

Bill No. 88 of 2021

THE UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION
(AMENDMENT) BILL, 2021

By

SHRI RAJENDRA AGRAWAL, M.P.

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BILL

further to amend the University Grants Commission Act, 1956.

BE it enacted by Parliament in the Seventy-second Year of the Republic of India as follows:—

1. (1) This Act may be called the University Grants Commission (Amendment) Act, 2021.

Short title and commencement.

5 (2) It shall come into force on such date, as the Central Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, appoint.

Insertion of
new section
22A.

2. After section 22 of the University Grants Commission Act, 1956, the following section shall be inserted, namely:— 3 of 1956

Apprenticeship
Embedded
Programme
under Open and
Distance
Learning and
online mode.

“22A. (1) Notwithstanding anything contained in any other law or regulation for the time being in force, no University shall be prohibited from—

(a) offering Apprenticeship Embedded Programmes under Open and Distance Learning or online mode; and 5

(b) collaborating with private institutions with the objectives of utilising their resources for offering Apprenticeship Embedded Programme under Open and Distance Learning or online mode.

(2) Any University offering Apprenticeship Embedded Programme under Open and Distance Learning or online mode shall regulate the attendance and assessment of such programme in such manner as it may deem appropriate.”. 10

STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS

The Government of India notified University Grants Commission (Open and Distance Learning Programmes and Online Programmes) Regulations, 2020 on September 4, 2020 under the powers conferred by sub-sections (1) and (2) of section 26 read with clause (j) of section 12 of the University Grants Commission Act, 1956 (3 of 1956) to regulate the programmes under Open and Distance Learning (ODL) mode and online mode.

The Regulations conferred the University Grants Commission (UGC) the responsibility to regulate the online and distance programmes by the Indian Universities. However, many of these regulations are proving restrictive in the expansion of Higher Education and limits their ability to embed employability into Higher Education Degree Programmes.

Given the fact that the Government aims to increase Gross Enrollment Ratio in Higher Education to above 50% (as specified in National Education Policy), opening up of apprenticeship embedded programmes under online and distance education mode would prove crucial in achieving this goal. The need is to create an ecosystem that will provide employable higher education to the aspiring youth and create an employer funded education model.

The present Bill seeks to liberalise apprenticeship embedded education to allow all universities to offer online degree apprenticeship programmes, in which students 'earn while learning' and 'learn by doing'. Under these programmes, the students are given monthly stipends and get on-the-job training, learning and mentoring.

Therefore, these degree apprenticeship programmes will not only help to increase Gross Enrollment Ratio in higher education but also increase the employability of the students.

Hence this Bill.

NEW DELHI;
March 5, 2021.

RAJENDRA AGRAWAL

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further to amend the University Grants Commission Act, 1956.

(Shri Rajendra Agrawal, M.P.)