

FAQs related to Distance Education Bureau

1. What are rules and regulations governing distance education offered by the Institutions?

UGC has notified UGC (Open and Distance Learning) Regulations, 2017 in the Gazette on 23/06/2017 and first amendment on 11/10/2017. The same can be accessed on UGC website at <http://www.ugc.ac.in/deb/notices.html>

2. How do the students who wish to pursue higher education through distance education know the recognition status of Institution?

The year-wise recognition status of universities approved to offer education through distance mode along with the approved programmes is already in public domain and can be accessed at UGC website www.ugc.ac.in/deb. Kindly make sure to read the notifications at Notice Board before taking admission anywhere. The same can be accessed through website at the following link: <http://www.ugc.ac.in/deb/notices.html>.

However, the student must confirm recognition status of HEI for ODL system for the session opted for admission. Recognition status of HEI for previous year does not indicate recognition status for next session also.

3. What is Institutional Recognition of distance education programmes?

During the period of institutional recognition, the University was required to offer programmes approved by the statutory bodies of the University, after seeking approval of the concerned Regulatory bodies, wherever required. Seeking approval from the respective Regulatory bodies was the responsibility of the university concerned. At present, institutional recognition is not given by UGC and only programmewise recognition is given.

4. What is the procedure for verification of degrees by the students?

The degree(s)/diploma(s)/certificate(s) are verified/validated by the issuing authority i.e. concerned university/institution only. DEB, UGC can provide the recognition status of the university/Institution which is available on the UGC website at www.ugc.ac.in/deb. UGC gives recognition to HEI to offer distance education programmes for a particular academic session but details of students admitted/passed

are maintained by the concerned HEI. Therefore verification of degree/Diploma is the responsibility of university concerned.

5. Whether the students can pursue technical/ degrees through distance education?

No institution is allowed to offer technical programme except MBA and MCA through distance mode. AICTE also does not recognise technical qualification except MBA and MCA acquired through distance mode.

The programmes like BE/B.Tech are not allowed through distance mode. MHRD directions prohibiting BE/B.Tech through distance mode dated 29.07.2009 are already uploaded on UGC website at the link

<http://www.ugc.ac.in/deb/notices/MHRDBTechMTech.pdf>

The joint committee of UGC, AICTE and DEC has not given its recognition to B.E and B.Tech programmes of any university through distance mode. In this regard copy of letter dated 13.08.2009 issued by the erstwhile DEC may be seen at <http://www.ugc.ac.in/deb/notices/BTechMTech.pdf>. For more information on the subject, kindly refer to various notices already displayed on UGC website www.ugc.ac.in/deb at the link <http://www.ugc.ac.in/deb/notices.html>.

6. What are the professional programmes which are permitted through distance education?

UGC has notified UGC (Open and Distance Learning) Regulations, 2017 in the official Gazette on 23/6/2017. As per said regulations, “Professional programmes” means a programme other than programmes in engineering, medicine, dental, pharmacy, nursing, architecture, physiotherapy and programmes not permitted to be offered in distance mode by any Statutory Councils or Regulatory Authorities. The programmes to be conducted by the Higher Educational Institutions under Open and Distance Learning mode or Distance Education mode for the purpose of these regulations, if any, should be considered only if the same are approved by the respective Statutory Councils or Regulatory Authorities. Programmes like B.Ed, MBA, Hotel Management etc are some of the professional programmes, which require approval of respective regulatory authorities.

7. What is the Supreme Court Judgement dated 03/11/2017 reg. technical programmes through distance education?

The Hon'ble Supreme Court vide its order dated 03.11.2017 in the matter of Orissa Lift Irrigation Corp. Ltd. Vs. Rabi Sankar Patro Vs Ors has suspended all the degrees in Engineering awarded by concerned Deemed to be Universities of the candidates enrolled during the Academic Sessions 2001-2005. As regards students who were admitted after the Academic Sessions 2001-2005, their degrees in Engineering awarded by the concerned Deemed to be Universities through distance education mode stand recalled and be treated as cancelled. The concerned Deemed to be Universities are (i) Janardan Rai Nagar Rajasthan Vidyapeeth (JRN), Udaipur, Rajasthan, (ii) Institute of Advanced Studies in Education (IASE), Sardarshahr, Rajasthan, (iii) Vinayaka Mission's Research Foundation, Salem, Tamil Nadu and (iv) Allahabad Agriculture Research Institute, Allahabad, UP (later known as Sam Higginbottom Institute of Agriculture, Technology and Sciences, Allahabad).

UGC has issued Public Notice on 22/11/2017 reg. the above Hon'ble Supreme Court orders dt. 03/11/2017 which is available on UGC website at https://www.ugc.ac.in/pdfnews/4116626_Orders-of-the-Supreme-Court.pdf and the complete judgment is available at https://www.ugc.ac.in/pdfnews/3251872_judgement_03-Nov-2017.pdf.

8. Whether the students can take admission for online courses/online examinations?

No, UGC, till date, has not given approval to any university to offer any programmes through online mode. Online examinations are not allowed.

