

AAA Peer Team Visit Report

FOR

3rd CYCLE OF ACCREDITATION



SNDT WOMENS UNIVERSITY, Mumbai

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**Submitted To
Vice Chancellor Office,
SNDT Women's University**

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INTRODUCTION

SNDT Women's University was established in 1916 by the esteemed social reformer Maharshi Dr. Dhondo Keshav Karve, marking it as a pioneering institution dedicated to the empowerment of women through education. The history of this university is intrinsically linked with the broader social reform movements aimed at promoting women's education in India. With a commitment to imparting high-quality higher education, the institution fosters a dynamic learning environment that encourages academic excellence, research, and social responsibility among its learners.

From its humble beginnings with just five women graduates in 1921, SNDT Women's University has evolved into a multidisciplinary institution. It has become a preferred choice for women students, offering a diverse range of traditional and modern subjects. The faculty at SNDTWU provides a conducive learning environment, offering a broad spectrum of experiences to students from diverse backgrounds, aligning with the university's motto, 'Sanskrita Stree Parashkti,' which means 'An Enlightened Woman is a Source of Infinite Strength.'

SNDTWU is unique in its national jurisdiction, spanning seven states and serving a student population of 69,815 across the country. The university comprises four faculties: Humanities, Commerce & Management, Science and Technology, and Interdisciplinary Studies. It offers 73 academic programmes and provides Ph.D. opportunities in 32 subjects through its various departments and institutes located at Churchgate, Juhu, and Pune campuses. Additionally, two upcoming campuses at Chandrapur and Palghar are dedicated to skill development and extending educational opportunities to rural and tribal women.

The university actively encourages faculty and students to engage in research projects, fostering a culture of inquiry and intellectual growth. The Women-Innovation Start-up Entrepreneurship (WISE) incubation centre nurtures innovative ideas and expands the horizons of research and innovation. SNDTWU is committed to the holistic development of its students through various extracurricular and co-curricular activities, including cultural events, sports, and community service initiatives.

Demonstrating its adaptability and responsiveness to educational reforms, SNDT Women's University implemented the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 for all postgraduate programmes in 2023-24 and for undergraduate programmes in 2024-25. Initiatives like the establishment of the Centre for Holistic Education, Training and Novel Advancements (CHETNA), which offers short-term value-added courses, and the Bharatiya Gyan, Sanskrit Evan Yog Kendra (BHGASY), which provides courses related to Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS), have been instrumental in successfully implementing NEP 2020.

In addressing the diverse needs of its learners, SNDT Women's University has developed robust support systems, including counselling and career guidance, ensuring an inclusive and supportive educational experience. The university's commitment to

equity, social responsibility, inclusivity, and sustainability is deeply reflected in its policies and practices.

Vision

A unique institution for women empowerment through higher education.

Mission

Empowering women through quality education, fostering intellectual growth, nurturing social responsibility, and promoting gender equality and justice.

CRITERIA-WISE SUMMARY**Criteria – I: Curricular Aspects**

SNDT Women's University focuses on woman empowerment through educational advancement by integrating knowledge with attitudinal growth and development of strong moral values. SNDTWU has developed different curricula during the past five years which match development requirements at local and national and regional and global levels. SNDT Women's University operates four faculties through 45 departments/institutes where students can study 73 programs.

SNDTWU implements thorough curriculum modifications because of changing educational requirements. The university uses a multidisciplinary framework to continue operating the Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) in selected programs and develops new programs based on requirements. The Learning Outcomes Curriculum Framework (LOCF) now serves all UG and PG programmes to present Programme Outcomes (POs) along with Programme Specific Outcomes (PSOs) and Course Outcomes (COs) through syllabi descriptions.

All educational content in different study programs pursues development of essential abilities while focusing on career readiness and self-entrepreneurship education. The program has introduced 56 value-added courses in education since its last five-year period. Different programs in the college incorporate four main themes including professional ethics, gender, human values and environmental sustainability in their curriculum.

All PG and select UG programs require internship together with research activities that foster important competencies and work-readiness skills. The integration with government and non-government organizations helps students develop knowledge of workplace dynamics and becomes more adaptable to different work environments.

