

Making PhD optional for eminent scholars is a progressive move

Experts hail the decision which will enrich students with practical exposure and industry knowledge

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The directive by the University Grants Commission (UGC) will allow scholars and industry experts to teach in the central universities, even if they do not possess a PhD. The scholars who were hired as guest lecturers based on their work experience will now be absorbed as 'professor of practice' and 'associate professor of practice'.

The decision by the UGC is significant as these professionals would also enrich students with their practical knowledge.

Speaking to *Education Times*, BJ Rao, vice-chancellor, University of Hyderabad, says, "The decision of the UGC to allow eminent scholars from varied domains to teach at the central universities irrespective of

Students will get to understand the subject in depth if scholars teach

whether they hold a PhD degree or not is a welcome move and should be implemented at the earliest. The quality of teaching-learning outcomes at the central universities will surely get a boost as these scholarly professionals come with a lot of experience and deep insights. Also, the teaching by scholars will be instrumental in bridging the quality learning gap among the students."

In the current framework, there is no defined way for these eminent professionals to enter the higher education ecosystem for teaching positions. Most of them are invited to teach as guest lecturers.



"These scholars bring in a different style of teaching by bringing in a deeper content about a subject than a conventional teacher. The

scholarly presence must be maximised, as it will make the teaching profession attractive and interesting. However, this directive of UGC

is in place only till July 2023," adds Rao.

Academia is hopeful that the students will get a deep practical understanding of

the subject as these scholarly teachers would relate their teaching with real-life examples that they have gone through in their respective fields. "For instance, if a Supreme Court judge teaches the Law students, he would be able to relate his teaching with his first-hand practical experience," explains Rao.

Yogesh Singh, vice-chancellor, Delhi University, says, "This decision by UGC is a welcome step as many top-rated universities across the globe are following this system and we will be implementing this at DU. This whole concept centres around the 'professor of practice' as a senior professor with an expertise in his or her domain is required at this position. While teaching at the central universities, these eminent scholars can also become motivational inspiration for the students' community."