

Kerala State Higher Education Council
Minutes of the 13th Executive Body meeting held on 18.02.2025

The 13th Executive Body Meeting of the fourth KSHEC was held on 18.02.2025 at 11.00 am through hybrid mode. Prof. Rajan Gurukkal P.M., Vice Chairman presided.

The following members attended the meeting.

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|-------------------------------------|----------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Prof. Rajan Gurukkal P.M. | : | Vice Chairman, KSHEC. |
| 2. Dr. M.S. Rajasree | : | Member, Executive Body, KSHEC |
| 3. Dr. K.K. Damodaran | : | Member, Executive Body, KSHEC |
| 4. Sri. Paul V. Karanthanam | : | Member, Executive Body, KSHEC |
| 5. Dr. P.P. Ajayakumar | : | Member, Executive Body, KSHEC |
| 6. Dr. Rajan Varughese | : | Member Secretary, KSHEC |

The following agenda was transacted and decisions taken.

Item No. 1 – Report on International conclave

Report of the international conclave on Next Gen Higher Education held on 14th & 15th of January 2025 at CUSAT, Kochi was approved as given below.

Report on International conclave.

Introduction

The International Conclave on Next-Gen Higher Education was held on 14th and 15th January 2025 at the Cochin University of Science and Technology. The conclave aimed to serve as a platform for deliberating on transformative trends in higher education and their implications for Kerala's academic ecosystem. The event brought together eminent policymakers, academic leaders, and industry experts from India and abroad.

Day 1: Tuesday, 14th January

Inaugural Session

The conclave commenced with the Inaugural Session, presided over by Dr. R. Bindu, Hon'ble Minister for Higher Education & Social Justice, Government of Kerala. The session began with a Welcome Address by Prof. Rajan Gurukkal, Vice-Chairman of KSHEC.

The Inaugural Address was delivered by Shri. Pinarayi Vijayan, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Kerala, who emphasised the state's commitment to transforming its higher education sector into a globally competitive system through innovative policies and strategic interventions.

The session also featured a Guest of Honor Address by Shri. K. N. Balagopal, Hon'ble Minister for Finance, Kerala, who underscored the importance of financial sustainability in higher education reforms.

Special Addresses:

- **Prof. V. K. Ramachandran, Vice-Chairperson, Kerala State Planning Board (recorded message).**
- **Smt. Ishita Roy, IAS, Principal Secretary, Department of Higher Education.**

Keynote Addresses:

- Prof. Philip G. Altbach, Boston College, delivered an address titled *Kerala and the World: The Future of International Higher Education*.
- Dr. Nina Arnhold, Global Lead, Tertiary Education, World Bank, spoke on *Pathways to Global Competencies: The Role of Policy Makers and Institutions*.
- Dr. Sanjay Behari, Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology, Thiruvananthapuram spoke on Building Future-Ready Medical research Institutions.

The session concluded with a felicitation message by Prof. Ada Yonath, Nobel Laureate (recorded message), and remarks by Prof. M. Junaid Bushiri, Vice-Chancellor, CUSAT, and Prof. P. G. Sankaran, Coordinator, Organising Committee and former vice-chancellor, CUSAT. The Vote of Thanks was proposed by Dr. Rajan Varughese, Member Secretary, KSHEC.

Afternoon Plenary Sessions

The afternoon featured three Plenary Sessions, each focusing on critical aspects of higher education modernization:

1. Plenary Session 1: Integrating Global Perspectives in Kerala's Higher Education

- Moderator: Prof. N. V. Varghese, IIT Bombay.

Speakers:

- Prof. Seeram Ramakrishna, National University of Singapore.
- Prof. Sabu Padmadas, University of Southampton.
- Dr. Zachariah Mathew, University of Michigan-Flint.
- Dr. Shakila T Shamsu, Former OSD, Ministry of Education, Gol.
- Dr. Mahmood Kooria, University of Edinburgh.

The session emphasized the importance of integrating global perspectives into Kerala's higher education system, fostering international collaborations, and aligning curricula with global standards.

2. Plenary Session 2: Generative AI and Emerging Technologies in Higher Education

- Moderator: Prof. Saji Gopinath, Former Vice-Chancellor, Digital University Kerala.

Speakers:

- Prof. Don Passey, Lancaster University.
- Dr. Stéphan Vincent-Lancrin, OECD, Paris.
- Dr. Rajasree M.S., CEO, TreST Research Park.
- Prof. Neeta Inamdar, Manipal Academy of Higher Education.

The session explored the transformative potential of AI and emerging technologies in higher education, focusing on their role in enhancing teaching, learning, and research.

