

QEC

NEWSLETTER



Capital University
of Science and Technology
Islamabad



Ranked

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QEC

Accomplishments and Milestones

- HEC Scorecard
- PSG-2023 QA Framework
- Institutional Quality Circle (IQC)
- International Rankings
- Professional Development Center (PDC)



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Patron

Prof. Dr. Muhammad Mansoor Ahmed

Editors

Mr. Fida Hussain

Mr. Muhammad Farhan

Ms. Rimsha Ejaz

Graphic Designer

Taaruf Ullah Khaweri

QEC Accomplishments and Milestones

Quality Enhancement Cell (QEC) at Capital University of Science and Technology, Islamabad Campus (CUST), is taking deliberate steps to bring about continual improvement in the effectiveness of the learning experiences of students. In Quality Enhancement Cell, there is a greater emphasis on Internal QA and the encouragement of an institutional "Quality Culture".

HEC Scorecard

CUST has always been in the forefront for accepting and adapting best practices in the field of Education. Recognizing the role that it has to play in higher education sector, CUST established Quality Enhancement Cell in 2015.

Since then this cell has been striving to ensure that the university's quality assurance procedures are compatible with international standards and are designed to improve the quality of higher education. QEC, CUST, is amongst the only few QECs of the Pakistan to have achieved **98.61** score from HEC for the



year 2023 and was rated as MMPS **"Meeting Most parameters Satisfactorily – MMPS"**, which is the highest category to be received by QEC via HEC's annual assessment.

PSG-2023 QA Framework

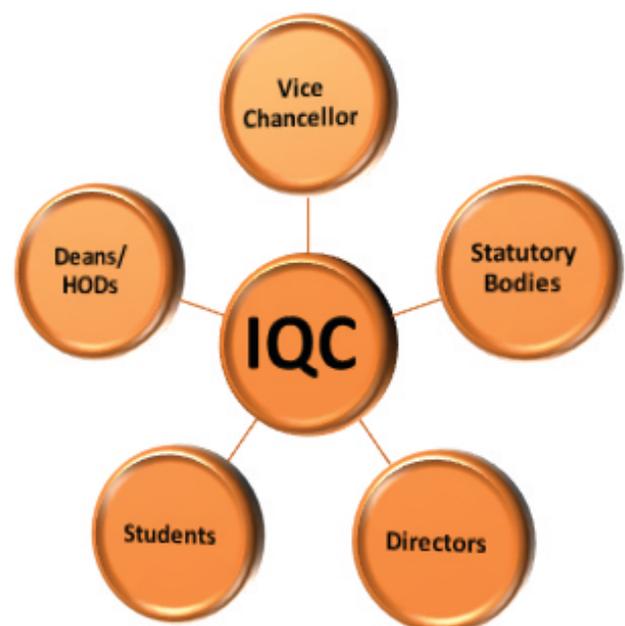
Higher Education Commission of Pakistan in collaboration with QAA UK, crafted a robust Quality Assurance Framework amalgamating internationally recognized QA with a principal mission to foster continuous improvement in the higher education sector of Pakistan. The Quality Assurance Framework, titled as "Pakistan Precepts, Standards, and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (PSG-2023)", emphasizes on fostering independent thinking, transparency and accountability, facilitating effective collaboration with stakeholders and promoting active engagement with students, faculty, administrators, and accreditation bodies. The Precepts, Standards and Guidelines (PSG), have been considered focus of the revised Quality Assurance Framework interlinked within each of three proposed quality assurance processes. These precepts, standards and guidelines

rationally align the standards with the institutional IQA and EQA both at program and institution level. The concept of Precepts under each domain of the proposed Quality Framework REQAAB (Reviewing Effectiveness of Quality Assurance & Accreditation), RIPE (Review of Institutional performance and Enhancement) and PREE (Program Review for Effectiveness and Enhancement) explain the expected outcomes, suggestive evidences and guidelines under each standard ensuring its effective execution and implementation.

Institutional Quality Circle (IQC)

CUST is committed to implement the PSG-2023 QA Framework in its letter and spirit and adopted the framework in principle. In this backdrop it established a centralized committee titled, "Institutional Quality Circle – IQC" which would serve as a highest formal institutional quality policy forum, headed by Vice Chancellor, IQAE (QEC), comprising of all statutory positions (Deans, HoDs, Registrar, Controller, Director Finance) and two Student Council Representative. Establishment of IQC as integral part of an institutional governance framework in the institution would maintain and improve EQA and IQA, facilitate and develop overall quality ecosystem within institution.

