



Guidelines for the Creation of the Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) in Accredited Institutions

A Post-Accreditation Quality Sustenance Activity



राष्ट्रीय मूल्यांकन एवं प्रत्यायन परिषद

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P. O. Box No. 1075, Nagarbhavi, Bangalore - 560 072, India





Prepared by :

Ganesh Hegde , Asst. Adviser

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The Director

National Assessment and Accreditation Council (**NAAC**)

P.B. No. 1075, Nagarbhavi, Bangalore - 560 072 India

Ph.: +91-80-23210261 / 62 / 63 / 64 / 65

Fax : +91-80-23210270

e-mail : naac@blr.vsnl.net.in

website : www.naacindia.org

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Introduction

In pursuance of the National Action Plan of the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), Bangalore, for performance evaluation, assessment and accreditation and quality upgradation of institutions of higher education, the NAAC proposes that every accredited institution should establish an Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) as a post-accreditation quality sustenance measure. Since quality enhancement is a continuous process, the IQAC will become a part of an institution's system and work towards realising the goals of quality enhancement and sustenance. The prime task of the IQAC is to develop a system for conscious, consistent and catalytic improvement in the performance of institutions. The IQAC will make a significant and meaningful contribution in the post-accreditation phase of institutions. During the post-accreditation period, the IQAC will channelise the efforts and measures of an institution towards academic excellence.

The guidelines provided in the following pages will facilitate the institution in the creation and operation of the Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC). The work of the IQAC is the first step towards the internalization and institutionalization of quality enhancement. Its success depends upon the sense of belongingness and participation it can inculcate in all the constituents of the institution. It will not be yet another hierarchical structure or record-keeping exercise in the institution; it will be a facilitative and participative voluntary system/unit/organ of the institution. The IQAC has the potential to become a vehicle for ushering in quality by working out intervention strategies to remove deficiencies and enhance quality. Quality circles in industries operate on similar lines.





Objective

The Primary aim of the IQAC is to develop a system for conscious, consistent and catalytic action to improve the academic and administrative performance of the institution.

Strategies

IQAC shall evolve mechanisms and procedures for:

- a) Ensuring timely, efficient and progressive performance of academic, administrative and financial tasks
- b) The relevance and quality of academic and research programmes
- c) Equitable access to and affordability of academic programmes for various sections of society
- d) Optimization and integration of modern methods of teaching and learning
- e) The credibility of evaluation procedures
- f) Ensuring the adequacy, maintenance and functioning of the support structure and services
- g) Research sharing and networking with other institutions in India and abroad.

Functions

Some of the functions expected of the IQAC are:

- a) Development and application of quality benchmarks/parameters for the various academic and administrative activities of the institution
- b) Dissemination of information on the various quality parameters of higher education
- c) Organization of workshops, seminars on quality related themes and promotion of quality circles
- d) Documentation of the various programmes / activities leading to quality improvement
- e) Acting as a nodal agency of the institution for quality-related activities
- f) Preparation of the Annual Quality Assurance Report (AQAR) to be submitted to NAAC based on the quality parameters.

Benefits

IQAC will facilitate / contribute:

- a) To a heightened level of clarity and focus in institutional functioning towards quality enhancement and facilitate internalization of the quality culture





- b) To the enhancement and integration among the various activities of the institution and institutionalize many good practices
- c) To provide a sound basis for decisionmaking to improve institutional functioning
- d) To act as a change agent in the institution
- e) To better internal communication.

Composition of the IQAC

The IQAC may be constituted in every institution under the chairmanship of head of the institution with heads of important academic and administrative units and a few teachers and a few distinguished educationists/representatives of local committee. The composition of the IQAC may be as follows:

1. Chairperson: Head of the Institution
2. A few senior administrative officers
3. Three to eight teachers
4. One or two members from the Management
5. One/two nominees from local society
6. One of the teachers as the coordinator of the IQAC.

The composition of the IQAC will depend on the size and complexity of the institution. It helps the colleges in planning and monitoring. IQAC also gives stakeholders or beneficiaries a cross-sectional participation in the institution's quality enhancement activities. The guidelines given here are only indicative and will help the institutions for quality sustenance activities .

It is necessary for the members of the IQAC to shoulder the responsibilities of generating and promoting awareness in the institution and to devote time for working out the procedural details. While selecting these members several precautions need to be taken. A few of them are listed below:

- It is advisable to choose from various backgrounds who have earned respect for integrity and excellence in their teaching and research. Moreover, they should be aware of the ground realities of the institutional environment. They should be known for their commitment to improving the quality of teaching and learning.
- It would be appropriate to choose as (senior administrators) in charge of institutional services such as library, computer center, estate, student welfare, administration, academic tasks, examination, planning and development.





- The management representatives should be persons who are aware of the institution's objectives, limitations and strengths and are committed to improvement. The local society representatives should be of high standing and should have made significant contributions to society, and, in particular, to education.

The Role of Coordinator

The role of the coordinator of the IQAC is crucial in ensuring the effective functioning of all the members. The coordinator of the IQAC may be a senior person with expertise in quality aspects. She/he may be a full-time functionary or, to start with, she/he may be a senior academic /administrator entrusted with the IQAC as an additional responsibility. Seretarial assistance may be facilitated by the administration. It is preferable that the co-ordinator may have a sound knowledge about the computer, its various functions and usage for effective communication.

Operational Features of the IQAC

Quality assurance is a by-product of ongoing efforts to define the objectives of an institution, to have a work plan to achieve them and to specify the checks and balances to evaluate the degree to which each of the tasks is fulfilled. Hence devotion and commitment to improvement rather than mere institutional control is the basis for devising procedures and instruments for assuring quality. The right balance between the health and growth of an institution needs to be struck. The IQAC has to ensure that whatever is done in the institution for "education" is done efficiently and effectively with high standards. In order to do this, the IQAC will have to first establish procedures and modalities to collect data and information on various aspects of institutional functioning.

The coordinator of the IQAC and the secretary have a major role in implementing these functions. The IQAC may derive major support from the already existing units and mechanisms that contribute to the functions listed above. The operational features and functions discussed so far are broad-based to facilitate institutions towards academic excellence and institutions may adapt them to their specific needs.

The Annual Quality Assurance Report (AQAR) of the IQAC

All the accredited institutions which have established the IQAC will submit a self-reviewed progress report annually to the NAAC, detailing the tangible results achieved in key areas which are specifically identified by the IQAC in the beginning of the academic year by devising a perspective plan. The AQAR is the outcome of the perspective plan of the IQAC.