3. Plenary Session 3: Fostering Research Excellence and Innovation

- Moderator: Prof. Suresh Das, IISER Thiruvananthapuram.

Speakers:

- Prof. Thalappil Pradeep, IIT Madras.
- Prof. Sabu Thomas, TreST Research Park.
- Prof. Pankaj Jalote, IIIT Delhi.
- Prof. Gin Jose, University of Leeds.

The session highlighted the need for interdisciplinary research, industry-academia collaborations, and the establishment of research excellence centers to drive innovation.

The day concluded with a Cultural Programme, titled *Bhavayami*, presented by RLV College of Music and Fine Arts, Thripunithura, showcasing Kerala's rich cultural heritage.

Day 2: Wednesday, 15th January 2025

Parallel Sessions

The second day featured Parallel Sessions across seven seminar halls, covering diverse themes of contemporary relevance. Highlights included:

1. Strategies for Financial Sustainability

Moderator: Prof. Jiju P. Alex, Member, Kerala State Planning Board.

Speakers:

- Dr. Denis Nikolaev, World Bank.
- Dr. K. J. Joseph, Director, Gulati Institute of Finance and Taxation (GIFT).
- Prof. Philip G. Altbach, Boston College.
- Prof. Jagathy Raj V.P., SNGOU

The session explored innovative funding mechanisms and financial models to ensure the sustainability of higher education institutions.

2. Academic Libraries: Preparing for Tomorrow's Challenges

- Moderator: Prof. Rajan Gurukkal, Vice Chairman, KSHEC.

Speakers:

- Professor K.K. Geethakumary, vice-chancellor, SSUS, Kalady
- Dr. Usha Mujoo Munshi, Chief Librarian, India International Centre.
- Dr. Gopakumar V, Digital University of Kerala.

The session emphasized the need for digital transformation and resource optimization in academic libraries to meet future challenges.

3. Leveraging Research Outcomes from Kerala's Universities for Effective Policy Formulation

- Moderator: Prof. Sabu Thomas, TreST Research Park.

Speakers:

- Prof. Gangan Prathap, Former Director, CSIR.
- Prof. U.K. Anandavardhanan, IIT Bombay.
- Prof. Raghavan B. Sunoj, IIT Bombay.
- Dr. Franklin J, Sacred Heart College, Kochi.

The session focused on translating research outcomes into actionable policies for the benefit of Kerala's higher education system.

4. Transforming Scientific Discoveries into Practical Solutions

- Moderator: Dr. A. Sabu, Member Secretary, KSCSTE.

Speakers:

- Prof. Mohanan Kunnummal, vice-chancellor
- Dr. Baby Chakrapani P.S., Cochin University of Science and Technology.
- Dr. Radhakrishnan E.K., Mahatma Gandhi University.
- Prof. Manoj N., Cochin University of Science and Technology.
- Dr. S. Anoop, College of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Mannuthy.

The session highlighted the importance of bridging the gap between scientific research and practical applications.

5. Benefits of Graduate Tracking System in Kerala's Higher Education

- Moderator: Prof. N. V. Varghese, IIT Bombay.

Speakers:

- Prof. Santosh K. Mehrotra, Former Professor, JNU.
- Mr. Ambarish Ambuj, World Bank.
- Prof. Sabu Padmadas, University of Southampton.

The session discussed the implementation of graduate tracking systems to monitor employability and skills alignment.

6. Reforming Teacher Education: Addressing Challenges, Seizing Opportunities

- Moderator: Prof. Mohan B. Menon, Former Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Wawasan Open University, Malaysia.

Speakers:

- Prof. Sapna V. Thwaite, University of Michigan (recorded message).
- Prof. Don Passey, Lancaster University.
- Prof. T. Mohamed Saleem, Farook Training College.

The session emphasised the need for reforming teacher training programmes to align with 21st-century pedagogical demands.

7. Preparing Students for the Jobs of Tomorrow

- Moderator: Prof. K. Ravi Raman, Member, Kerala State Planning Board.

Speakers:

- Prof. Seeram Ramakrishna, NUS.
- Dr. Stéphan Vincent-Lancrin, OECD.
- Dr. Rajesh Pankaj, FICCI.

- Mr. Ritin Malhotra, Times Higher Education.
- Mr. Ravin Nair, QS I-GAUGE.
- Dr. Arunkumar V. A., IHRD.
- Dr. M. Abdul Rahiman, LBS Centre for Science & Technology.

The session focused on aligning higher education curricula with future job market demands, emphasizing skill development and employability.

