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Executive Summary

- All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) was vested with statutory authority through an Act of Parliament in 1987 with the mandate to provide an enabling environment for the growth of technical education in India through planning, formulation and maintenance of norms and standards; quality assurance through accreditation; funding in priority areas; monitoring and evaluation; maintaining parity of certification and awards; and ensuring coordinated and integrated development and management.
- Our analysis below shows that AICTE has been unable to manage multiple functions to the satisfaction of constituents, **and has become virtually synonymous with granting approvals or licenses to a new applicant.** The role of quality assurance of existing institutions through issuing guidelines has taken a back seat.
- Our analysis further reveals that the role and mandate of AICTE overlaps with the jurisdictions of other regulatory mechanisms in the sector resulting in conflict that had to be settled in the Courts. The cases with Bharathidasan University, University Grant Commission (UGC) and Council of Architecture have been highlighted below and point to be noted is that **in all the cases, the verdict has gone against AICTE.** (See enclosed details)
- The above cases bring to the fore that **technical programmes under University systems are not legally bound for approval by AICTE.** Further IITs and IISc are also beyond the purview of AICTE. Thus the focus of AICTE narrows down to regulating only self-financing technical institutions.
- However, the organizational structure and functioning of AICTE is in sync with public institutions, which are budgetarily supported by the State and/or Central Government. There is negligible representation in the council from the self-financing private universities/higher education institutions and the industry. **Hence, the Council is unable to address the issues that are specific to self-financing private technical education providers and the changing needs of the industry.**
- Further, it is the vulnerable students, who have taken the brunt due to uncertainties arising out of the conflict of AICTE with Tamil Nadu Government over Common Entrance Test policies and fight over supremacy of jurisdiction with Council of Architecture. (See enclosed details)



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- **Our analysis below highlights how the enabling Act of AICTE has got converted to a regulating Act**, which constrains the supply of good institutions, excessively regulates existing institutions in the wrong places and is not conducive to innovation or creativity in technical education. **Ambiguity in Government’s policy for regulating the private higher education institutions, leads to delays in permission and other operational difficulties, which deters genuine higher education providers from entering the sector.**
- **A FICCI Survey in 2006 revealed that most private higher education providers are not averse to regulation but are constrained by the uncertainty in the policy framework** for long-term planning and duplication of procedures by various authorities, which leads to loss of time and resources.
- Also the lack of appropriate policies, and “bureaucratic” procedural hurdles deter quality technical educational institutions and universities from abroad to partner with our private higher educational institutions.
- India is perhaps one of the rare examples in the world where, as in the case of AICTE as well as UGC, the regulator and the accrediting agency serve under the same governance structure. **Inadequate quality assurance mechanism showcases Indian technical and higher education in poor light in the global scenario and most countries shy away from granting recognition to most of the Indian awards.**
- Further, it is also most critical to see whether higher education requires being distinguished between technical and non-technical education with separate regulators, contrary to academic logic.
- Therefore taking into consideration the economic and social changes impacting the technical education, present supply-demand and skill mismatch, and analyzing the best practices within the country and abroad, FICCI proposes **overhaul of “regulation”**, its articulation and embodiment through a flexible framework and **replacing it with a quality benchmarking system** that is comparable with the international standards as mentioned below;
 - **Dissolution of AICTE** and setting up a single regulatory authority, independent of Government as recommended by the National Knowledge Commission (NKC), Government of India with its role limited to regulate public and private aided and



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unaided institutions at the initial stages with “**minimum prescriptions**” and “**flexible norms**” at start to evolve into rigor with institutional evolution. Institutions with credible reputation over a period of 5 years should be given the autonomous status.

