



सत्यमेव जयते



ज्ञान-विज्ञान विमुक्तये

UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION

REPORT

TO DETERMINE LAND REQUIREMENT
FOR HIGHER EDUCATIONAL
INSTITUTIONS

2024

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University Grants Commission

Report of the Expert Committee constituted to determine land requirements for Higher Education Institutions

Higher education campuses are typically rather large, including expansive landscapes and striking architecture. Higher education is becoming more and more in demand as a result of the expanding population and urbanization. One of the main recommendations of the National Education Policy 2020, which places a specific emphasis on the development of the higher education sector in unserved/underserved areas, is to aim for 50% GER by 2035 in response to the growing demand.

Is the demand for higher education growing faster than our sector's capacity to meet it? To raise the GER, a sufficient number of higher education institutions (HEIs) must exist. On the other hand, the minimal standards, such as the land requirement, that are imposed for the founding of universities actually restrict the establishment of new institutions rather than promoting their creation. particularly in urban areas and hilly regions. Contiguous land availability is a constant concern in each of these places.

The steep terrain, poor connectivity, and propensity for landslides, etc., make it difficult to construct institutions that can meet the demands of the local population. As a result, the local populace faces significant financial hardship as they must go to neighboring towns in search of high-quality higher education.

In the same vein, our cities are growing exponentially. Even while our cities only make up 3% of the country's area, they account for a staggering 60% of its GDP, which is driving increased demand for higher education. Studies show that a region's ability to thrive economically is positively correlated with the number of institutions in that region. However, irrational requirements limit the potential for higher education to expand in urban and hilly areas.

Ensuring equitable development across all regions essentially requires access to quality education for all in each region. The National Education Policy 2020 made a number of proposals for the country's higher education system's growth. The relevant paras from the NEP 2020 promoting GER, are given below:

- By 2040, all higher education institutions (HEIs) shall aim to become multidisciplinary institutions and shall aim to have larger student enrolments, preferably in the thousands, for optimal use of infrastructure and resources and for the creation of vibrant multidisciplinary communities. Since this process will take time, all HEIs will first plan to become multidisciplinary by 2030 and then gradually increase student strength to the desired levels.
- The main thrust of this policy regarding higher education is to end the fragmentation of higher education by transforming higher education institutions into large multidisciplinary universities, colleges, and HEI clusters/Knowledge Hubs, each of

which will aim to have 3,000 or more students. This would help build vibrant communities of scholars and peers, break down harmful silos, enable students to become well-rounded across disciplines including artistic, creative, and analytic subjects as well as sports, develop active research communities across disciplines including cross-disciplinary research, and increase resource efficiency, both material and human, across higher education.

- Moving to large multidisciplinary universities and HEI clusters is thus the highest recommendation of this policy regarding the structure of higher education. The ancient Indian universities Takshashila, Nalanda, Vallabhi, and Vikramshila, which had thousands of students from India and the world studying in vibrant multidisciplinary environments, amply demonstrated the type of great success that large multidisciplinary research and teaching universities could bring. India urgently needs to bring back this great Indian tradition to create well-rounded and innovative individuals, and which is already transforming other countries educationally and economically
- More HEIs shall be established and developed in underserved regions to ensure full access, equity, and inclusion.
- There shall, by 2030, be at least one large multidisciplinary HEI in or near every district. Steps shall be taken towards developing high-quality higher education institutions, both public and private, that have a medium of instruction in local/Indian languages or bilingually.
- The aim will be to increase the Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education, including vocational education, from 26.3% (2018) to 50% by 2035. While a number of new institutions may be developed to attain these goals, a large part of the capacity creation will be achieved by consolidating, substantially expanding, and also improving existing HEIs
- More HEIs, and more programmes in higher education, will use the mother tongue/local language as a medium of instruction, and/or offer programmes bilingually, in order to increase access and GER and also to promote the strength, usage, and vibrancy of all Indian languages
- According to current standards, the amount of land needed for higher education institutions ranges from square meters per student to hundreds of acres, all of which must be contiguous and free of all encumbrances.

Broadly the land requirements for establishing universities are, as given below:

Central Universities: 500 acre

State Universities: As per the State Act

Private Universities: As per the State Act

Deemed to be Universities: 30 sq. mt. per student (As per 2019 Regulations).

As per the regulatory body concerned (Regulation 2023)

Details of land requirements, as per State Acts, of States are as below:

S. No	Name of the State	Private University		State University	Source	
		Urban	Rural			
1.	Andhra Pradesh	50 Acre	Not prescribed	Not prescribed	Andra Pradesh Private University (Establishment) Rules 2017	
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	50 Acre	Not prescribed	Not prescribed	Arunachal Pradesh Private University Act 2014	
3.	Assam	10 Acre	20 Acre	Not prescribed	Assam Private University Act 2007	
4.	Bihar	5 Acre	10 Acre	Not prescribed	Bihar Private University Act 2013	
5.	Chhattisgarh	15 Acre	25 Acre	Not prescribed	Chhattisgarh Private University Act 2014	
6.	Goa	Not prescribed	Not prescribed	Not prescribed	-	
7.	Gujarat	5 Acre	Not prescribed	Not prescribed	Gujarat Private University Act 2009	
8.	Haryana	10 Acre	20 Acre	Not prescribed	Haryana Private University Act 2006 (Amended 2014)	
9.	Himachal Pradesh	2.47 Acre	Not prescribed	Not prescribed	Himachal Pradesh Private University Act 2016	
10.	Jharkhand	10 Acre	25 Acre	Not prescribed	Jharkhand Private University Act 2014	
11.	Karnataka	20 Acre	Not prescribed	Not prescribed	Karnataka Private University Act 2023	
12.	Kerala	Not prescribed	Not prescribed	Not prescribed	-	
13.	Madhya Pradesh	20 Acre	Not prescribed	Not prescribed	Madhya Pradesh Private University Act 2007	
14.	Maharashtra	15 Acre (Taluks Head Qrs.), 10 Acre (Div.Qtrs./MM RDA/PMRDA)	25 Acre	Not prescribed	Maharashtra Private Universities Act, 2023. (Vertical University 15000 Sq.M) (For Cluster University-15000 Sq.M, Divisional Headquarter-4 hectares, other 6 hectares)	
15.	Manipur	Not prescribed	Not prescribed	Not prescribed	-	
16.	Meghalaya	Not prescribed	Not prescribed	Not prescribed	-	
17.	Mizoram	Not prescribed	Not prescribed	Not prescribed	-	
18.	Nagaland	Not prescribed	Not prescribed	Not prescribed	-	
19.	Odisha	15 Acre	30 Acre	Not prescribed	Orissa Private University Act 2012	
20.	Punjab	10 Acre	10 Acre	Not prescribed	Punjab Private University Act 2006	
21.	Rajasthan	30 Acre	Not prescribed	Not prescribed	Rajasthan Private University Act 2007	
22.	Sikkim	07 Acre	Not prescribed	Not prescribed	Sikkim Private University Act 2022	
23.	Tamil Nadu	100 Acre	Not prescribed	Not prescribed	Tamil Nadu Private University Act 2019	
24.	Telangana	Not prescribed	Not prescribed	Not prescribed	-	
25.	Tripura	Not prescribed	Not prescribed	Not prescribed	--	
26.	Uttar Pradesh	20 Acre	50 Acre	Not prescribed	Uttar Pradesh Private University (Establishment) Act 2019	
27.	Uttarakhand	10 Acre		Not prescribed	Uttarakhand Private University Act 2019	
28.	West Bengal	Not prescribed	Not 'Prescribed	Not prescribed	--	
29.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	Not prescribed	Not Prescribed	Not prescribed		
30.	Chandigarh	Not prescribed	Not Prescribed	Not prescribed		
31.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu	Not prescribed	Not Prescribed	Not prescribed		
32.	Delhi	Not prescribed	Not Prescribed	Not prescribed		
33.	Jammu and Kashmir	Not prescribed	Not Prescribed	Not prescribed		
34.	Ladakh	Not prescribed	Not Prescribed	Not prescribed		
35.	Puducherry	25 Acre	Not Prescribed	Not prescribed		Puducherry Private University Act 2015

The land requirements set by the different Regulatory bodies are as below:

1. Indian Nursing Council (INC)

S. No	Nursing College
1.	5.73 Acre

2. All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE)

	Land Area requirement in Acres					
	Other than Rural places (Competent Authority to certify that the place is not located in a rural area)			Rural Places as defined by Competent Authority		
	UG Programs	Diploma	Stand alone Post Graduate Programs	UG Programs	Diploma	Stand alone Post Graduate Programs
Engineering & Technology	2.50	1.50	2.5	10.0	5.00	10.0
Pharmacy	0.75	0.75	0.75	2.00	2.00	2.00
Architecture & Town Planning	1.00	1.00	1.00	2.50	2.50	2.50
Applied Arts & Crafts	0.75	0.75	0.75	2.00	2.00	2.00
HMCT	1.00	1.00	1.00	2.50	2.50	2.50
MCA	--	--	0.50	--	--	1.50
Management	--	--	0.50	--	--	1.00

3. National Council of Teacher Education (B.Ed.)

Urban	Rural	Hilly	Metropolitan
0.89 Acre			

4. National Medical Commission (NMC)

Urban	Rural	Hilly	Metropolitan
20 Acre	20 Acre	10 Acres (Two Pieces)	10 Acre

5. Pharmacy Council of India (PCI)

District HQ/Corporation/Municipality limit	City / Metros
2.5 Acres	0.5 Acres

Even while higher educational institutions typically occupy a sizable amount of land, very little of that area is actually used. The limited availability of land combined with the high minimum land requirement standard is a significant barrier to any region's progress in education. The minimum land requirement ought to be set in a way that promotes the development of further universities. It is necessary to rationalize the amount of land needed to set up higher education institutions by taking into account the rise in GER, the expansion of cities, the diversity of topography, and the growth of higher education institutions.

