



**UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION
BAHADURSHAH ZAFAR MARG
NEW DELHI-110002**

No.F.27-14/2013(Admn.I/A&B/DEC)

19th December, 2013

PUBLIC NOTICE

The UGC had vide Notification dated 17th June, 2013 informed that the UGC would be preparing a Regulation on Distance Education. For the purpose, a Committee was constituted under the Chairmanship of Prof. N.R.Madhava Menon to frame Draft Regulations on Distance Education. This Committee has prepared the Draft Regulations on Distance Education which is being posted on the website of the UGC with a view to solicit the comments/suggestions from Universities/Colleges and other stakeholders.

2. All stakeholders are requested to send their suggestions/comments on the Draft Regulations on Distance Education to Shri Vikram Sahay, Director (Administration), University Grants Commission, New Delhi-110 002 through email at vikramsahay.edu@nic.in latest by 3rd January, 2014.


(Upamanyu Basu)
Secretary
Tel: 011 23231814

DRAFT

REGULATIONS REGARDING

OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING INSTITUTIONS

AND PROGRAMMES OF STUDY, 2013

UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION

REGULATIONS REGARDING OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING INSTITUTIONS AND PROGRAMMES OF STUDY - OCTOBER, 2013

C O N T E N T S

PART - I

- 1.1 A Perspective on Open and Distance Learning (ODL) Regulation
- 1.2 Short Title, Scope and Commencement
- 1.3 Definitions and Interpretation

PART - II

RECOGNITION OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS FOR ODL PROGRAMMES

- 2.1 Eligibility Criteria and Conditions for Recognition
- 2.2 Period of Validity, Renewal and Withdrawal of Recognition
- 2.3 Self-Regulation through Disclosures, Declarations and Reports
- 2.4 Quality Assurance
- 2.5 Minimum Standards to be maintained
- 2.6 Self Learning Material (SLM)
- 2.7 Use of Technology
- 2.8 Programme Launching Process and Approval
- 2.9 Student Admission
- 2.10 Learner Support Centre and Learner Support Services
- 2.11 Evaluation and Certification Norms and Procedure
- 2.12 System Management: Structure and Processes
- 2.13 Research programmes leading to award MPhil/Ph.D/D.Sc/D.LITT degrees under ODL mode
- 2.14 Assessment and Accreditation

PART – III

MONITORING MECHANISM AND REGULATORY ARRANGEMENTS

- 3.1 Review of Performance
- 3.2 Guidance and Directions
- 3.3 Inspection
- 3.4 Complaint Inquiry

PART – IV

- 4.1 Disclosure and Dissemination
- 4.2 Quality Assurance Check and Reporting
- 4.3 Independent Third Party Audit
- 4.4 Assessment and Accreditation
- 4.5 Inquiry and Inspection

PART – V

APPENDICES

- 5.1 UGC GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS' ENTITLEMENT

1. **A PERSPECTIVE ON ODL REGULATIONS BASED ON REPORT OF ODL COMMITTEE (2012) :**

The Report of the Committee to suggest Measures to Regulate Standards of Education imparted through Distance Mode (Prof. N.R. Madhava Menon Committee), inter alia, made the following recommendations :

“The need for an alternative strategy to supplement the conventional system of higher education has been appreciated and accepted long back by the policy makers of the country. Through various policy and programme interventions, attempts have been made to promote Open and Distance Learning (ODL) system to facilitate the expansion of higher education sector for the fulfillment of aspirations of those who are deprived of pursuing it for whatever reason. As a result, the contribution of ODL to Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education has risen to about 22%. But, a lot still remains to be done. With the increasing use of technology all over the world in providing learning support to ODL students, the Committee finds it appropriate to recommend well regulated expansion of ODL system in the higher education sector in the country during the 12th Plan period to help fulfill the aspirations of the seekers of knowledge and skill by enhancing the opportunities at affordable cost for the benefit of all those who have the desire to educate themselves further but cannot do so on a full time basis.