- Government to **facilitate self-financing higher education institutions to set up campuses without any entry barriers** where the market forces work, as has been in case of Indian School of Business (ISB) Hyderabad or Great Lake Institute of Management, Chennai.
- **Autonomy to all institutions** to decide on setting up of new campus, new programmes, number of programmes, number of students, fees, faculty recruitment, collaboration with international institutions, etc. based on requirement of the industry, market forces and financial considerations of the institutions by making it responsible for delivery of quality education.
- **Government to ensure mandatory disclosure of ranking** and other related information by the technical & higher educational institutions for the benefit of students and parents to make informed choice.
- **Delink the quality assurance mechanism from the regulatory authority and make it independent.** Accreditation process to have direct consequences like relaxation in approval processes for setting up new campuses, starting new programmes, direct empanelment in various government schemes, international collaborations, etc. for attracting genuine technical and higher education providers to invest in the process.
- FICCI proposes two alternative benchmarking mechanisms drawn from the best practices of UK and USA and integrating it with mechanisms adopted by National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) that is acceptable amongst the stakeholders and recognized internationally. The recommended mechanisms are elaborated below in the detailed report. In both the systems there is a **unified accreditation process for the higher and technical education managed by the Universities and the Higher & Technical Educational Institutions themselves through Internal Quality Assurance Cells (IQAC)**. The role of Government is limited to being a facilitator and enabler in the accreditation process.



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The Context

Technical education in India contributes a major share to the overall education system and plays a vital role in the social and economic development of our nation. Responding to growing technical education due to rapid economic growth, the government set up the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) in 1945 and vested AICTE with statutory authority through an Act of Parliament in 1987 with the mandate to provide an enabling environment by carrying out the following functions:

- Planning, formulation and maintenance of norms and standards
- Quality Assurance through Accreditation
- Funding in priority areas
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Maintaining parity of certification and awards
- Ensuring coordinated and integrated development and management of technical education in the country.

Over the last 20 years, since the AICTE Act has been enacted, there have been major changes in the economy impacting the technical education scenario, which has not been taken into cognizance by AICTE and other regulatory bodies. The participation of the private sector in providing technical education has been a major initiative. The non-inclusive organizational structure, non-transparent institutional practices and overlapping guidelines due to multiple regulatory authorities (besides AICTE, there are State level Technical Education Bodies), has made the technical higher education highly **over- regulated but under-governed** resulting into growth of poor quality of institutions churning out “unemployable graduates”. Several concerns about the practices within the AICTE have also been reported and commented upon by the judiciary. It is critical, timely and crucial to take into consideration the economic and social changes for the reforms to be effective.

- Globalization of the world economy and subsequent liberalization of the Indian economy has made India interconnected and interdependent with the global economy. It has also created a demand for technically skilled global knowledge workers. Today, the technical institutions produce about 4 Lakh engineering graduates annually. As per a NASSCOM projection there would be a shortage of 5 Lakhs engineering graduates in IT sector by 2010. To make matters worse, a McKinsey study indicates that the industry finds only



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20%-25% of the graduates to be of employable quality relegating vast masses of educated youth to an unemployed or underemployed status.

- Research and development has gained priority amongst both the Government and the corporates to retain its competitiveness in the global context. However, currently there is a huge shortfall of about 45000 PhDs and 45000 M.Phils as indicated by MHRD's own estimates, whereas our Universities at present have been supplying only 5000 PhD's in science and 800 PhD's in engineering streams. Moreover, the quality of these PhDs also leaves much to be desired. Most of these are earned to gain promotions linked to the criteria laid down by AICTE. The reasons for such shortfalls are many-fold: - delinking of research from academic structure of universities, lack of sufficient funds, minimal interaction with the Industry, lack of career growth opportunities for the research degree holders, etc.
- Since past 2 decades private sector institutions have made significant contributions in imparting technical and higher education in the country to help meet the demand for professional human resources. This is evident by the fact that about 84% of management institutions, 64% of Engineering institutions and 76% of medical colleges are managed by the private sector, out of which, 43% of the institutions and 30% of student enrolment is in private unaided institutions. The enrolment in private education is low, mostly because of restriction by AICTE in granting permission for increasing enrollment numbers. In many cases the low enrollment becomes financially unviable for the private institutions. Also this role of the private sector has not been reflected in having them represented in the regulatory bodies.
- However, the demand from the industry for well-qualified and competent professional human resources has been surpassing the supply as revealed by an industry survey by FICCI for Planning Commission in 2007. There is a severe shortage of **quality professionals** across all engineering streams like mechanical, chemical, mining, electrical, industrial, instrumentation, electronics, IT, civil & structural, textile, etc., impacting the growth of about 20 major sectors.
- A FICCI Survey in 2006 revealed that most private higher education providers are not averse to regulation but are constrained by the uncertainty in the policy framework for long-term planning and duplication of procedures by various authorities, which leads to loss of time and resources.



