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Bachelor of Vocation Education students can now take competitive exams

PUNE: Students pursuing Bachelor of Vocation Education (BVoc) will now be able to appear for all kinds of Union or state-level competitive exams, for which, only conventional degree holders were eligible earlier.

The University Grants Commission's recent circular has bestowed BVoc the same status as any other conventional degree. "BVoc, a Bachelor-level degree specified by the UGC under section 22(3) of UGC Act, 1956, be recognised at par with the other bachelor level degrees for competitive exams conducted by Union/State Public Service Commission, Staff Selection Commission or other such bodies where the eligibility criteria is "Bachelor Degree in any discipline". Students with BVoc degree should be considered eligible for the trans-disciplinary vertical mobility into such courses where entry qualification is a bachelor degree without specific requirement in a particular discipline,' the circular stated.

"This step will strengthen the UGC's commitment towards facilitating mobility between vocational and general education and developing a consistent and standardised framework for recognition of vocational degrees. It will further open up various avenues and pathways to increase employability of candidates outside of conventional education, which, in turn, will contribute toward productivity at a national level to boost India's competitive edge at a time when there is still a shortage of skilled manpower to address the increasing needs and demands of the economy," said Ravi Bhardwaj, an education activist.

The UGC launched BVoc in all universities and colleges recently and also allowed multiple exit option for students.

"The multiple exit option is a good move. For example, if a student completes one year, he gets a diploma. In case, he completes two years, he stands to get an advanced diploma and after finishing three years, he will be eligible to get a degree certificate. This gives better opportunities for students who want to work. For those not certain about the course, the tran-disciplinary vertical mobility means they can get into other disciplines," said Akash PV, a graduation student of science faculty.

The BVoc programme is expected to provide expert and skilled force for industries reeling under "trained manpower crunch". Vidya Yeravdekar, principal director of

Symbiosis Society which runs two skill development universities one each in Pune and Indore, said, "The manufacturing industry needs skilled workforce in large numbers. Under 'Make in India' initiative, there is a possibility of huge fund inflow, which is bound to increase demand for skilled people in technical jobs."

Yeravdekar said, "It is not just manufacturing or construction industry, but also medical sector that needs skilled people other than doctors and nurses. A cardiologist requires a medical technologist to do angioplasty just as a medical technologist is needed to do an MRI scan. Hence, there is a demand for trained people in almost every industry and skill development universities are trying to provide this knowledge to the students."