



National Agriculture Education Accreditation Council



GUIDELINES
FOR
PROGRAM EVALUATORS

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Introduction

National Agriculture Education Accreditation Council (NAEAC) is mandated to carry out a comprehensive program of accreditation of agriculture degree programs and established under Higher Education Commission Notification No. 1-4/AGR/QAA/2006-07, dated 11 February, 2006. The implementation of the program required a set of Procedural Guidelines, Criteria, Forms, Templates and Manuals etc, most of these have already been designed and cleared by Council Members in the second meeting of NAEAC held on March 31, 2008. Similarly, a roster of subject Experts/Program Evaluators has been developed on the basis of the nominations received from the Vice Chancellors of agriculture universities along with a panel of experts from outside the system.

Accreditation is a mandatory process for all relevant academic programs offered by public and private sector institutions. The purpose of such accreditation is to enhance recognition of the institution in the agriculture community and prospective students/employers. All institutions in Pakistan which provide a recognized agriculture degree are required to apply to the Council to have such degree program accredited. NAEAC is responsible for the accreditation of educational programs leading to degree in the agriculture disciplines. All agriculture degree programs (except veterinary sciences) comprising about fifteen (15) disciplines of agriculture fall under the purview of NAEAC. Additional emerging disciplines and degree programs pertaining to agriculture education may be added in the future as and when necessary.

As per TORs of NAEAC, The Council is committed to prepare guidelines and procedures for the Program Evaluators to ensure effective assessment of degree programs. Therefore, NAEAC Secretariat has developed these guidelines to facilitate the Program Evaluators/ Experts. The guidelines cover a variety of aspects including role and responsibilities of the AIC Convener, members of AIC and coordinators of this exercise.

Significance of interaction with Head of Institution (HOI), faculty, students and others has also been spelled out. The Guidelines also embody a few tips for on-site visit phase and pre-visit phase as well as code of conduct and report writing.

It is hoped that these guidelines shall provide to the program evaluators an understanding of the Accreditation Process as well as useful tips for the effective and efficient conduct of assessment exercise.

2. Features of Program Assessment and Accreditation

The process of external assessment is expected to help institutions/degree programs to carry out their SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis which will enable them discern how to make their programs more useful to both the students and their potential employers. It is expected to act as an instrument to raise the quality of the educational provisions of the Higher Educational Institutions (HEI's) and to help them use their physical and instructional infrastructure optimally and professionally. The primary role

in the assessment and accreditation process lies with the individual institution/degree program itself.

Though there are various stages in the process of assessment and accreditation, the process of (a) self-assessment and (b) validation by external AIC are the two important common elements of the procedures adopted by the various Quality Assurance Agencies (QAA's) across the world.

a) Self-assessment:

The self-assessment process, which is the first step emphasizes on 'building for the future' through a review of the institutional/degree program performance, based on an understanding of its existing strengths and weaknesses. While preparing for self-assessment, the academic program needs to fulfill the following three essential requirements:

- i) The self-assessment process needs to be collaborative and participative. In this process the institution involves all its employees (academic and administrative), as well as students, parents, community representatives and other stakeholders.
- ii) The process should be authentic in analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of the institution. It is not an exercise, however efficient, in creating a document just to satisfy the visiting external evaluation team.
- iii) The process should be able to rejuvenate the institution/program and inculcate a passion amongst all concerned, for an effective understanding of its identity with reference to its claims for quality work and excellence.

The efforts to prepare its self-assessment report will be an intensive but self-rewarding exercise. The form of presentation and the data provided in these reports are crucial both to the program and the QAA. Every QAA requires the institution to submit such self-assessment information prior to the assessment processes. Thus, the term Self-study Report (SSR) is the product of the self-analysis processes the program has gone through and it is the basic document for the assessment of the degree programs by the Program Evaluators.

b) Validation by External Program Evaluators:

On receipt of the SSR/institutional information, the National Agriculture Education Accreditation Council (NAEAC) undertakes an in-house analysis of the report for its completeness and eligibility. For the eligible discipline, AIC visits are organized. Depending on the size, the institutional onsite visit varies from two to three days. The on-site visit will normally result in a detailed AIC report, highlighting the strengths and areas of concern of the degree awarding programs. The draft report of the AIC will be shared with the institution to ensure accuracy of institutional data/information, either by the end of the on-site visit or a few days later, on receipt of the consent of the institution. It is processed by the NAEAC Secretariat for institutional/degree program grading/rating and for the

consequent disclosure of the report and the outcome to the public. The validity period of the assessment outcome is for a maximum period of five years.

