

APHEA

Agency for Public Health  
Education Accreditation

SITE VISIT REPORT FOR THE  
INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION

REVIEW OF THE

Prasanna School of Public Health  
Manipal Academy of Higher Education

Site Visit Report

FINAL 25.07.2024

AGENCY FOR PUBLIC HEALTH EDUCATION ACCREDITATION  
SITE VISIT DATES: 24<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> June, 2024

SITE VISIT REVIEW TEAM:  
Professor Colleen Fisher (Chair)  
Professor Friday Okonofua  
Dr Julien Goodman

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## **Executive Summary<sup>1</sup>**

### *Foreword*

The Review Team (hereafter named “the Team”) would like to thank everyone involved with this process of Institutional Accreditation and for the hard work that went into preparing the Validation and Self-Evaluation stages. The Team would also like to extend their gratitude to the Prasanna School of Public Health (hereafter named “the School”) for their generous hospitality and candour during the accreditation site visit.

### **Criterion I: Governance and Organisation of the Institution**

The School of Public Health in Manipal began seven years ago and grew out of the existing Department of Public Health, which began in 2009. The School is a constituent part of the Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE), which in itself began in 1993. The School and the host University are recognised through the Ministry of Education, Government of India and the University Grants Commission.

As part of the visit, the School reformulated their organisational chart which the Team felt coherently captured the sense of the School and its organisation. It was evident that, at an individual level, people knew exactly what was happening within the School, but given that the School had grown so much within seven years, the Team appreciated that after another 10 years, it might look significantly different and therefore more systems need to be put in place. As such the Team would advise the School to look to systematise (and share) their organisational structures and to ensure that succession planning is built in.

All programmes are viably coordinated and their coordinators were met as part of the site visit. Stakeholders were clearly involved in the management of the School, including as primary stakeholders through the School’s Advisory Board, which acted as a high-level governance structure. Two students interviewed during the visit were student representatives, including a School-level Vice-president of the student body who had been elected by the other students in the School.

### **Criterion II: Aims and Objectives of the Public Health Institution and its Programmes**

The team felt that what had been achieved in the last seven years was truly amazing, and the School should be applauded for their development. So far, this is clearly supported from the

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<sup>1</sup> The full report (less annexes) will be published online at [www.aphea.be](http://www.aphea.be) and publicly available.

main University and, as such, the University deserves credit for their support as well as the international support deriving from collaborations in Maastricht and McMaster Universities.

The mission and the vision of the School, as well as the University, were broadcast not only on the Internet but throughout the School, on posters. At the beginning of School meetings faculty would be invited to recite its mission and vision. However, the Team did feel that the mission vision was rather back to front and, although not a unique situation and has been encountered elsewhere, the Team would advise the School to revise/revisit this so the mission captures what the School is actually doing at the moment and the vision encapsulates what the future aspirations are. The observation is that the mission, presently called the vision, clearly identifies and includes elements of education, research and service, with a heavy focus on research and translating evidence into policy as well as the sustainability of training public health workforces and the next generation of public health leaders.

The mission and vision of the School were clearly outlined through the generation of final qualifications, which were codified in a range of programme and module learning objectives. The School was evidently open to change, and this was seen by the introduction of a new programme within the range of programmes being offered at the School. They had also introduced elements of One-health into their programming. One of the biggest areas of response was seen in the change and responsiveness to student feedback in changing back from Modular teaching to Semester teaching. Although this had been University-wide, the original change from semester to modular system was to try and encourage more collaboration with other Indian universities within the higher education sector to allow students mobility. However, students felt that the timespan for each block in the modular system was too condensed and didn't give them enough time to focus on the subject content. They were quite vocal about this, and the School had positively responded by changing back to the semester system.

### **Criterion III: Programmes**

All the components of the curriculum were found to be justified with respect to their consistency and the final qualifications of the programme. The core components of the programmes were found to cover the basic concepts, theories and methods of public health and were found to be both theoretical and applied. Students and alumni had informed the Team that that they appreciated the multidisciplinary nature of programmes and a focus on providing modules in different programs and institutions. Examples were given by the

alumni of taking courses in architecture, hospitality and communications. The alumni had expressed to the Team that, although at the time, they didn't see the value of these modules, once they were in the workplace they were able to apply the acquired knowledge and skills to health related scenarios and, therefore, fully appreciated their inclusion in the curriculum. One additional aspect that the students and alumni mentioned is that they were not "spoon fed" but rather asked to invoke their critical skills in the process of learning. The Team felt this was a very healthy approach to learning for the students and also increased the psychology of lifelong learning within the student cohorts; and was clearly appreciated by students and alumni.

The School prides itself with being research driven and the ability for students to conduct primary research at the School was found to be exceptional. This was appreciated for two reasons. Firstly, it meant that research could be captured within the learning of the School and incorporated into the curriculum. Secondly, it ensured that ethics run throughout the programme. Students were ethically informed not only in terms of research but also through ethical approaches, cases and their internships, for example. This was seen as a clear benefit of the School's approach to engage and induce ethical lifelong learning within their research teaching. Research methods in particular were also taught by different departments, such as data management, to ensure that the students obtained the highest-level research skills available within the University.

The programmes were found to be coherent in both their content and the sequence of modules. At present there is a block of core modules followed by electives which then comprise specialisations. One of the areas which the Team felt the School may wish to consider is, when they grow (as the seven years previous has demonstrated), think about converting those specialisations, such as maternal and child health, into full-blown programmes in their own right, depending on the market needs for those programmes.

The Team witnessed a range of lifelong learning, including cross-departmental learning previously mentioned, Coursera and MOOCs to support student learning. The students had been found to value and appreciate the creative and applicable nature of the learning at the School which motivates them for lifelong learning. Alumni juxtaposed this against the so-called "spoon-fed" approaches.

One area that the School might consider is expanding the range of short courses and making them credit bearing to appeal to the local workforces who can then have an opportunity to build up to sequentially to a Masters degree. This could be beneficial to the employers as well as the workers, in addressing both time and financial pressures. As expressed in the

SED 70% of graduates are employed in NGOs, 10% in the private sector and 20% in the public sector.

The programme itself falls within a three-tier structure and one of the students met with was looking to go on to further study in a PhD programme, which is possible due to MAHE being a Deemed-to-be University within the Indian system and fully compliant within the Indian regulations. In fact, many of the junior faculty of the School had obtained PhDs through the School which offers both full-time (with University scholarships) and part-time PhDs. The Team were informed by the alumni group that one student was presently undertaking a PhD in the USA.

There was an overwhelming sense that the School was highly focused on research and research directing the School's teaching. It was appreciated how students were conducting primary research which was influencing the teaching within the programmes themselves. Examples of this were found in the introduction of One-health, global health, health literacy, climate change and the influences of COVID-19, which the Team witnessed as influencing both the content and design of the training available at the School. The School has recently initiated a new MSc in Health Technology Assessment.

There was found to be a clear process for establishing a marking schema, which is provided to the students through their handbooks. Each assessment has a marking schema developed by the faculty that are then passed through to the coordinators and then further up to the University's evaluation unit. The assessments consisted of internal (School based) formative assessments and University summative examinations. There are two markers for each assessment and, if required, a third marker is engaged.

An interesting feature within the School was that those students who had consistently had pass rates over 80% were given additional prospects, such as attending international symposia as a reward for their academic excellence.

A listing of international collaborations was presented as part of the SED which mainly focussed on the relations with Maastricht University in The Netherlands and McMaster University in Canada. MAHE has an international Office which focuses on mobility for staff and students, liaison for dual degrees, scholarships and research. At present, the University as a whole, is sending over 500 students out and accepting 350. The School's Global Health Symposium was deemed as excellent by the Team.

It was clear that the School (and University) expressed a clear strategy for further internationalisation and an evident aspiration for wider international relationships.

However, as the School grows, the Team felt there was an emphasis for looking toward the “West” for their relationships and felt that the School had much more to offer. As such, the School may wish to think about more south-south relationships and in increasing the strength of such research in particular areas, for example maternal and child health.

