CBSE School Quality Assessment and Assurance (SQAA)

"If we have to bring Quality in the Nation we need to begin at the roots i.e. in schools".

Dr. A P J Abdul Kalam

BACKGROUND

With the adoption of Sustainable Development Goals 2030 by India wherein one of the goals is improving the quality of education, raising the quality of school education in the country is one of the priority areas. It is a must for achieving global excellence. Comprehensive approaches and strategies are being devised to address the issue of improving the quality of school education in the country.

In view of the great need to improve standards of school education, focus has to be shifted on the performance and improvement of schools. Therefore, a comprehensive school evaluation system must be developed. In tune to this, CBSE has developed a framework **'School Quality Assessment and Assurance'** which helps in monitoring identified outcomes at all levels and across all spheres of school education. It would help teachers, educational administrators and all other stakeholders involved in school education to learn from this exercise and improve themselves.

INTRODUCTION

School Quality Assessment and Assurance (SQAA) is a commitment by Central Board of Secondary Education to provide global parameters of attainment as standards in schools affiliated to it. The CBSE aspires to lay down a set of standards and best practices as paradigms for attaining the benchmark in an individual institution for the upliftment of learning outcomes in the domain of school education imparted to children. The main purpose of SQAA is enhancement of quality, recognition of excellence, promotion of accountability, and benchmarking schools across a range of descriptors or indicators of assessment.

It also captures the unique ethos of an institution such as a school nurturing and promoting excellence in sports, or integrating innovative technology in classroom teaching, or with state of the art infrastructure or incubators of innovation in teaching learning processes, or involved extensively with community outreach activities, or focused on promoting social cohesiveness and equity, or excelling in the area of science and technology. This will also provide a degree of choice to a student or parent looking for specific qualities.
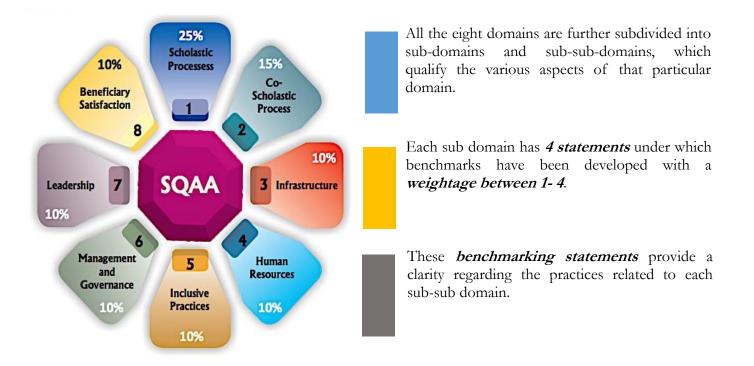
The School Quality Assurance Assessment (SQAA) is easily implementable, feasible, transparent, objective, and carries with it a measure of credibility and acceptability.

This will not involve ranking institutions/schools, but rather, will establish a level of acceptable quality for all assessed schools while respecting their unique mission.

Assessment of a school is intended to be a means to document the strengths and weaknesses of its educational practices and institutional effectiveness leading them to desired objectives. This will help them to clearly visualize their unique features and make them aware of what could be improved further.

FRAMEWORK OF SQAA

Since quality is a complex issue in education and should be seen in a holistic manner so CBSE School Quality Assessment and Assurance is holistic and it covers all aspects of school functioning, namely **Scholastic Processes, Co-Scholastic Processes, Infrastructure, Human Resources, Inclusive Practices, Management and Governance, Leadership and Beneficiary Satisfaction**. These eight domains carry different weightage and are further divided into sub domains which qualify the various aspects of that particular domain.

All the eight domains are further subdivided into sub-domains and sub-sub-domains, which qualify the various aspects of that particular domain.

Each sub domain has **4 statements** under which benchmarks have been developed with a **weightage between 1- 4**.

These **benchmarking statements** provide a clarity regarding the practices related to each sub-sub domain.

The benchmarking statements have been given in **CHAPTER 3 of SQAA Manual** available at the link _____. Although it is expected that each school meets the best practices as depicted in the benchmarking statements, not all statements will apply to or be appropriate for each school. Each school will mark against the statement that is applicable and appropriate for the school. This will help the school to aspire for the next level.

