24th May 2018, New Delhi

University Grants Commission has approved UGC (Online Courses) Regulations, 2018 as landmark reform in the field of Higher Education.

Higher Educational Institutions can now offer Certificate, Diploma and Degree Programmes in full-fledged online mode in line with their regular programs.

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In a landmark reform in the field of Higher Education, University Grants Commission has approved UGC (Online Courses) Regulations, 2018 in its meeting held on 24th May, 2018. Higher Educational Institutions can offer Certificate, Diploma and Degree Programmes in full-fledged online mode in only those disciplines in which it has already been offering the same or similar Programmes /Courses at graduation level in regular mode (of classroom teaching) or in Open and Distance Learning mode and from which at least one batch has been graduated and approved by the statutory councils, as applicable. Online Programmes requiring Practical/ Laboratory Courses as a curricular requirement shall not be permitted**.** The Examinations shall be conducted in proctored mode and in conformity with any norms for such examinations stipulated by the commission. The online learning shall have minimum four quadrants: video lectures, e- content, self-assessment and discussion forum to clarify doubts.

The Higher Educational Institutions will be eligible to offer Online Programmes if they have been in existence for at least five years and are accredited by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) with a valid minimum score of 3.26 on a 4-point scale; and should be in the top-100 in overall category in the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) for at least two years in the previous three years. However, NAAC and NIRF conditions shall not be applicable to existing government Open Universities till NAAC or similar accreditation system or NIRF are made available.

Aadhaar and Passport shall be used to authenticate the Indian and foreign students respectively for all online interactions including teaching-learning and examinations.

The learners' engagement will be monitored via participation in asynchronous / synchronous discussions, assignment activity and Programme involvement. The analytics of Learning Management System shall be used for ensuring the learner's participation at least for 2 hours every fortnight.

Overall Regulations provide enabling provisions for maintaining sanctity of admissions, teaching-learning, examination, authenticity of the learner and mandatory disclosure of Programme-wise information such as duration, start & end dates, fee, number of students, name of students with identifier, results, on HEI website/public domain.

These regulations will be made applicable from the academic session 2018-19. This initiative is a big step towards attaining the targeted GER of 30% by the year 2020.

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