

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

GENERAL UNDERSTANDING

Q1: What is the purpose of these Accreditation Standards?

Answer: The Accreditation Standards for Quality School Governance serve multiple critical purposes for educational institutions in India:

1. **Quality Assurance Framework:** These standards provide schools with a comprehensive, research-backed framework to systematically assess and enhance all aspects of their functioning—from governance and curriculum to student safety and continuous improvement.
2. **Alignment with National Policy:** The standards are fully aligned with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and National Curriculum Framework (NCF), ensuring schools remain current with national educational priorities and reforms.
3. **Holistic Development Focus:** They enable schools to move beyond purely academic outcomes to foster holistic student development across cognitive, socio-emotional, physical, and creative domains.
4. **Evidence-Based Improvement:** The standards promote a culture of self-reflection, data-driven decision-making, and continuous improvement through both internal reviews and external assessments.
5. **Accountability and Transparency:** By establishing clear benchmarks and documentation requirements, the standards strengthen accountability mechanisms and promote transparency in school operations.
6. **National and International Recognition:** Schools adopting these standards position themselves for quality recognition at both national and international levels, as the framework aligns with global quality ecosystems.

The ultimate goal is to ensure that every school in India delivers high-quality, inclusive, learner-centric education that prepares students for the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century.

Q2: Who developed these standards and what is their authority?

Answer: These standards have been developed by the **National Accreditation Board for Education and Training (NABET)** under the **Quality Council of India (QCI)**, making them highly authoritative and credible:

About QCI:

- Established through a Cabinet decision in February 1996
- Functions as an autonomous body under the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India
- Provides national accreditation framework aligned with international standards
- Works to achieve global recognition for its accreditation schemes

About NABET:

- One of the constituent boards of QCI
- Responsible for assessment, accreditation, evaluation, and quality interventions specifically in the education domain
- Works in collaboration with state governments, municipal councils, education commissions, and other stakeholders
- Has been actively engaged in ensuring quality school education for over a decade

Historical Context:

- The significance of school accreditation was first emphasized at the National Quality Conclave (NQC) in 2007 by Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, then-President of India
- NABET launched the first "Assessment & Accreditation Standard for Quality School Governance" (ASQG) in 2007
- The current Fourth Edition (June 2025) represents continuous evolution and refinement based on policy developments and educational advancements

This institutional backing ensures that schools accredited under this framework receive nationally recognized certification backed by government authority and aligned with India's quality movement.

Q3: Which schools can apply for this accreditation?

Answer: The Accreditation Standards have been designed with **broad applicability** to accommodate diverse school types and educational contexts across India:

By Affiliation:

- Schools affiliated with **CBSE** (Central Board of Secondary Education)
- Schools affiliated with **ICSE/ISC** (Indian Certificate of Secondary Education)
- Schools affiliated with **State Boards** across all Indian states
- Schools following **other recognized educational boards**

By Ownership/Management:

- Government schools
- Government-aided schools
- Private schools
- International schools

Key Principle: The framework is designed to be **universally applicable** regardless of board affiliation, emphasizing core principles of quality, equity, and governance that transcend specific curricular approaches. This ensures that all schools, regardless of their context, can benefit from and implement these standards to enhance educational quality.

FRAMEWORK & STRUCTURE

Q4: What is the CIPP Model and how does it apply to school assessment?

Answer: The **CIPP Model** is a well-established, comprehensive evaluation framework that forms the foundation of these Accreditation Standards. CIPP stands for **Context, Input, Process, and Product (Output)**, and each component plays a specific role in ensuring holistic school assessment:

1. CONTEXT (C):

- **What it evaluates:** The foundational conditions and circumstances in which the school operates
- **Includes:**
 - Nature and type of governing body
 - Understanding of children's developmental and educational needs
 - Statutory and regulatory compliance requirements
 - Stakeholder expectations (parents, community, staff)
 - Demographic and environmental factors
- **Purpose:** Provides the foundation for policy and governance decisions, ensuring the school understands its operating environment

2. INPUT (I):

- **What it evaluates:** The resources required to establish a high-quality learning environment
- **Includes:**
 - Safe and stimulating physical infrastructure
 - Qualified educators and support staff
 - Appropriate curriculum frameworks and pedagogy
 - Learning materials and equipment
 - Financial resources
- **Purpose:** Determines whether the school has adequate resources to deliver quality education

3. PROCESS (P):

- **What it evaluates:** The actual teaching-learning activities and educational experiences
- **Includes:**
 - Interactive and competency-based teaching methods
 - Student engagement strategies
 - Assessment techniques (formative and summative)
 - Feedback and evaluation mechanisms
 - Implementation of curriculum and pedagogical plans
- **Purpose:** Assesses the quality of educational delivery and student learning experiences

4. PRODUCT/OUTPUT (P):

- **What it evaluates:** The outcomes and effectiveness of school operations
- **Includes:**
 - Cognitive, affective, and psychomotor development of students
 - 21st-century skills, life skills, and emerging competencies
 - Parental and stakeholder satisfaction
 - Overall institutional growth and improvement
- **Purpose:** Measures whether the school is achieving its educational objectives and producing desired learning outcomes

Alignment with Accreditation Domains: The three key domains of the Accreditation Standards map directly to the CIPP Model:

- **School Governance** → Context & Input
- **Education & Support Processes** → Process
- **Performance Measurement & Improvement** → Product (Output)

This comprehensive approach ensures that schools are evaluated not just on outcomes, but on the entire ecosystem that produces those outcomes—from context to results.

Q5: What are the three key domains covered in the standards?

Answer: The Accreditation Standards are organized into **three interconnected key domains**, each containing multiple standards and parameters that collectively cover every critical aspect of school functioning:

DOMAIN 1: SCHOOL GOVERNANCE (Standards 1-6)

This domain focuses on the foundational structures, policies, and systems that enable effective school management:

- **Standard 1:** Context of School - Understanding demographic, environmental, and stakeholder factors
- **Standard 2:** Governance, Leadership, and Administration - Structures, roles, and accountability mechanisms
- **Standard 3:** Mission and Quality Objectives - Vision, actionable goals, and strategic alignment
- **Standard 4:** Documentation - Record management, indexing, and retrieval systems
- **Standard 5:** Financial Resources and Records - Budget planning, transparency, and auditing
- **Standard 6:** Physical Infrastructure & Support Facilities - Self-certification for adequacy and safety

Key Focus: Ensuring the school has robust governance structures, clear leadership, adequate resources, and compliance with regulatory requirements.

DOMAIN 2: EDUCATION AND SUPPORT PROCESSES (Standards 7-13)

This domain encompasses all aspects of curriculum delivery, teaching-learning, and student support:

- **Standard 7:** Human Resource - Recruitment, appraisal, professional development, and welfare
- **Standard 8:** Curriculum Planning, Enrichment, and Implementation - Integrated approach, learning outcomes mapping
- **Standard 9:** Teaching-Learning Process - Child-centered pedagogy, competency-based education, inclusive practices
- **Standard 10:** Assessment and Evaluation - Varied tools, progress tracking, Holistic Progress Cards
- **Standard 11:** Admission Policy - Compliance with regulatory requirements
- **Standard 12:** Student Support Services - Guidance, counselling, career support
- **Standard 13:** Physical & Psychological Safety - Safety protocols, anti-bullying policies, emotional well-being

Key Focus: Ensuring quality educational delivery, holistic student development, and comprehensive support systems.

DOMAIN 3: PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT & IMPROVEMENT (Standard 14)

This domain focuses on continuous quality enhancement:

- **Standard 14:** Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement
 - Parameter 33: Continuous Improvement (CI) practices
 - Parameter 34: Grievance Redressal System
 - Parameter 35: Benchmarking and Innovation
 - Parameter 36: Self-Assessment and Review of Compliance

Key Focus: Establishing systems for ongoing monitoring, stakeholder feedback, evidence-based improvement, and sustained excellence.

Interconnection: These three domains are not isolated but deeply interconnected. Strong governance (Domain 1) enables effective educational processes (Domain 2), while robust performance measurement systems (Domain 3) provide feedback that strengthens both governance and educational delivery. This holistic approach ensures that improvements in one area positively impact the entire school ecosystem.

Q6: How many standards and parameters are there in total?

