

FEATURES OF AUTONOMOUS INSTITUTIONS

Highlighting the importance of Autonomous Institutions, the UGC document on the XI Plan profile of higher education in India clearly states that: “The only safe and better way to improve the quality of undergraduate education is to the link most of the Institutions from the affiliating structure. Institutions with academic and operative freedom are doing better and have more credibility. The financial support to such Institutions boosts the concept of autonomy.”

Need for Autonomy

Institutions that have the potential for offering programmes of a higher standard do not have the freedom to offer them. The 1964- 66 Education Commission pointed out that the exercise of academic freedom by teachers is a crucial requirement for development of the intellectual climate of our country. Unless such a climate prevails, it is difficult to achieve excellence in our higher education system. With students, teachers and management being co-partners in raising the quality of higher education, it is imperative that they share a major responsibility. Hence, the Education Commission (1964-66) recommended autonomy, which, in essence, is the instrument for promoting academic excellence.

Objectives

- **The National Policy on Education (1986-92) formulated the following objectives for autonomous institution. An autonomous institution will have the freedom to:**
- determine and prescribe its own courses of study and syllabi, and restructure and redesign the courses to suit local needs; and
 - prescribe rules for admission in consonance with the reservation policy of the state government;
 - Evolve methods of assessment of students performance, the conduct of examinations and notification of results;
 - Use modern tools of educational technology to achieve higher standards and greater creativity; and
 - Promote healthy practices such as community service, extension activities, projects for the benefit of the society at large, neighborhood programmes, etc.

Special features of an autonomous institution

Starting of New Courses

An autonomous institution is free to start diploma (undergraduate and postgraduate) or certificate courses without the prior approval of the university. Diplomas and certificates shall be issued under the seal of the institution

An autonomous institution is free to start a new degree or postgraduate course with the approval of the Academic Council of the Institution. An autonomous Institution may rename the existing course after restructuring/redesigning it with the approval of the Academic Council.