



## SYMBIOSIS INTERNATIONAL (DEEMED UNIVERSITY)

(Established under section 3 of the UGC Act 1956)

**Re-accredited by NAAC with 'A++' Grade I Awarded Category - I by UGC**

**Founder: Prof. Dr. S. B. Mujumdar, M.Sc., Ph.D. (Awarded Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri by President of India)**

Minutes of the 47th Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) meeting of Symbiosis International (Deemed University), SIU held on Friday, 20 September 2024 at 10:30 a.m. at Convention Centre, Hilltop, Lavale

The following members were present at the 47<sup>th</sup> Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) meeting.

Category	Sr. No	Name of the member
Chairperson: Head of the Institution	1	Dr. Ramakrishnan Raman, Vice-Chancellor
Teachers to represent all level	2	Dr. Poornima Tapas, Professor, Symbiosis Institute of Business Management (SIBM), Pune
	3	Dr. Anirban Sur, Professor, Symbiosis Institute of Technology (SIT), Pune
	4	Dr. Sheetal Barde, Associate Professor, Symbiosis College of Nursing (SCON)
	5	Dr. Manjari Jonnalagadda, Assistant Professor, Symbiosis School for Liberal Arts (SSLA)
	6	Ms. Lasya Vyakaranam, Assistant Professor, Symbiosis Law School (SLS) Pune
One member of the Management	7	Prof. Vinayak Shirgurkar, Management Consultant
Few Senior Administrative Officers	8	Dr. Asmita Dani, Director - Academics, SIU
	9	Dr. Anita Patankar, Director, Symbiosis Centre for International Education (SCIE)
	10	Dr. Avinash Kakade, Deputy Registrar, SIU
	11	Dr. Sophia Gaikwad, Head - Symbiosis Teaching Learning Resource Centre (STLRC)
	12	Mr. Harshad Gune, Head - Software Development, SIU
	13	Dr. Dharmendra Pandey, Head - Quality Assurance, SIU
	14	CA Supriya Deshpande, Deputy Finance Officer, SIU
Nominees from Student	15	Ms. Pankhuri Varshney, SIT, Pune
One nominee each from Employers/ Stakeholders	16	Mr. Jivesh Govil, an Employer representation
	17	Mr. Nilesh Nikam, Ex. Standing Committee Chairman, PMC, a Stakeholder representative
One of the senior teachers as the coordinator/ Director of the IQAC	18	Dr. Hardik Vachharajani, Director, Quality Management and Benchmarking (QMB), SIU



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The following members were special invitees.

Category	Sr. No	Name of the member
Internal Invitees	1	Dr. M. S. Shejul, Registrar, SIU
	2	Dr. Sangeeta Paliwal, Librarian, SIU
	3	Dr. Vandana Ahuja, Director, Director, SIBM, Noida
	4	Dr. Venugopala Rao K, Director SCMS, Hyderabad

The following members could not attend the meeting due to their pre-occupation and were granted a leave of absence.

Category	Sr. No	Name of the member
Nominees from Local Society, Students, and Alumni	1	Mr. Pradeep Bhargava, Chairman, MECF Limited, Pune, a Local Society representative
	2	Ms. Nivedita Dodeja, Symbiosis School of Banking and Finance (SSBF), a student representative
	3	Ms. Kanisha Raina - Vice President, HR, Fiserv India Pvt Ltd, an Alumni representative
One nominee from Industry	4	Mr. Jaisurya Das, Co-Founder & Editorial Director, of Pune365.com





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**(Image-1: 47<sup>th</sup> IQAC meeting of SIU)**

With the permission of the Honourable Vice Chancellor, Chairperson Dr. Ramakrishnan Raman, Dr. Hardik Vachharajani, Director of IQAC, welcomed everyone to the 47th IQAC meeting and extended a warm welcome to all the internal invitees.

The new student member, Ms. Pankhuri Varshney, pursuing B.Tech. in Computer Science and Engineering from Symbiosis Institute of Technology (SIT), Pune, was also warmly introduced and welcomed to the meeting.



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### **ITEM NO.1**

**To confirm the 46<sup>th</sup> IQAC meeting minutes (MOM) held on Monday, 17<sup>th</sup> June 2024.**

The Director IQAC mentioned that the minutes of the 46th IQAC meeting held on Monday, 17 June 2024, were placed before the IQAC members.