Criteria – II: Teaching-learning and Evaluation

SNDTWU follows all government schemes to meet the reserve policy based on Maharashtra government guidelines that support student growth for holistic learning. The university conducts transparent admissions for its different programs online.

Prospective learners at SNDTWU benefit from multiple ways of active learning that include field visits and seminars as well as quizzes and debates while group discussions form part of the educational approach. The teaching staff at the university receives training on multiple Information and Communication Technology-based tools that aid both teaching methods and learning processes and assessment procedures. Moodle together with Canvas as well as Edmodo and Google Classroom serve actively as platforms in supporting these learning approaches. Through the mentor-mentee structure educational institutions effectively handle academic alongside emotional challenges that students encounter.

Recruitment practices at the university follow their authorized positions as sixty-three percent of full-time faculty members have been hired. The university fills its empty teaching positions through annual appointments of part-time and contractual instructors to maintain continuous academic operations. More than 81.61 percent of teaching staff possess doctorate qualifications.

The university uses total automation throughout student operational stages from enrollment until graduation results to establish increased transparency together with better operational efficiency. The E-savidha portal tracks all students after admission to monitor their both test-taking activities and pre-test processes. All examination procedures at the university now include technological integration through an on-screen evaluation project that will be expanded across the entire university campus. Since the previous five years the university has maintained a pass percentage averaging at 94.6%.

Criteria – III: Research, Innovations and Extension

SNDT Women's University actively maintains dedicated efforts to build an extensive research environment which advances the standard of academic instruction at the institution. The university granted 233 Ph.D. degrees throughout the assessment period because it firmly supports advanced research and academic achievement. Over the last five years professional bodies such as RUSA ICSSR UGC DST SUUTI and private organizations have provided Rs.60 lakh of financial support to establish a supportive research environment at the university. Development of state-of-the-art facilities at the Department of Food Science and Nutrition and C.U. Shah College of Pharmacy happened after allocation of Rs. 1.55 crore RUSA funds.

Research seed funding worth Rs. 2087 lakh has been obtained by faculty members through government and non-government organization grants. Through financial support the organization managed to execute 354 research initiatives during the preceding five years. The faculty at the university obtained numerous patents while writing 414 publications alongside 60 recognized research achievements and authoring 531 research books and chapters.

The institution devotes considerable attention to developing research competencies for students and faculty through educational programs which focus on research approaches and intellectual asset protection and skill advancement and startup concepts. SNDTWU continues its mission of societal engagement by conducting outreach projects that handle health care and social welfare together with educational needs of the community. The university achieves a student participation rate exceeding 75% in its academic service integration programs.

SNDTWU seeks to strengthen collaborations through its 60 Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with organizations across domestic and foreign sectors including institutions, industries and NGOs. The Women-Innovation Start-up Entrepreneurship (WISE) incubation centre at this university serves as a vital platform that develops entrepreneurial ventures through workspace allocation and seed funding as well as mentorship and extensive industrial network access.

Criteria – IV: Infrastructure and Learning Resources

SNDT Women's University maintains extensive facilities along with learning tools which aid students in their academic development and personal growth. The libraries at this university maintain extensive collection resources including books, journals, databases along with e-books and learning materials in both English and regional languages.

Visually impaired students find assistance at the Bharat Ratna Maharshi Karve Knowledge Resource Centre (KRC) through the implementation of JAWS software. Kohana replaced SLIM as the open-source library automation software to both optimize operational efficiency and enhance user navigation for the entire system. The digital process of academic content including dissertations, dissertations and archival materials makes knowledge more available to users. The KRC maintains a broad collection of more than four lakh printed books along with 270 journals and 2 million e-books as well as 50,000 e-journals and 65 databases. SNDTWU dedicates 8.86 percent of its budget toward library resources throughout this evaluation period to demonstrate its commitment towards scholarly enrichment.

SNDTWU maintains optimal facilities development in urban cities while maintaining high standards for education space optimization. The University has 148 classrooms and 88 laboratories and 9 modern ICT-equipped seminar halls available for users. The university operates three big auditoriums alongside several small seminar halls together with open areas which support academic and cultural events.

