

Minutes of State Level Academic Committee (SLAC) Meeting

held online on August 04, 2026, 11.00 AM

Venue: VC's Room, KSHEC & Online

Present (Offline and Online):

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| 1. Prof. Achuthsankar | : Vice Chairperson, KSHEC/Chairman-SLAC |
| 2. Prof. Mohan Kunnummel | : Vice Chancellor, University of Kerala (i/c), &
Kerala University of Health Sciences |
| 3. Prof. Jagathy Raj. V.P. | : Vice Chancellor, SN Open University |
| 4. Prof. D Mavoothu | : Vice Chancellor, Mahatma Gandhi University |
| 5. Prof. K.K Saju | : Vice Chancellor, Kannur University |
| 6. Prof. Saji Gopinath | : Vice Chancellor, Digital University of Kerala. |
| 7. Prof. A Biju Kumar | : Vice Chancellor, Kerala University of
Fisheries and Ocean Studies. |
| 8. Prof. Sajitha Rani | : Vice Chancellor,
Kerala Agricultural University |
| 9. Prof. B. Ananthakrishnan | : Vice Chancellor, Kerala Kalamandalam
(Deemed to be University of Arts and Culture) |
| 10. Prof. M. Junaid Bushiri | : Vice Chancellor, CUSAT |
| 11. Prof. Abida Farooqui | : Member Secretary, KSHEC/Convenor-SLAC |

The Vice-Chairman welcomed all Vice Chancellors and stated the context and mandate of the SLAC as follows: The Kerala State Higher Education Council (KSHEC) is a statutory body constituted under the provisions of the Kerala State Higher Education Council Act, 2007, as amended in 2018, with the mandate to advise the Government on matters relating to higher education and to ensure coordination, quality assurance, and academic standards across the higher education system in the State. The Government of Kerala, has constituted a State Level Academic Committee (SLAC) for the purpose of

disposing of objections, disputes, and complaints relating to the nomenclature of academic programmes/degrees and for according approval, recognition, and equivalency. As per Government Order G.O.(Ms) No.303/2018/HEDN dated 17.12.2018, the SLAC is chaired by the Vice Chairman, Kerala State Higher Education Council, with the Vice Chancellors of all State Universities in Kerala and the Member Secretary, KSHEC (Convener) as members. Universities, Higher Educational Institutions, employment agencies, employers, and other stakeholders are required to refer unsettled issues relating to nomenclature, approval, recognition, or equivalency of academic programmes and degrees to KSHEC for decision by the SLAC. Further, aggrieved candidates may appeal to the Kerala State Higher Education Council for adjudication of such matters by the SLAC. The functioning of the SLAC is guided by the Government-approved norms and guidelines issued vide G.O.(Ms) No.272/2018/HEDN dated 13.11.2018, which, inter alia, stipulate adherence to recognition and regulatory frameworks prescribed by statutory bodies such as the University Grants Commission (UGC), including specific provisions governing degrees acquired through Open and Distance Learning modes.

Agenda Item No. 1. AM(VII)SLAC 1-Letter dated 02/05/2026-S.S. Liya : Regarding the equivalence of the B.A. in History and Geography awarded by Goa University to the B.A. History and B.A. Geography degrees of the University of Kerala for educational purposes.

Decision: Resolved that the matter need not be decided upon by the Committee, as it pertains to the question of eligibility or equivalency for admission to a programme in the University of Kerala. The Committee noted that the University has not considered the matter favourably on the ground of inadequate subject content. It was observed that the State Level Academic Committee (SLAC) ought not to override a determination on subject content arrived at by the statutory academic bodies of a State University. It

was further resolved that a committee comprising the Deans of the universities in the State be constituted to examine the issues relating to the equivalency and eligibility of programmes such as Double Major, Double Minor, Double Main, and similar academic structures, with particular reference to credit requirements and subject content, and to submit appropriate recommendations.

Agenda Item No. 2 AM(VII)SLAC 11-Letter dated 07/03/2026 Letter No. HEDN-B4/62/2026-HEDN - Sri. Jumana Muhammed Regarding the equivalence of M.Sc Biotechnology Degree to M.Sc Botany for employment purposes.

