

The Higher Education Commission of India (Repeal of UGC Act) Act 2018

Government, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi has embarked on a process of reform of the regulatory agencies for better administration of the higher education sector. A Budget announcement has been to reform the regulatory framework and for revamping the UGC Act.

In fulfilment of the above, several reform measures have already been launched viz, reform of NAAC, Regulation for grant of Graded Autonomy to Universities, granting of Autonomous status to colleges, the Regulation for Open Distance Learning, Regulation for Online degrees etc.

Continuing these reform measures, a draft Act for repeal of UGC and setting up Higher Education Commission of India has been prepared by the Ministry.

Shri Prakash Javadekar, Minister for HRD appealed to all educationists, stakeholders and general public to give comments and suggestions **before 5 p.m. on 7th July 2018** on the draft Act. The comments may be mailed to reformofugc@gmail.com.

The draft Act is in accordance with the commitment of Government for reforming the regulatory systems that provide for more autonomy and facilitate holistic growth of the education system and which provides greater opportunities to the Indian students at more affordable cost. The transformation of the regulatory set up is guided by the following principles:

1. Less Government and more Governance:

Downsizing the scope of the Regulation. No more interference in the management issues of the educational institutions.

2. Separation of grant functions:

The grant functions would be done by the Ministry, and the HECI would focus only on academic matters.

3. End of inspection raj:

Regulation is done through transparent public disclosures, merit-based decision making on matters regarding standards and quality in higher education.

4. Focus on academic quality:

HECI is tasked with the mandate of improving academic standards with specific focus on learning outcomes, evaluation of academic performance by institutions, mentoring of institutions, training of teachers, promote use of educational technology etc. Will develop norms for setting standards for opening and closure of institutions, provide for greater flexibility and autonomy to institutions, lay standards for appointments to critical leadership positions at the institutional level irrespective of University started under any Law (including State Law)

5. Powers to enforce :

The Regulator will have powers to enforce compliance to the academic quality standards and will have the power to order closure of sub-standard and bogus institutions. Non-compliance could result in fines or jail sentence.

The MHRD welcomes suggestion on the draft Act for Higher Education Commission of India (repeal of UGC Act) 2018.
