



Building a future-ready workforce through skills-integrated education

India's demographic advantage can become an economic strength when education equips students with skills that translate into meaningful employment. While millions of young people earn degrees each year, employers are increasingly seeking practical capabilities, adaptability, problem-solving and communication skills alongside academic knowledge. This article explores why a skills-first approach is gaining importance in higher education, how skill-integrated universities are connecting classroom learning with industry experience, and why improving employability should remain a key priority. As India works towards its Viksit Bharat 2047 vision, aligning education more closely with workforce needs could play an important role in supporting long-term economic growth and opportunity.

- **Skills improve employability:** Employers increasingly value practical skills, problem-solving, communication and adaptability alongside academic qualifications.
- **Experiential learning matters:** Internships, apprenticeships, industry projects and hands-on training help bridge the gap between classroom learning and workplace expectations.
- **Future jobs demand adaptability:** Rapid technological change and evolving industries require graduates who can continuously learn, innovate and work across disciplines.
- **Industry-academia collaboration is growing:** Skill-integrated universities are aligning curricula with industry needs to prepare students for real-world careers.
- **Education supports national growth:** Strengthening employability through skills-focused education can help India build a future-ready workforce and contribute to the Viksit Bharat 2047 vision.

KULDIP SARMA

As young Indians prepare for careers in a rapidly changing world, one of the important challenges they face is not only finding employment but also developing the skills employers increasingly expect. While higher education has expanded significantly over the years, many graduates continue to face a gap between academic learning and workplace readiness.

Strengthening employability has therefore become an important priority for educators, policymakers and industry alike. India's large youth population presents a significant opportunity. Converting this demographic advantage into sustained economic growth will depend, in part, on ensuring that education equips students with practical knowledge, transferable skills and the ability to adapt to evolving workplace requirements.

A stronger focus on skills alongside academic learning can help bridge this gap by making learning more closely aligned with livelihoods. For decades, higher education in India has largely focused on knowledge acquisition. While strong academic foundations remain essential, employers today are also looking for graduates who can solve problems, think critically, communicate effectively and apply knowledge in real-world situations. This grow-



ing emphasis on applied learning has increased the importance of skill integration within higher education.

Skill-Integrated Universities and Experiential Learning
Unlike conventional models where classrooms and workplaces often function separately, skill-inte-

grated universities seek to connect academic learning with practical experience. Through internships, apprenticeships, industry projects and hands-on learning, students gain opportunities to apply classroom concepts in professional settings. Such experiences can make education more relevant while helping students develop

workplace confidence. This approach is particularly relevant as industries continue to evolve through advances in technology, digitalisation and changing business models. Many emerging careers require graduates who can learn continuously, adapt to new environments and work across disciplines. In this context, employability

increasingly depends not only on qualifications but also on practical competencies and lifelong learning.

Skills as an Enabler of National Development

India's young population remains one of its greatest strengths. However, realising the full potential of this demographic advantage requires sustained investment in education, skills and opportunities for meaningful employment. A skills-first approach is not limited to vocational education or job readiness. It also involves creating stronger connections between education, industry and career pathways, ensuring that students graduate with both academic knowledge and practical capabilities. Increasingly, institutions across the country are adopting industry-aligned curricula, experiential learning models and work-integrated programmes to support this objective.

Looking Ahead

As India progresses towards its Viksit Bharat 2047 vision, discussions around higher education are likely to focus not only on expanding access but also on improving learning outcomes and employability. Universities are increasingly expected to prepare graduates who can contribute to innovation, productivity and inclusive economic growth. Bringing learning and livelihoods closer together through stronger industry engagement, practical learning opportunities and skill development can help students navigate a changing world of work. Skill-integrated universities represent one important approach within this broader transformation, supporting graduates with the knowledge, capabilities and adaptability needed for the future. The author is Pro-Chancellor and Co-Founder, Medhavi Skills University

PGDM course in agribusiness management launched

A Post Graduate Diploma in Management (PGDM) in Agribusiness Management, reflecting the growing demand for professionals equipped to work at the intersection of agriculture, technology and business. The AICTE-approved programme has been designed to address changing trends in the agriculture sector, where digital technologies, climate-smart farming, precision agriculture, artificial intelligence (AI), data analytics and agritech innovations are playing an increasingly important role, introduced by Vignana Jyothi Institute of Management (VJIM), Hyderabad.



representatives, including Indira Reddy, beekeeper, National Bee Board member and founder of Sacred Honey. The curriculum covers areas such as agritech, AI-enabled agriculture, precision farm-

ing, agribusiness analytics, food processing, supply chain management, agri-finance, commodity markets, rural marketing, sustainability and entrepreneurship. Alongside classroom instruction, stu-

dents will participate in field visits, internships, industry immersions, live consulting projects and interactions with business leaders, practitioners and progressive farmers to gain practical exposure.