#### **Criterion IV: Students and Graduates**

All prospective student applications processes are guided by central policies regardless of age, religion, nationality or gender. On speaking with the students, they had accessed the data on the School through the website. The reasons for choosing the School included considering MAHE one of the best Universities in India, the existing international collaborations in The Netherlands and Canada, and the range of specialisations available. The Team were informed that student life on campus was better than expected, was considered as safe with security provided, and any concerns the students had were dealt with promptly, such as issues with the hostel. Other students had mentioned the library and facilities including at-home access to the library, alumni connections and the international exposure.

The School keeps informed of the student progress through use of their student life cycle management software which looks at the grades and attendance and is integrated into their learning management system, Brightspace. This system is being implemented university-wide and will be coordinated across all institutions once they have converted fully from the module to semester teaching plans.

When students join, they are first presented with the academic calendar and a mentor is assigned for pastoral and academic first point of contact. Quantitative data was provided on attrition and prolongations and there was found very little attrition. Students have the possibility of a maximum of 4 years to complete the programmes at the School.

There is a mentor-mentee system in use at the School for pastoral and academic affairs. The mentors are available on phones and emergencies are covered 24/7 through services in the central University. The University Student Support Services unit also runs support courses. One student had mentioned that they had signed up for courses on procrastination and public speaking. Additionally, the School uses a peer support system of other students. The peers receive training on issues such as sexual harassment and substance abuse.

Students have access and are well informed about the University’s student health clinic for issues such as mental health. Students informed the Team that they were able to simply walk

in and talk to someone for 5 to 10 minutes and this was followed up the next day with an additional session and further follow-up sessions were planned. These services are free of charge and student hospital fees are covered by student fees. An overview of the support systems in operation for the School through the central University is presented in figure 2 below.

Students had informed the Team that administrative staff were readily available through email but for emergencies they could call immediately. The School's administrative services are located in the main corridor of the School, have an office in the School which is open from nine am to five pm daily, including three Saturdays of each month which are considered work days.

The Team found that the School has an excellent website. The School uses WhatsApp and a range of social media including Facebook groups and Instagram. The website contains full programme details and a portal for applications is available centrally through the website. Information on the website is supported with student induction and handbooks which detail the School and University requirements, policies and practices. As previously mentioned some of these policies adorn the corridors in the form of posters.

Most interviewees had mentioned that they received information about the School via its website. Some of the reasons encountered for student interest in the School related to interests in non-clinical sciences. One alumnus had recommended to their juniors to take on the MPH whereas another student had informed the Team that their cousin would be attending in the following year. All interviewees had expressed that Manipal (MAHE) was well known and respected throughout the world and the alumni gave a clear sense of pride as having attended the School and University. To paraphrase one alumnus interviewed, "if you go to Manipal you'll get a job."

At a central level the University operates a formal and systematic alumni association in which all graduates are registered in a database and where career data is collected. At a School level there was more of an informal network consisting of faculty graduate relations and supported by WhatsApp but where career changes were also circulated. The alumni mentioned they were contacted all the time and post COVID-19 the School had been leading virtual interactions on career opportunities whereby faculty would identify graduates in certain posts which have vacancies and identify the skill sets required. In addition to these elements, the School regularly invites alumni back to sit on Master viva-voce examinations and help with teaching.



### **Criterion V: Human Resources and Staffing.**

The School abide by MAHE human resources recruitment processes which were presented to the Team as part of the site visit. In general faculty are employed on two-year probation which is then converted to ongoing upon agreement with the Head of Department. Job descriptions were presented to the Team as part of the site visit. During the interviews it became apparent that many faculty were employed at the Assistant Professor level which requires a doctoral degree, subject knowledge and work experience. Some of the other attributes consist of developing and updating curricula, teaching and supervision and funded research. Assistant Professors will initially have around a 60-80% teaching workload (depending on the department) whereas for full Professors it is around 20-40% teaching. The remaining time is allocated to research and administration. Administration covers duties such as coordinating teaching, overview of alumni placements, quality process documentation.

After four years as (entry-level) Assistant Professor along with two publications, there are opportunities to progress to Assistant Professor (Senior Scale). After at least one doctoral supervision and five publications, either as first or secondary author, there are opportunities for promotion to Selection Grade – Assistant Professor. Each stage takes around four years but this can be decreased if there are opportunities.

Numbers and qualifications of staff were reviewed through their Curriculum Validations and the evidence given as part of the SED. The Team were informed that there are 27 academic staff in the School with 23 holding PhDs (and 3 with MPhil) and 4 faculty members are currently pursuing Doctorates.

As in many countries throughout the world, Public Health is not regulated through a formal body, such as medical council. Therefore, the School adheres to the University Grants Commission Criteria.

The multidisciplinary nature of the faculty was reviewed through their Curriculum Validations. The meetings had highlighted varying discipline expertise such as, demographers, statisticians, NCD specialists, behavioural scientists.

The teaching staff are in the main, locally trained with many of the staff obtaining their PhDs from the School itself. Some of the faculty met with during the visit had highlighted their involvement in international projects. The School however, does engage international lecturers to increase their international profile. Pedagogical training is dealt with in more detail under criterion 5.6 below.

The School and Faculty were found to have support from the main University for conference attendance as well as support for writing grants. They also have access to the library / e-library and software. As part of their job descriptions, appraisals and promotion, faculty are required to pursue research and the School focuses heavily on research being at the forefront of their activities. Faculty interviewed had given an overview of the range of national and international research they were involved with.

The Team found that although faculty were involved in social outreach through NGOs and research activities, it appeared that these activities were conducted outside of their contractual arrangements rather than the School itself engaging in social outreach.

Faculty are mandatorily trained at the beginning of their tenure through the Centre for Continuing Education and Interprofessional Development (CCEID) (professional development). The centre further offers additional courses which are not compulsory in areas such as conflict resolution and copyrighting. The Team would urge the School to consider ongoing refresher pedagogic training (and sharing) for faculty.

The Team found that the School was well supported by 16 administrative functions internally as well as receiving administration support from the wider University, many of whom the Team had met during the site visit.

### **Criterion VI: Supportive Services, Budgeting and Facilities**

The School is supported through endowments and fees. The Central University also engages a 5-to-10-year period of support for new programmes before the return on investment. An annual cycle of central University monitoring and discussion are conducted on budget allocations which are then delivered to the School who have autonomy on its use (aside from faculty appointments).

The School through MAHE has access to 14 libraries on campus as well as a smaller library within the School. During the visit, students and alumni had specifically applauded the library facilities. One student in particular had praised the off-campus access to the library resources which saved her a three-hour commute. According to the students this was quite different to many universities in India. Library orientation was given to students during induction sessions. As previously mentioned, library staff were also available for students to help with areas such as plagiarism checking, search assistance, grammar software and workshops for aspiring authors. The library's website can be found [here](#).

The Team had chance to be shown around the facilities of the School and Central Library. The School facilities included various lecture and seminar rooms equipped with projectors and computers. Although not part of the learning facilities the Team recognised that students also had access to a world class sports facility in a short walk from the School.

Most of the students at the School have their own laptops and these are supported through the centralised IT department. In addition, a computer laboratory is available as well as researchers having access to five laptops loaded with software and a range of tablets available to all. Staff are also supported through being provided with individual laptops. Both staff and students have access to a range of software which was outlined in the SED and confirmed during discussions with the students.

During the visit the Team had the opportunity to interview the accommodation office where it was explained that, for a student body of 25,000 there are 16,000 beds available. Priority for accommodation is given to undergraduates and students with disabilities, who are also placed in blocks with lifts. There are separate amenities for international students. The students interviewed had mentioned that concerns were acted upon quickly, such as a student from another region of India suffering from heat and being moved in to a fully air-conditioned suite. The University also utilises a phone app that students can access maintenance and book cleaning from. There was a focus on nutritional food and hygiene in the communal eating areas.

### **Criterion VII: Internal Quality Management**

As with much of its operations, the School is directed in its quality processes through the central University. Centrally there is the Internal Quality Assurance Cell. The role of this cell is to align the vision and mission of the University and its departments with the regulatory requirements of the field, such as, the Indian Medical Council, as well as the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) other accrediting bodies and ranking organisations.

The Quality management system in the School is being driven by the central University strategic plans and supported by annual action plans and monthly reporting. In addition, there is a two-year internal periodic review and a five-year University review.

