



Policy Paper

Quality Assurance in Higher Agricultural Education through Accreditation by National Agricultural Educational Accreditation Board

**INDIAN COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH
(AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION DIVISION)**

Krishi Anusandhan Bhawan - II, Pusa,
New Delhi - 110012



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Krishi Anusandhan Bhawan - II, Pusa,
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त्रिलोचन महापात्र, पीएच.डी.

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सचिव एवं महानिदेशक

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AND

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FOREWORD

The mandate of Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE) is to promote excellence in agricultural education and to produce high quality technical manpower for the social and economic development of the country. National Agricultural Education Accreditation Board (NAEAB), formerly Accreditation Board, came into being in the year 1996 with defined set of functions under Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR). NAEAB accredits the higher agricultural educational institutions consisting of autonomous, constituent and affiliated agricultural colleges (offering Degree Programmes in agriculture and allied sciences subjects) in State Agricultural Universities, State Veterinary Universities, State Fisheries Universities, State Horticultural Universities, Central Agricultural Universities, ICAR Deemed Universities, State Universities, Private Universities, Central Universities, UGC Deemed Universities. NAEAB has the responsibilities of assisting the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) for the approval, recognition, inspection and funding of institutions; developing course curricula and its revision and providing guidance on University governance, personnel and financial policies.

ICAR is recognised as Professional Standard Setting Body and the member of proposed General Education Council

under new regulatory regime in New Education Policy 2020. Therefore, NAEAB has to play greater role to develop guiding principles for the accreditation of Universities/ Colleges offering academic programmes in agriculture and allied sciences. NAEAB should take necessary steps to create uniform academic structure in both public and private institutions offering academic programmes in agricultural sciences in the country.

The present policy paper on Quality Assurance in Higher Agricultural Education through Accreditation prepared by Agricultural Education Division will act as a guiding document for overall quality management in higher agricultural education in the country. I congratulate Dr. R. C. Agrawal, Dr. G. Venkateshwarlu and Dr. K. P. Tripathi for this painstaking effort.

Date: 30th March 2021
Place: New Delhi-110 001



(T Mohapatra)

ABBREVIATIONS

AC	Academic Council
AIEEA	All India Entrance Examination for Admission
AU	Agricultural Universities
BoM	Board of Management
B.Sc. (Agri.)	Bachelor of Science in Agriculture
B.V.Sc.	Bachelor of Veterinary Science
BSMA	Broad Subject Matter Area
CCEA	Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs
CIFE	Central Institute of Fisheries Education
CRIJ&AF	Central Research Institute for Jute and Allied Fibers
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DARE	Department of Agriculture & Research and Education
FC	Finance Committee
GB	Governing Body
GPAC	Grade Point Average of the College
GPAP	Grade Point Average of Programme
GPAAU	Grade Point Average of the Agricultural University
HAEIs	Higher Agricultural Educational Institutions
IARI	Indian Agriculture Research Institute
ICAR	Indian Council of Agricultural Research
IEA	Institutional Eligibility for Accreditation
IIHR	Indian Institute of Horticultural Research
LoI	Letter of Intent
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding

NAAC	National Assessment and Accreditations Council
NAEAB	National Agricultural Education Accreditation Board
NBA	National Board for Accreditation
PG	Post Graduate
Ph D	Doctorate of Philosophy
PRT	Peer Review Team
QCI	Quality Council of India
R & D	Research and Development
READY	Rural Entrepreneurship Awareness Development Yojana
SAU	State Agricultural University
SSR	Self Study Report
UG	Under Graduate
UGC	University Grants Commission
VCI	Veterinary Council of India

1. Introduction

Accreditation is a formal and independent verification that a program or institution meets established quality standards and is competent to carry out specific conformity assessment tasks. As per mandate of Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE)/Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) to aid, impart and coordinate Agricultural Education to enable Quality Human Resource Development, it requires accreditation to verify the technical competence of agricultural universities including other higher agricultural educational institutions (HAEIs) in the country. ICAR provides accreditation to agriculture universities, colleges and programmes through its accreditation secretariat of National Agricultural Education Accreditation Board (NAEAB). The accreditation serves only as a badge of quality assurance, it is not mandatory, is not a form of affiliation or recognition and does not give approval to open an institute or a program.

