

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION  
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

RAJYA SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 338  
ANSWERED ON 06.12.2023

**Assessment of Distance Learning Programs**

**338 Smt. Mausam Noor:**

Will the Minister of **Education** be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has conducted an assessment of online distance learning programs for postgraduate students in the central Universities;
- (b) if such an assessment has been conducted, the number of students enrolled in distance learning programs and their placements after completing postgraduate degrees through distance mode;
- (c) whether the Distance Education Bureau has recognized the impact of fewer placed students from these distance education programmes; and
- (d) the measures or strategies being implemented to improve placements and outcomes of students enrolled in distance learning programs?

**ANSWER**

**MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION**  
**(Dr. SUBHAS SARKAR)**

(a) & (b) University Grants Commission (UGC) notified the UGC (Open and Distance Learning Programmes and Online Programmes) Regulations, 2020 on 4<sup>th</sup> September, 2020. Subsequently, amendments have been notified on 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2021 and 18<sup>th</sup> July, 2022. The same are available on UGC website at <https://deb.ugc.ac.in/>. In Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), the premier institution for Open & Distance Learning (ODL) in the country, most of the online programmes have been introduced during the past two years. The minimum and maximum duration for successful completion of Master's programme in online mode is two years and four

years, respectively. Therefore, no such assessment of online distance learning programme for post graduate students have been conducted. The number of students enrolled in IGNOU's online post graduate programmes between January 2021 to July 2023 is 74,412.

(c) & (d) Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) have been sensitized to conduct Job Fairs for the students/learners of Open and Distance Learning (ODL) programmes. Regulation 22 of the UGC (Open and Distance Learning Programmes and Online Programmes) Regulations, 2020 stipulates that "Degrees at undergraduate and postgraduate level in conformity with UGC notification on Specification of Degrees, 2014 and post graduate diplomas awarded through Open and Distance Learning mode and/or Online mode by HEIs, recognized by the UGC under the above regulation, shall be treated as equivalent to the corresponding awards of the Degrees at undergraduate and postgraduate level and post graduate diplomas offered through conventional mode." This provision has also been issued by the UGC vide Public Notice dated 2<sup>nd</sup> September, 2022 for information to all stakeholders.

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