The Andhra Pradesh Private Skills Universities (Establishment and Regulation) Act, 2026

Act No. 28 of 2026

DISCLAIMER: This document is being furnished to you for your information by PRS Legislative Research (PRS). The contents of this document have been obtained from sources PRS believes to be reliable. These contents have not been independently verified, and PRS makes no representation or warranty as to the accuracy, completeness or correctness. In some cases the Principal Act and/or Amendment Act may not be available. Principal Acts may or may not include subsequent amendments. For authoritative text, please contact the relevant state department concerned or refer to the latest government publication or the gazette notification. Any person using this material should take their own professional and legal advice before acting on any information contained in this document. PRS or any persons connected with it do not accept any liability arising from the use of this document. PRS or any persons connected with it shall not be in any way responsible for any loss, damage, or distress to any person on account of any action taken or not taken on the basis of this document.

Registered No. HSE/49. [Price : Rs.**2-00** Paise

ఆంధ్రప్రదేశ్ రాజపత్రము

THE ANDHRA PRADESH GAZETTE

PART IV-B EXTRAORDINARY

PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY

No. 28] AMARAVATI, TUESDAY, 8th SEPTEMBER, 2026.

ANDHRA PRADESH ACTS, ORDINANCES AND REGULATIONS Etc.,

The following Act of the Andhra Pradesh Legislature received the assent of the Governor on the 7th September, 2026 and the said assent is hereby first published on the 8th September, 2026 in the Andhra Pradesh Gazette for general information :

ACT No. 28 of 2026

AN ACT TO ENACT FOR ESTABLISHMENT, INCORPORATION AND REGULATION OF SELF-FINANCED PRIVATE SKILLS UNIVERSITIES IN THE STATE OF ANDHRA PRADESH; TO PROVIDE FOR THE RECOGNITION OF ELIGIBLE EXISTING PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES AS PRIVATE SKILLS UNIVERSITIES; AND FOR MATTERS CONNECTED THEREWITH OR INCIDENTAL THERETO.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Andhra Pradesh in the Seventy-seventh year of the Republic of India as follows:

CHAPTER-I

PRELIMINARY

1. (1) This Act may be called the Andhra Pradesh Private Skills Universities (Establishment and Regulation) Act, 2026. Short title, extention and Commencement.

(2) It extends to the whole of the State of Andhra Pradesh.

(3) It shall come into force on such date as the Government may, by notification, in the Andhra Pradesh Gazette, appoint.

2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires,- Definitions.

(1) "Academic Bank of Credits" or "ABC" means the digital credit banking system established by the University Grants

Commission for the storage, accumulation, transfer and redemption of academic credits earned by students across institutions, as notified by the University Grants Commission from time to time;

(2) "AICTE" means the All India Council for Technical Education established under section 3 of the All India Council for Technical Education Act, 1987;

Central Act 52 of 1987.

(3) "Apprenticeship Training" means a course of training in any industry or establishment undergone in pursuance of a contract of apprenticeship under the Apprentices Act, 1961;

Central Act 52 of 1961.

(4) "Assessor" means a person certified by a Sector Skill Council or by the National Council for Vocational Education and Training to conduct competency-based assessments against National Occupational Standards;

(5) "Board of Assessment and Evaluation" means the Board of Assessment and Evaluation of the Skills University constituted under section 29 of this Act;

(6) "Brownfield Skills University" means a Skills University established under this Act by converting an existing institution, or a consortium of such institutions under a single Sponsoring Body, falling within Category A or Category B below, that satisfies the common conditions in clause (i) together with the category-specific conditions in clause (ii) or clause (iii), as applicable —

(i) Common conditions — the institution, or in the case of a consortium the principal converting institution, shall be,-

(1) located in a geographically contiguous area in an extent of land not less than

(a) 10 acres, if located within the Core Capital Area of the APCRDA or within the Municipal Corporation limits of Greater Visakhapatnam, Vijayawada Municipal Corporation or Tirupati Municipal Corporation; or

(b) 15 acres, if located in any other area;

(2) willing to make such financial investment as prescribed, on the recommendation of the Expert Committee; and

(3) willing to allot students in the Government Quota as provided under this Act.

