



**PONDICHERY UNIVERSITY
PUDUCHERRY 605 014**

**OFFICE OF
THE DEAN – INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE FOR MOU DOCUMENTATION:
GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION
WITH EFFECT FROM 08 OCTOBER 2020**

The following Guidelines have been approved for processing of Memoranda of Understanding of Pondicherry University with Indian and Foreign Partner Institutions:

I OBJECTIVES

A Memorandum of Understanding is a document that details the nature of collaborations between Pondicherry University and Partner Institutions for the purposes of:

- a) Student and Teaching Faculty Mobility or Exchange Programs
- b) Research Collaborations/ Joint Research Projects
- c) Jointly organized Seminars/ Conferences/ Events
- d) Joint publications
- e) Any other specific collaboration

II PROPOSAL FOR MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

- a) An MOU may be proposed by faculty members of Pondicherry University, who have developed rapport through collaborative work with a reputed partner institution in India or abroad. The faculty member concerned will act as Coordinator for that MOU.
- b) It is essential to provide a rationale for the proposed MOU and how this collaboration can enhance the stature of Pondicherry University. It is mandatory for the coordinator to discuss with the contact person at the partner institution regarding the purposes and measurable objectives as above and if possible, the details for the roadmap to implementation.
- c) The Coordinator who proposes an MOU has to present the proposed draft to the Department faculty council to discuss the feasibility. Please do not send proposals directly to the Dean IR for initiating this departmental process. If the MOU involves multiple departments, the coordinator may indicate that the MOU is with Pondicherry University as a whole and department level collaborations may be taken up after signing the MOU. The Minutes of the Meeting of the department faculty council with specific recommendations have to be sent by the HOD through the Dean of the respective Schools, to the Dean – International Relations with due approval and recommendation. Faculty members are advised to follow this channel as all information of any MOU has to be shared with all the colleagues in the department and the Dean of the School. This process may be carried out through email.
- d) For MOU proposals that are received directly from partner institutions, the IR Office will forward the document by email to the respective departments for the same process as above.
- e) All recommendations have to keep in mind the academic and other regulations as applicable, including for schedules, curricula, innovative courses proposed, travel, leave, facilities and resource sharing, financial implications for Pondicherry University and the partner institution, and any other relevant information.

III MOU EVALUATION COMMITTEE

The MOU Evaluation Committee constituted by the Vice Chancellor will examine the draft MOU and compliance with the procedure as above for approval after seeking clarifications

wherever necessary. In order to ensure the smooth and speedy processing of the MOU by the Evaluation Committee, the procedure as above is expected to be complied with.

IV PREPARATION OF MOU DOCUMENT

- a) An MOU is a document for promoting mutual understanding and commitments for collaboration although not legally binding or enforceable. Preparation of the MOU document on legal stamp paper is not necessary or mandatory. Pondicherry University and all foreign or Indian collaborating institutions may prepare the MOU document on plain paper with the logo and insignia of their University or Institution.
- b) The MOU Coordinator will arrange for the approved draft as above to be typed on A4 size plain paper with logo and insignia of Pondicherry University and the partner institution. The International Relations Office will share the design template of the page for preparing the MOU document.
- c) Electronic processing of the MOU document between the partner institutions for signatures is recommended. Exchange of the finalized draft of the MOU document will be in electronic form and sent by email for obtaining the signatures of the authorized representatives of partner institutions. A clause may be added as is done by foreign institutions for their official copy: *Scanned copies of signatures or digital signatures may be accepted depending on the national legislation.*
- d) The International Relations Office will prepare and share a generic template or draft MOU that may be modified to suit the specific details of respective MOU documents. This will enable ease of collection of data that is sought by apex bodies such as UGC and Ministry of Education from time to time. This is recommended to avoid wide variations in the draft and enhance the speed of processing by the MOU Evaluation Committee. The MOU draft has to be made with a commitment to achieve the deliverables so as not to remain a solemnly filed document.