The Committee is very much concerned with the complaints about the quality of self-learning materials used by a few ODL institutions, inadequate infrastructure facilities at headquarters and study-centres, lack of proper student support services and delivery of programmes through franchisees leading to lowering of the overall quality of education and its commercialization. This has shaken the faith of the employer groups and also common people in the ODL system. The Committee is also aware of the limitations of the UGC or DEC or AICTE or NCTE, in terms of necessary manpower and effective legal framework to reign in the foul players.

In view of the above challenges, the Committee recommends establishment of an independent and effective Regulatory Authority on Distance Education, equipped with necessary powers and resources, through an Act of the Parliament to determine and regulate the standards of higher education including technical education through ODL and to promote and co-ordinate amongst the stakeholders for dissemination of quality higher education relevant to the need of the individual and society. This independent Regulatory Authority may be called the Distance Education Council of India (DECI). Eventually, when the NCHER Bill is passed, DECI will get subsumed into the proposed overarching Regulator along with other existing regulators, viz. UGC, AICTE, NCTE, etc.

The Committee is aware that passing of the proposed Distance Education Council of India Bill may take some time. Meanwhile, the existing ambiguity and uncertainty cannot be allowed to prevail and be exploited by the foul players of the ODL system. There is a moral dilemma before the DEC, a statutory body of an open university i.e.. IGNOU, in acting as a regulator of the ODL system regulating other open universities. Before the commencement and even after some years of commencement of the IGNOU Act, the UGC remained the regulator in respect of distance education system. Therefore, position of UGC vis-à-vis IGNOU as a Regulator is stronger and more acceptable to the whole university system including the open universities. Keeping all this in view, the Committee recommends that the Government should issue a policy direction/notification to UGC for assuming the responsibilities of maintaining standards in ODL System and creating a DECI like interim authority for the purpose. Needless to say that while doing so the UGC and the interim authority will utilize the framework and resources available with the DEC working under IGNOU. First of all the interim authority shall evolve systems taking into account the observations made in this report, viz. development of programme specific quality benchmarks in respect of all relevant parameters, system for on line application and processing, and disclosure of relevant information on the web site of the institution and the DECI, development of quality self learning material, credible system of counseling, evaluation of assignments and examination etc. Once the systems are in position, the DECI and UGC may start the recognition of ODL institutions as per the newly developed system and enforce norms and standards laid by it in the recognized institutions.”

The recommendations of the Committee on ODL, accepted by the Government of India, have been reproduced here only to give the background and the scope of the Regulations being notified by the University Grants Commission pending the enactment of the Distance Education Council Bill by Parliament. By and large, these Regulations incorporate the spirit of the recommendations of the Expert Committee and the Report may provide guidance in interpreting the provisions of these Regulations.

1.1.2. INTERIM ARRANGEMENTS NOTIFIED BY UGC :

Pending the formulation of the Revised ODL Regulations by the University Grants Commission, a Notification was issued by the Commission in June 2013 adopting the “Guidelines of the Distance Education Council (since dissolved) on Minimum Requirements for Recognition of ODL institutions”. This was an interim arrangement intended to avoid a vacuum in the regulatory regime which arose on the repeal of Statute 28 of the IGNOU Act, 1985.

The UGC Notification of June 2013, reproduced below, may be read as the Preamble to the present Regulations Regarding Open and Distance Learning Institutions and Programmes of Study, 2013.

1.2 Short Title, Scope and Commencement

1.2.1 These Regulations may be called the University Grants Commission (the minimum standards of instruction for the grant of degree or any other award by whatever name called at the under-graduate and post-graduate levels including Research degrees through Open and Distance Learning (ODL) mode in the faculties of Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, Commerce and Management, Sciences including computational Sciences, Fine Arts) Regulations, 2013.

1.2.2 These Regulations shall replace the UGC Regulations, 1985 regarding the Minimum Standards of Instructions for the Grant of the First Degree through Non formal / Distance Education dated 25th November, 1985; and shall apply to a University established or incorporated by or under a Central Act, a State Act or 'an Institution Deemed to be University under Section-3 of the University Grants Commission Act, 1956. Deemed Universities purely offering ODL programmes shall not be permitted.

Standalone Institutions including Institutions of National Importance which are not Universities which have been given permission to conduct ODL programmes by erstwhile DEC shall be regulated by present regulations. However, the Commission shall not grant permission for fresh proposals from standalone institutions after the notification of these Regulations.