The history of agricultural education in India can be traced back to medieval period when study of agriculture was included in the curricula of Nalanda and Takshashila Universities as an important subject. However, formalized courses in agricultural education began only at the beginning of 20th Century when six agricultural colleges were established at Kanpur, Lyallpur (now in Pakistan), Coimbatore and Nagpur in 1905, at Pune in 1907 and at Sabour in 1908 under the General Universities. After independence, the Government of India initiated an extensive planning process. To ensure orderly growth, the ICAR, which is the apex body for coordinating, guiding, and managing research and education in agriculture in the entire country, took the lead and drafted the first Model Act for Agricultural Universities in India in 1966 and encouraged the setting up of exclusive State Agricultural Universities (SAUs) for research, extension and education support. The first Agriculture University in the country was set up in 1960 at Pantnagar (now in Uttarakhand), which paved the way for establishment of agricultural universities in other states. At present, there are 74 agricultural universities and more than three hundred private/Government aided colleges affiliated to State/Private universities in the country.

For quality assurance in higher agricultural education across National Agricultural Research and Education System, the ICAR, over the years, has

taken many initiatives and developed policy documents. Some of the major developments are given below:

a. Education Panel (1952)

- ◆ Developed model curricula for B.Sc. (Ag.) and B.V.Sc.
- ◆ Framed guidelines for establishment of new Colleges.

b. Standing Committee on Agricultural Education (1965):

- ◆ Developed first Model Act for SAUs.
- ◆ Formulated building norms for Agriculture, Agricultural Engineering and Veterinary Faculties.
- ◆ Developed model curricula for UG programme in Agricultural Engineering and Home Science.

c. Norms and Accreditation Committee (1974)

- ◆ Developed norms for financial assistance from ICAR to the Agricultural Universities.
- ◆ Faculties in general universities and Private Colleges offering Agricultural Education.
- ◆ Formulated guidelines for adoption of UGC pay scales by SAUs, qualifications and Career Advancement Schemes.
- ◆ Development scheme for Faculty members including competence improvement.
- ◆ Developed process of accreditation (recognition), which was mainly for financial support.

d. Accreditation Board (1996)

- ◆ Developed new process of accreditation, which was comprehensive, rigorous and periodic, and aimed at improving the quality and relevance of higher agricultural education.

e. National Agricultural Education Accreditation Board and its Regional Centres (2017)

- ◆ Accreditation Board was restructured with Effect from 9th February, 2017.
- ◆ Accreditation Board was restructured to cater the need of accreditation for ensuring quality in the era of ever-increasing

agricultural universities and colleges in the country.

- ◆ Four Regional Centers of the NAEAB have been established at Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI), New Delhi; Central Research Institute for Jute and Allied Fibres (CRIJAF), Barrackpore, Kolkata; Central Institute for Fisheries Education (CIFE), Mumbai and Indian Institute of Horticultural Research, Bengaluru to support the NAEAB in conducting accreditation of Higher Agricultural Educational Institutions in the country.

2. National Agricultural Education Accreditation Board

The Accreditation Board of the ICAR was established in the Year 1996 and later renamed as National Agricultural Education Accreditation Board (NAEAB) in 2017. Accreditation Board, now renamed as National Agricultural Education Accreditation Board with the approval of AGM of ICAR and with the Office Order from DARE, is an entity under ICAR Rules (Chapter X, 51-56) and Bye laws. Accreditation Board deals with the mandate of DARE to ensure quality education in agriculture and allied sciences subjects through accreditation and other functionalities for entire country. The Board functions under the chairmanship of Director General, ICAR. DDG (Agricultural Education) and ADG (EQR) have been designated as Vice-Chairman and Secretary of the Board, respectively. Nominated members include Vice-Chancellors of SAUs and Deemed-to-be-Universities of ICAR, Eminent Agricultural / Animal/Social Scientists and members representing agricultural industry. Secretary, UGC, Secretary, AICTE and Secretary, VCI are ex-officio members in the NAEAB. Board has been assigned the following functions:

- ◆ To advise the Council in evolving the norms and standards for accreditation of institutions and programmes of Agricultural Education including Veterinary Sciences and Agricultural Engineering.
- ◆ To assist the Council for the matters pertaining to approval, recognition, inspection and funding of institutions of Agricultural Education.

