Proceeding of 2 Days Training of Trainers (ToT) Workshop at Jammu

A two day workshop on “Training of Trainers (ToT) for handholding HEIs of Jammu & Kashmir” was conducted by the recently created J&K Special Cell of National Assessment and Accreditation Council, Bengaluru in collaboration with Department of Higher Education Govt. of J&K on 10-11 December, 2018 at G.G.M. Science College, Jammu.

The objective of the workshop was to identify the Assessors and to train them to further train the faculty members at their assigned institutions for preparing their institutions for NAAC.

**Day I**
**December 10, 2018**

After the registration of the trainers, the programme began with the inaugural session where Dr Wahidul Hasan, Senior Communication-Cum- Publication Officer, NAAC, formally welcomed all the distinguished guests and introduced everybody to the programme by screening a 15-minute NAAC documentary video elucidating the importance and benefits of NAAC for an educational institution to evaluate its assets, weaknesses and opportunities for innovation in pedagogy and to encourage research for the holistic improvement of the quality of education. The video also shed light of the functioning of NAAC.

In his address, Dr. Hasan mentioned that in the state of Jammu & Kashmir, there are still a number of educational institutions that have not yet applied for NAAC accreditation. He further explained that the participants of the workshop, will act as facilitators and handhold non-accredited institutions in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. These experts who have been associated with NAAC will be assigned various institutions where they will in turn guide these institutions to prepare for NAAC.

Dr. Hasan also informed that these Assessors will be paid honorarium by NAAC for carrying out such duties and the Director Colleges, Department of Higher Education J&K Govt. will be the Nodal Officer. There will be a monthly review meeting which will be held either in Jammu or Bengaluru.

The participants of the training programme were special invitees-handpicked by NAAC – who have been associated in one capacity or another with NAAC in the past.
Prof. Zahoor Ahmad Chatt, Director Colleges, Higher Education Department, J&K Govt. addressed the august gathering and informed that there were still quite a few educational institutions in the state that are still not NAAC accredited and some have not even initiated the process of accreditation. Moreover, only 2 Govt. and 02 Non-Govt., Universities of the state are NAAC accredited. Keeping in view the present scenario he submitted a proposal to NAAC, Bengaluru in the month of October 2018 for the creation of a Special Cell for J&K. The purpose of creating JNK Special cell is to facilitate the entire process of Assessment and Accreditation by the educational institutions. Prof. Chatt emphasised the importance of NAAC accreditation for HEIs for receiving financial assistance for carrying out various activities in the institution and for meeting the benchmark parameters at the national level.

He informed that 41 HEIs have already initiated the process by submitting Institution Information for Quality Assessment (IIQA) out of which 28 colleges have also submitted Self Study Report (SSR) to NAAC and 7 Colleges are even awaiting Peer Team Visit. Prof. Chatt also pointed out that there are few non government HEIs in the state that are performing brilliantly and have received good grades from NAAC consistently. He identified that the main problem that the HEIs in the State faced while applying for NAAC was that there was no proper documentation or record of the various activities carried out by them as NAAC always asks for records of activities carried out by the HEIs over the course of previous five years.

The gathering was then addressed by Prof. Jigar Mohammed, Dean Research Studies, University of Jammu who represented the Vice Chancellor of the University. He highlighted the importance of maintaining quality standards in institutions imparting Higher Education and that NAAC was playing a significant role in ensuring the same. He informed everyone that recently University of Jammu has got A+ Grade once again and consequently received 100 crores as a Special Grant from RUSA. He emphasised that University of Jammu in North India was working very hard to maintain world class standards. The students are qualifying NET & SLET quite regularly. He said that the present age is the age of creation of knowledge and if we don’t create knowledge, it becomes very difficult for us to be in competition.

He further stressed that accreditation is not a onetime process but a continuous process and an institution should always be encouraged to maintain and improve its standard.
The Chief Guest on the occasion was Jenab Khurshid Ahmad Ganai, IAS, Hon’ble Advisor to the Governor. He expressed his gratitude on being invited to the workshop. He emphasized the importance of hard work in all our endeavours. He requested NAAC to help HEIs to secure accreditation and expressed the keenness of the government to get maximum number of HEIs accredited so that the students of the State are benefitted. He informed that an amount of 24 Crores had been earmarked for colleges, to fill the gaps in the infrastructure, out of which 12 Crores had already been released. He also announced that two academic staff colleges had also been approved for the state.

