

## Foreword

Quality, in the context of a higher education institution, is multi-dimensional. The functioning of a library can be said to manifest one such dimension. The need to improve on the accuracy of accreditation process is constant and exists side by side and possibility to do so. The NAAC is always at it.

Though it is institutional accreditation that the NAAC does, the assessment of a library, a vital sub-unit, is a key step that integrates itself with the overall evaluation. Library is the fulcrum of support for the entire range of academic activities on an educational campus. In today's high-tech learning environment, the library as a learning resource is taking up increasingly more academic space and time in the life of a learner. In times ahead, this will be even more so. All this plays up the need for scientific evaluation of a library so that its role as the centerpiece of academic development is protected and enhanced. It is in this context, that the NAAC has after wide consultations evolved a set of guidelines on quality indicators, to help academic libraries to be always in their best form.

I appreciate the enthusiasm of all the participant librarians across the country and my colleagues, Dr. Srinivas Raghavan and Mr. B.R.Manjunath, in bringing out the guidelines in this booklet form. It is my sincere hope that it serves the intended purpose.

**(Prof. V.S. Prasad)**

## GUIDELINES ON QUALITY INDICATORS IN LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES: AFFILIATED/CONSTITUENT COLLEGES

### INTRODUCTION

Increasingly, the accreditation activity is gaining momentum in our country as people and educational institutions have come to realize that quality enhancement is essential for the institutions and the country. In the process of institutional accreditation, libraries have a crucial role. The services of the libraries have been expanding as they contribute significantly to the learning process, particularly the e-learning process.

In the accreditation process, evaluation of libraries is an essential component, where the collection, services and their outreaching capacity are monitored. In the recent past, significant developments have been reported in library and information services and the libraries are shouldering newer responsibilities in higher education. Hence the standards for assessing the quality of library services need to be updated. It is true that libraries largely support learning, teaching and research processes in institutions. So far, the classroom has, by and large, been the primary source of learning, with library accorded a supplementary status. In times ahead, one can foresee a role reversal, and indeed, in the increasingly learner-centric educational effort, one may already be witness to the library becoming the primary learning resource in many instances, with conventional classroom teaching playing mainly facilitating role. In case of Open Distance Learning (ODL), almost always, this has been the case.

It is in this backdrop that the NAAC has developed a set of objective indicators to facilitate assessment of the Library and Information Services of academic institutions. The guidelines are derived from an understanding of the global developments in the activities and services of libraries, the national environment, and the outcome of a recent national-level workshop held at the NAAC, in which college and university librarians and library scholars from across the country had participated.

College libraries need to have facilities that promote effective and interactive access and use of information resources for all users. In the area of physical facilities, the libraries need to offer safe, comfortable, well-lighted, clean space, with adequate and appropriate seating arrangements to ensure effective use of the library's resources including digital resources. Also, college libraries are required to consider study space needs, while allocating the seating space, with special attention being paid to reserve collections and the hostel environment of the institution. The libraries need to prepare well-framed rules and guidelines with regard to hours of access, circulation policies, and other regulations to offer better services to the users.

Affiliated college libraries function with the primary mission of meeting the library and information needs mainly of enrolled undergraduate students. The guidelines presented below identify the principal factors influencing the development and maintenance of college library services and collections.

## **A. MANAGEMENT OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES**

In affiliated colleges, the core objective of the library is to support the academic programmes offered and the library may evolve its collection and services mainly to reflect the curriculum requirements of its users. Besides, the library may design a system to deliver its products and services to attract more users. Ultimately the library should aim at bringing all its target users to the library and ensure its optimum usage. The parameters compiled here would facilitate the quality enhancement and sustenance of library services to a large extent. The libraries of the affiliated colleges may firm up their performance by equipping/enabling themselves to answer the following questions in the affirmative.

1. Does the library function on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays to facilitate use by students and faculty?
2. Does the library have extended and appropriate working hours before/after the class hours?
3. Does the college have a Library Advisory Committee? If yes, what is the role of the library committee?
4. Are the qualifications, experience and pay of the Librarian on par with that of the academic staff and as per government/UGC norms?
5. Has the librarian attended/participated in orientation/refresher courses and workshops/seminars (national/regional)?
6. Does the library have separate premises of its own? Does it contain minimum infrastructure facilities such as utilities, staff area, reading

hall, periodicals section, circulation counter, service area, Information Display, etc.?

7. What is the ratio of the seating capacity to the users (students and faculty)?

8. Is the Generator facility extended to the library?

9. What are the measures for overall maintenance and cleanliness of the library?

10. Does the library have computers and Internet facilities?

11. Are the library functions automated? If yes, are they fully/partially automated?

12. What are the financial/funding sources other than the state, central and UGC grants?

13. Is there any defined policy for collection development, stock verification, promotion and training of library staff?

## **B. COLLECTION AND SERVICES PROVIDED TO USERS**

### **I. COLLECTION**

The library is required to provide varied, authoritative and up-to-date resources that support its mission and fulfill the needs of its users. Resources may be provided in a variety of formats, including print or hard copy, online, electronic text or images, and other media. A college library needs to have the quantity of resources as prescribed by government, UGC, AICTE and other governing bodies. The collection of a college library may answer the following, for maintaining the quality of the resources.

1. Mention the total collection of Documents

- (i) Books
- (ii) Text Books
- (iii) Reference Books
- (iv) Current Journals
  - Indian
  - Foreign
- (v) Peer reviewed Journals
- (vi) Back Volumes of Journals
- (vii) Magazines
- (viii) E- Information Resources
  - CD's /DVD's
  - Databases
  - Online Journals
- (ix) Special collection
  - Competitive Examinations
  - Braille materials/Rare collection
  - AV Materials
- (x) Book Bank

2. Ratio of the library books to the number of students enrolled

### **II. SERVICES**

The library has a key role in supporting the academic activities of the institutions by establishing, maintaining and promoting library and information services, both quantitatively and qualitatively. The library offers a wide range of services from reference to electronic information services. College libraries may answer the following basic questions for ensuring appropriate services to the academic community.

l) Does the library provide the following basic services?

a. Circulation Services  b. Clipping services

c. Bibliographic compilation

d. Information display and notification services

e. Reference/referral services

f. Photocopy and printing services

g. User Orientation/Information Literacy

h. Resource sharing/ILL

i. Internet / digital resources availability

j. Any others

### C. EXTENT OF THE USE OF SERVICES

Performance evaluation of college libraries needs to be carried out at regular intervals in order to sustain and enhance their quality.

Normally, the evaluation can be made on compilation of use statistics. The following parameters would help in assessing the extent of use of library and its services.

1. a) Average number of books issued/returned per day. [       ]

b) Number of reference enquiries (users) on an [       ]  
average per month (percentage may be specified)

c) Number of services delivered per capita per month [       ]

d) Average no. of users who visited/documents consulted [       ]  
per month

### D. BEST PRACTICES FOR COLLEGE LIBRARIES

Listed below are some of the best practices that can enhance the academic information environment and usability.

1. Computerization of library with standard digital software.
2. Inclusion of sufficient information about the library in the college prospectus.
3. Compiling student/teacher attendance statistics and locating the same on the notice board.
4. Displaying newspaper clippings on the notice board periodically.
5. Career/Employment Information/ Services.
6. Internet Facilities to different user groups.
7. Information literacy programs.
8. Suggestion box and timely response.
9. Displaying new arrivals and circulating a list of those to academic departments.
10. Conducting book exhibitions on different occasions.
11. Organizing book talks.
12. Instituting Annual Best User award for students.
13. Organizing competitions annually.
14. Conducting user surveys periodically.

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