

Criterion I in SSR: Curricular Aspects as Total Learning Experience

Divya Joshi¹ & N. Bhojak^{2*},

¹P.G. Department of English, ²GCRC, P.G. Department of Chemistry,
Govt. Dungar College (Three times consecutively 'A' Grade by NAAC),
MGS University, Bikaner 334001, India

Abstract:

Assessment is always fruitful and if it's a combination of self-evaluation and critical assessment from outside agency, it yields fruitful results. When assessment is undertaken by any outside agency, it is objective, transparent, meaningful and fair. And only then the real purpose of assessment is achieved. If it is followed by accreditation it boosts confidence and pushes the Institute / organization towards the fulfilment and execution of its vision, mission and goals in the right direction. The A&A process of NAAC is systematically designed and the seven criteria very well reflect the core values and vision of NAAC. The points of assessment and enhancement range from teaching - learning to catering to student's diversity, curriculum, research, governance and the use of information and technology. This paper discusses Criterion I of SSR and its significance.

Key Words: SSR, Criterion, Key Indicators, Curriculum

Date of Submission: 14-08-2021

Date of Acceptance: 28-08-2021

I. INTRODUCTION:

Curriculum of any educational institution is the total learning experience encompassing the course content, methods and strategies employed and the values portrayed through its vision and mission. It includes the attainment of educational objectives by fostering capacity to think in more critical and informed ways about issues. Besides concentrating on explicit elements of the curriculum and formal teaching, the HEI endeavors to embody implicit elements through innovative and student centric methods.¹Assessment is always fruitful and if it's a combination of self-evaluation and critical assessment from outside agency, it yields fruitful results. When assessment is undertaken by any outside agency, it is objective, transparent, meaningful and fair. And only then the real purpose of assessment is achieved. If it is followed by accreditation it boosts confidence and pushes the Institute / organization towards the fulfilment and execution of its vision, mission and goals in the right direction. If the Institute is assessed and achieves higher grades, it boosts reliability, confidence and responsiveness.²NAAC (National Assessment and Accreditation Council) was established in 1994 with the aim of emphasizing quality assurance in HEIs and for the last two decades it has been working on these lines to uplift the quality of higher education in India. NAAC assessment and accreditation which is very much akin to global agencies for assessment, is carried out periodically to increase accountability and encourage innovations in teaching learning and research.³The revised A&A process has shifted from qualitative peer judgement to data based quantitative indicator evaluation wherein 25% score is generated by system as a pre-qualifier .SGS (system generated score) and increased role and participation of students and alumni has also made this process dynamic.

The A&A process of NAAC is systematically designed and the seven criteria very well reflect the core values and vision of NAAC. The points of assessment and enhancement range from teaching - learning to catering to student's diversity, curriculum, research, governance and the use of information and technology. The seven Criteria of A&A process for HEIs are:

- Curricular Aspects
- Teaching-Learning and Evaluation
- Research, Innovations and Extension
- Infrastructure and Learning Resources
- Student Support and Progression
- Governance, Leadership and Management
- Institutional Values and Best Practices

There are key indicators or sub headings which elaborate and explain the core values that form the basis for each criterion. These Key Indicators (KIs) then are given Metrics wherein responses from the HEIs are invited. In this paper we will be taking up Criterion I for discussion.

II. METHODOLOGY:

The key indicators and core values specific to each Criterion are so comprehensively designed that they address the significant area pertaining to the Criterion. For this paper, we will emphasize on both the quantitative and qualitative metrics prescribed for Criterion I. This criterion titled ‘Curricular Aspects’ focuses on the roles and responsibilities of HEI in designing the curriculum and its effective delivery. Affiliating colleges mainly deal with the implementation part but many a times the representation of the college teachers in designing and initiating the curriculum is central.

III. DISCUSSION:

Curriculum is defined as a planned document which contains content, objectives, process and methodology of the course, program and program specific that the learner undertakes to study. Curriculum is the backbone of HEI because it empowers the learners to achieve their desired professional goals. Well defined, revised and updated curriculum makes the learners capable to compete with peers and market. It is also necessary for HEIs to revise and update their curriculum as per global, national and local needs. The key indicators and weightages of Criterion I are as follows:

Criterion I	Key Indicators (KIs)	Universities	Autonomous Colleges	Affiliated/Constituent Colleges	
				UG	PG
Curricular Aspects	1.1 *(U)Curriculum Design and Development	50	50	NA	NA
	1.1. *(A) Curricular Planning and Implementation	NA	NA	20	20
	1.2 Academic Flexibility	50	40	30	30
	1.3 Curriculum Enrichment	30	40	30	30
	1.4 Feedback System	20	20	20	20
	Total	150	150	100	100

Design and development: It is clear from the above table that for affiliated colleges, design and development of the curriculum is not given weightage or is marked as NA because it is assumed that the college does not enjoy autonomy in framing and designing the curriculum. Despite this during the filling of SSR by affiliated colleges NAAC seeks information in data templates regarding the representation of College teachers and their contribution in curriculum design and planning. After the curriculum is prepared and planned, the college has to fulfil its responsibility in effective delivery of the same through a systematic defined process. The PO, POs, and CO displayed on the website and communicated to stakeholders, students and teachers help the HEI to attain feedback regarding curriculum for its needed revision.

