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## State board schools to get accreditation

Swati Shinde | TNV

**Pune:** In a bid to keep a check on the quality of secondary schools affiliated to the state board and to standardise them, the state government will soon start accreditation of the institutions.

State education minister Radhakrishna Vikhe Patil has already appointed the Quality Council of India (QCI) and Educare — a non-governmental organisation — for the job.

Speaking to TOI, Vikhe Patil said, "All state board schools will have to get themselves accredited. An advisory board will be formed at the state level, and a meeting will be held on June 25 in Mumbai to decide the terms of reference. An accreditation body, which will include senior officials from the education department and academicians, will be appointed soon to look after the process."

Besides quality, the accreditation committee will monitor how effectively the schools were using the government grant, he added.

The accreditation will happen on the lines of the accreditation of colleges and universities done by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) appointed by the University Grants Commission (UGC).

Meanwhile, a three-day orientation session for educational institutions to fa-

miliarise them with the concept concluded here on June 20. Representatives of institutions from Pune, Ahmednagar and Solapur attended the session.

According to Vipin Sahn, director, National Accreditation Board for Education and Training, QCI, "There are some key factors on which the schools will be judged. These include governance, curriculum, health and

safety, infrastructure and the recommended improvement process. While accrediting the schools, we will not only ensure compliance, but see how effectively they are handling the complaints and at what rate improvements are being made."

### Parameters for accreditation

- Infrastructure
- Staff skills
- School governance
- Health and safety
- Improvement process
- School environment
- Usage of grants

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## Accreditation to be done every 4 years with yearly review

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The accreditation will be done every four years. However, an annual surveillance will be done to check if schools were acting on suggestions and maintaining standards.

Gangadhar Mhamane, regional deputy director of education, said, "The accreditation will be done on various parameters such as teachers' qualifications, their attendance and teaching environment. For the time being, we are carrying out orientation sessions for institutions from various regions. After Pune, a similar session will be held in Aurangabad. The aim is to inform schools about this so that they prepare themselves for the process."

Officials of the QCI said that since this exercise is being undertaken for the first time, no grading will be done now, but eventually the system will come into force. The QCI has also received proposals from Tamil Nadu, Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh and Andhra Pradesh for accreditation of schools in those states.

Vinayak Shukla, secretary of the Pune-based Maharashtra Education Society which runs nine secondary schools in the state, appreciated the government's move. "It will help institutions in planning and executing their goals within the stipulated time. It will also standardise the whole system and ultimately the students will benefit."