

# PERFORMANCE AUDIT



## CHAPTER II HIGHER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

### Functioning of University of Calicut

#### 2.1. Introduction

University of Calicut, the second University, was established by the Government of Kerala in 1968. The Calicut University Act, 1975 (Act) gives the framework for the functioning of the University. The University caters to the higher educational needs in the districts of Kozhikode<sup>4</sup>, Malappuram, Palakkad, Thrissur and major parts of Wayanad<sup>5</sup> providing undergraduate, postgraduate, integrated postgraduate courses and research activities through 31 teaching and research departments, four cost based departments, 12 Centres for Computer Science and Information Technology (CCSIT), 11 Teacher Education Centres (CUTEC), six Schools of Management Studies (SMS), 425<sup>6</sup> affiliated colleges and 119 Boards of Studies (BoS) under 10 faculties. The University has been accredited by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) at A<sup>+</sup> grade level with CGPA of 3.45 points for the five-year period 2022-27, valid till 20 September 2027.

##### 2.1.1. Organisational set up

The Honourable Governor of Kerala is the Chancellor of the University. The Minister of Higher Education is the Pro Chancellor. The Vice Chancellor, appointed by the Governor, is the Principal Academic and Executive Officer. The academic activities are governed by the Guidelines, Regulations and Circulars issued by the University Grants Commission (UGC), All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) and other regulatory bodies in the Education sector. The Registrar, appointed by the Syndicate on the recommendation of a Selection Committee consisting of the Vice Chancellor and Chairman and two other Syndicate members, is in charge of the administration of the University and has the power to fix the functions and duties of the officers and employees of the University, other than those working under the direct supervision of the Controller of Examinations and the Finance Officer.

##### 2.1.2. Authorities of the University

The activities of the University are organised and supervised by (i) the Senate (ii) the Syndicate (iii) the Academic Council (iv) the Faculties (v) the Boards of Studies (vi) the Students' Council and (vii) the Finance Committee. Functions of the authorities are detailed in **Chart 2.1**.

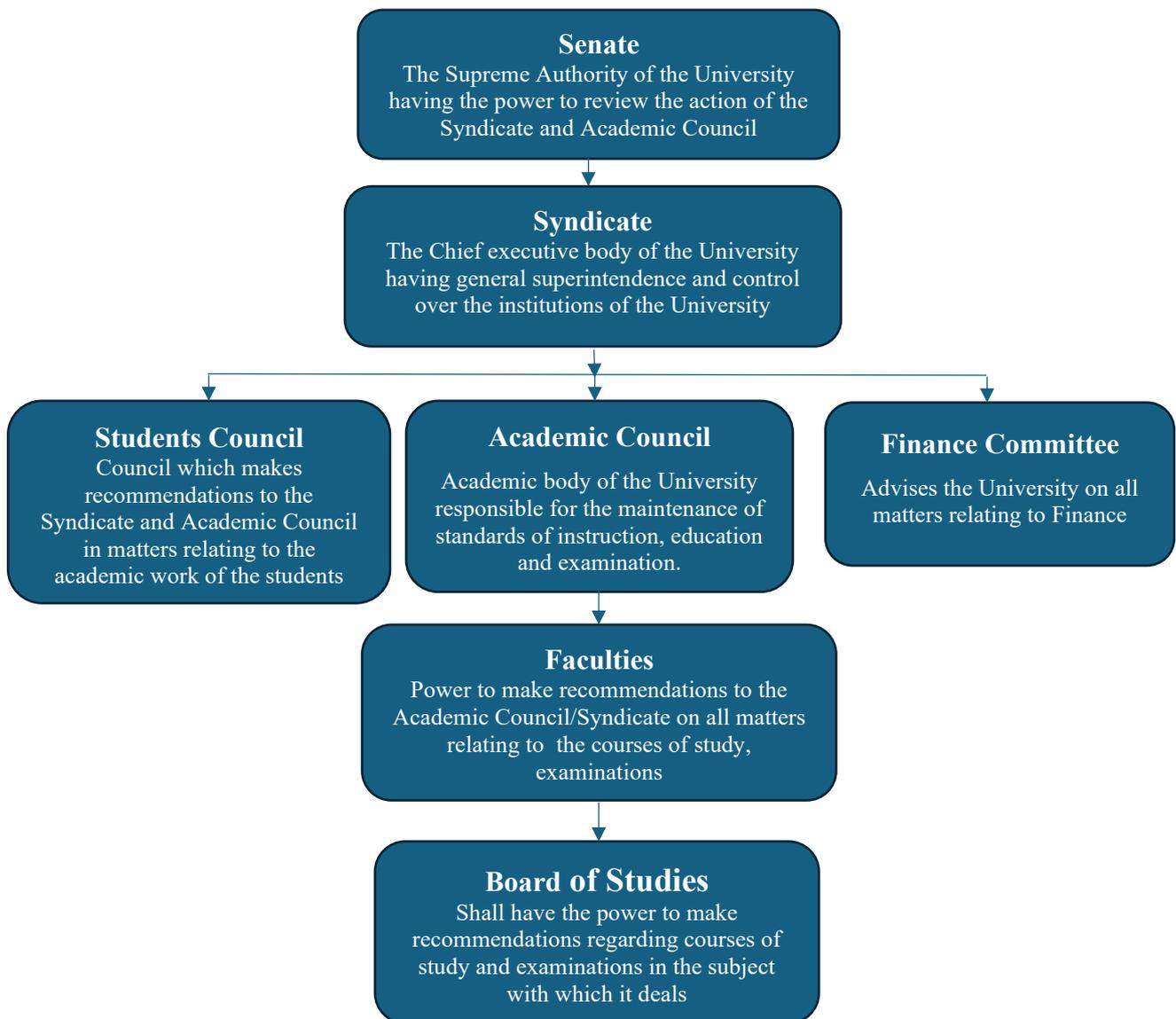
---

<sup>4</sup> Formerly known as Calicut.

<sup>5</sup> excluding Mananthavady -Taluk

<sup>6</sup> details as per Annual Report 2023 of the University

**Chart 2.1: Functions of the Authorities in the University**



## 2.2. Audit Objectives

Performance Audit on 'Functioning of University of Calicut' was conducted to ascertain whether;

- the academic activities of the University were planned and properly executed.
- creation and development of human resources and infrastructure facilities were adequate and as per norms, to impart quality education.
- financial management of the University was conducted properly and was in accordance with relevant Rules and Regulations.

## 2.3. Audit Criteria

The functioning of the University was assessed against the following criteria:

- The Calicut University Act, 1975, the Statutes and Ordinance thereunder.
- Guidelines and regulations issued by the University and regulatory authorities like UGC, AICTE, NCTE, NAAC etc.
- Orders issued by Government of India and Government of Kerala
- Kerala Financial Code, 2016
- The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016
- Kerala PWD Manual, 2012
- Kerala Panchayat Building Rules, 2019

#### 2.4. Audit, Scope and Methodology

The Performance Audit was conducted from 22 July 2024 to 31 March 2025 covering the period from 2019-20 to 2023-24. The institutions and Departments covered in the Audit along with the sampling methodology adopted for the selection are given in **Appendix 2.1**. Methodology of audit involved scrutiny of documents/ files, joint physical verification of laboratories, civil works and survey of students and faculties of the University. Apart from the above, records of General and Academic branch, Administrative branch and Engineering Department were also verified. The dump data for the last five years available in the Software Applications maintained by Calicut University Computer Centre was also examined.

An Entry Conference was held with the Principal Secretary, Higher Education Department and the Vice Chancellor and other University officials on 02 September 2024 wherein the scope, objectives, criteria and methodology of audit including selection of samples were discussed. An Exit conference was held with the Principal Secretary, Higher Education Department on 28 July 2025 to discuss the audit findings. The replies furnished by Government of Kerala have been suitably incorporated.

#### 2.5. Planning

##### 2.5.1. Lack of timelines and measurable milestones in Strategic Plan

University of Calicut constituted (April 2021) a Committee to frame the Strategic Plan document of the University. The Committee finalised the Strategic Plan of the University, and the Vice Chancellor accorded (November 2021) sanction to implement the Strategic Plan. In the Strategic Plan, University identified seven<sup>7</sup> strategic priority areas and set strategic goals in each area as detailed in **Appendix 2.2**.

Audit observed that the Strategic Plan was not approved (February 2025) by the Syndicate, and no timeline was set to achieve the strategic goals. Further, no

<sup>7</sup> i) Governance and management ii) Teaching and Learning iii) Academic Research and Innovation iv) Academic Support Services v) Student Support Services vi) Community and Outreach activities and vii) Facilities, Systems and Infrastructure

mechanism was in place to measure/monitor the progress of achievement of goals.

Government agreed (July 2025) to the audit findings and stated that the University has prioritised the formulation of an Institutional Development Plan (IDP) to guide its future growth and development. The proposed IDP will address the shortcomings by incorporating a comprehensive action plan with specific timelines, measurable milestones and clearly assigned responsibilities for each initiative. Once implemented, the new IDP will supersede the existing Strategic Plan making it obsolete.

Government response indicating implementation of IDP does not instill confidence, as the Strategic Plan proposed way back in 2021 was yet to be implemented.

### **2.5.2. Inadequate representation in the authorities of the University**

The Senate, Syndicate and the Academic Council are the authorities of the University. Section 43(1) of the Calicut University Act, 1975 (Act) specifies that all vacancies among the members (other than ex-officio members) of any authority or body of the University shall be filled, as soon as possible. Audit observed that during the audit period, the three authorities were reconstituted twice (March 2019 and June 2023).

On verifying the Annual Reports and Minutes of the meetings held by the authorities during the period 2019-24, the following deficiencies were noticed in the reconstitution/functioning:

#### **Senate**

- The number of vacancies in the Senate increased from seven to 43 between two reconstitutions, which remained vacant until the next reconstitution in June 2023.
- Of the 20 meetings held during the audit period, Government representatives from the Departments of General Education and Information Technology and Directors of Collegiate Education and Technical Education attended none of the meetings. The Secretary to the Department of Finance attended two meetings (January and March 2022), while the Secretary to Higher Education and the Chairman of the State Advisory Board attended just one meeting each.

#### **Syndicate**

- The vacancy of members was 17.24 *per cent* at the time of its reconstitution in 2019, which increased to 58.62 *per cent* in 2023 at the time of its subsequent reconstitution.

#### **Academic Council**

- The number of vacant posts in the Academic Council increased from one to 77 during 2019 to 2023 till the next reconstitution in June 2023.

Audit observed that non-filling of vacancies in time and non-attending of the meetings by the key members resulted in non-compliance of the Act.

In the reply (July 2025), Government attributed non-conduct of election to the Senate from the Principal Constituency due to stay by High Court, outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic, procedural delays etc., as the reasons for inadequate representation in the authorities of the University.

Audit acknowledges the Government response that the vacancies occurred due to Covid-19 pandemic, however, audit noted that the vacancies in these authorities continued beyond the Covid period.

### 2.5.3. Improper constitution of College Development Council

According to UGC guidelines on College Development Council (CDC), 1985, the University may set up a CDC for ensuring proper planning and integrated development of affiliated colleges and for providing the colleges with necessary assistance and guidance. The guidelines stipulate that the CDC must consist of the Vice Chancellor, Coordinator/ Director/ Dean of the Council<sup>8</sup>, Principals of some affiliated colleges and senior teachers of the University teaching Departments and a representative of the State Government. The CDC must meet at regular intervals at least twice in an academic year to review the implementation of various programmes and activities. The Director was expected to visit the colleges at least twice a year and to hold meetings of Principals of colleges.

However, Audit observed that, as against the above, the CDC functioned as a branch of the University and not as a council. It was supported by four District level Inspection Commissions (DLIC) and an affiliation sub-committee. The Director was not appointed on the recommendation of the Selection Committee and the charge of Director was entrusted to faculties during the audit period. Representative of the State Government and Principals of affiliated colleges were not included as members of the council. In the absence of a CDC constituted in line with UGC guidelines, no meetings of the council were seen conducted during the audit period.

Thus, CDC which was intended to act as a vital link between the University and its affiliated colleges to ensure proper and integrated development of affiliated colleges, did not serve the purpose due to improper constitution and non-conduct of meetings.

The Registrar accepted (October 2024) that the current CDC was only a part of the broader CDC envisioned by the UGC. Government replied (July 2025) that the CDC acts as a strategic arm of the University, working in compliance with the statutory provisions to guide, support, and monitor the development of affiliated colleges, ensuring adherence to quality standards and fostering overall academic excellence. However, the current structure and position of the CDC will be re-evaluated to review if it is mandatory to form a council, based on the UGC guidelines on CDC formation, and the matter will be presented to the relevant bodies for consideration. During the Exit conference (July 2025) the Principal Secretary emphasised the need for devising a structured format in

<sup>8</sup> The Coordinator/Director/Dean of the Council was to be appointed by the Syndicate on the recommendation of a Selection Committee consisting of the VC as the Chairman, a nominee of the UGC and a nominee of the Syndicate of the University.

which details are to be filled in by the colleges and the University can cross check the same.

Audit noted that the constitution of CDC was not in accordance with the directions of UGC and there was no evidence of CDC meeting regularly, as laid down in UGC Guidelines.

#### **2.5.4. Inspection of affiliated colleges**

According to Section 40 of the Calicut University First Statutes, 1977, every college shall be subject to inspection<sup>9</sup> from time to time and the report of such inspection shall be forwarded to the Principal of the College concerned and his explanation called for before any action is taken on it. Further, Section 77 of the Act states that, at the end of every four years from the commencement of the Act, the Vice Chancellor shall submit a report to the Government on the conditions of affiliated colleges.

Audit observed that instead of conducting periodic inspections, affiliated colleges were inspected by the four District Level Inspection Commissions (DLICs) only on the occasions of affiliation of additional programmes, permanent increase in seats or upon receipt of any complaints on the functioning of colleges, establishment of new colleges, extension/ conferment of autonomous status etc. Report as required under Section 77 of the Act, was also not furnished to the Government.

Government stated (July 2025) that the University effectively constitutes and utilises inspection bodies for the purpose of inspecting affiliated colleges, and the University has operationalised this by establishing four DLICs. Government further stated that DLICs conduct hundreds of inspections every year on various occasions and conducting periodical inspections beyond this was challenging.

