# Dimensions of Documentation for Assessment and Accreditation of Higher Educational Institutions

## Kulkarni Arvind Madhukar[1], Patil Sardar Ananda[2]

[1]Assistant Professor in Commerce and Coordinator, IQAC, Nya. Tatyasaheb Athalye Arts, Ved. S. R. Sapre Commerce and Vid. DadasahebPitre Science College, Devrukh. Tal.Sangmeshwar, Dist. Ratnagiri-415804

[2]Assistant Professor in Geography and Member, IQAC, Nya. TatyasahebAthalye Arts, Ved. S. R. Sapre Commerce and Vid. DadasahebPitre Science College, Devrukh. Tal.Sangmeshwar, Dist. Ratnagiri-415804

## ABSTRACT

*The SMART documentation and Documentation Management System (DMS) plays a significant role in the Assessment and Accreditation (A & A). The administration of documentation, the application of technology in maintaining, retrieving and applying documents in the assessment process and measuring the impacts of SMART documentation is the significant steps in effective documentation. The open source technology like Google and Facebook services can be better explored for A & A. With the help of open source computer technology, SMART documentation can be done in a much easier and faster way. It is the responsibility of the IQAC to design and develop a system for the documentation of the organization.*

**Key Words: SMART Documentation, Documentation Management System (DMS),Management Information System (MIS), Fulcrum, Google Services**

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## INTRODUCTION

Documentation is one of the most important aspects of an effective administrative system. The policy-making, strategic planning, preparation and executionof plans, allocationand assignment of work, effective Management Information System (hereafter named as MIS) requires handy support of effective documentation. The academic institutions should consider the three dimensions of documentation for assessment and accreditation purpose i.e., the administration of documentation work, use oftechnology and impact measurement. Effective documentation plays a pivotal role in the administration of the college. The MIS depends on accurate data collection, analysis of the data, and its interpretation. Documentation is the base of this process. Data related to every aspect of the institution should be accurately collected and neatly maintained. The accurately analyzed and interpreted data provide a sound basis for decision making.

The Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-Bound (hereafter named as SMART) documentation plays a significant role in the overall process of Assessment & Accreditation (hereafter named as A & A). Recently, the NAAC has changed the focus and method of assessment and accreditation process. The coreemphasis of the reform in the methodof A & A has been to augment the redeeming structures of the A & A process and make them more vigorous, objective, transparent and accessibleand make it ICT enabled. Around 70 percent assessment is done through online evaluationof matrix of the SSR and System Generated Scores (SGS) are assigned based onsupporting documents submitted by the college, through online*(NAAC Manual, 2019).*

This paper highlights the administration of documentation, the application of technology in maintaining, retrieving and applying documents in the A & A and measuring the impacts of SMART documentation.

**Administrative Strategy of Documentation**

Documentation needs an unambiguous and focused strategy.The strategy includes policy,procedure,and program.

**Policy of Documentation**

The policy of documentation isframed by the Internal Quality Assurance Cell (hereafter termed as IQAC).While framing policy the IQAC should take a review of the volume of documentation required, the departments concerned, the specialization required, availability of human resources, quality of human resources (technically equipped), timeavailable, budget provision for documentation,etc. Policy needs to be elaborative and inclusive

**Procedure of Documentation**

The procedure of documentation process is an important aspect of SMART and effective documentation work. In an academic institution, there are various curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular departments. The institution can adopt two types of policies for SMART documentation.

### DEPARTMENT AND COMMITTEE WISE DOCUMENTATION

Each department or committee should maintain its own documents and organize resources required accordingly. At the end of the year these documents, preferably digitized can be handed over to the IQAC for further procedure. This type has some advantages, mainly, use of flexitime concept, preparation of the ready reckoner of departmental activities, freedom of work, etc. The major drawbacks are the requirement of separate skilled staff, wastage of resources due to duplication of work owing to the interdisciplinary nature of activities, etc.

**Centralized Documentation**

IQAC should frame a separate committee for documentation; especially it is beneficial for large institutions.A separate staff, independent budget allocation, and required infrastructureshould be provided. The committee may collect all the documents from curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular departments within a stipulated time period and digitize it. At the beginning of the year, a time table can be given for the documentation process. The major advantages of this system are the avoidance of duplication of work, specialization, optimum utilization of resources, systemization of documentation process and departments are free from the tedious work.

Academic institutions can prefer either of these systems. Documents can be kept either in chronological order or according to the importance of the document.

**Program of Documentation**

The IQAC can prepare a schedule for documentation. Preferably, weekly or fortnightly the documents of activities undertaken by the various departments can be collected and digitized. A specific day or date in a week or fortnight is given to the concerned department to handover all the documents to the IQAC. Departments can upload scanned copies of the documents as per the provision made by the IQAC. Once in a month, the IQAC may take a review of the work done in comparison with the annual calendar. The departments who fail to upload or handover their documents shouldbe instructed to do so without procrastination. For digitization and proper storage of documentation, experienced and skilled persons are required. The IQAC should take care of it ahead of the documentation.

