

CENTRE FOR INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE (CIQA)

I. Establishment of Centre for Internal Quality Assurance:

The Centre for Internal Quality Assurance shall be established in all Higher Educational Institutions offering programmes in Open and Distance Learning mode and/or Online mode. It shall be headed by a full-time Director, being a senior academician not below the rank of an Associate Professor, preferably from the field of Open and Distance Learning and/or online education, who shall be supported by adequate number of academic and other staff.

II. Objective:

The objective of Centre for Internal Quality Assurance is to develop and put in place a comprehensive and dynamic internal quality assurance system to ensure that programmes of higher education in the Open and Distance Learning mode and Online mode being implemented by the Higher Educational Institution are of acceptable quality and further improved on continuous basis.

III. Functions:

The functions of Centre for Internal Quality Assurance would, *inter alia*, include the following, namely:-

- (i) To maintain quality in the services provided to the learners.
- (ii) To undertake self-evaluative and reflective exercises for continual quality improvement in all the systems and processes of the Higher Educational Institution.
- (iii) To contribute in the identification of the key areas in which Higher Educational Institution should maintain quality.
- (iv) To devise mechanism to ensure that the quality of Open and Distance Learning programmes and Online programmes matches with the quality of relevant programmes in conventional mode.
- (v) To devise mechanisms for interaction with and obtaining feedback from all stakeholders namely, learners, teachers, staff, parents, society, employers, and Government for quality improvement.
- (vi) To suggest measures to the authorities of Higher Educational Institution for qualitative improvement.
- (vii) To facilitate the implementation of its recommendations through periodic reviews.
- (viii) To organise workshops/ seminars/ symposium on quality related themes, ensure participation of all stakeholders, and disseminate the reports of such activities among all the stakeholders in Higher Educational Institution.
- (ix) To develop and collate best practices in all areas leading to quality enhancement in services to the learners and disseminate the same all concerned in Higher Educational Institution.
- (x) To collect, collate and disseminate accurate, complete and reliable statistics about the quality of the programme(s).
- (xi) To ensure that Programme Project Report for each programme is according to the norms and guidelines prescribed by the Commission and wherever necessary by the appropriate regulatory authority having control over the programme;
- (xii) To put in place a mechanism to ensure the proper implementation of Programme Project Reports.
- (xiii) To maintain are cord of Annual Plans and Annual Reports of Higher Educational Institution, review them periodically and generate actionable reports.
- (xiv) To provide inputs to the Higher Educational Institution for restructuring of programmes in order to make them relevant to the job market.
- (xv) To facilitate system based research on ways of creating learner centric environment and to bring about qualitative change in the entire system.
- (xvi) To act as a nodal coordinating unit for seeking assessment and accreditation from a designated body for accreditation such as NAAC etc.

- (xvii) To adopt measures to ensure internalisation and institutionalisation of quality enhancement practices through periodic accreditation and audit.
- (xviii) To coordinate between Higher Educational Institution and the Commission for various quality related initiatives or guidelines.
- (xix) To obtain information from other Higher Educational Institutions on various quality benchmarks or parameters and best practices.
- (xx) To record activities undertaken on quality assurance in the form of an annual report of Centre for Internal Quality Assurance.
- (xxi) It will be mandatory for Centre for Internal Quality Assurance to submit Annual Reports to the Statutory Authorities or Bodies of the Higher Educational Institution about its activities at the end of each academic session. A copy of report in the format as specified by the Commission, duly approved by the statutory authorities of the Higher Educational Institution shall be submitted annually to the Commission.

