dr Saji Thomas- Research Associate for 3 months
8. Achievements of some faculty & students in research:
 - a. Young Scientist Award to Dr Indumathi S by IRMC, Chandigarh, May 12-13, 2018
 - b. Discovery and Depositary of new strain by Mr. Abhinandan Patil with Certificate of Deposit (Lactobacillus rhamnosus strain MCC3594), NCMR on 18th Jan 2018
 - c. Discovery and Depositary of new strain by Mr. Abhinandan Patil with Certificate of Deposit (Lactobacillus rhamnosus strain (MCC3595) NCMR on 18th Jan 2018
 - d. IIT-Mumbai's Medha awardee was Dr Rajat Kumar in 2017 for being member of winning Interdisciplinary team for Innovation of medical device
 - e. Invitation to do an Internship in France received by Ms. Akshita Sharma from the Inserm Aix Marseille, University, France. Prof. Marcel Blot 2018
9. Six JRFs in SERB-DST funded projects and 4
10. Undergraduate research projects
 - a. 5 ICMR Scholarships awarded to our students
 - b. 75 UG research projects conducted in Dept of Microbiology, Community Medicine and Pharmacology.

Problems Encountered in last year:

- Coordinating working hours to make increased time for research activities was a challenge for all faculty who were used to focusing on clinical and teaching duties.
- Increase in the participation from other colleges in SMART was not satisfactory.
- Confusion about the list of journals recognized by UGC, Scopus etc amongst faculty
- Student confidence in presentation to be further worked on.

Resources Required:

1. Research guides
2. Motivated students
3. College Infrastructure
4. Communication systems

Notes:

- The number of articles from clinical faculty is increasing since institution of this program.

7.2 Best Practices

D Y Patil Educational Society, Institution Deemed to be University, Kolhapur

- Collaborative research work has begun even within the silos of medical college departments.
- Incentivization of research yields good results.