Though, the reply speaks about several inspections, no documentary evidence was provided regarding the inspections conducted. Further, reply was silent about the Report to be submitted by the VC to the Government at the end of every four years.

#### **2.5.5. Non-inclusion of industrial representative in Board of Studies**

Section 28(5) of Calicut University First Statutes, 1976 allows each Board of Studies (BoS) to consult specialists to bridge the gap between the University and Industry, for other relevant academic inputs and to create employment-oriented curriculum/ syllabus. Audit noticed that an Amendment to the Statute to include industrial representatives in each BoS was initially approved by Syndicate in September 2023<sup>10</sup>, however the same was yet to take effect (April 2025). Further, it was observed (January 2025) that stakeholders such as industrialists, entrepreneurs and students were not included in any of the 119 BoS. Thus, the intention of bridging the gap between the University and the Industry remained unfulfilled due to the delay in amendment of Statute.

<sup>9</sup> by one or more persons appointed by the Vice Chancellor or the Syndicate or by the Board of Inspection

<sup>10</sup> This was initially approved by Syndicate in September 2023. It was again placed before the Syndicate in March 2025 after complying with the directions given by the Senate on 06 June 2024.

Government replied (July 2025) that amendment of the Statute by inclusion of industrial representative was approved by the Syndicate on 20 March 2025 and would be submitted to the Hon'ble Chancellor for his consideration immediately after receiving approval from the Senate.

### 2.5.6. Functioning of Internal Quality Assurance Cell

National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) directed (January 2006) the University to establish an Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) for regular monitoring of the institution. IQAC<sup>11</sup> was expected to meet quarterly and develop quality benchmarks, obtain feedback from stakeholders and maintain institutional database through Management Information Systems (MIS). Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) were also expected (April 2017) to undertake continuous Academic and Administrative Audits (AAA) to improve the quality and sustenance of education. The outcome of AAA was to be placed in IQAC and Syndicate and plan of action prepared to implement the suggestions accepted by IQAC/ Syndicate.

Audit observed that IQAC had not developed (February 2025) a centralised MIS to streamline data management and had not obtained action taken reports on AAA from the respective departments. Further, IQAC or Syndicate had not discussed AAA Reports of the two AAAs conducted<sup>12</sup> by evaluating the performance of the Departments against 31 parameters under 12 categories<sup>13</sup>.

Audit analysed the performance of nine selected teaching Departments (including one cost-based Department) on the basis of the grading scores<sup>14</sup> obtained by them during the two AAAs and observed the following:

- Only two<sup>15</sup> Departments achieved scores above 50 *per cent* in the first AAA and none of the departments scored above 50 *per cent* in the second AAA.
- In comparison to the first AAA, scores of seven departments relegated in the second AAA.
- While three<sup>16</sup> Departments discussed the first AAA report, none of the Departments discussed the second AAA report.

Government replied (July 2025) that IQAC has already taken steps to identify an appropriate MIS software that meets its requirements and the Board meeting held in February 2025 had recommended to invite officials from Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam for a demonstration of their web-based MIS software. It was also stated that the gaps in the follow-up procedures of AAA

<sup>11</sup> constituted in the University in June 2007

<sup>12</sup> first one covering the academic years 2016-17 to 2020-21 in 34 departments (October 2021) and the second covering the academic years 2021-22 to 2022-23 in 36 departments (August to September 2023)

<sup>13</sup> Programmes offered, Faculty, Research, Students, Support Staff, Teaching Learning and Evaluation, Feedback mechanism, Activities of the department, Infrastructure facilities of the department, Uniqueness of the department and innovative practices, Strength Weakness Opportunities and Challenges (SWOC) and Future Plans.

<sup>14</sup> Scores of second AAA pertaining to Department of Journalism and Mass Communication and Department of Environment were not furnished to audit.

<sup>15</sup> Statistics and Education

<sup>16</sup> Chemistry, Physics and Russian and Comparative studies

process were identified by IQAC and it was decided to establish a structured mechanism to ensure systematic implementation of expert recommendations emerging from the AAA process.

Audit observed that though the Board had recommended to invite officials from another University for a demonstration, further action in this regard was pending (July 2025).

### 2.5.7. Drop in National Institutional Ranking

The National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) is an initiative by the Ministry of Education, GoI, to rank HEIs in the country. It evaluates institutions based on five broad parameters with sub parameters under each for ranking various universities and institutions annually. The University of Calicut was ranked at 64<sup>th</sup> position in the NIRF ranking (University category) in 2019 and improved its position to 54<sup>th</sup> in 2020. Thereafter there was steady drop in the ranking and the University stood at 89<sup>th</sup> position in 2024.

Score obtained by the University with respect to parameters fixed for the ranking during the period 2022-24 is given in **Appendix 2.3**. Analysis of the score obtained under each sub parameter revealed that in 10<sup>17</sup> out of 16 sub parameters, the score obtained by the University was 50 per cent or below.

Concurring with the audit findings, Government stated (July 2025) that subsequent to announcement of 2024 NIRF ranking, IQAC conducted a parameter-wise gap analysis comparing the scores obtained by the University with those of top-performing affiliating universities in Kerala and with Indian Institute of Science serving as the benchmark and also stated that measures were taken to improve the University's score in the future.

## 2.6. Academic and Research Activities

### 2.6.1. Continuation of affiliation of Engineering college in violation of Government directions

A P J Abdul Kalam Technological University (APJAKTU) Act came into force in May 2014. Department of Higher Education, GoK issued orders (March 2015) mandating affiliation to APJAKTU, for all undergraduate and postgraduate engineering courses starting from the 2015-16 academic year onwards. Section 60 of APJAKTU Act stipulates that the institutions in the technological branch maintained by other Universities of the State as their departments or their respective constituent colleges do not come under the jurisdiction of KTU. Audit observed that despite not maintaining a technological branch, Calicut University continued to offer B.Tech courses through Institute of Engineering and Technology (IET) which was in violation of the Government order.

<sup>17</sup> Student strength including doctoral students, online education, combined metric for publications, combined metric for quality of publications, IPR and patent published and granted, footprint of projects and professional practice, metric for number of Ph.D students graduated, percentage of students from other States/countries, economically and socially challenged students and Academic Peers and employers.

Government stated (July 2025) that being a constituent college of the University, IET was not required to be affiliated under APJAKTU. Further, during the Exit conference (July 2025), the VC stated that the University had not opted for affiliation under APJAKTU, given that it already had its own faculty of Engineering.

Audit observed that Government had directed (January 2018) the University to take urgent necessary action to affiliate all Colleges of Engineering under it to APJAKTU, before the commencement of academic admission of 2018-19. Thus, continuation of B.Tech courses through IET was in violation of Government directions.

### 2.6.2. Non-revision of syllabus/ curriculum

Considering the pace at which conceptual innovations and technology are changing, UGC recommended (January 2017) that curricula of all academic Departments should be reviewed and revised at least once in three years.

Audit observed that syllabi of 24<sup>18</sup> out of 45 categories of programmes were not revised during the last three years and notably the syllabus of BA, LLB was last revised in 2011. The details are given in **Appendix 2.4**.

Government replied (July 2025) that the syllabi of a few programmes not falling under major categories *viz.*, BA/B.Sc/B.Com/MA/M.Sc/M.Com had not been revised regularly, and action has been initiated to identify these programmes and to revise the syllabi.

### 2.6.3. Delay of six years in completion of B.Sc. Printing Technology Course

The Syndicate decided (March 2014) to introduce three-year B.Sc. Printing Technology programme as part of the School of Distance Education (SDE) utilising the facilities available in CUIET. The programme commenced in 2014-15 with an intake of 34 students, against an intake capacity of 60.

Audit observed that the University was able to complete the course only in May 2023, eight years after the programme was introduced<sup>19</sup>. The final results were published, supplementary/improvement examinations for all the six semesters were conducted between November 2023 and April 2024. Audit noticed that the completion of the course was delayed due to reasons like uncertainty regarding Regulations to be followed, anomalies in the syllabus, delay in conduct of practical examinations due to objections raised by the students of CUIET regarding the usage of their laboratory facilities.

Audit observed that the prolonged delay of six years in completing the course due to regulatory ambiguities, poor academic planning and lack of institutional readiness adversely affected the 34 students enrolled for the programme.

Government stated (July 2025) that the University is committed to ensure that such issues in the conduct of courses will not be repeated in the future.

<sup>18</sup> Includes four courses (Faculty of Journalism, Faculty of Science, Faculty of Language and Literature, Faculty of Fine Arts) in which the syllabi of UG courses were revised and of PG courses were not revised

<sup>19</sup> November 2014

#### 2.6.4. School of Distance Education - Loss of UGC recognition

University Grants Commission (Open and Distance Learning) Regulations, 2017, lay down the minimum standards of instructions for the grant of degree, through Open and Distance Learning mode (ODL). As per the above Regulations, in HEIs offering ODL programmes, a Centre for Internal Quality Assurance (CIQA) headed by a full-time Director, a senior academician of the rank of Professor was to ensure the quality of the programmes offered. Further, under the UGC (ODL and Online Programmes) Regulations, 2020 if a HEI offers any programme in ODL mode, after withdrawal of or fails to obtain recognition, the degree obtained pursuant to such programme in HEIs, shall not be treated as a valid qualification.

In the year 2019-20, 26 programmes<sup>20</sup> were conducted by the University. However, Audit observed that none of these programmes received UGC recognition for the academic year 2020-21, due to non-appointment of a full time Director and non-maintenance of prescribed faculty strength. Consequently, the courses were conducted through private registration mode without providing contact classes or study materials to 32,651 students. The lack of recognition for the programmes by UGC also raises question about the validity of degree certificate awarded to the students.

Government stated (July 2025) that the University had submitted its application for the July 2020 session under the earlier guidelines and might have secured recognition had the UGC not annulled those applications due to the pandemic. The University cannot be held accountable for this. It was also stated that the applications invited for the year 2020-21 were under the newly implemented UGC Regulations containing more stringent requirements, which the University was unable to satisfy. Further, it was stated that the students admitted under private registration followed the same syllabus and were awarded the same certificate as those in the ODL mode.

Audit acknowledges the constraints faced by the University in obtaining recognition for ODL programmes, however, the fact remains that the degree obtained through ODL programmes conducted without UGC approval is not a valid qualification.

#### 2.6.5. Admissions to Ph.D programme without adhering to the UGC directions

According to UGC (Minimum Standards and Procedure for award of M.Phil/Ph.D Degree) Regulations, 2016 (Regulations 2016) and its second Amendment dated 16 October 2018, HEIs were required to admit candidates for M.Phil/Ph.D programmes through a two-stage process, an entrance test with weightage of 70 *per cent* and an interview/viva-voce with 30 *per cent* weightage.

Audit observed that though the candidates for the Ph.D programme were admitted through a two-stage process, the prescribed weightage (70:30) was not followed, instead the admissions were conducted in accordance with the Clauses

<sup>20</sup> 12 Master's programmes and 14 Bachelor's programmes

4.8 and 4.9<sup>21</sup> of the University Research Regulations 2016. In the case of M.Phil programme, no interview was conducted, and the candidates were admitted solely based on the entrance test. The Academic Council did not amend the Calicut University Regulation 2016 to incorporate the provisions of the UGC (second amendment) 2018. As a result, 110 scholars admitted to Ph.D programme and 78 students to M.Phil<sup>22</sup> programme during the period 2019-24 in the selected departments, were admitted without complying with the UGC directions.

Government replied (July 2025) that prior to June 2024 examinations, UGC NET qualified candidates were not awarded marks and hence UGC regulations regarding admission could not be implemented earlier. In the absence of such scores, ranking could not be carried out. However, starting from 2024, UGC has started providing NET scores and accordingly from 2024, Ph.D admissions for candidates having NET scores are conducted by assigning 70 *per cent* weightage to NET score and 30 *per cent* weightage for marks obtained in interview.

The reply is not acceptable as audit observation was specifically regarding non-compliance of UGC Regulations 2018 prescribing 70:30 weightage in the two-stage admission process of Ph.D programme conducted by the University for all PG students, not for NET qualified students alone. The 70:30 weightage under the Regulations, was applicable to all Ph.D admissions conducted by the University, including those for candidates not holding a NET qualification.

### 2.6.6. Functioning of Directorate of Project

In accordance with Calicut University Research Projects Regulations 2020 (CURPR 2020), the University decided to facilitate research and development activities and a Project Cell was established in the University (30 April 2021). CURPR 2020 envisaged a Project Advisory Committee<sup>23</sup> to be constituted by the VC for the management of all activities related to the Directorate of Projects (DoP).

Guidelines for Establishment of Research and Development Cell in HEIs issued (04 March 2022) by UGC envisions to put in place a robust mechanism for developing and strengthening the research ecosystem and the Cell was to act as a liaison between researchers and relevant research funding agencies, extend guidance in preparation and submission of project proposals and post sanctioning of the grants to oversee adherence to timelines. Assessment of the functioning of the DoP revealed the following deficiencies:

- Project Advisory Committee, as required in CURPR 2020 was constituted only in March 2025 which meant that the activities related to the DoP were not monitored as required by CURPR 2020.

<sup>21</sup> According to these Clauses, all candidates getting a minimum prescribed mark are qualified to apply for registration to Ph.D programme and an interview/ viva-voce shall be conducted in such a way that the candidates would be required to discuss their research interest/area through a presentation.

<sup>22</sup> New admissions for M.Phil programme were discontinued from 2021-22 onwards

<sup>23</sup> Consisting of (i) the VC (ii) the Pro VC (iii) the Convenor, Standing Committee of Syndicate on Courses and Research (iv) the Director, Directorate of Projects (v) two faculties from University Teaching departments, nominated by the VC (vi) one external expert nominated by the VC

- During the period 2019-20 to 2023-24, DoP had given endorsement for 228 Project Proposals submitted by the faculties, but projects were sanctioned by the external funding agencies only in 17 cases (seven *per cent*).

Audit observed that the functions of DoP in facilitating the research projects defined at the time of constitution were not modified subsequently in line with UGC guidelines issued in March 2022. Consequently, the DoP was not acting as a liaison between researchers and relevant research funding agencies and also not extending guidance in preparation and submission of project proposals, as envisaged by UGC.

Government replied (July 2025) that the guidelines issued by UGC in March 2022 will be strictly adhered to in future and necessary modifications will be made in the existing Project Regulation of the University. During the Exit conference (July 2025), the Principal Secretary also added that the DoP mainly served as an administrative body and could not review the project proposals.

