

External PG in Homoeopathy

Honorable Pro Vice Chancellor of Kerala University Prof.S.Kevin

Commission Report

APPENDIX
(to Item No.1)

Report on the proposal to start External PG Course in Homoeopathy

1. Introduction

I have been authorized by the Academic Council meeting held on 5th June 2003 to study and submit a report to the Vice-Chancellor on the External PG Course in Homoeopathy proposed by the Board of Studies in Homoeopathy (PG) and endorsed by Faculty of Homoeopathy.

There are 12 departments in Homoeopathic Medical Colleges. At present there are PG courses only in 3 departments out of these 12 departments. As per the Teacher Trainee Scheme or PG courses, only the teachers of the concerned departments are admitted to the regular courses in Homoeopathic Medical Colleges. The teachers of the 9 departments in Homoeopathic Medical Colleges in the State, where PG courses are not available, have at present no chance of acquiring a PG Degree.

As per the CCH regulations governing qualifications for teaching staff of Homoeopathic Medical Colleges, PG Degree in Homoeopathy is not compulsory. Degree in Homoeopathy with prescribed minimum teaching experience or professional experience is recognized as sufficient qualification for the posts of Lecturer, Reader, Professor and Principal.

But the Government of Kerala have issued an order extending the benefits of AICTE Scales of pay to the teaching staff of Homoeopathic Medical Colleges. However AICTE scales of pay are admissible only to PG Degree holders. Non PG degree holders are sanctioned modified state scales of pay. As a result teachers without PG Degrees are at a disadvantage in their career aspects. They need to be provided an opportunity to acquire PG Degree.

Moreover, when teachers acquire PG degree, the standard of teaching in Medical Colleges will improve. This will benefit the students who study in these Colleges. This will also benefit the patients who are treated at these Medical Colleges.

2. Special Provisions for External Candidates

The CCH Regulations notified in 1989 and 2001 for M. D. (Homoeopathy) Course contain Special Provisions for External Candidates under Part VI of the Regulations. As per these provisions, the University may allow admission of external candidates to appear in Post Graduate Examination for a period of 8 years from the commencement of the regulations. The grace period for the application of the Special Provisions will expire in 2009.

The Special Provisions are very brief and deal with only 3 aspects, namely;

- (i) eligibility for admission
- (ii) duration of the course
- (iii) papers for examination and dissertation work

What is envisaged under the Special Provision of CCH is a part - time course of lesser duration. While the duration of the regular course is 3 years, the duration of the course for external candidates is only two years.

The Special Provisions are incomplete. They do not contain details regarding certain essential aspects of the course such as the following:

- (i) How many hours of theory classes an external candidate has to attend.

- (ii) Who will conduct these classes
- (iii) Where will theory classes be arranged
- (iv) How many hours of practical / clinical work should an external candidate attend.
- (v) Where should they attend these practical clinical sessions.

The papers to be studied by the external candidates are different from those regular students. This implies that there would be a different examination external candidates. Here again, the scheme of examination is not presented for Special Provisions; only the names of the papers are listed there.

The following details of the examination are not presented :

- (i) Maximum marks for each paper
- (ii) Whether there are practical / clinical examination in each paper.
- (iii) Whether there is a Viva-voce Examination.
- (iv) Percentage of marks to be secured for a pass.

The Board of Studies in Homoeopathy (PG) has not prepared the detailed curriculum or the examination scheme for the External candidates. They have simply endorsed the Special Provisions for starting M. D. course for external candidates with some modification in the eligibility criteria for admission.

The Special Provisions allowed candidates with Diploma in Homoeopathy and candidates with 10 years' of professional experience to join the course. These two categories have been excluded by the Board of Studies from getting admission to the course. As per the modifications made by Board of Studies only teachers of recognized Homoeopathic Medical Colleges in the State, who held full – time regular post not below the rank of Assistant Professor or having a teaching experience of not less than 7 years will be eligible for admission as an external candidate.

3. Differences between regular course and external PG Course

The major differences between the regular course and the external PG course are the following:

Duration of Course

Regular PG	3 years
External	2 years

Examination

For regular course there are two examinations, namely

Part I (at the end of 1^{1/2} years)

Part II (at the end of 3 years)

Part I comprises examination in 3 general subjects.

For Part II, there will be two written theory papers in the subject of specialty opted by the candidate, in addition to practicals.

For the External PG Course, there shall be only one examination comprising of 4 subjects at the end of 2 years of the course duration.

The External PG course is a Part - time course. The duration of a **part – time course is often longer than the regular course**. At least it should be equal to the duration of the regular course. Here the duration is less than that of the regular course. The course content is also lesser. The regular students write examination in 5 papers; while the external candidates are required to write the examination only in 4 papers.

Further, the coaching and training to be undergone by the external PG candidate seems to be inadequate for a professional course such as medicine. There would be only contact classes and no regular class attendance. There would be no IP or OP duties to get practical / clinical experience.

The external PG degree as envisaged in the Special provisions is of **no real academic value**. It can at best provide some theoretical knowledge to the candidates. That is clearly insufficient for awarding a PG degree in a subject like medicine where practical and clinical experience is as important as theoretical knowledge.

The external P G degree will not be useful in enhancing the quality of teaching, research and patient care in Homoeopathic Medical Colleges. Even for career advancement of reaches, this degree may not be of much use because in the Kerala State Homoeopathic Medical Colleges Services Rules 2001(Government of Kerala) it is stated that External PG can also be accepted for promotion provided three years class attendance is the minimum requirement for the PG degree.

In this context it may be noted that the Central Council of Homoeopathy has given permission to Universities to adopt this scheme, if they so desire. It is the University which has to take a decision whether to start the External PG Course.

Recommendations

1. It is recommended that the University of Kerala need not sanction the External PG Degree in Homoeopathy as it cannot maintain the academic the expected of a PG degree in medicine.

2. Post-graduate courses have been started only in 3 departments.

As per the present Teacher Trainee Scheme for post-graduate courses, only the teachers of these three departments are admitted to the courses. The Government of Kerala may be requested to admit teachers of non-PG departments also to the existing PG Courses under the Teacher Trainee Scheme. The CCH has stated that it has no objection in permitting teachers of Non-PG departments to join any of the available PG courses.

3. Further, the Government may be requested to enhance the number of seats for the PG courses under the Teacher Trainee Scheme so as to provide an opportunity to the existing teachers to acquire PG degree.

4. The CCH has framed PG Regulations only in 3 departments out of the 12 departments.CCH may be requested to frame regulations for PG courses in the remaining 9 departments also.

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