- ◆ Evaluate the academic programme and the institutional set up in which these programmes are conducted.
- ◆ To periodically assess the curricula of various degree programmes offered by the State Agricultural Universities and other approved institutions and suggest modifications, if required.
- ◆ To decide the equivalence of qualifications.
- ◆ To lay down Norms and Standards of courses, curricula, instructional facilities, teaching staff qualifications, requirements of admission etc. and if warranted de- recognize degree/institution.
- ◆ To provide guidance on University governance, personnel and financial policies etc.

Thus, accreditation for higher agricultural educational institutions in the country is one of the prime responsibilities of the Board to ensure quality in higher agricultural education. Over 20 years of conducting accreditation, it has been considered worth while to bring precision in the existing accreditation system for bringing improvement in the academic requirements in the agriculture sector. It has been necessitated due to establishment of a number of new universities in public and private sector, multi-campus and sectoral universities as well as changing research and educational priorities.

Considering importance of accreditation, Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs in the year 2015, while clearing the proposal for XII Plan Scheme “Strengthening and Development of Higher Agricultural Education in India” laid down the following conditions:

- ◆ Agricultural accreditation to be mandatory in all SAUs by 2016-17 and be linked with the release of grants for education quality assurance.
- ◆ Grading Systems may be evolved based on accreditation parameters and this may be linked with the financial support.
- ◆ Regional Centers for accreditation, monitoring and evaluation need to be created as recommended by the accreditation board of ICAR.

In order to make ICAR accreditation at the centre stage in higher agricultural education process, ICAR took a decision in 2015 (based on XV

NAEAB meeting and subsequent agreed by 234th GB) to link admission from ICAR (AIEEA) and accreditation of agricultural universities/colleges/programmes.

3. Regional Centers of the NAEAB and their jurisdiction

The following four Regional centers are responsible for receipt of the Self Study Reports, their preliminary examination and compliance under the guidance of Regional Advisor.

Region	States Covered	Regional Office
North	Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Chandigarh and Delhi	IARI, New Delhi
East & North East	Bihar, West Bengal, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Assam, Manipur, Sikkim, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Tripura, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh, Andaman & Nicobar Islands	CRIJ&AF, Barrackpore, Kolkata
West	Gujarat, Goa, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Daman & Diu and Dadar & Nagar Haveli	CIFE, Mumbai
South	Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry	IIHR, Bangalore

