VIGNAN'S

Foundation for Science, Technology & Research

(Deemed to be University)

-Estd. u/s 3 of UGC Act 1956

NAAC A
Accredited

Accademic and Administrative Audit (AAA) Committee Report

14-16 February, 2019

A REPORT ON

ACADEMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE AUDIT (AAA)

VIGNAN'S FOUNDATION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND RESEARCH

(VFSTR) (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY), VADLAMUDI, GUNTUR DIST.,

ANDHRA PRADESH

We, the Members of the Academic and Administrative Audit Committee (AAAC) express our sincere thanks and gratitude to Dr. M.Y.S. Prasad, Vice-Chancellor for entrusting us with the task of auditing the academic and administrative aspects of Vignan's Foundation for Science, Technology and Research (VFSTR). The Committee appreciates the academic standards maintained and administrative reforms implemented for the overall development of the VFSTR.

The Committee Members visited all the academic departments and administrative sections, had a detailed discussion with the respective Heads of the Departments and sections. Further, the Committee also interacted with the faculty members, students, and research scholars.

Based on the observations and evaluation of the aforesaid academic departments, administrative offices, and service departments, a detailed report is prepared and submitted to the Vice-Chancellor of VFSTR.
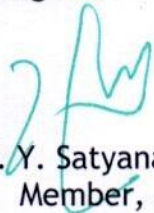
The Committee places on record its heartfelt thanks to Prof. Ramamurthy Naidu, Chancellor VFSTR, Dr. M.Y.S. Prasad, Vice-Chancellor and the Registrar Comm. Dr. M.S. Ragunadhan for cooperating at all levels of our Academic and Administrative Audit during our visits to Academic departments, Administrative offices, and Service departments.

The Committee also expresses its appreciation and sincere thanks to Dr. Ramakrishna Dean IQAC and his entire team.
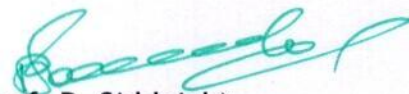
The Committee focuses its observations and evaluations on key aspects of both Academic and Administrative aspects namely: Background, Introduction, Infrastructure, Academic programs, Curricular Design and Development, Student enrolment and fee structure, Faculty details, Teaching-learning and evaluation process, Promotion of the research, Collaboration and extension activities, Library and IT infrastructure, Student Support and Student Progression, Organization Structure and Apex Bodies, Faculty Empowerment, Development, and Enrichment, Administrative Practices and Participative Management, Financial Management, Quality Improvement and IQAC, Best Practices of the Institute and Strategic Plans for Future Growth and gave its observations in each of the above aspects in relation to norms and stipulations of the statutory and regulatory bodies i.e., University

1

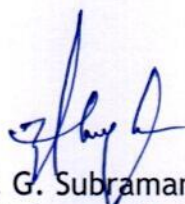Grants Commission (UGC), All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) and Pharmacy Council of India (PCI)

With regards

(Prof. Y. Satyanarayana)
Member, AAAC

(Prof. G. Subramanyam)
Chairman, AAAC

(Prof. P. Siddaiah)
Member, AAAC

BACKGROUND OF THE UNIVERSITY

Vignan's Foundation for Science, Technology and Research (VFSTR) was established in the year 2008 as a Deemed to be University under sec 3 of UGC Act, 1956. The origin of the University could be traced back to the Vignan Engineering College which was established in the year 1997, at Vadlamudi under Lavu Educational Society. Within a short span of a decade the VFSTR has been able to build a reputation for itself on par with other Universities of more than 25 to 30 years of standing. Every year, VFSTR has been able to place 75 – 80 per cent of its outgoing students in various MNCs and of the remaining pursue higher education both in India and abroad.

The University is imparting quality education in accordance with the changing times and in tune with the requirements of the society. The University was accredited with 'A' Grade by the NAAC in the year 2015 with CGPA of 3.02. Subsequently, the University Grants Commission (UGC) & AICTE inspected VFSTR during 27-29 Sep 2018 to review its functioning and recommended continuation of the Deemed to be University status. Besides, VFSTR has been accorded recognition as a Scientific and Research Organization (SIRO) by the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, Ministry of Science and Technology, Govt. of India in September 2018.

