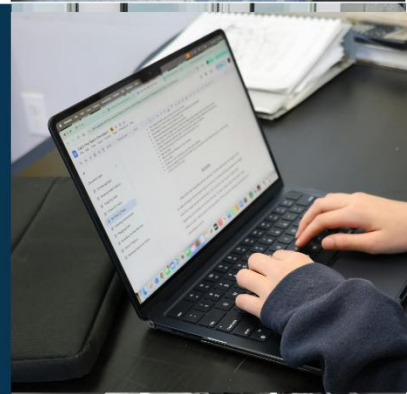


KERALA STATE HIGHER EDUCATION COUNCIL

K-LEARN GUIDELINES

GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPMENT,
DELIVERY, CREDIT
RECOGNITION, AND CREDIT
TRANSFER OF ONLINE COURSES



APRIL 2026

THE KERALA STATE HIGHER EDUCATION COUNCIL

**K-LEARN GUIDELINES:
GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPMENT,
DELIVERY, CREDIT RECOGNITION, AND
CREDIT TRANSFER OF ONLINE COURSES**

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Preface

The higher education sector in Kerala is undergoing a transformative shift towards flexibility, inclusiveness, and technology-enabled learning in alignment with contemporary national and global academic trends. The emergence of digital platforms, online learning ecosystems, and blended pedagogical models has opened new pathways for enhancing access, quality, and learner engagement in higher education. Within this evolving context, the Kerala State Higher Education Council (KSHEC) has initiated the K-LEARN platform as a comprehensive and forward-looking intervention aimed at integrating online learning into the mainstream academic framework of the State especially in the context of the implementation of Four-Year Undergraduate Programme (FYUGP).

This document presents the K-LEARN Guidelines, which have been developed by the committee constituted by the KSHEC to provide a structured academic and administrative framework for the design, delivery, quality assurance, credit recognition, and transfer of online courses. The guidelines seek to ensure that the expansion of digital learning opportunities is aligned with academic standards, institutional autonomy, and regulatory requirements, while also enabling learner flexibility and innovation in teaching-learning processes.

K-LEARN is envisioned as a collaborative digital learning ecosystem that brings together universities, colleges, faculty members, industry partners, and subject experts to create and disseminate high-quality online courses. By aligning these courses with the Four-Year Undergraduate Programme (FYUGP), the National Credit Framework, and the Academic Bank of Credits (ABC), the platform aims to facilitate seamless credit mobility, multidisciplinary learning, and multiple entry–exit options for students. It also addresses the need for a State-specific platform that can effectively integrate online courses with local curricular structures and academic requirements.

The guidelines outlined in this report cover three critical dimensions of online education. First, they provide detailed procedures for the development and delivery of online courses, including course design, content standards, instructional methods, learner engagement, and assessment mechanisms. Second, they establish a comprehensive framework for the recognition, award, and transfer of academic credits earned through K-LEARN courses, ensuring their integration into university programmes through transparent and standardised processes. Third, they extend the framework to include credit transfer from other recognised online platforms, thereby expanding learning opportunities for students while maintaining academic rigor and quality assurance.

A central feature of these guidelines is the emphasis on balancing flexibility with academic integrity. While the framework enables students to access diverse learning opportunities across disciplines, institutions, and platforms, it simultaneously preserves the authority of universities in matters relating to course approval, evaluation, credit recognition, and degree award. The integration with the Academic Bank of Credits further strengthens this ecosystem by enabling secure accumulation, transfer, and redemption of academic credits.

The K-LEARN initiative also reflects a broader commitment to promoting lifelong learning, skill development, and employability. By incorporating industry-oriented courses, interdisciplinary modules, and self-paced learning options, the platform seeks to equip learners with the knowledge, competencies, and adaptability required in a rapidly changing global environment. This document, therefore, serves not only as a set of operational guidelines but also as a policy framework guiding the future of digital higher education in Kerala.

April 2026
Thiruvananthapuram

Member Secretary

INTRODUCTION

The higher education sector in Kerala is undergoing significant academic transformation aimed at promoting flexibility, multidisciplinary learning, skill development, learner mobility, digital integration, and enhanced access to quality education. In this context, online and blended learning systems have emerged as important components of contemporary higher education, enabling students to access diverse learning opportunities beyond the limitations of conventional classroom-based instruction. The rapid advancement of digital technologies, online learning platforms, virtual laboratories, artificial intelligence-enabled educational tools, and open educational resources has created new possibilities for inclusive, learner-centric, and technology-enabled higher education.

The Kerala State Higher Education Council (KSHEC), as part of the ongoing higher education reforms in Kerala, has initiated the K-LEARN platform as a comprehensive digital learning ecosystem intended to support the development, delivery, management, and academic integration of high-quality online courses across universities and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the State. The K-LEARN platform is envisaged as a collaborative academic initiative through which universities, colleges, subject experts, industries, and academic institutions may contribute to the creation and dissemination of quality online learning resources aligned with the evolving academic and employability requirements of students.

The present comprehensive guidelines have been prepared to provide a structured academic and administrative framework for the effective implementation of online learning initiatives through the K-LEARN platform and for the recognition and transfer of credits earned through approved online courses. The guidelines seek to ensure academic quality, transparency, institutional autonomy, learner flexibility, and proper regulatory compliance while facilitating the integration of online learning into regular academic programmes offered by universities and colleges in Kerala.

The report is organised into three major parts. Part I deals with the *Guidelines for the Development and Delivery of Online Courses through the K-LEARN Platform*, including the procedures relating to course design, academic quality assurance, instructional delivery, assessment mechanisms, learner support, and institutional responsibilities. Part II focuses on the *Credit Recognition, Award, and Transfer of K-LEARN Online Courses*, including provisions relating to academic recognition, evaluation, credit award, learner engagement, examination mechanisms, and integration with the Academic Bank of Credits (ABC). Part III provides the *Credit Transfer Guidelines for Online Courses from Other Recognised Platforms*, including procedures for equivalence determination, academic scrutiny, mapping, institutional approval, and inter-university credit transfer mechanisms.

These guidelines aim to establish a balanced framework that combines academic flexibility with quality assurance, promotes learner mobility and multidisciplinary education, supports skill-oriented and employability-focused learning, and strengthens the integration of digital education within the broader higher education reforms being implemented in Kerala. The framework also seeks to empower universities and HEIs to effectively utilise national and global online learning opportunities while maintaining academic standards, institutional accountability, and the integrity of the higher education system.

Part 1

GUIDELINES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY OF ONLINE COURSES THROUGH THE K-LEARN PLATFORM

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

K-LEARN (Kerala Learning Network) is a State-level digital learning initiative established under the Kerala State Higher Education Council (KSHEC) to support the implementation of the Four-Year Undergraduate Programme (FYUGP) and to create a comprehensive technology-enabled higher education ecosystem in Kerala. The platform is envisaged as a centralized online learning system that facilitates the development, delivery, assessment, certification, and credit transfer of high-quality online courses aligned with the principles of, National Credit Framework (NCrF), and Academic Bank of Credits (ABC).