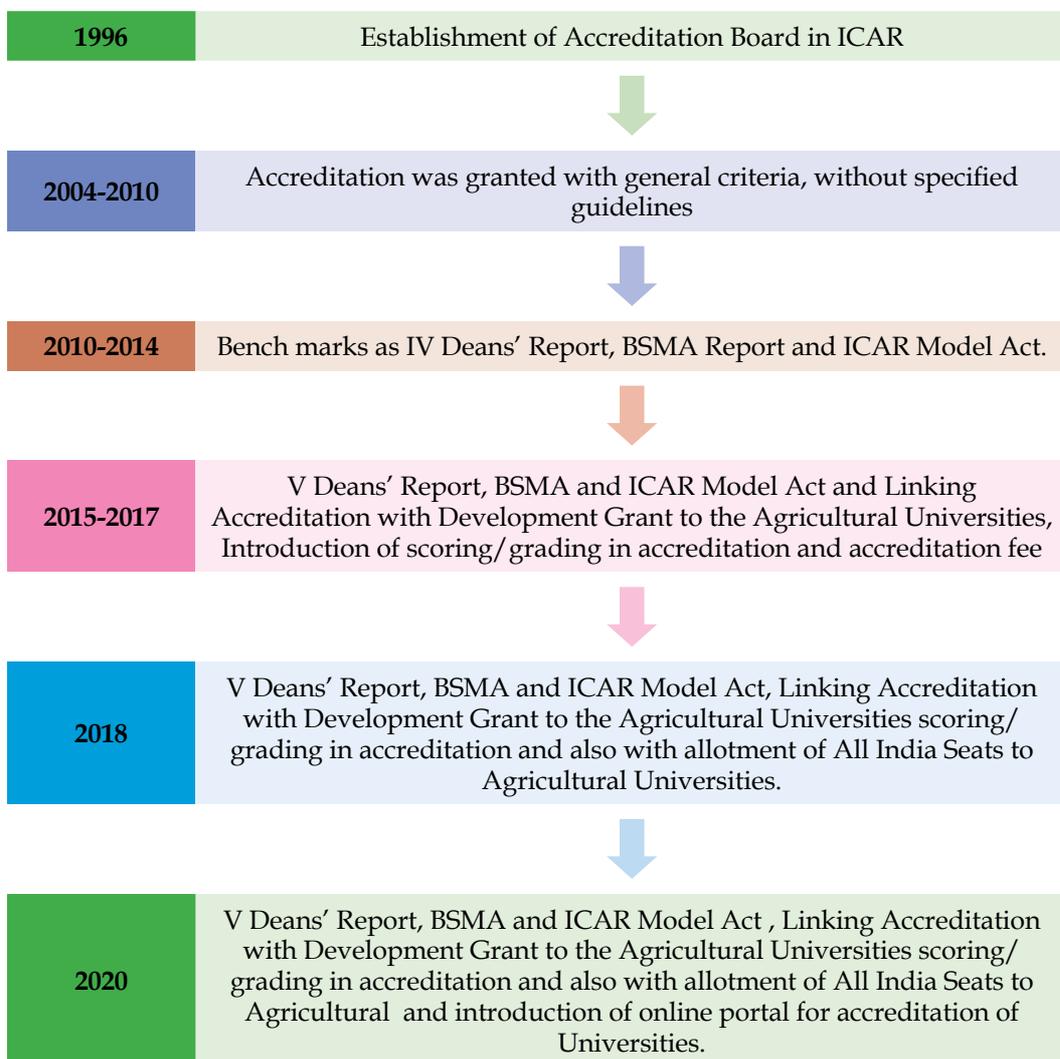
4. Reforms in ICAR accreditation system

The reform of accreditation for higher agricultural education in the country has become necessary because it is unequivocally felt that it should be beyond the prerogative of the very institutions being accredited. There should be higher accountability to public and thus the accreditation process should be more transparent and analytical based upon parameters relevant to the present agricultural education needs of the society. These factors include:

- ◆ Shift from measuring inputs to assessing and reporting outcomes, especially students' achievement
- ◆ Reliance on higher agricultural education to improve farm productivity, economic development, global competitiveness through teaching, research and extension.

- ◆ Increasing investment in higher agricultural education, from public and private sources, with concomitant expectation of positive returns
- ◆ Expanded importance of higher agricultural education, as seen through the eyes of its stakeholders such as alignment of accreditation and accountability, institutional and public purposes, importance and quality and investment and return.

Accreditation Reforms over the period



5. Eligibility Criteria for Accreditation

The HAEIs shall be eligible to apply for the accreditation from the NAEAB if they have a record of at least one batch of students passed out and fulfill the other conditions or are covered by the other provisions, if any. For accreditation point of view, the eligible HAEIs shall be grouped as below:

Agricultural Universities: These include State Agricultural Universities, State Veterinary Universities, State Fisheries Universities, State Horticultural Universities, Central Agricultural Universities and ICAR Deemed-to-be-Universities.

Agricultural Colleges (also known as Schools, Faculties, Institutes): These include autonomous, constituent and affiliated agricultural colleges (offering Degree Programmes in agriculture and allied sciences subjects) in State Agricultural Universities, State Veterinary Universities, State Fisheries Universities, State Horticultural Universities, Central Agricultural Universities, ICAR Deemed Universities, State Universities, Private Universities, Central Universities, UGC Deemed Universities and others.

Academic Programmes: Bachelor (UG), Master (PG) and Ph.D. Degree Programmes in agriculture and allied science subjects as recommended by Deans' Committees, Veterinary Council of India (VCI) and Broad Subject Matter Area Committees (BSMA) and being offered in Agricultural Colleges shall be eligible for accreditation from NAEAB.

Accreditation Fee

The purpose of charging accreditation fee from the applicant universities/ colleges was to meet the functional requirement of the Board and completion of accreditation process at different levels including Board Secretariat, Regional Centres, Peer Review Teams, Post-accreditation monitoring and review and completing other requirement of the Board in efficient, time bound and hassle-free manner. Following criteria for charging accreditation fee has been in place:

- ♦ In case of accreditation of the Agricultural University along with its constituent colleges and programmes, the University shall pay Rs 6.0 lakh accreditation fee+ GST as applicable from time to time.

