

UGC approves flexible study duration of UG, draft norms for feedback soon

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SOON, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) will be able to offer an option to undergraduate students to shorten or extend their study duration instead of the standard period of their degree programmes.

University Grants Commission chairman Prof M Jagadesh Kumar told this newspaper that through Accelerated Degree Programmes (ADP) or Extended Degree Programmes (EDP), students can now complete a 3-4 or 4-5 degree in reduced time by earning additional credits per semester.

He said the EDP enables an extended timeline with fewer credits per semester.

The UGC approved the standard operating procedures for HEIs to offer ADP and EDP in a meeting held on November 13.

"Under the ADP and EDP, students earn the same total credits as in the standard duration programme," he said.



The draft norms will now be put in the public domain for feedback from stakeholders.

The National Credit Framework introduces flexibility in higher education by allowing learners to complete undergraduate programmes through ADP or EDP in addition to standard-duration degrees, he said.

The HEIs will establish committees to evaluate students' eligibility for these programmes. These degrees will be equivalent to standard duration degrees for all employment and academic purposes.

Credits

In a 3-4 or 4-5 undergraduate programme, the duration may be extended up to a maximum of two semesters. Students can earn fewer credits in each semester. Based on the credit structure in the curriculum, the committee shall decide the minimum number of credits a student must earn in a semester in the EDP.

According to the SOP, the institutions may earmark up to 10 per cent of the sanctioned intake for ADP. "The only change will be in the duration of the programme. Students shall have the option to choose ADP either at the end of the first semester or the second semester and not beyond that," he added.

"Students opting for the ADP will earn additional credits per semester starting from the second or third semester, depending on when they transition to the ADP," Kumar said.