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AICTE instructs educational institutions to go after emerging areas

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IN line with its National Perspective Plan, the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) has decided not to allow existing institutions to start new programmes or increase the number of existing programmes in conventional areas like mechanical or civil, from the coming academic year.

Rather, the institutions would only be allowed to start a new programme or increase intake in emerging areas like Artificial Intelligence (AI), Internet of Things (IoT), blockchain, robotics, quantum computing,

data sciences, cyber security, 3D printing and design, Augmented Reality/Virtual Reality (AR/VR).

Out with the old, in with the new

A high-level committee constituted by the AICTE had in last year come out with a short and medium-term perspective plan for engineering education in the country and recommended institutions not to create any new capacity starting from 2020 academic year. It pointed the low capacity utilisation of 49.8 per cent (capacity vs enrolment) in undergraduate and post graduate courses as the

What's the ratio?

In the case of post graduate degree programmes like M.E. M.Tech, the AICTE has relaxed the faculty-student ratio from the earlier 1:12 (one faculty for every 12 students) to 1:15 (one faculty for every 15 students) now

reason for its directive.

In addition to this, like last year, the AICTE has also decided to reduce intake by 50 per cent in institutions that had 30 per cent or less seats filled in the last five years.

Consortium of Self-Financing Professional Arts and Science Colleges in Tamil Nadu, Joint Secretary, TD Easwaramoorthy said, "Private college managements themselves are interested in reducing intake in courses like civil, mechanical and electrical and start courses like AI. In fact, even top colleges are planning to voluntarily reduce their intake."

Regarding AICTE's plan to cut admissions by half in select institutions, he said, "Last year, the AICTE took out 2.5 lakh seats across the nation using this rule. So, this year, there will not be much reduction in the number of seats available.

under this condition."

Strict guidelines

The AICTE had also warned that its council will not issue Extension of Approval (EOA) unless 60 per cent of the eligible courses in any technical institution is accredited in three year's time.

This was part of the Approval Process Handbook for 2020-21, released by the AICTE on Wednesday. The AICTE would start accepting online applications for extension of approval for existing institution and also for new institutions from Thursday and fixed the last date for submitting application

as February 29.

Mind the staff

The AICTE has also insisted technical education institutions to ensure timely and complete payment of the salary to faculty members by Electronic Clearing Service (ECS) through nationalised banks. Expert visiting committee shall ensure the faculty availability by the annual salary paid statements of the faculty in addition to their physical presence, the apex regulatory body said.

It also asked college managements not to demand original degree certificate from the faculty members.