

Introduction of Associate Degree Programme in Pakistan



Government of Pakistan
Higher Education Commission
Islamabad

INTRODUCTION OF ASSOCIATE DEGREE PROGRAMME IN PAKISTAN

1) Definition

Wikipedia defines the Associate Degree programme in the following manner:

An **Associate Degree** is an undergraduate academic degree awarded by community colleges, junior colleges, technical colleges, and bachelor's degree-granting colleges and universities upon completion of a course of study usually lasting two years. In the United States and, uncommonly, in Canada, an associate degree is equivalent to the first two years of a four-year college or university degree. It is the lowest in the hierarchy of post-secondary academic degrees offered in these countries.

It is roughly equivalent to the foundation degree and the Business and Technology Education Council's Higher National Diploma in Britain, the two-year General Academic Studies Degree (French: *diplôme d'études universitaires générales*, DEUG) in France, the Higher Education and Training Awards Council's Higher Certificate in the Republic of Ireland. In 2000, Hong Kong introduced associate degrees, as equivalence to higher diplomas. These programmes are mainly provided through affiliated colleges at universities. In 2004, Australia added "associate degree" to the Australian Qualifications Framework. This title was given to more academically focused advanced diploma courses. However, very few courses yet use the new title.

2) Introduction

An Associate Degree is a two-year post-intermediate or equivalent academic degree to be awarded by public & private Universities/DAIs primarily in market driven subjects based on local and regional community and industry needs to be determined through a comprehensive survey to be carried out by the University/Institution concerned. The Associate Degree holder will be a simple "Graduate" as this degree will be equivalent to a BA/BSc (Pass) degree as far as the level of the degree is concerned.

The immediate link of the associate degree with the requirements of the market place is a core requirement of this programme since this degree fulfills a requirement or need of industry and is developed to respond to that need. The associate degree is not awarded in a generic manner upon completion of two years of a four-year regular undergraduate (BS) programme.

The concept of Associate Degree originates from the United States and, is being executed in many technically advanced countries including Canada, Australia and Japan etc. This degree is the lowest amongst the hierarchy of academics qualifications being awarded by foreign Universities. An Associate Degree programme is normally structured to be conducted over four regular semesters over a two years period and consists of 65-68 credit hours. After award of an Associate Degree from an accredited degree awarding University/Institution, the holder will have the option of transferring the

credits to a BS programme, at the discretion of the host university. The primary types of Associate Degree are the:

- i) Associate of Arts degree
- ii) Associate of Applied Science degree
- iii) Associate of Science degree.

3) Curriculum

An Associate Degree is a two-year post-intermediate/A-level or equivalent qualifications. The Curriculum for each Associate Degree programme is especially developed in close consultation with experts drawn from industry & the community and provides both for a solid general education background as well as courses addressing the needs of the specific degree. The general courses include English Comprehension, Communication Skills, Presentation Skills, Technical Report Writing, Computers and Pakistan Studies/Islamiyat or Ethics.

In the first phase of the launch of the Associate Degrees programme, number of Associate Degree programmes will not be offered in the professional disciplines of Pharmacy, Medicine, Dentistry, Nursing, Engineering, Law, Veterinary Sciences, and Architecture and Town Planning. Discussions are yet to be initiated with the respective Accreditation Councils about these programmes and they will be launched following consultations with them.

Checklist for University/Institution for launching Associate Degree is at **Annex-A**.

In Pakistan, University of Gujrat and Institute of Business Administration, Sukkur have launched an Associate Degree programmes in 2010 in the following disciplines:-

- i. Finance & Accounting
- ii. Textile Design
- iii. Para-Legal Studies
- iv. Hotel & Restaurant Management
- v. IT Management
- vi. Education
- vii. Sports & Physical Education
- viii. Graphic Design

Additional, application oriented disciplines in which the Associate Degree programmes are expected to be launched, and for which curriculum is yet to be developed, include:

- i. Health Services and Para-Medical Technology
- ii. Business and Commerce
- iii. Public Service
- iv. Data Processing and Programing
- v. Occupational Studies
- vi. Physical Therapy
- vii. Accounting, Information Systems
- viii. Computer Networking
- ix. Network Management
- x. Web Design, Web Management
- xi. Health Information Technology
- xii. Industrial/Production Technologies
- xiii. Health Care Administration
- xiv. Media Studies
- xv. Labour Relations
- xvi. Tourism & Hospitality
- xvii. Applied Psychology
- xviii. Agri Business
- xix. Dental Hygiene
- xx. Indigenous Community Health
- xxi. Community Management and Development
- xxii. Medical Lab Technology
- xxiii. Mine Technology
- xxiv. Dental Therapy
- xxv. Studio Art
- xxvi. Drama and Theater
- xxvii. Music
- xxviii. Sales & Marketing
- xxix. Security Management etc.