Answer: The Accreditation Framework comprises a comprehensive but manageable structure:

Total Standards: 14 Total Parameters: 36

Detailed Breakdown by Domain:

DOMAIN 1: SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

- **6 Standards with 11 Parameters**
 - Standard 1: Context of School (2 parameters)
 - Standard 2: Governance, Leadership & Administration (4 parameters)
 - Standard 3: Mission & Quality Objectives (1 parameter)

- o Standard 4: Documentation (2 parameters)
- o Standard 5: Financial Resources (1 parameter)
- o Standard 6: Infrastructure (1 parameter)

DOMAIN 2: EDUCATION AND SUPPORT PROCESSES

- **7 Standards with 21 Parameters**
 - o Standard 7: Human Resource (3 parameters)
 - o Standard 8: Curriculum Planning (7 parameters)
 - o Standard 9: Teaching-Learning Process (4 parameters)
 - o Standard 10: Assessment & Evaluation (3 parameters)
 - o Standard 11: Admission Policy (1 parameter)
 - o Standard 12: Student Support Services (1 parameter)
 - o Standard 13: Physical & Psychological Safety (2 parameters)

DOMAIN 3: PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT & IMPROVEMENT

- **1 Standard with 4 Parameters**
 - o Standard 14: Quality Assurance & Continuous Improvement (4 parameters)

Understanding the Structure:

- Each **Standard** represents a comprehensive quality statement defining essential conditions for organizational effectiveness
- Each **Parameter** provides operational definitions, best practices, and implementation guidance for achieving the standard
- Parameters follow a systematic **Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA)** cycle for implementation

Practical Significance: While 36 parameters may seem extensive, they are designed to be implemented systematically over time. Schools are encouraged to:

1. Begin with foundational parameters in governance and safety
2. Progressively build capacity across educational processes
3. Continuously refine and improve through performance measurement

The framework acknowledges that quality improvement is a journey, not a destination, and provides schools with a clear roadmap for systematic enhancement of all aspects of their functioning.

IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

Q7: What is the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle and why is it important?

Answer: The **Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle** is a fundamental quality management methodology embedded throughout these Accreditation Standards. It provides schools with a systematic, iterative approach to implementing and continuously improving every parameter:

THE FOUR STAGES:

1. PLAN (Step 1):

- **What it involves:** Establishing objectives, developing policies, creating SOPs, identifying resources, and defining success criteria
- **Key activities:**
 - Review policy documents and regulatory requirements
 - Design templates, frameworks, and action plans
 - Identify responsible personnel and timelines
 - Define measurable indicators and evaluation criteria
- **Output:** Documented plans, SOPs, templates, and implementation roadmaps
- **Example:** Developing a recruitment policy with clear selection criteria, committee structure, and approval processes

2. DO (Step 2):

- **What it involves:** Implementing the planned activities and processes
- **Key activities:**
 - Execute SOPs and action plans
 - Conduct training for staff
 - Organize activities and programs
 - Maintain records and documentation
 - Collect data and evidence
- **Output:** Implementation records, attendance sheets, filled templates, activity logs, videos, and documented evidence
- **Example:** Conducting the recruitment process as per the established policy, maintaining all records

3. CHECK (Step 3):

- **What it involves:** Monitoring, reviewing, and evaluating the implementation against planned objectives
- **Key activities:**
 - Compare planned vs. actual execution
 - Analyze data and performance metrics
 - Identify gaps, strengths, and areas for improvement
 - Collect stakeholder feedback
 - Prepare review reports
- **Output:** Review committee observations, gap analysis, recommendations, Minutes of Meetings (MoMs)
- **Example:** The designated committee reviews the recruitment process, identifies any delays or gaps, and recommends improvements

4. ACT (Step 4):

- **What it involves:** Taking corrective actions and implementing improvements based on the review
- **Key activities:**
 - Implement recommended modifications
 - Update SOPs and policies as needed
 - Document improvements made

- o Prepare Action Taken Reports (ATRs)
- o Feed learnings back into the next planning cycle
- **Output:** List of corrective actions, updated policies/SOPs, evidence of improvements
- **Example:** Modifying the recruitment policy to address identified gaps, updating documentation requirements

WHY THE PDCA CYCLE IS IMPORTANT:

1. Structured Implementation: Provides a clear, step-by-step approach that prevents ad-hoc or inconsistent practices

2. Evidence-Based Decision Making: Emphasizes data collection and analysis rather than assumptions or intuition

3. Continuous Improvement: Creates a never-ending cycle of refinement, ensuring schools don't become complacent after initial implementation

4. Accountability: Clear documentation at each stage creates transparency and assigns responsibility

5. Systematic Problem-Solving: The Check and Act stages specifically focus on identifying and addressing gaps

6. Scalability: The same methodology can be applied to any parameter, from curriculum planning to safety protocols

7. Alignment with Quality Standards: PDCA is internationally recognized and aligns with ISO and other quality management systems

PRACTICAL APPLICATION:

Schools implementing these standards will use the PDCA cycle for all 36 parameters. For instance:

- **Curriculum planning** follows PDCA: Plan the Annual Pedagogical Plan → Do (implement lessons) → Check (review student learning outcomes) → Act (modify teaching strategies)
- **Safety measures** follow PDCA: Plan safety protocols → Do (implement and train) → Check (conduct safety audits) → Act (address identified risks)

The cyclical nature ensures that even after accreditation, schools maintain a continuous improvement mindset, constantly refining their practices based on evidence and feedback.

Q8: What is a School Accreditation Manual and what should it contain?

Answer: The **School Accreditation Manual** is a comprehensive master document that serves as the school's quality management system blueprint. It is a mandatory requirement under **Parameter 9 (Standard 4: Documentation)** and represents a shift from a person-driven to a system-driven school environment.

PURPOSE OF THE SCHOOL ACCREDITATION MANUAL:

1. **Establishes Structured Approach:** Creates a systematic framework for planning and executing all school processes
2. **Ensures Resource Optimization:** Facilitates optimal utilization of available resources for effective educational outcomes
3. **Promotes System-Driven Operations:** Reduces dependence on individual personnel by documenting processes clearly
4. **Supports Continuity:** Ensures smooth transitions when staff members change roles or leave
5. **Facilitates Compliance:** Demonstrates adherence to accreditation standards and regulatory requirements
6. **Enables Quality Assurance:** Provides a reference point for monitoring and continuous improvement

MANDATORY COMPONENTS OF THE SCHOOL ACCREDITATION MANUAL:

1. SCHOOL INFORMATION & BACKGROUND

- School name, address, and contact details
- Affiliation number and affiliating body details
- School background, history, and educational philosophy
- Scope of education (stages offered)
- Linkages and partnerships

2. GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

- Details of the Governing Body
- School Management Committee (SMC) composition and functions
- Organizational chart/organogram
- Profile of senior management and key personnel

3. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

- Detailed roles and responsibilities of all designations mentioned in the organogram
- Specific accountabilities for:
 - Head of School (HOS)
 - Head of Quality Assurance
 - All process owners
- Authority matrix for decision-making

4. QUALITY FRAMEWORK

- Identification and mapping of key processes
- Assignment of process owners for each key process
- Mission statement and quality objectives
- Quality policy and quality assurance mechanisms

5. FACILITIES & RESOURCES

- Description of teaching-learning resources
- Infrastructure details
- ICT facilities and equipment
- Laboratory and library resources

6. FINANCIAL SYSTEMS

- Process for budget planning and approval
- Financial controls and authorization levels
- Audit procedures

7. HUMAN RESOURCE POLICIES

- Staff recruitment policy (teaching and non-teaching)
- Appraisal systems
- Professional development framework
- Staff welfare policies

8. DOCUMENTATION SYSTEM

- Department-wise list of essential documents and records
- Indexing and retrieval systems
- Retention and disposal policies
- Document control procedures

9. STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOPs)

The manual must include **at least 10 mandatory SOPs** covering key processes. Schools can go beyond 10 based on their context. Each SOP should contain:

- **Process name:** Clear identification
- **Process objective:** Why this process exists
- **Process owner:** Who is responsible
- **Process members:** Who is involved
- **Process description:** Step-by-step procedure
- **Measurable indicators:** How success is measured
- **Related records and documents:** Supporting documentation

Suggested SOPs include:

1. Curriculum planning and implementation
2. Teaching-learning process
3. Student assessment and evaluation
4. Admission process
5. Safety and emergency protocols
6. Grievance redressal
7. Staff recruitment and onboarding
8. Financial management
9. Infrastructure maintenance
10. Quality assurance and review

10. MONITORING & REVIEW MECHANISMS

- Monitoring matrix for all key processes
- Review schedules and frequencies
- Reporting formats
- Continuous improvement procedures

SPECIAL NOTES:

1. **Reference Integration:** If the school has already developed certain documents and records separately (e.g., comprehensive HR policy, detailed safety manual), the School Accreditation Manual may provide references to those documents under relevant sections rather than duplicating content.
2. **Living Document:** The manual should be treated as a living document, regularly updated to reflect policy changes, process improvements, and organizational evolution.
3. **Accessibility:** The manual should be easily accessible to all relevant stakeholders and serve as a primary reference for operational queries.
4. **Alignment:** All content must align with the requirements of the affiliating body and regulatory authorities.