The IQC will meet at-least four-times a year under the chairmanship of Vice Chancellor, to monitor the assessment of existing quality indicators and policies, ensuring the implementation of the recommended actions against IQA and EQA periodical reviews. QEC CUST will manage institutional planning, coordinate and follow-up the self –assessment



activities through Institutional Quality Circle.

International Rankings

Rankings serve as effective management tool to effect Strategic, Organizational, Managerial and/or Academic change. It has become a vital resource to attract students and their families, as well as for Academics, University administrators and Governments globally for identifying institutions for collaborations and partnerships.



Moreover, University's Ranking was the second most-researched factor by prospective international students when choosing where to study.

QEC CUST also participates in various International Rankings to present CUST's achievements and has achieved remarkable positions and scores amongst top HEIs of Pakistan. CUST entered the World University Rankings (WUR), by Times Higher Education (THE), previous year for the first time and gained recognition worldwide as it was the 1 of the only 6 private universities across Pakistan to have gained position in the score band of 401-500 for its Physical Sciences programs and 601-800 for its Engineering Programs. Over all it ranked 4th amongst all the universities of Pakistan. This is a big achievement for CUST and will help maintain and build its Institutional Position and Reputation more effectively.

Moreover, CUST entered Young University Rankings for the first time and was ranked 5th in all Pakistan. This ranking particularly assesses the performance and quality of HEIs of 50 or less than 50 years of age in particular. It's a remarkable achievement to have received score band of 201-250.

Apart from the Times Higher Education (THE) QEC CUST has also submitted data in the QS World University Rankings and is committed to participate in more international rankings to improve and enhance its standard of quality further.

Professional Development Center (PDC)

In order to continuous development and capacity building of the faculty and staff for efficient and effective delivery of academic as well as administrative services to our students, the Professional

Development Center has been established at Capital University of Science and Technology with these following objectives:

- Facilitate the faculty and staff members in improving and updating their knowledge and skills, teaching methodologies and relevant innovative techniques
- Promote research activities of the faculty members by providing conducive environment and maximum possible assistance
- Provide ample facilities and encouragement to faculty members for industrial collaborations
- Ensure skill development of individual faculty and staff members by analyzing their strengths and weaknesses

The Professional Development Centre conducts and arranges various workshops and consultative sessions for the faculty and staff members to achieve the above-mentioned goals the desired objectives. This year as well, PDC has arranged the following sessions and workshops:

- Importance of QS and THE Ranking
- On Effective Teaching Methodologies
- Role of SDGs in the development of PLOs and CLOs
- On Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)
- Understanding the world in Qualitative Way
- Workshops for Program Teams on the preparation of Self-Assessment Report
- Workshops on Work Environment and Ethics
- Together we can get organized
- Time Management



CUST Insights (Interviews)**Dr. Umar Farooq***Professor and Head of the Department of English****Briefly introduce yourself and your role at CUST***

My name is Dr. Umar Farooq, and I am a Professor and Head of the Department of English at CUST. In my role, I serve on various academic committees, including the Executive Committee, Academic Council, Board of Advanced Studies and Research (BASR), Board of Faculty, and the CUST Research Ethics Committee. Additionally, I am Chief Editor of CUST Newsletter and CUST student magazine.

***What steps has your department taken to improve the quality of its academic programs?***

Department of English offers BS (Language and Literature) and MS in English (Linguistics) programs. To enhance the quality of these programs, we have implemented a comprehensive approach that begins with the proposal design and extends through course content development, textbook selection, assessment criteria, and student

support activities.

We conduct regular meetings of the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) and the Curriculum Committee, collaborating with both internal and external experts to maintain academic integrity in our curriculum and teaching methodologies. Faculty members provide feedback at the end of each semester to further improve course content and reading materials. We also ensure that both faculty and students have access to a wide range of print and online resources.

How do you plan to further improve and enhance the quality of these programs with prospects and aspirations?

To further improve the quality of our programs, we plan to review the program objectives and course outlines during the summer in our Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) meetings. By incorporating feedback from teachers and students, and engaging in discussions during Curriculum Committee and Board of Studies (BoS) meetings, we aim to refine our content. This initiative will not only elevate academic quality but also equip students with the competencies necessary to excel in the job market.

Additionally, we are organizing a conference to provide a platform for faculty, researchers, and students to interact with experts in the field, fostering the exchange of ideas and knowledge.

