

Office of the Controller of Examinations

ANNUAL REPORT

2020-21



Maharajas College, Ernakulam
(A Government Autonomous College)

Preface

Maharaja's College, Ernakulam is one of the largest and oldest higher education institutions in Kerala. It is a premier institution with 20 departments offering a wide variety of undergraduate, post graduate and research programmes under several disciplines. With its rich heritage and unparalleled achievements, the college has become a cultural icon of the state.

From 2014-15, the Maharaja's is an autonomous college, the only such Government institution in Kerala. All activities relating to the planning, conduct, evaluation and result declaration of the internal and external evaluation of all the undergraduate and postgraduate programmes of the college are carried out by the office of the Controller of Examinations, from 2015-16 admissions onward. The entire process is being carried out strictly adhering to the provisions of the Examinations Manual of the College as approved by the Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam to which the college is affiliated. In the backdrop of conducting examinations during the coronavirus pandemic, the orders of the government and instructions of the University in this regard were also followed.

Every year, Annual Report of the office of the Controller of Examinations is prepared and published summarising all activities relating to the conduct of examinations of the academic year. On completion of all the examination related activities of the academic year 2020-21, this Annual Report is being published, after having gone through a difficult time due to the unprecedented challenges and crises posed by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The office of the Controller of Examinations undertakes all the tasks entrusted with it maintaining strict confidentiality, precision and utmost professionalism during every stage of the process. These daunting tasks could never be successfully completed but for the constant support and unrelentless co-operation from the Principal, Heads of Department, faculty and non-teaching staff of the college.

Dr C. Sivakumar
Controller of Examinations

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Introduction

As the entire humankind was struggling to cope with the sudden outbreak of the global pandemic covid-19, the examination wing of Maharaja's College, Ernakulam too had to face unprecedented challenges during the academic year 2020-21. When the nationwide lockdown to contain the pandemic started in March 2020, the entire works relating to the conduct of even examinations of the previous academic year 2019-20 came to a standstill. Even though some of the sixth semester UG theory examinations had been held before the start of the lockdown, further procedures for the evaluation of those theory examinations, the practical examinations and project evaluation had to wait till the lockdown regulations were relaxed. All those works had to be carried out during the academic year 2020-21, disrupting the usual working schedules of the office of the Controller of Examinations.

The education sector soon started to adapt to the new situation using technology. Several curricular activities like teaching, learning, internal assessment, *viva voce*, and even admission procedures could be conducted online. However, technology could not be suddenly adopted in the conduct of examinations and evaluation because of the very specific nature of such works. Therefore, all works in the examination wing like conduct of examinations and evaluation had to be conducted the usual manner.

In addition, several modifications in the conduct of examinations and evaluation were adopted. In view of the limitations in transport and accommodation facilities and also to minimize exposure of students to the epidemic, off-campus examination centres were setup in almost all districts of the state. To mitigate any possible shortcomings of online classes, modified but relaxed question paper patterns were adopted for the benefit of the both UG and PG students.

When the college completes each academic year after becoming an autonomous college, the workload of the examination wing is in the increase because of the management of more regulations, more batches of students, more mark lists, and other databases. But because of the above mentioned circumstances, the office of the controller of Examinations had to manage an unusually enormous load of work during the academic year 2020-21.

Academic Autonomy

Being an autonomous college, all activities relating to the planning, conduct, evaluation and result declaration of the internal and external evaluation of all the undergraduate and postgraduate programmes of the college are carried out by the office of the Controller of Examinations, from 2015-16 admissions onward. The entire processes is carried out strictly adhering to the provisions of the Examinations Manual of the College.

The college completed its sixth year of academic autonomy in 2020-21. The regular students of all UG programmes (2018 Admissions) and PG programmes (2019 Admissions) completed all their semester end examinations and their final results were published on 30th June 2020 and 13th July 2020 respectively. The final consolidated grade cards were uploaded in the college web site on the same day.

A brief of the different activities undertaken by the examination wing is provided under the following sections.

Revised Regulations

The regulations of the PG programmes in force during 2015 when the college became autonomous were first revised in 2016, and PG students admitted during 2016, 2017 and 2018 were under the revised regulation. The second syllabus was implemented with effect from 2019 PG admission onwards, switching to the outcome-based education. In the revised regulations, direct grading system was introduced in all the PG programmes.