The University is offering various programs in Engineering, Business Management, Computer applications, Science, Humanities, and Pharmacy with 12 academic departments. Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) with continuous assessment is implemented by the University since its inception to provide academic flexibility to the students.

Vignan's Foundation for Science, Technology & Research (VFSTR) (Deemed to be University) has initiated the Academic and Administrative Audit in its true spirit. For this purpose, Vice-Chancellor of VFSTR appointed three member Committee with senior academicians to carry out the Academic and Administrative Audit of the institute for the period 2015 – 2018 i.e. for three years. The objectives of the Committee are to review and find out the efficacy and efficiency of policies, implementation, and outcomes in the areas of academics and administration. The Committee specifically notes that administrative set up and organizational management is an essential part to achieve academic excellence – i.e., administrative, and academic aspects are highly interrelated.

1. **Prof. G. Subramanyam**   -   Chairman
    Former Vice-Chancellor, Gandhi Institute of Technology
    and Management, Visakhapatnam
    Former Registrar, Andhra University, Visakhapatnam
    Former Principal, College of Arts and Commerce,
    Commercial and Management, AU, Visakhapatnam

2. **Prof. (Dr.) Y. Satyanarayana**   -   Member
    First Vice-Chancellor, Damodaram Sanjivayya National
    Law University, Visakhapatnam
    Founding Director, School of Law, Gandhi Institute of

Technology and Management, Visakhapatnam

3. **Prof. P. Siddaiah**   -   Member
   Principal, ANU College of Engineering & Technology,
   Acharya Nagarjuna University, Nagarjuna Nagar, Guntur

4. **Prof. M. Ramakrishna**   -   Coordinator
   Dean IQAC, VFSTR

   The Terms of Reference of the Committee consisted of a thorough and comprehensive assessment of the existing Academic and Administrative processes of the university. The Committee visited all the academic departments, laboratories, central facilities, library, conference halls, seminar halls, administrative office, canteen, biogas plant, animal house, centers of excellence, Research Centres etc., of the University during 14-16 Feb 2019.

   During the visit, the Committee had an elaborate interaction with the Vice-Chancellor, and Heads of both academic and service Departments on various aspects relating to the academic and administrative activities in the University. The Committee also had an interaction with the teaching faculty and students separately seeking information on the facilities, grievances, comments, or suggestions for the overall improvement of the University. **The Committee had the benefit of going through the extensive documentation compiled by the Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) on the University along with the summary analysis of the data.**

A report of the AAA Committee of VFSTR (Deemed to be University) carried out from 14-16 Feb. 2019 is submitted herewith.

4

1. Introduction:

The major task before the AAA Committee is to examine or to understand the existing system and audit the policies and implementation vis-à-vis the norms and rules of the Statutory Authorities UGC, AICTE and PCI.

2. Details of various criteria / parameters:

2.1 Infrastructure:

Status: The campus is spread over 42.86 acers with a built up area (for instruction, administration, and amenities) of a total of 71,400 Sqm. The circulation area of 17300 Sqm is about 25per cent of total instructional and amenities area. The institute also has about 35000 Sqm area for hostels (separately for boys and girls). The VFSTR has a very good central facilities such as Library, Canteen, Guest house, Health centre, and other sports facilities.

There are 125 class rooms, 30 tutorial rooms, 114 laboratories and research centres. All the teaching faculty are provided with staff rooms / staff cubicles.

A new building with a built up area of 45000 Sqm is under construction and likely to be completed soon. Around 30000 Sqm will house Class rooms, research centres, student facilities, project implementation labs etc. New facilities like Biogas plant, Animal House, Structural Engineering lab, Robotics lab, and 3D printing design lab are established in the end of 2018 with state-of-art equipment.

Special English Language labs are existing in VFSTR and they cater to regular English Courses, and special 100-hour English Course being offered under MoU with Cambridge University, UK for PET and BEC English Proficiency Certification.