What role does QEC play in improving the quality of education at CUST?

The Quality Enhancement Cell (QEC) plays a crucial role in enhancing the quality of education at CUST. It initiates various activities aimed at improving academic programs, including faculty development initiatives that focus on the latest teaching trends, reviews of academic activities across departments, and gathering feedback on teaching practices to ensure a conducive learning environment. The QEC is dedicated to improving both the quality of academic programs and the overall educational environment at the university.

What is your role as Head of the Department in improving the quality of faculty and academic programs?

As the Head of the Department, my role is pivotal in leading the faculty and implementing initiatives that ensure the smooth operation of academic activities. I have taken several steps, including organizing faculty development programs, holding regular meetings of the Curriculum Committee, and maintaining the CQI cycle by observing teaching practices and academic activities within the department.

To bridge the gap between academia and industry, we invite speakers and professionals to share their insights with faculty and students. We also arrange industrial visits to provide students with practical exposure to the market, enhancing their learning experience and readiness for future employment.

CUST Insights (Interviews)

Dr. Sahar Fazal

Dean of the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences

Please introduce yourself and briefly describe, how you are contributing towards academic endeavors of CUST?

I completed my bachelor's degree from Bahauddin Zakariya University in 1996, followed by MSc (Hons.) with distinction from the University of Agriculture, Faisalabad. In 1999, I joined the Department of Entomology at Bahauddin Zakariya University. I was awarded a PhD scholarship by the Ministry of Science and Technology in 2000, enabling me to pursue my doctoral studies at South China Agricultural University in Guangzhou, China. Following this, I completed a Postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Sussex in England in 2009.

During my tenure as a member of the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) within the University's Quality Enhancement Cell, I have been the part of teams that were actively involved across various facets including the development and implementation of quality assurance frameworks, participation in internal quality audits, and the facilitation of workshops aimed at enhancing faculty development and student learning outcomes.

Describe different QA Practices which have been adopted and are being implemented to enhance the quality of programs.

Educational institutions are increasingly adopting diverse quality assurance (QA) practices to enhance the quality of their programs and ensure student success. These practices range from curriculum design and review processes to rigorous assessments and feedback mechanisms. Formalized accreditation standards, often mandated by governing bodies, play a crucial role, demanding institutions demonstrate adherence to specific criteria related to teaching methodologies, learning resources, and faculty qualifications. Continuous improvement initiatives are also gaining focus, with universities implementing regular program reviews and incorporating student feedback to identify areas for enhancement. Moreover, the integration of technology in education has led to the adoption of online learning platforms with built-in QA features, such as automated grading and progress tracking. Furthermore, the emphasis on research and scholarship within university settings drives quality through peer review processes for academic publications and grant applications, promoting a culture of rigorous evaluation and improvement.

These QA practices, when effectively implemented and continuously refined, contribute to a more robust and impactful educational experience for students. By focusing on clear learning outcomes, ensuring faculty competency, and utilizing effective assessment strategies, universities can deliver high-quality programs that prepare graduates for success in their chosen fields. The adoption of a comprehensive QA framework,

encompassing curriculum development, teaching methodologies, student support services, and assessment procedures, ultimately ensures that university programs remain relevant and valuable in the ever-evolving landscape of higher education.

How can CUST QEC play its role in improving the quality of education at CUST?

The Quality Enhancement Cell (QEC) at CUST is playing a key role in elevating the standards of education across the university. Through its proactive approach to quality assurance, the QEC can take initiatives that impact various facets of the educational avenues. This involves the thorough assessment of existing academic programs, ensuring alignment with national and international standards, and promoting a culture of evidence-based decision-making within the faculty. By conducting regular internal audits, program reviews, and student feedback mechanisms, the QEC can identify areas of strength and weakness, leading to targeted interventions and enhancements in curriculum design, teaching methodologies, and learning resources. Furthermore, the QEC can play a crucial role in fostering a research-oriented environment by faculty development and promoting research collaborations, that can ultimately enhance the intellectual capital of the university and translating into a more enriching educational experience for students.

Moreover, the QEC can work towards strengthening the university's infrastructure and support systems that directly impact student learning. This encompasses areas such as library resources, laboratory



facilities, and technological infrastructure. By ensuring the availability of up-to-date and relevant resources, the QEC can equip both faculty and students with the tools necessary to succeed in an increasingly complex educational environment. Additionally, the QEC can contribute to the development and implementation of effective student support services,

including academic advising, career counseling, and mentorship programs, ultimately contributing to improved student success rates and graduate employability.

