

UTTARAKHAND OPEN UNIVERSITY

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Higher education is the most critical element of growth in this era of knowledge economy. We need to at least double the Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) to remain active contributors to growth in this era. This truth has been well recognised by many policy planners, commissions and thoughtful individuals. The National Knowledge Commission has brought out valuable documents outlining the critical role of higher education. In this context, the role of Open and Distance Learning System (ODL) becomes significant and unique. The experience across the globe substantiates that ODL system is an effective tool for educationally empowering the different sections of society who, for one reason or the other, had missed the formal 'face-to-face' education. These days, distance education provides many vocational, professional and technical courses, including specialised programmes oriented towards the higher end of technology usage. It also has the potential to reach the unreached, marginalized and excluded people residing in distant places and difficult terrain. Strictly in tune with the philosophy of ODL system, Uttarakhand Open University (UOU) was established by an Act of Uttarakhand Legislative Assembly in 2005 (Act No. 23 of 2005) with the aim of disseminating knowledge and skills through distance learning, using the flexible and innovative methods of education to ensure 'independent learning'. The University uses novel educational programmes, various modes of communication technology and contact sessions to make distance learning more effective. The major objective of the University is to cater to the educational needs of the target groups to create skilled and knowledge based human resource for speedy upliftment and development of the State. The University aims to impart quality education by maintaining high academic standards. For this purpose, it has radically reoriented itself in view of the rapid changes in the sphere of professional and technical education and has developed a number of new and innovative self-employment/ employment oriented courses of study. Uttarakhand Open University is especially focusing on the educational needs of women, the tribals and other marginalized sections. It has extended its reach to most distant and difficult places and has made its presence felt even in the remotest corners of the state. It has signed MoUs with various providers with the sole aim of sharing resources and knowledge for the benefit of the people. The vision of the University is to provide the most critical components of growth, through quality higher education, to the state of Uttarakhand. UOU offers its programmes through 300+ Study Centres established at different locations in the state under eight Regional Centres at Dehradun, Roorkee, Pauri, Uttarkashi, Dwarahat, Bageshwar, Haldwani and Pithoragarh. The University has also signed Memorandum of Understanding with several leading research institutions, companies and professional bodies for the benefit of its students.