At a curriculum level, quality management is being driven the Board of Studies which meets bi-annually. This group received inputs from the heads of departments, coordinators, faculty, external stakeholders, students and University representatives. The role of the Board is then to review the results, propose measures for improvement and addressing of

student feedback. The processes include a periodic curriculum revision including syllabi, pedagogy and assessment. Once concluded, the process is sent for approval through the MAHE Academic Council, which is the highest body in the University (in other countries, this is called the Senate).

Student feedback takes two perspectives. There is anonymised module/course feedback completed after the module/course and feedback as part of the Board of Studies. The main issues addressed in recent months have been the vocal disapproval of the block/modular teaching system and the reversion to semester teaching, which the students appreciated.

The Board of Studies is also the forum in which faculty feedback to the School. Feedback has included updating elective choices, internships and assessments. The employers' voice is also heard in this Board, and during the site visit, the Team had a chance to interview the employers, who had expressed that there was constant communication between them and the School, which was seen as a strength.

Employers were also positive about the calibre of students and how they were ready to learn and push themselves to adapt to differing situations. The Team would recommend the School look to a more systematic feedback process to ensure that those who have given feedback know what actions have been taken. This is often called "closing the loop."

## Summary of Conclusions

<b>Criterion I: Governance and Organisation of the Institution</b>	
Sub – Criterion 1.1	Met
Sub – Criterion 1.2	Met with Comments
Sub – Criterion 1.3	Met
Sub – Criterion 1.4	Met
<b>Criterion II: Aims and Objectives of the Public Health Institution and its Programmes</b>	
Sub – Criterion 2.1	Met
Sub – Criterion 2.2	Met
Sub – Criterion 2.3	Met
Sub – Criterion 2.4	Met with Comments
<b>Criterion III: Programmes</b>	
Sub – Criterion 3.1	Met
Sub – Criterion 3.2	Met
Sub – Criterion 3.3	Met
Sub – Criterion 3.4	Met
Sub – Criterion 3.5	Met
Sub – Criterion 3.6	Met
Sub – Criterion 3.7	Met
<b>Criterion IV: Students and Graduates</b>	
Sub – Criterion 4.1	Met
Sub – Criterion 4.2	Met
Sub – Criterion 4.3	Met
Sub – Criterion 4.4	Met
Sub – Criterion 4.5	Met with comments
Sub – Criterion 4.6	Met
<b>Criterion V: Human Resources and Staffing</b>	
Sub – Criterion 5.1	Partially Met with comments
Sub – Criterion 5.2	Met
Sub – Criterion 5.3	Met
Sub – Criterion 5.4	Met
Sub – Criterion 5.5	Partially Met with comments
Sub – Criterion 5.6	Met with comments
Sub – Criterion 5.7	Met
Sub – Criterion 5.8	Met
<b>Criterion VI: Supportive Services, Budgeting and Facilities</b>	
Sub – Criterion 6.1	Met
Sub – Criterion 6.2	Met
Sub – Criterion 6.3	Met
Sub – Criterion 6.4	Met
Sub – Criterion 6.5	Met
<b>Criterion VII: Internal Quality Management</b>	
Sub – Criterion 7.1	Met
Sub – Criterion 7.2	Met
Sub – Criterion 7.3	Met with comments
Sub – Criterion 7.4	Met

## **Abbreviations and Acronyms**

CCEID	Centre for Continuing Education and Interprofessional Development
IT	Information Technology
NAAC	National Assessment and Accreditation Council
NCD	Non-Communicable Diseases
MAHE	Manipal Academy of Higher Education
MOOCs	Massive Online Open Courses
NCD	Non-Communicable Diseases
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PSPH	Prasanna School of Public Health
SED	Self-Evaluation Documentation (refers to report and appendices)

## **Criterion I: Governance and Organisation of the Institution**

*The governance, organisational structure and processes are appropriate to fulfilling the mission, aims and objectives of the institution.*

### **1.1 The institution or, host organisation, is legally recognised/accredited (if national accreditation exists) by national educational authorities and allowed to issue degrees.**

The School of Public Health in Manipal began seven years ago which and out of the existing Department of Public Health which began in 2009. The School is a constituent part of the Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE), which in itself began in 1993. The School and the host University is recognised through the Indian Government Ministry of Education and the University Grants Commission.

*Conclusion:* This sub-criterion is met

### **1.2. The organisational structure effectively supports sound and adaptable governance, leadership, management and organisation of the programme portfolio.**

An organisational chart, was presented as part of the Self-evaluation documentation, but did not really capture the essence of the organisational structure and during the visit. The team heard of many different organisational entities, such as, the Board of Studies which did not appear in the original organisational chart. However, as part of the visit, the School reformulated their organisational chart and presented this within the last session and this included as figure 1 below. The Team felt this representation much more coherently captured the sense of the School and its organisation. It was evident that, at an individual level, people knew exactly what was happening within the School, but given that that the School had grown so much within seven years, the team appreciated that after another 10 years, the School may look significantly different, and therefore more systems need to be put in place. As such they would advise the School to look to systematise (and share) their organisational structures and to ensure that succession planning is built in. This will include organisational Systems for the differing organisational units, including roles and responsibilities, remits and composition.

The Team found that the obligations of faculty, staff and students were clearly informed via handbooks and School policies and government documents were presented to the Team as part of the site visit. Equal rights and harassment, bullying and also anti-ragging (abuse or harassment of new entrants) policies were clearly in place and were broadcast throughout the School by a process of posters along the corridors and in the offices.

The School should also ensure the involvement of their internal and external stakeholders. Job descriptions for the Associate Professors and different Heads of Departments were presented to the team.

*Conclusion:* This sub-criterion is met with comments

**1.3 There is an academically qualified and/or experienced person (or group) responsible for the coordination of each of the programmes.**

At present the School has five departments and are recruiting for the positions of three new Heads of Departments. However, at a programme coordination level, all programmes are viably coordinated and their coordinators were met as part of the site visit with their details being presented to the Team as part of the SED.

*Conclusion:* This sub-criterion is met

**1.4 Where appropriate, there is evidence that student, faculty and stakeholders are represented (in regard to quality and relevance of content and delivery) in the management of the institution and programmes.**

Stakeholders were clearly involved in the management of the School, including as primary stakeholders through the School's Advisory Board, which acted as a high level governance organisational unit. Two students met during the visit were student representatives, including a School-level Vice-president of the student body who had been elected by the other students in the School.