Students from various campuses can access hostels at SNDTWU thanks to its multiple hostel facilities which serve 200 students at Churchgate and 360 students at Juhu and 140 students at the Pune location. The institution maintains a high student-computing ratio of 4.81 through its 855 computers which assures students receive enough technological access.

Criteria – V: Student Support and Progression

SNDT Women's University provides students with extensive welfare services by implementing both support structures and advancement programs. The assessment period showed that 66.88% of students received financial help through scholarships and freeships thus providing assistance to substantial portions of students. SNDT Women's University shows its commitment to maintaining student safety by operating three vital bodies: The Grievance Redressal Cell together with the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) and Anti-Ragging Cell. Extreme awareness initiated by these preventive bodies resulted in no student complaints during the assessment period because of the institution's successful preventive strategy.

Student progression at the university shows strong results because 78.22% of graduates obtained employment positions while 51.02% continued their education after graduating. SNDTWU dedicates considerable importance to student personality development through multiple engaging activities which enable students to develop new skills and capabilities. The institution organizes periodic workshops alongside seminars dedicated to training students about career development as well as resume writing and interviews and networking abilities and industry trends and both technical and soft skills that match students' specific academic subjects. Through its Competitive Exam Cell the university conducts training sessions for competitive tests both for college admissions and government or non-government service positions.

DSD serves as an essential institution for student development through its work with affiliated colleges to organize programs that deepen creativity and leadership abilities of their student body. The university responded through effective measures to combat COVID-19 by launching awareness programs about preventing the spread of infections and safe personal practices. Experienced mental health practitioners and student volunteers conducted online sessions which assisted students to control their stress and isolation feelings and to minimize their inactivity during the pandemic.

Students at SNDTWU succeeded in winning 206 awards and medals through a series of sports and cultural events that the university organized during the past five years. The Alumni Association operates as a registered organization which promotes university development through its donations and provides its experts to give lectures and counselling services alongside mentorship programs. Donations from SNDTWU alumni reached Rs. 100.03 lakhs during the evaluation period as they maintained their active affiliation with their alma mater.

Criteria – VI: Governance, Leadership and Management

SNDT Women's University has developed a strong governance framework with clear operational transparency to accomplish its educative and administrative purposes. Under the provisions of the Maharashtra State University Act 2016 and its associated statutes and ordinances the university leadership team contains the Chancellor and

Vice-Chancellor together with the Pro-Vice-Chancellor as well as Deans of Faculties and the Registrar and Director of Examinations and Evaluation and Finance Officer. The university includes Directors of Sports and Physical Education and Students Development for co-curricular activities and Directors of Lifelong Learning and Extension and Innovation, Incubation, and Linkages for community outreach programs.

A systematic leadership strategy exists at the university because the Vice-Chancellor meets regularly with both statistical officers and other members to review administrative approaches and develop planning strategies. Through faculty meetings the Deans of Faculties offer support to Boards of Studies (BOS) regarding academic issues. The institution has established an effective mechanism for grievance resolution that incorporates Students Grievance Cell plus Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) and Special Cell to provide equal treatment and fairness to each stakeholder.

Every five years the state creates Perspective Plans to set locations for affiliated colleges but the Strategic Plan works on enhancing education quality by expanding classroom methodologies and merging academic programs. The university obtained Rs. 1430.14 lakh in funding for infrastructure growth during the evaluation interval. All budgeted funds were used in compliance with government regulations through annual internal and external audits for maximizing financial transparency and accountability.

Through the Women-Innovation Start-up Entrepreneurship (WISE) center the university demonstrates its dedication to innovation by providing space and seed funding together with mentoring and access to an established industrial partner network that supports start-ups.

The university maintains detailed operational frameworks for its academic operations as well as its administrative undertakings and research programs through defined rules on recruiting and evaluating and advancing staff members including lecturers and administrators. A significant proportion of 61.8% faculty members secured financial help for research initiatives alongside 62.72% of teaching staff who joined development programs that demonstrated the university's focus on academic professionalism.