8. Navigating the Future of Historical Inquiry

- Moderator: Prof. Rajan Gurukkal, Vice Chairman, KSHEC.

Speakers:

- Prof. Kesavan Veluthatt, Formerly Professor of History, University of Delhi.
- Prof. K.N. Ganesh, Kerala Council for Historical Research (KCHR).
- Prof. Michael Tharakan, Former Vice Chancellor, Kannur University.
- Prof. K.M. Sheeba, Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit.
- Prof. P.P. Abdul Razak, PSMO College.

9. Art Education for the Future

- Moderator: Prof. M.V. Narayanan, Former Vice-Chancellor, Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit.

Speakers:

- Prof. Deepan Sivaraman, Ahmedabad University.
- Dr. Kavitha Balakrishnan, Government College of Fine Arts, Thrissur.
- T. G. Jyothilal, Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit.
- Jithinlal N R, RLV College of Music and Fine Arts.
- Shri Jijoy P R, K.R. Narayanan National Institute of Visual Science and Arts.

10. Industry-Academia Partnerships (STEM Subjects)

- Moderator: Mr. Balagopal Chandrasekhar, Chairman, KSIDC.

Speakers:

- Dr. Shalij PR, Director of Technical Education, Govt. of Kerala.
- Ms. Nazneen Jahangir, CEO, NeST Digital.
- Mr. Muraleedharan Manningal, CEO, ICT Academy Kerala.
- Dr. S. Vijayan Pillai, Technical Director, Keltron.
- Dr. Geemon Korah, Mane Kancor Ingredients Private Ltd.
- Dr. Prince Joseph, SFO Technologies.
- Mr. Vishal Menon, Synthite Industries Ltd.

The session emphasized the need for structured frameworks to connect academia and industry in STEM fields.

11. Industry-Academia Partnerships (Non-STEM Subjects)

- Moderator: Mr. C. Padmakumar, Special Officer, KMTC.

Speakers:

- Sri. Sudhir K. IAS, Director of Collegiate Education.
- Dr. Usha Titus IAS (Retd.), CMD, ASAP Kerala.
- Ms. Usha Nair, DSP Mutual Fund.
- Mr. Girish Krishnan, ICICI Prudential Insurance.
- Mr. Kamal Mampally, Geojit Financial Services Ltd.
- Mr. Raj Narayan, Federal Bank.

The session discussed the importance of industry-academia collaborations in non-STEM domains.

12. Kerala's Higher Education Transformations: Bridging Reforms and Global Aspirations

- Moderator: Prof. C. T. Aravindakumar, Vice-Chancellor, Mahatma Gandhi University.

Speakers:

- Prof. K. S. Anil Kumar, Registrar, Kerala University.
- Prof. Joby K Jose, Registrar, Kannur University.

- Prof. Godwin Samraj, Controller of Examinations, University of Calicut.
- Dr. Suja T. V., Member Syndicate, Mahatma Gandhi University.
- Ms. Anusree K, Member Syndicate, SNGOU.

13. Modernizing University Governance: Paving the Way for a Global Education Hub

- Moderator: Prof. Gopinath Raveendran, Former Vice Chancellor, Kannur University.

Speakers:

- Prof. Shyam B. Menon, Chairman, Reforms Commission.
- Dr. K. K. Damodaran, Member, Executive Body, KSHEC.
- Dr. Kavumbai Balakrishnan, Member Syndicate, University of Calicut.
- Dr. Nazeeb S., Member Syndicate, University of Kerala.
- Prof. Beena Mathew, Member Syndicate, Mahatma Gandhi University.
- Dr. Pramod Kumar K. V., Member Syndicate, University of Kannur.

The plenary session (2-3 PM) "*Future Directions of Change in Higher Education*" focused on discussing the key insights and outcomes of the conference, with an emphasis on the evolving landscape of higher education globally. The panel of distinguished speakers consisting of Professor Syam B. Menon, Professor N. V. Varghese, Professor Sabu Padmadas, Professor Seeram Ramakrishna, Dr. Nina Arnhold shared their perspectives on the challenges, opportunities, and transformative strategies needed to shape the future of higher education.

Valedictory Session (3-4 PM)

The Valedictory Session was chaired by Dr. R. Bindu, Hon'ble Minister for Higher Education, with the Valedictory Address delivered by Shri. P. Rajeev, Hon'ble Minister for Law, Industries, and Coir. The Hon'ble Minister for Higher Education in her declaration in the conclave underscored the importance of translating the conclave's recommendations into actionable steps for the future growth of Kerala's higher education system. The session began with a Welcome Address by Dr. Rajan Varughese, Member Secretary, Kerala State Higher Education Council. Prof. Rajan Gurukkal, Vice Chairman, KSHEC; Prof. M. Junaid Bushiri, Vice-Chancellor, Cochin University of Science and Technology (CUSAT), Dr. Jiju P. Alex, Member, Kerala State Planning Board also spoke. Dr. Arun A. U, Registrar, CUSAT proposed the vote of thanks.