The University Grants Commission made the decision to reevaluate and rationalize the land requirement for the establishment of new higher education institutions in light of this. The committee's goals included, among other things, recommending standards and guidelines for figuring out the amount of land needed, taking into account how institutions now use their space, the availability of land, and the advancements in technology that make it possible to learn at any time and from any location.

The Chairman, UGC Constituted the expert committee to look into the various aspects of establishing the universities in the country and rationalize the minimum land requirement.

The composition of the committee is as follows:

1.	Dr. Bharat Sharan Singh Chairman Madhya Pradesh Private University Regulatory Commission, Bhopal (M.P.)	Chairperson
2.	Prof. E. Suresh Kumar, Hon'ble Vice Chancellor The English and Foreign Languages University Hyderabad, Telangana - 500 007	Member
3.	Prof. Ajay Kumar Singh Senior Professor Department of Commerce, Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi.	Member
4.	Shri. Vikas Chandra Rastogi Hon'ble Principal Secretary Directorate of Higher Education Maharashtra.	Member
5.	Prof. (Dr.) Ami Upadhyay Hon'ble Vice Chancellor Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Open University Chharodi, Ahmedabad - 382 481	Member
6.	Dr. N. Gopu Kumar Joint Secretary UGC	Coordinating Officer

The Expert Committee meeting was convened twice in virtual mode. First meeting was convened on 5th December 2023 and 2nd meeting was convened on 1st February 2024. The Chairman of the committee emphasized the targets set by NEP 2020. One of the targets of NEP is achieving 50% GER by 2035. To achieve 50% from the present 27% means a growth of 23% in the next 12 years.

Against the mandate to revisit the land requirement the committee also analyzed universities with less land globally:

Sl. No	Name of the University	Country	Area (in Acre)
1.	Bond University	Australia	120
2.	Alfaisal university	Saudi Arabia	36.7
3.	Sejong University	South Korea	30
4.	London Business School	United Kingdom	5

Factors Considered for Rationalizing Land Requirement:

Multidisciplinary Education:

As NEP 2020 promotes multidisciplinary education, the requirements of infrastructure in every institution to offer programmes require a revisit. UGC's Guidelines for Transforming Higher Education Institutions into Multidisciplinary Institutions provide for various approaches, such as collaboration between institutions and merger of institutions to help institutions offer multidisciplinary institutions. These policies underline that land requirements need not be based on the number of programmes offered.

Availability of Land:

With the ever-increasing demand for higher education, more higher education institutions are required in cities and underserved/unserved areas such as hilly areas. However, population growth and difficult terrain of hills often become a limiting factor in establishing institutions. The committee considered the land requirement against the backdrop of the growth of Higher Educational Institutions, the cost of land, and the different landscapes in the country.

Online Education:

The NEP 2020 encourages all modes of learning. The online being an important mode of learning, its flexibility stands out as one of the major advantages for students. With UGC (Establishment and Operationalization of Academic Bank of Credits (ABC) Scheme in Higher Education) Regulations,

2021, extending the freedom to earn up to 50% of credits from institutions other than the host institution, students can study at their own pace, on their own time, and from virtually anywhere in the world. This further reduces the land and other physical infrastructure requirement for higher education institutions.

Open Spaces:

The potential roles open spaces with vegetation on campus play have been well documented. Open spaces with plants, walkways, shades and lights collectively create an environment appropriate for creative and innovative ideas (USGBC, 2009) than formal classes. The design of the campus should, therefore, be in harmony with the local ecology and sufficient open space.

Considering the above factors, the Committee makes the following recommendations:

- (i) The committee suggests that the minimum land required for universities be 20 acres (Rationale: the National Education Policy (NEP)) states that universities should have at least 3000 students and the Deemed to be University Regulations 2019 state that each student should have 30 square meters). The land must be unencumbered and continuous. The land must be freehold or on lease. If on lease, lease must be for a minimum period of thirty years.
- (ii) The committee suggests that open areas make up 40% of the entire land area.
- (iii) Nearby HEIs under a single management/multiple management can share common spaces like a playground, gym, and library etc.
- (iv) The minimum developed land for an Open university, except an Open university established or incorporated by or under the central act, shall be 5 Acres.
- (v) The minimum land requirement for Off-campus, constituent units may be 5 Acres.

6. Metropolitan cities and Hilly Regions:

Considering the constraints in the metropolitan cities and hilly terrains, for land, the Committee recommends the following:

- The land requirement should be 10 acres with a 3-acre open space.
- The land need not be contiguous, scattered expansion may be permitted.
- Vertical expansion may also be permitted, wherever the law permits. Accordingly, the built up area can be reduced. But the total area of open space should be maintained as 3 acre to support a healthy green campus.

Note: UGC can consider proposals to establish universities that do not conform to the above requirements on a case-to-case basis.

References:

1. The National Education Policy 2020
2. Higher education and economic growth: A longitudinal study of European regions 2000–2017.
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3. Reforms in urban planning capacity in India (2021)
(<https://www.niti.gov.in/sites/default/files/2021-09/UrbanPlanningCapacity-in-India-16092021.pdf>)
