

# Higher education reforms under the new regime

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## Manifest pedagogy

Consolidation

Education is one topic on which every year there have been questions. Such topics require comprehensive preparation by consolidating all issues at one place because inter disciplinary questions might be asked. Below is an **example along with the answer for such questions**. The answer given is a model to mould your answer writing skills.

## In news

*Many reforms in Higher Education in India are recommended and are being implemented. Also, new bodies are constituted in the sector.*

## Placing it in syllabus

Development and management of social sector / service relating to health, education and human resources

## Static dimensions

Higher education in India: Problems and Solutions

1. Governance related issues
2. Autonomy issues
3. Funding, infrastructure and international collaboration

# Current dimensions

Reforms in higher education in the new regime and their effectiveness

1. Higher Education Commission of India (HECI)
2. Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA)
3. Global Initiative of Academic Networks (GIAN)
4. Institutions of Eminence (IOE)
5. Impact of globalization on Higher Education in India

## Content

### Higher Education Commission of India

#### (Repeal of University Grants Commission) Act 2018

This Act is applicable for all higher educational institutions established, under any Act of the Parliament **excluding Institutions of National Importance** so notified by the Government, Act of State Legislature and to all Institutions Deemed to be Universities so notified by the Government.

The Commission has many functions inter alia to **promote the quality of academic instruction, maintenance** of academic standards and **the autonomy of higher educational institutions**. It **ensure maintenance of academic standards** in the Higher Education system in the Country and for pursuance of which it specifies learning outcomes, laydown standards of teaching, assessment and research, evaluate the yearly academic performance.

Here are the key differences between the proposed Higher Education Commission of India from the present University Grants Commission:

|        |     |      |
|--------|-----|------|
| Powers | UGC | HECI |
|--------|-----|------|

|                              |   |  |
|------------------------------|---|--|
| Financial                    | It disburses grants to Central institutions out of its funds.   | It will not have any financial powers.   |
| Academic                     | Promotes and coordinates university education and determine and maintain standards of teaching, examination and research. | It will specify standards for grant of authorization to a university of higher educational institution to commence its academic operations.            |
| Inspection                   | UGC conducts periodic inspections.  | No inspections.  |
| Action on bogus institutions | It terminates affiliations or withholds grants to universities for violations of its regulations.                         | It will be empowered to penalize or even shut down sub-standard institutions.  |
| Composition                  | Has a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman, and 10 members.  | It shall comprise a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson, and 12 members.   |
| Regular staff                | The UGC appoints its own staff.   | The same will apply to the HECI as well. The present staff of UGC will be re-trained to work on fully digital mode – without physical files – at HECI. |

## **Rashtriya Uchhchatra Shiksha Abhiyan**

- **Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS)**, launched in 2013 aims at providing strategic funding to eligible state higher educational institutions.
- **The central funding** (in the ratio of 60:40 for general category States, 90:10 for special category states and 100% for union territories) **would be norm based and outcome dependent.**
- **The funding to states** would be made on the **basis of critical appraisal of State Higher Education Plans**, describing **equity, access and excellence in higher education.**

## **Objectives**

- **To improve the overall quality of state institutions**
- To create a **facilitating institutional structure** for planning and monitoring at the state level, **promoting autonomy in State Universities** and **improving governance in institutions.**
- To ensure adequate **availability of quality faculty in all higher educational institutions**
- To create an **enabling atmosphere** for **research and innovations.**
- **To correct regional imbalances in access to higher education**
- To improve equity and inclusion in higher education by including minorities, SC/ST and women.

## **Global Initiative of Academic Networks (GIAN)**

Govt. of India approved a new program titled Global Initiative of Academic Networks (GIAN) in Higher Education

- To tap the talent pool of scientists and entrepreneurs internationally.
- To encourage their engagement with the institutes of Higher Education in India.

- To augment the country's existing academic resources, accelerate the pace of quality reform.
- To evaluate India's scientific and technological capacity to global excellence.