The QEC's success in improving educational quality at CUST relies on its ability to create a collaborative and communicative atmosphere involving all stakeholders: faculty, students, administrators, and external partners. Through active interaction with these stakeholders, the QEC can make sure its programs are aligned with the university's strategic objectives and adapt to the changing needs of students and the broader community.

The CUST QEC's dedication to ongoing improvement and reliance on evidence-based practices enables it to play a transformative role in elevating the educational experience and cultivating a culture of excellence within the university.

What sort of QA practices could QEC introduce in order to boost the quality of graduate and undergraduate programs further?

Quality Enhancement Cells (QECs) can play a crucial role in enhancing graduate employability and skills development through strategic initiatives. Regular skills audits and gap analyses, informed by industry feedback help to identify essential competencies and can guide the curriculum revisions. Moreover, QEC can introduce the integration of industry-recognized certifications into degree programs that can further strengthens graduate employability.

QECs can elevate faculty performance by utilizing performance metrics that evaluate teaching, research, and mentorship, complemented by peer mentoring for new faculty members. Data-driven approaches, such as learning analytics, empower QECs to monitor student progress and refine curricula based on employer feedback. Real-time feedback mechanisms facilitate continuous course improvement, while student involvement in quality assurance committees can offers valuable

perspectives. QEC can also promote interdisciplinary and modular programs that allows students to personalize their education and align it with their career aspirations. Graduate programs can be enhanced by establishing formalized research mentorship programs and tracking research outputs by using QEC platform.

Which innovative steps have been taken by the FOHLS in promoting the quality of their graduates?

The Faculty of Health and Life Sciences (FOHLS) has introduced a set of innovative initiatives to improve the quality of its graduates. These measures aim to bridge the gap between theory and practice, equipping students with the skills necessary for successful careers. Key initiatives include curriculum modernization. FOHLS regularly update its programs to incorporate the latest advancements and industry trends in life sciences. FOHLS also promotes interdisciplinary learning, enabling students to explore courses across various fields and to cultivate a comprehensive understanding for application of these courses in this domain. Through partnerships with healthcare organizations, research institutions, and industries, FOHLS provides internships, industry placements, and real-world project opportunities, offering invaluable hands-on experience. Research integration is central to the curriculum, encouraging students to participate in faculty-led research projects and develop crucial skills in critical thinking, problem-solving, and innovation. The faculty has also established international collaborations, offering research opportunities to expose students to global healthcare challenges and perspectives. Additionally, skills development programs focused on communication, leadership, and teamwork are embedded in the curriculum to ensure graduates are well-rounded and career-ready. These initiatives collectively ensure that FOHLS graduates are highly competitive, possess a strong skillset, and are well-prepared to meet the evolving demands of the industry.

STUDENT'S INTERVIEWS

Dr. Maria Mashkoor (Alumni)

Briefly introduce yourself and your association with CUST.

I have had the privilege of being an integral part of Capital University of Science and Technology's (CUST) journey since its inception. My association with the institution began in 2007 when I joined as a faculty member at Muhammad Ali Jinnah University, Islamabad, which later transformed into CUST. Over the years, I have had the opportunity to grow both personally and professionally, earning my BBA degree as a Gold Medallist in 2007, followed by an MS in Human Resource Management with High Distinction in 2013, both from Muhammad Ali Jinnah University. Most recently, I achieved a significant milestone by completing my doctorate in Human Resource Management from

CUST in 2024. With a tenure spanning 17 years, my journey at CUST has been a long and rewarding one, marked by academic achievements, professional growth, and a deep commitment to the institution's mission.

I joined academia as a faculty member in 2007. Currently, I am Assistant Professor in Department of Management Sciences (DMS). Being committed to enhancing higher education experience, I have introduced the course of Personal Grooming and Management at BBA level and Academic Writing at PhD level. Since 2015, I have been appointed as Social Events Coordinator of DMS and also of Department of Business Accounting and Finance since its inception. I am Patron of CUST Helping Hand Society since 2020 and under my patronage, more than 1500 community

projects have been completed. This reflects my commitment towards nation building through developing good humans in addition to competent professionals. I have also served as BBA Program Manager for 8 years. Additionally, I am member of Newsletter Committee, Disabled Students Committee and have served as a member of Board of Studies, member of Discipline Committee, member of Cafeteria Committee, Member of JBR team, Member of Budget Committee, Member of HR track (CBRC) and Member of Sports Gala.