Norms / Stipulations of Statutory Authorities:
UGC and AICTE require about 12 to 15 acres of area for the institute of this nature covering areas of Engineering, Management and Pharmacy.

The built-up area required is 9 Sqm per student.

AICTE recommends a special Language Laboratory for imparting to the students capabilities in speaking, reading and writing in English Language.

Observations / Comments / Recommendations of the Committee:

The Committee is happy to note that the campus area is much more than the stipulation. All the class rooms, laboratories, Seminar halls, and Administrative offices are spacious and well ventilated. The

infrastructure is well maintained. The number of class rooms and laboratories meet the requirements of the sanctioned student strength and divisions planned for all the UG and PG programs in the areas of Engineering, Management and Pharmacy. The actual built-up (instructional, Administrative and Amenities) area per student is 12.5 Sqm.

Committee noted the special English course and English Language laboratory help students in attaining communication capabilities, and more than meets the recommendations of the AICTE.

Committee feels that there is scope to further improve indoor sports facilities of the institute.

2.2 Academic Programs

Status:

VFSTR offers 19 Undergraduate programs, B.Tech. in 15 programs BBA, BCA, B.Sc., Pharmacy, 9 Engineering PG Programs, MBA, and MCA. The total sanctioned students' strength is 8820 out of which UG programs sanctioned students' strength is 7830. The sanctioned PG strength is 990. The total enrolled students' strength is 6759 against the total sanctioned strengths for the AY 2018-19.

Norms / Stipulations of Statutory Authorities:

The first time approval by AICTE for the admissions into Deemed to be universities in the year 2017-18 took care of all the Engineering and Management programs. The Extension of Approval for 2018-19 is also obtained from AICTE. The approval for B. Pharmacy program is obtained from Pharmacy Council of India (PCI).

Observations / Comments / Recommendations of the Committee:

The Committee verified the approvals of AICTE and PCI. The admitted students' strength is as per the approved strength. Committee also noted that all the programs and the admissions are made as per the approvals of the Board of Management (BoM) of the VFSTR, and information submitted to UGC as per norms.

2.3 Curriculum Design and Development

Status:

VFSTR has a practice of revising academic curriculum once in three years for engineering UG, engineering PG, and once in two years for

Management programs. The currently running engineering programs are as per R16 Regulations revised in 2016. The total number of course which are revised works out to 675. Each department offers value added courses being taught by industry experts on the latest subjects.

The curriculum takes care of Basic Sciences and Engineering, Core Engineering, Core Electives, Open Electives, Humanities and Management. Employability and life skills, projects and seminars are also part of the curriculum. The credits pattern is in line with other reputed institutes, and requires students to complete 195 credits to get their degrees.

A semester-long industry internship or a major project in the campus is an essential requirement in the final year of the studies. There is an option for Honours program with additional 12 credits.

All the programs have Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) to the extent of 30per cent of total credits.

Each department conducts a feedback survey from all stake holders and incorporated their recommendations in the design of curriculum. The proposed curriculum went through the reviews of Board of Studies of each program, Academic Council of the Institute, and finally approved by the Board of Management of the institute. Nearly half of the external members of the BoS are from Industries and Research Institutes, and remaining from other academic institutions, which helps to keep the courses in line with latest technology trends.

Norms / Stipulations of Statutory Authorities:

AICTE guidelines suggest the structure of credits to contain professional core, Professional Electives, Open Electives, Basic Sciences, Basic Engineering, and Humanities & Management. The Guidelines suggests a total Credits of around 180.

Observations / Comments / Recommendations of the Committee:

Committee finds the process of revision of the programs and initiation of regulations once in three years is healthy practice and keeps the academic quality in-line with technology developments. The process adopted is strictly implemented for all the academic programs.

The regulations which are in vogue are in-line with AICTE Guidelines. The Committee suggests to reduce the total credits requirement in the next review of the curriculum, and enhance further the importance given to the student Projects.

