

Vedas, Puranas to fetch students credits under new framework

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STUDENTS WILL be able to earn credits for specialised knowledge in Puranas, Vedas and the Indian Knowledge System, according to the final report on the new National Credit Framework (NCrF) released by the University Grants Commission on Monday.

Credits are essentially a "recognition that a learner has completed a prior course of learning, corresponding to a qualification at a given level". In other words, it is a way of quantifying learning outcomes.

The NCrF is a set of guidelines to be followed by schools, colleges and universities in adopting the credit system. It also brings the entire school education system under the ambit of credits for the first time. So far, only the National Institute of Open Schooling followed a credit system. The NCrF also covers skill and vocational education.

The document lists 18 major Vidyas, or theoretical disciplines; and 64 kalas, applied sciences or vocational disciplines and crafts that can count towards credits earned during school education. This provision was not there when the draft NCrF was first shared in the public domain for feedback in October 2022.

The new document shared by the UGC on Monday, however, has included "special expertise in Indian Knowledge System" as

one of the six areas in which students who are national- and international-level achievers can earn credits. The remaining being games and sports, performing arts, craftsman of heritage, social work and special achievement in innovation.

The NCrF states that knowledge in the 18 Vidyas, including four Vedas, the four subsidiary Vedas (Ayurveda—medicine, Dhanurveda—weaponry, Gandharveda—music and Silpa—architecture), Purana, Nayaya, Mimansa, Dharmashastra, Vedanga, the six auxiliary sciences, phonetic, grammar, metre, astronomy, ritual, and philosophy can be considered for "creditization".

The special achievements in the 18 Vidyas, which can be counted as credits, could be medals, holding positions in national and international events, Padma or other awards conferred by central or state governments, and high impact social work.

To illustrate how special achievements can be counted in terms of the credits earned, the NCrF document states, "If a person has won a gold medal in the Olympic Games, his preparation and practice for this outcome and achievement could be equated with the skilling credit requirements (say 70% credits) for a B.Voc degree in physical education. Just by accumulating 30 percent remaining academic credits (say in Hindi), the person could get vocational degree in physical education."