The first statement under each sub-sub domain depicts the best practice(s) carrying a weightage of 4. In order to get a score of 4, the other three statements must stand true/appropriate for the school.

Description of the Level of the Score per sub-sub domain

There are **four levels of performance** of **'Dynamic-Evolving', 'Stable', 'Transient' and 'Inceptive'** for rating school processes. The school can refer the following criteria to know where it stands in terms of developmental stage, and formulate appropriate and achievable plans for self-improvement and enhance accountability.

Score	Maturity Level	Guidance
4	Dynamic-Evolving	Demonstrates strong benchmarked defined and documented processes. Governance and leadership exhibits accountability, responsibility, self-evaluation and improvement planning.
3	Stable	Evidences of data based improvement processes. System is defined and documented. People are aware of their roles in the institution and practicing it. Practices are preventive and corrective in nature.
2	Transient	System is in early constructive years. Practices are generally corrective in nature.
1	Inceptive	System is at initial stage. Practices are individual based.

Note: If none of the above are true then no score need be given against the concerned sub-sub-domain.

Domains and Sub Domains

S. No.	Domains/Sub-domains
1	**Scholastic Processes**
1.1	**Curriculum Planning**
	1.1.1 Principal and teachers are familiar with the spirit and content of NCF
	1.1.2 Curriculum develops skills and abilities which prepare students for lifelong learning and fosters global citizenship.
	1.1.3 The Principal and teachers are familiar with the curriculum documents and support material brought out by CBSE.
	1.1.4 There is an Annual Curriculum and Pedagogical Plan for the development of Scholastic Skills
1.2	**Teaching Learning Processes**
	1.2.1 School follows an optimum number of teaching days and teaching hours.
	1.2.2 Teacher – Student Ratio
	1.2.3 Teachers adopt varied teaching learning approaches reflecting their understanding of the needs of the students.
1.3	**Student Performance, Assessment of Learning Outcomes and Feedback**
	1.3.1 Learning Indicators/Outcomes are used as check points to assess child's learning at

	different points of time.
	1.3.2 The school has defined procedures and criteria to regularly assess the students' performance and uses the results to improve their performance.
	1.3.3 Varied assessment tools and techniques are used to assess the performance of the students.
	1.3.4 Teachers prepare balanced question papers to assess the performance of students.
	1.3.5 The school ensures 75% attendance of its students
	1.3.6 The school ensures all students achieve and progress on their development continuum.
2	**Co-Scholastic Processes**
2.1	**Curriculum and Pedagogical Planning**
	2.1.1 There is an Annual Curriculum and Pedagogical Plan for the development of Co-Scholastic Skills (CSS).
2.2	**Art Education**
	2.2.1 The school provides opportunities for Art and Visual and Performing Arts activities.
2.3	**Work Education**
	2.3.1 The school implements Work Education Programme.
2.4	**Skill Enhancement**
	2.4.1 The school provides facilities to the students to participate in Literary and Creative Skills; Scientific Skills; Information and Communication Technology Skills; Organizational Leadership Skills and Aesthetic Skills.
2.5	**Mainstreaming Physical Education and Sports**
	2.5.1 School has a Policy for promoting Healthy Physical Education in Students.
	2.5.2 School has a strong leadership and management of PE and Sport.
	2.5.3 Teaching and learning of PE is rich and engaging.
	2.5.4 PE is given designated time in the curriculum.
	2.5.5 Assessment is as per the learning outcomes and the grade given in the curriculum document.
	2.5.6 PE helps in making healthy life style choices.
	2.5.7 Inclusive PE and Sport is an important aspect of school ambience.
	2.5.8 PE follows an integrated approach and all the four strands are a part of the larger curriculum.
2.6	**Life Skills Education**
	2.6.1 The school has a Life Skills development programme
2.7	**Values Education**
	2.7.1 The school has a well-integrated Value Education Programme.
3	**Infrastructure - Adequacy, Functionality, Aesthetics and Safety**
3.1	**Classrooms, Library, Laboratory, Computer Labs and ICT Facilities**
	3.1.1 The school has sufficient classrooms conducive to learning.