2.4 Student Enrolment and Fee Structure:

Status:

The enrolment of students to various programs is through a well administered and transparent mechanism by complying with all regulatory norms. Not a single student with less than 60per cent of marks in qualifying examination is given admission to Engineering programs. The demand ratio is around 15 consistently at the overall institute level – i.e., on an average 15 students apply for every seat in the University.

The number of seats filled against reserved categories (SC, ST, OBC, EBC) are 568 out of 940, 619 out of 1135, 710 out of 1179, 857 out of 1465 for the years 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18 and 2018-19 respectively. The unfilled reserved seats are converted to open seats at the end of admissions period.

The fee structure of the institute is divided into three categories – for regular engineering and management programs, for programs in the core engineering areas, for programs in the locally relevant areas – with reduced fee for the later two categories. The fee for above three categories are in the range of Rs.1.8 L, 1.0 L, and 0.6 L, respectively. The Fee Fixation Committee follows the AICTE estimates, Unit cost of education, and AFRC guidelines. The fee structure and entry level scholarships are reviewed and approved by the Finance Committee.

Norms / Stipulations of Statutory Authorities:

Reservation of seats 15per cent for SC, 7.5per cent for ST, and 27per cent for OBC (including EBC) categories is the reservation policy of GoI.

Justice Sri Krishna Committee of AICTE 2015 gave the guidelines for fee to be charged based on Human resources, Computers, Learning resources, operational costs and miscellaneous. The Andhra Pradesh Admissions and Fee Regulations Committees (AFRC) factors in cost of infrastructure, location of the institute etc.

Observations / Comments / Recommendations of the Committee:

VFSTR follows the reservation policies of the Government on-par with other State and Central Universities.

45per cent of the students admitted are girls, and this aspect is highly satisfactory in view of need of education of girls. Committee notes that the safe and secure environment of VFSTR encourages this level of admissions of girls.

VFSTR fee structure is in-line with the Guidelines and local regulations. Committee highly appreciates the entry level scholarships being offered by the institute, which continue for the whole program for the students linked to their performance.

2.5 Faculty Details

Status:

There are 501 fulltime faculty are on rolls during the year 2018-19. This works out to faculty-student ratio of 18.5 and sanctioned strength 13.4 on actual strength. 40per cent of the faculty are recruited from NITs and IITs through campus drives. The total number of teaching faculty with Ph.Ds are 179, which constitutes 36 per cent of total faculty. The faculty with Ph.Ds. almost doubled in the last three years (93 in 2015-16, 179 in 2018-19). The cadre ratio of Professors: Associate Professors: Assistant Professors in 2018-19 is 58:59:384. Every program is having minimum of one Professor and many programs more Professors.

All newly recruited faculty go through Faculty Orientation Programs (FOP) before taking up academic load. Assistant Professors take up 18 to 20 hours of teaching load per week, Associate Professors take up 12 to 14 hours of teaching load per week, and Professors take up 4 to 8 hours of teaching load per week. Faculty are actively involved in research activities resulting in publications and conferences.

Approximately 35 per cent of revenues of the VFSTR are spent on faculty salaries. More than a Crore were spent on incentives. The incentives and encouragement to the faculty for good performance in teaching and research publications, and their committed participation in administrative activities, student counselling, and organization, participation in conferences and workshops.

It is interesting to note that about 80 per cent of faculty are successful in achieving 90 per cent of pass percentage in their courses. More than 90 per cent of the faculty are getting student feedback of "Excellent" grading (above 90 per cent).

Norms / Stipulations of Statutory Authorities:

AICTE stipulates faculty student ratio of 1:20 on the sanctioned student strength.

The cadre ratio 1:2:6 required for composition of Professors : Associate Professors : Assistant Professors.

Every program must have at least one Professor, or according to the SFR and cadre ratio.

Observations / Comments / Recommendations of the Committee:

The norms of statutory authority with respect to faculty-student ratio is very well met and maintained by VFSTR.

Committee notes with high satisfaction the amount of expenditure on faculty salaries and incentives.

The cadre ratio presently meets the functional requirement. However, the number of Associate Professors and Professors need to be improved to meet the AICTE mandated cadre ratio.

