**6.5.1. Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) has contributed significantly for institutionalizing the quality assurance strategies and processes by constantly reviewing the teaching learning process, structures & methodologies of operations and learning outcomes at periodic intervals**

Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) is a body of high importance in the University system. It serves as a sounding board for the management in its quest for excellence and helps to bring out quality improvements in several domains. The IQAC debates on a variety of subjects including teaching and learning processes, academic and physical infrastructure, student progression, faculty empowerment etc., and provides recommendation to the University to take appropriate steps.

The academic and administrative structure of HBNI is unique. The CIs and OCC are administratively independent; they are also solely responsible for several academic functions such as selection and admission of students, infrastructure development and student support as first responders, proposal / revision of courses to support their mission programs, etc., at the same time following uniform, predominant guidelines arrived at the University level. The CIs and OCC accordingly have their own bodies / forums that look at quality improvements with regard to academics as well as administration. In addition, HBNI Central Office also drives the quality movement, designing and implementing new processes / procedures across the CIs/OCC, to enhance the delivery of quality measures.

At HBNI, IQAC was first set up in 2014 and its functioning has been strengthened in the recent years. Considering the distributed structure of HBNI, a few additional forums with wider participation from CIs/OCC, E.g. the Standing Committee of Deans (SCD) were also mandated with deliberating the quality improvement initiatives. Two quality improvements that have been institutionalised due to deliberations in IQAC and SCD are described below in brief:

1. Timeline for Ph.D. programs: it was noted that the total time taken for award of Ph.D. degree after submission of thesis needed to be reduced to enable students to move on in their career. The procedural steps after submission of synopsis by the student were reviewed and it was concluded that the review of thesis can be accelerated by forwarding the thesis to three reviewers simultaneously instead of two. This was deliberated in several meetings of SCD and has now been implemented in the Academic Ordinances issued in 2018.
2. Feedback from stakeholders: The feedback from the students indicated that a broader choice of courses would be of great benefit to the students. The ordinances have accordingly been modified to permit students to acquire course to the extent of 20% by self-study of courses offered by NPTEL or other MOOC platforms or credit seminars. This has been now codified in the Academic Ordinances issued in 2018, and has proved to be a welcome measure, as it has provided a lot of flexibility to the students.

In the current academic year (2021-2022), IQAC at HBNI has made the following contributions:

1. Specialised courses on Emerging trends in Biophysics and High-pressure Physics are proposed to be conducted by various CIs of HBNI.
2. Conducted a faculty induction program for the benefit of newly inducted faculties to brief them about the structure of academic programs at HBNI.
3. A series of value-added courses are proposed to start to enrich the knowledge of students and faculties. These courses include: i) Sarabhai Management Development Programme in association with IIM, Ahmedabad, ii) HBNI-INSTN joint course on Corrosion Degradation in Light Water Reactors, iii) Foundation course on Project Management of Nuclear Facilities, iv) Compulsory course on Research Methodology and v) Course on French language.
4. Released a new website for the institute.
5. Decided to create HBNI-Industry linkage Centre for felicitating the introduction of students and faculties of HBNI with industry, and help them to do internships at various industries.
6. Publication of HBNI newsletter illustrating scientific events and achievements of the institute.