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Role of IQAC in Ensuring Quality Higher Education in the Colleges of Assam

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Abstract : *The National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) proposed 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 the institution towards achieving the goals of academic excellence and ensuring quality higher education in Assam. Its prime task is to develop a system for conscious, consistent and catalytic improvement in the performance of the institution and to make significant and meaningful contribution to the post accreditation quality initiatives of the institution.*

Key Words: NAAC, IQAC, Quality Education, Higher Education, etc.

I. Introduction :

Most of the colleges of Assam have undergone the assessment by National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) and as per requirement each and every colleges has formed the Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC). The IQAC is supposed to look at the improvement of the quality of the college/institute in the coming years and accordingly prepared for the next assessment. Since quality enhancement is a continuous process, the IQAC will become a part of the institutions and work towards the goals of quality enhancement and ensuring quality education. The well defined parameters and guidelines provided by NAAC would facilitate the institutions in the creation and operation of the IQAC.

II. Composition of IQAC :

In the context of the pivotal role to be played by IQAC, NAAC has given very appropriate and clear guidelines so far as the composition of IQAC in an institution is concerned. As per these guidelines, the IQAC may be constituted in every institution of higher education under the chairmanship of head of the institution with heads of important academic and administrative units and a few teachers as well as a few distinguished educationist/representative of local committee. The composition of the IQAC may be as follows: -

- Chairperson: Head of the Institution
- A few senior administrative officers

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- Three to eight teachers
- One or two members from the management
- One/two nominees from local society
- One of the teachers as the coordinator of the IQAC

The composition of the IQAC will depend on the complexity of the organization. The norms given here therefore indicates how best the planning and monitoring need to rest on cross-sectional involvement and responsibility without the system itself becoming cumbersome.

III. Functions of IQAC:

Some of the functions of IQAC expected as follows:

- Development and application of quality benchmarks/parameters in various activities of the institutions.
- Dissemination of information on quality aspects.
- Organization of discussions, workshops, seminars and promotion on quality circles.
- Recording and monitoring quality measures of the institution.
- Acting as a nodal agency of the institution for quality-related activities.
- Preparation of the Annual Quality Assurance Report and such other reports as may be decided from time to time.

The co-coordinator of the IQAC and the secretary has a major roll 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 their specific needs.

IV. Role of IQAC in ensuring quality higher education:

Quality is primarily the responsibility of higher education itself, although the government has a special responsibility regarding quality assurance in many countries it is the institution that is responsible for providing and ensuring quality.

In the international scenario one of the aims of the associations of South East Asian Nation Universities Network (SEANTUN)-quality assurance is to help its member intuitions in most countries have a more or less well developed system of IQA. IQA is the totality of systems, resources and information devoted to setting up, maintaining and improving the overall quality and standards of an institution.

Thus, quality is required to be assured we need a structured quality assurance mechanism that makes it possible to monitor, improve and evaluate quality.

Therefore, each and every institution will have to build its own IQAC keeping certain objectives in mind namely monitoring, evaluation quality assurance for specific activities and instruments for quality assurance.

IQAC is to develop a system for conscious and consistent improvement in the performance of the institution of higher education so as to achieve quality. The task of IQAC in higher education is -

- Setting up of documentation process in motion.

- Awareness creation.
- Generation of confidence.
- Evolving of formats for information and data.
- Stipulation of schedule for the work.
- Drafting of quality status report.

V. Some suggestions for making IQAC more vibrant and active in the institutions:

Following are some of the suggestions for making IQAC more vibrant and active in the institutions:

- Maintenance of event register.
- Display the mission of the institute.
- Feedback forms from students about quality of the institution.
- Students counsellors can be appointed.
- A two member research advisory committee can be constituted to guide for research projects.
- Periodic meetings on various projects can be held to sort out problems.
- The cell should work out certain strategies or steps for checking the progress of work
- Student information system should be available which provides all type of data related to each student.
- The Head of an institution should create an atmosphere of cooperative partnership in achieving quality.

VI. Conclusion :

Thus, the role of IQAC in higher education is distinct and important as it works towards improving and maintaining the quality higher education in Assam, identifying and suggesting new ways of using teaching aids, developing suitable infrastructure and suggestion for new self financing course. The IQAC has been constantly involved in the management and maintaining the quality of education. Thus IQAC of is an effective and efficient coordination and monitoring mechanism.

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