1.2.3 These Regulations shall come into force from the date of its notification; and shall be in addition to and not in derogation of any other Regulations, Notifications, Guidelines or other instructions issued from time to time by the University Grants Commission in respect of standards of higher education.

1.3 Definitions and Interpretation

1.3.1 'Centre for Internal Quality Assurance' (CIQA) means a Centre established by a Higher Education Institution offering ODL for ensuring the quality of programmes offered by it through internal quality monitoring mechanism as may be prescribed by or on behalf of the Commission from time to time.

- 1.3.2 'Credit' means the Unit award gained by a student by study efforts of a minimum of thirty hours required to acquire the prescribed level of learning in respect of that Unit.
- 1.3.3 'Higher Education Institution' (HEI) means an institution providing education at the level of a University.
- 1.3.4 'Learner Support Services' (LSC) means and includes such services as are provided by a Higher Education Institution in order to facilitate the acquisition of teaching-learning experiences by the learner to the level prescribed by or on behalf of the Commission in respect of a programme of study.
- 1.3.5 'Open and Distance Learning' (ODL) means a mode of providing flexible learning opportunities by overcoming separation of teacher and learner using a variety of media, including print, electronic and occasional face-to-face meetings with the presence of an institution to deliver teaching-learning experiences, including practicals or work experiences.
- 1.3.6 'Self Learning Material' (SLM) means and includes contents in the form of course material, whether print or non-print, which is inter-alia self-explanatory, self-contained, self-directed at the learner, and amenable to self-evaluation, and enables the learner to acquire the prescribed level of learning in a course of study; but does not include text-books or guide-books.
- 1.3.7 'Franchising' for the purpose of these regulations, means and includes the practice of allowing, formally or informally, any person or institution or organization, other than the Higher Education Institution recognized under these regulations for offering ODL programmes, to offer such programmes of study on behalf of or in the name of the recognized Higher Education Institution; and the terms 'franchise' and 'franchisee' shall be construed accordingly.

PART-II

RECOGNITION OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS FOR ODL PROGRAMMES

2.1 Eligibility Criteria and Conditions for Recognition

- a) A Higher Education Institution, which is an Open University established for imparting ODL under a Central Act or a State Act, or a university established by such Acts for imparting education inter-alia in the conventional mode of class-room teaching, an Institution declared as Deemed to be University under section 3 of the UGC Act, 1956 imparting education in the conventional mode of class-room teaching, shall be eligible to seek recognition for offering ODL programmes to learners, provided:
- I. that the establishing Act, or the statutes therein governing the university, or the Memorandum of Association governing the institution deemed to be University, as the case may be, provide for offering such programmes;
 - II. where the HEI applying for recognition is a university or an institution deemed to be University already imparting education in the conventional mode of class-room teaching, it has been doing so for at least 10 years on the date of such application;
 - III. where the applicant HEI seeks to establish Learner centres for learners outside the territorial jurisdiction of the establishing Act, such application is accompanied by an authorization by the State government under whose academic jurisdiction such Learning centres are proposed to be established;
 - IV. a copy of such application in such proforma as may be prescribed, along with proof of eligibility, as hereinafter mentioned in these regulations, is displayed on the website of the HEI by way of self-disclosure;

- V. that the application is accompanied by evidence of having prepared the Self Learning Materials required for the programmes of study, duly approved by the statutory bodies of the HEI empowered to decide on academic matters;
- VI. that the application is accompanied by evidence of availability of ODL technology resources adequate for effective delivery of all the proposed programme(s) of study and the expected enrolment of students;
- VII. that the application is accompanied by evidence of the preparedness for establishing Learner Centres, providing Learning Support Services, establishing Centre for Internal Quality Assurance, availability of the prescribed number of faculty resources satisfying the minimum qualifications prescribed including for the purpose of continuous improvements in SLM, availability of adequate number of qualified Counsellors meeting such standards of competence as may be prescribed, and the administrative arrangements for supportive services for effective delivery of ODL.

