

In order to ensure that the quality of higher education is sustained and further streamlined, UGC has notified the following regulations in the last 3 years which are mandatory for every institution of higher education across the country to observe.

- UGC (Recognition and Monitoring of Assessment and Accreditation Agencies) Regulations, 2014.
- UGC (Institutions Deemed to be Universities) Regulations, 2016

Further, UGC has also in order to encourage research and development in the country, laid out a number of schemes, awards, fellowships, chairs and programmes under which financial assistance is provided to institutions of higher education as well as faculty members working therein to undertake quality research in almost all areas of knowledge across disciplines such as Universities with Potential for Excellence Scheme, Centre with Potential for Excellence in Particular Area (CPEPA) Scheme, Special Assistance Programme (SAP) Basic Science Research etc.

In addition to the above, UGC has taken many initiatives to improve the quality of Higher Education and meet the global standards. Some of the recent ones are listed below:

- UGC (Minimum Standards and Procedure for Award of M.PHIL./PH.D Degrees) Regulations, 2016 were notified in order to maintain strong checks on the quality of research output being produced in the country. These regulations ensure elimination of malpractices in the admission process as well as the progression towards award of an M.Phil or Ph.D. degree.
- UGC (Promotion and Maintenance of Standards of Academic Collaboration between Indian and Foreign Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2016 have been notified. One of the salient features of these regulations is to promote collaboration between the quality institutions from both the sides.
- UGC Approved List of Journals is a recent initiative of UGC for periodical notification of the list of approved journals to be considered for the purpose of computation of API scores.

Hiring of foreign faculty members at IITs

4384. SHRI K. R. ARJUNAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is mulling to hire foreign faculty members for longer terms to fill 20-30 per cent of faculty positions at the Indian Institutes of Technology;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the delay in getting the visas acts as an irritant for prospective faculty members;

(c) whether Government would specifically focus on resolving the issue of hiring faculty members of Indian origin, who fall under the category of Overseas Citizen of India; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. SATYA PAL SINGH): (a) to (d) In order to address shortage of faculty in premier educational institutions, including Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), various measures have been decided, especially for recruitment of foreign faculty. These include creation of pan-IIT faculty pool, effective use of VAJRA Scheme of Department of Science and Technology (DST), appointment of eligible OCI Card holders as permanent faculty, hassle-free visa to foreign faculty, reducing of annual income ceiling from US\$ 25,000 to ₹ 9.10 lakh per year. In addition to this, Government has also launched the Global Initiative for Academic Networks (GIAN) to enable foreign faculty to teach courses in the higher educational institutions in India.

Loans to universities for infrastructure development

4385. SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR GUPTA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any plan to provide soft loans to top universities for expansion and upgradation of hard and soft infrastructure and to set up research and technology parks;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) if not, what are the other measures being taken by Government to achieve this purpose; and

(d) whether the Ministry has any data on research and technology parks in various Central Universities in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. SATYA PAL SINGH): (a) to (c) The Government has announced to step up investments in general and research infrastructure in premier educational institutions, including health institutions, by launching a major initiative named “Revitalising Infrastructure and Systems in Education (RISE) by 2022” with a planned total investment of ₹ 1,00,000 crore in next four years. Higher