The International Conclave on Next-Gen Higher Education successfully provided a robust platform for knowledge exchange, policy recommendations, and international collaboration. The conclave's outcomes are expected to serve as a roadmap for the future growth and modernisation of Kerala's higher education system, ensuring its alignment with global standards and emerging trends.

Item No.2 – Post Conclave Workshop on Study in Kerala.

Reported and approved the details of Post Conclave Workshop on Study in Kerala as given below.

The *International Conclave on Next-Generation Higher Education*, held at CUSAT, Kochi on January 14-15, 2025, served as an excellent platform for in-depth discussions on the transformative changes needed in Kerala's higher education sector. Representatives from various international universities, the World Bank, OECD, and other major global organizations participated in the conclave and the pre-conclave session. Delegates from countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Singapore, Tanzania, and the Netherlands contributed to high-quality discussions.

The sessions at the conclave primarily focused on understanding global trends in higher education and integrating them into Kerala's academic landscape. Key discussions included curriculum modernisation, AI-driven education, increasing industry participation to enhance internship and apprenticeship opportunities for students, fostering entrepreneurial skills and

practical expertise, prioritising international study programs and research collaborations to ensure global learning experiences, training faculty in innovative teaching methodologies, strengthening public-private partnerships for higher education advancement, and expanding international research collaborations, among others.

The discussions and recommendations from the conclave have been guiding the transformation of Kerala's higher education sector. Implementation of the conclave's recommendations has already begun. On February 3, a post-conclave workshop on attracting international students to Kerala was organised by the KSHEC in Thiruvananthapuram. Steps have also been initiated to sign Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with foreign universities to enhance Kerala's higher education sector. On February 4, 2025, the Council signed an MoU with the University of Michigan-Flint in the United States. The Council is facilitating partnerships between the University of Kerala, MG University, and CUSAT with a few Austrian universities in STEM fields. The first meeting was held online on 14 February 2025.

Item No.3 - Constitution of Committee on UGC Draft Regulation 2025.

Reported the details of Constitution of Committee on UGC Draft Regulation 2025.

Review Committee

As directed by the Government vide letter No-.C3/11/2025-HEDN dated 20-01-2025 a committee comprising of the following members was constituted by the KSHEC to examine and prepare a report on the various provisions in the Draft UGC (Minimum Qualifications for Appointment and Promotion of Teachers and Academic Staff in Universities and Colleges and Measures for the Maintenance of Standards in Higher Education) Regulations, 2025.

Sl No.	Name	Designation
1.	Prof. Prabhat Patnaik (Chair)	Emeritus Professor, <u>Jawaharlal Nehru University</u>
2.	Prof. Rajan Gurukkal (Co- Chair)	Vice Chairman, Kerala State Higher Education Council
3.	Prof. N. V. Varghese (Member)	Former Vice Chancellor, National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration, New Delhi
4.	Dr. Vani Kesari (Member)	Professor & Hon Director, Prof N. R. Madhava Menon, Interdisciplinary Centre for Research Ethics and Protocol Cochin University of Science and Technology
5.	Dr. Rajan Varughese (Convenor)	Member Secretary, Kerala State Higher Education Council

Preliminary Observations

The committee formulated its preliminary observations as given below and the same was forwarded to the Government.

The Kerala State Higher Education Council - Preliminary Observations - on Draft UGC (Minimum Qualifications for Appointment and Promotion of Teachers and Academic Staff in Universities and Colleges and Measures for the Maintenance of Standards in Higher Education) Regulations, 2025

The Kerala State Higher Education Council's UGC Draft Regulations Review Committee headed by Prof. Prabhat Patnaik unanimously states at the outset that the New Draft Regulations involve serious Constitutional issues.

1. Constitutionality of the Draft Regulations, 2025:

(A) Constitutional Vision for Union Parliament was only for setting general standards and not on control of state universities established under plenary (legislative) power of competent legislatures.

According to the Constitution's Seventh Schedule, under List I, entries 63, 64, 65 and 66, the Union Parliament is given certain powers while Entry 32 of List II confers powers on state legislatures regarding incorporation and regulation of universities. In addition, Entry 25 of List III grants the Union Parliament and State legislatures the authority to enact legislation governing all aspects of education, including technical, vocational, and medical.

