

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP)

Digitalization of Accounting and Finance System

Utkal University

1. Title of the SOP

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Digitalization of Accounting, Finance, Budgeting and Financial Reporting System of Utkal University

2. Purpose

The purpose of this SOP is to establish a comprehensive, transparent, efficient, and technology-driven accounting and finance management system in the University for:

- Real-time accounting and financial reporting
- Instant generation of Receipt & Payment Statements
- Digital preparation of annual budget
- Efficient fund management and utilization monitoring
- Strengthening internal control and audit compliance
- Enhancing transparency, accountability, and governance
- Integration of all financial units and departments through a centralized digital platform

3. Scope

This SOP shall apply to:

- Finance & Accounts Section
- Budget Section
- Examination Accounts
- P.G. Departments
- Self-financing Courses
- Research Projects
- Hostels
- Autonomous Centres
- Grants and Sponsored Projects
- Pension and Salary Sections

- Procurement and Store Sections
- Any unit handling receipts, payments, advances, grants, or utilization certificates

4. Objectives of Digitalization

The digital finance system shall aim to:

1. Create a centralized ERP-based accounting system.
2. Enable online and real-time recording of financial transactions.
3. Generate instant financial statements and MIS reports.
4. Facilitate online budget preparation and monitoring.
5. Ensure integration with banks and e-payment gateways.
6. Minimize manual errors and duplication of work.
7. Ensure compliance with Government, UGC, Audit and statutory requirements.
8. Enable paperless financial administration.
9. Improve decision-making through real-time financial data analytics.

5. Guiding Principles

The digitalization process shall be guided by:

- Transparency
- Accuracy
- Accountability
- Timeliness
- Security and Confidentiality
- Auditability
- Standardization
- Ease of access and usability

6. Components of the Digital Finance System

The University shall implement an integrated Finance and Accounts Management System consisting of the following modules:

A. Accounting Module

- Double entry accounting system

- General ledger
- Cash book
- Bank book
- Journal entries
- Trial balance
- Receipt & Payment Account
- Income & Expenditure Account
- Balance Sheet

B. Budget Module

- Department-wise budget proposal submission
- Consolidation of annual budget
- Budget approval workflow
- Budget allocation and monitoring
- Revised budget management
- Variance analysis

C. Receipt Management Module

- Online fee collection
- Grant receipts
- Donations and consultancy receipts
- Automatic receipt generation
- Bank reconciliation

D. Payment Management Module

- E-bill processing
- Online approvals
- Vendor payment system
- Salary and pension processing
- Scholarship disbursement

- PF/NPS/GST/TDS compliance

E. Asset and Inventory Module

- Fixed asset register
- Depreciation accounting
- Stock and inventory management
- Procurement tracking

F. Audit & Compliance Module

- Internal audit tracking
- Statutory audit compliance
- Utilization certificate generation
- Digital document repository

G. MIS & Dashboard Module

- Real-time financial dashboard
- Department-wise expenditure tracking
- Grant utilization reports
- Fund position statements
- Instant Receipt & Payment statements

7. Procedure for Implementation

Phase I: Assessment and Planning

1. Conduct assessment of existing accounting and finance procedures.
2. Identify gaps, delays, and duplication in manual processes.
3. Prepare requirement specifications for ERP/software.
4. Constitute a Digital Finance Implementation Committee.

Phase II: Software Selection

1. Select suitable ERP/accounting software through due process.
2. Ensure the software supports:

- University accounting structure
- Multi-user access
- Cloud/server-based operation
- Security features
- Real-time reporting
- Audit trail
- Integration with banks and PFMS

Phase III: Data Standardization and Migration

1. Digitize existing financial records.
2. Standardize chart of accounts and coding system.
3. Migrate legacy data carefully with verification.
4. Validate opening balances and outstanding liabilities.

Phase IV: Training and Capacity Building

1. Conduct training for finance staff and departmental users.
2. Develop user manuals and operational guidelines.
3. Organize workshops on digital accounting procedures.

Phase V: Pilot Implementation

1. Start with selected sections/departments.
2. Monitor operational issues and rectify them.
3. Obtain user feedback.

Phase VI: Full-scale Implementation

1. Roll out the system across all units.
2. Discontinue redundant manual systems gradually.
3. Ensure mandatory digital entry of all transactions.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

Vice Chancellor

- Overall policy approval and monitoring

Registrar

- Administrative supervision and coordination

OSD Finance / Comptroller of Finance

- Overall implementation and operational supervision
- Monitoring of financial digitalization process
- Coordination with software vendor and departments

Heads of Departments / Units

- Timely submission of digital budget and expenditure data
- Compliance with SOP provisions

System Administrator / IT Cell

- Technical maintenance
- Data security
- Backup and server management

Accounts Personnel

- Daily data entry and verification
- Reconciliation and reporting

9. Internal Control Mechanism

The following controls shall be ensured:

- Role-based user access
- Digital approval hierarchy
- Audit trail for every transaction
- Daily database backup
- Periodic reconciliation
- Two-factor authentication where feasible
- Data encryption and cybersecurity protocols

10. Reporting System

The system shall generate:

- Daily cash position
- Instant Receipt & Payment Statements
- Monthly expenditure reports
- Budget utilization reports
- Grant utilization statements
- Department-wise financial reports
- Audit compliance reports
- Annual financial statements

11. Review and Monitoring

1. Quarterly review meetings shall be conducted.
2. Periodic internal audits shall evaluate system effectiveness.
3. Necessary upgrades and modifications shall be implemented based on feedback and statutory requirements.

12. Expected Outcomes

The digitalization initiative is expected to achieve:

- Faster financial decision-making ✓
- Accurate and real-time financial reporting ✓
- Improved budgetary control ✓
- Greater transparency and accountability }
- Reduction in manual workload }
- Better audit compliance }
- Efficient utilization of University resources }

13. Conclusion

The digitalization of the accounting and finance system of Utkal University shall strengthen institutional governance, improve operational efficiency, and align the University with modern standards of financial administration, transparency, and e-governance in higher education institutions.