Members were requested to provide feedback on the meeting minutes. As no further revisions were suggested, the resolution was passed.

#### ***Resolution Item No.1: IQAC: 20.09.2024***

***Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 17 June 2024, be and are hereby confirmed.***

### **ITEM NO.2**

**To review the Action Taken Report (ATR) of the 46th IQAC meeting held on Monday, 17<sup>th</sup> June 2024.**

During the 47<sup>th</sup> IQAC meeting, the Director IQAC mentioned that the resolutions passed had been communicated to the respective stakeholders for taking actions as per resolutions.

Dr. Sophia Gaikwad, Head STLRC gave a brief about the Four-day residential waste management training program that will take place from September 24th to 27th, 2024, organized by STLRC and SCWRM in partnership with the U.S. Consulate Mumbai, ExploreiT, and Climate Projects Foundation at the Sandipani Leadership Development Center. The program is fully funded by the U.S. Consulate, with their representatives attending the inaugural event and dinner.

Mr. Nilesh Nikam, a Stakeholder representative, expressed interest in the waste management training. Honourable Vice Chancellor approved his participation and encouraged him to nominate others or assist with the event.

#### ***Resolution Item No.2: IQAC: 20.09.2024***

***Resolved that the actions taken on the resolutions as passed at the meeting on Monday, 17 June 2024, be and are hereby noted.***

***Resolved further that Dr. Sophia Gaikwad, Head STLRC will share the waste management details and invitation with Mr Nilesh Nikam, a Stakeholder representative.***





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### ITEM NO.3

To inform the members about the compliance of SIU as per the statutory bodies including the University Grants Commission (UGC).

Dr. M. S. Shejul, Registrar, SIU presented an update on the University's compliance with the norms of regulatory authorities. The key points from the presentation were as follows:

#### 1. Regular Statutory Meetings

- Conducting periodic meetings is essential for effective governance and decision-making. These meetings ensure the University's compliance with regulatory norms and improve decision-making efficiency.

#### 2. Compliance Requirements

- **Approval from Regulatory Authorities:** The University seeks approval from the respective regulatory bodies for new programs and other institutional activities.
- **Adherence to UGC and Other Regulatory Authorities:** Compliance with both academic and administrative standards set by bodies like UGC enhances the institution's credibility.
- **Regular Audits:** Internal audits are regularly conducted to promote accountability and ensure continuous improvement.
- **Improvement Initiatives:** The University implements initiatives to maintain its quality standards and compliance with statutory guidelines.

#### 3. Memorandum of Association (MoA) 2023

- The preparation of the MoA 2023 aligns with the UGC regulations. This MoA was accepted by the Board of Management on September 5, 2024, and subsequently submitted to the UGC for final approval.

#### 4. University Authorities and Statutory Meetings

- Various statutory bodies of the University include:
  - **Board of Management, Academic Council, Planning and Monitoring Board, Finance Committee, Selection Committees,** and others.
  - The University adheres to the prescribed number of statutory meetings. The meetings are conducted in a timely manner with proper documentation and resolutions.

#### 5. Statutory Meetings Summary for A.Y. 2023-24

- **Board of Management:** 6 meetings held, 149 actionable items, all completed.
- **Academic Council:** 4 meetings held, 100 actionable items, all completed.
- **Planning and Monitoring Board:** 2 meetings held, 10 actionable items, all completed.



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### 6. Reserved Categories Admission Summary for A.Y. 2023-24

- Total number of seats earmarked for reserved categories: 593 for SC, 153 for ST, and 45 for Divyangjan.
- Corresponding admissions for reserved categories were completed as per norms.

### 7. Refund of Fees for A.Y. 2023-24 and A.Y. 2024-25

- Total refund processed in A.Y. 2023-24: ₹79.30 crore.
- Refund for A.Y. 2024-25 (up to September 18, 2024): ₹90.19 crore.

### 8. Other Compliances

- The University adheres to regulations like mandatory disclosures, participation in the AISHE Survey 2023, and statutory body approvals for various programs.
- Compliance with UGC, AICTE, BCI, and other bodies remains a priority.

