

**Before H. P. Private Educational Institutions Regulatory Commission,  
Shimla -171009.**

Case No: 05 of 2021

Date of Institution: 20.04.2021

Date of order: 10.06.2021

In the matter of :

Suo Moto

.....Petitioner

*Versus*

IEC University, Baddi, Distt.-Solan.

.....Respondent

**INTERIM ORDER**

The matter regarding running of 30 External and Self-Paced Learning Courses by the IEC University, Baddi, Distt.-Solan was brought to the notice of this Commission. A detailed reply regarding enrolling the students as well as approval of different Central / State Regulatory Bodies / Govt. for running of External and Self-Paced Learning Courses was sought from the IEC University. The University apprised vide their letter dated 06.04.2021 that there is no requirement to obtain approval of Distance Education Bureau of UGC to start such programmes. The University also submitted that the courses were initially started from the academic session 2020-21 with prior approval of the Commission. A course approval letter dated 18.07.2020 was also presented which was also taken on record. After perusal of same it has been found that 30 courses applied by IEC University under External and Self-Paced Learning Courses were allowed in-principal (conditional) vide letter dated 18.07.2020 keeping in view the Covid-19 situation and future learning technologies / methodologies with the specific condition **“to provide entire detail w.r.t. classes management, No. of teaching hours, days & examinations and admission procedures.”** However, sanctioned intake / seats were not granted for the aforesaid courses.

The decision dated 18.07.2020 taken by the Commission was reviewed and all External and Self Paced Learning Courses were cancelled in view of UGC decisions on Distance Education. Universities Grants Commission during the year 2009 had imposed restriction on conduct of Distance Education Programmes and issued instructions to this effect

from time to time. Distance Education Bureau authorizes institutions to conduct distance education. IEC University failed to provide any authority / sanctioning to conduct of External and Self Paced Learning Courses from Central Regulatory Authorities. The decision of the Commission to this effect was informed to IEC University vide letter dated 25.08.2020. Further, IEC University was again directed to close all such programmes vide letter dated 17.02.2021, but the University failed to submit compliance to this effect.

Thereafter proceedings in the matter were initiated vide Suo Moto Case No. 05 of 2021 and University was asked during the hearing dated 20.04.2021 to provide information regarding students enrolled in aforementioned courses, fee charged and approval of Central regulatory bodies / State Govt. for running External and Self-Paced Learning Courses alongwith ordinances / Act of University to support their action for running such programmes and enrolling the students.

The IEC University vide its admission disclosure submitted to the Commission as well as an email dated 07.06.2021 submitted the detail of 3039 students admitted in External and Self-Paced Learning Courses alongwith fee charged as well as detail of teaching staff engaged in the University for all its programmes including External and Self-Paced Learning Courses.

During the course of hearing, the University also prayed to convert the External and Self-Paced Learning Courses to Regular mode courses for the academic session 2020-21 and also deposed vide letter dated 01.06.2021 received through an email dated 01.06.2021 that **“the university is charging fee less than the proposed fee and the University will charge same fee for these students as committed not the fee approved for regular courses.”**. The University even failed to submit approved fee structure of External and Self Paced Learning Courses from the State Govt. as per the conditions mentioned in section 32 of the parent Act of the University.

After careful consideration of facts, circumstances and documents presented before the Commission, the Commission is of the opinion that it is a clear cut violation of admission norms as well as the provisions contained in IEC University Act by the Respondent University. The intake of students / vacancies for courses were not granted in the course approval letter dated 18.07.2020 and the respondent university did not comply to the other conditions mentioned in aforesaid letter and further did not seek mandatory approval of fee from the State Govt.. Moreover, before enrolling any student to such programmes, University was required to provide entire detail w.r.t. classes management, No. of teaching hours, days &

examinations and admission procedures. It is observed that before seeking formal approval of the Commission, the University enrolled more than 3000 students taking the shelter of letter of conditional course approval dated 18.07.2020 without realizing the future and fate of students who were enrolled in such unapproved programmes. University also submitted that fee charged from the students enrolled in the courses in question is very minimal. However, the fee collected from the students in aforesaid courses is in a tune of Rs. 30 lakhs approx. Since, admission violation cannot be sheltered with the least fee charged from the students, the Commission is also of the view that a penalty may be imposed on the IEC University, Baddi on its gross admission violations.

Since, the future of more than 3000 students are on stake due to negligence of IEC University, the Commission is also of the view that the courses in question may be converted to regular courses after meeting minimum infrastructure / faculty as required for the courses.

**After careful consideration of the case and to safeguard the interest of students, it is hereby ordered that:**

1. An Expert Committee be constituted immediately to analyze the infrastructure, faculty vis-à-vis proposal submitted by the IEC University regarding conversion of External & Self-Paced Learning Courses to Regular Courses to safeguard the interest of students. The said Committee shall visit the University and submit its detailed report to this Commission within a one month from the issuance of these orders.
2. The IEC University, Baddi, Distt.-Solan shall deposit an amount of Rs. 11.00/- Lakhs as penalty for violation of admission norms within one month from the issuance of these orders failing which penalty will be imposed specifically as per provisions contained in H.P. Private Educational Institutions (Regulatory Commission) Act, 2010 and Rules made thereunder.

The case is adjourned. List the matter before the Commission after receiving of detailed report from the expert Committee.

Orders be uploaded on website of the Commission.

Secretary, HPPERC is also directed to take further immediate action in the matter.

Announced.

(Major General Atul Kaushik)  
Chairman