*Conclusion:* This sub-criterion is met



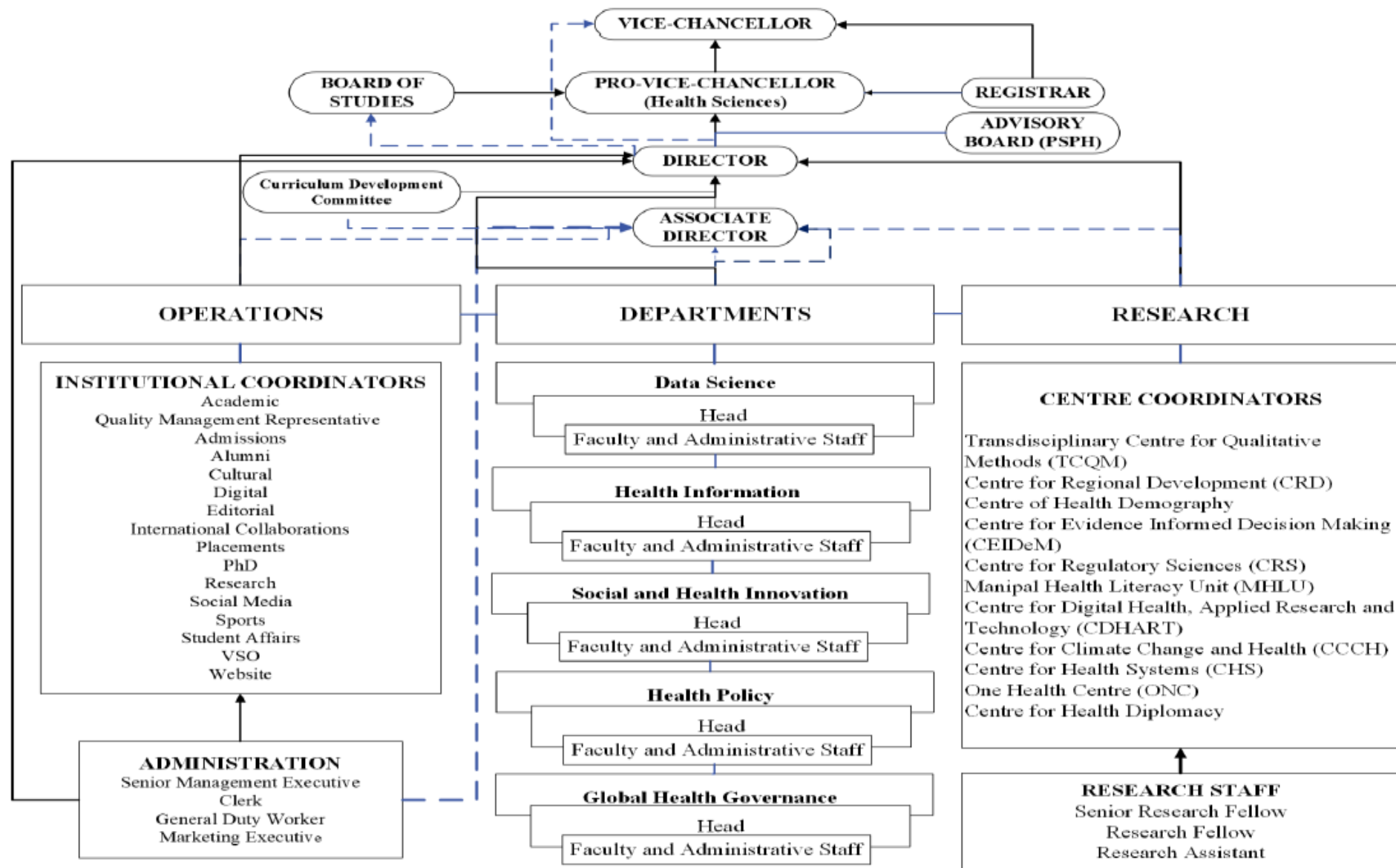


Figure 1: Organisational Chart of PSPH

## **Criterion II: Aims and Objectives of the Public Health Institution and its programmes.**

*The Institution has a clearly formulated mission, conducive to the development of public health and which is responsive to changing environments, evidence, health needs of populations*

### **2.1 The institution has a clearly stated and publicised mission.**

The background development at the School was clearly explained as part of the self-evaluation document. Less clear was that the School had only been in operation for seven years and the Team felt that what had been achieved in the last seven years was truly amazing, and the School should be applauded for their development. So far, this is clearly supported from the main University and, as such, the University deserves credit for their support as well as the international support deriving from collaborations in Maastricht and McMaster University.

The mission and the vision of the School, as well as the University, were broadcast not only on the Internet but throughout the School, on posters. At the beginning of School meetings faculty would be invited to recite its mission and vision. However, the Team did feel that the mission and vision were rather back to front because the mission of the School is, "To be among the top three Schools of Public Health in India and the top twenty Schools of Public Health in the world by 2025." Whereas the vision, is: "to be a 'game changer' in academia and research with focus on translating evidence into policy decisions and to attain excellence and sustainability in public health by training next generation of public health leaders according to their future needs. "This is not a unique situation and has been encountered elsewhere, However, the Team would advise the School to revise/revisit this so the mission captures what the School is actually doing at the moment and the vision encapsulates what the future aspirations are. The observation, is that the mission, presently called the vision clearly identifies and includes elements of education, research and service, with a heavy focus on research and translating evidence into policy as well as the sustainability of training public health workforces and the next generation of public health leaders.

*Conclusion:* This sub-criterion is met

### **2.2 Each programme within the institution has explicit programme aims in line with the mission of the institution.**

The mission and vision of the School was clearly outlined through the generation of final qualifications which were codified in a range of programme and module learning objectives which were presented to the Team as part of the site visit. This was also clarified during the Curriculum Validation stage. During the visit, the Team were also informed of a more global University ethos that saw many people talking of the separate institutions as being akin to a

“spoke” in a wheel to the main University. As part of the visit the Team met with many University representatives who presented a unified central support for the School.

*Conclusion:* This sub-criterion is met

### **2.3 The institution demonstrates appropriate responsiveness to emerging scientific evidence and developments in the public health academic and professional spheres, change in the environment and health needs.**

The School was evidently open to change, and this was seen by the introduction of a new programme within the range of programmes being offered at the School. They had also introduced elements of One-health into their programming. One of the biggest areas of response was seen in the change and responsiveness to student feedback in changing from module teaching to back to a semester teaching. Although this had been University wide, the original change from semester to module was to try and encourage more into collaboration with other Indian universities within the higher education sector to allow students mobility. However, students felt that the modules were too condensed and didn't give them enough time to focus on the subjects; and were quite vocal about this, and the School responded by changing back to the semester system.

*Conclusion:* This sub-criterion is met

### **2.4 The institution actively services the needs of the public health community**

The School runs an annual Global Health Symposium, which includes many different nationalities. In regard to servicing the needs of the local community the institution did not appear to have a unified or central strategy for outreach which the Team would encourage the School to adopt. More detail is provided under Criterion 5.5 below

*Conclusion:* This sub-criterion is met with comments

## **Criterion III: Programmes**

*The institution provides a supportive framework for each of the programmes offered at the institution.*

### **3.1 The core components of the curriculum provide a thorough teaching of the basic concepts, theories and methods of public health.**

All the components to the curricular were found to be justified in respect of their consistency and the final qualifications of the programme. These were verified through the Curriculum Validation process where all four validation reviewers gave this this aspect fully met. The final qualifications were found to be adequately translated into the learning objectives, which were found within the documentation presented both as part of the validation process but also during the site visit. These were broken down into programming and module learning outcomes and were denoted by the reviewers as fully met during the Curriculum Validation process.

The core components of the programmes were found to cover the basic concepts, theories and methods of public health and were found to be both theoretical and applied. Students and alumni had informed the Team that that they appreciated the multidisciplinary nature of programming and a focus on providing learning in different programmes and institutions. Examples were given by the alumni of taking courses in architecture, hospitality and communications. The alumni had expressed to the team that although, at the time, they didn't see the value of these courses, once they were in the workplace, they required the use those skills and therefore fully appreciated the knowledge that they had acquired. One additional aspect is that the students and alumni had mentioned is that they were not “spoon fed” and that they were asked to involve their critical skills in the process of learning. The Team felt this was a very healthy approach to learning for the students and also increased the psychology of lifelong learning within the student cohorts; and was clearly appreciated by students and alumni.

The School prides itself with being research driven and the ability for students to conduct primary research at the School was found to be exceptional. This was appreciated for two reasons. Firstly, it meant that research could be captured within the learning of the School and incorporated into the curriculum. Secondly, it ensured ethics run throughout the programme. Students were ethically informed not only in terms of research but also, for example, through ethical approaches, cases and their internships. This was seen as a clear benefit of the School's approach to engage and induce ethical lifelong learning within their research teaching. Research methods in particular, were also taught by different departments such as data management, to ensure that the students obtained the highest level research skills available within the University.

One of the alumni had also mentioned that they were encouraged to publish two papers during their time at the School (which was accomplished) whereas others had to learn R software. An anecdote given by one alumnus was that after leaving the School and entering into a government department they were able to train longer-standing colleagues in that department as they did not have the level of training that they were exposed to.

The programmes were found to be coherent in that both their content and the sequence of modules . At present there is a block of core modules followed by electives which then comprise specialisations. One of the areas which the team felt the School may wish to think about is when they grow (as the seven years previous has demonstrated), is making those specialisations into full-blown programmes in their own right, depending on the market needs for those programmes such as maternal child and health

*Conclusion:* This sub-criterion is met

### **3.2 The institution ensures multi-disciplinarity in order to prepare public health professionals.**

The Team witnessed a range of lifelong learning, including cross-departmental learning previously mentioned, Coursera and MOOCs to support student learning which the students had been found to value and appreciate the creative and applicable nature of the learning at the School which motivates students for lifelong learning which is juxtaposed against the so-called, “spoon-fed” approaches.