Entry 63 of List I confer Parliamentary power to make laws relating to universities like Delhi University, Banaras Hindu University and other Central Universities, while Entry 64 deals with institutions of scientific/ technical education/ institutions of national importance which may be financially supported by the Central Government either wholly or in part. Entry 65 gives the centre the authority to create agencies through parliamentary legislation and establish scientific or technical institutions as well as professional, vocational, or technical training institutions, while Entry 66 gives the centre the broad authority to set standards for institutions of higher education, research, or scientific and technical institutions.

Entry 66, thus, is the cause of the establishment of regulatory bodies such as the University Grants Commission (UGC), and the All-India Council of Technical Education (AICTE) which oversee and supervise technical and higher education. Other coordinating agencies like Bar Council of India, Nursing Council etc are established as per the mandate under Entry 66. Thus, it is clear that States are also vested with the responsibility of regulating HEI's such as Universities, while the determination of standards is vested with the Centre.

The fundamental question is whether in the guise of setting standards of higher education UGC Draft Regulation which is a subordinate legislation made by the executive has an overarching effect on the functioning of state universities which are established by the plenary power of competent state legislature.

2. Article 254 of the Constitution speaks about repugnancy or inconsistency of a Parliamentary legislation with State legislation in the concurrent list. It states that in case of repugnancy Parliamentary law shall prevail. Article 254 however is not about inconsistency between a State legislation and a *subordinate* legislation of Centre. Hence the justification that UGC Draft 2025, shall prevail over any state legislation is wrong; and it is also dangerous as it can be invoked to centralize any legislative field, not just education.

UGC Draft Regulations, 2025 is a subordinate legislation i.e., an executive or statutory body making a law. It is not made by a legislative body. The applicability of Article 254 is only to inconsistency between legislations of central and state legislative bodies in the concurrent list. Therefore, the following aspects may be noted:

(A) A subordinate legislation made as a part of parliamentary legislation cannot supersede a state legislation made by a competent state legislature. *Here Article 254 does not apply.*

(B) UGC Draft Regulation is not a Central Law. An executive crafted law cannot supersede legislative enactments.

(C) Entry 32 of List II conferred power on state legislatures regarding incorporation and regulation of universities. Hence the regulation of State Universities is still with the state legislature /government. However, for laying down general academic standards of HEI's, the UGC regulations can be made but not to the extent of taking over the regulation of State Universities which is exclusively within the state legislative power.

(D) The UGC Act 1956 also states (Chapter III, 12) that the steps taken by the UGC for maintaining standards have to be *in consultation with universities or other bodies concerned*, and not unilaterally prescribed (while at best asking for feedbacks that can be ignored with impunity). UGC Draft Regulations 2025 therefore exceed the UGC's own legal jurisdiction. (The fact that this may have also happened in the past is no justification for its happening now).

3. Autonomy of State Universities:

Entry 66 of List I speaks about standard setting exercise to be undertaken by Parliament. The Draft Regulations of 2025 was made by virtue of Section 26 (e) and Section 14 of UGC Act 1956. It may be seen that the power given to UGC in this regard is limited to teaching, research etc. However, this power has been extended by the Draft Regulations 2025, to the appointment of Vice Chancellors, who happen to be not only the academic but also the administrative heads of state Universities. The states are given the power to incorporate and regulate universities under Entry 32 of List II based on the regional, socio-demographic requirements. The UGC under the guise of standard setting is thus attempting to thwart the autonomy of universities created to suit their regional requirements. The respective legislations passed by the competent state legislature based on the purpose for which the University was established have laid down the criteria for selection of Vice Chancellors; the UGC Draft Regulations have stripped this Constitutionally conferred powers on State legislature and also the statutorily conferred powers on the Universities to manage their affairs. Hence UGC Regulations 2025 constitute an intrusion on the institutional autonomy of universities.

4. The Draft Regulation 2025 overrides the Parent UGC Act 1956 and therefore Unconstitutional:

Section 26 read with Section 14 of the UGC Act 1956, only confers powers with regard to defining qualification that should ordinarily be required of any person to be appointed as a member of the teaching staff in Universities and Colleges. Provisions regarding the appointment of VC's are not within the competence of UGC. Therefore, Draft Regulations are Ultra vires the parent UGC Act.