(ii) **Category A** — Skill-Institution sector: An Industrial Training Institute, Polytechnic, Vocational Training centre, Skills institution, or an institution recognised as an Awarding Body or Assessment Body, that —

(1) has been engaged in recognised skill or vocational training at NSQF Level 3 or above for a continuous period of not less than Five years immediately preceding the date of application;

(2) holds valid statutory recognition appropriate to its nature, example: NCVET, AICTE, SSC, SBTET (State Board of Technical Education and Training), etc.,

(3) in addition to the recognition under sub-clause (2), satisfies such minimum quality benchmark and minimum scale of operation as may be prescribed by the Government in consultation with the Directorate General of Training, the National Council for Vocational Education and Training or the relevant Sector Skill Council, including—

(a) a grading, accreditation or quality-rating benchmark appropriate to the nature of the institution such as the applicable grading of the Industrial Training Institute, National Board of Accreditation of a proportion of its Diploma Programmes, or an NCVET or Sector Skill Council quality rating, at or above the level specified in the guidelines; and

(b) minimum running Programmes across

not less than three NSQF levels, of which at least one shall be at NSQF Level 5 or above, together with minimum student enrolment, minimum full-time faculty and master trainers, and minimum built-up training infrastructure, in each case at or above the level specified in the guidelines; and

(c) evidence of financial capacity to fund the transition to a Skills University, in the manner and to the extent specified in the guidelines.

(iii) **Category B** — Higher-Education sector: A college or higher education institution that —

(1) has been engaged in teaching and research at undergraduate, postgraduate or higher levels in the State of Andhra Pradesh; and

(2) holds valid institutional accreditation from the National Assessment and Accreditation Council with a Cumulative Grade Point Average of not less than 3.01 for two cycles, or National Board of Accreditation for two-thirds of eligible Programs for two cycles, or a NIRF rank among the top fifty in any specific category or among the top one hundred in overall rankings for two years:

Provided that the institution shall submit a proposal duly satisfying the above requisite conditions;

Provided further that the Government shall at its sole discretion

examine each proposal and give permission for such proposals which fulfil all the requirements under this Act and the rules made thereunder.

(7) "Centre of Excellence" means a state-of-art applied training and research facility established by the Skills University in collaboration with an Industry Partner or Sector Skill Council;

(8) "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Skill Development Employment & Training, Government of Andhra Pradesh;

(9) "Constituent Institute" means a school, department, skill centre, centre of excellence or institution established and operated by the Sponsoring body as part of the Skills University;

(10) "Directorate General of Training" or "DGT" means the Directorate General of Training under the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Government of India, being the apex organization for the development and coordination of vocational training in India, and includes any successor organization by whatever name called;

(11) "Employee" means any person appointed by the Skills University and includes teachers, officers, assessors, master trainers and other staff;

(12) "Expert Committee" means the Committee of eminent persons constituted by the Government under section 9 of this Act;

(13) "Fee" means all fee including tuition fee and other fee, as ascertained, payable by a student;

(14) "Government" or "State Government" means the Government of Andhra Pradesh;

(15) "Government Quota Seats" means the seats to be filled under Government Quota in Private Skills Universities in accordance with the provisions of this Act;

(16) "Greenfield Skills University" means a Skills University established under this Act fresh for the first time, without any consideration to any existing educational institution, that is,-

(i) located in a geographically contiguous area in an extent of land not less than-

(a) 10 acres, if located within the Core Capital Area of the Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority, Municipal Corporation limits of Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation, Vijayawada Municipal Corporation or Tirupati Municipal Corporation;

(b) 15 acres, if located in any other area;

(ii) willing to make such financial investment as per Government guidelines, on Expert Committee recommendation; and

(iii) willing to allot students in Government Quota as provided for under this Act:

Provided that the Sponsoring body shall submit a proposal duly satisfying the above requisite conditions:

Provided further that the Government shall at its sole discretion examine each proposal and give permission for such proposals which fulfil all the requirements under this Act and the rules made thereunder;

(17) "Hostel" means a place of residence for students of the Skills University or its skill centres or study centres;

(18) "Hub-and-spoke model" means the delivery architecture in which a central hub campus of the Skills University provides administrative, academic and quality-assurance functions, while approved skill centres (the "spokes") as may be approved under section 13 function as instructional and training centres of the Skills University for the delivery of instruction and vocational training, and not as separate or affiliated institutions, having no independent academic or administrative status. The spokes shall function under the academic, administrative and quality oversight of the hub, and all admissions, curriculum, examinations, evaluation, certification and quality assurance shall remain under the exclusive control of the Skills University;

