

# Allow students to write exams in local languages: UGC to varsities

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The University Grants Commission (UGC) has asked universities to allow students to write exams in local languages even if the course is offered in English medium, while arranging evaluators and encouraging the translation of textbooks, according to chairman M. Jagadesh Kumar.

The Commission has also asked the universities to promote the use of local language in teaching and learning processes as well. "Promotion and regular use of Indian languages in education is a crucial area of focus in the new National Education Policy (NEP). It emphasises the importance of teaching and instruction in the



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mother tongue and local languages.

"It also lays thrust on the need to optimise communication in all Indian languages for better cognitive attainment and the development of a holistic personality of the learners," Mr Kumar said.

Noting that the academic ecosystem continues to be English medium-centric, the UGC chief said once the teaching, learning and assessment are done in local languages, student engagement will gradually increase, leading to an increase in the success rate.

"The Commission has requested the universities that students be allowed to write the answers in local languages in examinations even if the programme is offered in English medium, and promote translation of original writing in local languages and use local language in the teaching-learning process at universities," he said.

Asked about how students writing in local languages will be evaluated, he said, "This will be possible if the evaluators also know the local language

and the University can make the effort to find the evaluators who know the local language."

"The idea is to let the students write the answers in a language that will provide them the opportunity to express easily," Kumar said. He said that higher education institutions play an important role in preparing textbooks and supporting the teaching-learning process in the mother tongue and local languages.

The Commission has stressed that it is necessary to strengthen these efforts and "promote such initiatives as writing textbooks in the mother tongue/local languages and encouraging their use in teaching, including translating standard books from other languages".