

**Guidelines for the
Establishment and Monitoring
of the Internal Quality Assurance Cells (IQACs) in
Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs)**

Introduction

The University Grants Commission (UGC), established in November 1956 as a statutory body of the Government of India through an Act of Parliament, has the unique distinction of being the only grant-giving agency in the country which has been vested with two responsibilities: that of providing funds and that of coordination, determination and maintenance of standards in institutions of higher education.

The UGC's mandate includes Promoting and coordinating university education; Determining and maintaining standards of teaching, examination and research in Universities; Framing regulations on minimum standards of education; Monitoring developments in the field of collegiate and university education; Disbursing grants to the Universities and Colleges; Serving as a vital link between the Union and State Governments and institutions of higher learning; Advising the Central and State Governments on the measures necessary for improvement of university education. To monitor standards of the higher educational institutions it has established the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) as an autonomous body, under section 12 (ccc) of its Act in September 1994. NAAC is entrusted with the task of performance evaluation, assessment and accreditation of Universities and Colleges in the Country. The philosophy of NAAC is ameliorative and enabling rather than punitive or judgmental, so that all constituencies of institutions of higher learning are empowered to maximize their resources, opportunities and capabilities.

NAAC has been instilling a momentum of quality consciousness amongst Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs or 'Institutions'), aiming for continuous improvement. NAAC is triggering a 'Quality Culture' among the various constituents of the HEI, as well as enhancing the awareness of Institutional Quality Assurance with all stakeholders.

The prime agenda of NAAC is to Assess and Accredite Institutions of higher learning with an objective of helping them to work continuously to improve the quality of education. Assessment is a performance evaluation of an HEI and /or its units and is accomplished through a process based on self-study and peer review using defined criteria. Accreditation refers to the certification given by NAAC which is valid for a period of five years. NAAC accredits UGC 2(f) & 12B as well as non 2(f) & 12B HEIs.

All stakeholders have to be fully engaged in the endeavour of quality assurance of the HEIs. Therefore, it is imperative that HEIs are motivated to establish their own internal mechanisms for sustenance, assurance and enhancement of the quality culture of education imparted by them. It is significant that such internalization of quality would be invaluable in the enhancement of quality within the institution. The efficacy of external quality assessment would therefore be determined by the effectiveness of such institutional internal quality systems and processes.

At the instance of NAAC many HEIs have established the Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) as a post accreditation quality sustenance activity. The experience of NAAC reveals that the IQAC in these institutions are proactive and functioning in a healthy way. Based on this success story, from 1st April 2007 onwards NAAC is propagating to have such a mechanism created prior to the accreditation in all the HEIs which would help establishing quality culture in them. The UGC has recognized this initiative and it has taken a policy decision to direct all HEIs to establish IQACs for which it has decided to provide seed financial assistance.

Coverage

1. All HEIs which are universities established and /or incorporated by or under a Central Act, a Provincial Act or a State Act;
2. All HEIs deemed to be universities under section 3 of the UGC Act;
3. All other HEIs including colleges, enlisted / recognized under clause (f) of section 2 of the UGC Act;
4. All other non 2(f) colleges affiliated to or recognized by the universities; and
5. All Institutions of National Importance

Part- A: Guidelines to Establish Internal Quality Assurance Cells (IQACs) in HEIs

Maintaining the momentum of quality consciousness is crucial in HEIs. Internal Quality Assurance Cell, in fact, is conceived as a mechanism to build and ensure a quality culture at the institutional level. Every HEI should have an internal quality assurance system, with appropriate structure and processes, and with enough flexibility to meet the diverse needs of the stakeholders. The internal quality assurance mechanism of the institution may be called “Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC)”. The IQAC is meant for planning, guiding and monitoring Quality Assurance (QA) and Quality Enhancement (QE) activities of the HEIs.

The IQAC may channelise and systematize the efforts and measures of an institution towards academic excellence. It should not be yet another hierarchical structure or record-keeping exercise in the institution; it would be a facilitative and participative organ of the institution. The IQAC should become a driving force for ushering in quality by working out intervention strategies to remove deficiencies and enhance quality.

The IQAC Structure

The IQAC shall be constituted under the chairmanship of the head of the HEI. He/ She may be assisted by a Director (in case of a university) or a Coordinator (in case of a college) who shall be a senior faculty member. This position may be held as an additional charge by the faculty member concerned, or a new position of a full-time Director/Coordinator may be created and a person is selected and appointed or a senior faculty member is posted by redeployment.

Composition of the IQAC

The IQAC shall have the following composition:

- a) Head of the HEI – Chairperson
- b) Five (in case of a College) or eight (in case of a University) senior teachers and one senior administrative official – Members
- c) Two (in case of a College) or three (in case of a University) external experts on Quality Management / Industry / Local Community – Members

The members at b) and c) of the above shall be nominated by the Head of the HEI in consultation with the academic body of the HEI (Academic Council of a University or Academic Committee of a College). The membership of such nominated members shall be for a period of two years. The IQAC should meet at least once in a quarter. The quorum for the meeting shall be two-third of the total number of members. The agenda, minutes and Action Taken Reports are to be documented with official signatures and maintained electronically in a retrievable format.

Goals

1. To develop a quality system for conscious, consistent and catalytic programmed action to improve the academic and administrative performance of the HEIs;
2. To promote measures for institutional functioning towards quality enhancement through internalization of quality culture and institutionalization of best practices.