2.2 Period of Validity, Renewal and Withdrawal of Recognition :

- a) The Commission shall, in such manner as may be prescribed, recognize HEI to offer ODL programmes in specified areas of study, for a period of five years, unless withdrawn earlier, for reasons of non-compliance of these Regulations or any other provisions of the Act.
- b) During the period of recognition, the Commission shall have the right to cause inspection to review the functioning of any Institution in respect of ODL programme(s) offered by it.
- c) In case, any information, documentary evidence submitted or produced by the Higher Education Institution is found to be false at any stage, the recognition of the HEI for offering ODL programmes may be withdrawn by the Commission; and the HEI shall be solely responsible for protecting the legitimate interests of the students already on the rolls of the Institution and without prejudice to the provisions of these regulations, the UGC regulations for protecting interests of students in this regard shall apply.

- d) The Commission, either on its own or on the basis of any complaint received by it in respect of a Higher Education Institution imparting ODL programme(s), may cause an enquiry. in such manner as it may deem fit; and, where it is established that the activities of the Institution are in violation of the provisions of these Regulations, it may issue directions for withdrawal of recognition, after giving a reasonable opportunity to such HEI.

2.3 Self-Regulation through Disclosures, Declarations and Reports :

- a) A Higher Education Institution offering ODL programme(s) shall display on its website a declaration by an authorized signatory, not below the rank of the Registrar authenticating the following documents uploaded on the said website : -

Deleted:

- i) The establishing Act and Statutes there under, or the Memorandum of Association, as the case may be, of the HEI, empowering it to offer ODL programme(s).
- ii) Copies of the letters of recognition from Commission and other relevant statutory/regulatory authorities.
- iii) Programme details including brochures or programme guides giving, interalia, information such as name of the programme, duration, eligibility for enrolment, programme fee, programme structure.
- iv) Programme-wise information on syllabus; suggested readings; contact points for counseling, hands-on experience/internship; programme structure with credit points; programme-wise faculty details; list of supporting staff; list of Learner centres with addresses and contact details; their working hours and counselling schedule.
- v) Important schedules/date-sheets for admissions, registration-re-registration, counseling, assignments and feedback thereon, Term End examination, result declarations.

- vi) Detailed strategy plan related to online course delivery, if any including learning materials offered through online and learner assessment system and quality assurance practices of e-learning programmes;
- vii) The feedback mechanism on design, development, delivery and continuous evaluation of learner-performance shall form an integral part of the transactional design of the ODL programmes and shall be an input for maintaining the quality of the programmes and bridging the gaps, if any.
- viii) Information regarding any new programmes launched and those proposed for the next two years.
- ix) Details of collaborative arrangements with other institutions in respect of ODL programmes.
- x) Data of Year wise /programme-wise student enrolment details and Degrees awarded

2.4 Quality Assurance :

- a) A Higher Education Institution offering ODL programme(s) shall, within one year from the coming into force of these Regulations, establish a Centre for Internal Quality Assurance (CIQA) exclusively for ODL programme(s), if such a Centre is not already in operation.
- b) A Higher Education Institution offering ODL programme(s) shall follow the Quality Assurance Guidelines on learning materials in multiple media, human resources, curriculum and pedagogy, prescribed by the Commission or by any other agency authorized by it for prescribing such guidelines.
- c) A Higher Education Institution offering ODL programme(s) shall post its quality assurance mechanism on its website as part of self-disclosure.

- d) A Higher Education Institution offering ODL programme(s) shall take adequate measures for the training and capacity building of its teaching and administrative staff and counselors at regular intervals.

2.5 Minimum standards to be maintained :

- a) The Higher Education Institution shall ensure that the quality of programmes of study offered through ODL mode are maintained at par with standards obtaining in the conventional mode of class-room teaching as prescribed by the Commission or the appropriate statutory authority.
- b) A Higher Education Institution offering ODL programme(s) shall award only such degrees as are specified under section 22 of the UGC Act, 1956.
- c) A Higher Education Institution offering ODL programme(s) shall ensure that the academic infrastructure, including library, laboratory and workshop facilities at its Learner Centres, and information resources for online delivery of programmes, meet the Guidelines prescribed by the Commission from time to time, and are commensurate with the number of programmes and enrolments thereto.