1.2 Vision of K-LEARN

The vision of K-LEARN is to democratize access to quality higher education by ensuring that students across the State have access to curriculum-aligned digital learning resources irrespective of their geographical location or institutional limitations. The platform seeks to transform Kerala into a globally connected knowledge society by promoting flexible learning pathways, interdisciplinary learning opportunities, digital pedagogy, and lifelong learning practices.

1.3 Need for the Platform

Although national and international online platforms such as SWAYAM, Coursera, and edX provide a large number of online courses, concerns have been raised regarding their direct compatibility with Kerala's university curriculum, academic calendar, and credit structures. K-LEARN is therefore designed as a dedicated State-level system that aligns online courses with the specific academic requirements of Kerala universities and FYUGP regulations.

2. Objectives of K-LEARN

2.1 Promotion of Flexible Learning

One of the major objectives of K-LEARN is to facilitate flexible and learner-centric educational pathways under FYUGP. The platform shall enable students to pursue courses across disciplines,

institutions, and learning domains in accordance with their interests, academic progression requirements, and career aspirations. Students may use these courses for earning additional credits, completing pending credits, changing majors, or pursuing minors not available in their parent institutions.

2.2 Promotion of Self-Learning and Lifelong Learning

K-LEARN aims to promote a culture of self-learning and lifelong learning among students, teachers, and general learners. The platform is intended to move beyond traditional classroom-based education and create opportunities for learners to continuously acquire knowledge, competencies, and professional skills throughout their lives. The platform shall therefore support independent learning, flexible pacing, and open access to educational resources.

2.3 Strengthening Employability and Skills

The platform shall facilitate the integration of employability-oriented and skill-based learning into higher education. Through collaboration with industry partners, skilling agencies, and professional organizations, K-LEARN shall support upskilling, reskilling, entrepreneurship development, and professional certification programmes aligned with contemporary labour market requirements.

2.4 Faculty Empowerment and Digital Pedagogy

K-LEARN also seeks to strengthen faculty participation in digital education and e-content development. The platform shall encourage teachers and subject experts to develop innovative online courses and digital learning materials, thereby enhancing institutional capacity in online teaching-learning systems and digital pedagogy.

3. Scope of K-LEARN

3.1 Curriculum-Aligned Academic Courses

The K-LEARN platform shall support the development and delivery of curriculum-aligned online courses across various disciplines and academic domains. These may include Major Courses, Minor Courses, Multidisciplinary Courses (MDC), Skill Enhancement Courses (SEC), Value Added Courses (VAC), Ability Enhancement Courses (AEC), internship-linked courses, and research-oriented programmes offered under FYUGP. Such courses shall be mapped to university curricula and semester structures to facilitate academic integration and credit transfer.

3.2 Skill and Industry-Oriented Courses

In addition to academic courses, K-LEARN shall support skill-based and industry-oriented programmes aimed at enhancing employability and professional competencies. These courses may be developed in collaboration with approved skilling agencies, industries, and professional bodies and may focus on emerging technologies, entrepreneurship, digital skills, and sector-specific competencies.

3.3 Lifelong Learning and Continuing Education

K-LEARN shall also function as a lifelong learning platform by offering self-paced and continuing education programmes for working professionals, teachers, researchers, and general learners. These programmes may include awareness courses, professional development programmes, faculty training initiatives, and community-oriented educational programmes.

4. Types of Courses Offered through K-LEARN

4.1 Academic Credit Courses

Academic Credit Courses are online courses offered by accredited universities or institutions as part of recognized academic programmes. These courses shall carry academic credits and shall include mandatory assessment and evaluation mechanisms. The credits earned through such courses may be transferred and integrated into the learner's academic programme through the Academic Bank of Credits subject to university regulations and approval procedures.

4.2 Non-Academic Credit Courses

Non-Academic Credit Courses are intended primarily for skill development, employability enhancement, and competency building. Such courses may provide certifications or competency credentials based on learning hours and outcomes aligned with the National Credit Framework. These courses shall also include assessment mechanisms to ensure quality and learner competency verification.

4.3 Self-Paced Courses

Self-Paced Courses are independent learning courses designed mainly for knowledge enhancement and lifelong learning. These courses may not necessarily carry formal academic credits or mandatory examinations and shall allow learners to study at their own pace according to their interests and learning requirements.

5. Governance Structure of K-LEARN

5.1 Role of KSHEC

The Kerala State Higher Education Council shall function as the apex coordinating authority responsible for policy formulation, administrative management, quality assurance, and overall coordination of the K-LEARN platform. KSHEC shall approve course development proposals, coordinate with universities and partner institutions, oversee financial and technical operations, and ensure compliance with regulatory frameworks.

5.2 Academic Committee

KSHEC may constitute Academic Committees comprising subject experts, university representatives, educational technologists, industry experts, and specialists in online pedagogy. These committees shall advise KSHEC on curriculum alignment, quality assurance, assessment systems, technological standards, and emerging educational trends.

5.3 Institutional Collaboration

Universities, colleges, approved agencies, and educational organizations may collaborate with KSHEC for course development, learner support, assessment, certification, and technical infrastructure support. Such collaboration shall help create a sustainable and decentralized ecosystem for online education across the State.

6. Course Development Framework

6.1 Submission of Course Proposals

All online courses proposed under K-LEARN shall follow a structured proposal and approval mechanism. Course proposals shall include details such as course title, syllabus, credit structure, module-wise content plan, learning outcomes, assessment mechanisms, teaching-learning strategies, and faculty details.

6.2 Approval Process

Academic Credit Courses shall require approval from the competent academic bodies of the respective universities, including the Board of Studies and Academic Council. Signature courses proposed by faculty members shall also undergo academic scrutiny and approval prior to being hosted on the platform.

6.3 Curriculum Alignment

All online courses shall be aligned with FYUGP curriculum structures and learning outcomes. Courses shall be designed in a semester-linked and discipline-linked manner to facilitate easier integration into university academic systems and credit transfer mechanisms.

7. Course Coordinators

7.1 Appointment of Course Coordinators

Each online course shall have a designated Course Coordinator who shall function as the principal academic authority responsible for course development and delivery. The Course Coordinator shall normally be a recognized subject expert from a reputed educational institution, research organization, or professional domain possessing expertise in the relevant subject area.

7.2 Responsibilities of Course Coordinators

The Course Coordinator shall be responsible for preparing the syllabus and module structure, coordinating content development, supervising recording and production activities, ensuring academic quality, conducting learner engagement activities, and coordinating assessments and evaluations. The Course Coordinator shall also ensure that the course comprehensively covers the prescribed syllabus and adheres to prescribed academic and technical standards.

