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Colleges offering BMS get AICTE approval on 'as-is-where-is' basis

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Mumbai: In a circular issued on Friday, the All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE), has clarified that colleges offering BMS, BBA and BCA will be given approval on 'as-is-where-is basis'. The circular has brought some relief to institutes that were concerned about fulfilling the council's norms for infrastructure and teaching faculty with immediate effect.

Explaining the 'as-is-where-is' directive, AICTE chairman T G Sitharam told TOI that applications from colleges offering BMS, BBA and BCA will be approved in their current form, in the manner the course is being managed under different regulatory bodies, and will be given enough time to adapt and align with

AICTE norms. "The idea is not to police these institutions or to regulate them with stringent norms, but to handhold them into offering quality education to students across the country. We want to bring uniformity in the way these courses are managed, and it is the only way forward," said Sitharam.

In Mumbai alone, over 300 affiliated colleges offer BMS, which is one of the most sought after courses by students.

Sitharam said the Council is in the process of developing a model curriculum for the courses and colleges are expected to adhere to at least 80% of it. "They will have enough flexibility. We will also be holding teacher training programmes for these colleges. Scholarships for girl students have already been announced and we will extend

internship benefits to all students too,” said the chairman.

AICTE facilitates internship opportunities to students of all professional courses under its purview.

The circular further states that due to technical issues the AICTE server is handling about 1,000 concurrent users at a time. And because colleges may find it difficult to access the portal, the AICTE has extended the last date of application to April 1. If required, the date will be extended for a few more days.

Some city colleges, including St Xavier’s and Jai Hind, which were contemplating changing the nomenclature of the course to BCom (Management Studies), have now decided to follow the AICTE rules.

Principal Vijay Dabholkar from Jai Hind said they conducted a small survey with their students to find if they would prefer a change in nomenclature. “Most students wanted the college to retain the BMS programme,” said the principal.

St Xavier's principal Rajendra Shinde said their management, too, has decided to retain BMS and go with the AICTE.

T A Shiware, president, Association of Non-Government Colleges, said sooner or later colleges will have to abide by AICTE norms.

“Many colleges in Mumbai use shared facilities such as libraries, computer laboratories, conference rooms, staff rooms, etc. Creating separate infrastructure for BMS may not be feasible for many. Also, autonomous colleges currently have the freedom to decide their fees, but once it is brought under the ‘professional’ course category, that will be regulated too,” said Shiware.