2.6 Teaching Learning and Evaluation Process

Status:

The faculty utilise the experience gained in the FOPs and FDPs to prepare and deliver the course content to the students. ICT enabled class rooms are effectively used to deliver attractive multimedia content to the students, and the same is uploaded into the VU MOODLE for access to the students.

Every faculty is assigned 15 to 20 students for counselling and mentoring. They study the students and their problems in detail and provide them both academic and psychological support. The type of support and encouragement to the advanced learners and slow learners are different and selectively prescribed.

The examination section is well automated, and evaluation process is based on Blooms Taxonomy. Student evaluation consists of continuous internal evaluation as well as end semester evaluation with share 40 and 60 marks respectively. The evaluation process is confidential till conduct of exams, and fully transparent to the students' post-examinations.

More than 95per cent of students complete their degrees in the stipulated time of the programs. The pass percentage gradually increased from around 50per cent in the first year first semester to more than 95per cent in fourth year final semester. 50 – 60per cent of students pass all the semester without any backlogs. The percentage of recounting and revaluation request are less than 1per cent of total scripts (<300 out of a total of more than 30,000 scripts).

Norms / Stipulations of Statutory Authorities:

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10

Observations / Comments / Recommendations of the Committee:

Committee highly appreciates the status of teaching learning process and the outcomes.

Committee suggests VFSTR to further increase the digital learning efforts, keeping in view the increased importance of digital technologies and the current use and potential of VFSTR Faculty in digital technologies. This could be achieved through assigning credits for online courses.

2.7 Promotion of the Research

Status:

VFSTR established 15 research centres, and 4 Centres of Excellence with the state-of-the-art equipment, and in association with the industries.

10 per cent of faculty is identified for research activities with minimum academic load. Faculty is also encouraged with seed money for projects, and incentives to PIs and Co-PIs for taking up funded projects.The research scholars increased three folds in the last three years and currently there are a total of 294 research scholars. The full time research scholars are 103, and they are paid a fellowship of Rs.25000/- and Rs.18000/- per month for Engineering and Sciences respectively.

The funded projects from Government Agencies are obtained by VFSTR to the tune of Rs.90 L to Rs.100 L per year. Funds are also received from non-governmental organizations to the tune of Rs.50 L per year. VFSTR is accorded Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (SIRO) by DSIR – GOI in 2018.

The publications in the peer reviewed journals have steadily increased from about 200 in 2015 to around 500 in 2018. Most of the publications are in SCI / SCOPUS unpaid journals, with good impact factors. Faculty encouraged for high quality publications with financial incentives. The h-index of the institute is 17.

A number of workshops and seminars are conducted every year on innovation and ecosystem, and intellectual property rights. The number of patents published / awarded are moderate at this time, and poised to increase in the coming years.

Expenditure on research, including fellowships for research scholars, amounts to 8 – 10per cent of revenue.

Norms / Stipulations of Statutory Authorities:

Generally, UGC and AICTE encourage institutes to take up research and development activities to create new knowledge. In fact, it is an essential part of being a "University".

Observations / Comments / Recommendations of the Committee:

Committee is very much satisfied at the on-going efforts in the R&D area in terms of facilities, faculty involvement, publications and projects.

Committee highly appreciates the amount of fellowship being offered to full-time research scholars.

Committee notes that the funding being received from the Government and NGOs is moderate but significant for VFSTR being very young deemed to be University.

Committee suggests more active innovation / incubation / start up activities so that a few start up industries can be created.

Committee suggests to continue the proactive engagement of management and faculty in research publications to improve the h-index of the institute.

2.8 Collaboration and Extension Activities.

Status:

A number of collaborative activities being pursued by VFSTR with industries, research organizations, and academic institutes. This resulted in guest faculty from other institutes, student research internships, and collaborative project proposals. A significant outcome is establishment of a centre of Excellence with a contribution of roughly Rs.1200 L from M/s Keysight Technologies India (Multinational Industry / former HP).

The MoUs with the foreign academic institutions are actively pursued for student research internships. On average 10 – 15 students per year avail this facility in the Universities of Singapore, Japan, South Korea etc. VFSTR supports the travel expenses of the students.

