

## **External Academic and Administrative Audit**

**Name of the Institution:** St Bede's College, Shimla

**Affiliating University:** Himachal Pradesh University

**Head of the Institution:** Prof (Sr.) Molly Abraham

**Date -** 16<sup>th</sup> May 2023, 9:00 A.M onwards

**Venue:** St Bede's College, Shimla

**Experts:** Fr (Prof) George Thadathil, Principal, Salesian College, Darjeeling, Siliguri, West Bengal

Dr. Pavitra Bhardwaj, Associate Professor and IQAC Coordinator, Jesus and Mary College, University of Delhi, Delhi

The Academic and Administrative Audit was an initiative led by the IQAC of the College in order to emphasize self-reflection and self-improvement rather than compliance with predetermined standards. The purpose of the academic audit was to encourage departments to evaluate their "education quality processes" – the key faculty activities required to produce, assure, and regularly improve the quality of teaching and learning. The external experts attempted to know how faculty approach educational decision making and how they organize their work, using the resources available to them and working collegially to provide a quality education in the best interests of the discipline and student learning.

The main areas of focus of the Audit were to study the processes pertaining to:

- Determining Learning Objectives
- Designing Curriculum and Co-curriculum
- Designing Teaching and Learning Methods
- Developing Student Learning Assessment
- Assuring Implementation of Quality Education

The experts visited the College and interacted with faculty of all departments of the College. A template of presentation was shared and the same was used by all departments to present before the team. The Experts also visited the administrative offices, departments, laboratories, library, hostel premises, classrooms, sports facilities etc. The College has beautiful and aesthetically curated green cover which adds to exuberance to the heritage complexes.

The report was shared with the Principal.

Qualitative report of the Audit is Annexed:

St. Bede's College, Shimla, established in 1904, is a prestigious institution of North India with an illustrious history, rooted in precious catholic heritage which aims at providing a nurturing environment for training and education of young women.

St. Bede's is run by the Sisters of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary. It was founded by St. Claudine Thevenet and is committed to give its students the ability to recognize the divine in themselves and their fellow beings, and thus to respect the dignity and uniqueness of each individual.

It has been imparting higher education in the fields of Arts, Science, Commerce and the training of Teachers. It was recognized by the University Grants Commission under 2(f) and 12(b), and is the only college in HP State accredited 'A +'Grade by UGC-NAAC. The College also runs Post Graduate courses affiliated to Himachal Pradesh University and has been recognised as a College with Potential for Excellence by the University Grants Commission.

The College has 19+ departments with well qualified faculty members offering various courses in regular and self-finance mode. There is a hostel facility in the college which provides a home away from home. The students are accommodated in three major blocks, Thevenet Block, Marian Block and Dina Block. The hostel rooms are comfortable, well-furnished and impeccably maintained. The College also offers state of the art infrastructure for teaching, learning and research which include a well-stocked library, laboratories, sports facilities, auditorium besides others.

The following pertinent observations may be useful for departments to further enhance the quality of educational processes provided by them.

**Group1 (Arts and Humanities – Economics, English, Geography, Hindi, History, Music, Physical Education, Political Science, Psychology)**

The departments offer Under graduate and post graduate courses affiliated to HP University. The faculty are well qualified and experienced, with most having PhD as their highest qualification. Faculty have been educated in Universities outside the state hence provide diversity in the institutional culture and academic perspective. The departments are using various pedagogical approaches and techniques for effective teaching learning. Technological support has been leveraged for enhancing the learning experience of the students. Departments like Geography are doing commendable project work and also sensitising students towards their responsibilities towards protecting their environment and eco-system. Economics department has also initiated novel concepts like the 'Honesty Store' which not only help students in gaining entrepreneurial skills but also reinforces human values which are the core strength of the College.

There are areas on which the departments require attention, the departments need to work towards popularising their subjects and engaging with the schools in the area to attract more number of students. This can be achieved by holding short-term/Certificate courses for outside students as well during the College break days or weekends. (for instance Communication Skills, Mental health, Personality Development, Music Workshops, Leadership Skills, Public Speaking etc.)

The College has a glorious history and a vast number of notable alumni who have gained a lot of respect and honour for themselves and the College. All Departments must engage with the Alumni of their respective departments and invite them to interact with the students and also prospective students through open house interactions.

In this information age, it is also vital for all departments to develop data collection, analysis and presentation techniques which may be as per their specific objectives. This data will be very useful in self- reflection and improvement when looked at over a period of time.

Teamwork and consensus lead to total faculty ownership of and responsibility for all aspects of the curriculum and make everyone accountable for the success of students. Dialogue and collaboration should be encouraged within the department as well as with other institutions, especially those in the vicinity can be very helpful in adding academic vigour to the departments.

## **Group 2 (Science – Biotechnology, Botany, Chemistry, Computer Science, Mathematics, Microbiology, Nutrition, Physics, Zoology)**

The departments offers B.Sc., M.Sc., B.C.A and B.A courses to the students. The College has well developed laboratories with state of the art equipment to foster the practical learning experience required for these courses. The faculty are experienced and well qualified, mostly with PhD degree. The faculty are also engaged in research and some of them have published in reputed high impact journals.

The decreasing number of students in some courses is a concern, the faculty should introspect and understand the reasons thereof. Courses like Biotechnology, Microbiology and Computer Science are very popular in the present times and can be popularised to improve the public perception about the departments so that more students opt for these courses. This can be done by organising talks, lectures, College campus/lab visits etc. for students of various schools in and around Shimla to make them aware about the opportunities available for them in their neighbourhood.

Visits and educational tours to various research institutes, industries (Pharma/Distilleries/Food Processing Units/ Mushroom Farms/IT Companies etc.) should be organised more frequently to give the students real life exposure.

It is interesting to note the way certain faculty are leveraging internet based techniques for disseminating knowledge to students within and outside the College, this should also be done under the aegis of the institution through the College official YouTube Channel etc.

The different departments should collaborate with each other to undertake innovative research Projects to find solutions to some localised issues faced by the people, which usually require an interdisciplinary approach.

Inviting the superannuated teachers and alumni to the departments should be encouraged to add vibrancy and experience to the teaching learning processes of the departments.

The departments should also explore the possibility of real life research projects/ industry internships for students so as to improve their employability and make them job-ready after graduating from the institution.

### **Group 3 (Commerce and Management)**

The department offers BBA, B Com and B.Com.(Hons) courses. Running a professional course successfully requires commitment and hard work from the faculty and students alike. The faculty are motivated and sincere. Business and Management students require a pragmatic learning environment which keeps in sync with the latest trends in the world of Commerce, business, industry and banking.

Even though the courses are outlined by the affiliating university, tweaking them to add the necessary dynamism is the prerogative of the concerned faculty. Courses should be build upon one another to provide necessary breadth and depth. Assessment should be aligned with learning objectives.

Faculty are advised to collaborate and seek to adopt the good practices from other comparable departments of the College as well as institutions to adapt them to suit their specific circumstances and “raise the bar” of the department.

Department should collect data to find out what students need. Data should be analysed and findings incorporated in the design of curricula, learning processes, and assessment methods.

The experts do acknowledge the warm hospitality extended and wish the onward journey of the institution towards its 4th cycle accreditation every success.



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