

LOYOLA COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES THIRUVANANTHAPURAM



CRITERIA 7- Institutional Values and Best Practices

7.2 Loyola Best Practices

2. Loyola Research Collective (LRC)

Engaged Competence Enhancement (ECE) Paradigm

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Institutional Distinctiveness

Quality enhancement for Loyola has always been a constant recasting and reinventing process. In this journey towards excellence, we are guided by the pedagogical framework, evolved from time to time. At the beginning of this century, we were anchored in a frame of reference called Knowledge Building Process (KBP) and a decade later in Engaged Knowledge Building (EKB). Currently, we are fastened to the 'Engaged Competence Enhancement' (ECE) paradigm, which integrates our pedagogical and programmatic engagements. This paradigmatic leap has helped us traverse the binaries of pedagogy and practice by integrating them into a holistic paradigm. The philosophical base of this shift is that engagement envelops competence enhancement, combining knowledge, skills, values and attitudes in a continuum. This helps us engrave Loyola's pronounced goal statements into all our cardinal engagements, shaping our being and becoming.

ECE, embracing the vision and mission of our College and the core values of NAAC, endeavours to groom globally competent, ecologically responsive, ethically rooted, lifelong learners and responsible citizens. It aims to achieve competence enhancement of students by placing engagements at the core of all our teaching-learning processes. This paradigm encompasses the confluence of competencies anchored in five preferential domains—1) Programme Management, 2) Employability, 3) Research, 4) Community Engagement, and 5) Sustainability (PERCS)—by identifying Knowledge, Skills, Values and Attitudes (KSVA) inherent to each. We map our existing activities under these domains. The heads of departments take the lead in executing it.

Engagements under these five domains encompass curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular. Curricular engagements happen through participation in practices like lectures, seminars, assignments, group discussions, exposure visits, internships, fieldwork, action research projects, and dissertations. Under co-curricular engagements, students are given opportunities to attend several value-added programmes like certificate courses, invited lectures, seminars, conferences, and workshops. Under extra-curricular engagements, students take the lead in sports, arts, college day, and celebrations like Onam, Christmas, and Eid. Under community engagement, the College and its extension centre (LES) undertake many activities where students and faculty members become active stakeholders. Each department has identified its settings for engagements. Given below are the glimpses of the engagements under ECE.

Programme Management: 'Learning by doing philosophy' is the uniqueness of the teaching-learning process at Loyola. POs of the College reiterates our commitment to impart 21st-century competencies. Therefore, we adopted programme management as one of the preferential domains, strengthening the existing PIME approach to PIMER. Accordingly, our engagements emphasise designing and executing programmes effectively. As an effort to strengthen the competence in this area, we have broadened our collaborative networks, especially with the Project Management Institute Kerala Chapter and started a student forum of the PMI in the College. We consider this important because the world is changing rapidly, and quality improvement has become decisive.

Employability: Loyola gives a special focus on enhancing students' competencies, and the current Cos, PSOs, and Pos manifest it. The co-curricular and extra-curricular activities related to—career guidance, career counselling, orientation for job interviews, group discussions, CV preparation, innovation, entrepreneurship, intrapreneurship, student clubs—complement this process. Certificate courses, placement promotion, participation in fests, job fairs, membership in professional associations, professional ethics courses, job help desk, and alumni mentoring are the other activities to augment the employability dimension.

Research: We believe that enhancing the research competencies would significantly address our students' academic and career needs and adopted it as another preferential domain. Loyola's Research Collective (LRC), a primary engagement platform, addresses these needs. The collective comprises teachers, research scholars, and students of all the departments. The LRC is an evolution from our prior practice of *Research Clinic* and is responsible for the upkeep of scientific temper and research culture. The highlight of the practice is that it ensures the value of learning and growing together. We conduct workshops and other complementary input sessions on this platform.

Like NSS, our co-curricular engagements augment this by conducting surveys and reinforcing the integration between LRC and other domains as manifested in the increased number of research on gender, human values and ethics, environment and sustainability.

Community Engagement: Loyola has a legacy in community interventions right from its inception.

The adoption of this domain in ECE is a reiteration of this commitment. The latest addition of the MSW Disaster Management programme manifests how Loyola owns up the value of being socially responsive. The repeated disasters that affected Kerala during recent years was the

immediate context why Loyola took the lead to design a programme like this. All our programmes have incorporated this orientation through designing curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular engagements.

A brief sketch of the major programmes during the assessment period is below.

1. **'Rural Live-in NSS Camp': This is an annual community engagement programme of the College where all our PG students participate, which helps them realise ground realities.**
2. ***Snehanidhi***: A learning support programme for the tribal children during pandemic times combined with an online tutoring system.
3. ***Munneram***: an online psycho-social support initiative for the youth affected by Covid 19, followed by a week-long residential programme ***Karuthalode Kaathorkkaam, in a coastal community***.
4. **Counselling services to the palliative patients** funded by Pallium India
5. ***Samagram***: in collaboration with MHAT offering mental health support to the vulnerable families of the Poonthura coastal community.
6. **River mapping**: in collaboration with the district administration of Pathanamthitta in the wake of a series of floods and landslides in the region.
7. **Social entrepreneurship project**: collaborating with Bluepoint org to provide entrepreneurship support to various social enterprises.
8. **Disaster Relief activities:**
 - **psycho-social first-aid interventions and trauma counselling** in the areas affected by the Okhi cyclone and Kerala Floods.
 - **Fund mobilisation for Kerala Rescue movement** during Kerala Floods
 - **Voluntary Service**: in first-line treatment centres and worked with the Disha helpline during the pandemic.

Sustainability Consciousness: Loyola makes every effort to promote sustainability consciousness in our students. Four of our programmes' curricula contains courses on environment and sustainability. ECE facilitates creative transactions of these courses. There are environmental awareness programmes, plastic-free campaigns, one-plant one student initiative, weekly environment management and biodiversity programme, environment audits, and the commemoration of days. In addition to the rich flora, Loyola also has a Bee habitat, which students and teachers maintain.

Systems that sustain ECE: Outcome-based education (OBE) is used by the College to monitor and evaluate students' competence attainment at both the curricular and non-curricular levels. A digital framework for capturing and linking COs, PSOs and POs is developed in-house for the personalised assessment of outcomes is another feature of ECE.

Given below is the sample Planning and Assessment Framework for the preferential domains.

PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORKS

After identifying activities under each core domain, the team created planning and assessment frameworks for each of the core domains. This include the following steps:

1. Identification of Knowledge, Skills Values and Attitudes (KSVA) required for each domain.
2. Mapping it with POs and the activities designed under each domain.
3. Designing Tools for measuring the KSVAs.
4. Developing software to assist in the assessment process.
5. Test running and Trouble Shooting.
6. Creating awareness among students and faculty.
7. Implementing the Loyola Model of Outcome Assessment

Future: To make the ECE implementation more comprehensive and effective, we are in the process of developing a more rigorous, upgraded and efficient system of assessment and feedback. Nevertheless, ECE has helped deliver for us the promise of meaningful and accountable education to our students.