By creating a comprehensive School Accreditation Manual, schools establish a solid foundation for quality assurance, ensuring that excellence is embedded in systems and processes rather than dependent on individual efforts alone.

Q9: What evidence and documentation do schools need to maintain?

Answer: Comprehensive evidence and documentation form the backbone of the accreditation process, serving multiple purposes: demonstrating compliance, facilitating internal reviews, supporting continuous improvement, and enabling external assessments. The documentation requirements span all three domains of the Accreditation Standards.

GENERAL DOCUMENTATION PRINCIPLES:

1. **Multiple Formats Accepted:** Physical documents, digital records, photographs, video recordings (10-20 minutes), and online portal evidence
2. **Systematic Organization:** Department-wise indexing with clear retrieval systems (target: 3-minute retrieval time)
3. **Retention Policies:** As per affiliating body requirements and regulatory mandates
4. **Authenticity:** All documents should be verifiable, dated, and properly authorized

CATEGORY-WISE DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS:

A. REGULATORY & STATUTORY DOCUMENTS

- No Objection Certificate (NOC) from Government
- Recognition Certificate from concerned government authority
- Affiliation and Sanction Letter from affiliating body
- Building Safety Certificate
- Fire NOC

- Safe & Quality Drinking Water Certificate
- Sanitation Certificate
- Self-Certification Document for infrastructure adequacy
- Annual renewal/updates of all certificates

B. GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS

- School Management Committee (SMC) constitution documents
- Minutes of Meetings (MoMs) and agendas of SMC
- Organogram with roles and responsibilities
- School Accreditation Manual
- Mission statement and quality objectives documentation
- Policy documents for all key areas
- Annual reports and strategic plans

C. FINANCIAL RECORDS

- Approved annual budgets (minimum last 2 years)
- Audited balance sheets (minimum last 2 years)
- Audited income and expenditure statements (minimum last 2 years)
- Fixed asset register/master asset register
- Condemnation register
- Department-wise stock registers
- Purchase and procurement records
- Fee structure and collection records

D. HUMAN RESOURCE RECORDS

- Recruitment policy and SOPs
- Competency matrix for all designations
- Key Responsibility Areas (KRAs) for each designation
- Vacancy advertisements (evidence)
- List of recruited staff (last 2 calendar years) with subject and level categorization
- Personnel files and service records (with proper indexing)
- Staff appraisal templates and completed appraisals
- Training and professional development records (dates, duration, attendees, resource persons)
- Incentive and staff welfare policy
- Records of incentives provided (financial and non-financial)
- Health check-up certificates for all staff
- Police clearance for drivers and relevant personnel

E. CURRICULUM & PEDAGOGICAL DOCUMENTS

- Annual Curriculum Plans (ACP)
- Annual Pedagogical Plans (APP) mapped to learning outcomes
- Sample lesson plans (subject-wise and grade-wise) showing:
 - Integration of 21st-century skills
 - Integration of life skills and values
 - Competency-based approach

- o Use of TLMs and ICT
- Timetables for all stages
- Calendar of activities (arts, physical education, life skills, vocational education)
- Learning outcome documents (NCERT/SCERT references)
- List of vocational and pre-vocational courses offered
- Curriculum enrichment activity records

F. TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESS EVIDENCE

- **Video recordings** (10-20 minutes each) demonstrating:
 - o Activity-based and hands-on learning
 - o Use of TLMs and ICT in teaching
 - o Practical laboratory usage
 - o Competency-based lesson delivery
 - o Foundational Literacy & Numeracy (FLN) development
 - o Physical education and sports activities
 - o Arts education activities
 - o Vocational education implementation
- List of developed TLMs (manual and ICT-enabled)
- Evidence of teacher training on TLM development and ICT integration
- ICT facilities documentation

G. ASSESSMENT & EVALUATION RECORDS

- Assessment policy and SOPs
- Annual assessment calendar
- Sample competency-based question papers (subject-wise, grade-wise)
- Assessment tools for varied learning domains:
 - o 21st-century skills
 - o Life skills
 - o Arts education
 - o Physical education
 - o Vocational skills
- Self-assessment and peer assessment sheets with student improvement targets
- Rubric-based assessment samples
- Portfolio-based assessment samples
- Anecdotal records
- Analysis reports of formative and summative assessments
- Grade-wise student attainment analysis
- Holistic Progress Card (HPC) templates and samples
- External assessment participation records (SAFAL, Olympiads, competitions)

H. ADMISSION RECORDS

- Admission policy and SOPs
- Vacancy advertisements (grade-wise, in public domain)
- Required admission documents list
- Sample admission records (stage-wise)
- Fee determination policy
- Records of fee categories

- Transfer certificate issuance records
- **Video recordings** (10-20 minutes) showing admission process at different stages

I. STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES DOCUMENTATION

- List of certified counselors and trained teachers
- SOPs for guidance and counseling
- Case records of students who received counseling (maintaining confidentiality)
- Psychometric assessment tools list
- List of students assessed
- Career Profile Cards
- Early detection records for learning difficulties
- Referral records for specialized services
- Follow-up records
- List of career experts invited

J. SAFETY & SECURITY RECORDS

Physical Safety:

- POC SO Committee composition and MoMs
- POSH Committee composition and MoMs
- NDMA and SDMA guidelines identification records
- SOPs for all safety areas (11+ SOPs as per Parameter 31)
- **Video recordings** (10-20 minutes each) for each safety SOP implementation
- Health & Safety Audit Committee reports
- Drinking Water Quality Certificate
- Food Safety Certificate (FSSAI)
- Waterborne Disease Prevention Certificate
- Health check-up certificates (students, staff, support staff)
- Allergy records for students and staff with communication proof
- Fire evacuation drill register with dates, times, head counts
- Last Child Drop Policy documentation
- Transport safety records including de-boarding policy
- CCTV monitoring SOPs and records
- Annual physical stock verification reports

Psychological Safety:

- Anti-bullying and anti-ragging policy
- Life skills training calendar and records
- Good touch/bad touch workshop records (stage-specific, dated)
- Teacher training records on socio-emotional skills/Emotional Intelligence
- **Video recordings** (10-20 minutes) showing how teachers apply social-emotional skills
- Counseling records with follow-ups
- Evidence of inclusive, non-discriminatory practices

K. QUALITY ASSURANCE & IMPROVEMENT RECORDS

- Self-assessment reports and portal submission confirmations
- Minutes of Meetings of review and quality assurance committees
- Gap analysis reports
- Action plans for improvement with timelines and responsibilities
- Action Taken Reports (ATRs)
- Corrective and Preventive Action (CAPA) documentation
- Benchmarking evidence and innovation records
- **Video recordings** (10-20 minutes) showcasing innovations and best practices
- Grievance register (categorized: academic, administrative, infrastructure, etc.)
- Complaint handling records with resolutions
- Feedback collection records from stakeholders
- KPI tracking data
- Monitoring matrix for all key processes

L. CONTEXT & STAKEHOLDER DOCUMENTATION

- Template for demographic and background information of students
- Collected and analyzed demographic data
- Action plans for contextualization
- List of identified interested parties
- Needs and expectations survey data from stakeholders
- Analysis of stakeholder feedback
- Action plans addressing stakeholder needs

SPECIAL EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS:

Video Evidence: A distinctive feature of these standards is the requirement for recorded video links (typically 10-20 minutes) to demonstrate actual implementation of processes. These should cover:

- Teaching-learning activities across different learning domains
- Safety protocol implementation
- Admission processes at different stages
- Vocational education facilities and activities
- Physical education and sports activities
- Arts education activities
- Student application of learning outcomes in real-life contexts

Consistency Across Time: Evidence should demonstrate consistency, not one-time compliance. For example:

- "Records of organized activities over the last three months"
- "Last two years" of financial documents
- "Current or previous academic year" for various programs

DOCUMENTATION MANAGEMENT:

As per **Parameter 8 (Standard 4)**, schools must establish:

- SOPs for document development, review, approval, and storage

- Indexing systems for quick retrieval
- Version control for document updates
- Security and confidentiality protocols
- Digital and/or physical storage systems
- Automation and digitization measures where possible
- Master list of all indexed documents across departments

PRACTICAL TIP:

Create a **documentation checklist** aligned with each parameter's "Output" column from the PDCA cycle. Assign department/process-wise responsibilities for maintaining specific document categories. Conduct quarterly documentation audits to ensure readiness for both internal reviews and external assessments. Remember: if it's not documented, from an accreditation perspective, it didn't happen.