The industry involvement is of three types – Guest lectures by industry experts, Semester-long internship of students in industries, and faculty visits / training for two to three weeks in industry. All these three activities are actively followed up. 80per cent of the final year students

go through the industry internship. 10per cent of faculty is deputed to industry during semester breaks for two to three weeks.

The NSS wing of VFSTR leads and undertakes large number of outreach and extension activities by students in the nearby villages. The focus is on identifying social issues which can be resolved through technology interventions and project management in the rural areas. On an average 40 – 50 activities are taken up every year.

Social activities of the students include blood donation camps and Swacch Bharath campaigns. VFSTR students contributed financially for disaster management, and also actively participated through voluntary service in the flood effected areas of Kerala in 2018.

Norms / Stipulations of Statutory Authorities:

UGC and AICTE encourage collaborative activities with other institutions, industry interaction, and extension activities by the students in the nearby society.

Observations / Comments / Recommendations of the Committee:

Committee is highly impressed with the approach being taken in the areas of collaborations, industry involvement and extension activities.The semester long industry internship for students is an excellent initiative which will help students acquire knowledge on industrial activities and practices.

The extension activities carried out are commendable and will benefit more villages if further expanded.

2.9 Library and IT Infrastructure

Status:

Centrally air conditioned library with 2950 Sqm built up area and a seating capacity 700 people is existing. The library works for 15 hours a day on all working days, and 7 to 8 hours a day on holidays. There are 71000 book volumes with 25000 titles in the library. Institute subscribes for 189 print journals and 3750 e-journals which cover IEEE, Springer, ASME, ASCE etc. Library also has access to 10000 open access journals, and large number of e-books are available. Rs.75 – 80 L money is being spent for library subscriptions and purchase every year. The library automation software is developed by Vignan University, and same is being used extensively.

Complete campus including hostels are covered by IT network. 1 GBPS internet facility is available on NKN Network for the whole

campus. Number of computer systems up to 2220 for use by students in labs / class rooms and central facility which workout to student – computer ratio of 3.6. The maintenance and upgradation of IT facilities is carried out by an exclusive in-house IT cell with 8 technicians and programmers. A well-defined process exists for maintaining the website of the institute, and posting of the developments and contents.

A media cell organizes all audio / video / photography requirements of all the seminar halls, auditoriums and functions.

Norms / Stipulations of Statutory Authorities:

As per AICTE norms the total number of titles and volumes to be available in the library as per the sanctioned students and number of programs are 8050 and 49000 - respectively.

AICTE stipulates a student computer ratio of 1 : 6, and good connectivity.

The network connectivity requirement as per AICTE is 4 MBPS at four or five hot-spots if the students' strength is more than 1500.

Observations / Comments / Recommendations of the Committee:

The Committee is highly impressed with the Library and IT facilities available in VFSTR, and notes that they far exceed the statutory requirements.

The Committee suggests VFSTR to further build on its digital capacity initiatives in terms of learning resources like e-content.

2.10 Student Support and Student Progression

Status:

The policies of VFSTR are student-centric and cover academic, extra-curricular, social outreach, and emotional balance aspects.

VFSTR provides entry level and continuing merit scholarships to the deserving students to an extent of Rs.1500 L - Rs.1700 L every year. This is roughly 15per cent of the revenues of the institute. Around 2500 students get benefitted by this scholarship every year.

A special English Language course is offered for 100 hours in the first year of Engineering programs. This special language course will lead to Preliminary English Test (PET) and Business English Certification (BEC) under a special MoU with Cambridge University, UK.

Student activities council with a strength of about 200 students with various functionalities are formed every year to plan and organize various events. The complete expenditure is budgeted by the institute. Students are also involved in important committees as members (like Anti-ragging committee, Grievance redressal Committee etc.). Key members of Students' Activities Council also participate in the meetings of Apex bodies as observers.

VFSTR supports all the events being organized by the students with funding and managerial support. 40 – 50 programs are organized in the campus every year.

The counselling activity of VFSTR helps all the students in achieving psychological strength and emotional balance.