- ◆ In case of accreditation of Agricultural Colleges, the University shall pay Rs 3.0 lakh as accreditation fee + GST as applicable from time to time irrespective of the number of the Colleges to be accredited.
- ◆ In case of accreditation of Academic Programmes, the University shall pay Rs 2.0 lakh as accreditation fee + GST as applicable from time to time irrespective of the number of the programmes to be accredited.
- ◆ Expenditure on conducting Peer Reviews for accreditation to be borne by applicant universities.

6. Impact of Accreditation

The accreditation of Agricultural Universities/Colleges by ICAR started during 2001. However, till 2016, it was optional based on the request from Universities. As per the decision of the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) during 2015 for making accreditation mandatory for the agricultural universities receiving grants from the Education Division of ICAR, new guidelines for accreditation were developed by the NAEAB in 2017 to encompass all the institutions offering courses in agriculture and allied sciences in the country, especially large number of private colleges offering agricultural education.

In order to ensure quality of education in agricultural colleges, the Council made another decision to link accreditation mandatory for colleges receiving students through All India Examination conducted by ICAR. This decision led to large number of applications being submitted by both Government supported and Private institutions to get accreditation from ICAR. Considering self-assessment from the applicant university/colleges, third party assessment by the Peer Review Team and remarks/suggestions from the NAEAB, the accredited universities/colleges are submitting Action Taken Reports regularly. The improvements in various facets of universities/colleges are summarized below:

- 1. Filling of faculty positions:** In order to ensure requisite faculty numbers in colleges, several universities completed the recruitment process for faculty and other staff positions.

2. **Appointment of University Officers:** Since ICAR Model Act has been given major emphasis in scoring for the Universities, officers are being regularly appointed, specially, Deans/Directors positions.
3. Promotion of faculty and other staff is being undertaken regularly in all AUs.
4. Institutionalization of Board of Studies across AUs, conduct of AC, BoM, FC meetings have been implemented to address the administrative issues.
5. Mandatory UGC guidelines have been implemented because of the weightage given to them in the accreditation process.
6. All AUs have implemented Deans/BSMA committee recommendations and have made Agricultural Education System uniform in the country with respect to nomenclature, credit load and evaluation system.
7. Instructional facilities like laboratories, class rooms, Student Ready, research/instructional farms etc. have been largely improved because of due emphasis was given to these aspects in accreditation process.
8. Universities have strengthened/created student amenities to get accreditation.
9. Student Placement and Training Cell is being strengthened to fulfill the outcome-based accreditation system.
10. Universities are making serious efforts to receive grants from external sources for better R&D works, MoUs and Work Plants with foreign agencies/intuitions and support from Alumni, industrial establishments, CSR funding etc.

7. Grievance Redressal Mechanism in Accreditation: Appeal Committee

The NAEAB views the process of accreditation as an exercise in partnership, done jointly by the NAEAB and the institution being assessed. Every stage of the process is marked by transparency. The institution is consulted at various stages of the process eliminating conflict of interest with the peers, planning the visit schedule, sharing the assessment part of the report etc. In spite of this participatory approach, HAEIs might have

grievances to be addressed. Therefore, to provide review mechanism for institutions who are aggrieved about the process or its outcome or any other issues related thereof, the NAEAB has made a provision of the Grievance Redressal. Accordingly, an Appeal Committee has been constituted to look into the grievances of the universities/colleges. The Committee has examined the grievances of four universities so far.

8. New initiatives in accreditation system

Shifting from qualitative assessment to the Scoring/Grading system

Since accreditation has been linked with the financial assistance for strengthening and development of Agricultural Universities, All India Admission in UG/PG/Ph.D. Degree Programmes being conducted by the ICAR and declaration of agricultural degrees as professional subjects, the information regarding administrative setup, faculty, learning resources, amenities, research and extension etc. need to be uniformly considered for comparison and effective decision making. Adoption of the ICAR suggestions regarding effective delivery of course curricula by Agricultural Universities is also a component of Self Study Reports. Further, the grading system of accreditation may reflect institutional standing and to inculcate competitive spirit among Agricultural Universities.