**Training for Documentation**

Most of the times digitization of the documentation is done ata departmental level to avoid delay and over-centralization in the documentation process. Particularly when the departments are independent and not interrelated, department wise documentation is preferable and appropriate.For proper and standardized documentation training is required. The computer experts within the institute can train other faculty members; otherwise, external experts can be invited.

**Smart Documentation**

Digitization of documents is an omnipresent trend. For SMART documentation, a proper Documentation Management System (hereafter named as DMS) using computer technology is needs to be developed. SMART documentation requires the following things.

**Creating Formats for Documentation**

Information in the form of raw data needs to be analyzed and tabulated. If proper e-formats are given to the concernedperson and/or department, tabulation becomes easy and reduces the burden on the documentation committee.

For example, Figure-1 reveals detailed information regarding one of the aspects related to the facts of research to be collected for inclusion in SSR and/or AQAR.Excel sheet can be generated by the responses collected through Google Forms. The said excel sheet can be directly included in the AQAR/ SSR report and the link of the proofs related to the same can be used for uploading on the NAAC portal.

The advantages of 'Google Forms' are numerous; regular updating is easily possible, easy to handle and easy accessibility (can use Mobiles), free source, zero expenditure, a tool for online examination, surveys, feedbacks, etc.

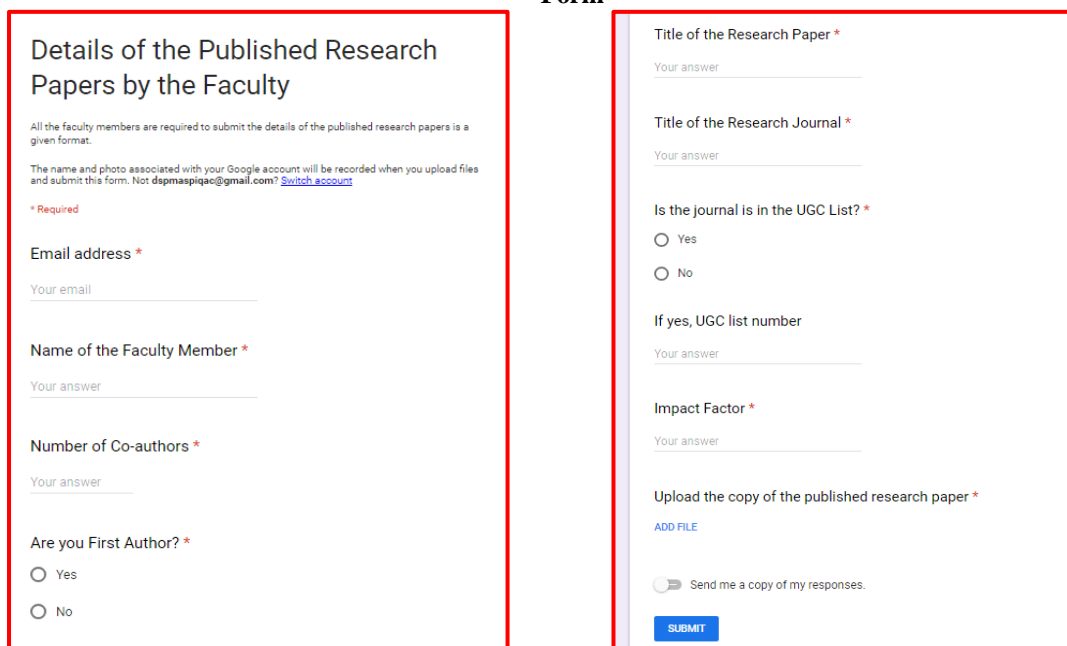**Collection of Information regarding published research paper and related proofs using Google Form**



**Fig. 1**

## INDEXING OF DOCUMENTS

Indexing of documents is an essence for easy retrieval of documents. Title of the document, brief content, related department, date, source, etc. are the components of the document to be indexed. Properly indexed documents reduce the retrieval time and pains of the retriever.

### GEO-Tagging of Various Activities

Geo-tagging validates the activities with spatial and temporal context, e.g. the work completed by the NSS, DLLE, or any other department related to social and environmental significance, like Bandhara Construction, plantation, etc. can be geo-tagged and made available for all the stakeholders. Also, social surveys conducted by the departments, solid waste disposal sites, etc. can be supported with the Geo-Spatial technology and freely made available for the community through Google maps. The Geo-Tagging is the most significant document and not necessary to maintain any unwanted files to prove the activity.

### Use of Youtube, Facebook Pages, and Google Sites

These are the open platforms for resource sharing. Social media can be used effectively for documentation purpose. YouTube can be used to upload videos of various programs, Facebook pages for uploading the reports, photographs and the creation of future events, Google sites can be used to create departmental websites free of charge. These all help for the creation of an image of the institute and day to day documentation of the concerned department. One can access the document from anywhere and anytime.

### Levels of Documentation

The documentation can be done on various levels considering the size, scope and its need.

### Individual Level:

The personal documents should be maintained on individual level e.g. the documents related to research, personal achievements, contribution to society and administration, CAS related documents, etc.