Audit observed that according to UGC norms DoP was expected to function as a liaison body.

#### **2.6.7. Non-completion of research works by research scholars**

As per Calicut University First Statutes, 1977, full-time research students shall submit the thesis within a period of five years and the Syndicate shall have the power to extend this time limit by one year in exceptional cases. Further, as per Calicut University Research Regulations 2016, a research scholar shall appear before the Research Advisory Committee (RAC) once in six months to make a presentation of the progress of his/ her work for evaluation and for further guidance. The six-monthly progress reports shall be submitted by the RAC to the University/ College with a copy to the research scholar. In cases of unsatisfactory progress, RAC is required to record the reasons and suggest corrective measures. If the research scholar fails to implement these corrective measures, the RAC may recommend to the institution, with specific reasons, for cancellation of the registration of the research scholar.

Audit observed that during the period of audit, out of the 145 research scholars who were awarded the University Research Fellowship (URF) and whose theses were due for submission within the above-mentioned period, 41 scholars (representing 28.3 *per cent*) either discontinued their research work or failed to submit their theses within the prescribed time limit.

Similarly, in researches funded by agencies such as UGC, CSIR, DST<sup>24</sup>, ICSSR<sup>25</sup>, NFOBC<sup>26</sup>, NFSC/ST and State Government, out of 181 research scholars whose theses submission was due during the period of audit, 44 scholars (24.31 *per cent*) either discontinued their research work or failed to submit their theses within the prescribed time limit.

Out of the 85 research scholars (URF and other agencies funded research) who did not submit the theses in time, 16 were from the selected departments. Audit

<sup>24</sup> Department of Science and Technology

<sup>25</sup> Indian Council of Social Science and Research

<sup>26</sup> National Fellowship for OBC

scrutinised the minutes of the RAC meetings made available to audit for the period 2019-24 in these selected departments and observed that the non-conduct of meetings ranged from 50 *per cent* to 100 *per cent* and the departments had not recommended for any corrective measures or cancellation of registration of the research scholar with specific reason, except in one case in the Department of Education.

Audit observed that inadequate number of meetings by RAC resulted in deprivation of monitoring and timely corrective measures by RAC. During the Exit conference (July 2025) Accountant General reiterated the importance of proper functioning of RAC and stated that non-completion of research by scholars also affects the opportunity of eligible students as there is limitation regarding the number of students a professor can guide.

Government replied (July 2025) that from 2024 Ph.D admissions onwards, it will be made mandatory to upload a six-monthly progress report recommended by the RAC on the college portal and that the term fees will be accepted only upon submission and recommendation of the progress report by RAC. However, the reply is silent about progress of research by the existing research scholars.

#### 2.6.8. Functioning of Intellectual Property Rights Cell

As per orders (April 2018) of the VC, a five-member committee was constituted to lead the Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Cell<sup>27</sup>. The committee was required to meet at least twice a year and advise the University on all matters relating to IPR. To identify the reasons for generation of lesser number of patents an IPR Professional was inducted<sup>28</sup> to the University for an internship. The IPR professional submitted a Report (December 2023) with recommendations for improving IPR management. In January 2024 it was also decided to appoint a patent agent, to regulate the patent filing activities of the University.

Audit noticed that after the constitution of the committee in 2018, IPR cell conducted only two meetings<sup>29</sup> during the audit period against the requirement to convene at least two meetings annually. University had not allocated any fund to the IPR cell during the audit period, except in 2023-24. Out of the ₹20 lakh allocated in 2023-24, only ₹13,955 was utilised. Though the recommendations<sup>30</sup> included in the Report submitted by the IPR professional were being implemented, the appointment of patent agent remained pending (March 2025). Further, only two patents<sup>31</sup> were filed by the University during the audit period, of which one<sup>32</sup> was granted.

While acknowledging the concerns raised regarding the limited activity of the IPR cell, Government stated (July 2025) that steps were initiated to conduct periodic discussions and that administrative process for appointment of patent agent was in its final stage. The IPR Cell has already drafted an Annual activity

<sup>27</sup> Established in the year 2009 with the aim of sensitising the students, researchers and faculty members about significance of IPR and to advise and guide them on IPR related issues.

<sup>28</sup> From September to December 2023

<sup>29</sup> On 19 August 2022 and 22 January 2024

<sup>30</sup> Strengthen institutional support, expand awareness initiatives, clarify and strengthen policies etc.

<sup>31</sup> 2019-20 and 2023-24

<sup>32</sup> Filed in 2023-24

plan which includes faculty and scholar sensitisation workshops, patentability assessment clinics, IPR awareness campaigns, filing support in collaboration with the agent etc.

## 2.7. Financial Management

According to Section 45(1) of the Calicut University Act, all grants and loans received from the GoK, GoI, UGC and from any other source, all revenues, all fees received, all incomes such as rent and profits derived from properties, all endowments and donations received, all other miscellaneous receipts and all deposits, remittances and service funds received in connection with the affairs of the University shall form one consolidated fund named 'The Calicut University Fund'. This fund is to be used as stipulated in the Act, Statutes, Ordinance and Rules.

The details of receipts and utilisation of the University fund are detailed in **Table 2.1**.

**Table 2.1. Year-wise details of receipt and expenditure**

(₹ in crore)

Year	State Grant				Earmarked Funds <sup>33</sup>		Fund received from other Agencies such as UGC, RUSA, etc.		Own fund <sup>34</sup> /Miscellaneous receipts <sup>35</sup>	
	Receipt		Utilisation*		Receipt	Utilisation	Receipt	Utilisation	Receipt	Utilisation
	Plan	NP	Plan	NP						
2019-20	8.00	235.21	13.13	235.21	6.38	5.20	3.31	3.51	201.76	99.18
2020-21	13.69	211.69	8.00	211.69	3.50	5.47	3.14	2.62	173.79	93.47
2021-22	13.14	222.27	14.26	222.27	4.53	5.31	2.00	3.01	226.64	214.72
2022-23	20.68	224.12	34.87	224.12	4.73	4.01	2.16	3.82	255.50	223.53
2023-24	11.00	244.50	18.39	244.50	5.11	6.25	6.77	3.16	248.32	205.42
<b>Total</b>	<b>66.51</b>	<b>1137.79</b>	<b>88.65</b>	<b>1137.79</b>	<b>24.25</b>	<b>26.24</b>	<b>17.38</b>	<b>16.12</b>	<b>1106.01</b>	<b>836.32</b>

\* Funds utilised in excess of receipts were met from own fund of the University  
(Source: Details furnished by Finance wing of the University)

During the period from 2019-20 to 2023-24, 48 per cent of the receipts of the University was from Non Plan Grants provided by GoK and 47 per cent from own fund and miscellaneous receipts. Remaining five per cent was contributed as grant by other agencies like UGC/ICSSR, earmarked funds and plan fund allocation by GoK.

### 2.7.1. Delay in Preparation of Annual Accounts

According to Sections 48 and 49 of the Act, the University's annual accounts are prepared under the Syndicate's direction and submitted to Government for audit. The annual accounts together with the audit report thereon are published by the Syndicate, placed before the Senate, and submitted to the Government. Once received, the Government lays the accounts before the State Legislative Assembly.

According to Section 9(1) of the Kerala Local Fund Audit Act, 1994 (KLFA Act), the Executive Authority must prepare and present the accounts relating to

<sup>33</sup> Grants from UGC, grants from outside agencies, grants for individual research projects etc.

<sup>34</sup> Examination fee, affiliation fee, income from self-financing institutions etc.

<sup>35</sup> Recoveries, interest on loans and advances, donations etc.

a financial year within four months of the close of that financial year. Section 10 mandates that the audit of the accounts prepared and presented must be completed within six months of the date of its presentation for audit.

Audit noticed delay on the part of the University, ranging from four to five months in preparation of annual accounts, seven to eight months in submission to Kerala State Audit Department (KSAD), and 10 to 19 months in conduct of audit by KSAD as detailed in **Appendix 2.5**.

Thus, due to the delay on the part of the University and KSAD, audit report relating to a particular year was being received by the University for remedial action after elapse of two to three years from the close of the financial year.

Government stated (July 2025) that the University has initiated the process of computerising the accounting system to avoid delay. It was also stated that University had submitted the annual accounts to the Government within the time period stipulated during 2021-24.

Audit observed that timeline was prescribed for preparation of accounts and audit of accounts by KSAD, for which delays were noticed by audit. However, no timeline was prescribed for submission of annual account/ audit report to Government. Hence, the contention that the annual accounts were submitted to Government within the time period is not tenable.

### 2.7.2. Functioning of Internal Audit Wing of the University

The University constituted (March 2010) an Internal Audit Wing (IAW) with the aim of ensuring financial discipline and propriety in financial transactions. During the audit period, the wing functioned with less than 50 *per cent* of the sanctioned manpower. The extent of coverage of units during the period 2019-20 to 2023-24 was as given in **Table 2.2**.

**Table 2.2: Internal Audit of functional units of the University**

Year	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Total no. of auditable units	72	72	72	72	72
No. of units scheduled for audit	21	5	25	34	21
No. of units in which internal audit was conducted	21	5	25	34	21

(Source: Details received from IAW)

Audit observed that IAW had not prepared a schedule so as to cover the entire units within a specified period. Out of 20 selected departments/centres, four<sup>36</sup> units were not covered in internal audit even once during the period 2019-20 to 2023-24, which includes units like Pareeksha Bhavan entrusted with University's core activities such as conducting examinations and Central Sophisticated Instrumentation Facility (CSIF), where costly scientific equipment are maintained.

Government stated (July 2025) that considering the audit findings steps will be initiated to strengthen the IAW and to provide adequate training to its staff. An audit schedule will also be prepared prioritising high risk units as regards core activities, fund transaction etc.

<sup>36</sup> CUTEC Sulthan Bathery, CCSIT Aranattukara, Pareeksha Bhavan, CSIF

### 2.7.3. Non-receipt of assistance of ₹2.37 crore due to non-settlement of previous UGC research projects

The objective of the General Development Assistance (GDA) Scheme to State Universities (XI and XII Plan)<sup>37</sup> implemented by UGC was to improve the infrastructure and basic facilities in Universities and to promote enhancement of quality. The Universities were expected to utilise the grants in a time bound manner and submit the Utilisation Certificate to the effect that the grant was utilised for the purpose for which it was sanctioned. The Utilisation Certificate was to be furnished as early as possible after the closure of a particular financial year.

Details of allocation of UGC fund, release, utilisation etc., from UGC under GDA scheme and merged scheme<sup>38</sup> to the University are detailed in **Table 2.3**.

**Table 2.3: Allocation, utilisation and amount to be reimbursed by UGC**

(₹ in crore)

Sl. No.	Name of Scheme	Allocation	Amount Released	Interest Accrued	Amount utilised (balance met from own funds)	Amount to be reimbursed by UGC
1	XII Plan GDA	14.52	11.62	1.29	14.55	1.64
2	XI Plan GDA	9.27	5.71	0	5.89	0.18
3	XI (IQAC)	0.05	0	0	0.009	0.009
4	XI Plan (Merged)	5.50	3.25	0.01	3.81	0.55
<b>Total</b>						<b>2.37</b>

(Source: Data furnished by Administration wing of the University)

The University submitted (August 2019-May 2020) the final audited Utilisation Certificate and Statement of Expenditure in respect of GDA received during XII Plan period to UGC. The Registrar requested (June 2020) UGC to settle the XI and XII plan accounts and issue final orders so as to effect the reimbursement of the due amount. Subsequently, the Registrar again requested (July 2021) UGC to release the amount due under GDA, which was expended from the own fund of the University, in anticipation of release of funds. In response to this request, UGC directed (September 2022) the University to immediately settle all outstanding grants received under various UGC schemes<sup>39</sup>, failing which administrative and legal action would be initiated against the University.

From the status of settlement of accounts relating to the 17 research projects implemented under various UGC schemes from 2009 onwards, Audit observed that final audited accounts and statement of expenditure along with UC for four projects were yet to be submitted to UGC (March 2024).

Government replied (July 2025) that out of the 17 UGC assisted projects, 16 projects had been completed successfully, and settlement of one Special Assistance Programme (SAP) was under process.

Thus, non-settlement of the accounts within the prescribed time period by the University led to non-receipt of ₹2.37 crore of GDA under UGC XI and XII Plan, due to the University.

<sup>37</sup> XI Plan 2007-12, XII Plan 2012-17

<sup>38</sup> Instrumentation maintenance facility, basic facility for women etc.

<sup>39</sup> UGC Special Assistance Programme, UGC major research projects etc.

#### 2.7.4. Loss of ₹8.79 crore as Central Assistance due to non-disbursement of Seventh Central Pay Commission arrears

The Department of Higher Education, MHRD, GoI accepted the UGC Pay Review Committee's recommendations (November 2017) to revise pay scales for teachers in HEIs, effective from 01 January 2016, in accordance with UGC Regulations<sup>40</sup> (July 2018). GoI informed (July 2018) GoK to submit the reimbursement proposals in the prescribed format and that GoI would reimburse 50 per cent of the additional financial burden under the Seventh Central Pay Commission (CPC) from 01 January 2016 to 31 March 2019, subject to compliance with UGC Regulations 2018.

GoK decided (June 2019) to implement the CPC recommendations, with arrears to be paid later, depending on the release of GoI assistance and the State's fiscal position and directed (September 2019), all State Universities to incorporate the UGC Regulations in their Statutes within a month. Accordingly, the Registrar of Calicut University, notified (February 2020) implementation of UGC Regulations 2018, effective from 18 July 2018. GoK also ordered (May 2020) the release of the arrears to be credited to the teachers' GPF accounts. However, in July 2022, GoI informed GoK its decision to discontinue the reimbursement scheme with effect from April 2022. Consequently, on 21 January 2023, GoK withheld the arrear payments.

Audit observed that though the University had implemented the Seventh UGC pay revision scheme, arrears amounting to ₹17.59 crore from 01 January 2016 to 31 March 2019 were not disbursed to the teaching staff. Further, the UGC Regulations on qualifications, selection committees, etc., were not incorporated in the University's Statutes, nor in the Calicut University Act. Due to non-compliance with GoI directions by GoK and the University, the University did not receive ₹8.79 crore of Central assistance.