5. UGC Draft Regulations are an Intrusion on Federal Principle of the Constitution:

The UGC Draft Regulations 2025, strip the power of the states to regulate universities established and funded by them which is a constitutionally conferred power. This is a clear violation of federalism which is a basic feature of the Constitution. *The UGC's attempting to extend its reach to state universities is an assumption of power which it does not possess.*

6. Observations on Certain Provisions of Draft Regulations:

UGC Draft Regulations, 2025	Comments
<p>Clause 3.8 Notable contributions in at least four of the nine areas mentioned are made into a minimum qualification for consideration by the selection committee for recruitment and promotion of university & college teachers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These areas may be considered plus points in cases where candidates are otherwise equally proficient, but <i>there is absolutely no reason to make them a minimum qualification, for that would exclude many excellent potential teachers and researchers from applying.</i> • Most of the nine areas have to do with getting money from outside for the

UGC Draft Regulations, 2025	Comments
	<p>university. Academically excellent persons should not be expected to become money-gatherers. Insisting on such minimum qualifications betrays a corporate-driven agenda to the detriment of original academic work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most of the parameters are difficult for applicants to attain at the entry level, especially with the massive proliferation of pay-by-hour guest lecturer appointments whose teaching experience is otherwise also not counted. • These “notable contributions” will prove difficult especially for candidates from different regions, given the disparity in resources and uneven development of educational infrastructure in our country. • Teaching which is the main task in a university is not given the weightage that it deserves.
<p>Clause 3.13 On acquiring M.Phil. and/or Ph.D. Degree before and after the appointment to the teaching positions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The motivation to do research and post-doctoral degrees is scuttled by this provision. • Since the mandate for promotion under the Draft Regulations 2025 is Ph.D and when faculty takes leave and goes for it, the condition that the period so taken would not be considered is unfair and unacceptable since if leave is not counted the concerned teacher will not engage either in meaningful research nor meaningful teaching... This affects both the quality of teaching as well as research
<p>Clause 5.6 Clause 5.6.3 3. If the assessment is between 1st January and 30th June of a year, promotion shall be granted from 1st July of the year. 4. If the assessment is between 1st July and 31st December of a year, promotion shall be granted from 1st January of the following year.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This provision creates two time slots during which the promotion will be granted after assessment by the Selection Committee. This appears to fix solely two dates from which the promotion would take effect. Such pre-fixed promotion timelines have the propensity for financial loss and unnecessary, further delays in promotions.
<p>Clause 9.0. Professor of Practice: HEIs may engage experts/ professionals/ practitioners from industries/other professions for</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There would be a growing trend of intervention of private businesses and corporates in the academia and within the existing university governance model, if implemented.

UGC Draft Regulations, 2025	Comments
<p>teaching and research. The engagement of the Professor of Practice will be exclusive of the sanctioned posts. The number of Professors of Practice in a HEI, at any point in time, should not exceed 10% of the sanctioned posts in a HEI.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Also, this clause may be considered as a divisive strategy of creating yet another layer of faculty members who cannot be easily organized on wider concerns of the teaching fraternity. • People outside the academia may come in as visiting scholars but not as faculty.
<p>Clause 10.0 Minimum Qualifications, Experience, Accomplishments, Selection Committee, and Selection Procedure for the Appointment of Vice-Chancellor in Universities.</p> <p>10.1. A distinguished person possessing high academic qualifications and demonstrated administrative and leadership capabilities, strong alignment to constitutional values, strong social commitment, belief in teamwork, pluralism, ability to work with diverse people, with a flair for innovation and a global outlook in higher education, along with the overall vision of the institution and abilities to manage complex situations with a minimum of ten years of experience as (i) a Professor in an HEI or (ii) at a senior level in reputed research or academic administrative organizations or (iii) at a senior level in industry, public administration, public policy and/or public sector undertakings, with a proven track record of significant academic or scholarly contributions, shall be eligible to be appointed as Vice-Chancellor.</p> <p>10. 1. iii “The Chancellor/Visitor shall constitute the Search cum Selection Committee comprising three experts.....</p> <p>10.1. iv. The following shall be the constitution of the Search cum Selection Committee.</p> <p>a) <i>a nominee of the Visitor/Chancellor, who shall be the Chairperson of the Search cum Selection Committee.</i> b) <i>a nominee of the Chairman, University</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointment of VC’s: <p>1 UGC Usurps Powers in Areas Not Spelt out in Parent Act: UGC Act 1956, does not spell out anything about appointment of VC’s. However, the VC is an executive head of the University. He/ She being an administrative head performs administrative functions primarily and therefore UGC has no role in their appointment as it is a function not involving teaching or research wherein academic standards as specified in Section 26 of UGC Act are at all involved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State government is stripped off its role regarding the constitution of search and selection committee of VC’s. • Those with no teaching/ University experience/ Research experience can be qualified to be selected as VC which is bound to damage the functioning of the Universities. • Industrialists with 10 years of experience who may have no essential connection with the HEI’s and whose interest is basically the promotion of corporate interest can be selected as VC; this is bound to have long term serious adverse consequences. • No essential qualification of an Industrialist is being prescribed, which provides way to the corporatisation of higher education. • In the composition of Search and Selection Committee the state government is given no role. The Chancellor who is a representative of Central Government is made the final arbiter for a university which is established and funded by the state. What is more, the central government is given a decisive say in the selection of VCs of state universities: in the