One area that the School might consider is expanding the range of short courses and making them credit bearing to appeal to the local workforces who can then have an opportunity to build up to sequentially to a Masters degree. This could be beneficial to the employers as well as the workers in alleviating both time and financial pressures. As expressed in the SED 70% of graduates are employed in NGOs, 10% in the private sector and 20% in the public sector.

The programme itself falls within a three-tier structure. One of the students met with was looking to go on to a PhD programme, which is possible due to MAHE being a Deemed-to-be-University within the Indian system and fully compliant within the Indian regulations. In fact, many of the junior faculty of the School had obtained PhDs through the School which offers both residential and online PhDs. The Team were informed by the alumni group that one students was presently undertaking a PhD in the USA.

One of the elements that came out of the discussions with the students was that one of the students had mentioned that a colleague in another University was not allowed to undertake

primary research. This student had mentioned that this gave them little understanding of ethical approaches. Student understanding of ethical approaches was considered by the students to make the School stand out amongst other Schools in the country.

The Team met with representatives of the central MAHE who had informed the Team that there are four ethics committees in University. These committees witness around one hundred projects submitted each month. These were broken down into animal, University, primary ethics and student ethics committees, the last of which mainly focuses on student projects although areas such as for trial for drugs goes to the others. Principal investigators are obliged to have to apply for the students and videos are available to help student to understand process. There is a seventy-two hour pre-screening process in which the proposals are either returned or positively processed. If returned, students can resend by the last Tuesday of each month to ensure that the student research is not delayed.

*Conclusion:* This sub-criterion is met

### **3.3 The institution fosters the translation of up to date research into the curricula design and content.**

There was an overwhelming sense that the School was highly focused on research and research directing the School's teaching. It was appreciated how students were conducting primary research which was influencing the teaching within the programmes themselves. Examples of this were found in both the introduction of One-health, global health, health literacy, climate change and the influences of COVID19 which the Team witnessed as influencing both the content and design of the training available at the School. The School has recently instigated a new MSc on Health Technology Assessment.

*Conclusion:* This sub-criterion is met

### **3.4 The institution provides mechanisms and policies for unbiased student assessment.**

School uses student ID numbers to provide anonymity to the student cohort. In addition, although they do not have an established examination board, there is a clear process for establishing marking schema which are provided to the students through their handbooks. Each assessment has a marking schema developed by the faculty that are then passed through to the coordinators and then further up to the University's evaluation unit. The assessments consisted of internal (School based) formative assessments and University summative examinations. There are two markers for each assessment, and when there was a difference of 15% or more, a third marker is engaged. On enquiry, the Team were informed

that the difference of 15% had not actually happened which gave the Team confidence in the in the schema of being correctly set.

An interesting feature within the School was that those students who had consistently had pass rates over 80% were given additional prospects, such as attending international symposia as a reward for their academic excellence.

There were clear policies made available for exams and thesis and external assessments were reviewed as part of the self-evaluation documentation. Policies on examinations, synthesis percentage were also presented as part of the SED and are also included within the student handbooks. For internal School-based exams, students are allowed to re-sit, both mentors and coordinators will be informed and there will be a meeting between the mentor and the mentee to understand the situation. Students may also receive extra courses, such as short courses and MOOCs to help them as, if they are unable to undertake the internal formative assessment for any reason, students may not be able to take their final exam. This is a situation that has been raised to the University. For the University exams, students are given the opportunity for a second attempt. If they fail that exam they'll enter the cohort after them. If there are emergency situations for the failure, there is no cap. If it's a simple fail, without emergencies then the re-sit result is capped.

*Conclusion:* This sub-criterion is met

### **3.5 The institution recognises and adheres to explicit policies on plagiarism and fraud. Faculty are provided and guided with instruments to tackle fraud or plagiarism in assessments and theses. Students are informed.**

With regard to plagiarism and academic integrity, students are provided with guidance during orientation and then reinforced throughout the course. Faculty retain the licences for Turnitin and also help guide the students with how to detect plagiarism in their own work. Students often use free plagiarism checkers online but licenses for use can be gained through the library resources The library has available licences for Turnitin but faculty had also made note that the parameters should be set by them and also offer the ability to test for the students. The software doesn't generally cover AI issues and there is a 10% level acceptance of plagiarism permitted (references not included)

*Conclusion:* This sub-criterion is met

### **3.6 The Institution recognises and adheres to the principals of the Bologna Declaration where appropriate.**

The criterion referencing the Bologna declaration is non-applicable to Universities outside of the European Higher Education Area. There was evidence provided of credit transcripts for learning made through Maastricht University for students to undertaking study there. However, there had been no concerns raised by either students or alumni in regard to having their learning recognised overseas as was evidenced through students further studying overseas.

*Conclusion:* This sub-criterion is met

### **3.7 The institution encourages international networking and collaborations.**

A listing of international collaborations was presented as part of the SED which mainly focussed on the relations with Maastricht University in The Netherlands and McMaster University in Canada. MAHE has its own international office which focuses on mobility for staff and students, liaison for dual degrees, scholarships and research. At present, the University as a whole, has sent over 500 students out and accepted 350. The School's Global Health Symposium was deemed as excellent by the Team.

It was clear that the School (and University) expressed a clear strategy for further internationalisation and an evident aspiration for wider international relationships. However, as the School grows, the Team felt there was an a emphasis for looking toward the "West" for their relationships and felt that they had much more to offer. As such, the School may wish to think about more south-south relationships and in increasing the strength of the research in particular areas such as maternal child health.

*Conclusion:* This sub-criterion is met



## **Criterion IV: Students and Graduates**

*The institution has policies and procedures on student recruitment, enrolment, support and follow-up which are assessed and revised regularly.*

### **4.1 The institution has clearly defined admission criteria and recruiting policies for their programmes.**

The admission process begins in January/February for the programmes. Later to July, programmes are published in a portal when they're opened and applicants send through documents uploaded and screening of documentation and initial verification is undertaken by the central University Admissions Department. If there is ambiguity then admissions talk to the School. Eligibility for Post graduate courses all rely on undergraduate education and provisional acceptances are issued for students still undertaking their undergraduate degrees.

Prospective students normally wait between 15 and 20 days for a response, and if all is in order they would be interviewed by three faculty on their motivation to study public health in MAHE. The Team recognised that the School is growing and would advise to pay attention to the capacity required for these interviews moving into the future. After this stage applicants receive a confirmation within two weeks.

Candidates then pay (c\$2000 per year) and are accepted. The candidates then meet the admissions department for verification of all details. A final verification is completed on arrival on campus. Admission of new students begins in September each year,

Some of the reasons for students applying but not arriving include geographical location (main issue). But as prospective students apply to multiple universities some had dropped out the process to study elsewhere. The School does receive applications from outside of India (mainly Nigeria, Nepal, Myanmar and Bangladesh) whereby checks are made to see if the University is recognised by the Ministry, whereas the Association of Indian Universities will give an equivalence of learning.

All applications processes are guided by central policies regardless of age, religion, nationality or gender. On speaking with the students, they had accessed the data on the School through the website. The reasons for choosing the School included considering MAHE one of the best Universities in India, the existing international collaborations in The Netherlands and Canada, and the range of specialisations available. The Team were informed that student life on campus was better than expected, was considered as safe with security provided, and any concerns the students had were dealt with promptly, such as issues with the hostel. Other students had mentioned the library and facilities including at-home access to the library, alumni connections and the international exposure.

All quantitative data on the School’s admissions was provided as part of the SED and further presented as part of the site visit.

*Conclusion:* This sub-criterion is met

**4.2 The institution strives to ensure that students are provided with opportunities to successfully undertake the programmes on offer. Programmes within the institution are achievable for the vast majority of students in terms of success rates and completing studies within the specified timeframe.**

The School keeps informed of the student progress through use of their student life cycle management software which looks at the grades and attendance and is integrated into their learning management system, Brightspace. This system is being implemented university wide and will be coordinated across all institutions once they have converted fully from the module to semester teaching plans.

When students join, they are first presented with the academic calendar and a mentor is assigned for pastoral and academic first point of contact. Quantitative data was provided as part of the SED on attrition and prolongations. As can be seen from Table 1 there is very little attrition. Students have the possibility of a maximum of 4 years to complete the programmes at the School.