Similarly, the UG regulations were first revised in 2016. Accordingly, the UG students admitted during 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019 were under the revised regulations. The UG regulations were revised for the second time with effect from 2020 admission to the UG programmes onward, completely switching to the outcome-based education.

The academic year 2020-21 thus was a period when the examination cell had to manage examinations under three different regulations, if supplementary examinations are also considered. Each new regulation entails additional responsibilities to the office of the Controller of Examinations.

Examination Schedule

In the previous years, the examination cell used to prepare the examination schedule in line with the academic calendar of the college well before the start of the academic year for the approval of the Academic Council and Governing Body. However, due to uncertainties arising out of the pandemic and lockdowns, such a comprehensive examination schedule could not be prepared in advance during the academic year. However, notifications for all examinations during the period were published well in advance for the convenience of the candidates.

Board of Question Paper Setters

The boards of question paper setters for each semester examination were constituted including members from the lists supplied by the corresponding Boards of Studies. There were separate boards of question paper setters for the PG and UG programs. The duties of the board of question paper setters are to prepare the outcome-based question papers for each course along with answer key/scheme of valuation. The boards ensure that the prescribed standards have been kept and that the scope of the questions are within the syllabus prescribed.

For each course, the corresponding syllabus, a model question paper and the blue print of questions pattern as approved by the Academic Council were handed over to the external question paper setters well in advance. Based on this, three sets of question papers along with answer keys/scheme for valuation for each course were obtained from the external question paper setters on time. This process required significant amounts of careful efforts, time and a lot of correspondence, all the time following strict confidentiality.

Scrutiny Board

The scrutiny of question paper of each course was done by the scrutiny board consisting of the chairman and one senior member of the board of question paper setters. The role of the

scrutiny board is to ensure that the question paper is in accordance with the syllabus, there are no errors, there is parity of standards across optional questions and the level of difficulty is consistent with the course outcome. After scrutiny, the chairman personally handed over the entire question papers along with answer keys in properly labeled and securely sealed separate envelopes to the Controller.

Question Paper Selection

The actual question paper used for examinations of each course was selected personally by the Controller, picking one randomly from the three sets of the scrutinized question papers. The Controller then assigned random question paper codes to each question paper. The draft question papers were once again vetted by the Controller before printing. Printing, packing and labelling of all the question papers were done with extreme caution, security and confidentiality under the direct supervision of the Controller. The entire process requires extreme diligence and confidentiality.

Question Paper Pattern

In order to mitigate any possible deficiencies of the newly introduced online classes, relaxed pattern of question papers was used for the regular students of online classes. The question papers which were already prepared in the usual pattern had to be modified to offer more internal optional questions in each question paper for the benefit of the students. However, the usual pattern had to be followed for the candidates of supplementary examinations. This exercise was a very difficult additional task for the office of the Controller of Examinations.

Examination Timetables

The notification and timetable of various end semester examinations were published one month prior to the commencement of the examinations. Adequate time was given to the candidates to register and pay the examination fee every time. The notification was published in the college website every time. In view of the lockdown situation, the notifications were shared through social media in order to ensure that each candidate get the information immediately.

Table No. 1 gives the list of all UG examinations conducted during the academic year 2020-21.

Table No. 1 - UG Examinations

Name of Examination	Exam Started on	Exam ended on
UG Semester - V 1. Regular (2018 admission) 2. Supplementary (2017, 2016 and 2015 admissions)	27.01.2021	05.02.2021
UG Semester - III 1. Regular (2019 admission) 2. Supplementary/Improvement (2018 admission) 3. Supplementary (2017, 2016 and 2015 admissions)	10.02.2021	05.03.2021
UG Semester - I 1. Regular (2020 admission) 2. Supplementary/Improvement (2019 admission) 3. Supplementary (2018, 2017, 2016 and 2015 admissions)	16.04.2021	16.08.2021