7.3 Coordination with Production and Technical Teams

The Course Coordinator shall work closely with instructional designers, multimedia production teams, technical experts, and KSHEC officials to ensure timely completion and quality assurance of the course development process.

8. E-Content Development Standards

8.1 Multidimensional Learning Framework

All courses developed under K-LEARN shall follow a multidimensional learning framework consisting of e-Tutorials, e-Content, Interactive Learning Systems, Assessment Components, Blended Learning Support, and Industry Integration. This framework is intended to create an engaging, interactive, and learner-friendly educational experience.

8.2 Video and Multimedia Content

The e-Tutorial component shall include professionally recorded video lectures, demonstrations, animations, simulations, virtual laboratory sessions, and other multimedia learning resources. The video content shall maintain high standards of academic quality, audio-video clarity, and learner engagement. Wherever possible, subtitles, transcripts, and multilingual support mechanisms shall also be incorporated to improve accessibility and inclusiveness.

8.3 Self-Learning Materials

The e-Content component shall include lecture notes, reading materials, presentations, case studies, illustrations, practice exercises, references, research articles, and supplementary learning resources designed to facilitate independent learning.

8.4 Interactive Learning Systems

Interactive learning mechanisms such as discussion forums, webinars, live doubt-clearing sessions, learner interaction activities, and peer discussions shall form an integral component of online courses. These systems are intended to ensure continuous academic interaction and learner participation.

9. Duration and Credit Structure

9.1 Credit Norms

The duration and credit structure of online courses shall be aligned with FYUGP and National Credit Framework norms. Generally, one academic credit shall correspond to approximately fifteen hours of learner engagement including lectures, readings, activities, and assessments. A four-credit course may normally contain around twenty hours of structured video content along with associated learning resources and assessments.

9.2 Modular Organization

Courses shall be organized into modules with clearly defined learning outcomes, learning activities, and assessment mechanisms. The modular structure shall facilitate flexible learning progression and outcome-based education.

10. Technical Infrastructure Requirements

10.1 Recording and Production Infrastructure

The K-LEARN ecosystem shall be supported by adequate digital infrastructure including professional recording studios, multimedia production facilities, video editing systems, audio recording facilities, and content management systems.

10.2 Digital Learning Infrastructure

The platform shall include cloud-based hosting infrastructure, Learning Management Systems (LMS), analytics systems, online assessment platforms, and learner support systems capable of supporting large-scale online learning activities.

10.3 Collaboration with Technical Agencies

KSHEC may collaborate with organizations such as ASAP Kerala and other approved agencies for technical support related to recording, editing, post-production, and platform management.

11. Assessment and Evaluation

11.1 Formative and Summative Assessment

Assessment and evaluation shall constitute an integral component of all credit-linked online courses. Courses shall include both formative and summative assessments to evaluate learner progress and attainment of learning outcomes. Formative assessments may include quizzes, assignments, projects, presentations, discussion participation, and peer evaluations.

11.2 Weightage and Evaluation Pattern

Normally, thirty percent weightage may be assigned to internal assessment components and seventy percent to final examinations. The final examinations may be conducted through online proctored systems or through approved physical examination centres depending on the nature and requirements of the course.

11.3 Certification and Credit Recognition

Learners successfully completing online courses shall receive certificates, grade sheets, and credit statements wherever applicable. Credits earned through Academic Credit Courses may be transferred and integrated into university academic programmes through the Academic Bank of Credits framework.

12. Quality Assurance and Course Review

12.1 Academic and Technical Review

KSHEC shall establish quality assurance systems involving academic review, pedagogical review, technical evaluation, and learner feedback analysis. All courses shall undergo scrutiny before approval and deployment.

12.2 Periodic Updating of Courses

Courses shall be periodically revised and updated to ensure continued relevance with changing curricular frameworks, technological developments, and industry requirements. Learner feedback, completion rates, and assessment performance shall be considered during the review process.

13. Intellectual Property Rights and Copyright

13.1 Compliance with Copyright Laws

All content developers and partner institutions shall comply with copyright laws and intellectual property regulations while developing online learning materials. Content used in courses shall either be original, appropriately licensed, or used with proper permissions and acknowledgements.

13.2 Ownership and Sharing Policies

KSHEC may formulate separate policies regarding ownership, reuse, licensing, and open educational access of digital learning resources developed through the K-LEARN platform.

14. Faculty Capacity Building

14.1 Faculty Development Programmes

KSHEC shall organize faculty development programmes, digital pedagogy workshops, multimedia production training programmes, assessment design workshops, and LMS orientation programmes to strengthen faculty competencies in online teaching-learning systems.

14.2 Building a Sustainable Digital Ecosystem

The faculty capacity-building initiatives are intended to create a sustainable ecosystem of trained educators capable of developing high-quality digital learning resources and effectively participating in online education systems.

15. Industry Collaboration and Employability

15.1 Collaboration with Industry and Skilling Agencies

K-LEARN shall actively promote collaboration between higher education institutions, industries, professional bodies, and approved skilling agencies to ensure that online courses remain relevant to emerging labour market requirements and technological advancements.

15.2 Internship and Certification Opportunities

The platform may facilitate industry-certified courses, internship-linked programmes, entrepreneurship development initiatives, and professional certification pathways aimed at strengthening the employability and practical competencies of students and lifelong learners.

16. Conclusion

16.1 Transformative Potential of K-LEARN

The K-LEARN platform represents a transformative initiative aimed at establishing a comprehensive digital higher education ecosystem for Kerala. By integrating academic flexibility, technology-enabled pedagogy, quality assurance, skill development, and global collaboration, the platform seeks to democratize access to quality higher education and strengthen Kerala's position as a globally recognized knowledge society.

Part II

Credit Recognition, Award and Transfer of K-LEARN Online Courses

1. Regulatory Basis for Credit Recognition

The credit recognition mechanism for K-LEARN courses may be framed in line with the UGC Credit Framework for Online Learning Courses through SWAYAM Regulations, 2021. Under this framework, universities are permitted to offer up to 40% of the courses in a programme through online learning via SWAYAM. The same regulatory logic may be adopted by State universities for K-LEARN, provided that the courses are duly approved by the competent academic bodies of the university and are integrated into the approved course basket of the programme.

The UGC regulations on SWAYAM credit mobility also provide that the parent institution shall give equivalent credit weightage to students for credits earned through approved online learning courses, and that universities shall not refuse credit mobility for such approved courses. This principle may be adapted for K-LEARN by ensuring that every course hosted on the platform undergoes academic scrutiny, is approved by the K-LEARN Academic Committee, and is subsequently adopted by the respective university through its statutory academic process.

2. Role of K-LEARN Academic Committee

Every course proposed for credit award through K-LEARN shall be placed before the Academic Committee of K-LEARN for detailed academic, pedagogical and technical evaluation. The committee shall examine the course syllabus, credit value, learning outcomes, module structure, assessment design, faculty profile, academic relevance, technical quality and alignment with the FYUGP curriculum. Only courses that meet the prescribed academic and quality standards shall be approved for hosting as credit-linked courses on the K-LEARN platform.