(19) "Industry Advisory Board" means the mandatory Industry Advisory Board constituted under section 28 of this Act;

(20) "Industry Partner" means any company, firm, association of persons, cooperative, public sector undertaking or industry body that has entered into a formal Memorandum of Understanding or agreement with the Skills University for curriculum co-development, training delivery, skill assessment, internship, on-job training, apprenticeship, placement or joint research;

(21) "Master trainer" means a senior vocational instructor with not less than five years of industry experience in the relevant skill domain;

(22) "NAAC" means the National Assessment and Accreditation Council, an autonomous institution of the University Grants Commission;

(23) "National Credit Framework" or "NCrF" means the overarching credit framework integrating the National Skills Qualifications Framework, the National Higher Education Qualifications Framework and the National School Education Qualifications Framework, as notified by the University Grants Commission;

(24) "National Council for Vocational Education and Training" or "NCVET" means the regulatory body established by the Central Government for regulating and overseeing skill and vocational education and training bodies in India;

(25) "National Occupational Standards" or "NOS" means the statements of the standards of performance that individuals must achieve when carrying out a function in the workplace, as developed and notified by the relevant Sector Skill Council;

(26) "National Skills Qualifications Framework" or "NSQF" means the competency-based framework organised into eight levels, as notified by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Government of India;

(27) "Notification" means a notification published in the Andhra Pradesh Gazette, and the word "notified" shall be construed accordingly;

(28) "On-job training" means structured training undertaken by a student at an actual workplace under Industry Partner supervision, forming a mandatory or elective component of a Program of study conducted in accordance with the applicable National Occupational Standards;

(29) "Prescribed" means prescribed by Rules, Statutes, Ordinances or Regulations made under this Act;

(30) "Private Skills University" means a self-financed Skills University established under section 3 of this Act, dedicated primarily to skill education, vocational training and competency-based learning leading to NSQF/NCrF-aligned qualifications, also referred to as "Skills University" or "University";

(31) "Recognition of Prior Learning" or "RPL" means the formal process by which a Skills University assesses and accords academic credits or qualifications for competencies acquired outside the formal education system, in accordance with NCVET guidelines and the relevant Sector Skill Councils;

(32) "Recognised Skills University" means an existing Private University established under the Andhra Pradesh Private Universities (Establishment and Regulation) Act, 2016, that has been granted recognition as a Private Skills University by the Government under section 14 of this Act;

(33) "Regulatory Authority" means such authority or body as the Government may, from time to time, by notification, designate for the purposes of this Act:

Provided that the Government may designate different authorities for different purposes under this Act;

(34) "Regulatory Body" means and includes a body established by the Central Government or the State Government for laying down norms and standards for quality in skills education, and includes the University Grants Commission, AICTE, NAAC, NCVET, NSDC, Sector Skill Councils and such other bodies as may be notified by the Government;

(35) "Regulations" means regulations made by any authority of the Skills University under section 37 of this Act;

(36) "Rules" means rules made under section 57 of this Act;

(37) "Schedule" means a Schedule appended to this Act;

(38) "Sector Skill Council" or "SSC" means an autonomous industry-led body set up under the National Skill Development Corporation for developing National Occupational Standards, conducting skill assessments and issuing certifications for a specific sector;

(39) "Skill Centre" means a training facility established by the Skills University or extended to it by an Industry Partner, for delivering skill training under the hub-and-spoke model;

(40) "Skill Component" means as defined in section 4(1);

(41) "Skill Department" means the Skill Development and Training Department, Government of Andhra Pradesh, or such other department as the Government may, by notification, designate;

(42) "Skills Education" means education and training developing practical competencies, vocational skills, industry-relevant knowledge and work-readiness, leading to NSQF/NCrF-aligned qualifications from Level 1 to Level 8;

(43) "Skills University" or "University" means a Private Skills University, being a Greenfield Skills University, a Brownfield Skills University, or a Recognised Skills University, as the case may be;

(44) "Sponsoring Body" in relation to a Skills University established under this Act means—

(i) a society "not for profit" registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 or the Andhra Pradesh Societies Registration Act, 2001; or

Central Act 21 of 1860.

Act No.35 of 1860.

(ii) a public trust "not for profit" registered under the Indian Trusts Act, 1882; or

Central Act 2 of 1882.