2.6 Self Learning Material (SLM) :

A Higher Education Institution offering ODL programme(s) shall, in order to facilitate the pace of learning and multiple choice for learners, ensure that :

- a) the Self Learning Material (SLM) developed and offered by it is self-explanatory, self-contained, self-directed, illustrative, easily comprehensible, self-motivating, self-evaluating, and in manageable modules such as units and blocks.
- b) the SLM has clearly stated objectives, intended learning outcomes, study guidance and advice for the learners as to how to optimally

use the SLM and suggestive related reference material to enhance the learning experience. Linkage within the text with other media should be maintained for easy referencing and progress.

- c) the SLM provides adequate mechanism for the learners to provide feedback on their understanding of the subject.
- d) the SLM is revised at such intervals of time as the Commission may prescribe; provided that the HEI may revise it earlier if it deems fit.
- e) the SLM is in multiple media such as in the print form, audio and video programmes, digital media, and online -interactive modules.
- f) no ODL programme is launched unless the Higher Education Institution has prepared all required SLM for such programme.

2.7 Use of Technology :

A Higher Education Institution offering ODL programme(s) shall take such measures as are necessary to blend Information Communication Technologies (ICT) for efficiency in its teaching learning process, and administrative functioning and for maintenance of updated information at all times in respect of status of admissions, registration, for managing teaching-learning activities through online support for interactive learning with learner feedback, to facilitate the use of Open Educational Resources (OER), Massive Open Online courses (MOOC) and for continuous as well as term-end evaluation, certification, and other student support.

2.8 Programme Launching Process and Approval :

- 2.8.1 Every HEI offering ODL programme shall publish complete details of each programme on offer including fee structure, minimum eligibility condition for admission as prescribed by Commission from time to time, schedules of activities and academic calendar viz. dates for registration, re-registration, counselling sessions, assignment submissions, receipt of feedbacks on assignments, examination, list of

study centres for different programmes

2.8.2 Before offering any programme, the HEI shall prepare a Programme Project Report (PPR) for each programme according to the norms and guidelines prescribed by the Commission and wherever necessary by the appropriate regulatory authority having control over the programme.

2.8.3 The PPR shall include,

- a) Information on relevance of programme to the Institution's mission and goals; objectives of the programme; nature of prospective target group of learners; and appropriateness of ODL mode for acquiring specific competence / skills;
- b) Instructional design which shall include duration of programme; faculty and support staff requirements; instructional delivery mechanisms; identification of media –print, audio/video, online, computer aided, and student support service systems.
- c) Procedure for admissions, curriculum transaction and evaluation.
- d) Details of the laboratory support required for the programme, if any.
- e) Library Resources
- f) Cost estimate of the programme and the provisions therefore. The cost estimate should indicate the amount assigned for programme development, delivery and maintenance
- g) Quality assurance mechanism and expected programme outcomes;
- h) Curriculum and detailed Syllabi of the programme
- i) Guidelines on programme launching, design, development and any such matters as prescribed by the Commission and other regulatory bodies shall be followed strictly by the ODL Institution.

2.8.4 The PPR shall be approved by the appropriate authority of the HEI and should be

authenticated by the competent authority.

2.8.5 On approval of PPR, the HEI shall prepare the SLM at least three months before announcing the programme.

2.8.6 The HEI shall put in place monitoring mechanism to ensure the proper implementation of PPR.

2.9 Student Admissions :

A Higher Education Institution offering ODL shall disclose on its website its policy on student admissions to the ODL programmes,

2.9.1 All admissions shall be made directly through headquarters of HEI, its own Regional Centres, if any, established by the HEI and formalities related to admissions/registration shall be the sole responsibility of the HEI.

2.9.2 No Learner centre will be allowed to conduct admissions directly or indirectly. The admission fee shall be payable by means of online transfer/bank draft/pay order directly in favour of HEI.

2.10 Learner Centres and Learner Support Services :

Learner Centres :

2.10.1 A Higher Education Institution offering ODL programmes shall ensure that the Learner centres are established in a college affiliated to a University or a government recognized Higher Education Institution offering programmes in the same broad areas having the necessary infrastructure and human resources for offering the programme.

2.10.2 A Learner Centre will be the contact point/centre established, managed and operated by the HEI for providing academic as well as administrative support to its learners. Approval of HEI shall be mandatory for opening of Learner Centres.