Programme	2018-2020	2019-2021	2020-2022	2021-2023
Master of Public Health	99% (n = 52)	100% (n = 61)	100% (n = 54)	100% (n=54)
MSc. (Biostatistics)	100% (n-19)	100% (n=14)	100%(n=20)	100% (n=19)
MSc. (Data Science)	NA	100% (n=2)	98% (n=11)	100 % (n=12)
Master of Hospital administration	100% (n=38)	97% (n=36)	94% (n=51)	94%(n=58)
Master of Social work	96 % (n=27)	100 % (n=30)	96 % (n=24)	96% (n=26)

Table 1: Completion rates on time by programme and academic year

Students with special needs can access facilities through the University. There was wheelchair access at the rear of the building for people with mobility issues. However, with regard to vision and hearing impaired students, there was a special unit within the University and, although no potential students had previously applied, it had been expressed to the Team during the visit, that it would seem indicative of the Indian system that these individuals would go to “special” Schools for people with visual and audial impairment.

*Conclusion:* This sub-criterion is met

#### **4.3 The institution provides accessible counselling services for personal, academic and professional development of students.**

As previously mentioned, there is a mentor-mentee system in use at the School for pastoral and academic affairs. The mentors are available on phones and emergencies are covered by 24/7 services through the central University. The stipulation is for one mentor to ten mentees but the Team had heard that in some cases the ratio was higher. As such, the Team would advise the School, that as the mentor is crucial, they should consider professional development for the mentors to help with their development in areas such as mental health first aid and the necessary skills to support the growing and diversifying student body.

The University has a Student Support Services unit which also runs support courses. One student had mentioned that they had signed up for courses on procrastination and public speaking. Additionally the School uses a peer support system of other students. The peers receive training on issues such as sexual harassment and substance abuse.

Students have access and are well informed about the University's student health clinic for issues such as mental health. Students informed the Team that they were able to simply walk in and talk to someone for 5 to 10 minutes and this was followed up the next day with an additional session and further follow-up sessions were planned. These services are free of charge and student hospital fees covered by student fees. An overview of the support systems in operation for the School through the Central University is presented in figure 2 below.

Administrative staff were interviewed as part of the site visit. Students had informed the Team that they were readily available through email but for emergencies they could call immediately. The School's administrative services are located in the main corridor of the School and have an office in the School which is open from nine am to five pm daily, including three Saturdays of each month which are considered work days.

*Conclusion:* This sub-criterion is met

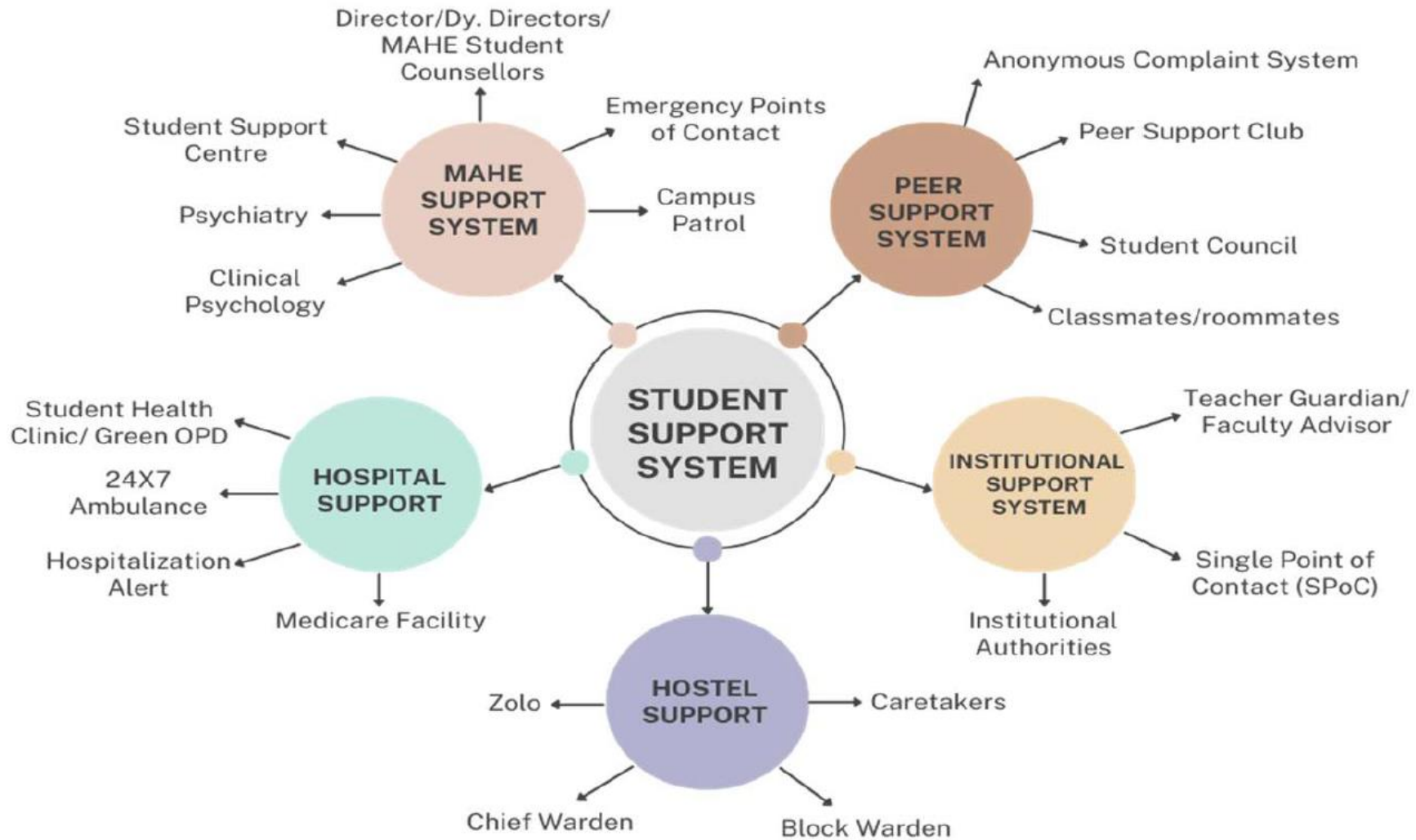


Figure 2: MAHE Student Support and Welfare Overview

#### **4.4 The institution has effective communication tools (website, brochures, etc.) to present itself and its activity internally and externally to students.**

The Team found that the School has an excellent website. The School uses WhatsApp and a range of social media including Facebook groups and Instagram. The website contains full programme details and a portal for applications is available centrally through the Website. Information on the website is supported through student Induction and handbooks which detail the School and University requirements, policies and practices. As previously mentioned some of these policies adorn the corridors in the form of posters.

Most interviewees had mentioned that they received information about the School via its website. Some of the reasons encountered for student interest in the School related to interests in non-clinical sciences. One alumnus had recommended to their juniors to take on the MPH whereas another student had informed the Team that their cousin would be attending in the following year. All interviewees had expressed that Manipal (MAHE) was well known and respected throughout the world and the alumni gave a clear sense of pride as having attended the School and University. To paraphrase one alumnus interviewed, “if you go to Manipal you’ll get a job.”

*Conclusion:* This sub-criterion is met

#### **4.5 The institution employs a proactive approach to monitoring students after graduation.**

At a central level, the University operates a formal and systematic alumni association in which all graduates are registered in a database and where career data is collected. At a School level there was more of an informal network consisting of faculty graduate relations and supported by WhatsApp but where career changes were also circulated. The alumni mentioned they were getting contacted all the time and, post COVID19, the School had been leading virtual interactions on career opportunities whereby faculty would identify graduates in certain posts which have vacancies and identify the skill sets required. In addition to these elements, the School regularly invites alumni back to sit on Master vivas and help with teaching.

The Team would recommend that because of its growth, the School may well have national and international leaders to count within its alumni body and, therefore, should look to systematize alumni connections beyond WhatsApp. This contact should also be used to capture the skills used in the workplace so they can be reflected upon in the curricula

*Conclusion:* This sub-criterion is met with comments

**4.6 The institution adheres to national legislation on the protection of personal data**

The School abides to national legislation on data protection as highlighted in the SED and materials presented on site.