My research interests are in the area of human resource management, particularly, fun at work, nature connectedness, emotions, creativity and thriving at work. 8 MS scholars have completed their research work under my supervision. I have authored 3 research articles, published in renowned international journals.

Can you tell us about your learning experience at CUST?

As a student, I have had the privilege of spending 13 incredible years at Capital University of Science and Technology (CUST), where I have had a truly transformative learning experience. Throughout my journey, I have had the opportunity to acquire a wide range of skills, including critical thinking, creativity, problem-solving, communication, teamwork, and leadership.

My time at CUST has been marked by a perfect blend of theoretical knowledge and practical application, with a strong emphasis on research and hands-on experience. I have had the chance to engage in various research projects, collaborate with esteemed faculty members, and participate in practical exercises that have helped me apply theoretical concepts to real-world problems.

The supportive learning environment and state-of-the-art facilities at CUST have enabled me to explore my interests, push my boundaries, and reach my full potential. I am grateful for the opportunity to have been a part of this vibrant academic community and am confident that the skills and knowledge I have gained will serve me well in my future endeavors.

What are the major strengths of the program which you studied at CUST?

Some major strengths of BBA, MS and PhD programs at CUST which helped ensure a high-quality educational experience that prepared me for success in my chosen field are:

- Relevant and Up-to-date Curriculum
- Clear Learning Objectives
- Disciplined Environment
- Experienced and Supportive Faculty

- Hands-on Learning
- Research Opportunities and access to modern resources
- Collaborative Environment
- Diverse Perspectives
- Timely Assessment and Feedback
- Accreditation and Recognition by reputable accrediting agencies and industry organizations.
- Continuous Improvement through regular program evaluation

Do you believe that the program which you were enrolled in has provided you with the knowledge and skills required at national and international level?

Studying at Capital University of Science and Technology (CUST) has empowered me with a profound understanding of cutting-edge concepts and innovative skills, poised to make a significant impact at both national and international levels. Through CUST's rigorous BBA academic programs, I have



acquired a solid foundation in my field, complemented by exposure to global perspectives, research-driven insights, and hands-on experience. This enabled me to win an International Scholarship for MA International Business Management (High Merit) from University of Westminster, London, UK, in 2006. My BBA knowledge definitely helped me to perform amongst the top 10 during my master degree.

During MS at CUST, the university's emphasis on critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration has equipped me with the versatility to navigate complex challenges and thrive in diverse environments. Furthermore, CUST's PhD program has provided me with a unique blend of theoretical knowledge and practical

expertise, enabling me to contribute meaningfully to the global community and drive positive change in my chosen profession.

How do you plan to apply the knowledge and skills learned at CUST in real world?

Here's a possible addition:

The learning experience has helped me to serve as a teacher well, enabling me to:

- Design and deliver engaging lesson plans that cater to diverse learning styles
- Develop effective teaching strategies that promote student-centered learning
- Foster a supportive and inclusive classroom environment

- that encourages active participation and collaboration
- Stay updated with the latest developments in my subject area and incorporate innovative teaching methods
- Mentor and guide students to reach their full potential and achieve their academic goals
- Contribute to the development of curriculum and educational programs that meet the needs of a rapidly changing world
- The skills and knowledge I acquired during my 13 years at CUST have been instrumental in shaping me into a compassionate, knowledgeable, and effective educator, and I am committed to continuing to learn and grow as a teacher to make a positive impact on the lives of my students.

STUDENT'S INTERVIEWS

Mr. Ahmed Ali (Student – Health and Lifesciences)

Briefly introduce yourself and your association with CUST.

I am Ahmed Ali, Student of final year BS Biotechnology at the Department of Bioinformatics & Biosciences, Capital University of Science & Technology. I am passionate about scientific research, particularly in biotechnology in translational medicine for cancer and cardiovascular diseases. My journey at CUST has been instrumental. Through my time here I have developed a solid foundation in subjects like genetics, molecular biology, and microbiology along with basic laboratory skills and scientific analysis.

Can you tell us about your learning experience at CUST?

My learning experience at CUST has been remarkably enriching both academically and personally. The University has a comprehensive curriculum that not only focuses on theoretical knowledge but also emphasis on hands on training through internships and workshops. This balanced approach is necessary to build a gap between theory and practical knowledge. The faculty is incredibly supportive, they offer supervision on research projects, academia, and career development.

What are the major strengths of the program which you studied at CUST?

