Academic and Administrative Audit Policy

I. PURPOSE

An essential element for achieving excellence in Higher Education is the combination of Academic and Administrative Audit (AAA). These two concepts are intertwined, addressing different facets of both academic and administrative aspects within a Higher Education institution. The attainment of high-quality academics necessitates a robust administrative support system. The Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) plays a pivotal role in conducting AAA, systematically monitoring and evaluating institutional processes through internal and external reviews. The AAA involves a peer review process, encompassing a self-study and on-site assessments conducted by peers from both within and outside the institution.

Academic Audit:

An academic audit is a systematic and scientific approach to evaluate the quality of the academic processes within an institution. It is intricately connected to ensuring quality assurance and improving the overall quality of academic activities in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

Administrative Audit:

It can be defined as a procedure for assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of administrative processes. This encompasses the evaluation of policies, strategies, and functions across diverse administrative departments, as well as overseeing the overall control of the administrative system.

II. OBJECTIVES

Major objectives of Academic and Administrative Audit:

1. Examining and comprehending the current system to assess the strengths and challenges within Departments and Administrative Units, and proposing methods for improvement and overcoming obstacles.

2. Identifying hindrances in the existing administrative mechanisms and pinpointing opportunities for reforms in academia, administration, and examinations.

3. Assessing the optimal utilization of financial and other resources.

4. Recommending continuous improvement methods for maintaining quality, taking into

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consideration criteria and reports from NAAC and other relevant bodies.

The review process involves the participation of internal committee members and external academicians. As part of the audit procedure, the IQAC has devised an evaluation proforma structured according to the criteria specified by NAAC. The departmental evaluation is conducted in a criteria-wise manner, addressing: The criteria-wise evaluation of the department includes:

A) Course content

B) Teaching - Learning Process

C) Examination and Evaluation system

D) Results

E) Research and consultancy activities

F) Knowledge upgradation

G) Infrastructure

H) Department Administration

III. POLICY COVERAGE

Approach towards AAA:

Creating renowned institutions or universities of national and global importance requires the implementation of a strong and continuous academic and administrative audit framework. P P Savani Universityhas adopted a two-fold strategy, incorporating both Internal Audit and External Audit, to guarantee the efficiency of its audit systems.

Internal Audit:

The Internal Quality Assessment Cell (IQAC) of the University will conduct internal audits at regular intervals. The IQAC has the authority to involve faculty members in the audit process. Auditors will assess the AAA form submitted by department heads, scrutinize supporting documents, and may request additional information and clarifications. Following document verification, internal auditors will compile the AAA report for each department. The internal audit

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process is expected to be finalized within a period of 4-6 days.

External Audit:

External peers or experts will conduct the institution's external audit.

Composition of External AAA team

External Audit team should consist of at least 2 faculty experts from other universities/institutions who have experience and/or training on academic quality systems, processes and strategies and audit tactics and methodologies.

The Process of External AAA

The External Audit process must be concluded within a 2-day timeframe. Here are the detailed steps involved:

1. Initially, the External Audit team will engage with the Provost or Vice Chancellor and the IQAC team to gather information about the programs and activities conducted or undertaken during the audit period.

2. Subsequently, auditors will visit all departments and facilities to validate the Academic Administrative Audit form and supporting documents. They will interact with the Head of the Department/Coordinator and the teacher responsible for quality assurance, addressing any doubts or seeking clarifications.

3. After completing audits in all departments and facilities, the audit team will collaborate with the IQAC team for additional details, documents, and clarifications.

4. Ultimately, the External Audit team will compile its report and convene with the University's teachers and staff. The Chairman of the Audit team will provide a concise summary of the audit's observations and findings, presenting the audit report to the Vice-Chancellor.

5. The Provost or Vice-Chancellor will review the report and forward it to the IQAC for the submission of proposals for implementing the suggested improvements and recommendations.

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Periodicity:

P P Savani University shall undertake both the internal and external AAA exercise on annual basis.

Process:

The University has established its unique procedures and templates, incorporating modifications specified by NAAC. The primary emphases of these outlined processes include:

a) Teaching-Learning and Evaluation Process

b) Articulating quality with respect to learning outcomes

c) Cultivating a research-oriented culture

d) Ensuring continuity and consistency aligned with the institution's vision and mission

e) Implementing best practices tailored to both the institution and its departments.

f) Assessing student performance

g) Monitoring student placement and progression

h) Pursuing continuous improvement for the comprehensive development of students, faculty, and the institution, emphasizing total quality.

i) Upholding principles of good governance.

Criteria For Academic Audit

Upon obtaining approval from the relevant authorities, the IQAC of the respective institution has the authority to develop strategies and procedures for conducting audits, tailored to their specific needs and adhering to the seven criteria established by accreditation bodies. The Internal Audit process is expected to be completed within a span of 4-6 days.