UG Semester - VI 1. Regular (2018 admission) 2. Supplementary (2017, 2016 and 2015 admissions)	28.06.2021	07.07.2021
UG Semester - IV 1. Regular (2019 admission) 2. Supplementary/Improvement (2018 admission) 3. Supplementary (2017, 2016 and 2015 admissions)	23.07.2021	04.08.2021
UG Semester - II 1. Regular (2020 admission) 2. Supplementary/Improvement (2019 admission) 3. Supplementary (2018, 2017, 2016 and 2015 admissions)	13.09.2021	24.09.2021
UG SAY Examination – Semester V and VI	06.09.2021	17.09.2021

SAY examinations and Special Examinations

The SAY examinations for all courses of semester V and semester VI of all UG programmes is conducted for the final year UG regular students after the publication of results of semester VI. Those regular students who have passed all the courses of the first four semesters are eligible to apply for the SAY examinations. The results are published immediately, taking special efforts, so that the passing students can apply for PG programmes without losing a year waiting for the next supplementary examinations. The results were published on 20.09.2021. Forty two students appeared for the SAY examinations this year.

Table No. 2 gives the list of all PG examinations conducted during the academic year 2020-21.

Table No. 2 - PG Examinations

Name of Examination	Examination Started on	Exam ended on
PG Semester - III 1. Regular (2019 admission) 2. Supplementary (2018 and 2017 admissions)	27.01.2021	08.02.2021
PG Semester - I 1. Regular (2020 admission) 2. Supplementary (2019, 2018 and 2017 admissions)	17.04.2021	13.08.2021
PG Semester - IV 1. Regular (2019 admission) 2. Supplementary (2018 and 2017 admissions)	29.06.2021	08.07.2021
PG Semester - II 1. Regular (2020 admission)	10.09.2021	25.09.2021

2. Supplementary (2019, 2018 and 2017 admissions)		
PG Geology - Semester I	04.08.2021	13.08.2021
PG Special / Re - Examinations Semester - IV	18.09.2021	25.09.2021

The special re-examination were held in view of the benefit of those regular candidates who could not attend the examination due to covid-19 pandemic. Five PG students and 56 UG students appeared for the special examinations.

Examination Registration

Examination registration and fee payment were fully online for regular students during the academic year. As per the extant government orders and other rules and regulations fee concession was given to the eligible candidates. Authenticated hall tickets for the eligible candidates were generated from the examination management software and made available to the candidates. In off-campus examination centres, candidates were permitted to use the hall tickets downloaded from the college website.

Attendance

Although all the programme regulations have made 75% attendance mandatory for appearing for the examinations, this requirement was relaxed in view of the government orders and in view of the online classes.

Additional Chief Superintendent

The Principal is the Chief Superintendent of all examinations conducted in the college. Shri Robin Francis, Assistant Professor, Department of Physics was appointed as the Additional Chief Superintendent of all UG and PG examinations conducted during the academic year 2020-21. The Additional Chief Superintendent carried out the important task of conducting the examinations as per the timetable, availing the services of required number of the faculty as invigilators. Preparation of class rooms marking register numbers, preparing seating plan, distribution of the examination materials and answer scripts on each day of examination, receiving back the answer scripts, preparation of mandatory forms, packing the answer scripts, etc are some of the other functions of the Additional Chief Superintendent. The services of the non-teaching staff are also availed for the orderly conduct of the examinations. During the academic year 2020-21, all the examinations were conducted efficiently in spite of the difficulties faced due to the lockdown and travel restrictions.

Assigning False Number on Answer Scripts

On receipt of answer script bundles from the Additional Chief Superintendent, the answer scripts and once again counted manually to mark the absentees. Then these are sorted course wise and programme wise in order prepare it for valuation. Thereafter, portion of each of the answer sheets where the students write their register number are torn off, and a false number is assigned on each and every answer script in order to hide the identity of the candidate. This is

a time consuming task requiring extreme care and diligence. Barcodes based on false numbers were generated separately for each course of UG and PG programmes.

Board of Examiners

During the previous years, the double valuation system had been followed for valuation of each answer scripts of end semester examinations for all UG and PG programmes. However, due to the prevalence of the pandemic, the College Academic Council decided that only twenty percent of the answer script for each course need to be subjected to the external valuation.