DOMAIN 1: SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

Parameter 1: Reflection on Context for Curriculum Planning & Implementation

Q1: What does "context of the school" mean? A: Context refers to factors like student demographics, home language, parents' educational status, socio-economic background, safety issues, technological limitations, availability of trained teachers, and regulatory requirements that influence how curriculum should be planned and delivered.

Q2: How do we collect demographic information from parents? A: Design a template during admission that captures home language, linguistic background, parents' education, socio-economic status, and home facilities for learning. Get parents to fill this during admission and analyze it to identify areas needing curriculum contextualization.

Q3: What is the output expected from this parameter? A: A completed template with demographic data, analysis of collected information, categorization of students, and a developed action plan for contextualizing the curriculum based on identified needs.

Parameter 2: Identification of Interested Parties and Their Needs & Expectations

Q4: Who are "interested parties" in a school context? A: Interested parties include parents, students, teachers, non-teaching staff, vendors, community members, governing body members, and anyone who has direct or indirect interest in the school's educational services.

Q5: How often should we collect needs and expectations from interested parties? A: The document suggests periodic collection, but at minimum, this should be done annually and whenever significant changes occur in school operations or stakeholder composition.

Q6: What if stakeholder expectations conflict with each other? A: Analyze and prioritize based on regulatory requirements, student welfare, and educational goals. Document the decision-making process and communicate transparently with all parties about how conflicting expectations were resolved.

Parameter 3: Composition, Structure & Functioning of Management Committee (MC)

Q7: What is the difference between SMC and Management Committee? A: The terms are often used interchangeably. The School Management Committee (SMC) is the governance body as prescribed by the affiliating body and regulatory authorities. Check your specific state/board requirements for exact composition.

Q8: How frequently should the Management Committee meet? A: Follow your affiliating body's requirements. Generally, quarterly meetings are recommended, but more frequent meetings may be needed during critical planning or crisis periods.

Q9: What records must we maintain for the Management Committee? A: Minutes of Meetings (MoMs), meeting agendas, attendance records, Action Taken Reports (ATRs), and documentation of member eligibility, tenure, and representation.

Parameter 4: Policy for Guiding and Monitoring Roles of Key Personnel

Q10: Who should be designated as "Head of Quality Assurance"? A: This should be a senior staff member (could be a Vice Principal, Academic Coordinator, or designated Quality Manager) who has understanding of quality systems and can coordinate across departments. The role should be formally defined with clear responsibilities.

Q11: What are "key processes" we need to identify? A: Key processes include curriculum planning, teaching-learning, assessment, admission, student support, safety protocols, resource management, staff development, and any process critical to educational outcomes and school operations.

Q12: Do we need SOPs for every process? A: The document requires at least 10 mandatory SOPs (Control of Records & Documents, Admission, Budgeting, HR/ Recruitment, Teaching Learning Process, Examination, Self Assessment, Performance Review, Complaint Handling/ Grievance Redressal System, Health & Safety). Focus first on critical processes that directly impact student safety, learning outcomes, and regulatory compliance. You can expand beyond 10 as your system matures.

Parameter 5: Promotion of Collaboration Among Staff

Q13: How do we map staff experience and aptitude? A: Create a staff profile database documenting qualifications, years of experience, areas of expertise, special skills, training completed, and areas of interest. Update this annually during appraisals.

Q14: What are "exemplary models" we should create? A: Exemplary models are best-practice examples in areas like Arts Integration, 21st-Century Skills development, Interdisciplinary Learning, or innovative teaching methods that can be documented, shared, and replicated.

Q15: How long should video recordings of exemplary models be? A: The document specifies 10-20 minutes as the standard length for demonstration videos.

Parameter 6: Action Research for Continuous Improvement

Q16: What is action research in simple terms? A: Action research is a systematic process where teachers identify a classroom problem (like low comprehension in reading), formulate a solution based on research, implement it, measure the results, and document what worked.

Q17: Do all teachers need to conduct action research? A: While not mandatory for every teacher, the school should create an ecosystem that encourages action research. Start with interested teachers and gradually build capacity through training.

Q18: What training is needed for action research? A: Teachers need training on identifying problems, reviewing existing research, formulating hypotheses, designing

interventions, developing assessment tools, collecting and analyzing data, and documenting findings.

Parameter 7: Mission, Quality Objectives, and Resource Management

Q19: What's the difference between mission and quality objectives? A: Mission is your broad educational philosophy and purpose statement. Quality Objectives are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound) targets that quantitatively reflect your mission.

Q20: Can we change our mission statement? A: Yes, but it should be done thoughtfully through a consultative process with stakeholders. The mission should be relatively stable, but can evolve as the school grows and educational context changes.

Q21: How many quality objectives should we have? A: There's no fixed number. Focus on having meaningful, measurable objectives that cover key areas like academic achievement, student development, teacher growth, infrastructure improvement, etc. Quality over quantity.

Parameter 8: Control, Storage, and Retrieval of Documents and Records

Q22: What is "indexing" of documents? A: Indexing is a systematic method of organizing and coding documents so they can be quickly located. For example: ADM/2024/001 for Admission records, year 2024, document 001.

Q23: Should we maintain physical or digital records? A: Both are acceptable. Digital records are encouraged for efficiency, but must have proper backup systems. Physical records require proper storage with fire safety measures. A hybrid system is often practical.

Q24: How quickly should we be able to retrieve a document? A: The document suggests approximately 3 minutes as a benchmark for efficient document retrieval.

Q25: How long should we retain different types of records? A: Follow your affiliating body's requirements. Generally: student records (permanent), financial records (7-10 years), assessment records (until student completes schooling + 5 years), staff records (employment period + 7 years).

Parameter 9: School Accreditation Manual & SOPs

Q26: What exactly is the School Accreditation Manual? A: It's a comprehensive document containing your school's background, philosophy, governance structure, key processes with SOPs, roles and responsibilities, quality objectives, and all essential policies and procedures.

Q27: Can we reference existing documents instead of duplicating content? A: Yes! If you already have certain documents (like recruitment policy, safety protocols), you can reference them in the manual rather than reproducing the entire content.

Q28: What are the 10 mandatory SOPs? A: While specific SOPs aren't rigidly listed, they should cover critical processes like: Control of Records & Documents, Admission ,

Budgeting, HR/ Recruitment, Teaching Learning Process, Examination, Self Assessment, Performance Review, Complaint Handling/ Grievance Redressal System , Health & Safety.

Parameter 10: Educational and Financial Plans

Q29: What is a School Development Plan (SDP)? A: An SDP is a strategic planning document outlining short-term, medium-term, and long-term goals for academic, infrastructure, human resource, and overall school development with timelines and resource allocation.

Q30: How is budget planning connected to assessment and accreditation? A: Quality education requires adequate resources. The budget should be aligned with your quality objectives, SDP, and the requirements of various parameters (like TLMs, labs, training, technology, safety equipment).

Q31: What is meant by "digitization for financial transparency"? A: Using accounting software, online payment systems, digital records, automated reports, and technology tools that make financial transactions traceable, verifiable, and easily auditable.