c) Quality Assessment

- Quality assurance activities at program level are undertaken on a cyclical basis.
- Stakeholders participation is ensured.
- Formal procedures are in place to ensure reviewers have no conflict of interest.
- Assessment would include;
 1. Program Self-assessment.
 2. External assessment including SWOT and actionable recommendations.
 3. Publication of a report, including criterion-wise analysis, SWOT analysis and actionable recommendations.
 4. A follow-up procedure to review actions taken in light of recommendations made.

3. Principles for Effective Assessment

The following principles may help Evaluators/Experts to make assessment an effective process, enable the institution to repose confidence in the AIC and to ensure unreserved acceptance of the outcome of assessment by the external evaluators.

i) Objectivity

Objectivity is crucial for fair assessment. Where Assessment is expected to be totally fact-oriented. Logical reasoning, fairness, genuineness and an in-depth understanding of degree program characterize objective assessment.

ii) Transparency

Transparency is the outcome of honest and forthright probing, resulting in a clear statement of the judgment. For example, an overwhelming praise of performance or an outright and hasty condemnation of the practices of the institution, without justification, tarnishes transparency.

iii) Reliability

This relates to almost every aspect of assessment in relation to both, the processes and the personnel. Evaluators should realize the importance of basing their interpretations, procedures and judgment on reliability, so as to reflect true validation of the information submitted by the institution and gathered during the visit and interactions with various stakeholders.

iv) Credibility

Credibility is the most important principle of quality assessment. Both, self-study and peer-assessment demand internal and external credibility. Trust strengthens the process of assessment through involved and sincere interaction, empathetic listening, confidence building activities and honest and unbiased assessment. This is essential for the successful interactions during the on-site visit and adds value to the observations recorded.

v) Support

A positive assessment approach encourages, enables and facilitates Program development. Short-comings are identified in order to facilitate the institution to improve its programs. Supportive assessment leads to progressive improvement of quality of education.

vi) Adaptability

While good assessment is rigorous, it should not be too rigid. Perception of diverse needs arising from specific contexts demands creative adaptation of the processes of assessment. Great deal of adaptability on the part of the Program Evaluators is called for, to complete the assessment procedures and institutions program visit in a befitting manner.

vii) Communication

Both the process and the outcome of assessment heavily rely on sound communication. Interactions between the evaluator and the various constituents of the academic programs largely depend on an effective verbal communication. Sharing of the outcome of assessment with different individuals and bodies also demands effective written communication.

viii) Teamwork

Teamwork is a modern management concept. Without belittling the central control and co-ordination by a leader, it enhances the importance of every member of the AIC. It helps the execution of tasks assigned with the enrichment and creativity of collective thinking and acting.

ix) Acceptability

Acceptability is public approval of a person. A person may be acceptable for several reasons such as reputation, achievement, geniality or charisma, the quality which easily attracts many. The acceptability of a reviewer does not depend so much on these as on the confidence he or she generates in the minds of the people of the host institution.

4. Attributes of Program Evaluators

Quality assessment is a verification tool that enables the Program Evaluators to identify the strengths and weaknesses (existing and potential) and avenues for improvement in the Program under assessment. For an effective assessment the Evaluator needs to:

- i) Commit full time attention to the evaluation process
- ii) Provide expertise as and when required for facilitating the smooth execution of the Process
- iii) Obtain and evaluate the objective evidence fairly and frankly
- iv) Constantly and consistently evaluate the observations and interactions made by self and the AIC during the exercise
- v) Arrive at generally acceptable conclusions based on the observations and findings during the visit
- vi) Remain true to the conclusion jointly arrived at and reach a consensus despite pressure to change or for fear or favor

In addition, the Program Evaluator has to work independently with little or no direction, communicate with people, probably whom they are meeting for the first time, and work in an unfamiliar environment.

5. Role and Responsibilities of Accreditation Inspection Committee (AIC)

External evaluation and accreditation is a team exercise and many individuals contribute to its success. Roles and responsibilities of members of the assessment team, therefore, determine how befittingly the “fitness for purpose” has been achieved through the process of external evaluation.

