Polity & Governance · GS - II

The proliferation of unrecognised higher education institutions exposes weaknesses in regulatory enforcement and consumer awareness. Examine the role of the University Grants Commission in maintaining academic standards and suggest measures to protect students from fraudulent educational institutions.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 19/11/2026	GS - II	Polity & Governance

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

UGC Act 1956, Section 22, degree-awarding authority, regulatory oversight, academic standards, student protection, information asymmetry, institutional accountability, digital verification, awareness campaigns, higher education reforms.

Model Answer

Introduction

The University Grants Commission (UGC) is a statutory body established under the UGC Act, 1956. Its regulatory role is crucial in maintaining academic standards and protecting students from institutions operating without legal recognition.

Role of UGC

1. **Academic standards:** Coordinates and maintains standards of university education.
2. **Degree regulation:** Section 22 restricts degree-awarding authority to legally authorised institutions.

3. **Recognition and monitoring:** Provides information regarding recognised universities and issues public advisories against unrecognised institutions.
4. **Quality assurance:** Prescribes regulations and supports improvements in higher education.
5. **Student protection:** Public warnings help prevent students from enrolling in institutions whose qualifications lack legal validity.

Major Challenges

- Misleading advertisements and fraudulent institutional claims.
- Limited awareness among students, especially in rural areas.
- Regulatory gaps and delays in enforcement.
- Commercial exploitation of students through false placement and recognition claims.
- Difficulties in monitoring institutions operating through digital and distance-learning modes.

Measures Required

- Regularly update and publicise the list of recognised institutions.
- Strengthen coordination between UGC, state governments and law-enforcement agencies.
- Establish accessible digital verification mechanisms.
- Take timely legal action against fraudulent institutions.
- Promote awareness among students, parents and educational counsellors.

Conclusion

Protecting academic credibility requires effective regulation, transparent information and student awareness. A robust UGC enforcement framework is essential for ensuring trust, quality and accountability in India's higher education system.