

**University Grants Commission
Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg
New Delhi – 110 002**

**Report of the Inspection Committee on its visit to Nirma University of Science
and Technology, Ahmedabad (a private university) on May 15, 2004**

1. INTRODUCTION

The University Grants Commission had constituted an Inspection Committee as per the following composition to visit Nirma University of Science and Technology, a private university established in Ahmedabad (Gujarat) for the purpose of ascertaining the availability of physical and academic infrastructure at the University (Ref. F.No. 1-1/2004 (DS-Admn) of May 06, 2004) :

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| 1. | Dr. B S Sonde
Former Vice-Chancellor,
Goa University, Goa | Convener |
| 2. | Dr. J V Prabhakar Rao
Department of Management
Andhra University
Waltair, Vishakhapatnam –530 003 | Member |
| 3. | Dr. Kapil Kapoor,
(Formerly Rector, JNU)
Department of English
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi – 110 067 | Member |
| 4. | Dr. Dev Swarup,
Deputy Secretary
University Grants Commission
New Delhi | Member Secretary |

The Committee visited Nirma University of Science and Technology, Ahmedabad on May 15, 2004, as per the programme suggested by UGC. All the members of the Committee were present during the day long visit, which commenced at the University campus at 1015 hrs. Prior to proceeding to the University campus, the Committee had its internal meeting at the place of stay to discuss the procedure to be followed, identify the items to be specifically looked into and consider the steps necessary for validation of the filled-in-questionnaire (in UGC

format) submitted by the University. On arrival at the campus, the Committee was received by Prof. N V Vasani, Vice-Chancellor, Shri Ambubhai M Patel, Managing Trustee (Nirma Education & Research Foundation) & Members of the Governing Board, Shri Hiren Patel, Member of the Governing Board, Shri D P Chhaya, Executive Registrar Director of Institutes and Heads of Departments. After brief introductions, the Committee was formally welcomed by Prof. Vasani. The Convenor and the Member Secretary in their opening remarks explained the purpose of the Committee visit and the procedure for inspection.

This was followed by brief presentations on Nirma Institute of Technology by Dr. H V Trivedi, Director and on Nirma Institute of Management by Dr. Anup K Singh, Director. A video on Nirma University of Science and Technology covering its vision, mission, goals, institutes, programmes, campus, activities and achievements was also presented on this occasion. In the discussion that followed, the Convenor and the members of the committee sought clarifications from the Vice-Chancellor, Registrar and the Directors of Institutes on some items which came up in their presentations and also referring to the filled-in questionnaire submitted by the University, which were provided satisfactorily. The Committee then visited major parts of the campus, various infrastructure facilities, library computer Centre, laboratories etc. and also had useful interaction with representative groups of faculty members and students on the campus. At the concluding stage of the visit, the committee called on Shri Karsanbhai K Patel, Chairman, Nirma Education & Research Foundation and also President, Board of Governors of the University to know about the future plans of the University. The Committee had its second internal meeting in the evening to discuss the day's proceedings and to take steps for preparing the Report of the Inspection Committee for Submission to UGC.

This Report is divided into five sections. Following this Introduction, major provisions in the Act of Nirma University of Science and Technology are compared with those in the UGC (Establishment and Maintenance of Standards in Private Universities) Regulations, 2003. This is followed by the Inspection Report in section 3. An Overall Analysis is then presented in section 4, followed by concluding Remarks at the end. The filled-in-questionnaire submitted by the University is appended to this Report.

2. Nirma University Act Versus UGC Regulations

The Nirma University of Science and Technology Act 2003 (Gujarat Government Gazette Notification dated April 26, 2003) is the basis for the establishment of this non-affiliating, unitary university. This has many features similar to other well-established universities and also following the UGC Regulations in the country, like :

- ↳ clearly laid down "Object";
- ↳ "powers and functions" well defined;
- ↳ authorities, officers as per established practice;
- ↳ some provision for association with the State Government, UGC and other Statutory Bodies,
- ↳ powers for framing regulations.

However, there are a few differences between the provisions of this Act and the UGC Regulations (2003) relating to private universities. They are :

- a) As per the Act (clause 4(iii), the objects of the university include :
- "to develop patterns of teaching at certificate/diploma, undergraduate, post-graduate and doctoral level."

But, as ^{per} the UGC Regulations (clause 3.6):

"The programmes of study at a private university shall lead to a degree and / or postgraduate degree/diploma conforming to relevant regulations/norms of the UGC....."