The uploaded K-LEARN concept note also envisages that faculty-designed signature courses shall be approved through university academic bodies and that K-LEARN shall provide technical and administrative support for hosting such courses online, while the host faculty remains responsible for delivery and evaluation.

3. Inclusion of Courses in University Course Basket

After approval by the K-LEARN Academic Committee, each university may examine the approved course list and include suitable K-LEARN courses in its own course basket for the relevant academic year. This inclusion shall be made through the appropriate university process, preferably with approval

from the Board of Studies, Faculty, Academic Council, or any other competent statutory body as applicable.

Once included in the university course basket, the courses may be made available to students for registration under appropriate categories such as Major, Minor, MDC, SEC, VAC, AEC, elective courses, additional credit courses, bridge courses, or credit deficiency courses. This will enable students to select K-LEARN courses as part of their approved academic pathway under FYUGP.

4. Student Registration and Online Learning

Students may register for approved K-LEARN courses through the university registration system or through an integrated K-LEARN registration interface, as decided by the university. Once registered, students shall undertake the learning process through the K-LEARN platform in online mode. The platform shall provide video lectures, e-content, reading materials, assignments, quizzes, discussion forums, and other learning resources.

The K-LEARN platform is intended to provide online courses aligned with FYUGP and to support flexible, credit-bearing learning opportunities. Internal assessment may also be completed through online mode using quizzes, assignments, learner participation, project submissions, discussion activities, and other digital assessment tools.

5. Internal Assessment

Internal assessment for K-LEARN courses may be conducted through the platform itself. The Course Coordinator shall design internal assessment components based on the learning outcomes of the course. These may include online quizzes, assignments, short-answer tests, case analyses, reflective notes, project-based tasks, presentations, discussion participation and peer learning activities.

The internal marks generated through K-LEARN shall be shared with the respective university in the prescribed format. The university may accept these marks as internal assessment marks for the course, provided that the course has already been included in the approved university course basket and the internal assessment pattern has been notified in advance.

6. External Examination by the University

For external examination, the university may adopt one of the approved mechanisms. The first option is that the university may conduct the external examination using its own question papers, examination system and evaluation experts. In this model, the university retains full academic control over the final assessment, while the learning and internal assessment components are delivered through K-LEARN.

The second option is that the university may use question papers generated from an AI-enabled question bank available through K-LEARN. Such question papers may be generated at the university level, based on approved course outcomes, syllabus units, difficulty levels, question types and examination patterns. However, final moderation and approval of the question paper shall remain with the university or its authorized academic/examination body.

7. Examination through Partner University

KSHEC may also collaborate with one of the universities, preferably a university with experience in open and distance or online education such as Sree Narayana Guru Open University, for conducting examinations for selected K-LEARN courses where required. In such cases, the partner university may conduct the examination, complete evaluation, declare results and award credits in accordance with approved academic and examination regulations.

The credits awarded by the partner university may then be uploaded to the Academic Bank of Credits. Other universities may recognize and redeem these credits towards the degree requirements of their students, provided that the course was part of the approved course basket or was otherwise approved for credit mobility.

8. Award of Credits

Credits for K-LEARN courses shall be awarded only after successful completion of prescribed learning activities, internal assessment and external examination. The credit value of each course shall be determined in accordance with FYUGP and National Credit Framework norms. The UGC Curriculum and Credit Framework for Undergraduate Programmes recognizes ABC and multiple entry-exit arrangements as key mechanisms for flexible credit accumulation and mobility.

The university conducting the examination and approving the result shall be the credit-awarding authority. Where the parent university conducts the examination, the parent university shall award the credit. Where a partner university conducts the examination under a KSHEC-approved arrangement, that university may award the credit and upload it to ABC.

9. Transfer of Credits to Academic Bank of Credits

After successful completion of the course, the credit-awarding university shall upload the credits to the student's Academic Bank of Credits account. The ABC framework defines credit accumulation as the facility by which credits earned by students from eligible higher education institutions are transferred and consolidated in the student's Academic Bank Account. It also defines credit recognition as credits earned through eligible institutions and transferred directly to ABC, while credit redemption refers to using accumulated credits for the award of a degree, diploma or certificate.

Accordingly, K-LEARN credits may be transferred to ABC by the credit-awarding university and later recognized or redeemed by the parent university for completion of degree requirements.

10. Recognition of Credits by Parent Universities

The parent university may recognize the credits earned through K-LEARN courses if the course has been included in its approved course basket or has been approved under its credit mobility framework. The university may map the earned credits to the relevant component of the FYUGP curriculum such as Major, Minor, MDC, SEC, VAC, AEC, elective or additional credit category.

The ABC-linked credit mobility system enables a student's earned credits to be deposited, recognized, maintained, accumulated, transferred and redeemed for the award of a degree. Kerala University's FYUGP regulations, for example, define an Academic Bank Account as the account to which credits earned by a student are deposited, recognized, maintained, accumulated, transferred, validated or redeemed for degree award.

11. Degree Award

The final degree shall be awarded by the parent university in which the student is enrolled, after verifying that the student has completed all prescribed credit requirements under the relevant FYUGP programme. Credits earned through K-LEARN and deposited in ABC may be counted towards the degree if they are recognized by the parent university and mapped to the approved curriculum structure.

This model ensures that K-LEARN functions as a high-quality course delivery and credit mobility platform, while universities retain academic authority over course adoption, examination, credit recognition and degree award.

12. Proposed Operational Model

The proposed model may operate as follows: KSHEC develops and hosts high-standard online courses through K-LEARN after approval by the K-LEARN Academic Committee. Universities then select suitable courses and include them in their annual course basket after statutory approval. Students register for the courses through the university or platform. Learning and internal assessment are completed online through K-LEARN. External examination may be conducted by the parent university using its own question papers, by using AI-enabled question bank support from K-LEARN, or through a KSHEC-designated partner university. After successful completion, credits are awarded by the examining university, uploaded to ABC, recognized by the parent university and counted towards degree completion.

13. Conclusion

A credit framework for K-LEARN courses can be legally and academically viable if it is built on three principles: prior academic approval, university-level adoption and ABC-enabled credit transfer. K-LEARN may provide the platform, course content, internal assessment support, quality assurance and digital learning infrastructure, while universities may retain the authority to include courses in their baskets, conduct or approve external examinations, recognize credits and award degrees. This arrangement will ensure academic quality, regulatory compliance, credit mobility and wider access to high-quality online learning for FYUGP students in Kerala.