Key areas for the Audit Panel's consideration include:

1. **Institutional Mission, Vision and Quality Policy**

   a. The institution's mission is clear, understood, and embraced by the staff.

   b. The goals and objectives align with the mission and are practical and attainable.

2. **Institutional Approach to Quality Assurance**

   a. The institution has embraced a functional definition of quality assurance that aligns with its mission.

   b. A methodical and all-encompassing approach to quality assurance, impacting essential

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services across the institution, is being executed.

    c. There is a discernible quality assurance handbook covering all affected activities.

    d. The quality assurance handbook is accessible to all departments for consultation by every staff member.

3. Administrative and Management Issues

A Governance

A1. **Principles of good governance are evident and they are translated into:**

i.   Operating transparently to enable public access to its policies and decisions.

ii.   Promoting participation from across the institution in policy formulation.

iii. Ensuring clarity in specific responsibilities, with members assuming appropriate roles based on their hierarchy.

iv. Ensuring policies are implemented promptly and monitoring their execution.

v.   Ensuring cohesiveness in the approach of the governing body.

A2. **Top management Leadership is demonstrable through:**

i.   Formulating and disseminating the institution's strategic plan, outlining clear short-term and long-term goals and objectives.

ii.   Crafting and conveying the institution's mission and Plan E.

iii. Making productive connections with external stakeholders.

iv. Creating an organizational structure that minimizes bureaucracy, enhancing communication, efficiency, and effectiveness.

a. Management of funds through:

(i) Ensuring openness and accountability

(ii) Appropriately budgeting and rationalizing funds with justification, considering both short-term and long-term objectives

(iii) Guaranteeing the cost-effectiveness of programs

(iv) Conducting effective internal audits

b. Management of academic activities through:

(i) Ensuring the relevance of programs

(ii) Continuously monitoring and enhancing academic standards

(iii) Ensuring national, regional, and international recognition of the institution's awards

c. Admissions:

(i) Admission policies are easily understood, transparent, and available to the public.

(ii) The equal opportunities policy is put into practice, taking into account the needs of physically disabled and mature students.

d. Students Council

(i) An entity like the Students Council is active in representing students across different committees, including the Academic Board.

(ii) The Council's perspectives are conveyed to the management, and appropriate measures are implemented in response.

e. Students Welfare

(i) There is an active office dedicated to students' welfare, and it receives consistent support from the management.

(ii) There is proof indicating that students are actively encouraged to utilize the available services.

f. Teachers' Council

(i) A teachers' council, characterized by its active involvement of all teachers, is in operation.

(ii) This council addresses the requirements of the entire staff within the institution, ensuring the preservation of their rights.

(iii) It makes a positive contribution to the efficient administration of the institution.

g. Staff Welfare

(i) There is a provision for establishing an office or association to offer support to staff.

(ii) This entity actively ensures that staff members are heard, and their needs are addressed in the most suitable manner.

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h. Staff Appraisal and Promotion

(i) The organization has firmly established protocols for the evaluation and advancement of its staff, ensuring their effective implementation.

(ii) Regular reviews of these policies are conducted to adapt to changing circumstances.

(iii) Efficient deployment of staff resources is ensured, with clearly defined roles and relationships, and duties assigned in accordance with qualifications and experience.

i. Staff Development

(i) Performance evaluation occurs periodically in a transparent manner, following well-defined policies.

(ii) Management communicates its recorded assessment of staff strengths and weaknesses to ensure transparency.

(iii) Adequate support and training are provided to empower staff to overcome identified weaknesses and enhance their overall effectiveness.

(iv) Opportunities for career advancement are extended to deserving individuals.

(v) Actively promoting continuing professional development is a priority.

(vi) Ancillary facilities such as staff accommodation, storage space, preparation rooms, and amenity accommodations are sufficient.

(vii) The teaching staff establishment is adequate to deliver the required curricula.

(viii) Identifying staff development needs systematically, considering individual aspirations, curricula, and institutional requirements, is a priority.

(ix) All staff members, both academic and non-academic, are provided with opportunities and necessary support to engage in appropriate staff development activities related to identified needs, including induction, in-service training, consultancy, research, and other scholarly pursuits.

j. The Teaching and Learning Environment

(i) The learning environment, encompassing both physical and social aspects, is generally favorable for academic pursuits. The level of research and scholarly activities aligns appropriately with the teaching standards.

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(ii) The quantity of teaching facilities is sufficient and well-suited for the offered curricula and the diverse student population.

(iii) The physical surroundings are adequately maintained, ensuring safety, cleanliness, timely repairs, and a pleasing decor.

(iv) Accommodation, especially specialized spaces, is optimally utilized, supported by well-structured plans, schedules, timetables, and control systems.

