

**UGC GUIDELINES ON ADOPTION OF CHOICE BASED
CREDIT SYSTEM**

**UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION
BAHADURSHAH ZAFAR MARG NEW
DELHI — 110 002**

UGC GUIDELINES ON ADOPTION OF CHOICE BASED CREDIT SYSTEM

1. PREAMBLE

The University Grants Commission (UGC) has initiated several measures to bring equity, efficiency and excellence in the Higher Education System of country. The important measures taken to enhance academic standards and quality in higher education include innovation and improvements in curriculum, teaching-learning process, examination and evaluation systems, besides governance and other matters.

The grading system is considered to be better than the conventional marks system and hence it has been followed in the top institutions in India and abroad. So it is desirable to introduce uniform grading system. This will facilitate student mobility across institutions within and across countries and also enable potential employers to assess the performance of students. To bring in the desired uniformity, in grading system and method for computing the cumulative grade point average (CGPA) based on the performance of students in the examinations, the UGC has formulated these guidelines.

2. APPLICABILITY OF THE GRADING SYSTEM

These guidelines shall apply to all undergraduate and postgraduate level degree, diploma and certificate programs under the credit system awarded by the Central, State and Deemed to be universities in India.

3. DEFINITIONS OF KEY WORDS

1. **Academic Year:** It is the period necessary to complete an actual course of study within a year. It comprises two main semesters i.e., (one odd + one even) and one supplementary semester.
2. **Choice Based Credit System (CBCS):** The credit based semester system is one which provides flexibility in designing curriculum and assigning credits based on the course content and hours of teaching along with provision of choice for the student in the course selection.
3. **Course:** A course is a subject offered by a department for learning in a particular semester
4. **Credit Point:** It is the product of grade point and number of credits for a course.
5. **Credit:** A unit by which the course work is measured. It determines the number of hours of instructions required per week. One credit is equivalent to one hour of teaching (lecture or tutorial) or two hours of practical work/field work per week.
6. **Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA):** It is a measure of overall cumulative performance of a student over all semesters. The CGPA is the ratio of total credit points secured by a student in various courses in all semesters and the sum of the total credits of all courses in all the semesters. It is expressed up to two decimal places.
7. **Grade Point:** It is a numerical weight allotted to each letter grade on a 10-point scale.
8. **Letter Grade:** It is an index of the performance of students in a said course. Grades are denoted by letters S, A+, A, B+, B, C.
10. **Program:** Means, UG degree program: Bachelor of Technology (B.Tech); PG degree program: Master of Technology (M.Tech) / Master of Business Administration (MBA).
11. **Semester Grade Point Average (SGPA):** It is a measure of performance of work done in a semester. It is ratio of total credit points secured by a student in various courses registered in a semester and the total course credits taken during that semester. It shall be expressed up to two decimal places.

12. **Semester:** It is a period of study consisting of 15 to 18 weeks of academic work equivalent to normally 90 working days. Odd semester commences usually in July and even semester in December of every year.
13. **Grade Sheet:** Based on the grades earned, a grade sheet shall be issued to all the registered students after every semester. The grade sheet will display the course details (course code, course name, number of credits, grade secured) along with SGPA of that semester and CGPA earned till that semester.
14. **Transcript:** The Transcript will be issued to the student as and when required and will contain a consolidated record of all the courses undergone by him/her, grades obtained and CGPA upto the date of issue of transcript. Only last letter grade obtained in a course by the student upto the date of issue of transcript will be shown in the Transcript.

4. SEMESTER SYSTEM AND CHOICE BASED CREDIT SYSTEM

The Indian Higher Education Institutions have been moving from the conventional annual system to semester system. Currently many of the institutions have already introduced the choice based credit system. The semester system accelerates the teaching-learning process and enables vertical and horizontal mobility in learning. The credit based semester system provides flexibility in designing curriculum and assigning credits based on the course content and hours of teaching. The choice based credit system provides a ‘cafeteria’ type approach in which the students can take courses of their choice, learn at their own pace, undergo additional courses and acquire more than the required credits, and adopt an interdisciplinary approach to learning. It is desirable that the HEIs move to CBCS and implement the grading system.

A course defines learning objectives and learning outcomes and comprises lectures / tutorials / laboratory work / field work / project work / comprehensive examination / seminars / assignments / MOOCs / alternative assessment tools / presentations / self-study etc., or a combination of some of these. Under the CBCS, the requirement for awarding a degree is prescribed in terms of number of credits to be completed by the students.

5. TYPES OF COURSES

Courses in a curriculum may be of three kinds: **Foundation / Skill, Core and Elective Courses.**

Foundation / Skill Course:

Foundation courses are the courses based upon the content leads to enhancement of skill and knowledge as well as value based and are aimed at man making education. Skill subjects are those areas in which one needs to develop a set of skills to learn anything at all. They are fundamental to learning any subject.

Professional Core Courses:

There may be a core course in every semester. This is the course which is to be compulsorily studied by a student as a core requirement to complete the requirement of a program in the said discipline of study.

Elective Course:

Electives provide breadth of experience in respective branch and application areas. Elective course is a course which can be chosen from a pool of courses. It may be:

- Supportive to the discipline of study
- Providing an expanded scope
- Enabling an exposure to some other discipline / domain
- Nurturing student's proficiency / skill.

An elective may be Professional Elective, is a discipline centric focusing on those courses which add generic proficiency to the students or may be Open Elective, chosen from unrelated disciplines.

Audit Courses

In Addition, a student can register for courses for audit only with a view to supplement his/her knowledge and/or skills. Here also, the student's grades shall have to be reflected in the Memorandum of Grades. But, these shall not be taken into account in determining the student's academic performance in the semester. In view of this, it shall not be necessary for the institute to issue any separate transcript covering the audit courses to the registrants at these courses. Its result shall be declared as "Satisfactory" or "Not Satisfactory" performance.