In reply (July 2025), Government stated that given the procedural requirements, the amendment of University Statutes and Regulations took longer than the stipulated timeline. During the Exit conference (July 2025) the Principal Secretary stated that all the documents were submitted to GoI for receiving the assistance.

Government reply is not acceptable as Audit observed that the University has not amended the statutes till date (September 2025). Further, instead of disbursing the amount and subsequently sending the details for reimbursement, GoK had submitted an undertaking outlining the amount proposed to be released to teachers in State Universities and colleges as payment of arrears on account of revision of salary on implementation of UGC revised pay scales scheme for the period from 01 January 2016 to 31 March 2019.

<sup>40</sup> UGC Regulations on Minimum qualifications for appointment of Teachers and Other staff of Universities and Colleges and Measures for the Maintenance of Standards in Higher Education, 2018.

### 2.7.5. Uneconomical institutions under the University

The University operated 41<sup>41</sup> Institutions under Self-financing mode in five districts viz., Thrissur, Malappuram, Palakkad, Kozhikode and Wayanad under the Directorate of University Study Centre (DUSC) on 'no profit no loss' basis.

When the income of all the institutions were reckoned together, the institutions were generating more income than expenditure except during 2023-24. However, Audit noticed that;

- Six institutions<sup>42</sup> were continuously running in loss during all five years, the highest loss being that of IET, Kohinoor (₹6.32 crore). The combined loss recorded by these institutions was ₹8.58 crore.
- Two institutions<sup>43</sup> were running in loss during the last four years recording a combined loss of ₹0.39 crore.
- Six institutions<sup>44</sup> recorded profit and loss intermittently during the five-year period and recorded a combined loss of ₹0.39 crore.

Details are given in **Appendix 2.6**. It was also noticed that during the five years, the average intake of students to all the courses conducted by the above institutions (which recorded continuous loss) ranged between 20 to 72 per cent of the intake capacity. The intake of students averaged above 50 per cent only in three courses viz., B.Sc. Computer Science of CCSIT Thalikulam (53), Department of Law (72) and Information Technology of IET Kohinoor (63) (**Appendix 2.6**). This indicated that low intake of students was a factor affecting the financial performance of the institutions.

Government stated (July 2025) that the loss incurred by the institutions was ascertained and measures were being taken to improve the financial status of the centres. As part of this, courses at IET were revamped, the centres were directed to devise strategies to improve the intake of students and it was also decided to review the feasibility of existing courses in the centres with less than 40 per cent intake.

### 2.7.6. Non-Constitution of Pension Fund in Calicut University

According to the Calicut University First Ordinances, 1978, a Pension Fund must be established and used solely for paying pensions to retired employees and officers of the University, subject to the provisions of the Act.

Audit observed that against the requirement of ₹1,461.44 crore by the University for the period 2019-20 to 2023-24, GoK had released only ₹1,137.79 crore towards pay, pension, DCRG and other non-plan expenditure which resulted in a deficit of ₹323.65 crore during the audit period.

<sup>41</sup> As of 2023-24, 12 Centres for Computer Science and Technology, 11 Calicut University Teacher Education Centres, six Schools of Management Studies, four Cost Based Departments, Institute of Engineering and Technology, CU Regional Centre, School of Health Science, Centre for Physical Education, B.P.Ed. Centre, Centre for Costume and Fashion Designing (CC&FD), Centre for PG Studies in Social Work (CPGSSW), Radiation Physics

<sup>42</sup> CCSITs – Kuttipuram, Manjeri, Muttill, Peramangalam, Pullut and IET Kohinoor

<sup>43</sup> CCSIT Thalikulam and Department of Law CU Campus

<sup>44</sup> CCSIT Pudukkad, CPGSSW Sulthan Bathery, CU Regional Centre, Perambra, CUTECs - Chalakudy, Vatakara, SMS Vatakara

Since 1977, the University had maintained a savings account (TPA 70) and three fixed deposits under the Registrar's name in the Sub Treasury, Tirurangadi, for the Pension Fund. However, adequate funds were not deposited and only ₹141.08 crore (including ₹100 crore invested in 2023) was earmarked (January 2025).

Audit observed that though fixed deposit of ₹141.08 crore was earmarked for Pension Fund, the University had not constituted Pension Fund till date. Thus, even after 47 years from the issue of Calicut University first Ordinance, the University was yet to constitute a self-sustaining pension fund.

In the Government reply (August 2025) it was stated that the University was facing significant challenges in meeting its non-plan expenditure, particularly salary, pension, DCRG etc., due to insufficient non-plan grants. The University had reported that, owing to financial constraints, it was unable to create a pension fund without assistance from GoK and had requested to grant a lumpsum amount as corpus fund. However, the request could not be considered favourably in view of the financial constraints.

### 2.7.7. Advances amounting to ₹6.79 crore pending settlement

According to Article 99 of Kerala Financial Code, temporary advances should be adjusted within three months of the date of drawal by presenting final bills with all supporting vouchers. In case of non-submission of the final bill within the stipulated time frame of three months, interest at 18 *per cent*<sup>45</sup> will be charged on the entire amount of advance from the date the amount was withdrawn to the date of recovery of the amount.

Audit observed that advances drawn for various purposes during the period from 1975-76 to 03 October 2011<sup>46</sup>, amounting to ₹4.79 crore, and those drawn from 04 October 2011 to 31 March 2024, amounting to ₹ two crore, were pending settlement (January 2025). Out of the total ₹6.79 crore pending, ₹4.79 crore was pending for more than 10 years, ₹4.47 lakh was pending for five to 10 years, ₹9.09 lakh was pending for one to five years and ₹1.86 crore upto one year. Additionally, the interest on the advances drawn after 04 October 2011 alone worked out to ₹20 lakh (for the period from 04 October 2011 to 31 March 2024).

Government stated (July 2025) that a Recovery cell was constituted in the University in the year 2015. Following its establishment, measures were implemented to settle the advances pending prior to 2009-10, which were impeded by factors including retirement or demise of original drawers and deterioration or loss of supporting documentation. In respect of advances pertaining to the period post 2009-10, it was informed that the process of settling is ongoing.

Since the advances had not been settled, audit could not ascertain whether the entire amount was utilised for the purpose for which it was sanctioned, or if any amount was retained by the officials who had availed the advance. Further,

<sup>45</sup> Effective from 04 October 2011

<sup>46</sup> Government of Kerala vide GO(P)/No.419/11/Fin. dated 04.10.2011 has stipulated that penal interest of 18 *per cent* per annum will be charged on the unutilised portion of advance from the date of drawal of advances. The rate of penal interest was not specified earlier.

inordinate delay in settlement of advances indicates lack of effective financial control by the University.

### 2.7.8. Non-utilisation of University Medical Inspection Fee

The University had been collecting Medical Inspection Fee of ₹20 per student since April 2019, which was revised to ₹25 per student from June 2023. The UGC Guidelines on Students' Entitlements 2013, emphasise that students are entitled to reasonable health care, including free and periodic health check-ups and treatment/hospitalisation in case of emergencies. Further, under Calicut University First Statutes, 1977, every college is required to have attached to it a Medical Officer to conduct the medical inspection of students.

From the scrutiny of records at eight selected study centres, it was observed that ₹63,760 was collected as medical inspection fee during the period from 2019-20 to 2023-24. However, seven centres<sup>47</sup> had not conducted any health check-ups for students during the audit period.

Government replied (July 2025) that necessary directions will be issued to the Centres to render the services for which special fees are collected.

## 2.8. Human Resources

### 2.8.1. Engagement of guest faculties in excess of the limits prescribed by UGC

According to the UGC Regulations 2018, the number of contract appointments was not to exceed 10 *per cent* of the total number of faculty positions in a College/ University. The numbers of permanent and guest faculties during the period 2019-20 to 2023-24 in the University are shown in **Table 2.4**.

**Table 2.4: Faculty details-Sanctioned Strength and Persons in Position (PIP)**

Year	Sanctioned Strength	PIP	Permanent Faculty		Guest Faculty		Percentage of guest faculties
			PIP	Vacancy	Maximum admissible	PIP	
2019	242	213	124	118	24	89	36.78
2020	250	203	116	134	25	87	34.80
2021	243	220	159	84	24	61	25.10
2022	242	278	171	71	24	107	44.21
2023	241	249	165	76	24	84	34.85
2024	242	298	156	86	24	142	58.68

(Source: Annual Report of the University)

Audit observed that during the audit period, the University had engaged guest faculty in the range of 25.10 to 56.68 *per cent* of the sanctioned strength against the maximum permissible limit of 10 *per cent*.

Government replied (July 2025) that the University had resorted to engagement of guest faculty where the services of temporary teachers were indispensable for the uninterrupted conduct of academic activities. The University Statute confers upon the Vice Chancellor the authority to appoint guest faculty under such circumstances. The appointment of permanent faculty members took place only in 2021.

<sup>47</sup> All centres except CCSIT Calicut

The appointment of guest faculties in excess of the prescribed limit was in violation of UGC regulations. Further, Audit noticed that several guest faculties engaged by the University were underqualified as detailed in subsequent paragraphs of this Report, thereby compromising the quality of education.

### 2.8.2. Appointment of Teachers without prescribed qualification

UGC Regulations 2018<sup>48</sup> mandate a Master's degree with 55 *per cent* marks in the relevant/allied subject and NET/SLET/SET, as minimum qualification for Assistant Professors and equivalent positions, provided that, candidates awarded with Ph.D. in accordance with the UGC Regulations, shall be exempted from the requirement of minimum eligibility condition. Clause 13.0 stipulates that contract/hourly basis appointments must follow the same eligibility criteria as regular appointments.

Audit observed that teachers without prescribed qualifications were working in the University Departments, Centres and affiliated colleges, the details of which are presented below.

**Appointments in University Departments:** On verification of the qualification of faculties in eight selected Teaching and Research Departments during the audit period, it was observed that 60 *per cent* of the Assistant Professors engaged in the Department of Statistics were on hourly basis and lacked the prescribed qualifications of NET/Ph.D.

Government stated (July 2025) that guest faculties were engaged only when the services of temporary teachers were essential to ensure uninterrupted and effective academic functioning. This was done by invoking the statutory powers of the Vice Chancellor and in accordance with the University's guidelines.

The reply is not acceptable since the guidelines issued by the University cannot supersede UGC Regulations and appointing faculties without adequate qualifications may adversely impact the quality of education imparted.

**Appointments in Affiliated Colleges:** On analysis of the database in the college portal of the University, audit noticed that 2035 guest faculties across 74 affiliated colleges<sup>49</sup>, did not possess qualifications as required under the UGC guidelines. To substantiate the findings, Audit selected eight colleges<sup>50</sup> from the abovementioned colleges and observed that, 91 (47 *per cent*) out of 193 teachers did not possess the qualifications required as per UGC Regulations, 2018.

From the analysis of database, Audit also observed that 10,704 faculties in 199 unaided Arts and Science colleges did not possess the required qualifications. According to Kerala Self-financing College Teaching and Non-teaching Employees Act 2021, faculties in unaided colleges who did not possess the required qualifications on the date of commencement of the Act were to obtain the qualification within the date notified by GoK. However, notification prescribing the date by which qualification was to be attained by faculties was not prescribed by GoK till date (July 2025).

<sup>48</sup> Clauses 3.4 and 4.1

<sup>49</sup> 40 aided and 34 Government Arts and Science colleges

<sup>50</sup> four aided colleges and four Government colleges

Government stated (July 2025) that directive will be issued to all affiliated colleges to appoint UGC qualified teachers before the start of the next academic year, upload the details to the centralised college portal and that failure to comply with the Government directions will result in actions including withholding affiliation.

**Appointments in Teacher Education Centres (CUTECS):** As per National Council for Teacher Education Regulations (NCTE), 2014 and Amendment of 2019, prescribing the qualification for appointment to the post of Assistant Professors in institutions offering Teacher Education, Assistant Professors must have prescribed qualifications including NET/Ph.D.

The University is running 11 University Teacher Education Centres (CUTEC) (March 2024). Audit observed that during the period 2019-20 to 2023-24, only two<sup>51</sup> out of 11 CUTECS, had qualified teachers as prescribed in the NCTE Regulations. The details are given in **Appendix 2.7**.

Government replied (July 2025) that appointment of 63 teachers without prescribed qualifications, with a few exemptions was done before the NCTE Regulations 2014 came into force. Since then, the contracts have been renewed annually based on the appraisal report filed from the centres.

The reply is not acceptable as the University should have complied with the NCTE regulations issued from time to time and appointed qualified teachers to ensure the quality of education imparted.

### 2.8.3. Non-filling of reserved category vacancies

In accordance with Section 15(a) of the KS&SSR<sup>52</sup>, if no suitable candidate is available from a specified community or group, the vacancy shall remain unfilled and be notified separately for that community. If no candidate is found after two subsequent re-notifications, the vacancy will be filled through direct recruitment from among the available candidates belonging to the Other Backward Classes (OBC). In the absence of suitable OBC candidates, the selection shall be made from Scheduled Castes (SC) candidates, and if SC candidates are also unavailable, the vacancy will be filled from Scheduled Tribes (ST) candidates.

Following the appointments made in the academic year 2021-22, 11 posts of Associate Professor (out of 29 posts notified in 2019), 10 posts of Assistant Professor (out of 63 posts), and four posts of Professor (out of 24 posts) remained vacant<sup>53</sup> at the University as no eligible candidates were available. Detailed department-wise and post-wise information on vacancies due to No Candidate Available (NCA), as provided by the University, is given in **Appendix 2.8**.

Government replied (July 2025) that the University could not issue notification for special recruitment for the NCA vacancies of Assistant Professor as a Writ Appeal filed in 2021 by one of the candidates was pending at the High Court. As the Court had stayed all proceedings relating to recruitment process,

<sup>51</sup> CUTEC Manjeri and CUTEC Chalakkudy

<sup>52</sup> Kerala State and Subordinate Service Rules

<sup>53</sup> as per the appointment chart

notification for NCA vacancies was issued in July 2024 on disposal of the court case.

The reply is not acceptable as notification for NCA vacancies pertaining to Assistant Professor was issued in July 2024 after a lapse of one year from the disposal of the case in February 2023. Further, the reply was silent regarding the notification process in respect of the other two posts.

