
Report of External Administrative Audit 2020

Submitted to the Internal Quality Assurance Cell of

Cochin University of Science & Technology

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External Administrative Audit of twenty nine departments together with the university administrative section (was successfully conducted from 22nd to 24th July 2020 with the help of the following external experts:

1. Dr. B. Madhusoodhana Kurup, Former Vice Chancellor, Kerala University of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences.
2. Dr. N. Chandramohanakumar, Former Registrar, Cochin University of Science and Technology.
3. B. Chakrapani, Associate Professor, CUSAT.

The recommendations of the committee conducting External Administrative Audit are given below:

1. General Administrative Sections

- ❖ Duty Chart needs to be updated immediately on Joining / Transfer/ Shifting etc. in the Section / Branch.
- ❖ Service Book should be verified from Internal Audit every year.
- ❖ Attendance of all faculty and non-teaching employees should be forwarded to all HoDs/Section Heads at 10 AM on daily basis.
- ❖ Complaint Register should be maintained at Section Level.
- ❖ Completion/Updation of service books in respect of all staff.
- ❖ Master File Index Register and Individual File Index system should be implemented.
- ❖ Code of Conduct be implemented and got signed from all employees of the University and an entry to this effect be made in the service book.
- ❖ All the service benefits to the retired employees should be transferred to them on the day of retirement.
- ❖ A pensioner's portal has to be opened for the retired employees.

- ❖ A central data base of the employees and retirees of the university has to be hosted and updated periodically.
- ❖ Even though, the University has an online file management system, many of the files are in the hard copy mode, which has to be dispensed with.
- ❖ More decentralization and delegation of powers has to be introduced right from the syndicate to the head of the respective sections.

2. Planning and Development Section:

- ❖ This is one of the weakest section in the University. This has to be further strengthened and more responsibility has to be fixed on this section. Presently because of the complex and time consuming procedure, PI s have lot of complaints in effective implementation of the external funded projects both in terms of project implementation and also release of project advances/Utilization Certificate. There should be a single window system under the planning section for the smooth running of the external funded projects.

3. Recruitment Cell

- ❖ Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) of the Recruitment (Teaching and Non-teaching) both regular and contractual be prepared and got approved from the Authority;
- ❖ Data tabulation sheets be prepared for each and every advertisement containing the number of applications, number of shortlisted candidates called, number of candidates appeared for Written Test/Skill Test/Interview with dates, number of candidates appeared, number of candidates recommended for selection/empanelment, and joining etc.
- ❖ Feedback received from the candidates must be analyzed and the decisions taken on the analysis must be documented in the concerned file;
- ❖ Every Statute/Ordinance/Rules prepared by the Recruitment Cell must be uploaded on the University website along with sharing the same through email to the employees of the university;
- ❖ File numbers should be unique and continuous, having proper indexing;
- ❖ Appointment letters be issued by the Recruitment Cell

4. Health Centre

- ❖ A full-fledged Health Care Centre has to be established in the University

5. Examinations Section

- ❖ Complaint/ Suggestion Register to be maintained in the branch.
- ❖ Being a non-affiliating University, and total automation of the examination wing, large number of sections in the examination wing cannot be justified and has to be reduced. This in no way is affecting the employees and proper redeployment has to be done to other sections.
- ❖ Ph.D. Portal should include:
 - a. Letter generation for External Expert for the evaluation of the Ph.D. thesis.
 - b. Reminder to External Examiner monthly up to 3 months should also be generated automatically on the Portal.
- ❖ Since all the PG programmes of the University is hundred percent internal, the gap between the PG Exams and the result declaration has to be further reduced to a week.
- ❖ The UG programme Examinations also has to be converted into full internal framework step by step.
- ❖ Payment of honorarium to the examiners to be initiated/ followed up by the section for avoiding time delay.
- ❖ Work related to academic section/files should handed over to Academic Branch.