Parameter 11: Self-Certification of Infrastructure & Facilities

Q32: What documents are needed for self-certification? A: NOC from Government, Recognition Certificate, Affiliation Letter, Building Safety Certificate, Fire NOC, Safe Drinking Water Certificate, Sanitation Certificate, and contextual certificates like air quality, LUX levels, and decibel checks.

Q33: How often should self-certification be renewed? A: Annually, or as per the validity period specified by the issuing authority. Some certificates (like Fire NOC) typically need annual renewal.

Q34: What if we don't have all certificates yet? A: Work systematically to obtain them. This parameter is foundational—schools must be compliant with statutory requirements before proceeding with full accreditation.

DOMAIN 2: EDUCATION AND SUPPORT PROCESS

Parameter 12: Recruitment, Induction & Orientation of Staff

Q35: What is a competency matrix? A: A document mapping each position (PRT, TGT, PGT, admin staff) with required qualifications, skills, experience, and competencies. It serves as the reference for recruitment and performance evaluation.

Q36: How long should the induction program be? A: There's no fixed duration, but it should adequately cover institutional philosophy, policies, curriculum frameworks, school culture, and practical orientation. Typically 3-5 days for new teachers, with mentorship extending for the first month.

Q37: What's the difference between induction and orientation? A: Induction is the broader process of integrating new staff into the school culture and systems. Orientation is typically the initial program introducing the school, policies, and basic operational procedures.

Parameter 13: Establishing an Appraisal System

Q38: What are KRAs? A: Key Result Areas (KRAs) are the main responsibilities and outcomes expected from each position. For example, a teacher's KRAs might include curriculum delivery, student assessment, classroom management, parent communication, and professional development.

Q39: Should appraisal be annual or more frequent? A: The document suggests defining periodicity. Best practice is continuous monitoring with formal appraisal at least twice yearly (mid-term and end-of-year), allowing for timely feedback and course correction.

Q40: What is 360-degree appraisal? A: An appraisal method where feedback is collected from multiple sources: self-assessment, supervisor evaluation, peer review, and potentially student/parent feedback, providing a comprehensive view of performance.

Parameter 14: Incentive/Staff Well-being Policy

Q41: What are examples of non-financial incentives? A: Recognition certificates, appreciation letters, awards for innovation, opportunities for career advancement courses, conference participation, leadership roles in projects, flexible working arrangements, or professional development opportunities.

Q42: Are staff wellness measures mandatory? A: While the specific measures aren't mandated, having a policy that addresses staff well-being is required. This could include health insurance, EPF, leave benefits, fee concessions for staff children, wellness programs, etc.

Q43: How do we decide who gets incentives? A: Link incentives to the appraisal system with clear, transparent criteria. Document the process in your incentive policy and ensure the SMC approves the framework.

Parameter 15: Integrated Approach for Curriculum Planning

Q44: What does "integrated approach" mean? A: Teaching subjects while consciously integrating 21st-century skills, life skills, values, and arts, rather than treating them as separate, isolated components. For example, teaching environmental science while developing critical thinking, collaboration, and environmental values.

Q45: How do we integrate arts into regular subjects? A: Use arts-based activities like drawing, role play, music, or craft to teach concepts. For example: creating models for science, dramatizing historical events, using songs for language learning, or drawing graphs in mathematics.

Q46: Do we need separate timetable slots for integration? A: Not necessarily. Integration happens within regular subject teaching. However, dedicated slots for arts, physical education, and life skills are also important for focused development in those domains.

Parameter 16: Mapping Curriculum with Learning Outcomes

Q47: Where do we find grade-wise Learning Outcomes? A: Check NCERT/SCERT websites and your affiliating body's curriculum documents. NIPUN Guidelines cover Foundational Stage (Pre-primary to Grade 3). Your state SCERT will have adapted versions.

Q48: What if our textbooks don't clearly mention Learning Outcomes? A: You need to map the textbook content to the official Learning Outcome documents from NCERT/SCERT. This is part of curriculum planning and should be documented in your Annual Pedagogical Plan.

Q49: How do we track student attainment of Learning Outcomes? A: Through formative and summative assessments designed specifically to measure Learning Outcomes. Maintain records showing what percentage of students achieved minimum/70%/80% mastery of each Learning Outcome.

Parameter 17: Planning and Organization of Arts Education

Q50: Which arts should we cover? A: As per NCF guidelines: Visual Arts (drawing, painting, craft), Music (vocal/instrumental), Dance, and Theatre/Drama. Schools should offer exposure to all, while allowing students to develop deeper skills in their areas of interest.

Q51: Do we need specialist arts teachers? A: Ideally yes, especially for secondary classes. For foundational and preparatory stages, trained classroom teachers can integrate arts, but specialist guidance enhances quality.

Q52: How do we organize participation in external competitions? A: Maintain a calendar of local, district, state, and national level arts competitions. Prepare students through regular practice, conduct school-level selections, and maintain records of participation and achievements.

Parameter 18: Physical Education and Sports

Q53: Is physical education different from sports activities? A: Yes. Physical Education is the curriculum-based teaching of movement skills, fitness, and health concepts. Sports activities involve competitive games and athletics. Both are essential and complementary.

Q54: What if we have limited space for sports? A: Utilize available space creatively, use nearby public grounds through arrangements, focus on space-efficient activities, and include indoor games. Document your adaptations based on context.

Q55: How much time should be allocated to physical education? A: Follow your affiliating body's requirements. NEP 2020 emphasizes daily physical activity. Typically, minimum 3-5 periods per week for structured PE, plus time for sports and games.

Parameter 19: Value Education, Community Outreach & Life Skills

Q56: How do we teach values without being preachy? A: Through stories, real-life examples, role modeling, experiential activities, community service projects, and discussions rather than lectures. Values are better caught than taught.

Q57: What are examples of Community Outreach Programs? A: Cleanliness drives, tree plantation, visiting old age homes, awareness campaigns, helping underprivileged students, environmental conservation projects, or community problem-solving initiatives.

Q58: Which life skills should we focus on? A: WHO identifies 10 core life skills: Self-awareness, empathy, critical thinking, creative thinking, decision making, problem solving, effective communication, interpersonal relationships, coping with stress, and coping with emotions.

Parameter 20: 21st-Century Skills & Futuristic Learning Skills

Q59: What exactly are 21st-century skills? A: Critical thinking, creativity, communication, collaboration (the 4Cs), plus digital literacy, information literacy, media literacy, financial literacy, and adaptability.

Q60: How are these different from regular academic skills? A: Academic skills are subject-specific knowledge. 21st-century skills are cross-cutting competencies needed for success in modern life and work, regardless of subject or career chosen.

Q61: Can we assess 21st-century skills? A: Yes, through rubrics, observation checklists, portfolios, projects, presentations, problem-solving tasks, and performance assessments rather than traditional paper-pencil tests.

Parameter 21: Vocational & Entrepreneurial Skills

Q62: From which grade should vocational education start? A: Pre-vocational exposure can start from Grade 6. Formal vocational courses typically start from Grade 9 onwards, as per NEP 2020 and affiliating body guidelines.

Q63: Which vocational courses should we offer? A: Choose based on student interest, local employment opportunities, available expertise, and emerging fields. Options include traditional vocations (tailoring, carpentry) and modern ones (coding, AI, data science, digital marketing, entrepreneurship).

Q64: How do we arrange internships for students? A: Build partnerships with local businesses, industries, NGOs, and government departments. Start with short exposure visits, gradually moving to structured internship programs with clear learning objectives.

Parameter 22: Child-Centered & Inclusive Pedagogy

Q65: What makes pedagogy "child-centered"? A: Focus on student's needs, interests, and learning pace; active learning rather than passive listening; student choice and voice in learning; formative feedback; and addressing individual learning styles.

Q66: How do we cater to different learning styles (VARK)? A: Use multi-sensory teaching: Visual aids, verbal explanations, reading/writing activities, and kinesthetic/hands-on experiences in every lesson. This ensures all learners access content through their preferred mode.

Q67: What are "hands-on" and "minds-on" activities? A: Hands-on means physical manipulation of materials (experiments, models, art). Minds-on means cognitive engagement (problem-solving, analyzing, creating, evaluating) that may or may not involve physical activity.