#### **2.8.4. Recruitment of contract/daily wage staff without complying with the Employment Exchanges Act, 1959**

The Employment Exchanges (Compulsory Notification of Vacancies) Act, 1959 insists that every establishment in the Public Sector (establishment owned, controlled or managed by the Government or a Department of the Government) shall, before filling any vacancy in any employment in that establishment, notify the vacancy to the Employment Exchange concerned. GoK directed (05 January 1988) to use the services of Employment Exchanges for vacancies outside the purview of Public Service Commission, warning that violations would lead to serious consequences, including prosecution.

Audit observed that since 2001, a total of 704 employees<sup>54</sup> were appointed on a contract or daily wage basis by the University. It was observed that these appointments were made without utilising the services of Employment Exchanges or obtaining the requisite non-availability certificates, thereby constituting a violation of the applicable legislation.

Government replied (July 2025) that the University is committed to comply with all relevant Statutes and regulations including the Employment Exchanges Act, 1959 and will take necessary steps to prevent similar instances of non-compliance in the future.

#### **2.8.5. Promotion of retired teachers to the post of Professor under Career Advancement Scheme**

According to Paragraph 6.3, Clause V of the UGC Regulations 2018, for promotion under Career Advancement Scheme (CAS), the applicant teacher must be on the role and in active service of the University/College on the date of consideration by the Selection Committee. Government of Kerala issued orders (20 February 2021) to provide promotion under CAS in Colleges, both Government and Aided, strictly in accordance with the norms, standards and procedures set out in the UGC Regulations.

The Assistant Registrar instructed (18 January 2022) that retired and relieved teachers of affiliated Colleges, whose placement as Professor was due on or after 18 July 2018, may process the proposals from the Colleges where they were actively on role on the CAS due date.

Audit observed that, during the period October 2022 to November 2024, 13 teachers of Aided Colleges who were not on the role and in active service on the date of consideration by the Selection Committee, were granted promotion from the post of Associate Professor (Academic Level 13A) to the post of Professor (Academic Level 14) under CAS by the University (**Appendix 2.9**).

<sup>54</sup> 536 non-teaching and 168 teaching staff (February 2025)

The irregular promotions resulted in excess drawal of pay and allowances amounting to ₹11.92 lakh in addition to retirement benefits.

Government replied (July 2025) that all the teachers listed by Audit were in active service in the College on their due date of promotion and had met the eligibility criteria for promotion to the post of Professor. The date of consideration by the Selection Committee is not the date of meeting of the Selection Committee, but the date that is considered by the Selection Committee to effect the promotion. Moreover, there can be instances where a delay in constituting a Selection Committee for various reasons can push an incumbent out of role.

The reply is not acceptable as the UGC guidelines stated that for appointments under CAS, the applicant teacher must be on the role and on active service of the University/College on the date of consideration by the Selection Committee.

#### **2.8.6. Delay in initiating action and non-recovery of dues from an Assistant Professor who violated Citizenship Act, 1955**

Section 9(1) of the Citizenship Act, 1955 stipulates that any citizen of India who by naturalisation, registration or otherwise voluntarily acquires, the citizenship of another country shall, upon such acquisition, cease to be a citizen of India. Further, as per Clauses 2 (a) and (i) under Section 7B of this Act, an overseas citizen of India shall not be entitled to the rights conferred on a citizen of India under Article 16 of the Constitution with regard to equality of opportunity in matters of public employment.

A Lecturer<sup>55</sup> of Department of Life Sciences of the University was on leave without allowance for a period of five years<sup>56</sup> in two spells to pursue higher studies<sup>57</sup>. The official's request for further extension of leave was rejected by the Syndicate (13 December 2006) and he was directed to join duty. The University issued (18 August 2007) a show cause memo and the Syndicate resolved (22 December 2007) to initiate disciplinary action. Subsequently the official was removed (02 July 2010) from service effective from 01 January 2006.

The official appealed (20 November 2010) to the Chancellor against the penalty and the Chancellor directed the University for fresh consideration and appropriate decision in accordance with law after affording an opportunity of being heard, to the appellant. The official was reinstated as a Lecturer in Life Sciences on 26 November 2013. Upon receiving an email petition (18 November 2020) along with details of the official's passport revealing that he had acquired British citizenship in the year 2008, the University initiated (October 2021) an inquiry and suspended the official from service (03 December 2021). Consequently, based on the inquiry report (May 2022) the official was terminated from service (June 2022).

The official suppressed the fact of renouncing Indian citizenship (31 May 2008) and acquiring British citizenship thereby constituting violation of Service Conduct Rules and the Citizenship Act and received an amount of ₹76.88 lakh

<sup>55</sup> Redesignated as Assistant Professor vide University order dated 21.03.2016

<sup>56</sup> from 18 November 2000 to 31 December 2005

<sup>57</sup> Post Doctoral fellowship in the Department of Medicine, University of California and M.Sc. Bio-informatics course in the School of Crystallography, Birkbeck College, London

as pay and allowances (November 2013 to March 2022). Audit observed that despite receiving concrete evidence against the official, there was a delay of 11 months on the part of the University in initiating inquiry against him. The University had also not recovered ₹18.91 lakh (March 2025) outstanding as dues<sup>58</sup> towards advance drawn and rent of residential quarter.

Government stated (July 2025) that the official has been directed (June 2025) to settle ₹8.16 lakh with penal interest of 18 *per cent* on the entire amount of advance from the date of drawal. It was further stated that, as the official had not responded positively to the request for clearing other outstanding dues, the University has decided to seek legal opinion on initiating appropriate action to recover the dues.

### 2.8.7. Granting of promotion to posts discontinued by Government

GoK's directive (26 February 2011) in the Ninth Pay Revision Commission implementation orders, required to discontinue the practice of granting promotion to posts such as Pool Officer, Pump Operator Higher Grade and Senior Electrician. According to the order, only the incumbents who were already holding these posts as on the date of ninth pay revision order were eligible to receive the corresponding revised scale. The Syndicate decided (27 April 2011) to implement the pay revision orders and decided (September 2012) to abolish the posts as and when the incumbents vacate the post and to make amendments to the Calicut University Ordinance in this regard. However, even after a lapse of 13 years from the pay revision order, modification to the Ordinance was not made (March 2025). Audit noticed that the following promotions were made during the period 2014-20 in violation of the Government order.

- **Promotion to the post of Pool Officer**

Since the modification to the Ordinance was not made, officials in the post of Section Officer (Fair Copy and Dispatch) Higher grade which was the feeder category of Pool Officer, approached the Court and obtained orders favouring them. The Honourable High Court directed<sup>59</sup> the University to fill up the vacancies in the post of Pool Officer and to consider the claim of the petitioners for promotion to the post. As a result, 11 persons were promoted to the post of Pool Officer.

- **Promotion to the post of Senior Electrician and Pump Operator Higher Grade**

The University followed the practice of granting promotion to the discontinued posts and six officials were promoted to the post of Senior Electrician and seven to the post of Pump Operator Higher Grade.

The practice of granting promotion to non-existent posts would create avoidable financial liability to the University. Had the University acted promptly and amended the Ordinance, the litigations, and consequent promotions could have been avoided.

<sup>58</sup> ₹8,16,000 drawn as advance on 30 July 2019 for the Global Initiative of Academic Networks (GIAN) Programme, ₹7,95,600 as interest at the rate 18 *per cent* till 31 December 2024 and ₹2,79,528 towards rent and penal rent of residential quarter

<sup>59</sup> During the period 2013-16 in four court cases

Government replied (July 2025) that steps have been initiated by the University to make necessary amendments in the Ordinances and to place the proposal before the Syndicate.

However, Audit noticed that the University is yet to implement the orders issued by GoK in 2011, indicating laxity on the part of the University in abiding by the directions of GoK.

## 2.9. Examination

### 2.9.1. The Examination Process of the University

The examinations for all UG and PG programmes in the affiliated colleges are conducted at various examination centres as per the examination calendar prepared by the University. Answer scripts are evaluated at University-designated valuation camps. After valuation, the answer scripts are tabulated at Pareeksha Bhavan. The process of tabulation involves adding of internal marks, grace marks<sup>60</sup> and application of moderation as per the orders of Pass Board<sup>61</sup>, to the marks awarded in the answer script. Grace marks and revaluation marks are effected before adding moderation. Mark sheets and Certificates are issued to students who clear the examinations. Students can apply for revaluation within 10 days/working days of publication of results by paying the prescribed fee. There is no revaluation for Multiple Choice Question (MCQ) examinations. The tabulation of results is done through 'Tabulation Software'. From November 2022, the processes of examination and valuation were integrated into the College Portal Software in a phased manner.

To assess the integrity of the database and to verify whether internal controls were adequate, audit conducted analysis of database of Student Portal, College Portal and UG/PG Tabulation Software received from the University as of December 2024. The audit findings emanating from this examination are detailed in the subsequent paragraphs.

### 2.9.2. Significant difference in the marks awarded in the valuation of answer scripts

The evaluation process for each course conducted by the University comprises two components: internal assessment (20 *per cent* weightage) and external evaluation (80 *per cent* weightage). Answer scripts are evaluated by examiners using a well-defined scheme of valuation and answer keys provided by the University.

The initial evaluation of the answer scripts is done by the Additional Examiner<sup>62</sup>. The Chief Examiner then evaluates a minimum of 10 *per cent* of these answer scripts and re-tabulate all answer scripts. The Chairman oversees

<sup>60</sup> Participation in National Service Scheme (NSS), performance in various arts and sports activities, etc.

<sup>61</sup> Chairpersons of the centralised valuation camps for each discipline who are members of the Board of examinations collectively serve as the Pass Board for their respective disciplines. Pass Board decides on the moderation to be awarded, if any.

<sup>62</sup> in exceptional cases such as low enrolment, insufficient availability of qualified faculty etc., the Chief examiner/Chairman may assume the role of an Additional examiner.

the re-tabulation<sup>63</sup> of marks, making corrections wherever discrepancies are identified. If no discrepancies are identified, the Chief examiner or Chairman may leave the marks unchanged. If discrepancies arise among the marks awarded by the evaluators, the marks assigned by the most recent evaluator is considered final.

Significant differences were noticed in the marks awarded by Additional examiner, Chief examiner and Chairman in the valuation process, as discussed below.

### 2.9.2.1. Significant difference in marks awarded for theory papers

Analysis of the College Portal database revealed significant variations in the marks awarded for theory papers by the Additional examiner and Chief examiner and between Additional examiner/ Chief examiner, and Chairman, as detailed in **Table 2.5**.

**Table 2.5: Differences in the marks awarded by the examiners**

Exam Year	Number of answer scripts valued	No. of answer scripts with difference in the marks awarded by the Additional examiner and Chief examiner	No. of answer scripts with difference in the marks awarded by Additional examiner/ Chief examiner and Chairman
2022*	20630	3248	46
2023	815526	75312	4076
2024	2478846	212274	12030
<b>Total</b>	<b>3315002</b>	<b>290834</b>	<b>16152</b>

\* valuation was done through the College Portal in a phased manner from November 2022 (Source: Data obtained from the College Portal)

Audit observed that out of 32,37,975<sup>64</sup> answer scripts evaluated by Additional examiner, difference in marks ranging from one *per cent* to 93 *per cent* of the maximum marks occurred in 2,90,834 answer scripts (8.98 *per cent*) on re-evaluation/scrutiny by the Chief examiner.

The re-tabulation process by Chairman culminated in changes to the marks in 16,152 answer scripts. Analysis of these variations showed that the difference in marks ranged from one *per cent* to 90 *per cent* of maximum marks. In 127 answer scripts the variation between the marks awarded by the Additional examiner and the Chief examiner was greater than 40 *per cent* of maximum marks. Answer scripts valued by Additional examiner/ Chief examiner when scrutinised by the Chairman, the variation was more than 40 *per cent* in 80 answer scripts.

Despite the fact that answer scripts were evaluated by examiners using a well-defined scheme of valuation and answer keys provided by the University, there was significant variation in marks when answer scripts were re-evaluated/scrutinised.

<sup>63</sup> Re-tabulation is the process of rechecking the totalling of marks awarded to a student in his answer script. It does not involve re-evaluating the answers, but rather ensures that: All questions have been marked, marks have been correctly added, and marks have been correctly transferred to the cover page or result sheet.

<sup>64</sup> Out of 33,15,002 answer scripts valued, 77,027 were first valued by the Chief examiner.

Government stated (July 2025) that significant discrepancies between the marks occurred primarily due to errors in entry of marks or calculation by the Additional examiner which were identified and rectified by the Chief examiner during detailed verification. It was also assured that the audit observations were being taken seriously, and appropriate corrective measures will be taken. Further, during the Exit conference (July 2025) the Principal Secretary emphasised a zero error policy for the examination system.

Audit observed that, since it is not mandatory to subject all the answer scripts to re-evaluation by the Chief examiner, the possibility of discrepancy if any, in the remaining answer scripts would remain undetected.

**2.9.2.2. Significant difference in marks awarded for Objective type examination**

According to various Regulations, Choice Based Credit Semester System UG Regulations 2019 (UG Regulations 2019), Calicut University Choice Based Credit Semester System UG Regulations 2014 (UG Regulations 2014) and Choice Based Credit Semester System PG Regulations 2019 (PG Regulations 2019) of the University, internal assessment for students of School of Distance Education (SDE) would be based on the marks obtained in ‘fill in the blank type’/MCQ examination conducted along with the external examination of SDE. The marks for the external examination and the objective type examination were evaluated and entered in the database separately.

Analysis of the College Portal database revealed significant variations in the marks awarded by the Additional examiner/Chief examiner/Chairman as detailed in **Table 2.6**.

**Table 2.6: Difference in the marks awarded by the examiners**

Year of the Examination*	Number of answer scripts valued	No. of answer scripts with difference in the marks awarded by the Additional examiner and Chief examiner	No. of answer scripts with difference in the marks awarded by Additional examiner/ Chief examiner and Chairman
2023	165944	1095	240
2024	548712	2665	385
<b>Total</b>	<b>714656</b>	<b>3760</b>	<b>625</b>

\* Discrepancies were not noticed during the year 2022  
(Source: Data obtained from College Portal)

Audit observed that out of 6,97,569<sup>65</sup> answer scripts, 3,760 answer scripts showed difference in marks ranging from four *per cent* to 95 *per cent* of the total marks when re-evaluated/scrutinised by Chief examiner. On re-tabulation of the answer scripts by the Chairman, 625 answer scripts exhibited difference ranging from four *per cent* to 92 *per cent* of the maximum marks. In two cases the mark that was originally awarded as ‘zero’ increased upto 10 marks.

