Criteria & Standards for Self-Assessment of Academic Programs

(Reproduced from the SELF ASSESSMENT MANUAL BY HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION OF PAKISTAN)

Criterion 1: PROGRAM MISSION, OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

Each program must have a mission, measurable objectives and expected outcomes for graduates. Outcomes include competency and tasks graduates are expected to perform after completing the program. A strategic plan must be in place to achieve the program objectives. The extent to which these objectives are achieved through continuous assessment and improvements must be demonstrated.

Standard 1-1: The program must have documented measurable objectives that support Faculty / College and institution mission statements.

Standard 1-2: The program must have documented outcomes for graduating students. It must be demonstrated that the outcomes support the program objectives and that graduating students are capable of performing these outcomes.

Standard 1-3: The results of program’s assessment and the extent to which they are used to improve the program must be documented.

Standard 1-4: The department must assess its overall performance periodically using quantifiable measures.

Criterion 2: CURRICULUM DESIGN AND ORGANIZATION

The curriculum must be designed and organized to achieve the program’s objectives and outcomes. Also course objectives must be in line with program outcomes. The breakdown of the curriculum must satisfy the standards specified in this section. Curriculum standards are specified in terms of credit hours of study. A semester credit hour equals one class hour or two to three laboratory hours per week. The semester is approximately fifteen weeks.

Provide the following information about the program’s curriculum:

A. Title of degree program.
B. Definition of credit hour.

C. Degree plan: attach a flow-chart showing the prerequisites, core, and elective courses.

D. Show curriculum breakdown in terms of mathematics and basic sciences, major requirements, social sciences and other requirements.

E. For each course in the program that can be counted for credit provide 1-2 pages specifying the following:
   - Course title
   - Course objectives and outcomes
   - Catalog description
   - Text book(s) and references
   - Syllabus breakdown in lectures
   - Computer usage
   - Laboratory
   - Content breakdown in credit hours (if applicable) as basic science, math, engineering science, and design for engineering discipline, general education requirements, business requirements and major requirements for the Business Studies and others.

**Standard 2-1:** The curriculum must be consistent and supports the program’s documented objectives.

**Standard 2-2:** Theoretical background, problems analysis and solution design must be stressed within the program’s core material.

**Standard 2-3:** The curriculum must satisfy the core requirements for the program, as specified by the respective accreditation body.

**Standard 2-4:** The curriculum must satisfy the major requirements for the program as specified by HEC, the respective accreditation body / councils.
Standard 2-5: The curriculum must satisfy general education, arts, and professional and other discipline requirements for the program, as specified by the respective accreditation body / council.

Standard 2-6: Information technology component of the curriculum must be integrated throughout the program.

Standard 2-7: Oral and written communication skills of the student must be developed and applied in the program.

Criterion 3: LABORATORIES AND COMPUTING FACILITIES

Laboratories and computing facilities must be adequately available and accessible to faculty members and students to support teaching and research activities. To meet this criterion the standards in this section must be satisfied. In addition departments may benchmark with similar departments in reputable institutions to identify their shortcomings if any.

Provide the following information about the laboratories and computing facilities:

Describe the laboratory/ computer facilities that are available for use in the program under assessment. Indicate for each lab the following:

- Laboratory Title
- Location and area
- Objectives
- Adequacy for instruction
- Courses taught
- Software available if applicable
- Major Apparatus
- Major Equipment
- Safety regulations

Standard 3-1: Laboratory manuals/documentation/instructions for experiments must be available and readily accessible to faculty and students.
Standard 3-2: There must be adequate support personnel for instruction and maintaining the laboratories.

Standard 3-3: The University computing infrastructure and facilities must be adequate to support program’s objectives.

Criterion 4: STUDENT SUPPORT AND ADVISING

Student must have adequate support to complete the program in a timely manner and must have ample opportunity to interact with their instructors and receive timely advice about program requirements and career alternatives. To meet this criterion the standards in this section must be satisfied.

Standard 4-1: Courses must be offered with sufficient frequency and number for students to complete the program in a timely manner.

Standard 4-2: Courses in the major area of study must be structured to ensure effective interaction between students, faculty and teaching assistants.

Standard 4-3: Guidance on how to complete the program must be available to all students and access to academic advising must be available to make course decisions and career choices.

Criterion 5: PROCESS CONTROL

The processes by which major functions are delivered must be in place, controlled, periodically reviewed, evaluated and continuously improved. To meet this criterion a set of standards must be satisfied.

Standard 5-1: The process by which students are admitted to the program must be based on quantitative and qualitative criteria and clearly documented. This process must be periodically evaluated to ensure that it is meeting its objectives.

Standard 5-2: The process by which students are registered in the program and monitoring of students progress to ensure timely completion of the program must be documented. This process must be periodically evaluated to ensure that it is meeting its objectives.
Standard 5-3: The process of recruiting and retaining highly qualified faculty members must be in place and clearly documented. Also processes and procedures for faculty evaluation, promotion must be consistent with institution mission statement. These processes must be periodically evaluated to ensure that it is meeting with its objectives.

Standard 5-4: The process and procedures used to ensure that teaching and delivery of course material to the students emphasizes active learning and that course learning outcomes are met. The process must be periodically evaluated to ensure that it is meeting its objectives.

Standard 5-5: The process that ensures that graduates have completed the requirements of the program must be based on standards, effective and clearly documented procedures. This process must be periodically evaluated to ensure that it is meeting its objectives.

Criterion 6: FACULTY

Faculty members must be current and active in their discipline and have the necessary technical depth and breadth to support the program. There must be enough faculty members to provide continuity and stability, to cover the curriculum adequately and effectively, and to allow for scholarly activities. To meet this criterion the standards in this section must be satisfied.

Standard 6-1: There must be enough full time faculty who are committed to the program to provide adequate coverage of the program areas/courses with continuity and stability. The interests and qualifications of all faculty members must be sufficient to teach all courses, plan, modify and update courses and curricula. All faculty members must have a level of competence that would normally be obtained through graduate work in the discipline. The majority of the faculty must hold a Ph.D. in the discipline.

Standard 6-2: All faculty members must remain current in the discipline and sufficient time must be provided for scholarly activities and professional development. Also, effective programs for faculty development must be in place.

Standard 6-3: All faculty members should be motivated and have job satisfaction to excel in their profession.
Criterion 7: INSTITUTIONAL FACILITIES

Institutional facilities, including library, classrooms and offices must be adequate to support the objective of the program. To satisfy this criterion a number of standards must be met.

**Standard 7-1:** The institution must have the infrastructure to support new trends in learning such as e-learning.

**Standard 7-2:** The library must possess an up-to-date technical collection relevant to the program and must be adequately staffed with professional personnel.

**Standard 7-3:** Class-rooms must be adequately equipped and offices must be adequate to enable faculty to carry out their responsibilities.

Criterion 8: INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

The institution’s support and the financial resources for the program must be sufficient to provide an environment in which the program can achieve its objectives and retain its strength.

**Standard 8-1:** There must be sufficient support and financial resources to attract and retain high quality faculty and provide the means for them to maintain competence as teachers and scholars.

**Standard 8-2:** There must be an adequate number of high quality graduate students, research assistants and Ph.D. students.

**Standard 8-3:** Financial resources must be provided to acquire and maintain Library holdings, laboratories and computing facilities.