

A study on Role of IQAC in Enhancing Quality of Higher Education Institutions (HEI's)

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Abstract: IQAC is now compulsory in every institution as per requirement of NAAC. The primary purpose of establishment of IQAC as a post accreditation quality sustenance measure is to develop a system for conscious, consistent and catalytic action to improve the academic and administrative performance of the institution and to assure all the stake holders about the quality and capacity building programmes provided in the institution. IQAC is a process to build and ensure a quality culture at the institutional level, and it is meant for planning, guiding and monitoring Quality assurance (QA) and Quality Enhancement (QE) activities of the HEIs. Improvement in quality is a continuous process to channelize the efforts and the initiations of the institution towards academic excellence. It is a process of internalization and institutionalization of quality enhancement programmes and practices either emulated from others or devised through ingenuity. It is a quality nurturing activity rather than controlling. IQAC success depends on the sense of belongingness and participation of all the participating constituents of the Institution. This paper aims to focus on the role of IQAC in quality enhancement of HEI's.

Keywords: IQAC, NAAC, HEI's, Quality

I. INTRODUCTION

The introduction of quality assurance system is a measure of accountability, but it can succeed only when it can measure what is important to academic fraternity in a manner that it can understand. It should be seen as a vehicle for leading in quality and excellence by working out intervention strategies to remove deficiencies and enhance quality. The publication of IQAC NEWS helps disseminating the information about the activities, programmes, interaction carried out by an institution for sharing the same with the stake holders and other education institutions for achieving best results or for getting accredited and assessed by the NAAC.

NAAC has been continuously encouraging in quality consciousness amongst Higher Educational Institutions, aiming for continuous improvement. So for enhancing the quality an internal mechanism for sustenance, assurance and enhancement of the quality culture of education imparted by HEIs they establish the Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) as a post accreditation quality sustenance activity. Therefore, in fulfilment for performance evaluation, assessment and accreditation and quality up-gradation of institutions of higher education Internal Quality Assurance cell (IQAC) is set up which actively work towards creating quality conscious environment in the Institution.

Maintaining the thrust of quality consciousness is essential in Colleges. Internal Quality Assurance Cell, in fact, is regarded as a mechanism to build and ensure a quality culture at the institutional level. Therefore HEI's have internal quality assurance system, with appropriate process, structure and enough flexibility to meet the diverse needs of the stakeholders. The internal quality assurance system of the institution is called "Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC)". Thus IQAC is for planning, guiding and monitoring the activities related to Quality Assurance (QA) and Quality Enhancement (QE),

towards achieving academic excellence. It should not be a just record-keeping exercise; it should rather be a facilitative and participative organ of the institution. The IQAC should be a driving force for steering in quality by working out intervention strategies to remove deficiencies and enhance quality.

Composition of IQAC: The IQAC shall have the following composition

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- a) Chairperson – Principal of the Institution
- b) Members - Five senior teachers and one senior administrative official
- c) Member - Two external experts on Quality Management/ Industry/Local
- d) Coordinator – Senior Teacher

The members shall be nominated by the Principal of the College in consultation with the academic body of the College (Academic Committee of a College). The period of membership of such nominated members shall be of two years. The IQAC meeting would be least once in a quarter. The members required for the meeting shall be two-third of the total number of members. The meeting agenda, minutes of meeting and Action Taken Reports are to be documented with official signatures and should maintained manually & electronical mode for retrieving in future.

II. OBJECTIVES

1. To know about the objective of IQAC with respect to HEI's.
2. To study the functions and value promotion policy of IQAC with respect to HEI's.
3. To suggest few best practices practised at HEI's.

III. RESEARCH DESIGN

The study is of descriptive in nature and the researcher has collected the secondary data from the published Guidelines of NAAC and UGC and other authenticated sources.

