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Assessment and Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions in India

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ABSTRACT

After independence the University Education Commission was set up in 1948 under the Chairmanship of Dr. S Radhakrishnan "to report on Indian university education and to suggest improvements and extensions that might be desirable to suit the present and future needs and aspirations of the country". It recommended that University Grants Committee be reconstituted on the general model of University Grants Commission of the United Kingdom with a full-time chairman and other members to be appointed from amongst educationists of repute. In 1952 the University Grants Commission (UGC) was formally inaugurated by late Shri Abul Kalam Azad, then Minister of Education, Natural Resources and Scientific

Research on 28th December, 1953. However, a statutory body of the UGC was formally established in November, 1956 through an Act of Parliament for the Co-ordination, determination and maintenance of standards of university education in India. National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) was established by the UGC in September, 1994 at Bangalore for evaluating the performance of the universities and colleges in the country. NAAC's mandate includes task of performance evaluation, assessment and accreditation of universities and colleges in the country. Accreditation facilitates institution to know its strength, weaknesses, and opportunities through an informed review process. The universities- Central, Private, State, Deemed-to-be and Institutions of National Importance and Colleges or institutions affiliated to, or constituent of, or recognized by university, including autonomous colleges are eligible for the process of Assessment and Accreditation of NAAC. The process for assessment and accreditation broadly consists of preparation of Self-Study Report (SSR), submission of Letter of Intent (LOI), submission of institutional eligibility for quality assessment and submission of Hard Copies of SSR. The Peer-Team consisting of three persons, a chairman, member Coordinator and a member visits the institution and submits on-site visit report. NAAC has identified seven criteria to serve as the basis of its assessment procedures. The NAAC has assigned different weightages to these criteria with the total weightage of 1000. Institutions are graded under for categories viz. A, B, C and D denoting Very Good, Good, Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory levels respectively. The accreditation status is valid for five years from the date of approval by the Executive Committee of NAAC. The institutions undergo the re-accreditation process after five years.

Keywords: University Grant Commission, National Assessment and Accreditation Council, Self-Study Report, Peer-team visit, Grading.

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INTRODUCTION

In ancient Bharat, a child used to get training, religious or professional, from his father in his house. Later, the Vedic and the Buddhist system of education developed. In the Vedic system Vedas, Vedangas, Upanishads were taught while in the Buddhist system, the thoughts of all the major schools of Buddhism were taught. Both the systems provided vocational and religious education. Realizing the importance of literature and science in the ancient Bharat, vocational training in literature and science was given prominence in the system of education. The education system of ancient India was unique as the state or society did not interfere with the curriculum. It was, absolutely, free education and the students had to live in the house (Ashram) of the teacher who took care of the primary needs of the students. It was primarily seminar- type where students used to learn through debates and discussions. It aims to provide good training to young men and women in the performance of their social, economic and religious duties. It also emphasized preservation and enrichment of culture, character, personality development and cultivation of noble ideas. The subjects taught to the students includes four Vedas - Rugveda, Yajurveda, Samveda and Atharveda, six vedangas- phonetics, ritualistic knowledge, grammar, exegetics, metrics and astronomy, the Upanishads, the six darshans- nyaya, vaiseshika, Samkya, yoga, mimnsa and vedanta, puranas i.e. history, tarka Shastra i.e. logic etc. In ancient Bharat, knowledge was imparted orally and the different methods of learning were memorisation, critical-analysis, introspection, story- telling, question and answer method, hands-on method and through seminars. In ancient India, Takshasila, Nalanda, Vallabhi, Vikramasila, Ujjain, Banaras, Salotgi and Ennayiram



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