Part III

CREDIT TRANSFER GUIDELINES FOR ONLINE COURSE FROM OTHER RECOGNISED PLATFORMS

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The higher education reforms initiated in Kerala aim to transform the higher education system into a more flexible, multidisciplinary, learner-centric, skill-oriented, and technology-enabled academic ecosystem. The reforms introduced through the Four-Year Undergraduate Programme (FYUGP) emphasise academic flexibility, learner mobility, multiple entry and exit options, multidisciplinary education, outcome-based learning, integration of skill education, and promotion of innovative teaching-learning practices.

The University Grants Commission (UGC), through various regulations relating to Online and Distance Learning (ODL), Academic Bank of Credits (ABC), and online education, has encouraged universities and higher education institutions to integrate online learning and digital education into mainstream academic programmes. These reforms support the creation of a flexible academic framework in which students can accumulate, transfer, and redeem academic credits earned through recognised institutions and online learning platforms.

The FYUGP implemented in Kerala is designed to provide students with greater flexibility in course selection and learning pathways. In this context, online learning platforms and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) provide significant opportunities for students to access quality academic content, advanced interdisciplinary subjects, emerging technology domains, employability-oriented skill programmes, and specialised learning resources beyond the limitations of conventional classroom teaching.

The rapid growth of national online learning platforms such as SWAYAM, NPTEL, and SWAYAM Plus, along with university-based online programmes, virtual laboratories, and recognised international MOOCs, has created the need for a transparent, academically credible, and standardised framework for recognition and transfer of credits earned through online learning.

Accordingly, these guidelines are issued to establish a comprehensive framework for:

- Recognition of online courses and MOOCs,
- Mapping of online courses with university curricula,

- Credit accumulation and transfer,
- Integration of online learning within FYUGP and other programmes,
- Maintenance of academic quality and equivalence,
- Integration with the Academic Bank of Credits (ABC),
- Promotion of flexible and lifelong learning opportunities for students.

1.2 Purpose of the Guidelines

The purpose of these guidelines is to create a structured and transparent mechanism through which students can pursue recognised online courses and obtain academic credit for the same within their university programmes.

The guidelines seek to facilitate:

- Greater academic flexibility for students,
- Recognition of high-quality online learning,
- Promotion of multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary education,
- Access to emerging areas of knowledge and technology,
- Enhancement of employability and professional competencies,
- Mobility of students across institutions and programmes,
- Integration of online learning with mainstream higher education.

The guidelines also aim to ensure that the recognition and transfer of online course credits are carried out in a manner that preserves academic rigor, institutional autonomy, and quality standards.

1.3 Scope of the Guidelines

These guidelines shall apply to all universities and higher education institutions in Kerala offering:

- FYUGP programmes,
- Postgraduate programmes,
- Diploma programmes,
- Certificate programmes,
- Vocational and skill-based programmes,
- Blended and hybrid learning programmes.

The guidelines shall apply to credit transfer arising from:

- SWAYAM courses,
- NPTEL courses,
- SWAYAM Plus courses,
- Online courses offered by Central and State Universities,
- Online courses offered by Institutions of National Importance,
- Online programmes offered by recognised national and international institutions,
- Government-recognised online learning platforms,
- Approved industry-linked online certification programmes,
- Other MOOCs approved by competent academic bodies.

These guidelines are primarily intended to provide a general framework for online course credit transfer for courses offered outside the regular university system. Institution-specific online platforms such as K-Learn may adopt separate operational procedures and implementation mechanisms while remaining broadly aligned with the principles of these guidelines.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE GUIDELINES

2.1 Promotion of Flexible Learning Opportunities

One of the major objectives of these guidelines is to provide students with meaningful flexibility in learning by enabling them to pursue approved online courses alongside their regular academic programmes.

Students should have opportunities to access courses from reputed institutions and national platforms without being restricted solely to the courses offered within their parent institution. The guidelines recognise that flexible learning pathways are essential in modern higher education systems and that students should be empowered to customise parts of their academic journey according to their interests, career aspirations, and learning needs.

2.2 Promotion of Multidisciplinary and Interdisciplinary Education

The guidelines aim to support the multidisciplinary philosophy of the higher education reforms implemented in Kerala and encourage students to pursue courses beyond their core discipline.

Online platforms provide access to a wide range of subjects including:

- Artificial Intelligence,
- Data Science,
- Environmental Studies,
- Humanities,
- Entrepreneurship,
- Digital Skills,
- Design Thinking,
- Communication Skills,
- Emerging technologies and interdisciplinary domains.

Through these guidelines, students can strengthen their academic profile by integrating knowledge from multiple disciplines and thereby improve their intellectual breadth and employability.

2.3 Recognition of Quality Online Learning

The guidelines seek to formally recognise high-quality online courses offered through reputed national and international platforms. They acknowledge that several online programmes offered through SWAYAM, NPTEL, IITs, Central Universities, and other recognised institutions possess significant academic value and can contribute meaningfully to higher education programmes.

2.4 Facilitation of Academic Mobility and Credit Portability

The guidelines support the concept of academic mobility by enabling students to accumulate and transfer credits earned through recognised online courses across programmes and institutions.

Integration with the Academic Bank of Credits (ABC) will facilitate:

- Storage of credits,
- Portability of credits,
- Multiple entry and exit pathways,
- Lifelong learning opportunities,
- Inter-university mobility.

2.5 Promotion of Skill Development and Employability

The guidelines seek to encourage students to undertake employability-oriented and skill-based online courses that improve professional competencies, workplace readiness, and career advancement opportunities. Online learning platforms increasingly provide access to industry-relevant programmes in emerging sectors and technologies, thereby enabling students to acquire practical knowledge and contemporary skills beyond the conventional curriculum framework.

The guidelines recognise the growing importance of digital skills, professional communication, entrepreneurship, emerging technologies, industry-recognised certifications, and vocational competencies in enhancing graduate employability and career readiness. Such online learning opportunities can help students strengthen technical expertise, improve problem-solving and innovation capacity, develop professional and interpersonal skills, and gain exposure to current industry practices and technological advancements. The integration of skill-oriented online courses within higher education is therefore expected to contribute significantly towards bridging the gap between academic learning and industry requirements while improving the overall employability and professional preparedness of students.

3.3 Academic Components Covered

Online courses may be considered for:

- Major courses,
- Minor courses,
- Multi-Disciplinary Courses (MDC),
- Skill Enhancement Courses (SEC),
- Ability Enhancement Courses (AEC),
- Open electives,
- Generic electives,
- Vocational and value-added courses,
- Internship-linked theoretical components,
- Research and project-oriented learning modules.

Universities may specify components for which online credit transfer is permissible.

4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

4.1 Learner-Centric Academic Flexibility

These guidelines are based on the principle that students should have meaningful flexibility in selecting courses and designing their learning pathways while maintaining programme integrity and academic standards.