Criteria – VII: Institutional Values and Best Practices

SNDT Women's University established inclusive education as its central focus from its very beginning to empower women. Academic and community-oriented initiatives run by the institution maintain a consistent stream of integration between institutional values and best practices. The Arushi Learning Centre for special children demonstrates SNDT Women's University's dedication to inclusion by creating a caring facility which supports both 25 special children and their community members. The educational environment at this campus combines the Nursery Experimental School with community outreach initiatives which shape students into conscientious stakeholders of society.

Through their educational programs the university teaches students to critically assess gender identities whereas traditional gender binary approaches make way toward inclusive learning practices. In India the Research Centre for Women's Studies (RCWS) exists as a pioneering organization that pioneers both research initiatives and outreach activities which promote gender sensitivity and the empowerment of women.

SNDTWU implements sustainable environmental projects as part of its eco-friendly initiatives. The university implements vermi-composting plants while segregating waste types including non-biodegradable materials and e-waste for hazardous chemicals and radioactive waste and partners with organizations Envoclean, Econnect Knowledge Foundation, RUR Green Life Pvt. Ltd., and Bachat Gats to demonstrate its commitment to environmental stewardship. The university implements multiple environmental initiatives which simultaneously create education about environmental responsibility while promoting student-staff environmental awareness.

The university employs green administrative measures such as green notice boards together with QR code event registrations and electronic notice boards and a prohibition against plastic water bottles at university meetings. The university demonstrates its dedication to sustainability through its initiatives to create paperless administrative processes. The university maintains more than half of its total ground area without concrete to permit groundwater restoration. The educational institutions contain gardens with vegetables and medicinal plants as well as Miyawaki forest areas which help build biodiversity awareness.

University power requirements drastically decreased because solar power systems became operational at Juhu and Pune campuses. The university performs scheduled audits of its sustainability practices through green audits combined with energy audits as well as environmental audits. The university shows its dedication to inclusion and accessibility through proper arrangements for an accessible environment for the 'Divyangjan'.

Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Challenges(SWOC)

Institutional Strength

- SNDTWU dedicated to women's empowerment through inclusive professional and vocational programmes rooted in Indian traditions
- Regularly introduction and updation of latest skill-based courses in multiple languages along with continuous update of curricula, teaching-learning pedagogies, and evaluation methods.
- Effective implementation of NEP 2020, adopting a multidisciplinary approach across all programmes.
- Student research and internships form a core component of all postgraduate programmes, fostering experiential learning through cutting-edge

pedagogical tools. These efforts equip women students with essential life skills to meet professional challenges and contribute to the achievement of national goals.

- Faculty dedicated to advocacy, policy conceptualisation, and awareness-building for women's advancement.
- As a pioneer in women's studies, SNDTWU has played a pivotal role in mainstreaming women's issues.
- Departments such as Special Education, Social Work, and Nursing have significantly contributed to building sensitive communities.
- SNDTWU inculcates responsible citizenship through community outreach programmes, environmental sustainability initiatives, and the celebration of diversity.

Institutional Weakness

- The limited **state-of-the-art accommodation facilities** hinders opportunities for **international student exchange, faculty exposure, and collaborations** with global institutions.
- A significant number of **vacant teaching and non-teaching aided positions** negatively impacts the university's **operational efficiency**.
- The **dispersion of campuses** and the widespread location of **affiliated colleges** across the country add complexity to **administrative coordination**, making it challenging to maintain uniform standards and streamlined communication.

Institutional Opportunity

- **SNDTWU strategically positioned to broaden its impact through the introduction of** cutting-edge science and technology programmes.
- **The** promotion of vocational **and** skill-oriented programmes **will significantly enhance the university's capacity to** empower rural and tribal women **through** targeted skilling initiatives.
- **The implementation of the** National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 **presents unique opportunities for** collaborations, entrepreneurial ventures, internship initiatives, **and** partnerships **with both** government **bodies and** industry **leaders**.
- **Emphasising** foreign language proficiency **and** **fostering** international collaborations **for** capacity building **and** research **can open up new** employment opportunities **both in** India **and** abroad.
- **The establishment of** satellite centres **across** India **and internationally** would further **expand the university's reach, transitioning its influence from a local to a global platform, thereby increasing its** global footprint **and** academic prestige.