It facilitates participation of high quality international academicians for delivering short-term courses and programs in Indian institutions.

Initially 500 international faculties will be engaged in conducting courses and later in subsequent years 1000 faculties would be engaged under GIAN throughout India.

The courses under GIAN will vary in duration from one to three weeks depending on the subject and will be free for students of the host institution and available at nominal fee for others.

These courses will be webcasted live for students across the country through web portal of IIT Kharagpur.

## **Institutes of Eminence (IoE)**

### **Eligibility**

Only higher education institutions, currently placed in the top 500 of global rankings or top 50 of National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF), are eligible to apply for eminence tag. The private Institutions of Eminence can also come up as Greenfield ventures provided sponsoring organization submits convincing perspective plan for 15 years.

The scheme of IoE was rolled out by University Grants Commission (UGC). It aims to help 20 higher education (10 public and 10 private) institutions from country break into top 500 global rankings in 10 years, and then eventually break into top 100 over time.

**UGC (Declaration of Government Educational institutions as Institutions of Eminence) Guidelines, 2017 are:**

1. Multi-disciplinary and have both teaching and research.
2. Reasonably good mix of domestic and foreign students.
3. Good proportion of foreign or foreign qualified faculty.
4. Student amenities comparable with that of globally reputed institutions.
5. Reasonably large owned campus with adequate space for expansion.

### **Attributes of IOEs that will separate them from other universities:**

1. Free from most UGC regulations which are binding on other universities.
2. Free to fix their own curriculum.
3. Can admit 30 per cent of foreign students on merit
4. They can recruit foreign faculty up to 25 per cent of its faculty strength

They shall be free to enter into academic collaborations with other institutions of India. The ultimate objective is for these Institutions of Eminence to acquire global standing in a few years. However, institutions based on a list of negative countries prepared by the External Affairs and Home ministries will be exceptions.

## **Test yourself: Mould your thought**

**Critically examine the impact of Globalization on Higher Education in India. Do you think Institutions of Eminence (IoE) initiative addresses these issues?**

Globalization is a meta-event which has impacted every sector and every region of the world, which came officially as a phenomenon post 1991. Education as a sector has been impacted both positively and negatively.

### **Positive impacts of globalization on the higher education**

- Eased the entry of foreign institutions and promoted integration with local institutions.
- Knowledge sharing through integrated networks of communication among universities facilitated by incoming technology.
- Teachers are exposed to new techniques and technologies of study

### **Negative impacts of globalization on new education**

- Huge privatization of higher education and education losing social focus.
- Universities focusing on subject which are market-driven and which support the industries.
- Commercialization of education by private players reduces the opportunities for poor.
- The percentage of people pursuing higher education is abysmally low, which is deteriorated further by commercialization.
- A desperate attempt to meet market needs has taken the focus away from research and development, which is one of the prime reasons that Indian universities do not find a place in top global rankings.
- Commercialization of education has had worse effects on vulnerable groups like women, differently abled, SCs and STs.
- Lack of good universities locally has led moving of talent pruned by schools to outside countries which sets the foundation for brain drain.
- Market driven approach has impacted humanities subjects in general.

### **Institutions of Eminence (IoE) scheme:**

The scheme under the union human resource development ministry aims to project Indian institutes to global recognition. How the scheme addresses adverse effects of globalization?

- Promotion of 10 'Public Institutions' under it through financial assistance and greater autonomy will bring social focus back to higher education.
- Greater autonomy, less political interference provides right academic environment.
- Academic collaborations being allowed in such institutions with top 500 in the world ranking institutions without permission of UGC which shall promote Research and Development.
- Quality improvement will reverse students drain.
- Making them world class institutions will in turn attract students from various countries

To address the issues of globalization in higher education, institute of eminence scheme is a right but first step, which should be accompanied by comprehensive reforms in higher education is to include institutional reforms.