### 9. Mandatory Disclosures:

- The university is committed to transparency and maintains a section for mandatory disclosures on its website.
- Relevant information is regularly updated to comply with statutory requirements.

### 10. Website Accessibility:

- Emphasis on the importance of ensuring that all necessary documentation and disclosures are easily accessible on the university's website to facilitate accountability.

The Vice-Chancellor announced the opening of Symbiosis International (Deemed University)'s new offshore campus in Dubai, with admissions finalized, staff hired, and classes starting soon.

#### *Resolution Item No.3: IQAC: 20.09.2024*

*Resolved that members noted the compliance followed by SIU as per the statutory bodies including UGC.*

#### **ITEM NO.4**

**To discuss the proposed IQAC Plan of Action (POA) for the A.Y 2024-25.**

Dr. Dharmendra Pandey, Head of QA provided an overview of the POA process, explaining the annual mechanism used to align the university's objectives with its vision, mission, and strategic goals. He highlighted the following key points:

#### **1. Annual Submission of POA:**

- Each year, the Quality Management and Benchmarking (QMB) team floats the POA template to all departments and institutes.





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- The POA serves as a key performance indicator (for monitoring institutional progress)

### 2. SMART Goals:

- This year's POA template was refined based on previous feedback, incorporating the use of SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound).
- The focus was on aligning goals with NAAC's seven criteria, NEP-related initiatives, and sustainability (SDG) targets.

### 3. POA Submission and Monitoring:

- Institutes were given a deadline of July 31st to submit their POA. As of the meeting date, 31 institutions had submitted their plans.
- QICs (Quality Improvement Committees) will monitor progress through quarterly meetings, ensuring that the institutions adhere to their planned actions.

### 4. Action Taken Report (ATR):

- At the end of the academic year, an ATR will be collected, documenting achievements based on the POA.
- Continuous monitoring will take place through QIC meetings to ensure that goals are met throughout the year.

### 5. Next Steps:

- Institutions that have not yet submitted their POA will be reminded to do so.
- The QMB team will ensure ongoing support and resources to assist in the successful implementation of the POA.

Mr. Vinayak Shirgurkar, a Management representative raised concerns about the limited focus on research, patents, AI integration, NEP alignment, and fund-raising in some institutions' POAs, highlighting inadequate research goals.

Dr. Hardik Vachharajani, Director IQAC, and Dr. Dharmendra Pandey, Head QA explained that research is already being tracked at the faculty level, and some POAs were excluded for not meeting SMART Goals criteria. They assured that QICs will continue to monitor these areas and ensure institutions adopt a more balanced approach aligned with the university's broader goals in research and innovation.

Additionally, Dr. M. S. Shejul, Registrar of SIU updated the committee on the signed MOUs, those in development for SIU, and the research funds that have been secured.

Dr Dharmendra Pandey, Head of QA emphasized that the POA is integral to driving institutional excellence and will be closely monitored to align with the university's strategic direction.

**Resolution Item No.4: IQAC: 20.09.2024**



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*Resolved that member noted the implementation and monitoring of the Plan of Action (POA) for the academic year, aligning institutional goals with SMART objectives, and ensuring progress through quarterly reviews.*

*Actioner – The QMB department and the respective institutes*

### **ITEM NO. 5**

**To update about the standardization of Stakeholder feedback.**

Dr Dharmendra Pandey, Head of QA discussed the key points about the standardization of Stakeholder feedback.

#### **1. Rationale for Standardization:**

- Highlighted the inconsistencies in current feedback processes across institutions, leading to fragmented data and insights.
- Emphasized the need for a unified feedback system to enhance decision-making and strategic alignment across the university.

#### **2. Feedback Frequency and Structure:**

- Proposed a structured feedback collection schedule: semester-wise for students and faculty, and annually for industry and alumni.
- Discussed the components of the feedback mechanism.

#### **3. Benchmarking Efforts:**

- Conducted internal benchmarking against best practices, and external benchmarking with top-ranked international universities.
- Developed standardized feedback templates based on best practices to ensure comprehensive data collection.

#### **4. Implementation Progress:**

- Standardized templates have been drafted and shared with stakeholders.
- A centralized platform for data collection and analysis is under development, aimed at providing insights at institutional, faculty, and university levels.