2.10.3 Each Learner Centre shall have such minimum infrastructure and teaching/support staff, as may be decided by the HEI as per norms of Commission from time to time. A Learner Centre shall be headed by a coordinator who shall be the permanent

teacher not below the rank of a qualified Assistant Professor of the concerned College/HEI. He shall be assisted by the counselors as decided by the HEI.

2.10.4 An ODL institution may establish special Learner Centres for imparting instruction to persons covered under the National Trust Act and the Persons with Disabilities Act.

2.10.5 The HEI shall have a Standard Operating Procedure (SoP) for the smooth functioning of the Learner Centres which will include functions of the Learner Centres and its different functionaries, monitoring mechanism of different services provided by the centre.

2.10.6 It will be mandatory for the Learner centre to maintain the learner data related to conduct of counselling sessions, evaluation of assignments and grievance redressal.

2.10.7 No HEI shall open its learner centres with franchising arrangement

Learner Support Services :

2.10.8 Each HEI offering ODL Programmes shall have guidelines for Learner support that is available to all Learner centres and accessible to the learners. The different services that shall be provided by the learner support centre shall include,

- (a) pre-admission Counselling for prospective learners to provide information to facilitate them in taking an informed decision on joining a specific ODL programme,
- (b) support for admission related matters,
- (c) details of study material of which information is available on the website of HEI
- (d) arrangement to ensure the delivery of study material to learners within a fortnight from the dates of admission.
- (e) A full time dedicated help desk well versed with the learner information data base providing single window services for all learner related queries.

2.10.9 The Student Entitlement Guidelines prescribed by the Commission (see Appendix...) shall be adopted by the HEI and to operationalize it, the HEI shall provide an appropriate redressal mechanism easily accessible to the learners.

2.11 Evaluation and Certification: Norms and Procedures :

2.11.1 Each HEI offering ODL Programmes shall have a set mechanism in the form of an ordinance for evaluation of learners enrolled through ODL mode and their certification.

2.11.2 Each HEI offering ODL Programmes shall adopt a rigorous process in development of question papers, question banks, assignments and their moderation, conduct of examination, evaluation of answer scripts by qualified teachers, and result declaration.

2.11.3 The examination of the ODL programmes shall be managed by the HEI Examination/Evaluation Unit and should not be contracted out.

2.11.4 The evaluation shall include two types of assessments- continuous/ formative assessment in the form of assignments, and summative assessment in the form of end semester examination/ term end examination.

2.12 Systems Management : Structure and Processes :

2.12.1 In every HEI there shall be a dedicated Unit for operationalizing the ODL programme in the form of the faculty of ODL/ School / Centre for ODL.

2.12.2 This Unit shall be headed by a regular functionary not below the rank of a Professor and shall have appropriate and adequate academic, technical, administrative staff and infrastructural resources as prescribed by the Commission.

2.12.3 This Unit shall plan, implement, coordinate and monitor operationalization and quality assurance of the ODL programmes, including monitoring the conduct and programme delivery by the Learner centres and shall ensure adherence to the regulations and guidelines of the Commission and other regulatory bodies

2.13 Research programmes leading to award MPhil/Ph.D/D.Sc/D.LITT degrees under ODL mode :

- 2.13.1 These Regulations regarding Post-Graduate research degrees in ODL mode shall be in addition to and not in derogation of any other Regulations, Notifications, Guidelines or other instructions issued from time to time by the Commission in respect of standards of research degrees/awards in HEI.
- 2.13.2 No HEI having ODL programmes shall enroll any research candidates in any broad area of research programme unless the Institution has adequate number of eligible Guides as per the Commission's norms who are permanent members of the Faculty of such Institution in that particular broad area of study.
- 2.13.3 Every HEI seeking to offer Research programmes through ODL shall seek prior approval of the Commission by submitting an application in the presented form giving details of the number of candidates being enrolled, the number of candidates who have obtained research degrees from the HEI, the number of research publications of the faculty, the academic resources in terms of faculty, library, laboratory and guides available in the Institution. The HEI shall have its ordinance of Research programmes approved by statutory bodies of the HEI.
- 2.13.4 Every HEI offering Research degree through ODL shall constitute a Research Advisory Council consisting of at least three external experts of eminence in the broad area of research and all research proposals shall necessarily be approved by the Research Advisory Council before the candidate is enrolled as a research student of the institution.
- 2.13.5 The Centre for Internal Quality Assurance of the institution in its annual report put up on its website and submitted it to the Commission shall under the head of "P.G. Research Programmes" give detailed account of progress in research of each candidate enrolled; research completed and degrees awarded and publications done. In all cases of doctoral degrees completed, the website should indicate the gist of the examiner's report on the thesis evaluated.