5.1. Role and Responsibilities of the AIC Convener

Convener is vested with the authority to monitor the AIC; hence his or her role becomes most important. Unless and until, however, one succeeds in getting the full co-operation of all the members with persuasion and goodwill, the task cannot be accomplished. An effective convener is an admirable blend of firmness and sympathy, cohesion and reserve, a task master. He or she effectively manages the human resource entrusted to his or her care to make assessment reliable and objective. Often an effective convener of AIC is found to have:

- a profile that evokes attention and commands respect - an asset to the authority of leadership;
- Just and impartial judgment;
- A blend of understanding and dignity;

- Effective communication which is clear and purpose oriented; and
- An inclusive attitude which manifests, among other things, sympathy for weaknesses and failures.

The convener is ultimately responsible for all phases of the institutional/degree program assessment and onsite visit. She/he should have management capabilities and experience and enjoys authority to make final decisions regarding the conduct of the other members of the AIC. Therefore, the convener's responsibilities also cover:

- Finalization of the schedule of visit in consultation with the NAEAC/host Institution and the AIC members.
- Planning and organization of the process of assessment during the visit to the Institution.
- Representing the AIC/Assessment team with the institution's management and other stakeholders, during the visit and scheduled interactions and while sharing the report with the institution.
- Assigning responsibilities to, and accomplishing discharge of them from, all the members of the AIC.
- Monitoring group dynamics in order to facilitate free interaction, transparent discussion, time management and adherence to procedures of interaction according to a pre-set agenda followed by faithful recording of outcomes.
- Monitoring the involvement of all members in the writing of the report.
- Conscious and consistent effort to minimize or eliminate inter-team variance.
- Arriving at a consensus in recording the judgment of the assessment outcome.
- Maintaining checklists at every stage to ensure control of quality in making the assessment exercise effective.
- Maintaining discretion in public behaviour; and in the disclosure of the results of the assessment at the institution in the interest of ensuring the team's credibility and decorum.
- Desisting from any activity that may cast a slur on the person or on the NAEAC for whom he or she holds the assignment.

5.2. Role and Responsibilities of AIC Members

Members of the AIC, being academicians and educational administrators with considerable experience have the potential necessary to perform the AIC task. As the exercise needs to be performed with utmost care and effectiveness, much care has been taken in developing a roster of Program Evaluators. The Accreditation Committee members will generally have:

- Readiness to acknowledge and accept constituted authority.
- Cohesive attitudes to enhance AIC performance.
- Willingness to work hard.
- Integrity and transparency.
- Willingness to accept suggestions and judgment which he or she perceives to be better than his or her own, in the interest of promoting collective effort.
- Readiness to contribute to AIC consultations or interactions.

AIC Members are responsible for:

- Complying with applicable visit/assessment requirements of the NAEAC.
- Planning and carrying out assigned responsibilities effectively and efficiently both as part of pre-visit exercise and during on-site visit.
- Processing data within the framework of the NAEAC criteria.
- Verifying and validating the effectiveness of the claims made by the institution.
- Maintaining careful notes on all activities performed by him or her during the visit: interactions with groups, visits to units, chance observations, discovery of new information helpful for finding out quality provisions, verification of documents, etc.
- Playing the AIC maintenance role of integrating with other members, facilitating group dynamics; contributing the best of one in ideas and skills.
- Playing the task-maintenance role by gathering new information to reinforce judgments, and by sharing work.
- Contributing to writing the report.
- Cooperating with and supporting the convener of the AIC.
- Desisting from any activity, official or personal, that may bring the AIC or the NAEAC into disrepute.

5.3. Role and Responsibilities of the NAEAC Coordinator

The Coordinator of the evaluation AIC is generally an official of the NAEAC and may or may not actively participate in the process of assessment. He plays a catalytic role to safeguard the NAEAC interests besides facilitating the effectiveness of the assessment. Naturally, he besides the professional competency, possesses skills in public relations, communication and knowledge of NAEAC rules and procedures and of team-work.

The Coordinator's responsibilities in general are:

- Preparing for the visit, in coordination with all the three agencies NAEAC, AIC and the host institution.
- Fixing mutually convenient dates for the visit.

