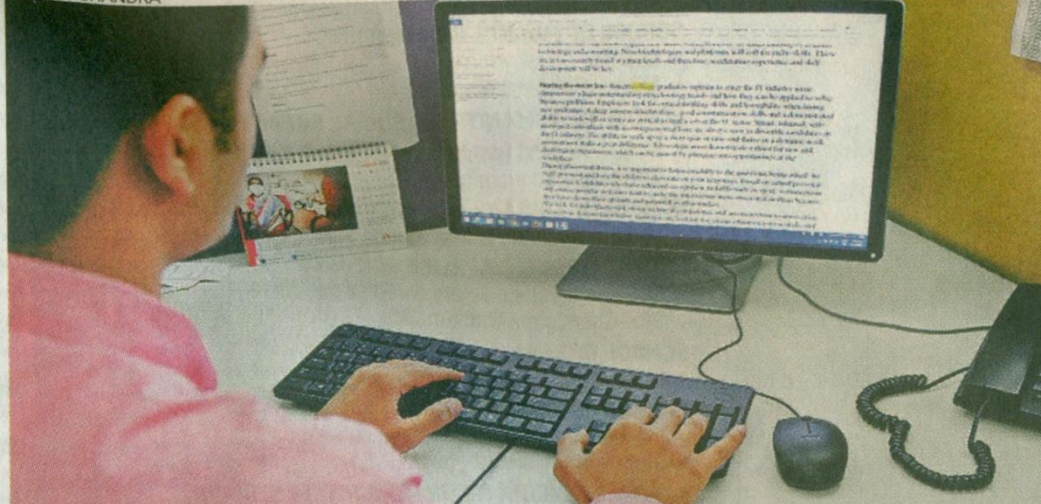


# Why do we need MOOCs

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**Komal Ganjoo** explains the pros and cons associated with Massive Online Open Courses (MOOC)

**M**OOC (Massive Online Open Courses), as the name suggests, are online classes designed for limitless participation, that is, countless students can have access to the course online. It is a new path towards learning and is seen as the latest version of distance learning. The term MOOC was coined in 2008 but it gained popularity in 2012, which was declared the 'year of the MOOC', as students around the world signed up to take classes in Maths, Science, Humanities, and other subjects.

MOOCs are controversial. Some consider them the future of higher education, while others think the system will eventually collapse. Let's quickly look at the pros and cons of MOOC:

## WHY DO WE LOVE MOOC

**Free or low cost:** You can check out topics and subjects without spending

money. MOOCs are a great platform for students to narrow potential majors without impacting bank account.

**Beats distance:** If you live in a far-flung location, but have an internet connection, MOOCs are an excellent option.

**No registration needed:** Anybody can take part, MOOCs never ask for one's prior education.

**Enhances your CV:** While this may not award you a degree, taking a MOOC speaks about your inner drive to learn.

**Wide range of subjects:** MOOCs can help you gain exposure to new topics, available in multiple languages.

**Tweak your skills:** MOOCs can help you prepare for college courses by helping you polish the basics before you pursue any coursework.

## WHY DO WE HATE MOOC

**It's not accredited:** Courses that are not accredited

could be less valuable for your career. However, it's not bad to mention on your resume that you have completed an online course.

**Lack of interaction:** One can miss the teacher-student conversation that happens in a classroom. There are many electronic alternatives, but face-to-face communication is lost, and emotions can often be misinterpreted.

**Grading papers are difficult:** Grading tens of thousands of essays or research papers is way too difficult. This could impact standards and schedules.

**Dropping out is easy:** Since there are no incentives to complete a course and no restrictions on dropping out, thus MOOC has high dropout rates. MOOCs are a good platform to access inexpensive quality education, but it is more to upgrade skills rather than to get an accredited degree.

*(The author is a digital learning professional, who is attending a publishing course at George Washington University)*