➤ **Objectives of the IQAC**

The IQAC of the HEIs is constituted to achieve the following objectives:

1. To develop clarity and focus in institutional functioning towards creation, sustenance and enhancement of quality and facilitate internalization of the quality culture in every sphere of the Institution.
2. To provide a sound basis for decision making imbibing all the dimensions of service quality to improve institutional functioning.
3. To act as a change agent in the Institution.
4. To coordinate and improve internal communication to facilitate greater policy implementation and quality assurance towards its stakeholders.
5. To recommend measures for achieving quality enhancement through internalization of quality culture and implementation of best practices.

➤ Functions of the IQAC

- IQAC develops and apply the quality parameters for the various academic and administrative activities of the College.
- IQAC facilitates in creating a student centric and encouraging for quality education and faculty development to adopt the required knowledge and technology for participatory teaching and learning process.
- Making Arrangement of feedback responses from students, parents, alumni and other stakeholders.
- Distribution of information to stake holders on the various quality parameters of higher education.
- Organizing the workshops, seminars, FDP on quality related themes and promotion of quality circles.
- Documentation of the various activities conducted by the College and leading to quality improvement.
- IQAC acts as a nodal agency for coordinating quality-related activities and involved in adoption and dissemination of good practices.
- Maintenance & Development of Institutional database through MIS for the purpose of enhancing the quality of institution.
- Development of Quality Culture in the College.
- IQAC prepares the Annual Quality Assurance Report (AQAR) of the College based on the quality parameters or assessment criteria developed by the relevant quality assurance body in the prescribed format.
- Involved in Bi-annual development of Quality Radars (QRs) and Ranking of Integral Units of the College based on the AQAR.
- Involved in Interaction with SQACs in the pre and post accreditation quality assessment, sustenance and enhancement endeavor.
- IQAC shall act as the Documentation and Record-Keeping cell as per UGC Regulations 2010

Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) has become the important part in the working institutions towards realization of the goals of quality enhancement and sustenance. The main task of the IQAC is to develop a cognizant, reliable and catalytic system in improvement and overall performance of institutions. To achieve this, it will channelize all efforts and measures of the institution towards promoting the academic excellence.

The IQAC has to ensure that education is done efficiently and effectively with high standards. So in this context IQAC adopts the practices and methodologies to collect data and information on various aspects of institution.

All the accredited institution have an IQAC and they have to submit the self review progress report annually to NAAC in which there would be details of the tangible results achieved by the institution in the key areas which are specified by the IQAC in the beginning of the academic session through a perspective plan. AQAR is the outcome of that perspective plan.

The (IQAC) functional Internal Quality Assurance cell and timely submission of AQAR is the Minimum Institutional Requirements to done for second, third or other subsequent cycle for accreditation. During the visit of NAAC's peer team they will interact with IQAC to know about the progress, functioning and quality improvement initiatives taken by the institution.

The value promotion policy adopted by IQAC has five-fold purposes:

1. **Contributing to National Development:** HEIs have a remarkable capacity to act as the catalyst in society through dissemination of knowledge and aim to play significant role in building on changes of country and contribute to national development by ensuring equity and access to higher education.
2. **Fostering Global Competencies and Human Excellence among Students:** HEI's strive to develop as a premier center of learning and create a niche in delivering higher education at par with the institutions of national and international repute, fostering global competencies and human excellence amongst the potential knowledge seekers.
3. **Inculcating value system among Students:** HEI's strongly affirm to succeed in workplace not only equipped with skills but also a strong value system, involving in conscious efforts towards students take in values commensurate with social, economic, cultural, ethical, spiritual and environmental realities.
4. **Promoting the Use of Technology for a Green Environment:** To make higher education delivery efficient and cost effective it is imperative to implement advanced technology to deliver quality education. Strive to make all attempts to evolve such technological advancements and innovations so as to enrich teaching learning experience of students.
5. **Eliciting Quest for Excellence as a permanent commitment:** The increasing access to higher education and ensuring social justice will continue to be important objective of national development, developing internationally and inter-cultural competent human resources is of equal importance with liberalization and globalization of economic activities. Thus, pedagogy and curriculum are designed to equip students with adequate skills sets to successfully deal with the challenges at their workplace globally.