The biotechnology program at CUST has several perks that set it apart. The curriculum is well structured, allowing students to build a strong scientific base while also exposing fields such

as genetic engineering, protein chemistry, biochemistry, and industrial biotechnology. Another key strength is focus on lab training. Moreover, the program encourages interdisciplinary



learning by incorporating biology, data science and artificial intelligence, which helps students to develop a scientific mindset that is essential for research and development.

Do you believe that the program which you are enrolled in has provided you with the knowledge and skills required at the national and international level?

Yes, I am confident that biotechnology program has equipped me with the skills and knowledge required at national as well

as international level. The curriculum is aligned with the current global trends in Biotechnology like synthetic biology, CRISPR gene editing and bioethics which are required in modern day scientific era. Moreover, the program promotes sustainable development, participation in research, allowing students to contribute to publications and attending conferences. I passionately believe the learning I have received at CUST has prepared me to address the local and global challenges in the field.

How do you plan to apply the knowledge and skills learned at CUST in the real world?

I plan to apply the skills and learning gained at CUST by advancing in translational medicine, particularly in domains like cancer therapy, cardiovascular disease, and reproductive medicine. Currently I am doing my final year project, and I am passionate about exploring how natural compounds can be utilized in developing effective cancer treatment. Through my work I aim to contribute to evidence-based therapies that offer safer and more accessible treatment options. By applying my knowledge in biotechnology and staying updated with translational research, I hope to make a remarkable impact in these fields.

STUDENT'S INTERVIEWS

Ms. Sumran Aslam (Student – Civil Engineering)

CUST Quality Enhancement Cell, publishes newsletter annually to share an account of its major activities and achievements of the year. To make the newsletter more inclusive and enhance its value, the viewpoints of selective primary stakeholders of the university are added. This year as well, QEC is compiling information for its newsletter for the year 2023 and requires your kind support in this regard. Please spare some time and answer the following brief interview questions regarding your role and quality assurance (As current student enrolled at CUST).

Briefly introduce yourself and your association with CUST.

My name is Sumran Aslam, and I am from Muzaffarabad, Azad Jammu and Kashmir. Since childhood, I have the aspiration



to become a civil engineer. In a society where stereotypes prevail, I am proud to say that as a girl, I was able to fulfill my

childhood dream. I completed my FSC with a focus on pre-engineering, achieving an A+ grade. Through my hard work and dedication, I secured admission to CUST, where I was awarded a full scholarship for my first semester. I feel privileged to be part of such an exceptional institution, which has contributed to my professional growth. CUST has provided me with numerous opportunities for internships and valuable experiences in my field. I am currently in the 7th semester & in short, I will be receiving a degree in the science of Civil Engineering from Capital University of Science & Technology (CUST). In a nutshell, my entire undergraduate life, I have been a part of CUST which allowed me to absorb wisdom from dedicated professors and be a part of a learning-by-doing process.

Can you tell us about your learning experience at CUST?

Learning on the campus CUST was very interesting for me. The institution has coherent course programs embracing both theory and practice of civil engineering. The staff was very encouraging, and all the time, they would advise us to be useful and apply what we learn in real life. Furthermore, CUST managed to offer us a career placement unit. This enabled me to acquire practical experience in the field, which is an essential complement to theoretical knowledge.

What are the major strengths of the program which you studied at CUST?

At CUST, it is also the mission of the program to impart the basics of engineering, while fostering creative and analytical thought processes to find solutions to existing or new problems in the construction industry. Another strong feature of the program

are the practical knowledge obtained in labs, projects and internship. The staff's attention to the success of every student and the orientation of the University to the industry considerably benefits all of us in the practical application of the program

Do you believe that the program in which you are enrolled in has provided you with the knowledge and skills required at national and international level?

Definitely yes. This program can be seen to be adhering to international quality benchmarks as well. Having gone through theoretical and practical work, I believe I possess the skills necessary for working at different engineering positions. I am

equally confident of the program's emphasis on contemporary engineering practices that are appropriate in our context, where we face pressures of integrating into the global market.

How do you plan to apply the knowledge and skills learned at CUST in the real world?

I seek to leverage my skills and know-how to grow professionally in the field of civil engineering with emphasis on sustainable development projects. The abilities I've acquired at CUST, including how to confront and resolve technical issues, as well as oversee and successfully complete projects, will be very useful.



Capital University of Science and Technology
Off Kaak Pul, Sihala Road, Zone-V, Islamabad
UAN: 111-555-666
<http://www.cust.edu.pk>