- Discussing visit schedules with the Program Coordinator and the Head of the host institution.
- Arranging with a representative of the institution to act as an Program Coordinator who will assist the AIC.
- Acquiring background information of the institution.
- Intervening in times of difficulty caused by breakdown in communication.
- Monitoring the communication network from start to finish.
- Offering administrative and academic support to the AIC.
- Ensuring compliance with all formalities and procedures regarding the administrative and academic aspects.
- Carrying out tasks and duties assigned by NAEAC during the visit and also post visit formalities.
- Doing such other assignments as occasion demands.

5.4. Role and Responsibilities of Host Institution Program Coordinator

- Institute may nominate a faculty member, preferably the coordinator of the program team who prepared self-study report.
- The host institution/Program Coordinator should have sufficient knowledge of the degree programs, enjoying goodwill among the faculty and students and have access to institutional data.
- The program coordinator in consultation with NAEAC coordinator shall select place of stay of AIC and make logistic arrangements.
- He shall be responsible for allocating one room in the department along with computer and a secretary for noting and drafting by AIC.
- He shall finalize the schedule of visit and detailed itinerary mutually agreed by him and the NAEAC Coordinator.
- Orient the department on the purpose and activities of AIC visit.
- He shall conduct the whole visit and participate in the opening and exit meetings.
- He shall ensure that schedule of visit is strictly adhered to and unavoidable change, if any should be immediately communicated to all concerned.

6. Shared Responsibility in the Conduct of Professional Accreditation Review

6.1. Institutions and Programs are Responsible For:

- Providing clear, accurate and complete information for an accrediting review.

- Emphasizing the importance of having key faculty and administrators appropriately involved and informed about the accrediting review.
- Information accrediting organizations of the desired purpose and expected results of the review in relation to institutional and program purpose and strategic direction.
- Providing constructive information in a timely manner to accrediting organizations if there are concerns or difficulties that emerge during the accrediting review.
- Understanding the standards, policies, and procedures of the accrediting organizations with which institutions and programs are working.

6.2. Accreditation Council is Responsible For:

- Ensuring that the accreditation team is well-informed and prepared for the review.
- Ensuring that standards, policies, and procedures are consistently applied.
- Pursuing only those data and information that are essential to judging whether accreditation standards are met.
- Focusing on financial and other resources only to the extent that they affect compliance with accreditation standards.
- Respecting the relationship of individual program needs to broader institutional objectives.
- Keeping institutional executives appropriately informed at all stages of the review process.
- Communicating consistent information at all stages of the review.
- Providing opportunities for objective review and resolution of differences if they arise during the accreditation process.

6.3. Both are Responsible For:

- Providing for candid and useful evaluation of the accreditation review.
- Ensuring open exchange if issues and concerns are identified by institutions, programs and accreditors.
- Ensuring flexibility, openness and cooperation in considering experimental and creative variations of accreditation review.
- Ensuring that resources are used efficiently through consistent monitoring of the costs of accreditation review (whether resulting from institutional decisions about self-study or accreditors decisions about reports, visits and presentations) in order that costs incurred are essential to a determination that standards are met.

7. Interactions of Accreditation Inspection Committee (AIC) members

Interactions are expected to elicit on-the-spot feedback from stakeholder group of the institution/Program for the purpose of matching performance with expectations. These interactions are either with groups or with individuals. No formal questionnaire and structured interviews are required. Free, frank and informal exchange of views and discussions are essential to validate the SAR and to scrutinize human, financial and physical resources and their use to improve the quality of teaching-learning process.

7.1. Important Pre-requisites for Effective Interactions

Following are nine most important pre-requisites for effective interaction.

- Careful listening to the responses.
- Eliminating external distractions.
- Steering clear of emotional responses.
- Avoiding selective perceptions.
- Clarity of language.
- Monitoring feedback.
- Appropriate responses to speeches.
- Task maintenance skills.
- Interpreting body language.

7.2. Interaction with Head of the Institution

This will deal with:

- Operational strategies adopted to translate the institutional/program goals/objectives.
- Curricular transaction providing for high quality learning experiences for students through the use of modern technology.
- Optimal stakeholder satisfaction; inputs for placement counseling and services and academic counseling.
- Management of teaching-learning programs.
- Conduct of assessment of student work.
- Tangible gains from effective leadership roles.
- Any other academic, pedagogic and administrative issues.

