

# CENTRE AIMS TO MAKE EDUCATION BETTER FOR SCS

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UGC advises colleges and universities to ascertain and rectify the educational shortcomings among SC students

**NEW DELHI** : The Union government aims to assess more than five million students from scheduled castes (SCs) and make "direct and specific" intervention for improving their education outcome.

Higher education regulator University Grants Commission (UGC) has advised colleges and [universities](#) to ascertain and rectify, once universities open, the educational shortcomings among SC students, who comprise 14.9% of the higher education students' population. More than 37 million students are pursuing higher studies across verticals, of which about 5.5 million are from the SC community, according to official data.

The [UGC](#) letter follows the advise of the ministries of human resource development, and social justice and empowerment. *Mint* has seen a copy of the letter written by UGC secretary Rajnish Jain.

The social justice ministry said it is important to have a specific programme for SC students, even as it monitors the use of SC welfare funds.

"There shall be specific and direct intervention for the welfare... based on their needs and deprivation and an academic support programme may be launched in all higher educational institutions. Under this, the student's academic deficiencies may be identified through a well-designed test and an academic support programme may be devised in accordance with the actual requirement," the UGC said.

The enrolment ratio of students for higher education in India is 26.3%, while for SC students it is at 23%. The performance of SC students in competitive exams is a little less than that of other backward classes (OBCs) and the unreserved categories. Among the top 50 candidates for the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test in 2019, 43 were from the unreserved category, while seven were from OBC.

The UGC urged colleges and universities to launch academic support programmes of two-six months for addressing the academic deficiencies of SC students in accordance with their actual requirement.

"SCs form an important political constituent. Besides, a direct and specific intervention by universities will better the situation," said a government official, requesting anonymity.

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