UoH fills 92% of Ph.D. seats through entrance-based admissions

The University of Hyderabad (UoH) has completed admissions to its Ph.D. programmes through the university entrance examination and interview process for the 2026-27 academic year, filling nearly 92 per cent of the available seats. According to the university, 170 of the 185 Ph.D. seats offered across 27 subjects were filled, resulting in an admission rate of 91.89 per cent. The admission process concluded on July 30 following a multi-stage selection procedure comprising a written entrance examination and interviews. The university conducted the Ph.D. entrance examination on June 6 and 7 at seven centres across the country. Candidates shortlisted on the basis of their written examina-



tion were interviewed between July 9 and 11. Admissions were finalised by inviting candidates in a 1:3 ratio, based on their combined performance in the written test and interview. The university said admissions for Ph.D. programmes in another 17 subjects will be conducted separately through UGC-NET and CSIR-UGC-NET scores after the National Testing Agency (NTA) an-

nounces the results. Earlier this month, the University of Hyderabad also completed admissions to its postgraduate programmes across 42 disciplines. Between July 13 and 17, a total of 1,201 students were admitted against 1,463 available seats, recording an admission rate of 82.09 per cent. Admissions to the postgraduate courses were based on candidates' performance in the CUET-PG 2026 examina-

tion. Eligible candidates were invited for counselling in a 1:10 ratio, with wait-listed candidates being considered subsequently to fill category-wise vacancies in various departments. The university is now preparing for admissions to its undergraduate and integrated master's programmes. Counselling for 17 programmes is scheduled to be held on August 13 and 14, 2026. Candidates shortlisted on the basis of their performance in the CUET-UG 2026 examination will be notified through the university website on August 3. The admissions process forms part of the university's annual intake across undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral programmes for the 2026-27 academic session.

TODAY IS WORLD LUNG CANCER DAY

Healthy lungs: Why awareness matters

Lung cancer is one of the most common diseases affecting the lungs, making awareness and prevention important for people of all ages. While it is more common in older adults, learning about lung health early can encourage healthy habits that last a lifetime. One of the most effective ways to protect lung health is by avoiding tobacco in all forms and staying away from second-hand smoke. Clean air, regular physical activity, a balanced diet, and good indoor ventilation also contribute to healthier lungs. Wearing protective masks in areas with heavy pollution or dust can further reduce exposure to harmful particles. Students can play an im-



portant role in spreading awareness by encouraging healthy lifestyles within their families and communities. Understanding how the lungs function, recognising the importance of clean air, and supporting smoke-free environments are simple yet meaningful ways to promote well-being.

Awareness also includes paying attention to overall respiratory health. If someone experiences persistent breathing difficulties or other unusual symptoms, seeking timely medical advice is always a sensible step. Early health check-ups and informed decisions can support better health outcomes.

100 smart vision glasses distributed by UoH for visually impaired

The University of Hyderabad (UoH) distributed 100 Smart Vision Glasses (Ultra Version) to visually impaired beneficiaries as part of a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative aimed at improving accessibility and independent living through assistive technology. Organised by the University's Empowered Committee for Differently Abled Persons (ECDAP), the programme brought together beneficiaries from diverse socio-economic backgrounds. In addition to participants from across Telangana, the recipients included students studying at higher education institutions in Hyderabad who had travelled from states such as Haryana, Odisha and West



Bengal. Each Smart Vision Glasses device, valued at approximately Rs 48,000, is equipped with features that enable users to read printed text in major Indian languages and English, identify people and objects, recognise currency notes, and detect obstacles while walking, supporting greater independence in everyday activities.

The initiative was supported by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) under its CSR programme and implemented by the Blind Vision Foundation, Bengaluru. The devices were developed by SHG Technology Private Limited. Speaking at the event, Prof. Pammi Pavan Kumar, Coordinator of ECDAP,

highlighted the university's continued efforts to promote accessibility and inclusion for persons with disabilities, particularly students pursuing higher education and career opportunities. Prof. Sai Prasad, Co-coordinator of ECDAP, said advances in assistive technologies are creating new opportunities for inclusive education and independent living. ECDAP member Sri N. Annavaram noted that innovations such as smart vision devices are transforming mobility and day-to-day navigation for visually-impaired individuals. During the programme, Gopi Krishna, Vice-President (CSR & Corporate Communications) at the Blind Vision Foundation,

demonstrated the capabilities of the Smart Vision Glasses, while Project Manager Navneet Kumar explained how user feedback continues to shape improvements in the technology. The event was attended by faculty members, disability support professionals and representatives from collaborating organisations, including Prof. Rajsekhar Veshwarapu, Director of the Cell for the Disabled at the English and Foreign Languages University (EFLU), Hyderabad. The organisers acknowledged the support of NPCI, the Blind Vision Foundation, the University administration and student volunteers in conducting one of the university's significant accessibility-focused outreach initiatives.