The Boards of Examination consisting of internal and external examiners were constituted from the panels received from the Board of Studies of each programme. Separate boards were constituted for practical examinations and viva voce.

Valuation of Answer Scripts

The college follows double valuation of answer scripts of end semester examinations of UG and PG programmes. This year also, the valuation was conducted by both internal examiners as well as external examiners immediately after the examination; the first valuation was carried out by the internal examiner and the second by the external examiner. The valuation is based on meticulously prepared schemes of valuation. In view of the pandemic spread, the practice of centralized valuation camps was dispensed with and the internal examiners were allowed to take the answer scripts home for valuation. External valuation of answer scripts was conducted either in centralized valuation camps or by home valuation.

If there is a difference of the marks awarded in internal and external valuation, the average of the two is taken as the final mark. If the variation in marks of internal and external valuation exceeds 20%, such answer scripts are sent to a senior internal or external examiner for a third valuation, after assigning another false number. In such cases, the final mark will be calculated as the average of the mark awarded in the third valuation and the one nearest to it from the two earlier valuations.

Practical Examinations

Practical examinations were conducted soon after the theory examinations as per the timetable set by the departments concerned. The Controller of Examinations appointed the external examiners from the panel submitted by the departments. Timetable for conducting practical examinations were also communicated to the candidates well before the examinations.

Project Evaluation & Viva Voce

In view of the limitations due to the coronavirus pandemic, the requirement of the evaluation of project reports by external examiners was dispensed with for both final year UG and PG programmes. Similarly, the requirement of external examiners for the comprehensive viva voce for final year PG programmes was also done away with. However, these evaluations were carried out by internal examiners in a timely manner.

Tabulation of Marks

The process of calculating the final marks from the different valuations is automated through examination software. The internal assessment marks of all semesters were uploaded by the

tutors of each class. The results as well as analysis of the final results of each semester were printed for the consideration of the Pass Boards concerned.

Pass Boards

The Pass Board of each department consists of the chairman and two senior examiners who have valued the answer scripts. Separate pass boards for each semester were constituted, and convened its meeting immediately after the tabulation of marks is completed. Result statistics of each course were presented before the Pass Board for consideration and approval. The minutes of the Pass Board duly signed by the members have been kept at the CE office.

Pass Board for VI Semester UG and IV Semester PG examinations were conducted on 06.08.2021. The results of VI Semester UG and IV Semester PG examinations were published by the Governing Council on 09.08.2021.

Publication of Results

After the approval of the results by the respective Pass Boards, the results were published by the Governing Council of the college. The results of all end semester examinations of all UG and PG programmes were published on time without any grievance. Computerized grade cards were issued semester wise immediately after the publication of results.

Grace marks were awarded to applicants for their achievements in Sports, Arts, NCC and NSS. It was awarded strictly as per the regulations of Mahatma Gandhi University.

Table No. 3 - UG Examination Results

Name of Examination	Date of Last Exam (Theory)	Result Published on	Number of Days Taken to Publish Results	Number of Days from the End of Practicals
UG Semester - V	05.02.2021	30.03.2021	54	12
UG Semester - III	05.03.2021	06.05.2021	62	20
UG Semester - I	16.08.2021	26.10.2021	70	-
UG Semester - VI	07.07.2021	09.08.2021	32	7
UG Semester - IV	04.08.2021	08.09.2021	34	21
UG Semester - II	24.09.2021	12.11.2021	47	14
UG SAY Examinations	17.09.2021	20.09.2021	3	3

Table No. 4 - PG Examination Results

Name of Examination	Date of Last Exam (Theory)	Result Published on	Number of Days Taken to Publish Results	Number of Days from the End of Practicals
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PG Semester - III	08.02.2021	30.04.2021	81	-
PG Semester - I	13.08.2021	26.10.2021	73	-
PG Semester - IV	08.07.2021	09.08.2021	31	7
PG Semester - II	25.09.2021	12.11.2021	47	14
PG Geology-Semester I	13.08.2021	05.10.2021	52	-
Special Examinations Semester - IV	25.09.2021	12.11.2021	47	-

Result Summary

A summary of results (regular) of all UG programmes combined is provided below. (The results of revaluation is not effected)

Table No. 5 - UG Result Summary (Regular)