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- No amount of increase in the public outlay can enable the government to set up institutions to match the demand in terms of quantity and quality without private sector participation. This is validated by the fact, that on recommendation of Planning Commission, MHRD has proposed Public - Private Partnership format for setting up of 20 Indian Institute of Information Technology (IIITs).
- India is perhaps one of the rare examples in the world where, as in the case of AICTE, the regulator and the accrediting agency serve under the same governance structure. Inadequate quality assurance mechanism showcases Indian technical and higher education in poor light in the global scenario and most countries shy away from granting recognition to most of the Indian awards.
- Although, there is great interest from world over to collaborate with Indian Higher Education sector for faculty & student exchange, programmatic and research collaborations, however, lack of appropriate policies, and “bureaucratic” procedural hurdles have not encouraged quality technical educational institutions and universities from abroad to partner with our private sector. In fact many prestigious institutions prefer to deal with institutions in countries like China, rather than deal with Indian administrative machinery.

Issues in the Existing Regulatory Framework

- Multiplicity of bureaucratic regulating authorities and overlapping jurisdictions and activities are the key feature of our existing regulatory framework. The Central, State and Deemed Universities are conferred with the powers to grant Degrees and to regulate affiliated institutions, where applicable. The University Grant Commission (UGC) is responsible for providing funds and coordination, determination and maintenance of standards in the universities. A Supreme Court ruling, on a petition filed by Bharathidasan University against the AICTE, on 24th September 2001 stated that the Section 10(k) of the AICTE Act does not cover a ‘University’ but only a ‘technical institution’, a regulation cannot be framed in such a manner so as to apply the regulation framed in respect of ‘technical institution’ to apply for Universities, when the Act maintains a complete dichotomy between a ‘University’ and a ‘technical institution’. **This means technical programmes under university systems are not legally bound for approval by AICTE.** On the other hand, autonomous



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institutions like **IITs and IISc** are also beyond the purview of AICTE. **Thus, the role of AICTE gets further diluted and ambiguous.** Consequently, an attempt to grab power manifests resulting in clash of interests. That diverts the attention of the academia from its main role.

- Further, AICTE has not only been in conflict with the Universities but has been seen to have a conflicting stand at the Madras High Court with the other regulator, University Grant Commission (UGC), where the judgment went in favour of UGC. In one of its ruling in July 2006, the High Court said that the UGC had "primacy" over the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) in maintaining standards and enforcing regulations in Deemed Universities.
- This further narrows down the focus of AICTE to self-financing technical institutions. Some of the self-financing technical institutions that are affiliated with the universities are subjected to being regulated by the universities as well as the AICTE, **which is duplicatory, besides being time consuming, resource taxing and, many a time, ending up at being cross-purposes to each other.**
- The organizational structure and functioning of AICTE is in sync with public institutions, which are budgetarily supported by the State and/or Central Government. The profile of the Council and its Secretariat is mainly dominated by people drawn from the public institutions with negligible representation from other key stakeholders like the leading private sector technical institutions, autonomous technical institutions, Professional Association Bodies and the Industry. Hence, **the Council is unable to address the issues that are specific to self-financing private technical education providers and the changing needs of the industry.** A self-assessment of AICTE in the form of annual reports that are critical of its functioning should have been published by AICTE. One is not aware of any independent review having been carried out, and widely publicized periodically, for the comments of the academic community. **The AICTE appears as being as closed and non-transparent in its functioning as its insistence on institutions to be open and transparent through mandatory disclosures.**
- The multiple function of AICTE in regulating entry, accreditation, disbursement of public funds, access and license makes the system very confusing and conflicting. Unable to manage multiple functions to the satisfaction of constituents, **AICTE's role has become**



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virtually synonymous with granting approvals or licenses to a new applicant. The role of quality assurance of existing institutions through issuing guidelines has taken a back seat. **There have also been questions raised on the approval given to many non-deserving institutions.** There have also been cases where institutions recognized abroad for excellence have not been recognized by AICTE (*Note: Refer to recent article by Mr.Gurcharan Das in Times of India about the cases of ISB in Hyderabad and SP Jain Institute in Mumbai*)

