

IQAC: An Introduction

The University Grants Commission (UGC), India has (in the XI Plan) made a policy decision to direct all Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) to establish Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) and to provide seed financial assistance for the same. It has also issued [Guidelines](#) for the establishment and monitoring of IQACs.

Maintaining the momentum of quality consciousness is crucial in HEIs. Internal Quality Assurance Cell, an internal quality assurance mechanism of the institution, 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 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.

Structure and Composition of IQAC

According to the UGC Guidelines, 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. 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; and, d) Director/Coordinator of IQAC - Member Secretary.

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 and Functions of IQAC

As highlighted in the UGC Guidelines, the goals of IQAC shall be: 1). To develop a quality system for conscious, consistent and catalytic programmed action to improve the academic and administrative performance of the HEIs; and, 2). To promote measures for institutional functioning towards quality enhancement through internalization of quality culture and institutionalization of best practices. To attain these goals, the functions of IQAC shall be:

1. Development and application of quality benchmarks/parameters for the various academic and administrative activities of the HEI;
2. 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;
3. Arrangement for feedback responses from students, parents and other stakeholders on quality-related institutional processes;
4. Dissemination of information on the various quality parameters of higher education;
5. Organization of inter and intra institutional workshops, seminars on quality related themes and promotion of quality circles;
6. Documentation of the various programmes/activities of the HEI, leading to quality improvement;
7. Acting as a nodal agency of the HEI for coordinating quality-related activities, including adoption and dissemination of good practices;
8. Development and maintenance of Institutional database through MIS for the purpose of maintaining /enhancing the institutional quality;
9. Development of Quality Culture in HEI;
10. 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;
11. Bi-annual development of Quality Radars (QRs) and Ranking of Integral Units of HEIs based on the AQAR;
12. Interaction with SQACs in the pre and post accreditation quality assessment, sustenance and enhancement endeavours.

Follow up

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. All HEIs shall submit AQARs and/or Quality Radars (QRs) and follow up reports of AQARs to the UGC as and when called for.
4. The IQAC must create its exclusive window on its institutional website, to regularly report on its activities, as well as for hosting the AQAR.

UGC's 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.