7.3. Interaction with Faculty

The Program Evaluators will discuss with the faculty:

- Management of curricular and evaluation processes
- Innovation in pedagogy
- Research done by both faculty and students
- Student assessment of teachers performance
- Individual professional development
- Discussions with the faculty regarding faculty development program, incentives, job satisfaction and career development

7.4. Interaction with Students

This aims at acquiring first-hand information on:

- Reasons for choosing the institution and the program of study
- Curricular content and flexibility; its effectiveness in meeting their needs and aspirations
- Self-learning opportunities and guidance
- Assessment procedures and instruments
- Personal, academic and professional counseling
- Use of modern technology to acquire learning experiences
- Support systems and welfare programs
- On-the-job internship training
- Teacher performance appraisal by students
- Enhancement of competencies to meet global demands
- Extension work and leadership training
- Matters of real concern to students.

7.5. Interaction with Parents and Alumni

This encompasses the followings:

- Delivery systems
- Their involvement in the educational programs and arrangements
- Communication on learner-progression
- Placement, communication, counseling, care
- Discipline and behavioral education
- Contribution to the development of the institution/degree program.

7.6. Interaction with Employers

- Reason for induction of institutions graduates
- Motivation and dedication towards job
- Leadership qualities
- Problem-solving capabilities
- Inter-personnel skills
- Teamwork spirit
- Communication and presentation skills
- Working knowledge of computer
- Attitude and behavior
- Punctuality and discipline

7.7. Interaction with Non-Teaching Staff

This entails an exchange of views on the followings

- Work ethics; security of service, welfare and motivation
- Management involvement in support staff training and development
- Relationship with students in daily transactions.

8. Effective Questioning

GOOD REVIEWER???

- You may be a very good expert in your (specialized) area,
But
- It does NOT necessarily mean that

You're a GOOD EVALUATOR!

Reviewing is a SKILL which you should gain by practicing!

Questioning Skills

- In order to become a GOOD EVALUATOR as well as a Good Teacher
You should master the QUESTIONING SKILLS!

Questioning – A vital tool of Human Thoughts and Social Interactions

- Open Doors to
 - ☞ Data
 - ☞ Information
 - ☞ Knowledge
 - ☞ Wisdom

8.1. Types of Questions

CLOSED QUESTIONS

- Useful when you want
 - ☞ a Yes or No answer
 - ☞ very specific information
 - ☞ to establish an agreement
 - ☞ to check something before going any further
- NOT helpful when you want your colleagues/ students to talk about themselves and their experiences
- If you start with a series of CLOSED Questions, your respondent might assume that you will do all the thinking and talking
- Once you have welcomed others and explained the objectives of the discussion, ask an open inviting Question as soon as possible

8.2. Open Questions

- Can be answered in different ways
- Encourage your colleague/student to:
 - Clarify their thinking (When you say ...; What do you mean by ...)
 - Look at the assumptions they are making (Why might someone say that...; What would be the reason for her doing that...)
 - Look for the evidence behind the judgments (What is the basis for saying that...)
 - Consider other viewpoints or perspectives (How is what you said is different from your student said... How do you think your teacher would have described...)

8.3. Architecture of a Question

DONT ASK!

- Multiple Questions

How are you doing at the institute? Is your program going as you expected? And, are you getting on OK with your teachers?

- Your respondent will wonder what to answer first
- Questions with Forced Choices

When that happened, was it because the course was difficult, or because students didn't attend the classes?

- You are not allowing your respondent to present his version

DONT ASK!

- Leading Questions

The reason for many students failing the exam was because you don't have good laboratory facilities, isn't it?

- You are telling the answer you expect and you want him to agree with you.
- Questions to which you already know the answers.
- Respondent will sense that you are manipulating him.

8.4. SOME TIPS

Ask one Question at a time.

- ⇒ If it is not important enough to stand on its own, don't ask it.

After you ask a Question, be quiet and wait.

- ⇒ Some people think as they talk; others think and then speak. So, allow for both. By waiting, you are allowing a silence to emerge. This signals that you really want to hear what other person has to say.