- **AICTE is not vested with powers to seal a non-performing or a non-complaint institution.** This is vested in the State Governments. It would appear incongruous for a Body to have “ Approval powers” without “Closure powers”. **As per Section 10 (k), AICTE can grant approval for starting new technical institutions and for introduction of new courses or programmes in consultation with the agencies concerned and as per Section 10 (q) withhold or discontinue grants in respect of courses, programmes to such technical institutions which fail to comply with the directions given by the Council within the stipulated period of time and take such other steps as may be necessary for ensuring compliance of the directions of the Council to approve technical programmes.** It can only advise the State government to seal the institution, which may not be complied by the State Government, as often it has come to be observed. And since, constitutionally the “Closure power” remains with the States, it would only be proper for States to be approvers under an enabling Act.
- **AICTE has been in conflict with State Governments like Tamil Nadu on their Common Entrance Test policies** and has been entangled in a legal fight over the issue of providing equity. In this whole battle students are the ones who have been suffering due to the uncertainties arising out of such scenario.
- **Its long drawn battle with the Council of Architecture on supremacy of jurisdiction was finally ruled in favour of the professional body,** albeit at exacting cost to the student body. As per judgement, dated September 8, 2004, of High Court of Judicature at Bombay in the case of Shri P.S.M Boarding House’s College of Architecture, Kolhapur & ors. V/s State of Maharashtra and ors. in Writ Petition No. 5942 of 2004, the Council of Architecture is the final authority for the purpose of fixing norms and standards for architectural institutions. As per judgement, dated September 8, 2004, of High Court of Judicature at Bombay in the case of Shri P.S.M Boarding House’s College of Architecture,



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Kolhapur & ors. V/s State of Maharashtra and ors. in Writ Petition No. 5942 of 2004, the Council of Architecture is the final authority for the purpose of fixing norms and standards for architectural institutions. As per a further judgement, dated July 12, 2005, of the High Court at Delhi in the case of Ms Sharmishtha S.Das V/s Union of India and ors. In Writ Petition No. 2669 of 2005, the Council of Architecture (Minimum Standards of Architectural Education) Regulations, 1983 shall govern the eligibility for admission to Architecture Courses.

- **The enabling Act of AICTE has got converted to a regulating Act**, which constrains the supply of good institutions, excessively regulates existing institutions in the wrong places and is not conducive to innovation or creativity in higher and technical education. Some major issues are listed below:
 - **Entry norms are restrictive** and relate only to the supply side i.e. infrastructure, faculty and fees with little consideration to the quality of the output. The whole exercise of approval is based on only the infrastructure requirement with virtually no importance to the quality of the product that is being produced by the college concerned. The initial application requires a plethora of annexures as evidence of physical norms being satisfied. This application is first screened, even before AICTE proceeds with the examination of academic merit in the received proposals. **On the other hand UGC presents a model where the academic merit takes precedence over the physical infrastructure.**
 - The definition of “Technical”, understood universally as knowledge adapted out of Basic Sciences is questionable. It stretches imagination to cohabit “management”, “hospitality”, “arts & crafts” with engineering and technology, pharmacy, etc.
 - The norms set by AICTE are straightjacketed and have little consideration to the requirements of programs as per the envisioned process and the treatments of the provider.
 - **The minimum land requirements and mandating of built-up area does not take into account that land is principally a “State” subject**, that all States do not have ‘institutional land zoning’ policy and there are variations in Building Bye-laws, such that it is possible to provide more built up area on lesser plot sizes than asked for by AICTE.



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Also physical norms vary from urban to semi urban & rural and do not match ground reality in terms of cost.