Recommendation: Resolved that a sub-committee comprising the Deans of the Faculties of Science or Applied Science of the universities concerned be constituted to examine the matter in detail. The recommendations of the sub-committee shall be placed before the State Level Academic Committee (SLAC) for its consideration.

Agenda Item No. 3: AM(VII)SLAC 2 Letter dated 08/12/2025 Safeera. V - Regarding the equivalence of PG Diploma in English Language Teaching (Annamalai University) to PGDTE (EFLU Hyderabad) for Kerala PSC HSST Communicative English Recruitment

Recommendation: Resolved that the Postgraduate Diploma in English language teaching awarded by Annamalai University is not to be considered as an equivalent to the postgraduate diploma in teaching of English offered by the English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad, as (i) Annamalai University has offered this diploma in distance mode outside its territorial jurisdiction, Calicut in this case and (ii) the Postgraduate Diploma in English language teaching awarded by Annamalai University is not recognized by UGC-DEB. Resolved further that the KSHEC may study the issue of agencies/universities from outside the state offering various programmes in distance mode outside their territorial jurisdiction, including allied health sciences.

Agenda Item No. 4: AM(VII)SLAC 3-Letter dated 28.10.2024 Letter No. 84/205/2024
Considering M.Tech in cyber Forensics and Information Security as an eligible
qualification for the post of Scientific Officer (Documents) in Forensic Science Laboratory
under Kerala Police Service.

Recommendation: Resolved that the nature and responsibilities of the post of Scientific Officer (Documents) be ascertained. It was further resolved that a sub-committee comprising the Deans of the Faculties of Engineering or Technology of the concerned universities be constituted to examine the matter and submit its recommendations for consideration by the State Level Academic Committee (SLAC).

5. Agenda Item No. 5: AM(VII)SLAC 4-Letter dated 10.07.2025 Letter No. C1/71/2025-
HEDN-Muhammed Shafi. S and Smt. Seetal C.P. - Regarding the recognition of the
Master of Visual Arts (MVA) Degree in Art History (Regular) awarded by Maharaja
Sayajirao University, Baroda for the post of Junior Lecturer in History of Arts and
Aesthetics in the Department of Collegiate Education (Music Colleges).

Recommendation: Resolved that a sub-committee comprising the Deans of the Faculties of Fine Arts of the concerned universities be constituted to examine the matter and submit its recommendations for consideration by the SLAC.

Agenda Item No. 6: AM(VII)SLAC 5-Letter dated 24.06.2025 Letter No. E1/13/2025-AH
- Gayathiri. P.V - Regarding the request for the issuance equivalence of a Government
Order declaring the B.Tech. degree in Biomedical Engineering with B.Tech. in Applied
Electronics and Instrumentation Engineering for employment purposes

Recommendation: Considering this as a special case and taking into account (i) that the candidate belongs to the Scheduled Caste (SC) category and (ii) the existing provision of the Kerala PSC Gazette Notification (Category No. 556/2014 dated 26.12.2014 relating to the post of Biomedical Engineer in the Medical Education

Department) permits certain alternative engineering qualifications, including Applied Electronics, in the absence of candidates possessing the prescribed qualifications, **resolved as follows:** B.Tech. degree in Biomedical Engineering is recommended as an eligible qualification for this specific employment purpose as a special case.

Agenda Item No. 7: AM(VII)SLAC 6-Letter dated 17.05.2025 Letter No. JA 2/15/2025 - Regarding the request for the issuance of an equivalence certificate for obtaining the SET certificate from LBS Centre in subjects allied to Journalism.

Recommendation: Postgraduate programmes in Journalism are offered under varying titles — *Journalism and Mass Communication, Mass Communication and Journalism, Journalism and Communication Studies, Print and Electronic Journalism* and allied names. These variations of nomenclature must not, by themselves, deprive qualified candidates of SET certification, higher education or employment; the UGC-NET itself is conducted in "Mass Communication and Journalism." Universities in Kerala may consider issuing equivalency certificate for journalism-related postgraduate programs awarded by universities within and outside Kerala for various nomenclatures in such a way as to enable eligible candidates to obtain SET certificates and ensuring that they are not deprived of higher education and employment opportunity because of the variations in nomenclatures.

