

Equivalence Certificates for Foreign Degrees

Prelims - Current events of national and international importance.

Mains - GS-II (Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources)

Why in news?

The University Grants Commission (Recognition and Grant of Equivalence to Qualifications Obtained from Foreign Educational Institutions) Regulations 2025 were notified recently.

- **Equivalence certificate** - Confirms a foreign qualification (degree, diploma) is equivalent to a specific Indian qualification level for higher studies or employment.
- **Issuing Authority** - University Grants Commission will now grant these certificates, replacing the previous system managed by the Association of Indian Universities (AIU).
- This marks the first dedicated regulatory framework by UGC for this purpose.
- **Validity** - Valid for all UGC academic institutions, higher education, research, and employment requiring UGC-recognized qualifications with few exceptions.
- **Exceptions** - Medical, pharmacy, nursing, law, architecture and others regulated by the norms of respective Statutory Councils in India" will not be covered under the regulations.
- **Applicability** - Applicable to qualifications obtained via distance or online learning modes.
- Also applies to school qualifications (requiring min. 12 years of schooling) for UG admissions in India.

Conditions for Granting Equivalence

- Qualification awarded by a foreign institution recognized in its home country.
- Entry requirements (credits, thesis, etc.) comparable to similar Indian programmes.
- Programme pursued according to the foreign institution's norms.
- Qualifications from off-shore campuses are eligible if compliant with regulations in both the host country and the institution's origin country.

Process for granting equivalence

- Applications via a dedicated UGC online portal.
- UGC-appointed standing committee decides (accept/reject) within 10 working days.
- Mechanism for review available in case of rejection.

Need for the issuance of the regulations

- Aligns with NEP 2020's focus on internationalization of higher education.

- Provides a structured, transparent, and statutory framework, replacing the non-statutory AIU system.
- Ensures clarity, consistency, and fairness in recognizing foreign qualifications.
- Facilitates seamless integration of students with foreign qualifications into India's education system and workforce.

Reference

[The Indian Express | equivalence certificates](#)