Planning and Implementation: The response of HEI to the statement that the institution ensures effective curriculum delivery through a well-planned and documented process ranges from preparation of academic calendar to teacher wise, class wise time table and other pedagogical methods adopted by the HEI to ensure effective delivery. This includes class-room lectures, references to additional e-resources like NPTEL, e PG Pathshala, Swayam etc., projects, field trips, symposiums, class room seminars, case studies, surveys, and workshops. Use of innovative pedagogical tools and techniques to enrich content beyond the basic subject contents for knowledge, guest lectures by subject experts, and extra/remedial classes are also significant in efficient and effective delivery of the structured curriculum.

Academic Flexibility: Academic flexibility refers to the freedom in the use of the time-frame of the courses, horizontal mobility, inter-disciplinary options and others facilitated by curricular transactions.⁴This means that HEIs are expected to introduce and initiate courses, programs that not only seek employment but also allows for studies across disciplines and subjects. National Education Policy also states that there will be no “hard separation” between arts, humanities and sciences, vocational and academic, etc.⁵. For traditional colleges this can be granting flexibility to choose courses and electives. For ex. if the college is offering Bachelor of Arts, it can offer a plethora of combinations. The students are given a choice to choose their subjects from a plethora of combinations available to them. For reference we can see the SSR of Govt .Dungar College, Bikaner which says, “The college is the only college offering 135 combinations in Arts.”⁶

Curriculum Enrichment: Add on courses/ programs and activities are also very essential and significant for learners. If the affiliating college does not enjoy autonomy and in lieu of its limitations of Programs, the need to extra edge in courses can be catered by offering the learners a choice of distance learning centers and vocational courses/programs in addition to their regular degree programs. This can be a great step to generate employability skills and global competencies. The Colleges showing concern towards the ever-increasing demand of the region for mainstream regular courses that otherwise are not available can come forth by putting up regional study centers of Vardhman Mahaveer Open University (VMOU) Kota and IGNOU etc. Moreover, curriculum enrichment also includes the inclusion of social, economic and community issues of relevance.

Feedback System: The curriculum should be constantly reviewed, revised, and updated. Relevant and specific suggestions offered and feedback received from the students, teachers, and stake holders should be incorporated by HEIs. This is why NAAC has introduced student satisfaction survey and feedback system to know the areas which need improvisation. The two metrics related to feedback seek response from HEI regarding the systematic analysis of feedback and action taken report on the same. Very specifically in SOP it is mentioned that in this metrics only feedback related to curriculum should be addressed and incorporated.

Metrics: Criterion I

There are two kinds of metrics in SSR, Qualitative (QIM) and Quantitative (QnM). For qualitative metrics, the HEI is expected to give a descriptive response and for quantitative, the response should be as per the data template provided by NAAC. Below is the metrics and expected responses for Criterion I:

1.1.1. QIM The Institution ensures effective curriculum delivery through a well-planned and documented process

1.1.2. QIM The institution adheres to the academic calendar including for the conduct of CIE

1.1.3. QnM Teachers of the Institution participate in following activities related to curriculum development and assessment of the affiliating University and/are represented on the following academic bodies during the last five years

1.2.1. QnM Percentage of Programmes in which Choice Based Credit System (CBCS)/ elective course system has been implemented

1.2.2. QnM Number of Add on /Certificate programs offered during the last five years

1.2.3. QnM Average percentage of students enrolled in Certificate/ Add-on programs as against the total number of students during the last five years

1.3.1. QIM Institution integrates crosscutting issues relevant to Professional Ethics, Gender, Human Values, Environment and Sustainability into the Curriculum

1.3.2. QnM Average percentage of courses that include experiential learning through project work/field work/internship during last five years

1.3.3. QnM Percentage of students undertaking project work/field work/ internships (Data for the latest completed academic year)

1.4.1. QnM Institution obtains feedback on the syllabus and its transaction at the institution from the following stakeholders 1) Students 2) Teachers 3) Employers 4) Alumni

1.4.2. QnM Feedback process of the Institution.

After going through the metrics carefully, the HEI fills the SSR with utmost care. HEIs should write the descriptive part carefully and fill the correct data in data templates.

IV. CONCLUSION:

The curriculum comprises of Core subjects to impart common knowledge foundation and Electives to pursue the learner's own educational interests. The design, development, implementation, and enrichment of the curriculum are executed through resources and processes, materials and methods to ensure the overall development of the student. The prime concern of the HEIs is to create and provide a positive learning environment and serve the needs of students coming from rural background. Inculcation of values and awareness about everyday issues is implemented with an objective of making them responsible citizens. Criterion 1 of SSR is structured for HEIs to achieve this in the best possible ways.

REFERENCES:

- [1]. SSR, Govt. Dungar College, Bikaner. Rajasthan. 2nd cycle, 2014, Criterion I, pg 21-25.
- [2]. Divya Joshi & N. Bhojak, Importance of NAAC Accreditation for Higher Education Institutes, International Journal of Allied Practice, Research and Review, Vol. 7 (12), 01-07, 2020
- [3]. Divya Joshi & N. Bhojak, Pre -NAAC Registration Requirements for Higher Education Institutes, International Journal of Allied Practice, Research and Review, Vol. 8 (1), 01-08, 2021.
- [4]. http://naac.gov.in/images/docs/Manuals/manuals_new/Manual-Affiliated-Constituent-Colleges-1.3.2021.pdf
- [5]. <https://www.thenewsminute.com/article/nep-offers-flexibility-students-choose-subjects-it-may-not-be-easy-129767>
- [6]. <https://docplayer.net/64778045-Bikaner-rajasthan.html>