He said that our state is in no way lagging behind as the student-teacher ratio in the state is 17:1, the highest in the country. He stressed that the focus of HEIs must be to produce quality students who can compete at the world stage. He suggested that a mechanism must be devised to acquire some sort of feedback about the teachers from the students so as to ensure the quality of education imparted to them.

Dr. B.S Ponmudiraj, Deputy Adviser, NAAC gave a presentation titled “Revised Accreditation framework – An overview” where he shed light on the new framework of Accreditation and Assessment that had been adopted by NAAC since 2017 wherein 65% weight-age was given to Quantitative metrics and 35% to Qualitative metrics in UG Colleges, 70% and 30% for autonomous Colleges and 75% and 25% for universities. He also responded to various queries raised by the participants and clarified their doubts regarding the new and revised framework.

In the post- lunch session Dr. Wahidul Hasan screened an informative NAAC IIQA video.

The last session of the day was chaired by Prof. Vishnukant Chatpalli, Advisor, NAAC on “Self Study Report and Data Verification and Validation (SSR & DVV) where he gave various instruction and tips for filling up IIQA and SSR. He also highlighted the finer details that must be borne in mind while preparing these reports. He emphasized the right process of Quality Assessment and said that if we are on the right path then speed is not a priority. He also discussed in detail how to constitute the Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) in the colleges.

With the conclusion of this session, Day I of the workshop came to a close.
Day 2

December 11, 2018

The second day of the workshop began with “Group Work on ICT” where the participants were divided into three groups and given hands-on training in the computer laboratory.

This was followed by the Registration of the Assessors where they were acquainted with online self-registration process. They were also briefed about the eligibility criteria and system-generated Peer Team selection. They were also instructed about the preparation of the Peer Team report and how to fill a Score Sheet post assessment.

The various queries of the participants were addressed by the NAAC Team in an Open Forum.

In the post-lunch session, Prof. Z.A Chat, Director Colleges, Department of Higher Education, J&K Govt., expressed his gratitude to the NAAC Team for their dedicated efforts and contribution in the creation of J&K Special Cell, NAAC. He presented the future plan of action for HEIs in the State and impressed upon the need to improve the stature of HEIs and the quality of education imparted in them. He discussed the road ahead and said that the objective of Higher Education sector in the state is to reach the highest level in providing quality education to the students. He said that it was imperative to understand ourselves through NAAC which acts as a mirror and motivates us to reach minimum quality benchmarks.

He reiterated the importance of the role that the trained participants would play in handholding not only the HEIs which are going in for the 1st Cycle of NAAC but also those institutions that have, for one reason or another, failed to go in for subsequent accreditation cycles. The special group of trainers/assessors would be assigned different institutions for handholding. He once again thanked Director, NAAC and his team for their rigorous efforts.

Various suggestions were also given by the participants regarding the strengthening of IQAC, within HEIs; avoiding discrimination in terms of providing financial assistance on the basis of grades; and extending validity of the accreditation by at least two years.

Prof. Vishnukant S. Chatpalli, Advisor, NAAC gave the closing statements where he stressed upon the need for re-skilling and changing the working
methodology in order to be in sync with the changing times. He said that this workshop was the first of its kind to be conducted in India. It was a new initiative taken by NAAC to ensure continuous and comprehensive handholding of HEIs so as to formalise the entire process of assessment and accreditation.

He suggested that the Department of Higher Education Department must identify drop-out institutions - to handle them separately and to identify the various reasons for their dropping out. He laid emphasis on the importance of the role that the College Development Councils of the universities must play in facilitating the affiliated colleges for NAAC accreditation.

The workshop concluded with a Vote of Thanks presented by Dr. Satinder Singh, Nodal Principal, G.G.M. Science College, Jammu where he expressed his gratitude to the NAAC Team, the distinguished participants and especially Prof. Z. A Chatt, Director Colleges, Higher Education Department for his wonderful and significant initiative.

A glimpse of 2 days Training of Trainers (ToT) Workshop at Jammu