4.2 Outcome-Based Recognition of Credits

Recognition and transfer of credits shall be based primarily on the learning outcomes achieved by the student, the academic rigor of the course, the extent of student learning effort involved, the quality and credibility of the assessment process, and the overall nature of academic engagement required for successful completion of the course. Credit recognition shall therefore reflect actual academic attainment and demonstrated competency by the learner rather than mere course registration or completion. Universities and higher education institutions shall ensure that recognised online courses possess reasonable equivalence in quality, content, and learning outcomes with courses offered within the institutional academic framework.

4.3 Maintenance of Academic Quality and Integrity

Universities and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) shall ensure that the online courses recognised for credit transfer are academically credible and are offered through reliable and recognised academic or professional platforms. Institutions shall also ensure that assessment processes are authentic, transparent, and verifiable, and that student participation and academic engagement are meaningful and adequately monitored. Credits awarded through online learning shall maintain equivalence with institutional academic standards and programme requirements. Universities and HEIs shall establish appropriate quality assurance and verification mechanisms to prevent academic misconduct, plagiarism, impersonation, malpractice, or misuse of online certification systems.

4.4 Institutional Autonomy

Universities and institutions shall retain academic autonomy in matters relating to mapping of online courses, determination of academic equivalence, prescription of additional assessments or evaluation procedures, acceptance or rejection of credit transfer requests, and integration of online courses into programme structures. These guidelines are intended to function as a broad academic framework while allowing universities and institutions sufficient flexibility to adapt implementation according to their academic priorities, discipline-specific requirements, professional regulations, and institutional policies. Institutions may therefore evolve additional procedures and criteria consistent with these guidelines to ensure academic quality and programme integrity.

4.5 Transparency and Accountability

All procedures relating to course mapping, approval mechanisms, evaluation processes, credit transfer decisions, and grievance redressal shall be transparent, systematic, and properly documented. Universities and institutions shall maintain appropriate academic records relating to the recognition and transfer of online course credits and ensure accountability in implementation. Students shall be clearly informed regarding eligibility conditions, equivalence norms, assessment requirements, approval procedures, timelines, and grievance redressal mechanisms so that the entire process of online credit transfer remains fair, transparent, and academically reliable.

5. CATEGORIES OF ELIGIBLE ONLINE COURSES

5.1 SWAYAM Courses

SWAYAM courses recognised under the relevant UGC Regulations shall ordinarily be eligible for credit transfer subject to curriculum mapping and approval by the competent academic bodies of the university or higher education institution. SWAYAM, being the national online learning platform established by the Government of India, offers a wide range of academically credible courses developed by reputed institutions and subject experts across the country.

SWAYAM courses may include discipline-specific courses, foundation and introductory courses, skill-oriented programmes, multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary courses, employability-focused learning modules, and value-added academic programmes. Such courses may be utilised for major courses, minor courses, Multi-Disciplinary Courses (MDC), Skill Enhancement Courses (SEC), Ability Enhancement Courses (AEC), open electives, and other approved academic components depending on curriculum requirements and institutional regulations.

Considering the national-level academic recognition accorded to SWAYAM courses by UGC and other statutory bodies, universities may establish simplified procedures for recognition and transfer of SWAYAM credits. Universities may also evolve suitable mechanisms for mapping SWAYAM courses with their curriculum structure and programme outcomes to facilitate wider academic utilisation by students.

5.2 NPTEL Courses

NPTEL courses offered by the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) shall be recognised as academically rigorous Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) in engineering, science, management, technology, humanities, and interdisciplinary domains. These

courses are generally designed with strong academic standards and often include structured assignments, tutorials, periodic assessments, and proctored examinations.

NPTEL courses may be utilised for major and minor course components, electives, skill enhancement, professional competency development, interdisciplinary learning, and emerging technology domains. Universities may prescribe minimum certification scores, requirements relating to proctored examinations, additional internal assessments, viva voce, seminars, or practical evaluations wherever necessary to ensure equivalence with institutional academic standards. Universities may also establish discipline-specific norms regarding acceptance of NPTEL courses for laboratory-intensive or practical-oriented subjects.

5.3 SWAYAM Plus Courses

SWAYAM Plus courses focusing on employability enhancement, professional competencies, emerging technologies, Artificial Intelligence, Data Science, industry-linked learning, entrepreneurship, and advanced digital skills may also be recognised subject to approval by the competent academic authorities. SWAYAM Plus is designed to strengthen industry integration and workplace readiness by providing application-oriented and professionally relevant learning opportunities to students.

Many SWAYAM Plus courses involve collaboration with industry partners, professional organisations, and technology experts and may therefore include project-based learning, case studies, practical assignments, and industry-oriented training modules. Universities and higher education institutions may evolve separate equivalence frameworks or assessment mechanisms for such courses considering their practical and professional orientation. Such courses may be particularly useful for enhancing employability, innovation capacity, entrepreneurial skills, and exposure to current industrial and technological developments.

5.4 Other MOOCs and Online Courses

Other MOOCs and online courses may also be recognised for credit transfer subject to academic scrutiny, equivalence evaluation, mapping with curriculum outcomes, and approval by competent academic authorities. Such recognition shall be based on the academic quality, learning outcomes, assessment methods, student learning effort, and relevance of the course to the programme structure.

These may include online courses offered by Central and State Universities, international universities, government-recognised online learning platforms, recognised skilling agencies, professional organisations, and industry-certified programmes. Universities may adopt more detailed scrutiny and

verification mechanisms for such courses to ensure academic credibility, quality assurance, and compatibility with programme outcomes and institutional standards.

Institutions may also prescribe additional evaluation procedures, assignments, viva voce, seminars, or internal assessments wherever required to establish academic equivalence and ensure the integrity of the credit transfer process.

6. CREDIT CALCULATION BASED ON MINIMUM LEARNING EFFORT

6.1 Principle of Credit Determination

Credit equivalence shall be based on minimum direct academic effort and attainment of learning outcomes rather than merely course duration or platform certification.

6.2 Components of Minimum Learning Effort

The minimum learning engagement may include:

- Viewing video lectures,
- Reading course materials,
- Assignments and quizzes,
- Tutorials and discussion participation,
- Projects or practical activities,
- Preparation for assessment and examination.

6.3 Indicative Weekly Learning Effort for online courses

Activity	Suggested Weekly Effort
Video lectures	3 Hours
Reading and self-study	1 Hour
Assignments and quizzes	1 Hour
Discussion / reflection	1 Hour
Total	6 Hours

6.4 Credit Equivalence Framework

Duration	Minimum Learning Effort	Credits
4 Weeks	24 Hours	1 Credit
8 Weeks	48 Hours	2 Credits
12 Weeks	72 Hours	3 Credits
16 Weeks	96 Hours	4 Credits

Universities may prescribe separate norms for laboratory-intensive, field-based, studio-based, and research-oriented courses.

7. ACCUMULATION OF CREDITS FROM MULTIPLE ONLINE COURSES

7.1 Combination of Credits

Students may earn required credits by completing multiple approved online courses. Credits earned from different online courses may be combined or partially utilised depending on programme requirements.

