

Associate Studentship Under ODL Mode of Education

(A Case Study)

Hemant Gawande, Educational Consultant

Anadi Educational Services, Bhopal M. P. India

Abstract

Certain Universities under ODL Mode offer an “Associate Studentship” scheme under which an eligible candidate can seek admission in one or some limited courses which are being offered by the University, and then register for only one course or a limited number of courses, pertaining to a minimum and a maximum of pre-determined credits. The Associate Student Programme is very flexible and allows students to study at a University for a short time without studying full-time or following a specific Degree, Certificate or Diploma. As an Associate Student one can choose to take one or more courses at either the undergraduate or post-graduate level. Learner will be a fully integrated University Student with access to all of the events and facilities of the concerned School of Studies but he/ she will not be expected to take any assessments unless he/ she chooses to. Student can choose to study modules on campus or take certain language modules via distance learning.

Keywords- *Associate Student, Associate Degree, ODL, Distance, Learning.*

Introduction

An Associate Degree is an Undergraduate degree awarded after a course of post-secondary study lasting two to three years. It is a level of qualification above a High School Diploma, GED, or Matriculation, and below a Bachelor's Degree.

The first Associate Degrees were awarded in the UK (where they are no longer awarded) in 1873 before spreading to the US in 1898. In the United States, the Associate Degree may allow transfer into the third year of a Bachelor's Degree. Associate Degrees have since been introduced in a small number of other countries.

What is an Associate Degree?

An Associate Degree is the first level of Non-vocational degree you can pursue following a High School Diploma. Typically designed to be completed in two years or less, associate degree programs include introductory courses through which students can start to learn about a particular field or academic discipline. For this reason, the courses in an associate program may overlap with the lower level courses in a Bachelor's program of the same field or subject.

The Associate Student needs to get associated to a Study Centre for the purpose of counseling, assignment evaluation, using of library, etc. The application form is used for registration. There will be a prescribed fee charged per credit course for admission to course(s) under UG & PG Programmes. Course fee is charged on a pro-rata basis. As per this system the programme fee will be divided by the number of credits of the programme which will be equal to the fee for a single credit, this will further be multiplied by the credits assigned to that course. For example if an Associate student is choosing B.A., then the candidate has the right to choose for 'any course' from a course group.

The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), a Case Study

The University offers a scheme of Course-wise Registration and Certification (CRCS). Under this scheme, one can register for a single course or a limited number of courses, subject to a maximum of 16 credits. The rules of CRCS are as under:

- The eligibility for registering for a course under the Scheme shall be same as the eligibility for admission to the Programme from where the course(s) are drawn.
- The Scheme shall be offered in both Cycles of Admission, subject to the provision that the courses are on offer in the particular admission cycle.
- Registration for all courses of all the academic programmes shall be open for registration under the Scheme except the courses offered under Research Degree Programmes and Awareness/Appreciation level Programmes.
- Courses offered in combination shall have to be taken together by the student.
- Course(s) once opted shall not be changed or withdrawn by the student.
- The minimum and maximum period allowed for completion of the course(s) registered would be six months and two years, respectively.
- There will be no separate counselling or lab-work schedule for students registered under the Scheme. The registered students under the Scheme shall be advised to be in touch with the Learner Support Centre allocated in order to know the schedule of theory/practical counselling sessions and participate in the sessions accordingly.
- Candidates registering under the Scheme, for successfully completing the course(s) opted, shall be required to fulfill all the academic requirements as prescribed by the University from time to time.
- Candidates successfully completing the course(s) opted shall be provided with a Certificate of Completion of Course indicating the score obtained in continuous/term-end assessment and credits earned.

The minimum period for the Associate Student for the completion of their course is six months whereas the maximum period is two years. In case the courses opted by the students are up to 16 credits then a minimum period of six months would be allowed, and if the option exceeds 16 credits, the minimum period would be one year.

The Associate Students need to be in touch with their respective study center so that they are updated on the schedule of the sessions and attend them too as there will be no separate counseling or lab work schedule for associate students.

The Associate Students will be allowed to take admission in any of the admission cycles. There will be no counseling and/ or lab/ practicals conducted separately for the Associate students but in such a case the students would be allowed to avail the counseling/ practical session in the next semester and accordingly the minimum duration would be extended to another six months. However, the maximum duration of two years would remain unchanged.

In case an Associate Student chooses more than 16 credits worth of courses in either of the admission cycles then they will not be entitled to seek admission in the next consecutive cycle unless the prearranged minimum duration is finished.

Also these Associate Students are not eligible to take admission in any course which limited number of seats or the admission for which will be done through Entrance Test.

Associate Students will not be eligible for the award of any kind of 'Certificate/ Diploma/ Degree'. They will also not be eligible for continuation of study by way of re-registration for the second or third year, as the case may be. 'COURSE COMPLETION STATUS' Card only will be issued to Associate Students.

Under the "Associate Studentship" scheme there is no provision for a change in course. Likewise, the provision for re-admission is also not available.

Reference

<https://www.soas.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/associate-students>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Associate_degree

<https://www.aiuniv.edu/degrees/business/articles/bachelors-degree-vs-associates-degree>

<https://ignouadmission.samarth.edu.in/index.php/site/programme-detail?id=48432bfa4f9e8cd2b52a2d220a81bbeff50e2dfaacb2045c28063a29594ed6e41643>

<http://www.ignou.ac.in/?q=ignou/aboutignou/division/srd/activities/detail/157>