

## National Credit Framework (NCrF)

### Why in News?

The University Grants Commission (UGC) has issued new Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the implementation of the National Credit Framework (NCrF).

### What is National Credit Framework (NCrF)?

- **NCrF** - It is an inclusive one single meta framework to seamlessly integrate the credits earned through school education, higher education and vocational & skill education.
- It provides for Assignment, Accumulation, Storage, Transfer & Redemption of Credits
- **Integrated Framework** - NCrF encompasses National Higher Education Qualification Framework (NHEQF), National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF) and National Curriculum Framework (NCF).
- **Developed by** - It has been jointly developed by UGC, AICTE, NCVET, NIOS, CBSE, NCERT, DGT, Ministry of Education, and Ministry of Skill Development.
- **Notional Learning Hours** - For one year of education/ learning across school education, higher education and vocational education, training and skilling, the learning hours is to be set at 1200 Hrs per year and awarded 40 Credits per year.
- **Credit Value** - Under National Credit Framework (NCrF), one Credit is equivalent to 30 notional learning hours.
- **Credit Activities** - Student can earn credits from diverse activities
  - Classroom teaching
  - Laboratory work, Atal Tinkering Laboratories, Research projects
  - Assignments, tutorials
  - Sports and games, yoga
  - Performing arts, music, handicrafts
  - Social work, National Cadet Corps, National Service Scheme activities,
  - Vocational and skill education
  - On-the-job training, internships, apprenticeships
- **Mandatory Assessment** - The assessment is mandatory for earning credits for all types of learning.
- **NCrF credit levels**
  - School education - Up to level 4
  - Higher education - Level 4.5. to level 8
  - Vocational education & training from - Level 1 to level 8.
- The total Credit Points earned by the student in a particular year could be obtained by multiplying the credits earned with the NCrF Level at which the credits have been earned.
- **Recognition of Prior Learning**- NCrF enables provisions for Recognition of Prior Learning for students and workers which creditizes their learning through various formal, non-formal, traditional or any other means.

- **Academic Bank of Credits (ABC)**- The NCrF would be operationalised through ABC by including credits earned through school education, vocational education, higher education, training and skilling, including apprenticeships, internships, project work etc.

*Academic Bank of Credits (ABC) is a virtual/digital storehouse that contains the information of the credits earned by individual students throughout their learning journey.*

### **What are the benefits of NCrF?**

- **Balanced Education** - NCrF helps HEIs balance vocational and skill training and knowledge-generating academic pursuits.
- **Multidisciplinary Credit Transfer** - Using the NCrF, higher education institutions (HEI) can give a unified accumulation and transfer of credits across multidisciplinary education, including skill education.
- The NCrF is an enabling framework rather than a regulatory one.
- **Flexible Credit Earning** - The NCrF gives students the flexibility to earn credits from diverse range of activities.
- **Meeting Diversity of Needs** - NCrF understands India's societal, technological, and educational needs and strive to meet those demands holistically.
- **Making Education Dynamic**- It helps in making India's higher education system dynamic and relevant to the country's needs.
- **Creating Competitive Institutions** - NCrF aims to help institutions remain flexible and competitive in keeping with the inevitable rapid economic and technological changes.
- **Fulfilling Employment Needs** - NCrF enables institutions and students to meet the current and future evolution of job requirements by bridging the skill mismatch.
- **Career Growth** - NCrF allow students to pursue their academic and career goals.
- **Upgrading HEIs** - NCrF transform HEIs, besides being havens of knowledge, to equip students with the skills and the competencies needed for emerging roles and self-employment.
- **Creating MERU Institutions** - NCrF enables the transformation of HEIs into multidisciplinary education and research university (MERU) institutions as demanded by NEP 2020.
- **Facilitating Social Mobility** - It makes higher education a tool for students to increase their social mobility by enabling students acquire practical skills and knowledge through a flexible curriculum.
- **Multiple Entry and Multiple Exit**- The NCrF enables the students with opportunities to catch up and re-enter education ecosystem in case they have fallen behind or dropped out at any stage.

### **What are the challenges in implementing NCrF?**

- **Manpower** - Mapping course credits of individual students who take a transfer from other educational institutes needs substantial manpower.

- **Homogenization** - A common framework for courses risks homogenising of institutions' and erasing the uniqueness of them.
- **Large Scale** -Scaling this individualised mapping approach could become problematic as student numbers increase.
- **Mapping Credits** - Understand a student's prior learning and mapping it with a particular university's courses poses implementation difficulties.
- **Possibilities of Rejection** - Universities may accept or reject the credits earned by the learner thorough prior learning.
- **Standards of Learning** - Standards of teaching and learning across institutions vary and accommodating the differences into the framework poses challenges.

### Way forward?

- Use of Information Technologies to integrate the educational reporting systems.
- Accommodate the diverse education models across the states.
- If a university does not accept a student's credits, it needs to inform him/her why the credits are not accepted.
- Raise awareness among students and address challenges in understanding the framework.

### References

1. [The Hindu | National Credit Framework](#)
2. [UGC | NCrF](#)

