

QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

Dr. Niradhar Dey,

Assistant Professor, Department of Education,
Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalaya
(A Central University), Bipaspur, C.G,
INDIA.
ndeyeduggv@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Quality assurance and accreditation in higher education is defined as systematic management and assessment of procedures adopted by higher education institution or system to monitor performance and to ensure achievement of quality improvement. Quality assurance aims to give stakeholders confidence about the management of quality and the outcome achieved. The provision for education is mainly the responsibility of the government, which is interested in educational quality assessment because (i) the govt. has constitutional obligation to assure quality of education (ii) accountability in use of public resources is to be assured and (iii) provision of quality education for all the eligible aspirants is a political decision, which enjoys a strong social support. It is imperative therefore to identify the characteristics of quality, evolve strategies for fostering it, identify the factors affecting it, examine the relationship between quality and resources, and explore the measures of monitoring changes over time. To do this, a common framework is needed for gathering qualitative and quantitative data and for analyzing them, to assess quality and to assure the stakeholders of their quality. As the responsibility of maintenance of standards of higher education is vested with UGC, the UGC has established NAAC for assessment and accreditation of universities and colleges. A three stage procedure is followed, which involves (i) preparation of the self-study report by the institutions based on the defined parameters (ii) validation of the self-study report by a team of peers through on-sight visit and interaction with the functionaries of the institutions and (iii) the final decision on assessment and accreditation by the NAAC. The outcome of accreditation exercises undertaken by the agencies like NAAC and NBA have significant impact on improvement of quality of higher education, the strengths and shortcomings of the institutions are detected for initiating appropriate action. The stakeholders- the government, students and employers- duly benefit from information and analysis of institutional performance. In the globalised environment, the emergence of trans-national institutions and use of electronic media for delivery of programmes through distance mode, pose a greater challenge to quality assurance agencies for (i) clarifying issues pertaining to the procedures for quality assurance (ii) evolving acceptable criteria for assessment of learning attainments. A joint effort between the institutions and the accreditation bodies would be needed to ensure good coordination and communication, so that they can adhere to an ethical code of good practice and be objective, fair and rigorous in the task of accomplishing quality assessment and accreditation.

Key words used: NAAC, UGC, NBA, QAA, AICTE