

Nursing, Engineering may become part of distance learning courses

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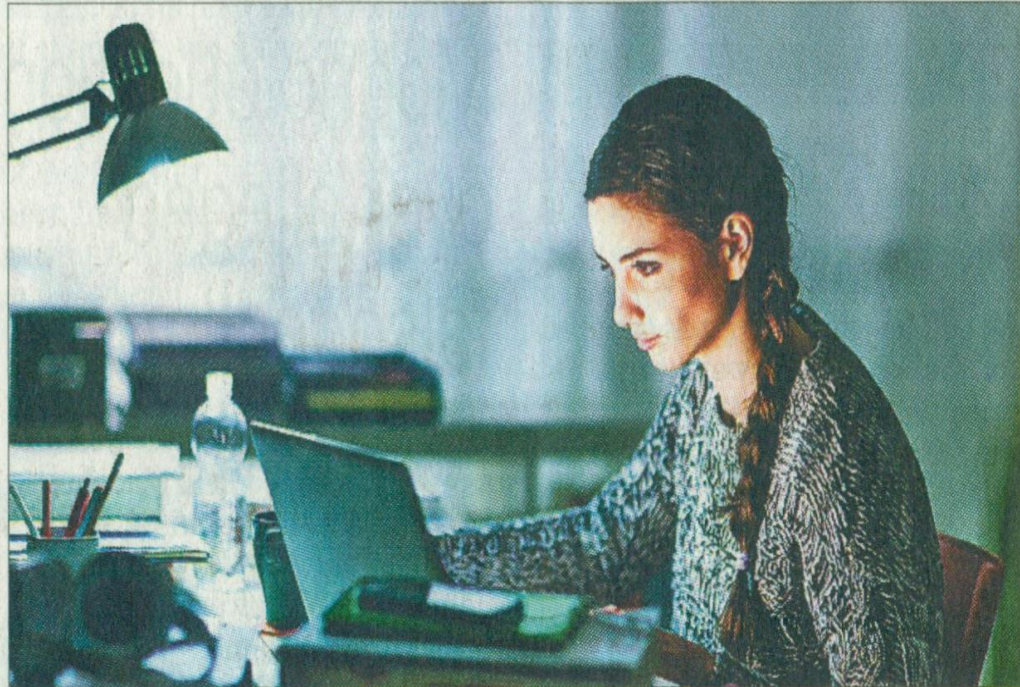
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New Delhi: With the central government making changes to its distance education norms, technical courses like Engineering and Nursing are also likely to be available through distance mode.

The University Grants Commission (UGC) has recently notified its new norms for distance education and institutes that have technical courses might be allowed to run if they make special arrangements for practical course work for students, sources in the Ministry of Human Resource Development, said.

By making special arrangements, government means giving a couple of months time to the students to visit the institution and complete the practical work, while they study the theory part through distance mode.

Higher educational institutions in India do not have the permission to offer degree programmes in Engineering, Medicine, Dental, Pharmacy, Nursing, Architecture, Physiotherapy, and other technical



Picture for representation

disciplines in the distance learning mode. The government had shut down all such institutions that offered distance learning for these courses in 2013.

The new notifications were discussed in a meeting of officials from the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) and the UGC with officials of the HRD Ministry, early this week. "We have not said a complete no for technical institutions under the

distance learning mode. If an institution wants to start a course, they should first approach the concerned body, like AICTE for engineering. If the concerned body feels that they can give it a go ahead, then the institutions will be allowed," a source privy to the developments said.

The government wants to provide means of learning to those who are unable to pursue a full-time course.