V AUTHORISED REPRESENTATIVE OF PONDICHERRY UNIVERSITY

- a) The Registrar is the Authorised Representative of Pondicherry University for signing all MOUs. The respective MOU Coordinator and Dean - International Relations may sign as witnesses for the purpose of taking responsibility for the contents and implementation.
- b) *Scanned copies of signatures or digital signatures are acceptable by sharing the MOU document by email and using the edit and insert signature functionality of PDF documents.* The MOU Coordinator will obtain the signatures in person if any of the above persons would prefer to affix their signature physically.
- c) The Office of Dean IR along with the MOU Coordinator, will thereafter share the scanned MOU as an electronic PDF document to the contact person at the partner institution for obtaining their signatures, scanning and sending back by email. The final signed copy of the MOU may be printed for maintenance of records in the Office of Dean IR and whenever needed for official purposes for seeking approval of Academic Council and other statutory bodies.

VI ROLE OF THE MOU COORDINATOR

- a) The Coordinator will be responsible for actively engaging with the partner institution and ensuring that the objectives are kept in mind and achieved. The Coordinator shall provide and update information on all activities conducted through the MOU.
- b) The partner institutions through mutual rapport and cooperation may expand the scope of the collaboration and actively engage as detailed above. The extent of active collaboration purely depends on the follow-up and communication between the MOU Coordinators in the partnering institutions.

VII SELECTION OF STUDENTS FOR EXCHANGE PROGRAMS

- a) The announcement inviting all eligible students to apply for all Exchange Programs under all MOUs has to be made publicly by the Coordinator through the Heads of the Departments/ Centres and Schools concerned giving sufficient time for all eligible and interested students to apply.
- b) For selection of students for Exchange Programs, a transparent and well documented selection procedure may be evolved by the respective departments to fulfil the criteria laid down under the MOU. The respective MOU Coordinators have to document the selection procedure with details of announcements for inviting students' applications, evaluation of such students by the entire Faculty Council of the concerned Department, approval of the HOD and Dean. The hard and soft copy of final details of selected students has to be sent to the Dean – International Relations by the MOU Coordinator through the HOD.
- c) The students have to be provided with full information about the Exchange Program whether with or without financial support offers from the partner institutions such as fee waivers or concessions, Scholarships or Fellowships from ERASMUS or other such funding agencies.

VIII FOREIGN TRAVEL – LETTER OF APPROVAL FOR STUDENTS

- a) For all students, foreign travel under Exchange Programs or for any official reason, the Dean – International Relations will approve and issue NOC or Permission Letters to the selected students from the respective departments whose applications are sent through the Head of the concerned Department and the Dean of the School. The students need such letters for submission along with their visa applications. This process will be done on email and the No Objection Certificate and Letter of Approval will be issued as an electronic document on email to each student.
- b) Request for NOC or Letter of Approval for foreign travel by students for Exchange Programs under MOU has to be sent by the MOU Coordinator through the HOD by email.
- c) For all travels abroad by students for approved academic purposes, the relevant letter of acceptance of paper etc by the host institution/ event organizer is mandatory and the request has to be forwarded through the HOD.

IX FOREIGN TRAVEL – NOC FOR FACULTY OR STAFF

- a) Faculty members of PU, who travel abroad under Exchange Programs of MOUs or any other official purposes, have to apply for their NOC and all prior approvals to Director, Registrar and Finance Officer as per existing procedure through the HOD and Dean of the School. A copy may be sent to the Dean IR by email for information as the file is referred to the Office of IR. However all decisions for faculty are as per existing procedure.
- b) After obtaining the final approval, the soft and hard copy of the final details of purpose of travel and start and end dates have to be intimated by email to the Dean International Relations for information and records.
- c) For staff mobility from any foreign partner institution for any purpose, the Dean – IR is authorized to issue letters for enabling visa procedures if needed.

X CONCLUDING NOTE

The SOPs as detailed above are issued based on discussions with various faculty members and the guidance of the Vice Chancellor and Director SEIRR. Processing by email is encouraged to ensure speedy and transparent action. These guidelines for implementation and compliance are issued with due approvals with immediate effect from 08 October 2020.