		3.1.2 The School Library facilitates effective delivery/implementation of its educational programmes.
		3.1.3 Laboratories are available to support learning activities
		3.1.4 Computer and other ICT facilities are available to support different administrative and educational activities in the school.
3.2	**Principal's Office, Staff Room and Administration Offices**	
		3.2.1 The school has sufficient space for Principal, Staff and Administration as per requirements.
3.3	**Infirmary (Medical room), Water and Sanitation, Health Management facilities**	
		3.3.1 The school has adequate water, sanitation and health management facilities and follows effective waste management practices.
3.4	**Furniture**	
		3.4.1 The school has adequate, safe, comfortable, age appropriate and aesthetically designed furniture.
3.5	**Lighting and Ventilation**	
		3.5.1 The school building is designed for natural lighting and ventilation in keeping with the best international norms.
3.6	**Disaster Management Provisions**	
		3.6.1 Adequate provisions/ effective measures are in place for Disaster Management.
3.7	**Eco-friendly Orientation, Aesthetics, Lawns and Green Plants**	
		3.7.1 The school practices eco-friendly processes.
3.8	**Safety Provisions**	
		3.8.1 The school ensures safety measures as per statutory requirements and as defined by the Board from time to time.
3.9	**Playground and Sports Facilities**	
		3.9.1 Indoor and outdoor sport facilities are available and support differently-abled students.
3.10	**Rooms for Activities – Arts, Sculpture, Music, Dance, Theatre, Technology**	
		3.10.1 The school has adequate number of activity rooms for art, sculpture, music, dance, theatre, technology.
4	**Human Resources**	
4.1	**School Staff – Teaching and Non-Teaching**	
		4.1.1 The school recruits qualified and competent staff (teaching and non-teaching) that is sufficient in number to support fulfilment of school mission and objectives.
		4.1.2 The school has an induction policy in place for the new employees.
		4.1.3 The school conducts staff appraisal.
		4.1.4 The school carries out staff development programmes and capacity building of teachers.
		4.1.5 The school decides the salary and other allowances as per state norms/central norms.
		4.1.6 The school provides staff incentives and appreciation.
		4.1.7 The school has a well-developed mechanism of mentoring of teachers.
4.2	**Parents**	
		4.2.1 Parents interface with school.
4.3	**Students**	
		4.3.1 Students as Resources.

4.4	**Alumni**	
	4.4.1 The school interacts with Alumni.	
4.5	**Community**	
	4.5.1 The school is committed to fostering effective school community partnership for providing enriching opportunities to enhance students' achievement and wellbeing.	
5	**Inclusive Practices**	
5.1	**Barrier free environment**	
	5.1.1 The school provides barrier free access in terms of physical environment to the students with disabilities.	
	5.1.2 The school provides barrier free access in terms of curriculum to students with special needs.	
	5.1.3 The school provides barrier free access in terms of teaching and assessment to the children with disabilities.	
5.2	**Games, Sports and other Recreational Facilities**	
	5.2.1 Adequate and appropriate indoor and outdoor games, sports and other recreational facilities are provided to students with disabilities.	
5.3	**Transportation Facilities**	
	5.3.1 The school provides adequate transportation facilities to students with disabilities.	
5.4	**Overcoming Attitudinal Barriers**	
	5.4.1 Training and sensitization programmes are conducted by the school for all the concerned with the students with disabilities.	
5.5	**Other Support Services**	
	1.5.1 Training and sensitization programmes are conducted for all staff members by the school with respect to students with disabilities.	
6	**Management and Governance**	
6.1	**Vision and Mission Statement**	
	6.1.1 The school is guided by clear vision and mission statements.	
6.2	**Institutional Planning Mechanism**	
	6.2.1 The school has both long term and short term plans commensurate with its vision and mission statement for institutional planning.	
6.3	**Effective Coordination**	
	6.3.1 The management ensures effective co-ordination within the school and with outside community.	
6.4	**Resource Management**	
	6.4.1 There is a rationale for resource management and mechanisms are in place	
6.5	**Relationship Management**	
	6.5.1 There is a formal mechanism for relationship management (staff, parents, community, alumni, etc.)	
6.6	**Activity Management**	