- Ambiguity in Government's policy for regulating the private higher education institutions, leads to delays in permission and other operational difficulties, which deters genuine higher education providers from entering the sector. This has resulted in discrepancies and differential treatment accorded to start-up new institutions. For instance, requirement of 25 acres of land for campuses has made impossible for most institutions to start operations in large cities. However, at the same time there are some Universities who have been granted permission to operate in just a few rooms. There is no forum or mechanism to scrutinize the functioning of AICTE. This has resulted in institutions going to the courts and the accountability of AICTE is in question. There is no level playing field.
- Routine annual inspections of ongoing courses is followed by approval for which the institution concerned is required to pay an amount of Rs. 40,000/- for each course. This in turn is a big financial strain on the Institutions. The UGC, on the other hand, reviews approved colleges once in five years.
- The physical norms, mandated at start, per force lead to massive capital outlays, which automatically creates ground for wealthy entities only to become providers and to run education as business, whereas genuine academics are excluded from being providers, since such capital investment is beyond their reach.
- Common format for approval of new institutions, new courses, additional courses and increase in intake of students restricts any kind of innovation.
- There is no mechanism to differentiate between a performing and non-performing institution as both categories of institutions have to endure long drawn bureaucratic procedures for granting of autonomous status, starting campus outside the state and country and fixing of fees which impacts the entire planning process. This also demotivates the performing institutions. This is also likely to encourage unethical practices to expedite the approvals.
- There have also been instances of AICTE interpreting its own rules arbitrarily. For example, a reputed engineering college was threatened with 'de-recognition' until and unless it stopped running programmes dealing with fundamental sciences like MSc in Physics/Electronics/Chemistry/Mathematics, etc., since these courses do not come



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under the purview of AICTE. **It is strange that AICTE does not permit conduct of courses dealing with fundamental sciences, which are so essential to advancement of technological knowledge. At the most they could have referred these to the UGC for necessary approvals. Further, it amounts to curtailing the educational vision of any providing institution.**

- Faculty remains under utilised as AICTE norms specify course specific faculty with no concern for pedagogic treatment and its effects on teachers. The subject concerned may require less number of hours of duty than the specified number of teaching days in a year. If the institution utilises the faculty for teaching other relevant subject, AICTE norms will not accept the faculty in achieving the student faculty ratio of 1:15 for the additional subject. **Moreover, rigid AICTE norms inhibit optimal utilisation of resources that are already scarce. Academic flexibility seems to be ignored and not encouraged.**
- **There are no guidelines for granting permissions for Joint Degrees by Indian and Foreign Universities** and requests are declined without any logical explanations, e.g: tie-up between S P Jain Management Institute & Research, Mumbai and Massachusetts Institute of Technology was not accepted. Putting entry and collaboration barriers for foreign institutions is further stagnating the technical education in the country. If the AICTE's powers, as ruled by the Supreme Court, do not cover Universities, it is inconceivable that it has powers over Foreign Universities. Also a foreign tie-up with an already established and well-accredited institution is treated as a separate set up.
- The well-known and reputed Indian School of Business in Hyderabad (recently ranked as one of the top institutions in the world) is also not recognized by AICTE, although it is fully supported by the State Government with provision of ample land at nil cost.
- Cumbersome processes result in delays to start market driven, job-oriented courses, update and develop curriculum from industry perspective
- **The secretariat's human resources are people without the experience of running private institutions on own funding; are untrained and pedagogically unqualified; lack the maturity to "appraise" the body of people who are proposing, rather than the "application" proposed; are rule-bound rather than purpose-led; and the average age of senior staff or the length of their professional experience is**



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insufficient and unmatched with the talents required to administering regulation of education.

- The AICTE has no well-informed public process of arriving at policy formulation; its bodies are not representatively constituted and its leadership in recent years has been visionless; indeed, visionaries have had little support from the system, if appointed. This is perhaps the first time, in decades that a Parliamentary committee for MHRD is looking into the functioning of AICTE.