IV. Centre for Internal Quality Assurance Committee:

- (1) Centre for Internal Quality Assurance Committee shall have the following composition, namely:-
 - (a) Vice Chancellor of the University – Chairperson;
 - (b) Three senior teachers of Higher Educational Institution - Members;
 - (c) Head of three Departments or School of Studies offering recognized programmes in Open and Distance Learning and Online mode - Members;
 - (d) Two external experts of Open and Distance Learning and/or Online education - Members;
 - (e) Officials from the Administration and Finance departments of the Higher Educational Institution – Members;
 - (f) Director, Centre for Internal Quality Assurance – Member Secretary.
- (2) The members at clauses (b) to (e) shall be nominated by the Vice- Chancellor of the Higher Educational Institution.
- (3) The membership of such nominated members shall be for a period of two years. The Committee of Centre for Internal Quality Assurance shall meet at least once in a semester. The quorum for the meeting shall be two-third of the total number of members with mandatory presence of one external expert. The agenda, minutes and Action Taken Reports are to be documented with official signatures and maintained electronically in a retrievable format.
- (4) Centre for Internal Quality Assurance Committee shall perform the following functions, namely:-
 - (i) To oversee the functioning of Centre for Internal Quality Assurance and approve the reports generated by Centre for Internal Quality Assurance on the effectiveness of quality assurance systems and processes.
 - (ii) To facilitate adoption of instructional design requirements as per the philosophy of the Open and Distance Learning and/or Online learning decided by the statutory bodies of the HEI for its different academic programmes.
 - (iii) To promote automation of learner support services of the Higher Educational Institution.
 - (iv) To coordinate with external subject experts or agencies or organisations, the activities pertaining to validation and annual review of its in-house processes.
 - (v) To coordinate with third party auditing bodies for quality audit of programme(s).
 - (vi) To oversee the preparation of Self-Appraisal Report to be submitted to the Assessment and Accreditation agencies on behalf of Higher Educational Institution.
 - (vii) To promote collaboration and association for quality enhancement of Open and Distance Learning and Online modes of education and research therein.

- (viii) To facilitate industry-institution linkage for providing exposure to the learners and enhancing their employability.

V. Quality Monitoring Mechanism

- (1) The guidelines on quality monitoring mechanism shall be adopted by the Centre for Internal Quality Assurance for conducting institutional quality audits, to promote quality assurance and enhance as well as spread best-in-class practices of quality assurance.
- (2) Quality monitoring shall be addressed under the following broad areas, namely:-
 - (i) **Governance, Leadership and Management:** This relates to the policies and practices of Higher Educational Institution in the matter of planning, human resources, recruitment, training, performance appraisal, financial management and the overall role of leadership, with a focus on the following key aspects:
 - (a) **Organisation Structure and Governance:** The Higher Educational Institution shall fill all sanctioned/required positions as prescribed by the Commission and establish a credible governance system.
 - (b) **Management:** The leadership and management of the Institution shall strive to assess and review the organisational culture to achieve its vision, mission and goals.
 - (c) **Strategic Planning:** The Higher Educational Institution shall undertake strategic planning of its activities and implement the same by aligning those with academic and administrative aspects to improve the overall quality.
 - (d) **Operational Plan, Goals and Policies:** The Higher Educational Institution shall have well defined goals which are realistic and measurable, well defined policies that are in sync with its strategic plan and are realistic and achievable, clearly stated guidelines for the implementation of its policies and plans, and transparent and accountable system for its policies and planning that are well communicated to its stakeholders.
 - (ii) **Articulation of Higher Educational Institution Objectives:** The Higher Educational Institution shall articulate a clear vision, mission, ethos and broad strategy consistent with the goals for offering programmes in Open and Distance Learning and Online mode.
 - (iii) **Programme Development and Approval Processes:** This area of concern relates to programme development and approval mechanism for the programme(s) to be launched, covering the following key aspects, namely:-
 - (a) **Curriculum Planning, Design and Development:** The curriculum planning, design and development of academic programmes is a major academic activity of the Higher Educational Institution. Therefore, it shall have processes, systems and structures in place to carry out these responsibilities.
 - (b) **Curriculum Implementation:** The Higher Educational Institution shall have specific implementation plans for identifying the time to be spent on specific components of the implementation phase. It is the basis for the effectiveness of the programme(s) and their usefulness as a whole.
 - (c) **Academic Flexibility:** The Higher Educational Institution shall adopt proper strategies for imparting academic flexibility, which refers to freedom in the use of the time-frame of courses, vertical mobility, and inter-disciplinary options facilitated by curricular transactions for learners.
 - (d) **Learning Resource:** The Higher Educational Institution shall ensure quality learning resources in the form of Self Learning Materials (SLMs) for Open and Distance Learning mode and e-learning material for Online mode of education as defined in these regulations. While deciding on the instructional packages, the Higher Educational Institution shall take into consideration various factors – the media and technology utilised matches the course content in order to enhance and expand learning, and to match to the learners' needs; that these are accessible, practical and equitable, and cost effective to the learners.