Best practices

- **Outcome Based Education (OBE)** is a student centric instruction method during which the course delivery and assessment are planned to realise the stated objectives and outcomes. In this sort of method the performance of a student is measured in terms of knowledge, skill and behaviour upon the completion of a program.
- **Choice based credit system (CBCS)** is a system in which choice based courses are offered to students to opt based on their career goal. This system has been set up to achieve whole learning experience for students, where the students can choose the prescribed courses as the core, elective or soft skill from the options, rather than to simply consume what the curriculum offers. They can learn in a convenient way and the assessments are graded based on a credit system. It provides an opportunity and flexibility to students to complete the programme by earning the required credits.
- **Student-Centred Learning [SCL]** an educational method that transforms the focus of instruction from a teacher to the student, and this learning method places the student (learner) in the center of the learning process. The methods used in SCL are debate, discussions, role play, case study and the key qualities of this method of learning is active participation of student, co-operation and problem

solving techniques. Proper implementation will motivate students towards learning, gaining knowledge and having a positive attitude.

- **Research and Development Cell (R&D cell)** A R&D cell's main aim is to create research awareness and development among students and faculties so its proper functioning is most important. It gives motivation to the faculty for carrying research work, generate project proposals, tap funds from governmental and Industrial funding agencies and establish Centre of Excellence in college as well as to interact with industries. It helps in up gradation of faculties academic qualification and help the for proper planning and coordination of research and development activities.
- **Feedback System:** Collecting feedback is very important as it the way to achieve continuous improvement is through collecting feedback. The feedback is taken from students, faculties, alumni, parents and other stakeholders which will give necessary insights into the blind spots and pain points which would otherwise be hard to find, which is essential for development of the institution because by this way, the IQAC can then understand what they actually want and start working in the right direction.
- **Regular Interaction with Department:** The IQAC interacts with the department for line up of the interests. Planning and implementation can be done hand-in-hand with active participation of the faculties and HOD and providing deeper understanding in pursuing quality. The IQAC suggests few measures while planning the departmental curriculum for attaining the quality and outcomes.
- **Industry Institute Interaction:** The main objective is to establish and maintain relationship with corporate world through MOU's, Centre of Excellence, sponsored projects, industrial visits and in-plant trainings for students and faculty members. The institution interact with various industries through Industry Institute Interaction committee that maintains professional relations with those industries. Industrial tour and visits are arranged for students and faculty members to gain practical exposure and keep abreast their knowledge. To achieve excellence in academics, students are motivated to interact with industries and research organizations through industrial visits, sponsored projects, trainings, internships, consultancy etc. Industry experts are regularly invited for sharing their knowledge with the students. It opens a new way to young dynamic minds and faculty members to develop skills across diverse areas including managerial skills, social responsibilities and Industry liaison.
- **Academic Administrative Audit**
 Academic and Administrative Audit (AAA) is essential for achieving excellence in Higher Education. Both are interrelated with each other. So, to have a quality oriented academics, there should be a strong administrative background.
Academic Audit: - Academic audit is a scientific and systematic method of reviewing the quality of academic process in the institution. It is related with the quality assurance and enhancing the quality of academic activities in HEIs.
Administrative Audit: - It is a process of valuation of the efficiency and effectiveness of the administrative procedure. It includes assessment of all the policies, strategies & functions of the various administrative department, control of the overall administrative system etc.

IV. CONCLUSION

The role of IQAC is important in HEIs as it act towards the improvement in quality. Excellence and quality are results of the teamwork led by leaders like principal and coordinator of IQAC. However the leaders should work on guidelines of IQAC with proper realisation and accountability. Thus IQAC is involved in

enhancing the quality of education so utmost important to have effective and efficient co-ordination and monitoring mechanisms.

V. REFERENCES

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