**Departmental – Curricular, Co-Curricular And Extracurricular**

The documents related to departmental work academic or co-curricular e.g. syllabus, teaching diary, academic planning, minutes of the departmental meetings, study tours, project work, student participation in various activities, departmental research and outcomes, student data bank, etc.

**Central Repository For Documentation**

The documents maintained by the academic, co-curricular and extracurricular departments should be kept in a central repository system for easy access to the authority.

**Internal Quality Assurance Cell**

In the absence of departmental level documentation and central repository system, the IQAC can directly collect the documents from the individuals and the departments and maintain it, but it is advisable to have the departmental system for effective documentation.

**The Process Of Smart Documentation**

Capture, storage, indexing, locating, retrieval, auditing, and submission to the NAAC are the phasesinthe SMART documentation process. Figure 2 and 3 depict the information about SMART documentation processand DMS. The SMART documentation process supported DMS with technology is more productive.
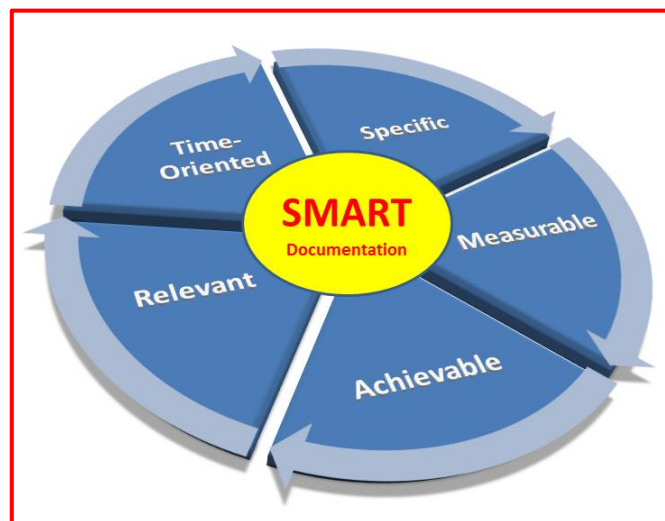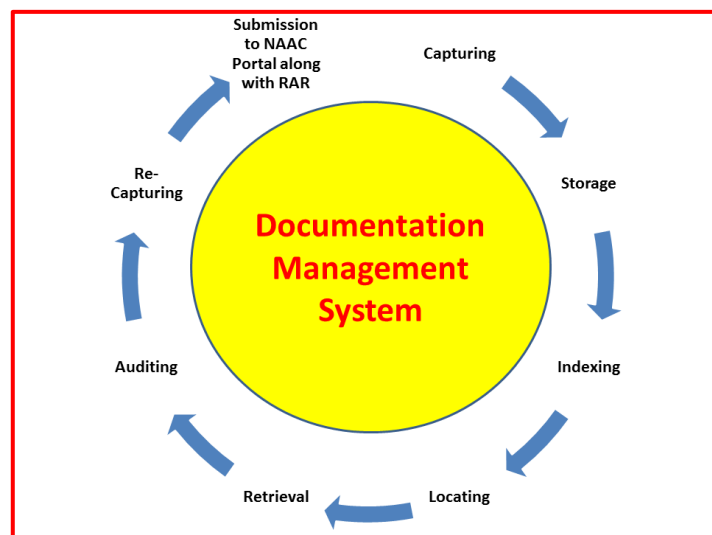


**Fig. 2**



**Figure 3**

**Impact Measurement**

It is important to have a follow-up system regarding SMART documentation work. The responsibility of the follow-up always lies on the IQAC. IQAC can seek weekly or fortnightly reports from concerned departments regarding the documentation progress. An academic calendar can be used for the cross check for this purpose.

**Testing of Systems**

The system devised for SMART documentation needs to be revised as and when required. e.g., the e-questionnaires prepared using 'Google Forms' need to be tested and revised before submitting the details and the supporting document, if required.

**Feedback from Stakeholders**

User feedback is an important mechanism for the efficient functioning of the system. Regular feedback is essential from the users regarding the effectiveness, accessibility, difficulty level and utility of the system. The received feedback needs to be analyzed and the action should be taken accordingly.

## SIGNIFICANCE OF DMS

The significance of the DMS is as given below.

1. Resource saving (Time, energy and natural)
2. Quality referral services for the institute as well as locality
3. Documentation and data management in the HEIs are areas where the process of assessment by NAAC has made a Significant Impact
4. Proper management and presentation of the relevant document
5. Easy Accessibility to the documents
6. Capability to generate Reports
7. Promoting analytics and informatics for Decision Making
8. Helpful for research

## Conclusion

The SMART documentation is need of the hour for any institution for effective decision making and results-oriented functioning. Documentation forms the basis for effective Management Information System (MIS). With the help of open source computer technology, SMART documentation can be done in a much easier and faster way. It is the responsibility of the IQAC to design and develop a system for documentation of the organization. The administration of documentation stands to be a fulcrum of the total administration of the institution.

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