#### **5. Challenges Identified:**

- Resistance from certain institutions regarding the adoption of a standardized approach.
- Need to maintain the autonomy of individual institutions while ensuring core components of feedback remain consistent.





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### 6. Next Steps:

- Continuously improve the feedback process, targeting a fully operational system by 2025-2026.
- Develop automated systems to streamline feedback collection and analysis, minimizing manual efforts.

### 7. Concluding Remarks:

- The significance of adopting global best practices in feedback mechanisms was reiterated, along with the commitment to enhance stakeholder engagement and satisfaction.

Mr. Harshad Gune, Head of Software Development highlighted the key aspects of Moodle in the discussion and outlined actionable suggestions for its improvement.

### Moodle Development and Implementation Summary

#### Key Points Discussed:

##### 1. Current Moodle Operations:

- Moodle is deployed across 41 institutions, facilitating course management and student engagement.
- A unique shared instance, referred to as "Multidisciplinary Courses," allows students to enroll in courses from other institutions without switching platforms.

##### 2. Automation Initiatives:

- Registration and enrolment processes have been automated to streamline operations, reducing manual effort and improving efficiency.
- The goal is to simplify the process so faculty can enroll students in multidisciplinary courses with a single click after registration.

##### 3. Training and Development Integration:

- Moodle is also being utilized for the HR department's training and development-related activities, including training programs and promotion exams, creating a centralized repository for materials and feedback.

##### 4. Challenges Identified:

- Multiple accounts for faculty across different Moodle instances have created confusion.
- A need for a unified authentication system to simplify access across various Moodle applications.



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### Suggestions for Implementation:

#### 1. Unified Authentication System:

- Develop a single sign-on (SSO) system to allow faculty and students to access multiple Moodle instances with one account, improving user experience and reducing confusion.

#### 2. Enhanced Automation:

- Continue to automate enrollment and registration processes, aiming for a seamless experience where enrollments can be managed in a single action.

#### 3. Feedback Mechanism:

- Implement a standardized feedback system within Moodle to gather user experiences and suggestions for ongoing improvements.

#### 4. Training and Support:

- Provide training sessions for faculty and staff on the new features and systems to ensure smooth adoption and utilization of Moodle.

#### 5. Regular Updates and Maintenance:

- Schedule regular updates and maintenance checks on Moodle to ensure its functionality and to incorporate user feedback effectively.

### Attendance System Concerns:

Ms. Pankhuri Varshney, a student member raised concerns regarding the clarity of the attendance system in Moodle. Students find it challenging to comprehend their overall attendance and subject-specific percentages due to the current format.

**Recommendation** Honourable Vice-Chancellor suggested that Mr. Harshad create a brief video tutorial to assist students in navigating the attendance system. Additionally, it was proposed to consolidate all attendance information into a single, accessible location.

### Notifications and Announcements:

Dr. Manjari Jonnalagadda, Assistant Professor SSLA, and Ms. Pankhuri Varshney, a student representative expressed concerns about the timing of notifications and announcements in Moodle, noting that they often arrive close to assignment deadlines.

**Recommendation:** Honourable Vice-Chancellor recommended adjusting default settings to ensure that notifications are always enabled for faculty and informed Mr. Harshad Gune, Head of the Software Department to investigate the notification workflow and conduct tests with faculty members to identify and address any technical delays, thereby improving communication.

**Resolution Item No.5: IQAC: 20.09.2024**





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*Resolved that member noted and appreciated the efforts by QMB and the Software Development team in streamlining the stakeholder's feedback process.*

*Resolved that Mr. Harshad Gune, Head of Software Development will fix the attendance, notification, and announcement concerns raised for Moodle.*

*Actioner- The QMB and the Software Development Team.*

### **ITEM NO. 6**

**Presentation on innovative practices and quality initiatives adopted at SIU by different institutes and departments.**

1. Symbiosis Institute of Business Management (SIBM), Noida
2. Symbiosis Centre of Management Studies (SCMS), Hyderabad
3. Symbiosis Central Library

As per the prevailing practice, one department and two institutes were invited to present the innovative practices and quality initiatives adopted by them under the guidance of QMB.

**Institutes:**

#### **Symbiosis Institute of Business Management (SIBM), Noida**

The first presentation was delivered by Dr. Vandana Ahuja, Director of SIBM, Noida, who provided an overview of the institute and highlighted its key outcomes for the members.