Parameter 23: Teaching Learning Materials (TLM) & ICT Integration

Q68: Do TLMs have to be expensive purchased materials? A: No! Teachers can create low-cost, no-cost TLMs from local materials. What matters is that they're age-appropriate, curriculum-aligned, and effectively support learning objectives.

Q69: What ICT facilities are minimum requirements? A: Check your affiliating body's requirements. Typically: computer lab, digital classroom with projector, internet connectivity, and access to government educational platforms like DIKSHA, NISHTHA, etc.

Q70: How do we train teachers in developing ICT-enabled content? A: Organize workshops on creating presentations, educational videos, online quizzes, using learning management systems, and accessing digital resources. Peer learning and online courses are also valuable.

Parameter 24: Competency-Based Learning (CBL)

Q71: How is CBL different from traditional teaching? A: Traditional teaching focuses on content coverage; CBL focuses on mastery of defined competencies. Students progress when they demonstrate mastery, not just when time periods end. Assessment focuses on application, not just recall.

Q72: Do we still need to complete the syllabus in CBL? A: Yes, but the emphasis shifts. Coverage is organized around competencies and learning outcomes. Quality of learning (depth and mastery) takes precedence over speed of coverage.

Q73: How do we plan lessons for CBL? A: Start with identifying the learning outcomes/competencies for each topic. Design activities that help students develop those competencies. Create assessments that measure mastery. Provide differentiated support based on student progress.

Parameter 25: Identification of Learning Needs & Individualized Instruction

Q74: What is an Individual Education Plan (IEP)? A: A customized learning plan for students with special needs or unique learning difficulties, specifying modified learning outcomes, teaching strategies, assessment methods, and support services required.

Q75: How do we identify learning difficulties early? A: Through continuous formative assessment, observation, baseline testing, screening tools, parent inputs, and attention to

warning signs like persistent struggle despite efforts, behavioral issues, or developmental delays.

Q76: What is remedial instruction? A: Additional targeted teaching for students who haven't mastered expected learning outcomes. It uses different teaching methods, simplified content, extra practice, and smaller steps to help students catch up.

Q77: What about advanced learners? A: They need enrichment through advanced capsule courses, extension activities, mentorship, competitions, projects, and opportunities for deeper exploration beyond the regular curriculum.

Parameter 26: Varied Assessment Tools & Techniques

Q78: Why can't we just use written tests for all assessments? A: Different learning domains require different assessment methods. Practical skills need observation; creativity needs projects; collaboration needs group work assessment; values need behavioral observation. Multiple tools give a complete picture.

Q79: What is portfolio-based assessment? A: A collection of student work samples over time (projects, assignments, tests, creative work) that shows learning progress, strengths, areas of growth, and achievement patterns.

Q80: How do we implement self-assessment and peer assessment? A: Provide clear rubrics, model the process, start small with simple assignments, teach students how to give constructive feedback, and gradually increase complexity as students become comfortable.

Parameter 27: Analysis of Student Assessment & Tracking Progress

Q81: What's the difference between formative and summative assessment? A: Formative is ongoing assessment for learning (to guide teaching and improve learning). Summative is assessment of learning (to certify achievement at the end of a period). Both are essential.

Q82: How do we analyze assessment data meaningfully? A: Look for patterns: Which learning outcomes are students struggling with? Which teaching methods work best? Are there common errors? Which students need intervention? Use data to adjust teaching strategies.

Q83: What is CCE (Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation)? A: A system that continuously assesses learning progress (not just at term-end) and comprehensively covers all aspects of development (scholastic and co-scholastic), using varied assessment methods.

Parameter 28: Holistic Progress Card (HPC)

Q84: Why is the traditional report card not sufficient? A: Traditional cards focus mainly on marks in academic subjects. HPC covers academic, co-scholastic, life skills, values, physical education, arts, and personal development—giving a complete picture of the child.

Q85: How is HPC aligned with NEP 2020? A: NEP emphasizes holistic development, competency-based education, and de-emphasis on rote learning. HPC reflects competency levels, skill development, and overall growth rather than just subject marks.

Q86: Should we include student self-assessment in HPC? A: Yes, this is encouraged. It promotes student ownership of learning, self-reflection, and metacognition. Include a section where students evaluate their own progress and set goals.

Parameter 29: Admission Policy & Procedures

Q87: Can we conduct entrance tests for admission? A: Follow your state's regulations and affiliating body guidelines. Many states prohibit entrance tests for younger grades. For senior grades, regulations vary. Always ensure compliance with RTE Act where applicable.

Q88: What is the admission process for foundational stage? A: Generally based on age criteria as per RTE Act and state rules. No entrance tests are allowed. First priority to neighborhood children. Ensure no discrimination based on socio-economic status.

Q89: How do we handle admission fee determination? A: As per your state's fee regulation Act and affiliating body guidelines. Fee structure must be approved by the prescribed authority (often SMC or Fee Regulatory Committee) and be transparent and justified.

Parameter 30: Guidance and Counselling Services

Q90: Do we need a full-time counsellor? A: Ideally yes, especially for larger schools and senior grades. For smaller schools, you can have a trained part-time counsellor or trained teachers designated for counselling, with referral systems to external professionals when needed.

Q91: What qualifications should a counsellor have? A: Minimum a post-graduate degree in Psychology, Counselling, or related field. Professional training in school counselling, knowledge of child psychology, and familiarity with psychometric tools are essential.

Q92: What is a Career Profile Card? A: A comprehensive profile of each student (typically from Grade 9 onwards) documenting their interests, aptitudes, strengths, personality traits, values, and career preferences based on assessments, academic performance, and counselling sessions.

Q93: When should career counselling start? A: Career awareness can start from middle stage. Formal career guidance and counselling should begin from Grade 9, intensifying in Grades 10-12 when students make important stream and career decisions.

Parameter 31: Physical Safety Measures

Q94: What is POCSO Committee? A: A committee mandated under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act to handle complaints and create awareness about child safety from sexual abuse. Composition as per regulatory guidelines.

Q95: What is POSH Committee? A: Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) Committee as per the POSH Act to prevent and address sexual harassment at the workplace, protecting female staff and students. Required for all institutions.

Q96: How often should fire evacuation drills be conducted? A: Minimum twice a year is recommended, but quarterly drills ensure better preparedness. Maintain detailed records: date, time, duration, issues identified, and corrective actions taken.

Q97: What is Last Child Drop Policy? A: A safety protocol ensuring that every child is safely handed over to authorized persons. Special attention to the last child waiting for pickup, with designated staff supervision and documented procedures.

Q98: What should the Health & Safety Audit Committee check? A: Physical infrastructure safety, lab safety, chemical storage, sports equipment condition, food safety in canteen, drinking water quality, sanitation facilities, electrical safety, fire safety equipment, and compliance with all safety SOPs.

Parameter 32: Psychological Safety Measures

Q99: What is the difference between bullying and ragging? A: Bullying is repeated aggressive behavior (physical, verbal, or social) by peers. Ragging typically involves senior students harassing juniors. Both are harmful and must be strictly prevented through clear policies and swift action.

Q100: How do we train teachers on Emotional Intelligence? A: Through workshops on recognizing and managing emotions (self and others), empathy development, effective communication, stress management, and creating emotionally supportive classrooms. Regular refresher training is important.

Q101: What is meant by "positive self-concept"? A: A student's belief about their own abilities, worth, and potential. Teachers help build this through encouragement, recognizing effort, providing constructive feedback, setting achievable challenges, and celebrating progress.

Q102: How do we ensure inclusive, non-discriminatory teaching? A: Train teachers on unconscious bias, use gender-neutral language, ensure equal opportunities for all students, celebrate diversity, have zero-tolerance for discrimination, use inclusive examples in teaching, and create classroom cultures of respect.

DOMAIN 3: PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT & IMPROVEMENT

Parameter 33: Continuous Improvement (CI)

Q103: What's the difference between corrective and preventive actions? A: Corrective actions fix problems after they occur (reactive). Preventive actions identify potential problems before they occur and prevent them (proactive). Mature quality systems are primarily preventive.

Q104: How do we identify areas needing improvement? A: Through internal reviews, stakeholder feedback, assessment data analysis, benchmarking with standards, comparison with similar schools, identifying recurring issues, and systematic process audits.