6. Engineering Wing

- ❖ Helpdesk E-mail ids for registering the complaints separately for Electrical and Civil works to be maintained.
- ❖ Schedule for inspection of various services and buildings to be fixed.
- ❖ Periodic maintenance of Teaching and non-teaching quarters has to be carried out.
- ❖ At the time of submission of final bills by the contractor, the building wise costing to be obtained from the PMC in writing for record purposes.
- ❖ Payment Register for all the payments being made to the contractors and PMC to be maintained.
- ❖ List of files should also contain the total no. of pages pertaining to particular file.

7. Guest House Services

- ❖ Guest house booking has to be fully online. Alumni members also should be able to book the Guest house facility online.
- ❖ Photo copy of Identity Proof of Guest is to be retained at Guest House.
- ❖ A permanent cook has to be appointed in the Guesthouse.

8. Finance Wing

- ❖ Initiative for a fully double entry system has to be speed ed up and implemented in the University.
- ❖ To frame a suitable Investment Policy to invest the funds in the shape of FDRs. Audit suggested that funds may be invested once in a year in the month of March because during March banks are in need of funds to meet their certain targets therefore higher rates can be offered to CUSAT.
- ❖ Decentralization of various processes related to Finance Branch - such as Routine expenditure and Experts' payments bill processing, fellowship bill processing.
- ❖ The reply to the audit paras has to be submitted to the local audit ,so that general tendency of huge accumulation of audit paras can be avoided
- ❖ Once budgetary provisions are made to different departments, then the present practice of administrative sanction for departmental purchase shall be dispensed with.
- ❖ Project work to be separated from Finance and specific section to be developed, the project advances should be released within one week of the request from the concerned PI.

9. Sports & Cultural Events

- ❖ Yearly sports /cultural calendar is to be prepared and strictly adhered. This at any cost should not be in conflict with the academic schedules of the University.
- ❖ Preventive maintenance schedule for gym equipment's is to be prepared

10. Security Services

- ❖ Regular training of Security Guards using in-house resources or by Security Services provider for improvement of knowledge and skills for betterment of the University.
- ❖ Security Service provider is to be asked to furnish Fidelity/Indemnity Bond to compensate the University against any theft etc. A clause in this regard is to be inserted in the Tender Document.
- ❖ Standard Operating Procedure for Fire Safety is to be framed.
- ❖ Regular training of Staff, Students and Security Personnel on Fire Safety/Disaster management is to be carried out and recorded.
- ❖ Proper recording of all the defects / incidents reported by a Security Guard on a particular Security post in occurrence Register / General Diary.
- ❖ ERP Ticketing Based Visitor Management System to be implemented.
- ❖ ERP Ticketing Based Complaints Redress System to be implemented.

11. Transport

- ❖ Average running cost per kilometer of the vehicles to be calculated and recorded.
- ❖ Trip based passes are to be issued in lieu of tickets for occasional commuters.
- ❖ Issuing of Bus pass is to be implemented through ERP system.
- ❖ Procedure to collect the Bus pass fee with the semester fees may be worked out
- ❖ ERP based vehicle requisition system to be implemented.
- ❖ Bus /mini bus services from the main gate to University campus should be arranged on an hourly basis so that entry of private vehicles to the campus can be minimized.

12. Purchase Section

- ❖ System for Department level purchases for annual requirements should be introduced to reduced time and costs.
- ❖ Centralized purchase system for general purchase in the university has to be speedup and strengthened. Practice of general purchase toward the end of the financial year has to be discouraged.
- ❖ A register for recording and quick addressing of purchase related grievances should be made available in the purchase section.
- ❖ Regular meetings of staff of the section should be convened, at least once a week/fortnight for making SWOT analysis of the purchase section.
- ❖ In order to resolve the technical issues found in the process flow of purchase files, the indenter should be informed at the early stage along with the appropriate solution.