Recommendations by FICCI

With Government focus on education as the priority sector in the XI Five Year Plan, address the quality issues in higher education and a commitment to raise the Gross Enrollment in Higher Education from 10% to 15% by 2010, the role of private sector has become all the more crucial. However, in view of the above scenario, Indian Technical Education need to be freed from the existing “**license raj**”, if it has to excel and compete globally. FICCI suggests **overhaul of “regulation”, its articulation and embodiment through a flexible framework and replacing it with a quality benchmarking system that is comparable with the international standards** as mentioned below:

- Government focus should be to prepare for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence in higher educational institutions, ensuring access & equity and promoting and facilitating student achievements through student loans, scholarships etc.
- The higher education sector should be opened up with an enabling environment for all kinds of higher and technical institutions to flourish. **AICTE should be dissolved and a single regulatory authority, independent of Government, as recommended by the National Knowledge Commission (NKC), Government of India should be set up with its role limited to regulating public and private, aided and unaided, institutions at the initial stages with minimum prescriptions and flexible norms at start to evolve into rigor with institutional evolution.** Institutions with credible reputation over a period of 5 years should be given “autonomous” status.



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- **Government should facilitate self-financing institutions** to set up institutions without any entry barriers where the market forces work, as has been in case of Indian School of Business (ISB) Hyderabad or Great Lake Institute of Management, Chennai.
- However, the government must make it **mandatory for all higher and technical institutions to disclose their ranking** for knowledge of all on the website and all promotional literature to help students make an informed choice. This will ensure growth of quality institutions and the fly by night operators will perish.
- **Autonomy to all institutions** should be granted to decide on setting up of new campus, new programmes, number of programmes, number of students, fees, faculty recruitment, etc., based on requirements of the industry, market forces and financial considerations of the institutions by making it responsible for delivery of quality education. **The regulatory authority should be responsible for:**
 - Allocation of funds for research, scholarships, etc., based on performance of both public and private sector institutions, thus instilling healthy inter-sector competition between the institutions.
 - Non-performing institutions should be given a period of 5 years to come up to the minimum prescribed level or face closure
 - Budgetary allocation to the institutions should be performance-based instead of traditional incremental budgeting.
- **The quality assurance mechanism should be delinked from the regulatory authority and made independent.** Accreditation process should have direct consequences like relaxation in approval processes for setting up new campuses, starting new programmes, direct empanelment in various government schemes, etc., for attracting genuine technical and higher education providers to invest in the process.
- National Board of Accreditation (NBA) under the governance of AICTE accredits only technical programmes, which in turn does not ensure the quality of the entire institution. Whereas, the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) is an autonomous body of UGC with a quality benchmarking process that is holistic and integrated with periodic assessment and accreditation of institutions of higher education or units thereof, and not specific academic programmes or projects. The NAAC process, unlike NBA,



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collaborates with stakeholders of higher education for quality evaluation, promotion and sustenance.

- Since April 2007, NAAC has adopted a new methodology of assessment and accreditation, which has been designed to significantly reduce inter-team assessment variations and also to conduct the assessment of large number of institutions effectively in a short period of time. Considering the wide variations in quality levels of affiliated/ Constituent Colleges and their large numbers in the country, the Assessment Instrument has been redesigned to provide a two-step approach for such institutions. The Assessment Instrument has also been fine-tuned for greater objectivity and validity.
- Here once again we find duplication of roles in the accreditation process between NAAC and NBA. **Quality benchmarking of Technical Education is no different from other Higher Education streams, neither is it segregated in any other country.** Since NAAC, which has a holistic, integrated and participative approach, is recognized by international benchmarking mechanisms like INQAAHE (International Network of Quality Assurance Agency in Higher Education) and is acceptable to the technical institutions in the country, it negates the requirement for NBA to benchmark technical education specifically.
- **Self-regulation mechanism should be integrated in the system** through setting up of an Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) within an institution making it mandatory for all education providers to do it. It should comprise of a Chief Executive, senior academicians and officers of the institution working together as a steering group. **Initiatives like FICCI-Higher Education Network should be supported by the Government to promote self-regulation in the sector through the prescribed Code of Conduct and Disclosure Norms formalized and adapted by the members themselves.**
- FICCI proposes two alternative benchmarking mechanisms below drawing from the best practices of UK and USA and integrating it with our own mechanisms that are acceptable to the stakeholders:
 1. **Accreditation Mechanism Adapting the US Model:**
 - There should be no governmental body to supervise higher education institutions or accrediting bodies