*Conclusion:* This sub-criterion is met

## **Criterion V: Human Resources and Staffing**

*The institution ensures that the profile and number of teaching and support staff is appropriate to the provision of the stated programmes and their continuous development.*

*The promotion and recruitment policy within the institutional recruitment regulations and procedures are consistent with the mission of the institution and the aims and objectives of the stated programmes.*

### **5.1 A staff recruitment policy exists outlining the type, responsibilities and balance of academic staff required to adequately delivery the programme curricula.**

The School abides by MAHE human resources recruitment processes which were presented to the Team as part of the site visit. There are six steps involved in the statutory process and seven steps in the ad-hoc process. For direct faculty statutory recruitment, a manpower requirement is raised, followed by advertising the posts and inviting applications. The applications then undergo scrutiny centrally and a shortlist is made. The next step is for the Faculty Selection Committee to meet and interview the potential candidates. Once selected the candidate is then issued an approval / appointment letter.

In general faculty are employed on a two year probation which is then converted to full-time upon agreement with the Head of Department. Job descriptions were presented to the Team as part of the site visit. During the interviews it became apparent that many faculty were employed at Assistant Professor which requires a doctoral degree, subject knowledge and work experience. Some of the other attributes consist of developing and updating curricula, teaching and supervision and funded research. Assistant Professors will initially have around a 60-80% teaching workload (depending on the department) whereas for full professors it is around 20-40% teaching. The remaining time is allocated to research and administration. Administration covers duties such as coordinating teaching, overview of alumni placements, quality process documentation.

After four years as (entry level) Assistant Professor along with two publications there are opportunities to progress to Assistant Professor Senior Level. After at least one doctoral supervision and five publications, either as first or secondary author, there are opportunities for promotion to Selection Grade – Assistant Professor. Each stage takes around four years but this can be decreased if there are opportunities.

At present the School has seven Professors, 9 Associate Professors, three Assistant Professors (Selection grade), five Assistant Professors (Senior scale) and one Assistant Professor. If the Data Science unit is subtracted the number of full professors equates to three across all

departments. As such, the Team observed the faculty body in the majority of departments as rather “bottom heavy” with more junior faculty. To this end the Team would recommend the School aim to increase its reputation in research and scholarship (and de facto attractiveness to students and grant makers – vis a vis rankings) through investment in balancing the faculty profile with more full professors.

*Conclusion:* This sub-criterion is partially met with comments

## **5.2 There is a central and stable core of academically qualified and / or experienced teaching staff in sufficient numbers dedicated to the programmes offered.**

Numbers and qualifications of staff were reviewed through their Curriculum Validations and the evidence given as part of the SED. The Team were informed that there are 27 academic staff in the School with 23 holding PhDs (and 3 with MPhil) and 4 faculty members are currently pursuing Doctorates.

As in many countries throughout the world, Public Health is not regulated through a formal body, such as a medical council. Therefore, the School adheres to the University Grants Criteria. This has caused a slightly difficult situation as three out of five new Heads are required and there is a new Director of the School arriving shortly who will need to be part of the recruitment process. In turn this is causing a small delay in recruitment of the Heads.

Staff to student staff ratios were set centrally at 1 to 10 but were found to differ across departments (generally dependent on the number of departmental staff). In Data science the ratio is 1 to 5, Social Work 1 to 12 and for the Master of Public Health 1 to 20. As such, the Team would advise the School to take care to adhere to existing guidelines in the staff student ratios.

*Conclusion:* This sub-criterion is met

## **5.3 Departments are comprised of staff with multidisciplinary backgrounds.**

The multidisciplinary nature of the faculty was reviewed through their Curriculum Validations. The meetings had highlighted varying discipline expertise such as, demographers, statisticians, NCD specialists, behavioural scientists.

The teaching staff are in the main, locally trained with many of the staff obtaining their PhDs from the School itself. Some of the faculty met with during the visit had highlighted their



involvement in international projects which increases the School's international profile. Pedagogical training is dealt with in more detail under criterion 5.6 below.

*Conclusion:* This sub-criterion is met

#### **5.4 The institution supports the active involvement of faculty in public health research activities.**

The School and Faculty were found to have support from the main University for conference attendance as well as support for writing grants. They also have access to the library / e-library and software. As part of their job descriptions, appraisals and promotion, faculty are required to pursue research and the School focuses heavily on research being at the forefront of their activities. Faculty interviewed had given an overview of the range of national and international research they were involved with

*Conclusion:* This sub-criterion is met

#### **5.5 The institution supports the active involvement of faculty in public health service (practice) activities.**

The Team found that although faculty were involved in social outreach in their own time, through NGOs and research activities as part of their workload but it appeared to the Team that these activities were conducted outside of their contractual arrangements rather than the School itself engaging in social outreach. As such, the team would recommend the School look at what the operations of public health schools are and how integral they are to the communities they serve, and then consider having social outreach as a part of faculty responsibilities and, in this sense, avoid the ivory tower nature which sees schools of public health detached from the communities they serve.

*Conclusion:* This sub-criterion is partially met with comments

#### **5.6 The institution has policies to evaluate and support professional development, within existing resources, for all staff.**

The School utilises an annual appraisal system, the remit of which is elaborated in detail for the faculty and conducted in a one-to-one session with the Head of Department. The appraisal system returns a grade consisting of four categories A+++, A++, A+ and A. Each of these levels is associated with salary increases with A+++ eliciting the higher increases. The University policy stipulates that each grade should accommodate 30% of the faculty apart from the lower

A grade which is 10%. From this year, to achieve the highest grade, faculty are required to publish two papers as the first or submitting author. All publications are required to be uploaded into the central research management system. Feedback from the appraisal is given to the Director and coordinators.

The range of faculty activity covered consists of the number of grants received (which the faculty also receive assistance in acquiring), teaching research and publications, attendance at conferences, awards gained as well as student feedback. If Faculty disagree with the grade given, they have the opportunity to raise concerns with the Vice-chancellor. Faculty felt that the process was both fair and transparent.

Faculty are mandatorily trained at the beginning of their tenure through the Centre for Continuing Education and Interprofessional Development (CCEID). The Centre further offers additional courses which are not compulsory in areas such as conflict resolution and copyrighting. The Team would urge the School to consider ongoing refresher pedagogic training (and sharing) for faculty.

*Conclusion:* This sub-criterion is met with comments

### **5.7 The institution has policies in place for appointment and promotion.**

The policies for appointment and promotion of faculty were presented to the Team as part of the SED and additional job descriptions were made available during the site visit. Criterion 5.1. above contains the details of both policies and procedures in action at the School and University.

*Conclusion:* This sub-criterion is met

### **5.8 An appropriately qualified and sufficient administrative/support staff is available for the programmes.**

The Team found that the School was well supported by 16 administrative functions internally as well as receiving administration support from the wider University, many of whom the Team had met during the site visit.

*Conclusion:* This sub-criterion is met

## **Criterion VI: Supportive Services, Budgeting and Facilities**

*The accommodation, budget and facilities are adequate to realise the mission of the institution and range of programme aims and objectives.*

### **6.1 The institution has financial resources sufficient to support the stated aims, final qualifications and learning objectives of the programmes offered.**

The School is supported through endowments and fees. The Central University also engages a five-to-10-year period of support for new programmes before seeing the return on investment. An annual cycle of central University monitoring and discussion are conducted on budget allocations which are then delivered to the School who have autonomy on its use (aside from faculty appointments).

*Conclusion:* This sub-criterion is met

### **6.2 The learning resources are adequate and students and staff are provided with sufficient access and guidance on to these resources inside and outside of usual School working hours.**

The School through MAHE has access to 14 libraries on campus as well as a smaller library within the School. During the visit, students and alumni had specifically applauded the library facilities. One student in particular had praised the off-campus access to the library resources which saved her a three hour commute. According to the students this was quite different to many universities in India. Library. Library orientation was given to students during induction sessions. As previously mentioned, library staff were also available for students to help with areas such as plagiarism checking, search assistance, grammar software and workshops for aspiring authors. The library's website can be found [here](#).