To rationalize the Associate Degree programme, a series of consultative meetings were held at Higher Education Commission with selective public and private sector universities. It was agreed to launch Associate Degree in selective universities at their designated campuses with applied and focused approach and keeping in view marketability of holders. It was particularly agreed that Associate Degree will not be offered to students enrolled for BS programme at the main campus of the University and will, therefore, not be an exit path for these students. The apprehension that the proposed Associate Degree will in any way hamper the successful implementation of BS Programmes was dispelled. It was also decided that Associate Degree will not be a substitute to existing BA/BSc (Pass) degrees offered through affiliated colleges.

Government of Sindh has agreed to attach infrastructure of some colleges in Khairpur, Nawab Shah, Noshero Feroze and Dadu District with IBA, Sukkur to launch Associate Degree in Electronics, Computers & IT and Telecommunication.

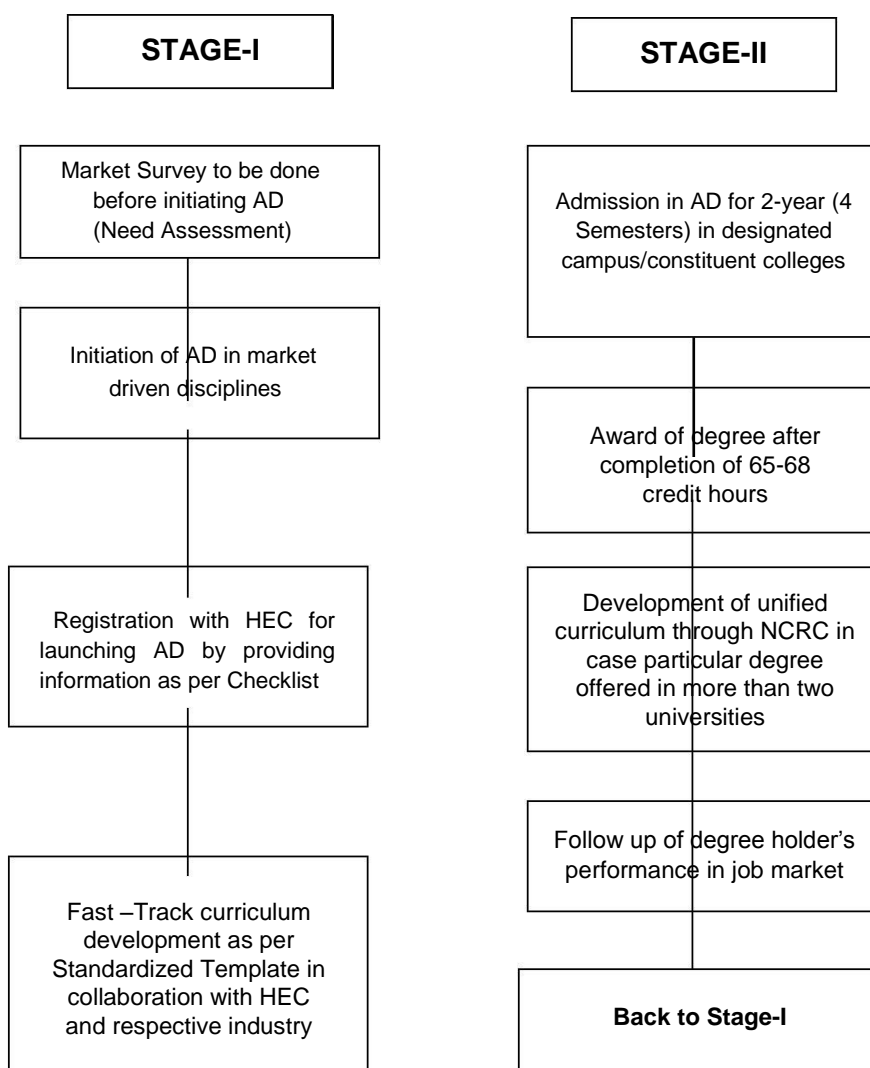
4) Programme Features

To rationalize the Associate Degree programme, the constructive and innovative ideas put forward by the Vice Chancellors reaffirm the fact that the programme is not to be launched in isolation and, in fact, all the stakeholders including universities, industries and market forces have been taken on board. The universities intending to launch theme based Associate Degree shall be required to carry out market survey before institution of the Associate Degree programme to ascertain the employability of the graduates. Following are the selective features of the Programme:

- ✍ Associate Degree programmes shall be launched in market driven disciplines for which HEC shall present fast-track curriculum development to ensure uniformity in case subject is offered at more than two Universities/Institutions.
- ✍ To make Associate Degree attractive and to ensure marketability of the holders, a survey needs to be undertaken by the University/Institution to identify specific target areas within broader disciplines of study before launching the programme.
- ✍ Admission requirement for Associate Degree shall be Intermediate/12-year schooling or equivalent and will be awarded upon qualifying 65-68 credit hours in four (04) semesters to be completed. The programme will be offered through especially designated campuses/constituent colleges of the universities and not on the main or principal campus of the University/Institution.
- ✍ Universities intending to launch Associate Degree programme shall be required to inform and register themselves with the Commission by providing the information in **Annexure A.**
- ✍ In case the curriculum of the programme to be offered has not been developed, the universities should in collaboration with the HEC and respective industry representatives to develop the required curriculum.
- ✍ The Commission will develop semester based curriculum through specially constituted National Curriculum Revision Committee when one particular degree shall be offered in more than two Universities/Institutions.

Provincial Governments shall be requested to transfer infrastructure of non-functional degree colleges to respective Public universities for launch of Associate Degree programmes in these dysfunctional colleges which will be declared as constituent colleges of the respective universities.

PROCEDURE FOR LAUNCHING ASSOCIATE DEGREE PROGRAMME



Abbreviations Used:

- AD Associate Degree
- NCRC National Curriculum Revision Committee
- HEC Higher Education Commission

The template for Associate Degree programme shall be as under:

STANDARDIZED TEMPLATE

Sr. No.	Categories	No. of courses	Credit Hours	% age of total Cr Hrs
1.	Compulsory Requirement (No Choice)	6	18	27%
2.	Discipline-Specific Foundation Courses	4	12	18%
3.	Major Courses including Project/Internship	10	30	46%
4.	Electives within the major	2	6	9%
	Total	22	66	100%

- Total numbers of Credit hours 65-68
- Duration of Associate Degree 2 years
- Semester duration 16-18 weeks
- Semesters 4
- Course Load per Semester 16-18 Cr Hrs
- Average number of courses per semester 4-6 (not more than 3 lab/practical courses/semester)

MODEL LAYOUT (HOTEL & RESTAURANT MANAGEMENT)

Compulsory Courses (the student has no choice)		Foundation Courses Discipline-Specific		Major Courses including Project/Internship report		Elective Courses should be supporting the major	
6 courses		4 courses		9+1 courses		2 courses	
18 Credit hours		12 Credit hours		30 Credit hours		6 Credit Hours	
Subjects	Cr Hr	Subject	Cr Hr	Subject	Cr Hr	Subject	Cr Hr
1. English I (English Composition & Comprehension-I)	3	Fundamentals of Accounting	3	Fundamentals of Food & Beverage	3	Elective-I*	3
2. English II (English Composition & Comprehension-II)	3	Cost Controlling Budgeting & Forecasting	3	Kitchen Management	3	Elective-II*	3
3. English III (Communication /Presentation skills)	3	Mathematics Economics	3 3	Restaurant Management	3		
4. Pakistan & Islamic Studies	3			Fundamentals of Hotel Business Admin	3		
5. Applied Mathematics/ Statistics	3			Hotel Management Operations	3		
6. Introduction to Computer	3			Rooms Divisions	3		
				Public Relations	3		
				Psychology	3		
				Applied Marketing	3		
				Event Management	3		

* Elective can be chosen from the list of Food & Beverages & Operations, Hotel Mgt and Operations

Annex-A

**Checklist for University/Institution for Launching Associate
Degree One Sheet to be filled for Each Programme offered**

Name & Status (Public or Private) of University/Institution		
Name of Designated Campus		
Governance/Administrative Structure of Designated Campus		
Principal/Director		
Administrative Officer		
Accounts Officer		
Programme to be offered		
List of Prospective Employers of proposed Associate Degree Programme Graduates		
Expected Average Market Salary of Graduates		
Estimate of Market Demand for Associate Degree Programme Graduates (Provide basis for figures)		
Name & Designation of Person/Firm carrying out Market Survey		
Details of Physical and Academic Infrastructure		
Physical Infrastructure	Standards	*Available Facilities
Classrooms	2 classrooms for each programme	
Library	1 library cum reading room	

Laboratories/Workshops	At-least one Lab./workshop for each programme with appropriate space		
Academic Infrastructure	Standards		*Available Facilities
Faculty	At least 6 teachers for each programme		
	Associate Professor Assistant Professor	1	
	Lecturer	4	
Qualification	At-least BS (4-year) degree holder		
Lab. Staff	At-least 2 for each lab.		
No. of Administrative Staff	With Admn. Staff: teacher ratio of 1:3		
Above information must be accompanied with relevant documentary evidences			