Institutional Challenge

- **Resource mobilization** from both **governmental** and **non-governmental sources** remains a significant challenge for SNDT Women's University (SNDTWU).

- Persistent **faculty shortages** coupled with the demands of maintaining **infrastructure over 100 years old** hinder the university's ability to **implement new programmes** and achieve its **full potential**.
- **Industry indifference** towards **collaborative initiatives** poses obstacles to establishing strong **industry-academic partnerships**.
- The relatively **limited engagement** of **alumnae** further challenges the university in building robust **networks** for **mentorship, fundraising, and professional development** opportunities.

Recommendations:

- (1) Introducing advanced and new age scientific programs in pure sciences, engineering, and technology to enhance academic and research output.
- (2) The Educational Technology Department may enter into MOU with all Teacher Education College to develop educational resources and generate revenue.
- (3) The Management Education Department may devise short-term courses for developing leadership skills of private and government organisations.
- (4) Entering into more MOUs with foreign universities and exploring the possibility of collaborative programmes.
- (5) Entering into MOUs with industries for introducing collaborative programmes leading to effective placements.
- (6) Leveraging locational advantage and introducing short-term courses catering to the job demands of the local market.
- (7) Introducing programmes and courses leading to film direction, film editing, short-film making, dancing, and acting for leveraging the geographical closeness of the University to the media and entertainment industry in Mumbai.
- (8) Further exploring revenue-generation opportunities by developing a policy for the optimal use of educational resources and campus facilities 24/7 without disrupting academics.
- (9) Pursuing foreign accreditation through international ranking frameworks such as QS World University Rankings or Times Higher Education (THE) Rankings to gain global recognition and foster international collaborations.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, SNDT Women's University has consistently demonstrated its commitment to women's empowerment through its academic offerings, research, and community outreach initiatives. The seven NAAC criteria reflect the university's focus on curricular development, teaching-learning methodologies, research, infrastructure, student support, governance, and institutional values. However, there are areas where the university can further enhance its growth trajectory.

The university's strong foundation in empowering women through education provides a solid base for potential expansion into co-ed education, particularly in metropolitan areas, with a continued emphasis on maintaining a gender-responsive approach. Introducing some more advanced and new scientific programs, particularly in pure sciences, engineering, and technology, will not only enhance research output but also cater to the growing demand for women in these fields. Additionally, more

collaborations with industries and foreign universities can foster greater global exposure for students, enriching academic experiences and improving placement opportunities. The Educational Technology and Management Education departments can play a crucial role in fostering revenue-generating avenues through collaborations with teacher education colleges and leadership development programmes for professionals. Leveraging the university's location and introducing short-term courses tailored to local job market demands, such as media, entertainment, advertising and film-making may further meet community and emerging market demand needs. Exploring innovative programs in creative fields, such as film direction and acting, would open new avenues for student engagement and talent development. By optimizing the use of university resources and facilities throughout the year, the university may be able to create a sustainable revenue model that supports its academic and research activities without compromising its primary focus on education.

The recommendations provided aim to address both internal challenges and external opportunities, enhancing the university's academic offerings, student support services, and overall impact on society. Implementing these strategic initiatives will position SNDTWU as a forward-thinking institution, responsive to the evolving educational landscape while remaining committed to its mission of women's empowerment.

Signatures:

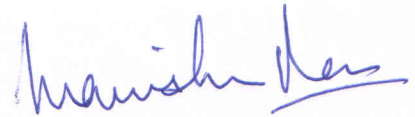
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2) Prof. Smita Shukla
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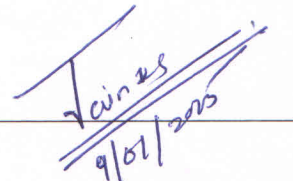
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09/01/2025

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9/01/2025

Date: 8th and 9th January, 2025
Place: Mumbai