

# ACADEMIC AUTONOMY AUDIT REPORT 2024-2025

IQAC

MAR IVANIOS COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS) Thiruvananthapuram

## MAR IVANIOS COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

### AUTONOMY AUDIT

(16-17 July 2025)

#### **Preamble:**

Founded by Archbishop Mar Ivanios in 1949, Mar Ivanios College, Thiruvananthapuram, aims at excellence and focuses on the holistic development of its students. It is the first institution in the University of Kerala to be assessed and accredited by NAAC as early as 1999. The college has the distinction of having completed five cycles of NAAC assessment and accreditation. The fifth cycle was completed in 2024 with A++ and a CGPA of 3.56. The National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) ranked the college at 36<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>, 48<sup>th</sup>, 44<sup>th</sup>, 50<sup>th</sup> and 66<sup>th</sup> positions in the NIRF Rankings for Arts and Science Colleges in 2017, 2018, 2019, 2021, 2022 and 2023, respectively.

Mar Ivanios College is the first private college affiliated to the University of Kerala to be recognized as a College with Potential for Excellence (CPE) by the UGC. Based on its commendable performance in all domains, namely, Teaching, Research and Extension, it was granted autonomy by the University of Kerala with effect from 13<sup>th</sup> June 2014.

#### **Conferment of Autonomy on Mar Ivanios College:**

Based on the performance of the college and its NAAC Grades and NIRF rankings, the UGC conferred autonomy on the college in 2014. The college enjoys academic, administrative and financial autonomy, though with some limitations. The UGC document titled “UGC (Conferment of Autonomous Status Upon Colleges and Measures for Maintenance of Standards in Autonomous Colleges) Regulations, 2023” stipulates that “the autonomous college shall have the following Statutory bodies to ensure proper management of academic, financial, and general administrative affairs: Governing Body, Academic Council, Finance Committee and Board of Studies.” As stipulated by the UGC, the college has Governing Body, Academic Council, Finance Committee and Board of Studies and the composition of each of these four statutory bodies is strictly as per the UGC stipulation and these bodies meet as per the regulations.

After the conferment of autonomy in 2014, 26 meetings of the Governing Body and 17 meetings of the Academic Council have been conducted. The Finance Committee has met 22 times ever since autonomy was conferred. The Boards of Studies of different departments meet twice a year.

Since 2014, the college has grown steadily, especially on the academic front. Five new departments (self-financing mode) were established and eight new UG programmes (Aided: 01 and Self-financing: 07) and one PG programme have been launched. A number of certificate courses were also introduced benefitting the student community. There have been innovations in the conduct of the examinations also, both internal and external. These measures have certainly enhanced the performance of the institution.

#### **Review of Autonomy:**

A three-member committee headed by Prof. A. Joseph Dorairaj, Emeritus Professor, School of English and Foreign Languages, Gandhigram Rural Institute (Deemed to be University),

Gandhigram, Tamil Nadu, Prof Manju S. Nair, Senior Professor, Department of Economics and Deputy IQAC Coordinator, University of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram and Prof Abraham Joseph, Senior Professor of Chemistry and IQAC Coordinator, University of Calicut, Kozhikode visited the institution on July 16-17, 2025 and interacted with the Principal, Dean of Academics, Heads of Departments, Controller of Examinations, the faculty and a cross-section of the students to review the academic scenario after the college became an autonomous institution. The team visited the college library and the office of the CoE. A key feature of the mandate was to offer suggestions to make autonomy effective and robust so that different stakeholders, especially the student community, reap the benefits of autonomy to the fullest measure.

### **Methodology:**

As a prelude to this exercise, the IQAC Coordinator of the college had sent out a questionnaire (EXCEL sheet) to all departments and had gathered information from departments regarding the implementation of autonomy both at the micro- and macro-levels. She had also collected details regarding individual department's plan of action for 2025-26. Using these details as a base, the three-member committee interacted with the Principal, the Dean of Academics, the CoE, Heads of Departments and a cross-section of the student community. The committee also visited the library, the office of the CoE, Zoology and Chemistry labs and the multimedia studio and e-content Development Centre. The Principal, the CoE and the Heads of Departments made PowerPoint Presentations which were followed by focused group discussions. This was followed by a detailed discussion with the Principal and the Dean of Academics. The key objective of this exercise was to review the functioning of the institution as an autonomous college and offer suggestions for the further growth and development of the college as an institution enjoying autonomy. The draft report was shared with the Principal and the Dean of Academics and was then finalized.

### **Major Findings:**

After the conferment of autonomy, the college has moved forward with the launching of new departments offering additional UG and PG programmes and certificate courses. The faculty and student strength have increased considerably and there has been commensurate improvement in the college infrastructure as well. As far as administration is concerned, there is decentralization and the governance is participative.

### **Suggestions:**

1. For an institution that is 76 years old, there are very few departments and programmes. There are only 9 PG programmes and 18 UG programmes. More programmes should be launched so that the college becomes a true knowledge provider enlightening thousands of students. MSW and MA Psychology could be launched during 2026-27 in the self-financing mode. MSc. Computer Science also could be launched. The Department of Languages could be bifurcated into Department of Indian languages and Department of Foreign Languages, and German could be added to the second category.