(v) Comprehensive support services, including library resources, technical assistance, administrative support, student services, and staffing, are available at satisfactory levels.

k. Learning Resources

(i) P P Savani University provides ample specialized facilities, encompassing practical and experimental learning resources needed for its prescribed curricula.

(ii) Sufficient physical resources, including equipment, materials, and Information and Communications Technology, are available for the effective delivery of the curricula.

(iii) Up-to-date equipment is easily accessible and deployed efficiently.

(iv) The library, audio-visual resources, internet access, appropriate software and hardware, and other academic services meet the necessary requirements for the curricula.

l. Program Organization and Delivery

(i) The organization and management of learning programs are executed efficiently.

(ii) Teaching programs are clearly defined, communicated to students, and subject to regular monitoring.

(iii) Coursework and assessments are scheduled in a systematic manner.

(iv) Regular feedback from students, employers, parents, and alumni is obtained, analyzed, and acted upon as needed.

m. Teaching and Learning

(i) The foundation of teaching and learning lies in explicit learning outcomes that align with the objectives of the program/course.

(ii) Innovative, diverse, and suitable teaching methods are employed to achieve the stated learning outcomes, making effective use of available facilities, equipment, materials, and aids.

(iii) Teaching is meticulously planned and prepared, ensuring effective delivery that considers the needs of all student categories.

(iv) The teaching style and pace are thoughtfully adapted to the nature of the curricula, the varied abilities and prior learning of students, addressing the specific needs of both highly capable and weaker students equally.

(v) Teaching methods promote independent learning coupled with critical thinking, fostering a sense of responsibility in students for their own learning.

(vi) Learning experiences are enhanced by incorporating relevant cross-curricular connections, current research, industrial applications, and the development of essential skills such as communication and teamwork.

n. Student Support

(i) Recognition of students' needs for guidance and support is reflected in the provision of advice and assistance in curricular, vocational, and personal domains.

(ii) Sufficient measures are in place to provide information and guidance to potential students throughout the application and enrollment stages.

(iii) Effective support is extended to students during their studies through induction systems, counseling services, and provisions for remediation and curricular decision-making.

(iv) Adequate preparation for the next stage of study or employment is ensured through appropriate contacts, information, advice, and training for students.

o. Monitoring and Assessment

(i) Various assessment methods, such as coursework, projects, research, and examinations, are systematically employed to fulfill diagnostic, formative, and summative purposes.

(ii) Assessment schemes align with the aims and elements of the taught curricula.

(iii) The extent and weightage of assessment schemes are transparent and communicated to all stakeholders, and the applied standards are explicit and consistent across the entire curricula.

(iv) Coursework is consistently assigned, evaluated, and set at an appropriate level of achievement.

(v) Coursework authentically encompasses the entire spectrum of curricular goals, including the development of generic skills.

(vi) Student achievement, as reflected in their coursework, is comparable to that of students in similar courses elsewhere.

(vii) Positive student performance and attitudes indicate a successful learning experience.

(viii) A systematic procedure for recording student progress, providing feedback, and implementing corrective measures when necessary is effectively implemented.

(ix) Students have readily available access to fair appeal procedures.

p. Output, Outcomes and Quality Control

(i) Institutional assessment of achievement concerning educational aims and learning outcomes relies on regular utilization of performance indicators.

(ii) Results are continually monitored and analyzed, with appropriate actions taken as needed.

(iii) Quality control arrangements are coherent and consistent at various levels, including institutional, departmental, subject, and/or course levels.

(iv) Quality standards, policies, and strategies within the relevant area are consistently applied and periodically reviewed.

(v) A broad dedication to excellence in teaching and learning is evident in the attitudes of both staff and students across all aspects of provision.

q. Industrial Links/Work-based Experience

(i) Regular meetings are held by a committee that includes representatives from the institution, industry, and other stakeholders, with the aim of engaging in manpower planning.

(ii) There is an ongoing and dynamic interaction with industries to identify study programs and appropriate work experiences that align with the needs of the students.

r. Community Service and Good Citizenship

(i) The institution actively contributes to fostering a healthy community spirit and offers its services and expertise to promote psycho-social, economic integration, and development.

Audit Panel Discussions and Decisions

The audit panel acknowledges all the findings, engaging in discussions to deliberate on their observations. They collectively reach a conclusion, ensuring it accurately reflects the institution's state of affairs. Following the audit, the panel provides oral feedback to the top management. Subsequently, the institution receives a draft report within two months of the visit, followed by the final report within 15 days.

Implement recommendations from the audit:

After a thorough examination and assessment, the Vice-Chancellor will transmit the External Audit team's report to the IQAC for the execution of the suggested improvements and recommendations. A comprehensive action plan should be formulated to implement the suggestions in a systematic and phased manner.

Registrar,
P P Savani University
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