Agenda Item: 8 (outside Agenda): AM(VII)SLAC 18 (A)-Letter dated 06.07.2026- Anoop M.M. - Regarding the grant of equivalence for the M.A. Journalism and Mass Communication degree awarded through the online mode by Andhra University for the Higher Secondary School Teacher (HSST) post under the Kerala PSC.

Recommendation: (i) In view of the general question involved in the issue, it was resolved to recommend to the government to issue a speaking order citing the statutory provisions which make it mandatory to consider automatic equivalence of distance and online mode of education, based on the note appended **(Appendix 1)**. A single, binding Government Order

may be issued, giving uniform effect across all Universities, Colleges, Government Departments, the Kerala PSC, and Recruitment Agencies set up by the Govt, requiring that they accept degrees awarded by UGC-recognized institutions through ODL or Online mode for higher education and employment, without insisting upon a separate equivalency certificate equating them with corresponding conventional mode.

(ii) In particular, the M.A. Journalism and Mass Communication awarded through Online mode by Andhra University is recommended for recognition for the purpose of employment as higher secondary school teacher under the Kerala PSC.

(iii) The LBS Centre for Science and Technology may be directed to revise the relevant provisions of the SET Prospectus based on recommendation (i) above

Remaining items on the agenda were deferred for consideration of the next meeting.

Any other item admitted by the chair:

The Vice-Chairperson of KSHEC suggested that WhatsApp groups comprising (i) The Hon'ble Vice-Chancellors and (ii) Deans of all Universities be constituted to facilitate the smooth implementation and coordination of the SLAC. This was agreed to.

Minutes were circulated electronically and confirmed.

Meeting concluded by 12.15pm.



Prof Achuthsankar

Vice Chair Person



Prof. Abida Farooqui

Member Secretary

Appendix 1 (vide item No 8):

SLAC resolved that no separate equivalency or eligibility certificate may be insisted upon for any degree awarded in a UGC-recognised modes — Open & Distance Learning (ODL) or online — for higher education or employment in any UGC-recognised university or institution, based on the following premises:

1. Regulation 22 of the UGC (Open and Distance Learning Programmes and Online Programmes) Regulations, 2020, read with the UGC Public Notice dated 8 September 2022, declares that UG/PG degrees and PG diplomas awarded through ODL or Online mode by UGC-recognised institutions are equivalent to the corresponding conventional-mode degrees. Equivalence need not be re-proved before any State authority.
2. The Hon'ble High Court of Kerala has ordered as per W.P.(C) No. 15672 of 2025, 2025: KER:43507 that insisting on such a certificate for degrees from UGC- recognised universities is ultra vires the UGC Act, 1956 — warning that requiring State-University equivalence for UGC-approved courses would spell the end of the education system, and declaring such conditions contrary to the Government Order and the National Education Policy.
3. G.O.(Ms) No. 272/2018/HEDN dated 13.11.2018 clarifies that no equivalency or recognition shall be insisted upon for degrees from UGC-recognised national institutions. Continuing to demand such certificates contradict the State's own declared position.
4. NEP 2020 mandates parity across delivery modes, expansion of open, distance and online access, and removal of artificial barriers to educational and occupational mobility. A blanket equivalency requirement runs directly against it.

THEREFORE:

Degrees shall be judged on academic level, curriculum and subject content, not on nomenclature or mode. Universities, Colleges, Government Departments, the Kerala PSC, and Recruitment Agencies set up by the Govt, shall accept degrees awarded by UGC-recognized institutions through ODL or Online mode for higher education and employment, without insisting upon a separate equivalency certificate equating them with corresponding conventional mode. Accordingly, all prospectuses, recruitment notifications and departmental rules be amended to delete clauses requiring such certificates. Separate scrutiny shall be confined to foreign qualifications, unrecognized institutions/programmes, and fields regulated by statutory councils (NMC,BCI,AICTE, COA).