The University has made use of its Act to include Nirma Institute of Diploma Studies ^{or} one of its constituents, which is only a polytechnic admitting students at X+ level. This seems to be a major departure from UGC expectations in the Regulations- 2003 as polytechnic level programmes are generally outside University System.

- b) The University Act is silent on the jurisdiction of the University. But the UGC Regulations clearly spell out (clause 3.3) that a private university established

under a State Act shall operate ordinarily within the boundary of the State concerned. However, the University is presently working within the boundaries of the State of Gujarat.

- c) There is a requirement as per UGC Regulations (clause 3.4), that a private university shall fulfill the minimum criteria in terms of programmes, faculty, infrastructural facilities, financial liability etc as laid down by UGC, AICTE and other Statutory Bodies. But in the Nirma University Act, there does not seem to be any provision for this. However, the University Act (clause 29) has provision for furnishing Returns and Information to UGC and other Statutory Authorities, when called for.
- d) The UGC Regulations (clause 3.6) require that the programmes of study offered by a private University shall conform to the relevant Regulations of UGC or the concerned Statutory Body. There is no such provision in the University Act.
- e) The admission of students and fixation of fees, shall be as per the norms/guidelines prescribed by UGC and concerned Statutory Bodies (UGC guidelines, clause 3.9). But there is no provision for this in the University Act.

3. INSPECTION REPORT

The following Inspection Report has been prepared by the Inspection Committee after carefully perusing the filled-in-questionnaire submitted by the University and on-site validation of this through visits to various infrastructural facilities on the campus and discussions with a cross section of stake holders of the University.

1	Name of the University	:	Nirma University of Science and Technology Sarkhej-Gandhinagar Highway, Ahmedabad – 382 481.
2	Date of Visit	:	May 15, 2004.
3	Registered Office	:	Ahmedabad, Gujarat
4.a	Name & Headquarters of the Society/Promoting Agency	:	Nirma Education & Research Foundation, Ahmedabad, Gujarat

4 b	Whether the agency is involved in promoting/running any other University/Institution? If yes, details	:	No
5.	Claimed Territorial Jurisdiction	:	The University Act does not include any reference to this.
6.	Programmes permitted to be offered by gazetted notification of Govt. & its reference	:	Certificate/Diploma/Under-graduate/Post-graduate and Doctoral levels as per clause 4(iii) of the University Act, Gazette Notification of 16 th April, 2003
7.a	Whether all documents requested by the inspection team provided	:	Yes
7 b	If not, what are the deficit documents (list to be enclosed)	:	Not applicable
8.	Physical verification of administrative infrastructure.	:	Satisfactory, as per the details given under items 14,16 of the questionnaire filled-in and submitted to UGC.
8 a	Whether administrative authorities like Governing Council, Academic Council & BOS formed & minutes of their meetings produced?	:	Yes, details provided under items 12,13 of the Questionnaire filled in.
8.b	Whether VC, Registrar, FO & Administrative Officers appointed? If yes, whether they were physically present during inspection?	:	Yes, VC, Registrar, Directors of Institutes, Heads of Departments were present.
8.c	List of authorized University Officers present during the UGC Committee Inspection.	:	As listed above.
8.d	Administrative Office details like approx. total plinth area, separate offices for VC, Registrar Administrative Office, Committee Room, Reception cum students waiting room etc.	:	Plinth areas of all buildings are given in details under item 16 in the questionnaire filled in. All buildings have been planned aesthetically and well constructed. All facilities required for faculty/students/others provided on the campus.
8.e	Whether Office equipments like Computer(s) Telephone/Fax, Xerox machines available	:	Yes, in adequate numbers.
9.	Physical verification of Academic Infrastructure	:	The Committee is satisfied with the adequacy, quality and standard of the

	Infrastructure	infrastructure.
9.a	<p>Corpus of the society shown to the inspection team</p> <p>(i) Land documents, if shown, extent of land registered in the name of the University & its location</p> <p>(ii) Deposits made in the name of Society/University, separately or jointly with State authorities.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes, Details given under item 14 in Questionnaire filled in. 100 acres (65 acres already in possession, remaining under transfer of registration)</p> <p>Yes, Rs. 5 crores as RBI Bond (non-cumulative, 6 Years) in the name of the University as per the Act.</p>
9.b	<p>Buildings shown to house the University & their plinth are details</p> <p>(i) Permanent</p> <p>(ii) Temporary/Leased Property</p>	<p>11 buildings permanent (item 16) and located in the main campus.</p> <p>Nil</p>
9.c	<p>Whether Library available?</p> <p>If available, details</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Details given under item 16(iii) in the questionnaire. Very well equipped, including automation in service offered.</p>
9.d	<p>Whether Classrooms & Laboratories available?</p> <p>If available, details</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Class-room of various sizes, well equipped including ICT facilities, high quality auditorium also.</p>
9.e	<p>Whether teaching staff appointed?</p> <p>If yes, details to be enclosed</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Details given under item 18 (appendix 16)</p>
9.f	<p>Whether technical & non-teaching staff appointed? If yes, details to be enclosed.</p>	<p>Yes,</p> <p>Details given under item 19 (appendix 17)</p>
10.a	<p>Whether students already admitted?</p>	<p>Yes</p>
10.b	<p>If yes, breakup details of Courses as against the number of students admitted in each course.</p>	<p>Details given under item 17(appendix 15)</p>