*Conclusion:* This sub-criterion is met

### **6.3 Appropriate and well-equipped physical facilities supporting the educational methods of the programmes are provided.**

The Team had chance to be shown around the facilities of the School and Central Library. The School facilities included various lecture and seminar rooms equipped with projectors and computers. Although not part of the learning facilities the Team recognised that students also had access to a world class sports facility in a short walk from the School.

*Conclusion:* This sub-criterion is met

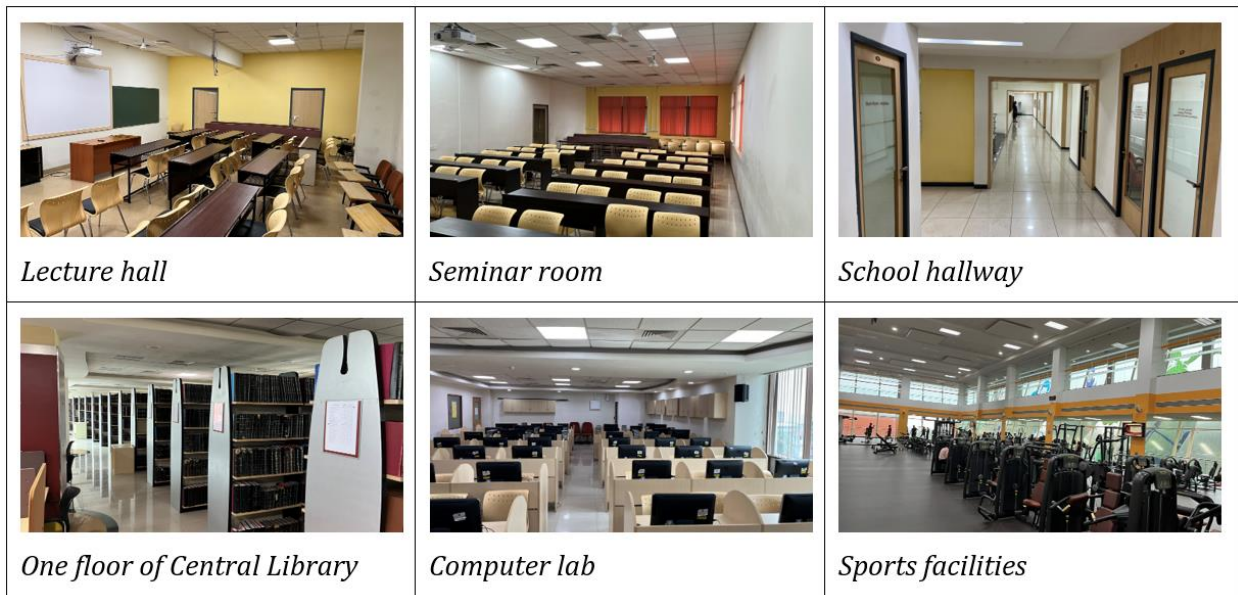


Figure 3: Resources witnessed during tour of facilities

#### **6.4 Appropriate computer facilities, including both hardware and software, access to the internet and appropriate service support are provided.**

Most of the students at the School have their own laptops and these are supported through the centralised IT department. An addition a computer laboratory is available as well as researchers having access to five laptops loaded with software and a range of tablets available to all. Staff are also supported through being provided with individual laptops. Both Staff and students have access to a range of software which was outlined in the SED and confirmed during discussions with the students.

*Conclusion:* This sub-criterion is met

#### **6.5 Support is provided for the welfare and accommodation of students.**

The welfare support offered to students is covered in detail under criterion 4.3 above. During the visit the Team had the opportunity to interview the accommodation office where it was explained that the University has 24 blocks of accommodation. For a student body of 25,000 there are 16,000 beds available. Priority for accommodation is given to undergraduates and students with disabilities, who are also placed in blocks with lifts. There are separate amenities for international students. The students interviewed had mentioned that concerns were acted upon quickly, such as a student from another region of India suffering from heat and being moved in to a fully air conditioned suite. The University also utilises a phone app where

students can access maintenance and book cleaning from. There was a focus on nutritional food and hygiene in the communal eating areas.

*Conclusion: This sub-criterion is met*

## **Criterion VII: Internal Quality Management**

*There is an internal system for assuring quality and supporting policy development, decisions, and actions.*

### **7.1 A systematic quality management system regarding institutional provisions and the quality of programmes is in place with the involvement of relevant stakeholders.**

During the visit the Team were given a presentation on the quality processes in use both in the School and University. As with much of its operations, the School is directed in its quality processes through the central University. Centrally there is the Internal Quality Assurance Cell. The role of this cell is to align the vision and mission of the University and its departments with the regulatory requirements of the field, such as, the Medical Council, National Association of Hospitals, as well as the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), other accrediting bodies and ranking organisations.

The quality management system is based upon a fifteen year strategic plan broken down into three 5 year implementation plans which align to five strategic pillars. The first pillar is “excellence in education” which looks to strengthen education programmes, research and innovation based on societal and industry needs. The aim is to strengthen the qualifications of faculty, including engaging more international faculty but also to support more economic disadvantaged students. The second pillar is “exemplary research and innovation” which seeks to raise the quantity and quality of research output and encourage faculty to take on consultancies. Thirdly there is “expanding reach and internationalisation” which includes joint research, academic exchange and developing joint academic programmes. The penultimate pillar is “effective engagement and Alumni relations” which, aside from academic collaborations, seeks more emphasis on alumni involvement in decision-making bodies in the University and its institutions. Finally, there is “enabling Foundation” which seeks to support all the above activities through expanding infrastructure with an emphasis on environmental development.

*Conclusion: This sub-criterion is met*

## **7.2 There is regular and systematic data collection of student and staff feedback concerning the institution and the programmes offered.**

The Quality Management System in the School is being driven by the central University five and 15 year strategic plans and supported by annual action plans and monthly reporting. In addition, there is a two-year internal periodic review and a five-year University review.

At a curriculum level, quality management is being driven the Board of Studies which meets bi-annually. This group received inputs from the Heads of Departments, coordinators, faculty, external stakeholders, students and University representatives. The role of the Board is then to review the results, propose measures for improvement and addressing of student feedback. The processes include a periodic curriculum revision including syllabi, pedagogy and assessment. Once concluded the process is sent for approval through the MAHE Academic Council which is the highest body in the University (in other countries this is called the Senate).

Student feedback takes two perspectives. There is anonymised module / course feedback completed after the module /course. Response rates were helped by the system employed in the School. Students are given a session to feedback online and once completed they will receive an exam ticket which allows them to take the summative exams for the course. The second area for feedback consists of student feedback as part of the Board of Studies of which, minutes were produced as part of the SED. The main issues addressed in the recent months has been the vocal disapproval of the module teaching system and the reversion to the semester teaching which the students had appreciated. Other related feedback included the lack of time available for further learning and extracurricular activities.

The Board of Studies is also the forum in which faculty feedback to the School and feedback has included updating elective choice, internships and assessments. The employers' voice is also heard in this Board with employers recently expressing concern with the lack of in-depth knowledge of students coming from the module teaching. During the site visit the Team had chance to interview the employers who had expressed that there was a constant communication between them and the School which was seen as a strength.

*Conclusion:* This sub-criterion is met

**7.3 Feedback on quality of the programmes and institutional provisions is provided to faculty, students and other persons involved.**

Employers were also positive about the calibre of students and how they were ready to learn and push themselves to adapt to differing situations. However, the Team did note that the employers were not informed of the changes made, but rather had witnessed the changes in the graduate body and had appreciated that their concerns raised had been taken into account. Likewise, the students had also referenced that they had appreciated the changes made and associated it positively with their feedback rather than being informed directly as to what changes had taken place as a result of their feedback. As such, the Team would recommend the School look to a more systematic feedback process to ensure that those who have given feedback know what actions have been taken. This is often called “closing the loop.”

*Conclusion:* This sub-criterion is met with comments

**7.4 The institution provides evidence that recommendations received during previous reviews (by APHEA or any other national/international review body) have led to changes in curricula, organisation of the programmes or institutional activities.**

Although the School has not been through an APHEA accreditation and is not directed by regulatory bodies, it was evident from the evidence provided that they have been responsive to feedback from faculty, students and employers and well as to directives from the Central University.

*Conclusion:* This sub-criterion is met