2.14 Assessment and Accreditation :

- 2.14.1 Every HEI offering ODL Programme shall be subjected to a system of performance Assessment and Accreditation by an accreditation agency authorized by the Commission.
- 2.14.2 Every HEI offering ODL Programme shall get its SLM audited by external experts of eminence before launching a programme.

Part III**Monitoring Mechanism and Regulatory Arrangements**

- 3.1 The Commission shall periodically review the performance of HEIs through a system of self disclosure, obtaining information from the HEI and other authorities and wherever necessary by causing inspection of the HEI.
- 3.2 The HEI shall be under an obligation to provide all necessary information as may be requisitioned by the Commission for monitoring its performance.
- 3.3 The Commission may also provide guidance to the HEIs for quality assurance and improvement of the ODL programmes.
- 3.4 If the Commission, on the basis of information available with it including material/document in its possession by way of inspection of the institution and information obtained from other sources, is of the opinion that the HEI has violated the regulations, and the norms and guidelines made thereunder which is detrimental to the laid down standards for maintenance of ODL system, it shall withdraw permission accorded to the HEI for conducting an ODL programme.

Provided that no action shall be taken for withdrawal of permission without giving due opportunity to the HEI.

- 3.5 Any Person aggrieved by an order made by the Commission relating to recognition to an HEI or for withdrawal of recognition of an HEI or any programme offered by the HEI offered or proposed to be offered may prefer an Appeal before the Commission within such period and in such manner as may be prescribed.

PART IV

Enforcing Compliance with the Regulations

Based on the principle of autonomy of Higher Education institution and the philosophy of self- appraisal, self correction and self-disclosure as a measure of compliance, these Regulations seek to avoid inspection and control excepting in cases of fraudulent statements, commercialization of education, non-disclosures of facts and other unfair practices intended to mislead the learners under ODL programmes. Therefore, enforcement of these Regulations is expected through five distinct strategies.

- 4.1 Disclosure and dissemination: a Higher Education Institution, recognized under these Regulations for imparting ODL, shall publish in its prospectus for admission and upload on its website, the details of programmes offered, learners enrolled, degrees awarded, Learner centres provided, faculty members and their qualifications, approval of regulatory bodies, and all relevant information.
- 4.2 Quality assurance check and report: A Higher Education Institution recognized under these Regulations for imparting ODL shall get all its programmes assessed through the Internal Quality Assurance Centre once in a year in the format prescribed by the Commission and the report on quality assurance shall, before the end of the

academic year, be prominently placed on its website and shall forward a copy of the same to the Commission.

- 4.3 Independent Third Party Audit: At least once in every three years, a HEI recognized under these Regulations shall cause an Independent Third Party Audit of all the programmes offered under ODL during the preceding three years and shall place it in the public domain and shall forward a copy of the same to the Commission. To facilitate the process and to ensure the credibility of the system, the Commission shall notify a list of independent experts, who may be approached for auditing programmes offered by the HEI concerned.
- 4.4 Assessment and Accreditation: Once every five years, HEI recognized under these Regulations shall compulsorily subject itself to assessment and accreditation by a competent authority duly authorized by the Commission in this behalf and notify the result of accreditation in its website as well as in every publication released to the public on behalf of the Institution.
- 4.5 Inquiry and Inspection: Where the Commission finds it necessary, on receipt of a complaint or *suo motu*, it may cause an inquiry through inspection or otherwise by such body of experts as it may deem fit, to satisfy itself that all the mandatory requirements under these regulations are being complied with by the Higher Education Institution imparting ODL programmes and take appropriate action to get compliance enforced against the erring Institution.

* * * * *