10.c	Any Off-Campus or Study Centre or admission Centre established outside State?	: NO
11.	Overall remarks / observations	<p>a) The University is well planned and organized. Although functioning only since April 17, 2003 when its Act was gazetted, it is based on the strong foundation of its institutions, viz., Nirma Institute of Technology and Nirma Institute of Management, which have been in existence for 7-8 years.</p> <p>b) Its Engineering and Management Programmes have been already accredited (2 for 5 years, 5 for 3 years in 2001-02) by National Board of Accreditation. Besides, the Institute of Technology has been given an Award of Excellence by Indian Society for Technical Education in 2002-03.</p> <p>c) The University has been attracting competent students/faculty for its programmes from all over Gujarat. The Management programmes attract students from many other States as well. This is a sign of good progress.</p> <p>d) The committed management, dedicated team of faculty/non-teaching staff under the leadership of Shri Karsanbhai K Patel (Industrialist & Philanthropist) President, Board of Governors and Prof. N V Vasani, Vice-Chancellor is their big asset, which has enabled rapid growth of the University and reaching its present high status.</p>

		<p>e) Recognizing the excellent role played by the University, the Indian Science Congress Association has identified Nirma University of Science & Technology as the venue for the forthcoming session of the Indian Science Congress to be held in January, 2005.</p>
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4. OVERALL ANALYSIS

The Inspection Committee has noted that the University has developed well in a very short time. It was only in the year 1994 that Nirma Institute of Technology was established by the Nirma Education and Research Foundation, and this was approved by AICTE for several UG Degree programmes and also affiliated by Gujarat University. This Institute was joined by two other institutions, viz., Nirma Management Institute (1996) and Nirma Institute of Diploma Studies (1997), both being autonomous institutions, the former being AICTE approved and latter by the State Government. These institutes have formed the nucleus of Nirma University which has greatly helped it to take off in the right direction.

The University has been managed well in terms of physical infrastructure and has the rapidly growing students strength, which is now in the range of 5000. One more institute, viz., Nirma Institute of Pharmacy has been added to this family since 2003, when the University status was conformed. All the four institutions are well equipped, well staffed and forward looking. They make use of state of the art educational aids in students laboratories/class rooms. They are giving considerable emphasis to industrial interaction, placement of students, alumni linkages etc. with highly satisfactory results already being demonstrated. Moreover, a wide range of programme options upto Doctorate level are now available at the university. As a result, talented /merited students are always keen to join the programmes at this university.

However, the University has a few differences between the Act and the UGC Regulations 2003, which were brought to the attention of the Vice-Chancellor and other functionaries. In particular, the Committee has emphasized the need to separate out the Nirma Institute of Diploma Studies (which is basically a polytechnic) from the University system. The University authorities have agreed to give due consideration to the suggestions of the Committee.

5. CONCLUDING REMARKS

It has been a great pleasure for the Inspection Committee to visit Nirma University and familiarize with its programmes and activities. In a short time, this University has developed into a fine institution and is already attracting attention and admiration of the society. Its physical infrastructure and educational facilities are easily comparable with those of well established/reputed Universities in the country. Besides the management of the university appears to be keen to go along with the expectations of UGC in maintaining the norms and standards necessary for higher education in India. In the light of this, UGC may give necessary encouragement to the University in its forward march to become a Centre of excellence in higher education. This University richly deserves to be recognized by UGC by including it under Section 2(f) of UGC Act, 1956. The Committee wishes the University all success in this endeavour.



Prof. B S Sonde
(Convenor)



Prof. Kapil Kapoor
(Member)

New Delhi
May 19, 2004



Prof. J V Prabhakar Rao
(Member)



Dr. Dev Swarup
(Member Secretary)