The Draft National Credit Framework (NCrF)

Why in news?

The government began the process of public consultations on the National Credit Framework (NCrF) which seeks to integrate academic and vocational domains.

What is the credit system?

- **Credit system -** Credits are recognition that a learner has completed a prior course of learning, corresponding to a qualification at a given level.
- It offers flexibility in choosing courses, the option to change courses or institutions midway, or to re-enter the education system after dropping out without losing years.
- The students can digitally deposit their credits in the Academic Bank of Credits (ABC) and redeem them whenever required.
- **Credit frameworks -** Credit frameworks are guidelines to be followed by schools, colleges and universities in adopting the credit system.
- For example, the National Higher Education Qualification Framework (NHEQF) lays out the guidelines for higher educational institutions that want to implement the credit system.

The Choice-Based Credit System (CBCS) which offers the opportunity to mix and match a wide variety of courses, enabling interdisciplinary and intradisciplinary education, is followed by many universities in India.

What is the NCrF about?

- **NCrF -** National Credit Framework is an umbrella framework for skilling, re-skilling, up-skilling, accreditation and evaluation in educational & skilling institutions.
- It proposes to integrate the credits earned through school education, higher education and vocational and skill education.
- It encompasses National Higher Education Qualification Framework (NHEQF), National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF) and National School Education Qualification Framework (NSEQF).
- The NCrF has been proposed as part of the National Education Policy (NEP).
- **Coverage** - It brings the entire school education system under the ambit of credits for the first time.
    - So far, only the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) followed a credit system.
- The NCrF covers skill and vocational education.
- **Validity of credits** - According to the University Grants Commission regulations, the

credits shall remain valid for a maximum duration of **7 years**.
- A student shall have to earn at least 40 credits for completing a year of school education after putting in 1200 hours of notional learning hours.
- **Draft** - It has been drafted by a 11-member committee headed by National Council of Vocational Education and Training (NCVET) chairperson **Nirmaljeet Singh Kalsi**.

Notion learning hours means time spent not just in classroom teaching, but also in a range of co-curricular and extracurricular activities such as sports, yoga, performing arts, music, social work, NCC, vocational education, job training, internships or apprenticeships.

What are the benefits of this framework?

For students

- Ensures flexibility in the duration of study/ courses through multiple entries and exit/work options
- Paves way for creditisation of all learning hours, including academic, vocational and experiential learning
- Gives the provision for lifelong learning – any time anywhere learning

For institutions

- Brings about a unification of higher education institutions
- Promotes multidisciplinary education
- Promotes stronger collaboration between institutions
- Increases the focus on research and innovation

For government

- Assists the government to increase the enrolment of students
- Helps to fulfil the national vision of complementing the demographic dividend
- Aids in transforming India into the Skill capital of the world

For industry

- Allows students to attain NSQF-approved foundational skills
- Helps students be more employable
- Allows integration of educational upskilling through micro credentials

References

1. The Indian Express | Working of credit system in schools
2. The Hindu | Draft National Credit Framework
3. PIB | The draft National Credit Framework (NCrF)



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