The IQAC shall have the following functions

- Development and application of quality benchmarks/parameters for the various academic and administrative activities of the HEI;
- Facilitating the creation of a learner-centric environment conducive for quality education and faculty maturation to adopt the required knowledge and technology for participatory teaching and learning process;
- Arrangement for feedback responses from students, parents and other stakeholders on quality-related institutional processes;
- Dissemination of information on the various quality parameters of higher education;
- Organization of inter and intra institutional workshops, seminars on quality related themes and promotion of quality circles;
- Documentation of the various programmes/activities of the HEI, leading to quality improvement;
- Acting as a nodal agency of the HEI for coordinating quality-related activities, including adoption and dissemination of good practices;

- Development and maintenance of Institutional database through MIS for the purpose of maintaining /enhancing the institutional quality;
- Development of Quality Culture in HEI;
- Preparation of the Annual Quality Assurance Report (AQAR) of the HEI based on the quality parameters/assessment criteria developed by the relevant quality assurance body (like NAAC, NBA, AB) in the prescribed format;
- Bi-annual development of Quality Radars (QRs) and Ranking of Integral Units of HEIs based on the AQAR;
- Interaction with SQACs in the pre and post accreditation quality assessment, sustenance and enhancement endeavours.

Follow up

- The AQAR shall be approved by the statutory bodies of the HEIs (such as Syndicate, Governing Council/Board) for the follow up action for necessary quality enhancement measures.
- The Universities shall regularly submit the AQARs to the NAAC/other accreditation bodies. The Colleges shall regularly submit their AQARs to the affiliating University, state level quality assurance bodies, NAAC / other accreditation bodies.
- All HEIs shall submit AQARs and/or Quality Radars (QRs) and follow up reports of AQARs to the UGC as and when called for.
- The IQAC must create its exclusive window on its institutional website, to regularly report on its activities, as well as for hosting the AQAR.

Benefits of IQAC

- a) Ensure heightened level of clarity and focus in institutional functioning towards quality enhancement
- b) Ensure internalization of the quality culture;
- c) Ensure enhancement and integration among the various activities of the institution and institutionalize good practices;
- d) Provide a sound basis for decision-making to improve institutional functioning;
- e) Act as a dynamic system for quality changes in the HEIs;

- f) Build an organized methodology of documentation and internal communication.

Eligibility for Financial Assistance for establishing IQAC

All Universities and Colleges which are under section 2(f) & 12B of the UGC Act will be eligible to receive the financial support for establishing and strengthening of the IQACs in them.

The UGC will provide seed money during the XI plan of Rs.5.00 lakh to each University and Rs.3.00 lakhs to each College as one time grant, to meet the establishment and strengthening expenditure of the IQAC. The expenditure can be incurred on following items:-

(Rs. in Rupees)

Sl. No.	Purpose of grant	University	College
1.	Honorarium to the Director / Coordinator, IQAC @Rs. 1000x12x5	60,000/-	60,000/-
2.	Office Equipments	1,00,000/-	60,000/-
3.	Hiring Services for Secretarial & Technical Services	1,80,000/-	60,000/-
4.	ICTs Communication expenses	80,000/-	70,000/-
5.	Contingencies	80,000/-	50,000/-
Total		5,00,000/-	3,00,000/-

Part B: Monitoring Mechanism

- The State Quality Assurance Cell (SQAC) and Affiliating Universities shall monitor the functioning of IQACs in the colleges coming under their jurisdiction.
- NAAC and other respective accrediting bodies shall monitor the functioning of IQACs in universities and other Institutions of National Importance.
- NAAC peer teams and those of other accreditation bodies will interact with the IQACs.

The Format for Annual Quality Assurance Report (AQAR) of the IQAC is given in the Annexure.

The Format for Annual Quality Assurance Report (AQAR) of the IQAC

Name of the Institution:

Year of Report:

Section A: Plan of action chalked out by the IQAC in the beginning of the year towards quality enhancement (attach separate sheet if required).

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Section B: Details in respect of the following (attach separate sheet).

1. Activities reflecting the goals and objectives of the institution
2. New academic programmes initiated (UG and PG)
3. Innovations in curricular design and transaction
4. Inter-disciplinary programmes started
5. Examination reforms implemented
6. Candidates qualified: NET/SLET/GATE etc.
7. Initiative towards faculty development programme
8. Total number of seminars/workshops conducted
9. Research projects a) Ongoing; b) Completed
10. Patents generated, if any
11. New collaborative research programmes
12. Research grants received from various agencies
13. Details of research scholars
14. Citation index of faculty members and impact factor
15. Honors/Awards to the faculty: National and International
16. Internal resources generated
17. Details of departments getting assistance/recognition under SAP, COSIST (ASSIST)/DST, FIST, and other programmes
18. Community services
19. Teachers and officers newly recruited
20. Teaching – Non-teaching staff ratio
21. Improvements in the library services
22. New books/journals subscribed and their value
23. Courses in which student assessment of teachers is introduced and the action taken on student feedback
24. Feedback from stakeholders
25. Unit cost of education
26. Computerization of administration and the process of admissions and examination results, issue of certificates
27. Increase in the infrastructural facilities
28. Technology upgradation
29. Computer and internet access and training to teachers, non-teaching staff and students

30. Financial aid to students
31. Activities and support from the Alumni Association
32. Activities and support from the Parent-Teacher Association
33. Health services
34. Performance in sports activities
35. Incentives to outstanding sportspersons
36. Student achievements and awards
37. Activities of the Guidance and Counselling unit
38. Placement services provided to students
39. Development programmes for non-teaching staff
40. Good practices of the institution
41. Linkages developed with National/ International, academic/research bodies
42. Action Taken Report on the AQAR of the previous year
43. Any other relevant information the institution wishes to add.

Section C: Outcomes achieved by the end of the year (attach separate sheet if required).

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Section D: Plans of the HEI for the next year

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*Name & Signature of the
Director/Coordinator, IQAC*

*Name & Signature of the
Chairperson, IQAC*