75 – 85per cent of eligible students obtain on-campus placement in various multinational companies. Around 10per cent of students go for higher education. A few students develop into entrepreneurs.

Norms / Stipulations of Statutory Authorities:
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Observations / Comments / Recommendations of the Committee:

Committee noted with satisfaction the well-structured organization of student activities and student progression. The special trainings being offered by the institute for Campus Recruitment and to impart employability skills are commendable.

Committee suggests the placements in the core engineering industries needs to be improved.

The students participation in these committees is effective. The Committee also noted there are very few grievances or issues which had to be dealt by the respective committees, and such cases are dealt effectively.

Committee suggests appointing of a counselling psychologist to deal with students who need more medico-professional counselling, though such cases may be only a few.

3. **Administrative Policies and implementation:**
   3.1 **Organization Structure and Apex Bodies.**

   Status:

   The organizational structure is well defined with Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, Registrar, 12 Deans, Finance Officer, 12 Heads of

Departments, and 12 Deputy HoDs. The University manual clearly defines the roles and responsibilities of all the Executives.

The four Apex bodies – Board of Management (BoM), Academic Council (AC), Finance Committee (FC), and Planning and Monitoring Board (PMB) are duly constituted and functioning effectively. The Management nominees in each of the above Apex bodies is only one, and rest of the members are drawn from distinguished personalities of industry and research organization with vast diversified experience. The Apex bodies meet regularly – BoM four times in a year, AC three times in a year, FC twice in a year, and PMB once in a year – and their recommendations are followed up systematically.

University has eminent personalities as advisors.

Norms / Stipulations of Statutory Authorities:

UGC defines the constitution of the Apex bodies. UGC also lays down detailed procedure for selection of Vice-Chancellor.

Observations / Comments / Recommendations of the Committee:

The Committee observed that the selection and posting of Vice-Chancellor in June 2017, and constitution of all Apex bodies are as per the UGC norms.

Committee noted that the Deputy HoDs are appointed in each department to look after the laboratories and lab works, which is a very good initiative to improve the quality.

3.2   **Faculty Empowerment, Development, and Enrichment**

Status:

Recruitment, periodic performance assessment, organization of various professional development programs are adopted so that the faculty and staff are motivated and work in a harmonious atmosphere. Promotions through Career Advancement Scheme (CAS) are carried out periodically for the faculty.

The Directorate of Academic Faculty Development headed by Dean, plans all the faculty orientation, faculty improvement, and faculty enrichment programs at regular intervals.

The faculty empowerment and enrichment programs cover the following
-     Making the recruits effective teachers

- Exposure to industry and latest technologies
- Training into the emerging courses to keep pace with the development of higher education.

The number of faculty who went through the faculty development programs in the last three years are 65, 115, and 175, respectively for the years 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18. On average about 350 faculty per year are provided financial support (travel, DA, and Registration fee) to attended Conferences, Workshops outside of the University.

Norms / Stipulations of Statutory Authorities:

Regular FOPs and FDPs are recommended by both AICTE and UGC.

Observations / Comments / Recommendations of the Committee:

The faculty empowerment, orientation, development, and enrichment programs of the institute are commendable.

3.3 Administrative Practices and Participative Management

Status:

A comprehensive University Administrative Manual is prepared detailing the functions, responsibilities, and accountability of all the executives. The Manual also covers the functioning of Apex bodies.

Regular weekly meetings are held by the Vice-Chancellor to review functioning of all the Departments, Directorates, and Deans. All academic, administrative, and development issues are discussed and resolved in these meetings.

All the faculty and non-teaching staff are controlled and monitored through the biometric attendance system. Registrar's office controls all types of leaves for the employees.

22 Committees were constituted comprising faculty and students with clearly defined functions helping transparent and democratic functioning. These Committees look after the functions which overlap the responsibilities of multiple Deans / HoDs, and the functions having scope across the University. These Committees function systematically.

Norms / Stipulations of Statutory Authorities:

UGC and AICTE recommend biometric attendance system, and formation of Committees on important subjects like ragging, Grievances, discrimination, sexual harassment etc.