#### **1. Brand Building and Visibility:**

- **Social Media Presence:** Initiated a strong presence on platforms such as Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube. Initially managed by the academic coordinator and director, this responsibility has transitioned to student councils, highlighting student engagement in marketing efforts.
- **Website Development:** Launched an official website that serves as a primary marketing tool. It includes relevant content on academic programs, workshops, guest lectures, and research initiatives, aimed at addressing scepticism from potential students and parents regarding the institution's newness.
- **Digital Marketing Collaboration:** Partnered with SRV Media for search engine optimization and content creation, enhancing the institution's online visibility and facilitating higher registration numbers for MBA admissions.

#### **2. Academic Credibility:**

- **Zero Deviations Report:** The academic audit conducted by SIU in the first year reported no deviations, affirming the institution's commitment to maintaining high academic standards.



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- **Qualified Faculty:** A well-qualified core faculty, supplemented by visiting faculty, has been instrumental in delivering quality education. Diverse pedagogical approaches have been employed to ensure effective teaching and positive student feedback.
- **Senior Academic Engagement:** Increased involvement of senior academicians from the NCR region in institutional committees has strengthened academic governance and curriculum relevance.

### 3. Corporate Connections:

- **Industry Advisors:** Formed a network of 15 corporate advisors who provide ongoing feedback on the curriculum and participate in Program Review Committees, ensuring the institution remains aligned with industry needs.
- **Panel Discussions and Industry Visits:** Regular industry-related panel discussions and webinars have been organized to expose students to current business challenges. Additionally, students participate in industry visits to gain practical insights.
- **MoUs with Industry Leaders:** Signed Memorandums of Understanding with prominent organizations such as Bennett Coleman & Co. (Times of India Group) and Grant Thornton, enhancing industry support and internship opportunities for students.

### 4. Quality Practices and Experiential Learning:

- **Induction Program (Excelsior):** A comprehensive induction program for new students includes corporate panel discussions, workshops on contemporary topics, guest lectures, and industry visits. This program is designed to familiarize students with institutional processes and expectations.
- **Pre-Placement Activities:** Conducted workshops on resume writing, mock interviews, group discussions, and company-specific information sessions to prepare students for the job market.
- **Experiential Learning Integration:** Emphasized hands-on learning through projects across all specializations, fostering critical thinking and problem-solving skills necessary for real-world business scenarios.

### 5. Innovative Pedagogical Practices:

- **Case-Based Learning:** Implemented case-based learning methodologies using real-world business cases from renowned publishers like Ivey and Harvard. This approach encourages critical analysis and strategic decision-making.
- **Economic Times Reading Sessions:** Regular sessions focused on articles from The Economic Times enhance students' understanding of the global business landscape. These sessions promote discussions on economic policies and industry trends, facilitating a deeper engagement with current events.





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## Symbiosis Centre of Management Studies (SCMS), Hyderabad

Dr. Venugopala Rao K, Director SCMS, Hyderabad, provided an overview of the institute and highlighted its key outcomes for the members.

### 1. Introduction of Continuous Assessment Components:

- Traditional assessment methods, including class tests, presentations, case study analyses, MCQs, quizzes, and mini-projects, were discussed as part of the evaluation strategy.
- Recognizing the need for innovation, a **Video Assignment** was introduced as a non-traditional component of continuous assessment.

### 2. Rationale for Video Assignments:

- The use of video in education has been shown to enhance learning processes and develop digital communication skills (Pappus et al., 2017).
- Video assignments contribute to more efficient test preparation (McCombs & Liu, 2007). They also foster increased self-reflection among students (Leijen et al., 2009).

### 3. Benefits of Video Assignments:

- **Engagement:** Video assignments are more engaging for students, encouraging active participation.
- **Creativity:** This format enhances student creativity, allowing them to explore topics in innovative ways.
- **Presentation Skills:** Students improve their presentation skills through the process of creating and presenting their videos.

