Manipur University was established on 5 June 1980, under the Manipur University Act.1980 (Manipur Act 8 of 1980), as a teaching cum-affiliating University at Imphal with territorial jurisdiction over the whole of the state of Manipur.

It was converted into a Central University w.e.f. 13 October 2005. The Manipur University Act No.54 of 2005 received the assent of the President on 28 December 2005.

The University is located at Kanchipur, Imphal, the capital city of Manipur, India. The University campus is spread over an area of 287 acres (1.16 km$^2$) in the historic Canchipur, the old palace of the kingdom of Manipur.

The Langthabal Palace(Konung) was established by Maharaja Gambhir Singh in 1827 (October) just after the liberation of Manipur from Burmese occupation. Maharaja Gambhir Singh took his last breath in Canchipur.

As envisaged in the policy programmes of the UGC for the development of Collegiate education, College Development Council, MU was set up at the Manipur University under syndicate resolution no. 5 dated 1-10-1985, to ensure the proper planning and integrated development of affiliated colleges.

At present Dr. RK Rajan Singh, Director i/c is looking after the affairs of the CDC and there are 22 members of the CDC with Vice-Chancellor as its ex officio chairman.