UG Programmes	No. of Students Appeared	No. of Students Passed	Pass Percentage
Semester I	745	458	61.48%
Semester II	702	351	50.00%
Semester III	637	377	59.18%
Semester IV	632	402	63.61%
Semester V	630	469	74.44%
Semester VI	631	461	73.06%

A summary of results of all PG programmes combined is provided below. (The results of revaluation is not effected)

Table No. 6 - PG Result Summary (Regular)

PG Programmes	No. of Students Appeared	No. of Students Passed	Pass Percentage
Semester I	301	230	76.41%
Semester II	335	263	78.51%
Semester III	276	242	87.68%

Semester IV	282	254	90.07%
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Mark List and Tabulation Register

After the publication of the results of the final year UG and PG students, their marks of all semesters are consolidated and the final mark list was prepared, incorporating the changes on account of improvement examinations, supplementary examinations and award of grace marks. This year the mark lists of both UG and PG were generated and printed using the examination management software. A lot of effort had to be taken to complete the process without any error.

Along with the issuance of the final mark sheets, a consolidated tabulation register had to be prepared for both UG and PG and sent to the Mahatma Gandhi University who issues the final degree certificates to the candidates. This was also a tedious task to complete within a time limit ensuring error free output.

Grievances

Students were allowed to apply for Recounting, Challenge Valuation and viewing the photocopy of the answer scripts on payment of the required fee within 14 days from the publication of results. Those who failed in internal assessment can apply to redo the internal assessment with their junior batch after paying the prescribed fee. Table No. 7 gives the number of applications received under each category of grievance redressal.

Table 7 - Number of grievance applications received

Semester	Re-totalling	Challenge Valuation	Revaluation ^{§§}	Request for Copy of Answer Script
UG Semester I	0	-	65	0
UG Semester II	0	-	37	0
UG Semester III	0	10	-	0
UG Semester IV	0	-	30	0
UG Semester V	0	21	-	0
UG Semester VI	1	-	25	0
PG Semester I	0	-	20	0
PG Semester II	0	-	39	0

^{§§} Revaluation was introduced in the place of Challenge Valuation following the introduction of the same in Mahatma Gandhi University.

PG Semester III	0	24	-	5
PG Semester IV	0	-	7	2

Continuous Internal Assessment System

The evaluation scheme for each course contains two parts; (a) in-semester evaluation and (b) end-semester evaluation. In-semester evaluation is out of 20 marks and end-semester evaluation is out of 80 marks. Regarding in-semester evaluation, each course will be assessed on the basis of different criteria such as attendance, tests, assignment and seminar.

Two internal assessment examinations were conducted in each semester out of 40 marks. Question papers were set by the respective faculty in charge of each course. At the end of each semester, course specific internal assessment marks (Form A) and consolidated internal assessment marks (Form B) were generated department wise.

To ensure transparency of the evaluation process, the in-semester marks awarded to the students in each course in a semester were published on the notice board at least one week before the commencement of external examination. There is not any chance for improvement for in-semester evaluation marks.

Conduct of Supplementary/Improvement Examinations

Supplementary/Improvement examinations were also conducted along with Regular Semester end examinations and their results were also published along with results of regular examinations. Improvement examinations are allowed only for semester I, II, III and IV of UG programmes only. The students can appear for improvement examinations only once for each course, during the next year after their regular examination. However, UG students can appear for supplementary examinations till the lapse of three years from their sixth semester regular examinations. PG students can appear for supplementary examinations till the lapse of two years from their fourth semester regular examinations.

NAAC Accreditation

The college was going through the process of the fourth cycle of NAAC accreditation and the NAAC peer team visit during the period. The NAAC peer team visited the college in February 2021. Since evaluation is an important criteria of NAAC assessment, the working of the office of the Controller of Examinations was thoroughly examined. The Controller made a detailed presentation before the team detailing every aspects of the continuous efforts of the office in improving the quality of the evaluation system of the college. The double valuation system and the timely publication of results were given particular emphasis.

The Office

The office of the Controller of Examinations consists of the following at time of preparing this report.