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- Accreditation should be governed by commonly developed and accepted “standards of good practice”, and not by law.
- Provision for Umbrella Body/Bodies to review accreditation bodies/councils for respective sectors. NAAC could be one such Body after being delinked from UGC. Use of professional bodies like the Academies of Science, Engineering, Management, etc. could be considered. Provision for Universities and Industry to set up a non-governmental Body for the purpose should be made. The Umbrella Body/Bodies would
 - define standards for the approval of accreditation councils/associations, and recognizes accrediting associations that meet the criteria.
 - would not “accredit” or “recognize” institutions, but should be made responsible for recommending to the Government for the disbursement of funds to the Institutions based on inputs of accrediting councils/associations.
 - be funded by the Central and State Governments in case of NAAC and subscription from education providers—public and private in case of Non – Governmental Body
- Fully autonomous, sector-specific accreditation councils / association should be established with adequate representation from all stakeholders and funded by the universities and industry. Existing professional bodies could be empowered to take up this role.
- Each accreditation council / association should evolve its own comparable norms and standards and define strategies to complete the process within a stipulated time frame. These norms should be available on the web. Overlapping situation should be assessed by joint mechanism.
- Each accrediting council/ association may have representatives from leading Indian and foreign universities to carry out the accreditation process within the prescribed norms. The process would involve;
 - Self Assessment according to the standards of the accrediting organization
 - Peer review of the self-assessment by a team consisting of practicing educators and administrators at other higher education institutions.
 - Site visit based on self assessment
 - Review of the team’s recommendations and follow up



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- Accreditation organization's decision
- Ongoing review based on the accrediting organization's timeline for accreditation review
- Accreditation would be granted for a specific period of time, and must be renewed, usually every 5 -10 years as specified by the accrediting council.
- Accreditation reviews to be carried out by review teams comprising instructors and administrators from accredited institutions.
- "Program", "Professional", or "Specialized" accreditation should be available for specific programs of study within and institutions. An institution that is "accredited" might offer several "accredited programs"

2. Accreditation Mechanism Adapting the UK Model:

- Independent Quality Assurance Agency funded by the Central and State Governments and subscription from education providers—public and private to be set up for review of standards and quality and provide reference points that would help to define clear and explicit standards. NAAC could be empowered for such purpose after being delinked from UGC.
- Each university and college of higher education would be responsible for ensuring that appropriate standards are being achieved and quality education is being offered through institutional audit process.
- Quality Assurance Mechanism would be based on "**institutional**" review along with "**subject**" review and "**research**" review.
- The review team would consist of qualified professionals from the sector. They should be members of a professional body in their area and should be active academicians with teaching and research experience for at least 5 years. A panel of such professionals could be periodically published on the agencies website.
- Focus would be on having systems, which check effectiveness of structures and overall enhancement.
- Evaluation of academic Infrastructure could be done on the following elements as done in the UK:
 - Set of **Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)** would promote a clear understanding of the achievements and attributes represented



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by the main qualification titles, such as bachelor's degree with honours, or master's degree.

- **Subject benchmark statements** would set out expectations about the standards of Degrees in a range of subject areas
- **Programme Specifications** would be the sets of information that each institution would provide about its programmes
- **The Code of Practice** for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher and technical education would be a guideline on good practice for universities and colleges, relating to the management of academic standards and quality. It would have 10 sections:
 - Postgraduate research programmes
 - Collaborative provision and flexible and distributed learning (including e-learning)
 - Students with disabilities
 - External examining
 - Academic appeals and student complaints on academic matters
 - Assessment of students.
 - Programme approval, monitoring and review.
 - Career education, information and guidance
 - Placement learning
 - Recruitment and admissions
- Assessment would be based on grading system, which would make it flexible and responsive to change, and which in turn would build confidence amongst the institutions.



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About Us

FICCI is the rallying point for free enterprises in India. It has empowered Indian businesses, in the changing times, to shore up their competitiveness and enhance their global reach. With a nationwide membership of over 1500 corporates and over 500 chambers of commerce and business associations, FICCI espouses the shared vision of Indian businesses and speaks directly and indirectly for over 2,50,000 business units. It has an expanding direct membership of enterprises drawn from large, medium, small and tiny segments of manufacturing, distributive trade and services. FICCI maintains the lead as the proactive business solution provider through research, interactions at the highest political level and global networking.