UGC Draft Regulations, 2025	Comments
<i>Grants Commission.</i> c) a nominee of the apex body of the university such as Syndicate/ Senate/Executive Council / Board of Management/ Equivalent Body of the University.	Search Committee two of the three members are nominees of the Chancellor and the UGC Chairman, both of whom are central appointees. Excluding state governments and giving a decisive role to the central government in the choice of state university VCs is a clear violation of the tenets of federalism.

Summary

The Draft UGC Regulations 2025 constitute an assault on the rights of states. This is most clearly visible in the matter of selecting Vice Chancellors in state-run universities. The guidelines give the Governor-cum-Chancellor the power to appoint the three-member Selection Committee in which the Chancellor's nominee will be the Chairperson and two members will be indirect central appointees. The power to establish and supervise state universities rests with the state governments, as per the Constitution's Seventh Schedule. The UGC's role should be limited to coordinating and setting standards for higher education and that too "in consultation with universities". The Draft Regulations not only sideline the role of state governments, which contribute around 80% of the funding for state universities, but they also undermine the democratic functioning of universities. They contain objectionable provisions that propose appointing Vice-Chancellors from the private sector, and from commercial backgrounds, instead of prioritising academic expertise within universities. This, could lead to further commercialisation of higher education and erode its integrity, ultimately undermining academic freedom and critical thinking. Hence, there is an urgent need to withdraw these Regulations and to introduce a fresh set of guidelines in consultations with State governments, and all stakeholders in higher education.

Item No.4 - Government Order - Commission for Curriculum Review and the Revision of the Academic Activities of Fine Art Colleges in Kerala.

Reported the details of the constitution of the Commission for Curriculum Review and the Revision of the Academic Activities of Fine Art Colleges in Kerala vide Government Order No. GO (Rt) No. 34/2025/HEDN dated, 07.01.2025.

It was resolved to cancel the constitution of the committee to revise the curriculum of Music vide proceedings (No. KSHEC-A3/345(A)/Committee-revise curr.Music/ 1035/2023 dated 22.12.2023). No expenditure was incurred for this committee . Dr. Uthara Soman, Research Officer, KSHEC was given the charge as the coordinator of the committee.

Item No.5 - CoE- MoU between KSHEC and Universities.

Reported the details of MoU between KSHEC and Universities.

Centres of Excellence in Higher Education

Sl. No.	Centres of Excellence	Agency/ Location	MoU Signed	Amount to be Released
1	Centre of excellence for Teaching, Learning and Training	Kerala State Higher Education Council, Thiruvananthapuram		

2	Kerala Institute for Science, Technology, and Innovation (KISTI)	Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam	✓	20 Lakhs
3	Kerala Institute of Advanced Studies (KIAS)	Munnar Engineering College campus of the Centre for Continuing Education Kerala (CCEK)		
4.	Kerala Network for Research-Support in Higher Education – (KNRSHE) Sub Centres _ _____ a) Central Instrumentation Laboratory, TVPM (South) _ _____ b) Central Instrumentation Laboratory – Kannur (North) _____ c) Centre for Academic Computing, Cochin	Main Centre, Kerala State Higher Education Council, Thiruvananthapuram _____ i. Government Women’s College, Thiruvananthapuram _____ ii. Kannur University, Kannur _____ ii. Cochin University of Science and Technology, Kochi	✓ ✓	8 Lakhs (GWC)
5	Centre for Indigenous People’s Education (CIPE) Institute for Tribal Studies and Research (ITSR) at Chethalayam to be transformed as Centre for Indigenous People	University of Calicut, Kozhicode		
6	The Kerala Institute for Gender Equality (KIGE)	Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit, Kalady	✓	
7	Kerala Language Network Sub Centre – a. Translation Centre, Ponnani b. Language Technology Mission, Kannur	Thunchath Ezhuthachan Malayalam University	✓	8 Lakhs

It was also resolved to entrust the charge of coordination of Kerala Institute of Advanced Studies (KIAS) to the Vice Chairman, KSHEC till a regular Director is appointed and also decided to prepare a DPR for KIAS for commencement of the activities of the CoE.

