

**Report on Internal Academic Audit of the Center for Distance and Open Education
(CDOE), Himachal Pradesh University, Shimla-5.**

1. Summary Meeting:

The Summary Meeting of the CIQA Committee CDOE (Formerly ICDEOL) was convened on March 23, 2024, at 02:00 P.M. as per office letter No ICDEOL/18-13/2016-2023/UGC-DEB/Admin dated February 26, 2024. Professor Sanju Karol, the Director of CDOE, chaired the meeting in her office. The following committee members were present:

- (i) Prof. Sanju Karol, Director CDOE - Chairperson.
- (ii) Prof. Hari Mohan, Mathematics - Member.
- (iii) Prof. Pardeep Kumar, Mathematics - Member.
- (iv) Prof. L.R. Verma, Public Administration - Member.
- (v) Prof. Bhawana Jharta, Political Science - Member.
- (vi) Prof. Kuldeep Singh Katoch, Education - Member.
- (vii) Sh. Ramesh Sharma, Deputy Registrar, Administrative Branch - Member.
- (viii) Sh. Satish Sharma, Assistant Registrar, Academic - Convener.

(i) The CIQA Committee had previously conducted three meetings to address various challenges encountered by CDOE in ensuring quality across all aspects of distance learning. The committee extensively examined quality-related issues pertinent to the holistic requirements of CDOE, encompassing academics, examinations, assignments, students' grievances, and infrastructural needs. Additionally, the CIQA committee reviewed reports from the following committees of CDOE, as constituted under the authorities mentioned in paragraph 1:

- (a) Academics, Exams, and Evaluation Committee
- (b) Territorial Jurisdiction and Mandatory Disclosures Committee
- (c) Human Resource and Infrastructural Committee

- (d) Programme Project Report Committee
- (e) Self Learning Material Print and Online Committee
- (f) Learners Support Centres Committee
- (g) Swayam and MOOC and Online Courses Committee
- (h) Grievance Mechanism Redressal Committee
- (i) Website updates, UGC-DEB, and Statutory Updates Committee

2. Summary of Concerns Raised and Actions Taken:

(ii) Recommendation: Recognizing the imperative role of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in modern education, especially in distance learning, the committee proposed integrating infrastructure to facilitate interaction with students, particularly during Personal Contact Programmes (PCPs), through a hybrid mode.

Action/Implementation: Building on discussions from previous meetings, the committee advocated for the adoption of cutting-edge technology to enable online student engagement. After extensive deliberations, the administration acknowledged the necessity and committed to the urgent establishment of such infrastructure. Consequently, within a few months, two large interactive panels were installed in classrooms to enhance student-teacher interaction. Presently, the CIQA Committee is progressing towards implementing similar setups in six additional classrooms, complete with audio-video facilities to record lectures and interactions. This initiative aims to introduce flexibility and extend the reach of CDOE to students, enabling them to access lectures at their convenience, 24x7.

(iii) Recommendation: The CIQA Committee noted the diverse backgrounds of CDOE learners, recognizing their challenges in attending Personal Contact Programmes (PCPs) due to various commitments.

Action/Implementation: In response, the Director prioritized student-centric approaches to teaching and learning. Coordinators were instructed to devise hybrid timetables, allowing students to attend on-campus classes while also connecting remotely through platforms like Google Meet. This innovative approach has yielded significant success, prompting further exploration of tools like the Teachmint app to enhance the efficacy of social media in facilitating the teaching-learning process.

(iv) Recommendation: Addressing student grievances emerged as a critical area for enhancing the quality of the teaching-learning process at CDOE, aiming to reduce dropout rates.

Action/Implementation: The CIQA Committee advocated for bolstering measures to address student grievances, leading to collaborative efforts with the Director. Previously limited to helpline numbers, avenues for expressing grievances were expanded to include email contacts for each academic/administrative branch. Grievances received through the Mulhyamantri Seva Sankalp Helpline are duly addressed, with a monthly report submitted to the Director. Serious grievances are escalated to the Grievance Redressal Mechanism Committee for thorough investigation. Additionally, a Facebook page of ICDEOL serves as a platform to address student doubts, with future considerations including the feasibility of a dedicated online chatbox

(v) Recommendation: The Committee emphasized the critical role of assignments in any Distance Education Institution, constituting 30% in Undergraduate programs and 20% in Postgraduate programs, thus significantly impacting students' overall evaluations. Recognizing assignments' pivotal role in CDOE's success, the committee urged a thorough review of the assignment process.

Action/Implementation: The committee proposed timely uploading of assignment questions on the CDOE website, with immediate reporting to the Director via the Programmer through PRO for any subject left unaddressed. Assignments received via post or counter must be meticulously recorded in a register with diary numbers. In normal circumstances, the entire process of Internal Assessment Awards must be completed within 15 days. Additionally, the Director is contemplating a new assignment format comprising short-answer questions and MCQs to enhance effectiveness.

(vi) Recommendation: The CIQA Committee noted the dilapidated condition of furniture allotted to faculty members, highlighting the urgent need for replacement.

Action/Implementation: The Director promptly set in motion the procedure for procuring new furniture, actively collaborating with the Registrar, Pro-Vice Chancellor, and Chancellor of the University to ensure timely replacement. Currently, 25 sets of furniture have been allocated to CDOE, with plans underway to replace all old furniture, recognizing the importance of creating an aesthetically pleasing environment conducive to positive energy.

(vii) **Recommendation:** Recognizing the pivotal role of updated and quality Self-Learning Material (SLM), the CIQA Committee stressed the importance of timely updates, printing, and dispatch.

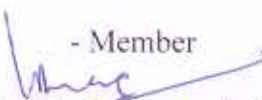
Action/Implementation: The Director issued notifications to all concerned parties to ensure no delays in the update, printing, and dispatch of SLM, acknowledging its significance as a hallmark of CDOE.

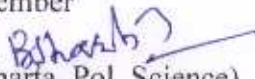
The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks to the Chair.


3. The signatures of all committee members are appended below:


(Prof. Hari Mohan, Mathematics)


(Prof. Pardeep Kumar, Mathematics)


- Member

(Prof. L.R. Verma, Pub. Admn.)

- Member

(Prof. Bhawana Jharta, Pol. Science)

- Member

(Prof. Kuldeep Singh Katoch, Edu.)

- Member

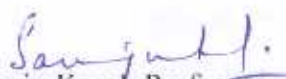
(Ramesh Sharma)

- Member

(Satish Sharma)

- Member

- Member

Convener


Dr. Sanju Karol, Professor

Chairman, CIQA Committee, CDOE