- (e) **Feedback System:** The process of revision and re-design of curricula shall be based on feedback from all stakeholders in terms of its relevance and appropriateness in catering to the needs of the society, economy and environment.
 - (iv) **Programme Monitoring and Review:** The Higher Educational Institution shall plan and execute programme monitoring and review system to conduct periodic internal reviews and maintain the quality of academic programmes. For such reviews, the Institution shall also consider the attainments of learning outcomes that are assessed through the various tools for direct and indirect assessment.
 - (v) **Infrastructure Resources:** The Higher Educational Institution shall have a system to elicit data on the adequacy and optimal use of the facilities - physical facilities, library (or e-library), Information and Communication Technology infrastructure, etc. - available in a Higher Educational Institution to maintain the quality of academic programmes and ensure qualitative support to each of the stakeholders.
 - (vi) **Learning Environment and Learner Support:** The learner support services including academic counselling and library services shall be a major pre-occupation of Higher Educational Institution for its Open and Distance Learning mode and Online mode learners. Additionally, Higher Educational Institution shall establish Information and Communication Technology facilities as component of the learning environment which is focused around the pedagogical use of modern educational practices to support blended learning. Learner Support Services shall be provided through the campus-wide portal and e-Learning platform. The Higher Educational Institution shall take a more sophisticated approach to the use of Information and Communication Technology and expertise in e-learning. The approach shall provide a seamless learner-centred environment.
 - (vii) **Assessment and Evaluation:** All the stated Learning Outcomes of a Programme must be part of its evaluation protocol. The Higher Educational Institution shall execute the evaluation through varied assessment tools including multiple choice questions, projects, reports, case-studies, presentations, and term-end examinations, to suit the different learning outcomes expected of the course elements. The Higher Educational Institution shall have proper assessment and moderation system for assessing the learning outcomes of learners.
 - (viii) **Teaching Quality and Staff Development:** The Higher Educational Institutions shall have a well established structure for promoting quality counselling, capacity building workshops, programmes, interactive teaching-learning and provide staff development programmes and activities to encourage academic staff to improve teaching and learning on continuous basis.
- (3) Process of Quality Audit**
- (i) **Academic Planning:** The Higher Educational Institutions shall have robust and appropriate academic planning procedures to ensure that the programmes offered by it are relevant to national economy, reflects the Institution's strategic direction and offers a high quality 'value-added' learner experience. The Institution shall have adequate and appropriate teaching and other support staff along with infrastructure and technology support to ensure that the curriculum remains up to date and the institutional goals are achieved.
 - (ii) **Validation:** The Higher Educational Institution shall have a mechanism in place for validation to ensure that its programmes are academically viable, that academic standards have been appropriately defined and that these offer learners the best opportunity to learn.
 - (iii) **Monitoring, Evaluation and Enhancement Plans:** Quality deliverance of the Open and Distance Learning programmes and Online programmes and the outcomes attainment and continual quality improvements shall be ensured by the Higher Educational Institution, shall be broadly as follows, namely:-

- a) **Reports from Learner Support Centres (for Open and Distance Learning programmes):** Report of academic activities and other related activities containing details of all the activities related to academic planning, counselling, learner support, etc. shall be collected periodically from Learner Support Centres. The Higher Educational Institution shall adopt the technological solutions for easy receipt of these reports.
- b) **Reports from Examination Centres:** Report of conduct of examinations in both Open and Distance Learning Mode and Online mode, alongwith report of observers/proctors for all examinations shall be collected periodically from Examination Centres. The Higher Educational Institution shall adopt the technological solutions for easy receipt of these reports.
- c) **External Auditor or other External Agencies report:** The Higher Educational Institution shall consider the comments made by External auditors, experts and third party of quality audit and implement as appropriate.
- d) **Systematic Consideration of Performance Data at Programme, Faculty and Higher Educational Institution levels:** For effective evaluation and audit, the Higher Educational Institution shall ensure easy access to performance monitoring information such as course pass rates, learner entry profiles and progression and achievement reports, which should be available through web-based application and be used for report making by the Higher Educational institution.
- e) **Reporting and Analytics by the Higher Educational Institution:** The Higher Educational Institution shall generate the required reports out of such web-based applications and analyze learner and academic analytics for deciding the improvements to be executed for better performance.
- f) **Periodic Review:** The Higher Educational Institution needs to have an effective system for collecting feedback from the stakeholders regularly to improve its programmes. The Higher Educational Institution needs to conduct self-assessments regularly and use the results to improve its systems, processes etc. and finally quality of programmes.