### 4. Student Feedback: Overall feedback from students indicated that:

- The topics assigned for video assignments were relevant and engaging.
- Technical difficulties were noted (e.g., issues with recording, editing, and uploading), suggesting a need for additional support or training.
- Students reported a better understanding of the subject matter as a result of engaging with the video assignment.
- Many learned new technical skills during the assignment process.
- Students felt more comfortable and confident presenting their ideas in video format, which contributed positively to their learning experience.
- A majority expressed a preference for more video assignments in future courses, indicating that they enjoyed this method compared to traditional assignments.



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### 5. Visual Examples:

- A glimpse of various student-created videos was presented, showcasing the creativity and effort put into these assignments.

### Department:

#### Symbiosis Central Library

Dr. Sangeeta Paliwal, SIU Librarian provided an extensive overview of the quality initiatives and best practices being implemented at the SIU Central Library. Her insights highlighted the library's commitment to enhancing resources, improving services, and leveraging technology for a better user experience.

#### 1. Quality Initiatives:

- **Resources Procurement:** Subscription of databases and library resources, including:
  - Databases: 181
  - Print Books: 419,810
  - E-Books: 305,766

Conducted at least two library committee meetings per institute annually, with special sessions for librarians on agenda drafting and meeting minutes.

#### 2. Library Resources Overview:

- 286 Wi-Fi enabled nodes with 24/7 remote access to databases.
- 90 e-resources training sessions conducted.
- 700 national and international journals available.
- 10,274 newly added print books in the 2023-24 academic year.

#### 3. Administrative Initiatives:

- Annual library report review conducted from July 18 to July 23, 2024.
- Stock verification reports compiled and presented to the University Library Committee.
- Data validation for various rating and ranking agencies (e.g., UGC, AICTE).

#### 4. Technological Development:

- Implementation of an E-resource Management System with features like Single Sign-On (SSO) and a customized interface.
- Real-time analytics for monitoring resource usage and detailed user profiling for improved service.

#### 5. Library Services:

- Document Delivery Services (DDS) reported 373 requests.





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- Conducted multiple library orientations and information literacy programs.
- Feedback collection on library services showed a 36% response rate.

### 6. Best Practices:

- Integration of ICT tools, including a centralized feedback system and library automation via KOHA.
- Library Management Information System (LMIS) and regular training programs for library staff.

### 7. Upcoming Plans:

- Development of a library portal with integrated feedback forms.
- Implementation of RFID technology in SIMS and SLS Hyderabad.

**Resolution Item No.6: IQAC: 20.09.2024**

***Resolved that member noted and appreciated the innovative practices and quality initiatives adopted at SIBM, Noida, SCMS, Hyderabad, and Symbiosis Central Library.***

### ITEM NO. 7

**To seek suggestions/ feedback from all stakeholders.**

- Honourable Vice-Chancellor suggested increasing the number of student representatives by including more than one student from both undergraduate and postgraduate levels, with at least one representative from each off-campus centre participating online. He proposed having a set of special invitees from various campuses to ensure inclusivity and continuity, which could become a best practice for future meetings.

**Resolution Item No.7: IQAC: 20.09.2024**

***Resolved that Dr. Hardik Vachharajani, Director IQAC will coordinate for additional student representatives from both UG and PG levels, with at least one representative from an off-campus centre joining online.***

***Actioner: The QMB department***

***Any other points with the permission of the Chair.***

- Dr. Hardik Vachharajani, Director IQAC, informed the members about the change in the nomenclature of Symbiosis School of Culinary Arts (SSCA) to Symbiosis School of Culinary Arts and Nutritional Sciences (SSCANS), Pune.

The Honourable Vice- highlighted the need to notify Scopus about the renaming from the librarian's perspective. He informed Dr. Sangeeta, Librarian at SIU, that all previous



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publications under SSCA must be linked to the new name to ensure the old entity is mapped to SSCANS, avoiding the creation of a new entity.

- The Honourable Vice-Chancellor and Mr. Nilesh Nikam, a stakeholder representative congratulated SIU and the eleven faculty members recognized among the Top 2% Scientists of the World in the 2024 list released by Stanford University, acknowledging their dedication and contributions, marking SIU's highest representation across various disciplines.

With no further points for discussion, the meeting concluded with a vote of thanks from the Chairperson to all attendees

**Dr. Hardik Vachharajani**  
Director of the IQAC

IQAC- 47/ 20/09/2024  
Date: 27 /09/2024

**Dr. Ramakrishnan Raman**  
Chairperson of the IQAC