

Accredited B-schools to get graded autonomy soon



All PGDM institutions will be categorised based on the NBA accreditation status of their programmes

A long-pending demand by the Education Promotion Society for India (EPSI) that better-run business schools which offer post-graduate diplomas in management should be granted autonomy on the basis of accreditation and global rankings, has been acceded to by the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE).



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As per the guidelines, all PGDM institutions will be categorised into categories I, II and III institutions on the basis of the NBA accreditation status of the programmes offered by the PGDM institutions. The PGDM institutions with a majority of their programmes accredited from the National Board of Accreditation (NBA) with 75 per cent or more scores will be categorised as Category I institutions. Under Category II will be included those PGDM institutions that have a majority of their programmes accredited from the NBA with 67.5 per cent or more scores. Rest of the institutions, not included in these two categories, will be part of the Category III.

Concessions granted

The AICTE, in a Gazette Notification with detailed guidelines put out on October 11, grants this autonomy to PGDM institutions. So far, as per the AICTE's regulatory model adopted in the 1990s, all MBA/PGDM institutions have been treated on par, irrespective of quality standards. This notification comes as a great relief to these institutions, says Dr H Chaturvedi, Director, Birla Institute of Management Technology (Bimtech) and Alternate President, EPSI.

According to a press release issued by EPSI, Category I status will also be granted to those institutions ranked among the first 100 ranks under FT Global MBA Ranking or QS Global MBA Ranking. As per the AICTE Notification, Category I and II institutions will be provided autonomy for introducing new programmes, starting skill courses and distance learning courses, inviting foreign faculty, admitting foreign students, tie-ups and collaborations with foreign B-schools and setting up research parks and incubation centres.

Category I PGDM institutions have been provided 11 major concessions from the AICTE's regulatory control, and Category II PGDM institutions will be given six major relaxations.

Changes will promote agility

Every year, the PGDM institutions will be given an opportunity to submit their application for this categorisation twice, on June 1 and December 1. They will have to submit an application along with documents related to NBA scores or Global MBA Ranking of FT or QS. In the notification, AICTE has reiterated that institutions getting autonomy under Categories I and II will continue to follow the infrastructural norms and corporate governance guidelines issued by it from time to time. These PGDM institutions will also continue to follow the mandatory disclosure guidelines of the AICTE.

“EPSI congratulates the AICTE for starting a new chapter in Indian management education which will facilitate a cordial relationship between the regulatory body and PGDM institutions based on mutual trust, understanding and empathy. It will provide a level playing field between the PGDM institutions and the IIMs, to some extent,” says Prof Chaturvedi.

It will also free the accredited institutions from red-tapism, bureaucratic delays and archaic rules, and help them align their curriculum and programme bouquets with the ever-changing requirements of industry at national and global levels. In the context of the rapid changes happening in the business world due to industry 4.0, it will prove a boon for all stakeholders, says Dr Chaturvedi.