7.2 Carry Forward of Unutilised Credits

Unutilised credits earned by students through recognised online, blended, or digital learning courses may be retained and carried forward in accordance with the provisions of the Academic Bank of Credits (ABC) and applicable UGC regulations. Such credits shall remain valid for the duration prescribed under the relevant regulatory framework and may be accumulated progressively by the learner over different stages of higher education. The stored credits may subsequently be utilised for the completion of future academic programmes, qualifications, diplomas, certificates, or additional learning pathways, thereby supporting lifelong learning, flexible education, and multiple entry–exit opportunities within the higher education system.

7.3 Academic Mobility

Credits earned through recognised online courses and approved digital learning platforms may be transferred and utilised to facilitate academic mobility and flexible learning pathways. Such credit transfer may be permitted within the same university, across different universities, across academic programmes, and through multiple entry and exit options envisaged under the National Education

Policy (NEP) and UGC regulations. This provision aims to promote learner flexibility, interdisciplinary education, mobility across institutions, and seamless continuation of higher education without unnecessary repetition of coursework, subject to the academic approval and equivalence norms prescribed by the respective universities and competent academic bodies.

8. RECOGNITION OF ADDITIONAL LEARNER ENGAGEMENT

8.1 Additional Academic Engagement

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) may recognise and encourage additional learner engagement undertaken by students while pursuing online, blended, or digital learning courses. Such engagement may include additional reading and reference study beyond the prescribed course materials, seminar presentations, participation in academic discussions and peer-learning activities, project work, reflective assignments, practical exercises, laboratory components, field-based activities, case studies, and other experiential learning components relevant to the course outcomes. Institutions may also encourage faculty mentoring, guided academic interaction, and supplementary academic activities to enhance the depth of learning, critical thinking, application skills, and interdisciplinary understanding of students enrolled in online courses.

8.2 Additional Credit Recommendation

Where a student successfully completes additional academic engagement activities prescribed by the institution, the concerned HEI may, based on structured mentoring, evaluation, and academic monitoring, recommend additional academic weightage or award one additional credit, wherever permitted under the regulations of the respective university and approved by the competent academic bodies. Accordingly, a one-credit online course may be recognised as equivalent to two credits, and a two-credit course may be recognised as equivalent to three credits, subject to the fulfilment of prescribed academic requirements, additional workload, assessment standards, and institutional quality assurance mechanisms. Such provisions shall support enhanced learner participation, experiential learning, and meaningful academic engagement beyond the minimum online learning requirements.

9. ASSESSMENT AND PASS CRITERIA for additional engagement

9.1 Continuous Assessment

Assessment of students enrolled in recognised online or blended learning courses shall ordinarily follow a continuous and comprehensive evaluation approach designed to measure learner participation, academic progress, conceptual understanding, and practical application of knowledge. The assessment process may include assignments, quizzes, project work, seminar presentations, participation in academic discussions, reflective exercises, internal tests, practical activities, and other evaluation components approved by the institution or university. HEIs may adopt suitable digital assessment mechanisms and learning analytics to monitor learner engagement and academic performance while ensuring transparency, fairness, academic integrity, and adherence to university regulations.

9.2 Final Assessment

Final evaluation of recognised online courses may be conducted through appropriate academic assessment mechanisms approved by the respective university or Higher Education Institution (HEI). Such evaluation may include platform-based examinations, proctored online examinations, university-conducted examinations, viva voce examinations, practical examinations, project evaluations, demonstrations, presentations, or any other suitable mode of assessment prescribed for ensuring academic quality and outcome attainment. In cases where additional learner engagement activities are recognised for awarding enhanced academic weightage or additional credits, the university or institution may also conduct supplementary evaluation processes to assess the quality, depth, and authenticity of such engagement. The final assessment framework shall ensure fairness, academic integrity, transparency, and comparability with conventional academic standards.

9.3 Pass Requirements

Universities and competent academic bodies may prescribe appropriate pass requirements and eligibility criteria for the successful completion of recognised online courses and for the award of any additional credit or academic weightage arising from supplementary learner engagement. Such requirements may include minimum assignment scores, minimum examination marks, minimum certification grades, participation in discussions and academic activities, successful completion of project work or practical components, and attendance or engagement norms wherever applicable. Institutions may also prescribe additional evaluation criteria for recognising enhanced learner participation, reflective assignments, seminar presentations, field-based activities, mentoring sessions, or other structured academic engagements undertaken beyond the minimum course

requirements. The award and transfer of credits shall be subject to the satisfactory fulfilment of all prescribed academic and quality assurance requirements of the respective university.

10. EXAMINATION AND AWARD OF CREDITS BY UNIVERSITIES / COLLEGES

10.1 University-Conducted Examination

Universities and colleges may conduct examinations for approved online, blended, and digital learning courses, including courses offered through platforms such as SWAYAM, NPTEL, SWAYAM Plus, K-Learn, and other recognised online learning systems. Such examinations may be organised by the university directly or through affiliated colleges and authorised centres in accordance with the academic regulations and quality assurance mechanisms prescribed by the competent academic bodies. This provision is intended to facilitate wider academic recognition, institutional flexibility, and effective integration of online learning into regular university programmes.

10.2 Nature of Examination

In cases where universities or colleges undertake institutional evaluation of approved online courses, the examination process may include university-designed or institution-prepared question papers, evaluation by university-approved examiners, internal assessment components, project evaluation, viva voce, practical examinations, seminar presentations, or other suitable assessment methods consistent with the nature of the course. Universities may integrate continuous assessment and additional learner engagement activities into the evaluation framework for awarding credits and additional academic weightage. In such cases, platform-issued certificates may not always be mandatory, provided that the institution conducts an approved academic evaluation process and certifies that the prescribed learning outcomes, assessment standards, and academic requirements have been satisfactorily achieved by the learner.

10.3 Examination Fee

Universities and colleges may prescribe appropriate fees for the conduct of examinations and evaluation processes relating to recognised online and blended learning courses. Such fees may include charges for online proctored examinations, university-conducted examinations, practical or laboratory evaluations, viva voce examinations, project assessments, certification processing, or other academic evaluation activities wherever applicable. Institutions may also prescribe reasonable fees for additional assessment components associated with enhanced learner engagement, supplementary practical training, or the award of additional academic credits, subject to the norms and approval procedures of the respective university and regulatory authorities.

11. CREDIT TRANSFER FROM ONLINE COURSES OTHER THAN SWAYAM–NPTEL

11.1 Eligibility

Online courses offered through platforms other than SWAYAM and NPTEL may also be considered for credit transfer and academic recognition, subject to the approval of the concerned university or Higher Education Institution (HEI). Such courses shall ordinarily undergo appropriate academic scrutiny to ensure their quality, relevance, academic rigour, and compatibility with the curriculum and learning outcomes of the respective programme. The evaluation process may include curriculum mapping, verification of course content and duration, assessment equivalence, examination mechanisms, certification authenticity, learner engagement standards, and overall compliance with the academic and regulatory requirements prescribed by the university. Institutions may also consider the reputation, accreditation status, industry relevance, and academic credibility of the online learning platform while determining eligibility for credit transfer.