In the present scenario of the higher agricultural education in the country, agricultural universities award agricultural degrees whereas, general universities also have either agricultural Colleges or some of its departments offer degrees in agriculture and allied sciences subjects. The NAEAB has a provision of three-tier-accreditation system comprising Programmes (Degree Programme), Colleges and University. The very basis for developing three-tier-accreditation is to give due emphasis on each and every segment of course curricula delivery such as academics, student development and departmental management which are considered essential for the overall performance of the University

Higher weightage to undergraduate programmes

As per recommendation of GB of ICAR, UG programmes shall be assigned higher weightage in accreditation process. It is essential that 50% of

the UG Programmes running in the College (If the Colleges is offering UG/ PG/Ph D Programmes) shall first qualify for accreditation, then the PG/ Ph D Programmes shall be reviewed for accreditation. Further, total number of accredited programmes (including all UG/PG/ Ph D) in the College shall be 50% or more to become the College eligible for accreditation. In case if the Colleges is offering only PG/ Ph D programme, then it is essential that 50% of the PG/ Ph D Programmes shall be accredited to enable the Colleges eligible for accreditation.

Considering scores to the colleges in final score to the University

If a College scores GPAC (Grade Point Average of the College) of 2.5/4.0 and above then shall be eligible for accreditation. It is essential that 50% or more of the constituent Colleges shall qualify for accreditation, only then the University shall be considered for its accreditation.

Accreditation based on Bench mark guidelines for colleges and universities developed by ICAR

ICAR accreditation is granted based on guidelines developed over long period of time to address the overall improvement in higher agricultural education. Deans' Committee Report have been developed over 60 years, with subsequent modifications/upgradations as required, to address the UG programmes. There is in built minimum requirement for new colleges in the Deans' Committee Reports. Model Act developed by ICAR is a document suggesting the administrative set up in agricultural universities. BSMA committee reports have been developed to address and streamline PG/Ph.D. programmes. Similarly, for Veterinary education, guidelines from VCI are considered for accreditation of veterinary colleges.

Assessment of programmes, colleges and university together

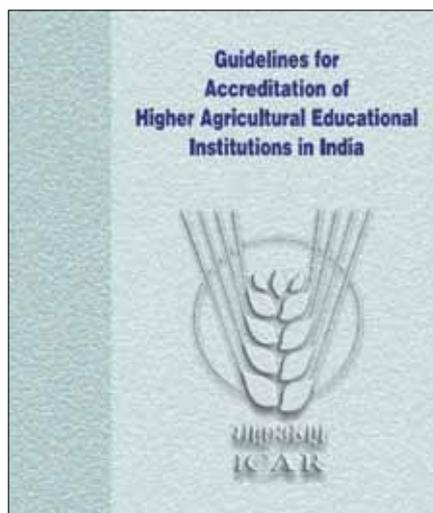
In variance to the system of accreditation adopted by the NAAC/ NBA and QCI, the NAEAB accreditation is based on the assessment and evaluation of entire system right from Departments, Colleges and the University. Every level of accreditation process is conducted based on the separate guidelines formed to cater the need of respective component.

9. Accreditation guidelines developed with reference to the higher agricultural education institutions

In order to promote higher agricultural education in the country, the essential requirement is the capacity to develop skilled manpower of good quality in adequate number. At present, there are 74 agricultural universities and large number of constituent and affiliated colleges imparting degrees in agriculture and allied sciences.

Over the past few years, quality of agricultural education in these institutions has been a matter of concern due to faculty shortage, insufficient fund, sub-optimal infrastructure and learning resources, high inbreeding, high student intake and poor governance.

Lately, it was realized that there was a lot of subjectivity in the process of accreditation, thus the core issues in quality education was not being addressed. Therefore, a new approach was needed for accreditation with high degree of objectivity in the process so as to infuse transparency, uniformity and commitment to agricultural education. Keeping these in view, 'Guidelines for Accreditation of Higher Agricultural Educational Institutions in India' have been developed for implementation. The new guidelines for accreditation has three-tier-accreditation



i.e. Programme, College and University with different Self Study Report for each. Introduction of Score-card based on the criteria, key aspects and its pre-determined weightage together with grading of agricultural universities have definitely inculcated transparency and competitiveness in the process.

10. Post-accreditation monitoring and mid-course corrections

The Mid-term Review addresses deficiencies identified in an earlier Self Study Reports and describes improvements the institution has achieved

based on the NAEAB recommendations and any self-identified issues that are detailed in the Quality Focus Essay. Mid-term reports sometimes may coincide with a second visit from a site team. NAEAB has made the following arrangement for post accreditation monitoring.