13. Library

- ❖ Increase rare book collections and encourage faculty members to purchase books and reimburse from the external funded projects.
- ❖ Complaints: After resolving the complaints from the library users, the action taken report to be recorded in the respective file.
- ❖ All the research output including articles, chapter-in-book, PhD and M.Phil. thesis should be available in the library and Knowledge Repository.
- ❖ Explore the possibility to share the library resources with outside library users.
- ❖ Periodic communication with faculty members to update the publication in the CUSAT Knowledge Repository.
- ❖ Analyse the fine collection trend over a period of three years and take necessary measures to reduce fine.
- ❖ Space for reading section has to be upgraded from time to time.

- ❖ The reading facility in the library has to be extended to 24 hours, 365 days basis.

14. Store Section

- ❖ An Inventory Management Software be installed at Store Section.
- ❖ It will help to find out proper details of the incoming/outgoing material and issue of Non-availability Certificate for an item to be procured.
- ❖ The software will also help to issue NOC to an employee at the time of leaving the University.
- ❖ Rate contract for the purchase of chemicals should be done.
- ❖ A system of control (like gate pass) on the outgoing material for repair and other purposes should be developed at the Centralized level.

15. Computer Centre

- ❖ The external experts suggested that the University should have a central computational facility together with a Data Centre. It is learned that such a facility is being created with the funding from KIIFB. Steps has to be taken to extend the facility to outside agencies on a payment basis so that the computing facility will be sustainable.

16. Scholarship & Fellowship Section:

- ❖ War footing steps has to be taken to release the fellowships for the Research Scholars/ associates on the first working day of every month as practiced for the employees of the University.

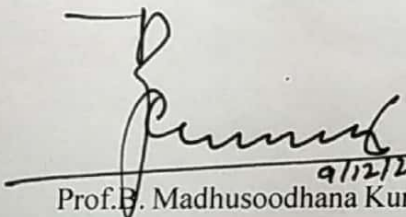
17. International Student Division

- ❖ International students division has to be further strengthened.
- ❖ Complaint/ Suggestion Register to be maintained in the section.
- ❖ FRRO record to be maintained in the section.
- ❖ Record of participation in Culture Event Programmes by the International Students to be encouraged and maintained in the section.
- ❖ Detailed Annual Report of the ACTIVITIES to be prepared.
- ❖ Further efforts has to carried out to increase the enrollment of foreign students
- ❖ Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to be prepared


18. Teaching Departments.

- ❖ The University has number of Teaching Departments, Schools and Centres. But a clear demarcation on their respective roles and duties have not been well defined. An exercise has to be carried out to spell out the roles of these various entities in the academic perspective.

- ❖ The performing Centres have to be encouraged to grow further, offering them administrative and financial support.
- ❖ The underperforming Centres can be either winded up or can be merged together.
- ❖ Some of the active faculty members are appointed as the Hon. Directors of these Centres and generally they are given additional charge. This is found to be affecting the day today activities of both the Centres and the Departments. A practice of appointing them on deputation for a fixed period can be formulated, so that they can concentrate more on their respective units and their contribution for the growth of these Centres can be accelerated.
- ❖ Almost all the Teaching Departments have an office structure of a section officer, an assistant section officer, a computer assistant, peon and an attender. It is noted that all the files coming to the general administration from the Departments is put up again from the assistant, the lowest hierarchy of the office. Since the files from the Department are scrutinized by a section officer, again going to the lowest hierarchy cannot be justified. Further scrutiny of the files shall be dealt with the next higher level hierarchy namely assistant registrar. This duplication has to be avoided and suitable deployment of the employees can be done in a much more effective way. This has to be addressed by the University very seriously.
- ❖ The duties and responsibilities of the Technical Staffs of the Teaching Department has to be spelt out and well defined.
- ❖ Last but not least, this exercise of administrative audit has to be carried out periodically, say once in three years and follow-up actions has to be done to implement the possible recommendations in a very systematic way.


9/12/2020
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