In 142 answer scripts the variation between the marks awarded by the Additional examiner and the Chief examiner was greater than 40 *per cent* of maximum marks. Answer scripts valued by Additional examiner/Chief

<sup>65</sup> Out of 7,14,656 answer scripts 17,087 answer scripts were first valued by Chief examiner

examiner when scrutinised by the Chairman, the variation was more than 40 per cent in 13 answer scripts.

Audit observed that variations in marks awarded for the objective type examinations at different levels of valuation was unjustifiable. Since MCQ/fill in the blank evaluations were objective type and based on pre-determined answer keys, discrepancies in the marks awarded should ideally be 'Nil'.

Government stated (July 2025) that the differences were attributed to errors in entry of marks by examiners which were subsequently identified and corrected by Chief examiner/Chairman. It was also stated that appropriate instructions will be issued to all examiners and that the existing system will be strengthened and additional measures taken to address the shortcomings and enhance the integrity of the evaluation process.

As stated in the preceding paragraph, since it is not mandatory to subject all the answer scripts to re-evaluation by the Chief examiner, the possibility of discrepancy if any, in the remaining answer scripts would remain undetected. Further, lack of revaluation procedure for MCQ based examinations deprives the students of remedial action if he/she feels that they have been awarded lesser marks. Hence, the reply is not acceptable.

### 2.9.3. Non-finalisation of final results in UG/PG Programmes

During the period 2019-23<sup>66</sup>, Pareeksha Bhavan tabulated 1,11,67,145 answer scripts of Under Graduate (UG) programmes and 16,78,845 answer scripts of PG programmes in affiliated colleges.

On verifying the UG tabulation database, Audit observed that results of 116 UG answer scripts<sup>67</sup> were yet to be finalised (December 2024), out of which, in 57 cases the reason for non-finalisation was not recorded by Pareeksha Bhavan. Additionally, in the year 2023, results of two UG answer scripts were withheld due to non-receipt of marks from the valuation camp.

Similarly, in PG programmes, results of 3908 answer scripts<sup>68</sup> out of 16,78,845 were yet to be finalised (December 2024), of which in 3894 cases, the reason for non-finalisation was not seen recorded.

Due to non-finalising of results of answer scripts, examination results were not declared in the above cases. Audit noticed lack of transparency in these cases, as no reasons were attributed by the University for not finalising the answer scripts.

Government stated (July 2025) that non-finalisation of results occurred due to reasons such as complications in consolidating results of re-admission candidates transitioning from one stream to another stream, wrong registration of course/paper and delay in receipt of marks. The cases pointed out by Audit were being reviewed and necessary corrective actions taken to address the issue. It was also stated that measures will be implemented to ensure timely and accurate processing of results. Further, during the Exit conference (July 2025)

<sup>66</sup> Figures pertaining to the year 2024 not included as finalisation process was yet to be completed

<sup>67</sup> 53 cases in 2019, 08 in 2020, 05 in 2021, 10 in 2022 and 40 in 2023

<sup>68</sup> 25 cases in 2019, 38 in 2020, 37 in 2021, 119 in 2022 and 3689 in 2023

the Principal Secretary stated that a specific time frame should be set for finalising the pending answer scripts.

#### **2.9.4. Non-awarding of moderation marks in UG/PG examinations**

The UG examination process was governed by Clause 8 of Regulations 2014 and 2019. The provisions for awarding moderation marks in the evaluation process outlined in Clause 9.4 of CUCBCSS 2014, stipulates that moderation was to be capped at five *per cent* of total external marks per semester, with a maximum of 10 *per cent* per course<sup>69</sup>. If a student fails in a single subject, this limit can be increased to 15 *per cent*. The Board of Examiners concerned may apply moderation percentages within these limits. However, as per Clause 8.9 of CBCSS 2019, moderation was to be granted as per the orders of the Academic Council.

Tabulation of marks for UG programmes in affiliated colleges was managed using the CBCSS tabulation software. After the entry of marks is completed, the respective section finalises the marks and generates moderation statistics. Based on this statistics, the Pass Board determines the applicable moderation. Once the Pass Board minutes is approved by the VC, the digital wing implements the moderation as per the approved records. If modification in marks is effected due to revaluation, grace marks, etc., resetting the moderation to zero, and if a candidate still requires moderation to pass, the necessary moderation is applied manually.

For Postgraduate (PG) programmes, the Credit Semester System (CUCSS PG-2010) was introduced in 2010 and replaced by CBCSS PG Regulations 2019 for 2019 admissions onwards. Although these regulations do not explicitly mention moderation, it was applied as per Academic Council's orders.

The discrepancies observed in the awarding of moderation marks are detailed in subsequent paragraphs.

##### **2.9.4.1. Non-awarding of moderation marks resulting in UG/PG students failing examinations**

On an analysis of the data in UG tabulation database regarding moderation given in the regular UG examinations during audit period, Audit observed that in 2,069 cases, students failed due to non-awarding of eligible moderation and that these students had secured pass marks without moderation in all subjects except for one subject. Despite being eligible for moderation upto 15 *per cent*, no moderation was granted to them and hence declared to have failed.

On verifying the remarks column in UG tabulation database, Audit observed that out of 2,069 cases, in 902 cases, moderation was not given after updating marks obtained in revaluation, in 148 cases, moderation was not given after applying Grace marks for participating in Sports, Arts festival, NSS etc., in one case moderation was not given after combining from SDE CUCBCSS and in 64 cases, the moderation mark was changed to zero with the remarks 'Edited after Finalisation'. In the remaining 954 cases, Audit could not ascertain the reasons as there was no entry in the remarks column.

---

<sup>69</sup> Refers to a single subject

Similarly, analysis of PG tabulation database on moderation given in regular PG examinations during the audit period, revealed that six students who had secured pass marks in all subjects except for one were not awarded the eligible moderation and hence declared as failed. On verifying the remarks column in PG tabulation database, it was seen that in one case moderation was not given after applying Grace marks<sup>70</sup>, and in five cases, the moderation mark was changed to zero with the remarks 'Edited after Finalisation'.

Government agreed (July 2025) to the audit findings and stated that instances of non-award of moderation have, in several cases, directly resulted in the failure of candidates in the examinations. Each case is currently being examined and the University is considering long-term solutions to prevent such discrepancies in the future.

#### **2.9.4.2. Declaration of failed UG/PG students as passed on award of excess moderation marks**

During analysis of UG tabulation database on regular students for the period 2019-24, it was noticed that 72 students passed the examination on account of receipt of ineligible moderation.

On verifying the remarks column in the database, it was noticed that in 25 cases, excess moderation was given after applying revaluation marks, in 42 cases, after application of Grace Marks, in four cases, excess moderation was given with the remarks 'Edited after Finalisation', and in one case, there was no entry in the remarks column and hence Audit could not ascertain the reason.

During the analysis of details in PG tabulation database on students who appeared for examination during 2019-24, Audit observed that two candidates passed the examination on account of receipt of excess moderation.

Government acknowledged (July 2025) that ambiguities and differences in interpretation regarding applicability of moderation had led to award of excess moderation marks in certain cases. All instances where moderation marks exceeded the prescribed limits were being examined. It was also stated that, to prevent recurrence, clear and stringent guidelines on moderation policy will be re-circulated to all the branches concerned.

#### **2.9.5. Students passing exam papers without securing the required minimum external marks**

As per the CBCSS UG Curriculum 2019 and B.Voc (Bachelor of Vocation) Curriculum 2021 Regulations, a student must secure an aggregate P grade (combining external and internal marks) in each course to pass and qualify for a degree. A minimum of 20 *per cent* marks in external evaluation was mandatory to pass a course, and no minimum was prescribed for internal evaluation. However, for integrated programmes under CBCSS (2020 admission onwards), a minimum of 30 *per cent* marks in external evaluation was required to pass a course.

On an analysis of the UG tabulation database, it was observed that seven students as detailed in **Table 2.7** passed the examination despite not securing the minimum external marks required.

<sup>70</sup> Grace marks for participating in Sports, Arts festival, NSS etc.

**Table 2.7: Students who passed papers without securing minimum external marks**

Sl. No.	Registration No.*	Course	Year of admission	Name of the Paper (Paper code)	External mark obtained	Moderation awarded	Total	Minimum external mark required to pass	Maximum External mark
1	XXXXBCM111	B.Com Taxation	2019	Corporate Taxation and Tax Planning (BTSE604)	13	2	15	16	80
2	XXXXBCM114	B.Com Taxation	2019	Corporate Taxation and Tax Planning (BTSE604)	13	2	15	16	80
3	XXXXBVH006	B.Voc-Tourism and Hospitality Management	2021	Basic Skills in Arabic (CARA133)	13	2	15	16	80
4	XXXXBVH007	B.Voc-Tourism and Hospitality Management	2021	Basic Skills in Arabic (CARA133)	14	1	15	16	80
5	XXXXBCM055	B.Com Co-operation	2019	Writing For Academic and Professional Success (CEGA236)	14	1	15	16	80
6	XXXXBPA044	B.Voc-Professional Accounting and Taxation	2021	Malayala Bhashayum Sahithyavum I (CMAA135)	15	0	15	16	80
7	XXXXISY007	Integrated MA Sociology	2020	Applied Botany (IBCD524)	15	0	15	18	60

\* Original Registration number has been masked

(Source: Data obtained from UG Tabulation database of affiliated colleges)

Thus, the absence of a proper validation mechanism in the tabulation and result processing procedures resulted in students being declared as passed the examination, which was in violation of the academic regulation set by the University. Further, Audit noticed that the student mentioned at serial number one in the table above was awarded Degree certificate.

Audit further noticed that a student who had secured only 44 marks<sup>71</sup> out of 100 and failed in the Internship and Project paper in the sixth semester of B.Voc Fashion Technology was awarded Degree certificate (April 2024) by the University.

In response to audit observation on awarding of Degree certificate to the aforementioned student, Government stated (July 2025) that the incident occurred due to incorrect setting of pass minimum, which was attributed to a software error. Further, it was stated that corrective measures were being considered to address the issue without affecting the student.

<sup>71</sup> As per B.Voc. Regulations 2014, a minimum of 50 per cent marks is required to pass the Project/Internship examination.

### 2.9.6. Awarding internal/external marks beyond maximum permissible limit

As per the UG Regulations (2014 and 2019) for the Choice-Based Credit and Semester System, a student's final mark comprises of external marks from semester-end examination and internal marks. The evaluation scheme allocates 80 per cent to external examination and 20 per cent to internal assessment. The Board of Studies sets the minimum and maximum internal/external marks in the syllabus, and the University conducts external examinations for all semesters. Internal marks are awarded based on attendance, assignments/seminars/viva voce (viva), tests, records, and lab involvement/records. External marks awarded should not be beyond the maximum permissible limit.

On an analysis of the UG tabulation database, audit observed that for the period 2019-24 in six instances, the final external marks awarded to the students exceeded the maximum permissible limit. Details are given in **Table 2.8**.

**Table 2.8: Details of students who were awarded external marks in excess of maximum permissible limit**

Sl No.	Programme	Paper Name	Registration Number	Year of Examination	Internal Mark received	External Mark received	Maximum External Mark Permissible	Difference	Total Mark received
1	B.Sc Physics	Mathematics- 3	XXXXSPH004	2020	13	61	60	1	74
2	B.Sc Mathematics	Problem Solving Using C	XXXXSMT027	2020	14	61	60	1	75
3	BA Economics	Individual/Group Activity (Project)	XXXXAECR34	2021	9	41	40	1	50
4	B.Sc Biotechnology	Environmental Biotechnology	XXXXSBT046	2021	15	73	64	9	88
5	B.Sc Biotechnology	Physical and Applied Chemistry Practical	XXXXSBT046	2021	15	69	64	5	84
6	Bachelor of Social Work	Project	XXXXBSW024	2022	14	61	60	1	75

(Source: Data obtained from UG Tabulation database)

Further, on scrutiny of UG Tabulation database, it was observed that during the period 2019-24, internal marks awarded exceeded the maximum permissible limit in 22 instances (**Appendix 2.10**).

In response, the Government stated (July 2025) that, in five instances, external marks exceeded the maximum permissible limit due to application of grace marks and in one case due to non-adjustment of marks on re-admission of the student from the old scheme to new scheme. In cases where internal marks exceeded the maximum, the discrepancy was attributed to deficiencies in the software functionality. It was also informed that corrective measures were being taken in all such cases and effective mechanism will be implemented and strict action will be initiated against those found responsible for such lapses.

### 2.9.7. Awarding of maximum internal marks to students without sufficient attendance

As per UG Regulations 2019, UG Regulations 2014 and Integrated Programmes (from 2020 admission onwards), internal assessment is based on a system,

comprising written tests, assignments, seminars, viva, and attendance in theory courses.

Components with percentage of marks of Internal Evaluation of theory courses under UG Regulations 2014, were attendance (25 per cent), assignment/seminar/viva (25 per cent) and test paper (50 per cent). Attendance of each course was evaluated as given in **Table 2.9**.

**Table 2.9: Percentage of marks allotted as per the attendance**

Attendance (in per cent)	Percentage of marks allotted against the component 'attendance'
Above 90 per cent attendance	100 per cent
85 to 89 per cent	80 per cent
80 to 84 per cent	60 per cent
76 to 79 per cent	40 per cent
75 per cent	20 per cent

(Source: CUCBCSS UG Regulations 2014)

Internal evaluation components for theory courses under UG Regulations 2019 and Integrated Programmes included test paper (40 per cent), assignment (20 per cent), seminar (20 per cent), and classroom participation based on attendance (20 per cent). The details of scheme for awarding internal marks based on classroom participation were as shown in **Table 2.10**.

**Table 2.10: Details of maximum and minimum internal marks**

Split up of marks for Classroom participation (CRP) Range of	CRP Out of 4 (Maximum Internal mark 20)	Out of 3 (Maximum internal mark 15)
50 per cent ≤ CRP < 75 per cent	1	1
75 per cent ≤ CRP < 85 per cent	2	2
85 per cent and above	4	3

(Source: UG Regulations 2019 and Regulations for Integrated Programmes (CBCSS 2020 admission onwards))

Attendance is maintained by the Department/College<sup>72</sup>, and as per all the three Regulations, a student must have at least 75 per cent attendance per semester to appear for examinations.

