

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](#)