If your respondent is struggling to answer an open Question, perhaps your Question lacked focus. Try to Rephrase the Question to be more specific, but keep it open.

- ⇒ Be mindful that very often, rephrasing leads to an entirely a new Question.

After your respondent has apparently finished, remain quiet for few more seconds. You might get additional information, and this ensures you don't interrupt. Follow-up with a related question. Don't ping-pong around from one subject to another. e.g., if your colleague

answered: “I believe the main problem we have right now is the lack of motivation from students.”

Then the logical next Question would be: “So, what are some specific situations where you have seen lack of motivation from students?”

Search for consensus on correct responses

- ⇒ If one participant immediately gives a response, follow-up by asking others what they think about it.
- ⇒ “Do you agree with him?” – is a good way to get others involved in the discussion.

”WHY?” is a tricky Question to ask. It can sound confrontational and aggressive

- ⇒ Guard against this by using a gentle tone of voice.
- ⇒ Soften the Question with extra words that involve the respondent directly. e.g., it is better to ask: “Why do you think that happened?” than “Why did that happen?”

Sometimes a participant might talk at length about things irrelevant to the Question you asked.

- ⇒ You may feel uneasy and want to re-focus the discussion. But, if he has previously been reluctant to talk at all, you will build rapport and gain their trust by listening attentively.
- ⇒ Let them lead the discussion for few minutes, and later you can return to the Question you asked.

Be confident in your questioning.

- ⇒ One reason people ask Multiple Questions is that they are not comfortable in asking Questions.
- ⇒ Remember that you are seeking information, not intruding. You are assisting them to tell about themselves and their experiences.

9. Executing the External Assessment Exercise

The following is detail of the various steps and processes the AIC may undertake in the successful completion of the task of accreditation inspection. Any assessment exercise has two main phases – (1) Pre-visit Phase and (2) The on-site/visit phase. The details of these two phases are stated below.

9.1. Pre-visit Phase

Pre-visit Phase envisages various steps in initiating the visit. The various tasks at this stage include:

- The NAEAC makes the final decision on the institution/Degree Program to be evaluated. AIC formation and the time-frame of the assessment. This is done normally in consultation with the institution and the convener of the AIC.
- For planning the AIC visit, NAEAC staff should review the adequacy of description (manual/documentation or the equivalent) of the processes. If this review reveals any inadequacies, further information/documents are to be sought from the institution, to be complied with before arranging the onsite visit by the AIC.
- Preparation of the AIC Documents by the NAEAC staff that enables each AIC Member to prepare for, and go through, the assessment process meticulously.
- Discussion with the members and convener on the process and issues.
- Request institution in making logistic and academic arrangements for the visit.
- A pre-visit analysis of the documents/information submitted by the institution.
- The visit schedule should be prepared in consultation with the institution and communicated to all the potential stakeholders.
- Check-list used for evaluating the quality provisions.
- Formats for reporting assessment observations.
- Formats for documenting supporting evidence for conclusions reached by the Program Evaluators.

9.2. On-site Visit Phase

It is appropriate to expect that the assessment brings to light the institution's progress over the years. Hence, It is expected from AIC that they:

- Have acquired a fairly comprehensive and thorough knowledge of the institution/degree program through a careful study of the SAR and other documents submitted by the institution.
- Effectively participate in the on-site visit to the institution/program, to validate the claims made by the institution in its SAR.
- Strictly adhere to the assessment schedule mutually agreed upon.
- Ensure the AIC report, which is the outcome of the process, is written well.
- Work within the assessment framework, and adhere to the Code of Conduct as set by the NAEAC.
- Honour and uphold the group dynamics of the AIC.

It is expected that the host institution undertakes the following, for the effective conduct of the onsite visit:

- Inform its employees about the objectives, scope and schedule of the AIC visit.
- Appoint responsible member of the staff as program coordinator to accompany the AIC to facilitate the visit.
- Provide all resources needed for the AIC to ensure an effective and efficient assessment process.
- Provide access to facilities and evidential material as requested by the AIC.
- Cooperate with the expert AIC to permit fair and unbiased validation of the claims made.