Mandatory Courses (MC)

These courses are among the compulsory courses but will not carry any credits. However, a pass in each such course during the program shall be necessary requirement for the student to qualify for the award of Degree. Its result shall be declared as "Satisfactory" or "Not Satisfactory" performance.

6. EXAMINATION AND ASSESSMENT

The HEIs are currently following various methods for examination and assessment suitable for the courses and programs as approved by their respective statutory bodies. In assessing the performance of the students in examinations, the usual approach is to award marks based on the examinations conducted at various stages (sessional, mid-term, end-semester etc.,) in a semester. Some of the HEIs convert these marks to letter grades based on absolute or relative grading system and award the grades. There is a marked variation across the colleges and universities in the number of grades, grade points, letter grades used, which creates difficulties in comparing students across the institutions. The UGC recommends the following system to be implemented in awarding the grades and CGPA under the credit based semester system.

6.1 Letter Grades and Grade Points:

Performances of students in each course are expressed in terms of marks as well as in Letter Grades based on absolute grading system. The UGC recommends a 10-point grading system with the following letter grades as given in the Table 1.

Range of Marks	Grade Point	Letter Grade
100 – 90	10	S (Superior)
89 – 80	9	A+ (Excellent)
79 – 70	8	A (Very Good)
69 – 60	7	B+ (Good)
59 – 50	6	B (Average)
49 – 40	5	C (Pass)
Below 40	0	F (Fail)
Absent	0	AB (Absent)
Authorized Break of Study	0	ABS

- ❖ A student is deemed to have passed and acquired to correspondent credits in particular course if s/he obtains any one of the following grades: "S", "A+", "A", "B+", "B", "C".

- ❖ A student obtaining Grade F shall be considered Failed and will be required to reappear in the examination.
- ❖ For non credit courses, ‘Satisfactory’ or “Not Satisfactory” is indicated instead of the letter grade and this will not be counted for the computation of SGPA/CGPA.
- ❖ “SA” denotes shortage of attendance (as per item 11) and hence prevention from writing Semester End Examination.
- ❖ “W” denotes **withdrawal** from the exam for the particular course.
- ❖ At the end of each semester, the institute issues grade sheet indicating the SGPA and CGPA of the student. However, grade sheet will not be issued to the student if s/he has any outstanding dues.

6.2 Fairness in Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of system of education as it is instrumental in identifying and certifying the academic standards accomplished by a student and projecting them far and wide as an objective and impartial indicator of a student’s performance. Thus, it becomes bounden duty of a University to ensure that it is carried out in fair manner. In this regard, UGC recommends the following system of checks and balances which would enable Universities effectively and fairly carry out the process of assessment and examination.

- i. In case of at least 50% of core courses offered in different programs across the disciplines, the assessment of the theoretical component towards the end of the semester should be undertaken by external examiners from outside the university conducting examination, who may be appointed by the competent authority. In such courses, the question papers will be set as well as assessed by external examiners.
- ii. In case of the assessment of practical component of such core courses, the team of examiners should be constituted on 50 – 50 % basis. i.e. half of the examiners in the team should be invited from outside the university conducting examination.
- iii. In case of the assessment of project reports / thesis / dissertation etc. the work should be undertaken by internal as well as external examiners.

7. COMPUTATION OF SGPA AND CDPA

The UGC recommends the following procedure to compute the Semester Grade Point Average (SGPA) and Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA). The credit points earned by a student are used for calculating the Semester Grade Point Average (SGPA) and the Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA), both of which are important performance indices of the student. SGPA is equal to the sum of all the total points earned by the student in a given semester divided by the number of credits registered by the student in that semester. CGPA gives the sum of all the total points earned in all the previous semesters and the current semester divided by the number of credits registered in all these semesters. Thus,

$$SGPA = \sum_{i=1}^n (C_i G_i) / \sum_{i=1}^n C_i$$

Where, C_i is the number of credits of the i^{th} course and G_i is the grade point scored by the student in the i^{th} course and n represent the number of courses in which a student is registered in the concerned semester.

$$CGPA = \sum_{j=1}^m (C_j S_j) / \sum_{j=1}^m C_j$$

Where, S_j is the SGPA of the j^{th} semester and C_j is the total number of credits upto the semester and m represent the number of semesters completed in which a student registered upto the semester.

The SGPA and CGPA shall be rounded off to 2 decimal points and reported in the transcripts.

8. ILLUSTRATION OF COMPUTATION OF SGPA AND CGPA

8.1 Illustration for SGPA

Course Name	Course Credits	Grade letter	Grade point	Credit Point (Credit x Grade)
Course 1	3	A	8	3 x 8 = 24
Course 2	4	B+	7	4 x 7 = 28
Course 3	3	B	6	3 x 6 = 18
Course 4	3	S	10	3 x 10 = 30
Course 5	3	C	5	3 x 5 = 15
Course 6	4	B	6	4 x 6 = 24
	20			139

$$\text{Thus, SGPA} = 139 / 20 = 6.95$$

8.2 Illustration for CGPA

Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 3	Semester 4
Credit: 20 SGPA: 6.9	Credit: 22 SGPA: 7.8	Credit: 25 SGPA: 5.6	Credit: 26 SGPA: 6.0
Semester 5	Semester 6		
Credit: 26 SGPA: 6.3	Credit: 25 SGPA: 8.0		

$$\text{Thus, CGPA} = \frac{20 \times 6.9 + 22 \times 7.8 + 25 \times 5.6 + 26 \times 6.0 + 26 \times 6.3 + 25 \times 8.0}{144} = 6.73$$