- ◆ The HAEI shall submit comprehensive compliance report in a format prescribed by the Council on the observations of Peer Review Team, NAEAB for accreditation of the institution after completion of 2.5 years from the date of accreditation. The compliance report shall be reviewed by the Sectoral Committees/Mid-term Review Committee of the NAEAB.
- ◆ Commitments made by universities through undertaking by Registrar office order, Letters to the PRT chairman or any other during the Peer Review shall be verified during the Mid-term Review of the University along with the observations made during grant of accreditation.
- ◆ Observation of the Committees shall be put up to the next meeting of the NAEAB for necessary direction in the matter.

11. Linking accreditation with development grant and all India admissions to the agricultural universities.

As per recommendations of CCEA in the year 2015 and ICAR in 2018, accreditation was linked with grant from education division and allocating All India seats to SAUs by ICAR through AIEEA, respectively. Subsequently, ICAR decided to link accreditation with eligibility of colleges (students) to enable them to apply for AIEEA. This arrangement has made lots of impact and almost all higher agricultural educational institutions, both may be in public or private sector, are aspiring for ICAR accreditation to make them visible at the National level.

For the admission through ICAR's AIEEA (PG) and AICE-JRF/SRF (Ph. D), it has been decided that the first batch students from newly established colleges, not having ICAR accreditation, may be allowed, with the condition that it will be applicable for first batch pass out students only in that particular academic year. For the second batch students, accreditation of the College from ICAR is compulsory. It was clarified that the exemption of

accreditation is not applicable in subsequent years for those students who pass out in first batch. Further, it has also been decided that all admission guidelines through ICAR's AIEEA (PG) and AICE-JRF/SRF (Ph. D) should be applicable to both Private and Government Colleges and these decisions shall be implemented from the academic session 2021-22.

12. On line portal for processing applications

In order to infuse transparency and efficiency in the accreditation process, the NAEAB in its XXV meeting decided to implement online mode process for invitation of LoI/IEA/Statement of Compliance and its preliminary examination. The Indian Agricultural Statistics Research Institute (IASRI), New Delhi under the National Agricultural Higher Education Project (NAHEP) developed the portal (<https://accreditation.icar.gov.in/>) and its Standard Operating Procedure along with following three Manuals which are available on the Accreditation Portal.

- i. User Manual for NAEAB Secretariat
- ii. User Manual for Regional Centres of NAEAB
- iii. User Manual for Registrars of degree awarding Universities



Both Public and Private Agricultural Universities/ Colleges (HAEIs) can apply for online accreditation by submitting Letter of Intent (LoI) along with Institutional Eligibility for Accreditation (IEA) and Statement of Compliance (SoC) to the NAEAB Secretariat. After acceptance of LoI, IEA and SoC, HAEI shall submit Self Study Report (SSR) to the respective Regional Centre of the NAEAB and one copy of SSR along with Accreditation fee to NAEAB Secretariat through this portal. Regional Centre of the NAEAB shall examine the SSR submitted in portal and ensure that SSR meets the requirement of the guidelines.

The accreditation portal has made significant impact on the submission of the required documents along with Self Study Reports by saving time, cost and facilitating quick decision at all levels.

13. ICAR as Professional Standards Setting Body as per New Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020)

As per the recommendations of NEP 2020, the ICAR shall act as a Professional Standard Setting Body (PSSB) for Agricultural Education to develop the curricula and lay down academic standards for the agricultural education. As a member of the proposed General Education Council (GEC), the ICAR shall take necessary steps through PSSB for making a uniform academic structure across the country both in public and private institutions offering academic programmes in agricultural sciences.

As a member of the GEC, the ICAR will be able to contribute in the regulation of agricultural education through a single regulatory body to be enacted as a National Higher Education Regulatory Council (NHERC), the first vertical of the proposed Higher Education Commission of India.

In this background NAEAB has an important role to play, beyond the accreditation, in regulation of Higher Agricultural Education in the Country.

14. Way Forward

- ◆ Continuation of accreditation and subsequent monitoring of all agricultural universities/colleges including veterinary sciences in a time bound manner to ensure quality education in agriculture and allied sciences.

- ♦ The NAEAB of ICAR need to be aligned as an Accreditor with the National Accreditation Council (NAC) as per NEP 2020, a meta-accrediting body under new regulatory regime, for the accreditation of Universities/Colleges offering academic programmes in agriculture and allied sciences.

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