9.3. Opening Meeting

The purpose of an opening meeting is to:

- Introduce the members of the AIC to the management of host Institution.
- Review the scope and the objectives of the assessment.
- Provide a short summary of the methods and procedures to be used to conduct the assessment.
- Establish official communication links between the AIC and the institution.
- Confirm that the resources and facilities needed by the AIC are available.
- Confirm the time and date of the Exit Meeting and any interim meetings of the AIC and the institution's management and staff.

9.4. Exit Meeting

At the end of the assessment process and prior to preparing the AIC report, the AIC members should hold a meeting with the head of the institution. The main purpose of this meeting is to present assessment observations to the senior management, in such a manner so as to ensure that they clearly understand the results of the assessment. The convener should present observations, taking into account the perceived significance. Records of the closing meeting should be kept.

10. Evaluation Manual (Toolkit) for Agriculture Degree Programs

Evaluation Manual / Toolkit is an important instrument for the external assessment and accreditation / rating of agriculture degree programs. The manual is revised and upgraded periodically. The main objective is to make it quantitative, objective, precise and easy to use by the Program Evaluators. The manual encompasses various aspects of all the seven evaluation criteria adopted by the Council and are given below:

Program Evaluation Criteria and Score

Sr #	Evaluation Criteria	Standards (Number)	Score	Percent
A. Major Criteria				
I.	Strength and Quality of Faculty	17	250	25
II.	Curriculum Design and Development	12	140	14
III.	Infrastructure and Learning Resources	20	220	22
IV.	Students Support and Progression	20	140	14
Sub – Total (A)		69	750	75
B. Minor Criteria				
V.	Research and Consultancy Activities	8	100	10
VI.	Governance and Leadership	9	100	10
VII.	Best Practices	5	50	5
Sub – Total (B)		22	250	25
Grand Total (A+B)		91	1000	100

11. Code of Conduct

A Program Evaluator /Expert has to pursue the followings.

- a) To act in an unbiased and trustworthy manner with the NAEAC and host institution.
- b) To disclose any relationship or conflict of interest they have with the institution program to be assessed prior to the acceptance of the assignment.
- c) Not to accept any gift of commercial value, favour or any other profit from the institution to be assessed.
- d) Maintain confidentiality i.e. not to disclose any part of the findings/judgment unless they are authorized to do so by the NAEAC.
- e) Not to act in any way prejudicial to the reputation or interests or credibility of the NAEAC.
- f) Evaluators personal behavior, while on duty, should be above reproach: misuse of privileges, acceptance of favours from host institutions.
- g) They shall maintain their self-dignity as senior members of the AIC.
- h) They shall be fully committed to the task entrusted to them by observing a strict work-ethic: they shall keep schedules of work; perform all duties assigned to them with thoroughness, efficiency and honesty; and desist from any distraction that may come in the way of the discharge of duties.

12. Essential of Good Report Writing

The AIC report, like any other report, should be well written. When writing the report it is important to keep in mind that it is the institution/degree program, which has to act on the findings. For this reason the report should be above all factual. Further, it should be complete, helpful and brief.

12.1. Features of Good Report Writing

- Logical soundness of thoughts.
- Spontaneous sequencing of sentences in a paragraph to match flow of ideas, sequential arrangement of the components of the report.

12.2. Form and Structure of Report

The self-appraisal report and other information submitted by the institution to the NAEAC for undergoing assessment and accreditation should be validated/assessed against the criteria set by the NAEAC. At the end of the assessment exercise, a summary report should be prepared to record the findings of the review/validation highlighting the strengths and potential weaknesses which the institution/degree program, may need to act upon. This

report is generally confidential until processed by the NAEAC. While writing the report the following may be covered.

- The scope and objectives of the external evaluation.
- Details of the schedule of visit, identification of the AIC members and the representatives of the NAEAC and the institution/degree program, assessment dates.
- Identification of criteria against which the assessment is executed (the quality manual, the SAR, quality benchmarks etc.).
- Observation made and suggestions for improvement.
- The institutions ability to achieve the defined objectives.
- The judgment of the AIC on the extent of the institutions degree program quality provisions, compliance with the applicable standards/regulations and related documentation.
- Findings recorded, must be supported by objective evidence and such evidence should be detailed in the report.
- Report should be concise and not longer than necessary and must be easily understandable.
- Suggestions/recommendations made in the report should be worded in a manner that prompts required action for improvement.
- Report should be free from praise or blame of individuals.