Item No.6 -MoU between KSHEC and University of Michigan-Flint (UM-Flint).

Reported the details of MoU signed between KSHEC and University of Michigan-Flint (UM-Flint) in the following areas.

- Joint research projects in fields of mutual interests;
- Exchange of academic publications and reports;
- Sharing of experiences in innovative teaching methods and course design;
- Organization of joint symposia, workshops, and conferences;
- Opportunities for faculty development and exchange;
- Opportunities for student mobility; and
- Opportunities for visiting higher education leaders, administrators and research scholars.

Item No.7 -Govt. Letter - Cancellation of FDP Certificate.

After detailed discussion it was resolved to take necessary steps in the matter based on legal opinion as the matter is pending in the Hon'ble High Court of Kerala.

Item No.8 -KSHEC - Participation in International Education Expos in partnership with EdCIL (India) Ltd.

It was resolved to participate and facilitate the participation of Higher Education Institutions from the state in the International Education Expos in partnership with EdCIL (India) Ltd. as these events are crucial platforms to showcase Kerala's Higher Education Institutions to a global audience.

Item No.9 -Budget Provision for Unnatha Vidya Bhavan.

Reported the details as follows:

1. The construction of Unnatha Vidya Bhavan is listed as Project Item No. 450 in the LDF Manifesto and a Priority Project to be completed within 18 months.
2. As per Government Order GO (Rt.) No. 677/2024 dated 13.06.2024 government accorded Administrative Sanction for the construction of Unnatha Vidya Bhavan for an amount of Rs 634.21 lakhs for the first phase work. (The total detailed estimate for the entire project is Rs. 12.95 Crore).
3. An amount of Rs. 74,67,094/- (Rupees Seventy-Four lakhs Sixty-Seven Thousand and Ninety-Four only) was released for the construction in 2024-25 financial year.
4. In the Budget 2025-26 presented in the Assembly on 7th February 2025, Rs. 20 Crore was provided as financial assistance to the Kerala State Higher Education Council for implementing various schemes of the Council under the Head of Account 2202-03-103-56.
5. But there is no allotment of grants/ funds for the creation of Capital Assets under this Head of Account of the KSHEC.

In this context, a letter was forwarded to the Principal Secretary, Higher Education requesting funds to be allotted in the Budget 2025-26 for KSHEC under creation of Capital Assets for the construction of Unnatha Vidya Bhavan either from the allotted amount of 20 Crore (H/A 2202-03-103-56) or by granting additional funds for the timely completion of the project.

Item No.10-Proposal from ULCCS for the Construction of Toilet Block.

As per government direction and decision of the Executive Body of KSHEC, it was resolved to approve the proposal submitted by ULCCS, amounting to Rs. 18,55,000 (Rupees Eighteen Lakhs Fifty-Five Thousand only) for the construction of Toilet Block for KSSTM. This is necessary to start the construction work for the first phase of the Unnatha Vidya Bhavan after demolishing the existing old toilet block in the Construction site.

Item No.11- National Convention on Higher Education - Draft UGC Regulations, 2025 on 20.02.2025.

Reported the details of the National Convention on Higher Education organized by the Department of Higher Education, Government of Kerala, in connection with the Draft UGC Regulations, 2025. The convention will be held on February 20, 2025, at 10:00 AM in R. Sankaranarayanan Thampi Hall, Kerala Legislative Assembly Complex, Thiruvananthapuram. Hon'ble Chief Minister of Kerala will inaugurate the function and the Hon'ble Minister for Higher Education will be chairing the meeting. Higher Education Minister's from other states are expected to attend the meeting.

Additional Agenda

Item No. A1 - SAAC Accreditation - Sir Syed College, Taliparamba

It was resolved to approve the recommendation of the SAAC Peer team members and to award Grade **point of 3.30 (Grade of A+)** to Sir Syed College, Thaliparambu in the SAAC accreditation.

Item No. A2 - FYUGP Evaluation Committee

It was resolved to constitute a Committee under the Chairmanship Prof. Suresh Das (Former Vice President. Kerala State Council for Science, Technology and Environment) to evaluate the implementation of FYUGP curriculum in the state Universities and colleges. The other members of the committee include :

1. Dr. K.K. Damodaran (Member, Executive Body, KSHEC)
2. Sri. Paul V Karanthanam (Member, Executive Body, KSHEC)
3. Dr. P.P. Ajayakumar (Member, Executive Body, KSHEC)

The Minutes were read and confirmed

The Meeting which started at 11.00 am concluded by 12.30 pm.



Member Secretary



Vice Chairman