Q105: How often should we review our processes? A: Critical processes (safety, learning outcomes) should be monitored continuously with formal reviews quarterly. Other processes can be reviewed semi-annually or annually based on their impact and stability.

Parameter 34: Grievance Redressal System

Q106: What types of grievances should we handle? A: Academic issues, administrative problems, admission disputes, infrastructure concerns, fee matters, discrimination complaints, safety issues, staff behavior, discipline matters, and any stakeholder concern about school functioning.

Q107: How quickly should grievances be resolved? A: Define timelines in your SOP. Simple issues should be resolved within 3-7 days, complex matters within 15-30 days. Always acknowledge receipt immediately and keep complainants informed of progress.

Q108: What if a grievance is against the principal? A: Your SOP should have an escalation mechanism. Such grievances should go directly to the Management Committee or designated authority above the Principal to ensure unbiased handling.

Q109: Should we allow anonymous complaints? A: Yes, but handle carefully. Anonymous complaints prevent retaliation but can lack verifiability. Investigate genuinely, but may require corroboration. Encourage named complaints by ensuring confidentiality and protection from retaliation.

Parameter 35: Benchmarking and Innovation

Q110: What does benchmarking mean for schools? A: Comparing your processes and results against defined standards (like NABET criteria), best practices from research, or high-performing schools to identify gaps and improvement opportunities.

Q111: How do we identify best practices to adopt? A: Read educational research, attend conferences, network with other schools, review government guidelines and policy documents (NEP, NCF), study award-winning schools, and consult with educational experts.

Q112: Do innovations have to be completely original? A: No. Adapting proven practices from other contexts to your school is valuable innovation. Original innovations are great, but don't reinvent the wheel—learn from others and contextualize to your needs.

Q113: How do we document innovations? A: Create case studies documenting: the problem/opportunity identified, solution designed, implementation process, resources used, challenges faced, results achieved, and lessons learned. Include photos/videos and data evidence.

Parameter 36: Self-Assessment and Review of Compliance

Q114: How often should we do self-assessment? A: Annually at minimum. Many schools do it twice yearly or even quarterly for continuous monitoring. More frequent self-assessment allows timely course correction.

Q115: Who should be involved in self-assessment? A: Form a Self-Assessment Committee (SAC) including the Head of Quality Assurance, senior faculty, department heads, admin representatives, and potentially SMC members. Different teams can assess different domains.

Q116: What if we score low in self-assessment? A: That's the purpose—to identify gaps! Don't be discouraged. Use it as a diagnostic tool. Create an improvement plan, prioritize critical areas, implement systematically, and reassess to track progress.

Q117: Can we use the accreditation checklist for self-assessment? A: Yes! The checklist (Table I) in the document is designed for both self-assessment and external assessment. Use it to evaluate your compliance level on each parameter regularly.

GENERAL IMPLEMENTATION QUESTIONS

Q118: Where do we start with implementation? A: Start with Parameter 11 (compliance with statutory requirements), then work on governance standards (Parameters 1-11), followed by education processes (Parameters 12-32), and finally performance measurement (Parameters 33-36).

Q119: How long does it take to become accreditation-ready? A: Depends on your current status. Schools with good existing systems may be ready in 2-4 months. Schools starting from scratch might need 6 months to build robust systems and gather evidence.

Q120: Do we need to implement everything simultaneously? A: No! Use a phased approach. Prioritize based on: regulatory requirements, safety issues, critical learning processes, and areas with significant gaps. Build systematically rather than trying to do everything at once.

Q121: What kind of training do our staff need? A: Training on: quality concepts and accreditation standards, documentation and SOP development, competency-based education, varied assessment methods, 21st-century skills integration, ICT in education, inclusive teaching, counselling basics, and safety protocols.

Q122: How much documentation is required? A: Quality documentation, not quantity. Focus on essential SOPs, policies, records, and evidence that demonstrate compliance and effectiveness. Over-documentation can be as problematic as under-documentation.

Q123: What if we're a small school with limited resources? A: Scale appropriately. The standards are applicable to all school sizes. Use technology for efficiency, leverage parental involvement, collaborate with other schools, access free government resources, and focus on evidence-based low-cost solutions.

Q124: How do we maintain momentum after initial implementation? A: Integrate standards into regular planning cycles, assign clear responsibilities, conduct regular reviews, celebrate successes, provide ongoing training, keep the SMC engaged, use data for decision-making, and make quality assurance part of school culture.

Q125: What support is available during implementation? A: NABET-QCI may provide guidance documents, workshops, and helpdesk support. Network with schools that are

already accredited, join professional associations, consult educational experts, and access online resources and training modules.

ASSESSMENT & RATING QUESTIONS

Q126: What are the different levels of accreditation? A: Four levels: Foundational Certification (<40%, 1 year validity), Entry Level Accreditation (40-60%, 2 years), Standard Accreditation (60-80%, 3 years), and Accreditation with School of Excellence (>80%, 4 years).

Q127: What does "Level 3 on all parameters" mean? A: Level 3 represents "Satisfactory Compliance" - meeting essential accreditation standards. To qualify for accreditation, you must score at least Level 3 (out of 5) on every parameter, not just an average score. This ensures no critical area is neglected.

Q128: What are SR/RR parameters? A: SR (Statutory Requirements) and RR (Regulatory Requirements) refer to compliance parameters like Parameter 11 (infrastructure and safety certificates) and health/safety parameters (31-32). These are foundational and must be at Level 3 minimum for any accreditation.

Q129: What is surveillance in accreditation? A: Periodic review visits during the accreditation validity period to verify that the school maintains compliance with standards. Standard Accreditation requires annual surveillance; School of Excellence requires surveillance after 12 months, then yearly.

Q130: How is the overall score calculated? A: Each parameter is scored 1-5. The total score across all 36 parameters is calculated and converted to a percentage. For example, if you score 120 out of maximum 180 points (36 parameters \times 5), that's 66.67% (Standard Accreditation level).

EVIDENCE AND DOCUMENTATION QUESTIONS

Q131: What types of evidence are most valuable? A: Authentic, dated, and contextualized evidence: actual student work samples, filled assessment tools, meeting minutes with dates and signatures, photographs with captions, analyzed data reports, approved policies, training attendance records, and implementation logs.

Q132: How do we organize evidence for each parameter? A: Create a parameter-wise folder system (physical or digital). Each folder should contain: relevant SOPs, policies, planning documents, implementation records, review reports, improvement actions, and supporting evidence like photos/videos.

Q133: Should we collect evidence throughout the year or just before assessment? A: Throughout the year! Build evidence collection into regular processes. Retrospectively creating evidence is difficult, time-consuming, and may not be authentic. Make documentation part of routine operations.

Q134: What if we've been doing something but didn't document it? A: Start documenting now and going forward. You can create retrospective documentation for some things (like describing your admission process in an SOP), but ongoing evidence (like MoMs, student work) must be current and authentic.

Q135: How many samples do we need to provide? A: The document often says "sample" evidence. Provide sufficient samples to demonstrate consistent practice across grades/subjects. For example, 2-3 lesson plans per subject per grade, not every single lesson plan created.

Children with Special Needs (CWSN)

Q136: What qualifies as "special needs"? A: Learning disabilities, physical disabilities, intellectual disabilities, autism spectrum disorders, ADHD, speech/language impairments, visual/hearing impairments, or any condition requiring specialized educational support.

Q137: Do we need a special educator on staff? A: Ideally yes, especially if you have enrolled CWSN students. For smaller schools, train regular teachers in inclusive practices and establish referral connections with special education professionals or resource centers.

Q138: What is an IEP and who creates it? A: Individual Education Plan—a customized learning plan for CWSN students. Created collaboratively by teachers, special educator/counsellor, parents, and potentially external specialists, based on the child's assessment and needs.

Q139: How do we assess CWSN students? A: Through differentiated assessment methods appropriate to their abilities. May include modified question papers, extra time, oral assessment, practical demonstration, portfolio assessment, or customized rubrics based on their IEP goals.

Technology and ICT Questions

Q140: What government platforms should schools use? A: DIKSHA (digital content), NISHTHA (teacher training), e-Pathshala (textbooks and resources), SWAYAM (courses), PM eVIDYA (multi-mode access), and state-specific portals. Check NCERT and your state education department.

