

No. 4-9 /2014-U1A  
Government of India  
Ministry of Human Resource Development  
Department of Higher Education

New Delhi, dated the 30<sup>th</sup> July, 2014.

**ORDER**

**Sub: Review of the University Grants Commission for its restructuring and strengthening to address imperatives and challenges in the higher education sector**

Indian Higher Education sector has become the largest in the world in terms of number of institutions and the second largest in terms of students; the sector is already educating and enabling nearly 28 million students in nearly 726 universities and 38000 colleges. The Gross Enrolment Ratio as per 2011-12 stands at 20.4%. Such expansion and massification of the higher education sector in myriad streams of higher education and across regions has thrown up a wide variety of challenges and addressing these challenges would constitute the key to ensure advances in the Human Development Index of the Country and transform the country into a true 'Knowledge Economy'.

The University Grant Commission Act was enacted in the year 1956. At that time there were only 20 universities and 500 colleges in the country with a total enrolment of 0.21 million students. The UGC Act was amended thrice, the last being in 1985. UGC was created under Entry 66 of the List I of Schedule VII of the Constitutions. It is the apex regulatory body in the country for university education. It has the powers of not only laying down and determining standards of university education, but also the powers of giving grants to universities and colleges in the country.

With the increase in enrolment, there has been a spurt in private universities/deemed to be universities in the country. While UGC has laid down regulations for maintenance of standards in these types of institutions, the regulations are implemented more in breach rather than in compliance. A case in point is a recent instance reported of a private university which was churning out and selling research/Ph.d Degrees. The UGC has no mechanism to ensure follow up on regulatory instructions and enforce compliance with it. This inadequacy is on account of the limitations in its structure and processes. While the UGC has endeavoured to regulate the higher education system in the country and promote quality and access, it is felt that the UGC could have done better, if it were strengthened and re-structured. These limitations can only be overcome by a thorough review and amending the UGC Act, 1956.

The Central Government had set up on July 7, 1998 a Task Force to suggest measures to curb the growth of fake universities in the country. The Task Force was

mandated to examine the relevant provisions of the UGC Act which were to be amended to provide sufficient safeguard against incidence of fake university. On March 11, 1999 MHRD also set up a Group of six persons to study and to report upon various new initiatives on higher education covering several elements like self-financing institutions, foreign universities and Indian education abroad. The report was examined in the MHRD and a Draft Cabinet Note was prepared for amendments in the UGC Act, 1956. The matter could not proceed further in the wake of appointment of Yashpal Committee for renovation and rejuvenation of higher education.

However, there is a realization that the UGC is not able to do justice to its mandate in light of massification of higher education. Faced with the fact that lot of private institutions have come up in higher education sector and the growing trend of commercialization of higher education, several states having created private universities which sometimes are not maintaining the laid down standards of higher education, UGC's entire functioning continues to be oriented more towards grant giving rather than regulation and enforcement of minimum standards. It is imperative that an urgent review of the UGC in its entirety is conducted.

The Central Government, therefore, recognizing the need for restructuring the University Grants Commission and reshaping its educational leadership and regulatory role to address imperatives and challenges in the higher education sector for fullest realization of the higher learning and research potential in the Country, hereby constitutes a UGC Review Committee with the following members,

- (i) Prof. Hari Gautam, former Chairman, UGC.....Chairman
- (ii) Prof. C.M. Jariwala, former Head and Dean of Law, BHU.....Member
- (iii) Prof Kapil Kapoor, former Pro VC, JNU.....Member
- (iv) Shri R.P. Sisodia, Joint Secretary (Higher Education).....Member-Secretary

The Committee shall conduct a review of the present status of UGC and suggest restructuring and re-organizing of UGC for attaining even better performance to meet the desired objectives. The Committee shall also suggest amendments to the UGC Act, 1956, and the Rules and Regulations made thereunder. The following shall be the items of review/ Terms of Reference (TOR) of the Committee:

- (i) Evaluation of the performance of the UGC in coordinating and determining standards of education in universities, conducting an audit of its regulatory reach and identifying strengths and weaknesses on this aspect. (This will also include an evaluation of the performance of the Regional Offices and the Inter University Centres of the UGC).
- (ii) Requirement of regulatory space for the UGC vis –a –vis other regulatory bodies for providing educational leadership in the higher education sector.

- (iii) Assessment of regulatory space for the UGC vis-à-vis autonomy and accountability of Universities and Colleges and measures to reinforce the desired regulatory role.
- (iv) Analysis of the regulatory function vis –a- vis grant disbursing function of the UGC and recommending changes in the balance between the twin functions.
- (v) To suggest ways and means to set up a robust accreditation system in the higher education sector and to revamp NAAC to meet the challenges of mandatory accreditation.
- (vi) Use of information and communication technology, along with business process reengineering for ushering in e-governance and transparency in UGC's functioning.
- (vii) Revamping the grant disbursing function of the UGC to introduce effectiveness and efficiency for timely utilization of grants.
- (viii) To introduce performance based system of release of funds and to align it with RUSA guidelines.
- (ix) Measures for effectively regulating distance education and online education in the country and to harness the technology for enabling access to higher educational institutions.
- (x) Analyze the way UGC staff is organized in head office and regional offices and suggest re-structuring of the entire UGC including its regional offices.
- (xi) New measures for enhancing student mobility and internationalization of the higher education sector.
- (xii) Measures for reinvigorating the teaching environment in Universities and Colleges
- (xiii) Measures for enhancing quality research, particularly research in Basic Sciences, and ushering a climate of innovation in higher education sector in the country.
- (xiv) Regulation of Private Not-for-Profit entities in higher education and also suggest measures to curb commercialization.

3. The Committee shall submit its report within a period of six months from the date of this Order. The Committee shall cease to function on the day it submits its report to the Government.

4. The UGC shall provide all secretarial assistance and logistics support to the Chairman and Members of the Committee. This will include expenditure on travel and accommodation of the Committee on its visits for conducting interaction with higher educational institutions and academics.

5. The Committee may devise its own methodology and processes for its functioning. The Committee may also engage Experts, rapporteurs and raconteurs as required by it for enabling smooth progress in its working. The expenditure for engagement of such Experts, rapporteurs and raconteurs may also be borne by the UGC.

  
(R.P. Sisodia)

Joint Secretary to Government of India

To: Chairman and all Members

Copy to:

1. The Chairman, University Grants commission, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg, New Delhi
2. The Secretary, University Grants commission, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg, New Delhi
3. PS to HRM
4. PS to Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, Yojana Bhavan, New Delhi.
5. PS to Principal Secretary to Prime Minister
6. PS to Secretary, Department of Higher Education
7. PS to Secretary, Department of School Education
8. PS to Secretary, Planning Commission, Yojana Bhavan, New Delhi
9. All Joint Secretaries in the Department of Higher Education and the Department of School Education and Literacy.
10. Heads of all autonomous bodies under the MHRD
- ✓ 11. Webmaster, MHRD- for uploading the Order on the website of the MHRD for general information.

  
(R.P. Sisodia)

Joint Secretary to Government of India