On verification of database, Audit observed 3,206 instances where students were awarded full internal marks in theory papers despite having shortage in attendance and having availed condonation.

The Controller of Examination replied (20 March 2025) that even if a student has shortage in overall attendance, there was a chance for the student to obtain full internal marks in some subjects.

Subsequent to the reply given by the Controller of Examination, Audit selected 18 colleges and test checked the attendance records pertaining to courses in which the students were awarded maximum internal marks and observed that 64 per cent of the students<sup>73</sup> were awarded full internal marks despite not having minimum required attendance. Details are given in **Appendix 2.11**.

<sup>72</sup> University may grant condonation for shortages in attendance. Students can avail condonation of shortage of attendance in a maximum of four semesters during the entire programme (Either four single condonations or one double condonation and two single condonations during the entire programme)

<sup>73</sup> 454 students out of 713 students in 18 colleges

Government stated (July 2025) that instructions were issued to colleges to ensure that the internal marks are awarded in proportion to each student's attendance status for individual subjects. It was also clarified that the University's role was limited to issuing common guidelines, and that awarding of internal marks was under the purview of the respective colleges and it was practically not feasible for the University to examine each individual case.

University cannot absolve from its responsibility of ensuring the correctness of internal marks awarded by the affiliated colleges and hence the contention of Government is not tenable.

### **2.9.8. Revaluation of Papers- difference between original and revaluated marks**

Revaluation process allows students to request re-evaluation of their answer scripts, by paying the prescribed fee. On verifying the UG/PG tabulation database for the period 2019-24, it was observed that in UG programmes out of 94,959 cases where students had applied for revaluation, in 77,665 (81.79 *per cent*) cases there was difference in marks after revaluation. Out of 77,665 cases in which there was difference in marks on account of revaluation, in 23,837 answer scripts (30.69 *per cent*) the variation in marks was more than 10 *per cent*, as detailed in **Appendix 2.12**.

In PG courses, 24.10 *per cent* of revaluated answer scripts had changes in marks (31,966 out of 1,32,651 answer scripts), with 44.61 *per cent* (14,260 answer scripts) varying by over 10 *per cent*. Five papers were not taken into consideration as first evaluation or revaluation marks were marked as 'absent'.

As per University order<sup>74</sup> (19 August 2016), revaluation marks are awarded without limit. If the increase is 30 *per cent* or more of the maximum marks, a second revaluation is conducted, and the final score is the average of both revaluations. As per University order<sup>75</sup> (28 January 2019) valued answer scripts are to be disposed of after two weeks from the date of declaration of revaluation results, due to which physical copies were unavailable for scrutiny by Audit. Hence, Audit selected random samples of answer scripts of the recently conducted examination which were available with the University, to substantiate the findings Audit arrived at on the basis of data analysis. The details in this regard are given in **Appendix 2.13**.

The high percentage of answer scripts that showed changes in marks after revaluation, along with the substantial discrepancies between the first and second evaluations, indicates a lack of consistency and reliability in the valuation process.

Government stated (July 2025) that observations made by Audit have been taken seriously, and further measures will be taken by appropriate academic/administrative bodies of the University to strengthen the system.

<sup>74</sup> U.O. No. 456/2016/PB

<sup>75</sup> U.O. No. 67/2019/PB

### 2.9.9. Delay in conduct of examinations and publication of results

According to Clause 6.6 of UG Regulations 2019 of the University, the University shall prepare a uniform calendar for conduct of examinations and publication of results.

On verifying the records furnished by Pareeksha Bhavan regarding details of the regular examinations conducted during the years 2019-20 to 2023-24, Audit observed that there was delay in the conduct of 229 UG examinations and publication of results. Conduct of 100 examinations was delayed by 60 days or more<sup>76</sup>, with maximum delay ranging upto 357 days and publication of results of 174 examinations were delayed by 60 days or more, with maximum delay ranging upto 718 days.

On a cross verification of the details of 42 examinations<sup>77</sup> (**Appendix 2.14**) in the UG tabulation database, Audit observed delay ranging from 69 to 576 days in publishing results, causing hardships to 10,03,145 students who attended these examinations.

Government replied (July 2025) that significant delays occurred in the conduct of examinations during the period 2020-23, primarily due to the disruptions and backlogs resulting from Covid-19 pandemic. Since then, sustained efforts were taken to normalise the examination schedule and is now adhering to the prescribed academic calendar.

Audit acknowledges the progress made by the University in normalising the examination schedule. However, in 2023-24 also, instances were noticed wherein the conduct of examination was delayed by 95 days and publication of results by 100 days.

## 2.10. Infrastructure

### 2.10.1. Functioning of Centre for Computer Science and Information Technologies and School of Management Studies without mandatory Infrastructure facilities

AICTE Approval Process Handbook lays down the norms for essential and desirable requirements and standards regarding land, built-up area requirements, Smart Board, internet connection, LCD projectors in classrooms, etc., for technical institutions. Deficiencies observed in the infrastructure facilities across the three selected CCSITs and two Schools of Management Studies (SMS) were as follows:

- Though internet connection was available in the computer laboratory, of the selected CCSITs, this facility was not available in the classrooms of two<sup>78</sup> CCSITs, and smart boards were not available in any of the three CCSITs. Grievance Redressal Committees and Committees for SC/STs were not established in CCSIT Manjeri and CCSIT Aranattukara.

<sup>76</sup> As an Examination Manual was not prepared by the University, Audit considered instances in which the delay was 60 days or more.

<sup>77</sup> B.Sc, BCA, BA

<sup>78</sup> CCSIT CU campus and CCSIT Manjeri

- School of Management Studies, Vatakara, was functioning in rented building and had no strong rooms for keeping the question papers/answer sheets. Online grievance redressal mechanism, internal complaint committee and committee for SC/ST were not established in Vatakara and Palakkad SMSs.

The functioning of CCSITs and SMSs without the mandatory facilities is a violation of AICTE guidelines and may adversely impact the academic progress of students.

Government replied (July 2025) that necessary directions were issued to the centres to form Internal complaint committee, Grievance Redressal cell etc., and CCSITs have since been provided with computers and all basic equipment such as projectors, smart boards etc., and purchase proposal for improving the infrastructure of centres has been sanctioned by the University. However, the reply was silent regarding the non-availability of strong rooms.

### 2.10.2. Inadequate infrastructural facilities in Departments of the University

The inadequacies noticed in the infrastructural facilities during the joint physical inspections (May, June 2025) with the officials of the University, in the eight Departments selected by Audit, are detailed below:

- Department of Chemistry was facing shortage of space in respect of storing equipment in laboratories and in conducting classes for elective students. The sitting space allotted for Research Scholars was insufficient, and seminars were conducted in the seminar hall of Department of Botany and in the seminar hall of Aryabatta/ Central Sophisticated Instrumentation Facility.
- In Department of Psychology, regular classes of PG Diploma in Rehabilitation Psychology were conducted in seminar hall as classroom space was not available. Four year UG programme was not started due to shortage of space. No action was taken by the Engineering wing of the University for rectifying the floor leakage, due to which rest room facility at the department was nonfunctional from 2022.
- Department of Education was facing difficulty in conducting lecture classes, practicals and examinations effectively as the existing classrooms were too small to accommodate the students enrolled for the courses. Though the department had applied for Integrated Teacher Education Programme in three streams<sup>79</sup> for the academic year 2026-27, sufficient number of rooms and laboratories as stipulated in NCTE regulations were not available.
- Integrated PG courses (BA and MA Folklore) were not started due to non-availability of academic space.
- Department of Statistics was facing shortage of classrooms for conducting Integrated PG programme. High end computers essential

<sup>79</sup> B.Sc.Ed, BA.Ed and B.Com.Ed

for M.Sc and Ph.D students for effectively handling high dimensional data were not available.

Government stated (July 2025) that the issue of inadequate class room facilities in the Departments of Chemistry and Psychology were expected to be resolved on completion of construction of a new academic block building under PM-USHA<sup>80</sup> scheme.

However, the reply was silent regarding the issues observed in other departments.

### 2.10.3. Inadequacies in the hostel facilities provided to students

The University provided accommodation for students. The women's hostel comprising five blocks with a total intake capacity of 1805, accommodates 1678 inmates and men's hostel comprising seven blocks with a total intake capacity of 579 accommodates 529 inmates (April 2025).

Guidelines on Safety of Students on and off campuses under the Twelfth Plan of University Grants Commission for HEIs require that, any physical infrastructure housing students should be secured by a boundary wall, the entry points should be manned by security guards, CCTV cameras, identity verification mechanism etc. Further, HEIs were to install fire safety system including sprinkler systems or other fire extinguishing systems, fire detection devices etc.

The deficiencies noticed in the accommodation provided to the students were (i) CCTV cameras were not installed at the entry points of the hostel and (ii) Fire detection devices, stand-alone smoke alarms, devices that alert the presence of fire etc., were not available in any of the blocks.

The above deficiencies revealed that the safety of students as mandated by UGC guidelines were not addressed by the University.

Government stated (July 2025) that necessary steps were being initiated to install fire detection devices and CCTV cameras in the hostels.

### 2.10.4. Inadequate safety measures and poor maintenance of laboratory equipment

According to UGC Guidelines<sup>81</sup> (January 2011), University shall make sure that students wear appropriate personal protection equipment, and are aware of the location and mode of use of all safety and emergency equipment. In addition to this, Guidelines on Safety of Students on and off Campuses of HEIs issued by UGC (July 2018), stipulate that HEIs should install a fire safety system and undertake mock drills for fire situations at least once in a semester.

Audit conducted joint physical inspection (September-October 2024) along with Heads of Departments (HoDs) and officials in charge of 15 laboratories<sup>82</sup>

<sup>80</sup> Pradhan Mantri Uchchar Shiksha Abhiyan

<sup>81</sup> UGC Guidelines for Universities, Research Institutes and Colleges for procurement, storage, usage and disposal of radioactive and other Hazardous Materials/Chemicals

<sup>82</sup> Seven from the Department of Physics and eight from the Department of Chemistry

of two Departments. The issues observed in these laboratories, relating to maintenance of equipment and infrastructure were as follows:

- Fire detection devices, stand-alone smoke alarm devices or fire extinguishers had not been installed in any of the laboratories, instead, fire extinguishers were installed in the corridors.
- Seven out of eight laboratories in the Department of Chemistry were not equipped with eye wash and safety shower. None of the laboratories were equipped with fire blankets and mercury spill kits. The roof of Advanced materials research laboratory collapsed in August 2024 and the laboratory had been nonfunctional since then. The hot air oven, Rudolph Automatic Polarimeter, Differential scanning Calorimeter and freezer were non-operational. Research scholars were conducting tests outside the University due to non-availability of high-end equipment in the Chemistry laboratories.
- Security/safety measures such as radiation detection instruments, screening facility at the entry and exit points, personal dosimeters for users, engagement of security personnel etc., were not available in the Radiation Physics laboratory, where nuclear substances/radioactive elements were kept. Experiments in Nuclear Physics were being conducted outside the University as the Particle Accelerator was not fully functional.

Out of the 50 research scholars who responded to the Survey, 22 were from the Science stream and needed laboratory facilities for their research. Ten out of 22 research scholars (45 *per cent*) responded that laboratory tests /experiments were conducted outside the University due to unavailability/nonfunctioning of equipment in the University. Seven research scholars stated that the delay in getting the results from the outside laboratory/institution had affected their research work.

Government stated (July 2025) that under PM-USHA project, it was decided to procure essential safety equipment for all the laboratories under Department of Chemistry. It was also informed that Hot air oven and Polarimeter had been repaired, additional equipment were acquired under DST-FIST<sup>83</sup>, PM-USHA, and that action was being taken to repair the ceiling of Advanced materials research laboratory. Further, the process of providing fire safety training, mock drills, installing safety signage, procurement of fire extinguishers etc., are in planning stage.

#### **2.10.5. Improper maintenance of equipment in Central Sophisticated Instrumentation Facility**

Central Sophisticated Instrumentation Facility (CSIF) of the University houses 19 sophisticated instruments worth ₹10.58 crore used for material characterisation, different physical and chemical analyses, precision chemical analysis and computational analysis. According to the Stores Purchase Manual 2013, issued by GoK, the Purchase department may enter into Annual Maintenance Contract (AMC) for proper maintenance and trouble-free service

<sup>83</sup> Department of Science and Technology- Fund for Improvement of Science and Technology Infrastructure (FIST)

of goods, especially for sophisticated equipment and machinery which are not otherwise covered by warranty.

During Joint Physical Verification conducted (November 2024) along with the Director, CSIF, Audit observed that, of the 19 equipment maintained in CSIF, only four had valid AMC. AMC was not taken/renewed for 10 equipment worth ₹6.88 crore after the warranty period, and five of these were non-functional. Of the remaining five equipment, whose AMC expired between February and September 2024, three were not working.

As these advanced machines are essential for data analysis, simulations and testing across multiple disciplines, the malfunction had not only delayed research progress but also affected students and faculty who rely on these equipment for their academic work.

Government stated (July 2025) that at present, out of the 19 instruments, 12 were fully functional and one was irreparable. It was also informed that steps were being initiated to rectify the defects in the remaining six instruments and for executing AMC for those instruments which were not covered under AMC.

The reply is silent about the reason for not renewing AMCs on time.

#### 2.10.6. Lack of facilities for differently abled persons

The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, aims to ensure that students with disabilities have equal access to educational opportunities, support services, and infrastructure in HEIs.

Details obtained from two CCSITs<sup>84</sup>, two SMSs<sup>85</sup> and three Teacher Education Centres<sup>86</sup> functioning outside the University campus revealed that basic facilities like ramps/rails were not available in both SMSs, facilities of lifts were absent in the multi-storied buildings of the seven institutions, and disabled friendly toilets were not available in one CCSIT<sup>87</sup> and two SMSs (**Appendix 2.15**).

During joint inspection of 27 buildings (February 2025) of the selected nine Departments and one individual unit/one CCSIT/other facilities<sup>88</sup> within the University campus, Audit observed non-availability of functional lifts, ramps, tactile paths and disabled friendly toilets (**Appendix 2.15**).