Observations / Comments / Recommendations of the Committee:

Committee observes good discipline and compliance with all the rules by all the faculty and other employees.

The Institute is having transparent style of working through the Committees on various issues like Anti-ragging Committee, Grievance Redrasall Committee, Internal Complaints Committee etc.

The participation of the students in relevant committees is appreciated.

3.4 Financial Management

Status:

The major part of the revenue is from students fee including tuition fee, examination fee, admission fee etc. Institute has developed the strategies for planning the budgets, and optimum utilization or financial resources.

Approximate expenditure heads (as percentage of revenue) are as bellow:
- Faculty Salaries   – 35%
- Students scholarships   – 15%
- R&D expenditure   – 8 – 10%
- Regular recurring expenditure – 20 – 25%
- Capital formation   – 15 – 20%

Most of the transactions are through bank either online or through cheques with complete transparency.

Regular internal audit once in two months, and external audit by statutory auditors twice in a year are carried out. All recommendations are implemented. The reports of the external auditors are posted in the Institute's website.

Norms / Stipulations of Statutory Authorities:

Transparency the financial management is one of the important guidelines of UGC and AICTE.

Observations / Comments / Recommendations of the Committee:

The Committee noted that the institute has a sound and transparent financial management in place.

The expenditure of most of the departments are to the level of budget allocations. However, the Committee recommends proper funds

18

re-appropriation procedure to be evolved with the approval of Finance Committee.

3.5 Quality Improvement and IQAC

Status:

The IQAC of VFSTR is strengthened with exclusive Dean, Associate Deans, and staff. IQAC team leads the efforts of the VFSTR in establishing high quality in all the activities. It leads all the efforts of accreditations and high level assessments like NBA, NIRF, NAAC, AICTE Approvals, UGC reviews and approvals.

IQAC organises awareness programs to all the departments and faculty on the core values and the data requirements of various assessments and reviews – like NAAC frame work, NIRF assessment methodology etc.

Norms / Stipulations of Statutory Authorities:

Both UGC and AICTE strongly recommended constitution of IQAC in every institute.

Observations / Comments / Recommendations of the Committee:

Committee notes with satisfaction very good performance of IQAC in VFSTR.

Committee recommends VFSTR to take up NBA accreditation of the programs (initially it can be a few select programs).

3.6 Best Practices of the Institute

Status:

VFSTR considers some of its practices evolved through the systematic functioning in the last 10 years as "Best Practices". They include
- Bridge course for 2 to 3 weeks for newly admitted students.
- Student Scholarship
- Initiative on health of the students
- Faculty development and enrichment programs
- Special English certification course
- Innovative curriculum design and project based learning
- Semester-long internship in industries for final year students
- Green campus and environment sustainability
- Technical skill development programs

- Student counselling system
- Promotion of values through various social outreach programs
- Honouring the parents of student achievers.

Norms / Stipulations of Statutory Authorities:

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Observations / Comments / Recommendations of the Committee:

Committee notes that "best practices" of the institute are very innovative. Many of these programs are started by VFSTR well ahead of others - even before the statutory bodies recommended such practices. Taking care of physical fitness and student health is a very good initiative, and Committee recommends to further strengthen this in the upcoming curriculum revision with allotment of credits.

3.7   Strategic Plans for Future Growth

Status:

A five-year strategic plan 2018-2023 has been chalked out and available. The Plan envisages a road map for VFSTR with long term guidance on academics, research and administrative aspects.

Norms / Stipulations of Statutory Authorities:

Observations / Comments / Recommendations of the Committee:

VFSTR has moved from creation of infrastructural facilities to optimum and gainful utilization of these facilities for the benefit of students and faculty. Committee highly appreciates the approach of the University which is outcome based and utilization based. VFSTR may prepare a detailed strategic plan for a period of 10 years in place of existing strategic plan.

(Prof. Y. Satyanarayana)
Member, AAAC

(Prof. P. Siddaiah)
Member, AAAC

(Prof. G. Subramanyam)
Chairman, AAAC

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FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND RESEARCH

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