9. What is the eligibility criteria for Central Govt. jobs on the basis of degrees obtained through distance mode?

MHRD vide Gazette Notification No.6-1/2013 dated 10.06.2015 (published in Gazette on dated 25.07.2015) has notified that- all the degrees/diplomas/certificates including technical education degrees/diplomas awarded through Open and Distance Learning mode of education by the Universities established by an Act of Parliament or State Legislature, Institutions Deemed to be Universities under Section 3 of the UGC Act, 1956 and Institutions of National Importance declared under an Act of Parliament stand automatically recognized for the purpose of employment to posts and services under

the Central Government, provided they have been approved by the University Grants Commission, New Delhi. The above notification is displayed on MHRD website at the following link: http://mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/Notification10062015.pdf

10. Whether the degree acquired through distance mode is equivalent to the degree acquired through regular mode?

The Degrees/ Diplomas/ Certificates awarded for programmes conducted by the ODL institutions, recognized by the erstwhile DEC/UGC, in conformity with UGC Notification on specification of Degrees should be treated as equivalent to the corresponding awards of the Degree/ Diploma/ Certificate of the traditional Universities/ Institutions in the country.

UGC vide its letter **dated 14.10.2013** has clarified the above matter to all Higher Educational Institutions. The letter is uploaded on UGC website and can be accessed at the following link:

<https://www.ugc.ac.in/deb/notices/ODLEquivalenceDegrees.pdf>

11. What is the territorial jurisdiction of Institutions/Universities for offering distance education programmes?

UGC from time to time issued its policy on territorial jurisdiction. UGC has issued notification vide No.F. 27-1/2012(CPP-II) dated 27th June 2013 on territorial jurisdiction, which is available on UGC website www.ugc.ac.in/deb.

The policy on territorial jurisdiction is defined under Annexure IV of UGC (ODL) Regulations 2017 which can be accessed on UGC website at <http://www.ugc.ac.in/deb/notices.html>.

12. Whether UGC has issued any directions to State Governments regarding territorial jurisdiction?

The UGC issued Public Notice on 27/6/2013 on territorial jurisdiction of the university. Prior to this DEC & also UGC issued letters No. F 1-52/99(CPP-II) dt 09.08.2001; 13/5/2003; No.F. 9-8/2008(CPP-II) dt 16.04.2009 & 15.06.2009 and by DEC on 31/1/2012 & 1/11/2012 to HEIs/ State Govt informing territorial jurisdiction. UGC vide its letter F.No. 28-2/2015 (DEB-III) dated 04.05.2016, while drawing the attention to the letters issued to the State Governments in 2009, again requested all the State Education Secretaries as under:

1. to take immediate action to take suitable steps for amending the existing Acts (if not done so far) made so as to bring the same in conformity with the observations made by the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India and
2. to stop all the State/State Private Universities in the State from operating beyond the territorial jurisdiction of their State in any manner.
3. to check and stop all other universities (except central universities) to operate in any manner in your State.

The letter is uploaded on UGC website and can be accessed at:

http://www.ugc.ac.in/pdfnews/9320929_DEb-to-States--UTs.pdf

13. Whether the territorial jurisdiction is applicable to Examination Centres also?

Yes. As far as Examination Centres are concerned, please refer to UGC public Notice No.F. 27-1/2012(CPP-II) dt 27th June 2013 which clearly stipulated that a university established or incorporated by or under a State act shall operate only within the territorial jurisdiction allocated to it under its Act and in no case beyond the territory of the state of its location. The words 'shall operate' cover all aspects of distance education including examination centres. A further clarification is issued by UGC vide Public Notice issued vide F.No. 12-9/2016 (DEB-III) dated 19.07.2016 which is uploaded on UGC website and can be accessed at the following link:
https://www.ugc.ac.in/pdfnews/1873455_Territorial-Jurisdiction-of-Universities.pdf

14. Can the students pursue M.Phil/Ph.D. through distance education?

No. As per UGC (Minimum standard and procedures for awards of M.Phil/Ph.D Degree) Regulation, 2016, no institution is allowed to offer M.Phil and Ph.D through distance mode. Students are advised not to take admission in any M.Phil/Ph.D. programme, if offered by any University/Institution through distance mode.

UGC has issued Public Notice on 31st May, 2017 which is uploaded on UGC website and can be accessed at the following link:

https://www.ugc.ac.in/pdfnews/2954328_Public-Notice---Ph.D.-M.Phil-in-ODL.pdf

15. Is there any helpline / student grievance redressal set up in the Universities?

UGC has already notified UGC (Grievance Redressal) Regulations, 2012 vide Gazette Notification in March, 2013. The same has been uploaded on UGC website and can be accessed at http://www.ugc.ac.in/pdfnews/0588502_English.pdf

UGC vide D.O. No. F.1-1/2016 (Secy) dated 01.06.2016 directed all the universities to establish a helpline with the notification on the homepage of the website of respective universities. The notification can be accessed at following link: http://www.ugc.ac.in/pdfnews/6962674_helpline.pdf

16. If admission for distance education has been taken by the students in the approved period and the HEI/Institution was not granted extension of recognized for subsequent years, what is the validity of such degrees?

Admission taken in the approved Open and Distance Learning (ODL) program during the recognition period stands recognized till the completion of course even if the University does not have recognition for further years provided the programme is offered as per the UGC norms of territorial jurisdiction and in conformity with the UGC (ODL) Regulations, 2017 and regulations of respective regulatory bodies.