Government stated (July 2025) that as part of making the University buildings barrier free, facility of lifts and ramps, construction of tactile paths etc., are being proposed to be installed in the buildings, subject to availability of fund. In respect of the Centres outside the campus, it was stated that necessary steps will be taken to provide ramps and rails in the buildings under construction and all possible measures were taken to rearrange the classes on the ground floor of the buildings.

<sup>84</sup> CCSIT Manjeri, CCSIT Aranattukara

<sup>85</sup> SMS Palakkad, SMS Vatakara

<sup>86</sup> CUTEC Manjeri, CUTEC Sulthan Bathery, CUTEC Calicut

<sup>87</sup> CCSIT Aranattukara

<sup>88</sup> Pareeksha Bhavan, two hostels

### 2.10.7. Non-reclamation of the University land and illegal subletting of land by Co-operative Societies

The Syndicate constituted (April 2012) a committee under the convenorship of an Advocate Sri.P M Niyas, to inquire about the allocation of the land owned by the University to various agencies. The Committee submitted its report with recommendations on 26 July 2012, for review by the Syndicate. In this report, the Committee recommended to reclaim 105.7 cents of land held unauthorisedly by six co-operative societies and two Academic Chairs<sup>89</sup> and to frame necessary Rules for allotment of land to societies. Though three sub-committees<sup>90</sup> were constituted subsequently by the Syndicate for studying the report and the first sub-committee submitted (April 2018) an interim report, no action was initiated by the University to reclaim the land.

Audit observed that the University had allotted land/buildings to Co-operative societies of the employees of the University on the terms and conditions in the agreements that (i) The lessee shall not at any time carry on or permitted to be carried on upon the premises for any other purpose than for the purpose for which it is leased and (ii) The lessee shall not transfer or sublet the premises or the building to any other person without written consent from the lessor.

Audit observed that the University had allotted/leased out land and buildings to 18 agencies such as Co-operative Societies, banks, post-offices etc., and in eight cases, renewal of the agreement was not done on expiry of the lease period. Details are given in **Appendix 2.16**. Audit conducted joint site verifications (January 2025) with the officials of the University and observed that out of the eight societies functioning within the University, five had violated the terms of the lease agreement and were gaining undue financial benefit through illegal sub-letting of University properties. The details are given in **Appendix 2.17**.

Government replied (July 2025) that decision on the report submitted by Niyas committee was still pending and action will be taken upon receipt of the report from the current sub-committee. Further it was stated that the land was allotted to the societies in the initial phase of the University, considering the convenience of the university community. The societies have been asked to provide explanations on the issues pointed out by Audit. Steps have been initiated to revise the lease amount in a timely manner. Necessary inspections will be conducted and clarification will be provided to Audit.

It is a matter of concern that although a Report of the Committee recommending reclamation of 105.7 cents of land was available since 2012, the University was yet to take a decision (July 2025). Land and buildings were allotted to the societies for providing services to the employees of the University. Audit observed that by sub-letting the properties of the University to third parties, the Co-operative societies had violated the conditions stipulated in the lease agreements and gained undue benefits.

<sup>89</sup> Established by the University to create, promote and disseminate scientific knowledge and information to foster integrity and ensure advancement of society.

<sup>90</sup> In March 2018, May 2019 and August 2024.

### **2.10.7.1. Unauthorised possession of University land**

#### **Excess Land Occupied by Academic Chairs**

The Building Committee at its meeting (February 2003) recommended that the area of land allotted to each Academic Chair<sup>91</sup> instituted in the University be limited to 20 cents, which was approved (June 2003) by the Syndicate.

Audit conducted joint site inspection (January 2025) with the officials of Engineering wing of the University and took measurement of land allotted to the Chairs. It was observed that Chair for Islamic Studies and Research and EMS Chair for Marxian Studies and Research were occupying 27.2 cents and 53.4 cents of land respectively.

#### **Encroachment by Chelambra Grama Panchayat**

University Engineer conducted an inspection along with the Assistant Security Officer and submitted (02 March 2020) a report regarding the unauthorised construction of a road by Chelambra Grama Panchayat (GP) in the University land. The GP authorities claimed that the land was handed over to them by the University for construction of a road, years ago. The Registrar had sent letters<sup>92</sup> to the Secretary of the GP requesting to produce the records relating to the handing over of the land to the GP by the University. Apart from this no other action or follow-up were seen taken by the University.

Government stated (July 2025) that Academic Chairs are part of the University and governed by a body formed based on the order of the University. Considering the audit observation, the Engineering Division was directed to measure and demarcate the land allotted to the Chair for Islamic Studies and Research. If possession of land exceeded the allotment, action will be taken to reclaim the surplus land. In respect of EMS Chair for Marxian Studies and Research, it was informed that no specific land was allotted/earmarked for the Chair and that permission was given only to utilise the land where a building was constructed by the Chair utilising its own fund. As such, excess land will be reclaimed as and when it was found essential for the purpose of the University. Regarding encroachment by the GP, it was stated that the GP authorities failed to submit documents regarding the transfer of University land, and that steps will be taken to clear the encroachment after verifying the asset register of the University.

The reply provided in respect of EMS Chair for Marxian Studies and Research indicates lack of control on the part of University on its assets. Moreover, the response offered by the Government is not acceptable, as the University is obliged to adhere to its own orders concerning the prescribed limits of land allotment to each Chair.

---

<sup>91</sup> Seven Chairs

<sup>92</sup> 08 May 2020 and 14 August 2020

### 2.10.8. Construction of buildings without obtaining permission from Regulatory Bodies

According to Rule 4 of the Kerala Panchayat Building Rules (KPBR), 2019, no person shall develop, redevelop, or modify any land or building without obtaining a permit from the Secretary.

During 2023, the University submitted<sup>93</sup> application forms along with drawings for the regularisation of its 13 buildings located within the jurisdiction of two Grama Panchayats<sup>94</sup> (GP) to the Secretaries of the respective GPs. After examining the records, the Secretaries of the GPs directed the University to submit the approval from District Town Planner. Additionally, one GP<sup>95</sup> directed the University to furnish a No Objection Certificate from Fire and Rescue Services Department.

In light of the above, Audit conducted a verification to ascertain whether all structures constructed within the University campus were assigned with building numbers. It was observed that, out of a total of 169 buildings, 74 had not been assigned building numbers, indicating that the buildings were constructed without permission of the LSGI which constitutes a violation of the KPBR and renders these buildings unauthorised.

The University did not maintain a Register of buildings as stipulated in KPWD Manual, instead, only an asset register, as per Kerala Financial Code Form 23, was maintained. As the asset register maintained by the Engineering wing of the University did not include details regarding the year of construction of the buildings, Audit was unable to determine since when these buildings were existing without the approval of the LSGIs.

Government stated (July 2025) that the applications were rejected by GPs stating that under the provisions of KPBR, it is mandatory to submit a single application for the regularisation of all existing buildings on a plot. Since it was practically impossible to consolidate the details of all the buildings in the campus into a single application, particularly since some smaller buildings are exempt from fire safety, an exemption from the above Rule of KPBR was sought (September 2024) from GoK. The application is presently under the consideration of Town Planning Department and if exempted, it would allow the University to submit separate applications for each building.

In the absence of permits from LSGIs, there is no assurance that the buildings constructed comply with the provisions of KPBR.

### 2.10.9. Non-commissioning of lifts due to non-receipt of licence from Electrical Inspectorate

According to Rule 3(1) of the Kerala Lifts and Escalators Rules, 2012, every owner of a place intending to erect a lift/escalator shall make an application to the Electrical Inspector of the Electrical Inspectorate. On receipt of an application, the Electrical Inspector shall conduct a scrutiny and either grant or refuse permission within one month.

<sup>93</sup> During the period 20 February 2023 to 11 April 2023

<sup>94</sup> Pallikkal and Thenhipalam

<sup>95</sup> Thenhipalam

Administrative and financial sanctions were granted (February-March 2023) by the University to install six<sup>96</sup> lifts at a total cost of ₹146.65 lakh. The tenders for supply, installation, testing and commissioning with AMC for six passenger lifts were invited separately and selection notices issued in December 2023<sup>97</sup>.

On joint physical verification (April 2025) conducted along with Assistant Engineer of the Electrical wing, Audit noticed that work relating to installation of lift in CEAM building had not commenced and in Mathematics block was in process. The remaining four lifts were not functional. In this regard Audit observed that,

- The Electrical Inspectorate directed that the buildings be regularised from the local authority and the documents proving the same be submitted along with the completion report for obtaining the licence for the lift. As regularisation of building was insisted upon, two lifts<sup>98</sup> could not be made operational.
- In CHMK building and Senate building the installation of passenger lifts were completed, but were not operational owing to pending permission from the Electrical Inspectorate due to non-availability of approved building plans.
- The lift installation work at CEAM had not commenced since the contractor proposed modifications to the existing lift framework after the award of contract. The Engineering wing prepared an estimate amounting to ₹16.20 lakh based on these suggestions. As administrative /financial sanction for the civil works were yet to be obtained (August 2024) from the Syndicate, the work was yet to commence.

Thus, despite signing the agreement with contractors in January 2024 and prescribing the period of completion as three months, none of the six lifts could be made operational till date (July 2025).

Government stated (July 2025) that as regularisation of the buildings in which the lifts were installed could not be received from the local bodies concerned, an application was submitted to the Chief Electrical Inspector seeking permission to make the lifts functional. In respect of lift in CEAM building, it was informed that the estimate for the civil works was under the consideration of Works Committee and after approval of the estimate and completion of civil work, installation of lift will be completed.

Non-availability of lifts in multi-storied buildings poses additional challenges to the differently abled.

#### **2.10.10. Non-compliance to conditions of contract regarding Insurance Policies**

As per Clause 12 (Insurance) of the Standard Bid Document relating to the civil works, the contractor shall provide, in the joint names of the Employer

<sup>96</sup> in Pareeksha Bhavan, Humanities Block, New building for Mathematics, CHMK Library, CEAM building, Senate House

<sup>97</sup> M/s Esccon Elevators Pvt. Ltd. (five) and M/s Infra Elevators Pvt. Ltd. (one)

<sup>98</sup> in Pareeksha Bhavan, Humanities Block

(University) and the contractor, insurance covers in two parts (a) from the start date to the completion date and (b) for the Defect Liability period.

The value of insurance shall generally be 0.5 *per cent* of the contract value subject to a minimum of ₹ two lakh and maximum of ₹ five lakh. In the event of failure to obtain the insurance by the contractor within 15 days of start date, 0.2 *per cent* of the contract amount shall be deducted by the employer.

The Engineering wing implemented 529 works during 2019-20 to 2023-24 with an aggregate estimate cost of ₹108.46 crore. On a test check of 57 works executed under the Engineering wing of the University, Audit observed that the insurance requirement specified in the letter of acceptance/contract was not enforced and an amount of ₹3.66 lakh<sup>99</sup> was not deducted.

Government replied (July 2025) that from 17 February 2025 onwards, the conditions for providing insurance by the contractor has been incorporated in the selection notice and the contractors have submitted insurance policy taken by them.

The reply is silent about ₹3.66 lakh which was not deducted from the contractors.

#### **2.10.11. Non-adherence to Quality Assurance and Quality Control in civil works**

According to Kerala Public Works Department (KPWD) Manual Revised Edition 2012, a three-tier<sup>100</sup> quality control system is to be followed, in which first and second-tier tests have to be carried out during the work/construction and third tier (technical audit) after completion of construction. The work bill submitted for payment was to be accompanied by Quality Control (QC) test results.

On a test check of 57 works undertaken by the Engineering wing of the University, Audit observed that in 24 works in which the estimated amount was more than ₹15 lakh, no comprehensive mandatory QC tests were conducted, and final payment was released without ensuring the quality of construction/maintenance works.

Audit also noticed that the University did not incorporate the list of QC tests and their frequency in the tender documents, as specified in Section 2103 of the PWD Manual.

Government stated (July 2025) that performing second-tier quality monitoring by maintaining a separate QC cell similar to that in KPWD was not economical and was impossible with the existing staff strength. Provisions of KPWD Manual, KPWD QC Manual and KPWD QC Lab Manual cannot be followed as such in the University with limited number of technical employees and lesser volume of work. However, possibility of second-tier quality monitoring will be explored.

<sup>99</sup> 0.2 *per cent* of the contract amount

<sup>100</sup> First-tier mandatory for all projects with estimated cost above ₹15 lakh was to be done by the Contractor at his own cost, second-tier on a random basis by the QC wing of Engineering Department, third tier (Technical Audit) for projects with estimated cost more than ₹five crore was to be conducted by an external agency/expert empanelled for the purpose within six months of completion of a project.

The explanation citing inadequate manpower as a reason for not conducting the required Quality Assurance checks on various works undertaken by the University Engineering Department is not justifiable.

### **2.11. Recommendations**

- *The University may ensure that defined timelines and milestones are fixed for achieving Strategic Plan of the University along with mechanism for monitoring the progress of achievement.*
- *Guidelines issued by UGC /Regulatory bodies may be adhered to and amendments made may be placed before the immediate Syndicate meeting for timely incorporation into the University's Regulations. Further, Government may prescribe a timeline for such incorporations.*
- *In order to safeguard academic standards and protect students' interests, University may ensure that programmes offered are recognised by the UGC.*
- *Government may ensure that the University's accounts are duly prepared and submitted to the Kerala State Audit Department (KSAD) within the stipulated timeframe, and that the KSAD completes the audit in accordance with the prescribed schedule.*
- *Government and the University may ensure strict compliance with the conditions prescribed for receiving funds from the UGC and other centrally sponsored schemes. Additionally, proper monitoring mechanisms should be in place to oversee the utilisation of these funds.*
- *Government may, in consultation with the University ensure that services of adequate number of qualified faculties are available in its institutions.*
- *University may consider implementing an objective and rigorous answer script evaluation system and hold evaluators accountable for laxity in valuation process and also incorporate adequate checks in the tabulation software to ensure that moderations are provided to students uniformly as per regulations.*
- *University may ensure that all institutions under its jurisdiction meet at least a minimum set of infrastructure standards, which must be outlined based on the current guidelines of the UGC and other relevant regulatory bodies.*
- *University may formalise agreements with all parties to whom land and buildings were leased out. These agreements must include provisions for the periodic revision of rent or lease rates to ensure alignment with prevailing market conditions.*