Q141: What if we have limited internet connectivity? A: Use downloadable resources for offline use, leverage DIKSHA's offline functionality, use mobile data alternatives, focus on teacher-created digital content stored locally, and gradually improve connectivity through phased infrastructure development.

Resource Management Questions

Q142: What if our budget is limited for implementing all requirements? A: Prioritize: safety and regulatory compliance first, then critical learning processes. Use low-cost alternatives: teacher-made TLMs, free government resources, community partnerships, parental involvement, and phased implementation.

Q143: Can we seek partnerships for implementation? A: Absolutely! Partner with: other schools for resource sharing, local industries for vocational training, NGOs for specialized programs, government schemes for infrastructure, and parent community for various support activities.

Staff Workload Concerns

Q144: Won't this create excessive workload for teachers? A: Initially, documentation requires effort. However, good systems eventually reduce workload by creating clarity, reducing confusion, streamlining processes, and preventing recurring problems. Balance is key—avoid over-documentation.

Q145: How do we manage time for all these requirements? A: Integrate quality practices into regular work rather than treating them as additional tasks. For example, lesson planning should naturally incorporate learning outcomes mapping. Use efficient documentation templates and technology tools.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Parent Involvement Questions

Q146: How do we effectively involve parents in the accreditation process? A: Inform them about accreditation goals and benefits, seek their feedback regularly, involve them in SMC where applicable, share progress updates, invite them to observe certain activities, and communicate how quality improvement benefits their children.

Q147: What if parents don't understand or value accreditation? A: Communicate in simple terms focusing on tangible benefits: better learning outcomes, safer environment, improved facilities, systematic teaching, comprehensive student development, and enhanced school reputation.

Q148: Should parents see our self-assessment results? A: Transparency builds trust. Share overall findings and improvement plans with the parent community (through SMC or general meetings) without overwhelming them with technical details. Show how you're working on identified gaps.

Student Involvement Questions

Q149: How can students contribute to quality improvement? A: Through student feedback on teaching-learning, participation in self and peer assessment, student councils providing inputs on facilities and activities, leadership in certain initiatives, and involvement in school improvement projects.

Q150: Should we involve students in self-assessment? A: For certain parameters, yes. Student feedback on teaching quality, facilities, safety, support services, and their learning experience is valuable. Use age-appropriate methods: surveys for seniors, simple feedback forms for younger students.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Review and Monitoring Questions

Q151: What's the difference between monitoring and review? A: Monitoring is ongoing tracking of implementation against plans (weekly/monthly). Review is periodic deeper evaluation of effectiveness and outcomes (quarterly/annually). Both are essential for continuous improvement.

Q152: Who should conduct internal reviews? A: The Head of Quality Assurance coordinates, but reviews should involve relevant stakeholders: process owners for their domains, cross-functional teams for integrated processes, and management for strategic review.

Q153: What happens if review identifies major gaps? A: Develop corrective action plans with timelines and responsibilities, allocate resources for improvement, provide necessary training or support, monitor implementation closely, and conduct follow-up reviews to verify effectiveness.

Sustainability Questions

Q154: How do we sustain quality after achieving accreditation? A: Make quality management part of school culture, not a one-time project. Continue regular self-assessments, maintain documentation systems, keep training staff, respond to stakeholder feedback, innovate continuously, and prepare for surveillance assessments.

Q155: What if key staff members leave? A: This is why system-based approaches matter! Document everything through SOPs, maintain organizational knowledge in manuals and records, have succession plans for key roles, train multiple people in critical functions, and ensure smooth handovers.

Q156: How do we prevent reverting to old practices? A: Regular monitoring, leadership commitment, making new practices easier than old ones, recognizing and rewarding compliance, making stakeholders accountable, sharing success stories, and continuous reinforcement through training and communication.

MISCELLANEOUS PRACTICAL QUESTIONS

Q157: Can we get accreditation if we're currently under-performing academically? A: Accreditation assesses your systems and processes, not just current results. If you demonstrate systematic approaches to improvement, evidence of progress, and commitment to quality standards, you can qualify. Accreditation itself will help improve outcomes.

Q158: What if our affiliating board has different requirements? A: Always comply with your affiliating board's mandatory requirements first. The NABET standards are designed to be compatible with various boards. Where there are differences, demonstrate compliance with both sets of requirements.

Q159: Do we need to implement everything exactly as described? A: The document provides "suggestive" methodologies. You can adapt to your context while meeting the core intent and requirements of each parameter. Document your adaptations and rationale. Innovation in implementation is encouraged.

Q160: How detailed should our SOPs be? A: Detailed enough for new staff to understand and follow, but not so lengthy that nobody reads them. Include: purpose, scope, responsibilities, step-by-step process, forms/templates used, monitoring methods, and related documents. Aim for 2-5 pages typically.

Q161: What's the role of the affiliating board in accreditation? A: NABET accreditation is separate from but complementary to board affiliation. Some boards may recognize or encourage NABET accreditation. The standards ensure compliance with board requirements while adding comprehensive quality management.

Q162: Can we implement standards for only certain grades? A: The standards are designed for comprehensive implementation. However, you can phase implementation starting with certain grades/stages, especially for new schools. Document your phased approach and timeline for complete implementation.

Q163: What if we identify we're non-compliant in critical areas? A: Use self-assessment to identify gaps before applying for accreditation. Develop an improvement plan, implement systematically, and apply when ready. It's better to be honest in self-assessment than to face rejection in external assessment.

Q164: How do we handle differences of opinion within staff about implementation? A: Through dialogue, training, sharing research evidence on effectiveness, involving resisters in planning, starting with pilot implementations, demonstrating benefits, and building consensus. Leadership commitment is crucial.

Q165: Can newly established schools apply for accreditation? A: Yes, but you need sufficient operational history to demonstrate implementation of processes and show some results. Typically, schools should have at least one complete academic year of operation before applying.

POST-ACCREDITATION QUESTIONS

Q166: What are the benefits of achieving accreditation? A: Enhanced reputation, parent confidence, systematic quality improvement, staff professionalism, better learning outcomes, competitive advantage in admissions, potential recognition from authorities, structured management systems, and continuous improvement culture.

Q167: Can we use accreditation status in marketing? A: Yes, you can mention your accreditation status, level achieved, and validity period in promotional materials. However, claims should be factual and not misleading. Follow NABET guidelines on using accreditation logos and certificates.

Q168: What's expected during surveillance visits? A: Verification of continued compliance, review of improvement actions since last assessment, checking maintenance of documentation, observation of actual practices, stakeholder interviews, and assessment of progress on recommendations from previous assessment.

Q169: How do we prepare for surveillance? A: Maintain all systems and documentation continuously (not just before visits), implement recommendations from previous assessment, document improvements and new initiatives, keep evidence updated, and be ready to demonstrate actual implementation.

Q170: Can we apply for higher accreditation levels? A: Yes. After achieving one level, continue improving and apply for reassessment at a higher level when your surveillance period shows consistent higher performance. Demonstrate systematic enhancement across all parameters.

FINAL GUIDANCE QUESTIONS

Q171: What's the biggest mistake schools make in implementation? A: Treating accreditation as a documentation exercise rather than genuine quality improvement. Creating policies and SOPs on paper without actual implementation. Focusing on evidence collection over actual practice improvement.

Q172: What's the most important success factor? A: Leadership commitment. When school leadership genuinely believes in quality improvement (not just getting a certificate), provides resources, models behavior, holds people accountable, and celebrates progress—implementation succeeds.

Q173: Should we hire consultants for implementation? A: Consultants can provide guidance, training, and faster setup, but don't outsource the actual work. Schools must own the process. Consultants should build capacity, not create dependency. Many schools successfully self-implement with proper training.

Q174: What resources does NABET-QCI provide? A: The accreditation standard document (this document), application forms and processes, assessor training, potentially guidance webinars or workshops, helpdesk for queries, and post-assessment feedback. Check the NABET website for current offerings.

Q175: Where can we get more help or information? A: NABET-QCI website and helpdesk, training programs and workshops offered by NABET, networking with accredited schools, educational consultants specializing in quality management, professional education associations, and online forums/groups of schools pursuing accreditation.

Q176: What's the single most important thing to remember? A: Accreditation is not a destination but a journey. It's about building a culture of continuous quality improvement that benefits students, not just earning a certificate. Focus on genuine improvement, and accreditation recognition will follow.