11.2 Institutional Decision

The final decision regarding the recognition and transfer of credits earned through non-SWAYAM online courses, MOOCs, blended learning platforms, or other digital learning systems shall rest with the concerned university or Higher Education Institution (HEI). The competent academic bodies of the institution may prescribe detailed procedures, equivalence norms, quality assurance mechanisms, evaluation requirements, and limits relating to such credit transfers in accordance with applicable UGC regulations, university statutes, and academic policies. Universities may also establish appropriate institutional frameworks to ensure transparency, academic integrity, and uniformity in the recognition of credits earned through external online learning platforms.

12. MAPPING OF ONLINE COURSES FOR FYUGP STUDENTS

12.1 Constitution of Mapping Committees

Universities may constitute appropriate academic bodies and expert mechanisms for the systematic mapping and recognition of online courses for students enrolled under the Four-Year Undergraduate Programme (FYUGP). Such mechanisms may include subject-level committees, Boards of Studies (BoS), expert panels, curriculum committees, or other competent academic bodies entrusted with evaluating the suitability and equivalence of online courses with the prescribed curriculum requirements of the university. These committees may examine the course content, learning outcomes, duration, academic rigour, assessment mechanisms, practical components, industry relevance, and alignment with programme-specific objectives before recommending the courses for approval and credit transfer. Universities may also involve experts from academia, industry,

professional bodies, and digital learning platforms wherever necessary to ensure quality and relevance.

12.2 Publication of Mapped Courses

Universities may periodically publish and update an approved list of mapped online courses eligible for registration and credit transfer by FYUGP students. The published list may clearly indicate the equivalent subject or curriculum component, credit value, course category, eligibility criteria, mode of assessment, examination requirements, and any additional academic conditions prescribed for the recognition of the course. Such mapped course lists may include SWAYAM, NPTEL, SWAYAM Plus, K-Learn, and other approved online learning platforms recognised by the university. Universities and affiliated colleges may make these details available through official websites, academic portals, learning management systems, or course registration platforms to facilitate transparency and informed course selection by students.

12.3 Periodic Revision

The list of mapped and approved online courses shall be reviewed and revised periodically to ensure continued academic relevance, quality, and alignment with evolving educational requirements. Such revisions may take into consideration curriculum changes introduced by universities, emerging technologies and interdisciplinary areas, student demand, industry requirements, employability trends, advancements in digital pedagogy, and newly introduced or updated courses offered through SWAYAM, NPTEL, SWAYAM Plus, K-Learn, and other recognised online platforms. Universities may also periodically discontinue outdated courses and introduce new academic offerings to maintain the effectiveness, flexibility, and contemporary relevance of online learning opportunities available to FYUGP students.

13. RECOGNISED ONLINE COURSES FOR FYUGP

The following categories of online courses may ordinarily be recognised for FYUGP:

- SWAYAM courses,
- NPTEL courses,
- SWAYAM Plus courses,
- Courses offered by Central and State Universities,
- Courses offered by Institutions of National Importance,
- International online courses recognised by universities,

- Courses approved by universities,
- Government-recognised skilling platform courses,
- Industry-recognised certification programmes approved by competent authorities.

14. ACADEMIC AUTHORITY AND FINAL DECISION

14.1 Role of Universities and HEIs

Universities and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) shall retain full academic authority and autonomy in all matters relating to the recognition, mapping, evaluation, and transfer of credits earned through online, blended, and digital learning courses. The competent academic bodies of the university shall have the authority to determine course equivalence, approve curriculum mapping, sanction credit transfer, prescribe additional assessments or academic requirements wherever necessary, and decide upon the recognition or rejection of online courses offered through various platforms. Such decisions shall be taken in accordance with UGC regulations, university statutes, academic ordinances, and institutional quality assurance mechanisms while ensuring academic integrity, transparency, and comparability with conventional learning systems.

14.2 Documentation and Record Maintenance

All credits approved through online course recognition and credit transfer mechanisms shall be properly documented and maintained in the official academic records of the institution. The recognised credits shall be appropriately reflected in mark lists, grade cards, transcripts, and other academic records issued by the university or HEI. Wherever applicable, such credits shall also be uploaded to the Academic Bank of Credits (ABC) in accordance with UGC regulations and the provisions relating to academic credit accumulation, transfer, and multiple entry–exit pathways. Universities and institutions shall establish suitable digital and administrative mechanisms to ensure accuracy, traceability, transparency, and timely updating of academic records relating to online learning credits.

15. GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL

15.1 Institutional Grievance Mechanism

Universities and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) shall establish appropriate grievance redressal mechanisms for addressing issues arising in relation to online course recognition, mapping, evaluation, and credit transfer processes. Such mechanisms may deal with matters including rejection of credit transfer requests, delays in processing applications, disputes relating to equivalence determination, mapping-related grievances, assessment concerns, and any other academic issues connected with the

implementation of these guidelines. Institutions shall ensure that grievance handling procedures are transparent, time-bound, fair, and accessible to students and other stakeholders.

15.2 Appeal Process

Students aggrieved by any decision relating to online course recognition, equivalence, mapping, assessment, or credit transfer may submit appeals before the competent academic authority of the university or institution within the timelines prescribed by the respective regulations. The competent authority may examine the matter through appropriate academic committees or expert bodies and communicate the final decision within a reasonable period, ensuring fairness, academic consistency, and adherence to institutional regulations.

16. REVIEW AND AMENDMENT

These guidelines may be periodically reviewed, updated, and revised by the competent authorities in light of evolving UGC regulations, developments in higher education reforms, technological advancements in digital and online learning, recommendations of the Kerala State Higher Education Council (KSHEC) and universities, as well as emerging academic, research, employability, and industry requirements. Universities and HEIs may also issue supplementary procedures, operational guidelines, and implementation frameworks consistent with these principles to facilitate effective adoption and continuous improvement of online learning integration within higher education.

17. CONCLUSION

These Online Course Credit Transfer Guidelines seek to establish a flexible, transparent, academically credible, and learner-centric framework for integrating online, blended, and digital learning into the higher education system in Kerala. The guidelines aim to balance academic flexibility, learner mobility, multidisciplinary education, skill development, institutional autonomy, and the maintenance of academic quality and integrity. The framework is intended to empower students to effectively utilise national and global online learning opportunities while ensuring proper academic standards, equivalence, accountability, and quality assurance within the higher education ecosystem. Through the systematic integration of recognised online learning platforms, universities and HEIs can expand access to quality education, promote lifelong learning, strengthen employability, and support the broader objectives of higher education reforms in Kerala.



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