1.4.3. Way Forward to Improve Higher Education

Regulatory and governance reforms	• **Ensure effective coordination of roles of different higher education regulators, such as the UGC, All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) and National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE), and restructure or merge these where needed. Amend the UGC Act to provide legislative backing to the tiered regulatory structure.** • **Create a framework to allow foreign universities of global repute to operate in India, in collaboration with Indian institutions to offer joint degree programmes.** • **Ensure that the selection process of ViceChancellors of universities is transparent and objective.** • **Link at least a proportion of the grants to performance and quality.**
Curriculum design	• Domain experts in each educational field should be asked to develop a basic minimum standard in curriculum that will serve as a benchmark for institutions at the undergraduate and post-graduate levels. Institutions should be given the freedom to innovate and expand curriculum beyond this basic minimum standard. • Curriculum and pedagogy at all higher education institutions should be updated continuously through mandatory feedback from domain experts, faculty, students, industry, and alumni. • Diverse post-secondary career options should be provided through skills/vocational training that should be integrated seamlessly with higher education and the skilling mission. • Internships by students in undergraduate courses should be encouraged and potentially mandated in all professional and technical courses. This would help with the practical orientation of students.
Reforming accreditation framework	• All higher education institutions must be compulsorily and regularly accredited. • Despite a two-fold increase in accreditation levels in the last five years, accreditation coverage is still inadequate. One way to bridge this gap by 2022-23 is to allow credible accreditation agencies, empanelled through a transparent, high quality process, to provide accreditation. • Accreditation must give adequate weightage to outcomes rather than inputs only. • Public information material brought out by institutions and their websites should prominently display the accreditation status and grade.
Creating 'world class universities'	• Twenty universities – 10 each from the public and private sector – are being selected as 'Institutions of Eminence' and are helping to attain world-class standards of teaching and research. The funding of INR 1,000 crore over a 5-year period to each institution, planned for selected public universities, could be further increased. • Further, a graded mechanism to ensure additional funds flow to the top public universities should be developed. This is similar to the model adopted by Singapore and China to develop their top two public universities.
Performance-linked funding and incentives	• Only two out of 47 central universities have NAAC scores of above 3.51, despite generous funding available to them. An evaluation may be undertaken to understand the challenges faced by these central universities, and they should be asked to develop strategic plans for getting into the top 500 of global universities rankings in the next 10 years. Going forward, **funding to these institutions should be linked to performance and outcomes** through the Ministry of Human Resource Development and the newly constituted Higher Education Funding Agency.