Dr C. Sivakumar Associate Professor of Physics	-	Controller of Examinations
Dr Prakasan K. Assistant Professor of Zoology	-	Joint Controller
Smt. Subida M. D. Assistant Professor of Islamic History	-	Deputy Controller
Dr. A. K. Bindu Assistant Professor of Hindi	-	Deputy Controller
Shri Georgekutty Cherian Assistant Professor of Economics	-	Deputy Controller

The following faculty members had also held the office during the period as detailed below.

Dr Suresh V. N. Associate Professor of Commerce	-	Controller of Examinations
Dr C. Sivakumar Assistant Professor of Physics	-	Joint Controller
Dr Prakasan K. Assistant Professor of Zoology	-	Deputy Controller
Dr Jolly V. Antony Assistant Professor of Chemistry	-	Deputy Controller
Shri Sujith P. Assistant Professor of Statistics	-	Deputy Controller

The Controller is supported by office staff including the Head Accountant, clerks, system administrator, data entry operators and office assistants. The examination system is computerized with a web-based exam management software developed and maintained by National Informatics Centre (NIC). The software is regularly being updated and streamlined to suit the increased requirements and also to cover more examination related activities. The software include, among others, the modules for examination scheduling and management,

candidate management, registration, fee payment, hall ticket generation, mark entry and management, results, mark list generation, etc.

Examination Cell is well equipped with adequate number of computer systems, heavy duty printers and UPS backup. It functions in a separate building in the campus with CCTV surveillance, office infrastructure, printing room, store room, distribution room and three valuation halls. However, infrastructure facilities including office space have to be enhanced in accordance with the increasing work load of the office.

Facing Covid-19

The scale of the covid-19 crisis and the disruptions it caused was an enormous challenge to the examination wing. The uncertainties and anxieties the pandemic created among the academic community was difficult to overcome. Being the largest stakeholders, the students were the most affected. The college as well as the examination wing adopted several modifications and changes in the evaluation system in order to overcome these difficulties.

Since travel facilities were limited during the lockdown, the college decided to conduct examinations in off-campus centres in all districts for the benefit of students. Accordingly, data of students appearing the examinations in off-campus centres were collected by the examination office. Then government colleges in various districts were designated as off-campus examination centres, taking permission from the authorities concerned of each centre. Faculty members of the college were deputed to conduct the examination in each centre. Required number of question papers, answer sheets and other examination materials were additionally prepared and sent to each centre on time. The students were permitted to use the hall tickets downloaded from the website. After examinations, the answer scripts and other examination materials were taken back to the college for evaluation.

All examinations halls in the college were sanitized and are equipped with hand sanitisers. The invigilators were given gloves. Temperature of all students are taken on all days of examination at college gates. In order to minimize contact with hands, the signatures of students were not taken on the forms used in the examination halls. Number of candidates in each hall was reduced for ensuring physical distancing among candidates. This process increased the number of examination halls and the number of invigilators. Special examination halls were set up for those candidates with covid-19 symptoms. The answer scripts were kept in quarantine in such cases, before valuation.

Internal assessment examinations, viva voce and project evaluation were conducted online. To mitigate any possible shortcomings of online classes, modified but relaxed question paper patterns were adopted benefitting the both UG and PG students. The requirement of 75% attendance for appearing for the examination was dispensed with.

In consideration of the students who couldn't appear for the sixth semester UG and fourth semester PG examinations due to the pandemic, special re-examinations were held. Thus the students could complete the programme this year itself, and continue their higher studies without waiting for the next supplementary examinations.

Earlier, the valuation of the answer scripts by internal examiners used to be done in centralized camps. But in view of the pandemic, the internal examiners were allowed to take the answer

scripts for valuation at home and return. The external evaluation was limited to 20% of the answer scripts only in view of the pandemic. Students were given the chance for revaluation of the answer sheets, in the place of the prevailing challenge valuation system.

The office of the controller of examinations is functions fully following the covid-19 protocols. An electric sanitizer dispenser is installed at the entrance. Hand sanitisers are made available in all rooms. All staff of the office follow the prescribed covid-19 protocols strictly, and are fully vaccinated. The office staff continue to offer their dedicated service even amidst the anxieties and uncertainties of the pandemic and lockdowns.



Sivakumar

Dr C. Sivakumar
Controller of Examinations