		6.6.1 There is complete activity management mechanism available in the school.
6.7	**Data and Record Maintenance**	
	6.7.1 There is complete data and record maintenance.	
6.8	**Oral and Written Communication**	
	6.8.1 Effective oral and written communication systems are in place.	
6.9	**Standard Operating Procedures**	
	6.9.1 The administration follows Standard Operating Procedures.	
6.10	**Financial Administration**	
	6.10.1 There is a mechanism for financial administration including record keeping, budget, audit, etc.	
6.11	**Fee Structure**	
	6.11.1 Judicious fee is charged commensurate with the facilities provided by the school.	
6.12	**Admission Process**	
	6.12.1 The school has a provision for Free and Compulsory Education under the RTE Act 2010.	
	6.12.2 The school admission policy is in consonance with CBSE guidelines and norms.	
7	**Leadership**	
7.1	**Scholastic and Pedagogical Leadership**	
	7.1.1 The school leader has a clear Vision and Direction to take the school forward.	
7.2	**Collaborative Leadership**	
	7.2.1 The school leaders demonstrate effective communication, cross-functional collaborations and build relationships	
7.3	**Systems for Ongoing Quality and Change Management**	
	7.3.1 The school leaders strive for continual improvement in the learning outcomes of students	
	7.3.2 The school leaders demonstrate capacity to improve systems in the school and ensure an ethos of responsibility and accountability	
	7.3.3 The school leaders promote innovation by introducing creative methods and techniques that equip students and the institution with 21st century skills	
8.1	**Satisfaction of Students**	
	8.1.1 The school allows students to express their opinions, views and suggestions on policies and develops a mechanism to involve them in the decision-making process.	
8.2	**Satisfaction of Teachers**	

	8.2.1	The school creates a non-threatening and caring environment for the teachers to voice their feedback and develops a mechanism to review this feedback periodically and use it for improvement, planning and assessing teacher satisfaction.
8.3	**Satisfaction of Office Staff**	
	8.3.1 School provides opportunities to the Office Staff to express their opinion, views and suggestions regarding the policies and uses this feedback for improvement.	
8.4	**Satisfaction of Principal**	
	8.4.1 The Management/Society provides a mechanism for the Principal to voice his/her suggestions, views and concerns and periodically reviews the same for continual improvement and also uses it to assess the Principal's satisfaction.	
8.5	**Satisfaction of Parents and Alumni**	
	8.5.1	The school provides a platform for the parents and the alumni to share their feedback on the ongoing processes of the school and review the same for improving performance of the school and for assessing their satisfaction.
8.6	**Satisfaction of Community**	
	8.6.1	The school principal charts relevant community outreach programmes (viz, preserving the heritage, working with old age homes, preserving environment) and integrates them in the annual curriculum plan for all age groups.
8.7	**Satisfaction of Management**	
	8.7.1 The management develops a mechanism for reviewing the vision and mission statement of the school and assesses it and uses it for developing a process of continual improvement.	

ELIGIBILITY FOR SQAA PROCESS

    a. All schools affiliated with CBSE
    b. All schools aspiring for CBSE affiliation

Each school affiliated to the Board must undergo the process of SQAA and update its information online on the eight domains **once every three years, starting from the year, 2020.**

The schools aspiring to be affiliated to the Board can also undergo the process in an offline mode and prepare themselves for being a CBSE School.

PROCESS OF SCHOOL QUALITY ASSESSMENT AND ASSURANCE

The process of School Quality Assessment and Assurance involves **two essential phases**:

Phase 1: Self-Assessment using different instruments of SQAA

Phase 2: Validation by External Peer Assessor Team by visiting the Assesse School

Phase 1	Self-Assessment	• **Mandatory: Outcome of Self-Assessment to be uploaded on the CBSE Portal once in every three years**
Phase 2	Validation by External Peer Assessor Team	• On demand by school • May be done by members of Hubs of Learning for each other on voluntary basis • On random basis by the Board

At the introductory level, CBSE is only focusing on Phase 1 of SQAA i.e. Self-Assessment for quality improvement of its affiliated schools.

The CBSE SQAA is an affirmation of 'Quality'. It is a means of demonstrating confidence in the schools' purpose and performance. The goals are effectiveness, improvement and public assurance. It will not involve ranking of schools/institutions, but rather, will establish a level of acceptable quality for all the schools affiliated with the Board. It will help the schools to go through the rigorous process of self-audit and reflection, build on their strengths and work on the areas that need attention, ultimately helping them to move towards becoming '***Hubs of Excellence'***.