2. To help students transition from the vernacular medium to English, a Bridge course should be organized by the Departments of English (both aided and self-financing) at least for five days at the beginning of the academic year. A separate course book should be prepared and this practice should be institutionalized.  
In addition to the bridge course in English, bridge courses in different disciplines could be organized to help students familiarize themselves with basic domain-specific concepts and theories which will serve as a launching pad for knowledge and skill enhancement.
3. As of now there are only 58 certificate courses. Autonomy enables institutions to diversify and offer multiple certificate courses that are beneficial to students not only in terms of knowledge enhancement but also skill development to match individual students' interests and aptitude.  
It should be ensured that every student of this college completes at least two certificate courses by the time he/she graduates from this institution.
4. When semester examination results are published, all departments should undertake a result analysis with a view to finding out the possible reasons for the low pass percentage in many instances. This exercise should be completed within seven days of the publication of results and the findings should be discussed in the meeting of the Heads of Departments. Based on the findings, appropriate remedial measures should be taken up.
5. Science Facilitation Centre which involves all the Science departments of the college is one of the best practices of the institution. It needs to be institutionalized and taken to the next level. Instead of organizing programmes on second Saturdays alone, a ten-day in-depth programme could be organized either during the winter or summer break and nodal agencies like DST-INSPIRE could be approached for funding.
6. Soft Skills should be introduced for all undergraduate students and it is the responsibility of the department of English to enhance students' communication skills, both oral and written. It should be part of the curriculum and not an optional course.
7. In order to promote mobility between departments and streams (aided and self-financing), students should be allowed to choose courses offered by other departments and from alternate streams, i.e. aided streams to choose courses offered by the self-financing stream and vice versa. Enough checks and balances will ensure that this does not lead to any administrative difficulties.
8. A community radio could be thought of and it shall be the responsibility of the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication. The community radio will serve the educational and entertainment needs of all the institutions on campus and will also give hands-on training to the students of Journalism and Mass Communication.
9. There is some interdisciplinarity on campus. The departments of Botany and Biotechnology offer a joint programme. Similarly, the department of Journalism and

Mass Communication takes a few courses for the students of MA Malayalam and Media Studies. More interdisciplinary programmes should be introduced.

10. Amalgamating the Mar Iyonis College with the Engineering college and Law college on campus, a full-fledged university could be set up in the near future.
11. To promote research, the post of Dean for Research could be created.
12. The publication of semester examination results varies from two to sometimes even eight weeks. This needs to be rationalized and results, especially for the final semester, should be published within fifteen days after the conduct of the last examination.
13. To improve the financial position of the college, CSR funds could be collected and could be used to improve the infrastructure.
14. Externally-funded project holders should be incentivized.
15. The college brings out three journals: *Chetana*, *Verbum* and *Innovatus*. It is better to appoint an internal editor so that the claim that these are your journals is justified. The present editor could be redesignated as the Consulting Editor. The composition of the editorial board should be as per the UGC directive.
16. There are three institutions on campus offering professional courses (Engineering and Technology, Law, and Physiotherapy). Steps should be taken to ensure that there is inter-institutional collaboration in the form of certificate courses.
17. Adjunct/Visiting Professors/Professors of Practice could be appointed to improve the quality of teaching and research and also to mentor the young faculty.
18. As far as examination is concerned, students may be given the option to write the paper on IKS in English or Malayalam.
19. Though it is not mandated by the parent university, student representatives could be included in the BoS so that feedback could be gathered on the curriculum.
20. The admission criteria for certain programmes such as BA Analytical Economics need to be revisited.
21. The institution needs to have clearly articulated policies on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI).
22. The Department of Maths and Statistics should be bifurcated for the better functioning of both the streams.
23. It should be ensured that each faculty comes out with at least one publication every year.

24. The boundaries between the two streams in the programme titled “BSc Botany and Biotechnology” need to be clearly articulated.

**Conclusion:**

The affiliating system of governance did not allow colleges to grow at their own pace. The curriculum and the examination system did not take into consideration the differential level of students as well as institutions. It was the story of “one size fits all”. As a result, some outstanding colleges, despite their huge potential, could not make progress, for they were reined in at different levels. But autonomy liberated them.

Mar Ivanios College (Autonomous), Thiruvananthapuram has made optimum use of the academic freedom given to it and has cemented its position as an outstanding institution in the entire country. It is one of the handful of colleges in India that have completed the fifth cycle of NAAC assessment and accreditation and that too with an outstanding score. Autonomy has helped the institution to innovate and the college can and should grow further making full use of the autonomy given to it and we are sure that the college will, in the near future, attain the status of a university and become a beacon of light and hope to the state of Kerala.

<b>(Prof A. Joseph Dorairaj)</b>	<b>(Prof Manju S. Nair)</b>	<b>(Prof Abraham Joseph)</b>	<b>(Prof Meera George)</b>
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