(iii) any other society or trust "not for profit" formed by a consortium of industry bodies, academic institutions or educational societies; or

(iv) any company registered under section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013; or

Central Act 18 of 2013.

(v) any other company, with such limitations as the Government may specify:

Provided that industry companies, associations or consortia with a proven track record in skill training, vocational education or workforce development shall be given preference in the grant of a Letter of Intent, as a factor in Expert Committee evaluation;

(45) "Specified" means specified by Ordinances Statutes and Regulations under this Act;

(46) "State University" means a public university receiving regular financial support from the State Government and established under an Act of the Andhra Pradesh State Legislature, other than Private Skills Universities established under this Act;

(47) "Statutes" and "Ordinances" mean respectively the Statutes and the Ordinances of the Skills University made under this Act;

(48) "Student" means any person enrolled in the Skills University for a degree, diploma, certificate, RPL certificate or other academic or vocational distinction, including a research degree;

(49) "Study Centre" means a centre maintained by the Skills University for advising, counselling, assessment, career guidance or other student support;

(50) "Teacher" means a Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, Adjunct Professor, Professor of Practice, Industry Expert, Assessor, Master Trainer, Vocational Instructor or any other person required to impart skills education, practical instruction, on-job training supervision or research guidance to students; and

Central Act 3 of 1956.

(51) "UGC" means the University Grants Commission established under section 4 of the University Grants Commission Act, 1956.

CHAPTER - II

ESTABLISHMENT OF SKILLS UNIVERSITY

Establishment of Skills University.

3. (1) The Government may permit the establishment of a Private Skills University by inclusion of the name and location of the Skills University, the name and address of the Sponsoring body and details of its registration in the Schedule of the Act.

(2) The location of the Skills University shall be within the State of Andhra Pradesh and shall be notified by the Government.

(3) The Skills University shall be a Greenfield Skills University or a Brownfield Skills University, having adequate facilities for skill training, instruction, practical workshops, applied research, competency assessments and extension services. It shall operate ordinarily within the boundary of the State of Andhra Pradesh. After the development of the main hub campus, the Skills University shall be entitled, as of right, to establish spoke skill centres and study centres within the State of Andhra Pradesh under the hub-and-spoke model.

(4) The Skills University shall normally be permitted to have one campus to start with:

Provided that the Government may, under exceptional circumstances such as starting of a few specialised skill courses proximate to industrial clusters, if it deems fit, permit two additional campuses, subject to adherence to quality levels and satisfactory accreditation standards as may be specified:

Provided further that the Government may permit the Skills University to open additional campuses beyond the initial three, anywhere within the State of Andhra Pradesh, subject to satisfactory operation for a period of five years and fulfilment of such infrastructure and other requirements as may be specified by the Government.

(5) The Skills University shall be free to and is encouraged to use technology extensively as part of its skill delivery, including online learning platforms, blended delivery, simulation tools, virtual laboratories and AI-driven assessment tools, in line with modern pedagogic concepts and the applicable UGC regulations on online education.

(6) The Skills University shall be entitled to conduct online and distance education Programs from the date of its establishment, subject to—

(a) compliance with the Relevant UGC Regulations in this aspect;

(b) alignment of all such Programs to the appropriate NSQF level; and

(c) inclusion of mandatory on-job training or practical assessment components in each such Program, as may be prescribed.

(d) Study Centres for online and distance education Programs shall be fully equipped with the required laboratories for conducting practical sessions and skill training, as may be prescribed.

(7) The Governing Body, the Board of Management, the Academic Council, the Industry Advisory Board and the Chancellor, the Vice-Chancellor, the Registrar, the Chief Finance and Accounts Officer, the Director of Assessment and Evaluation, the Director of Industry Engagement and Placement and such other officers or authorities, so long as they continue to hold such office or membership of the respective Skills University specified in the Schedule, hereby constitute a body corporate by the name of the said Skills University.

(8) Each such Skills University shall have perpetual succession and a common seal with power, subject to the provisions of this Act, to acquire and hold property, to contract and shall, by the said name, sue or be sued.

(9) The Skills University shall not claim, as a matter of right, any grant-in-aid from the Central Government or the Government:

Provided that this shall not prohibit the Skills University from applying for research grants, receiving funding under Government skill development schemes, or receiving performance-based grants under any Government skill employment Program as the Government may, by notification, specify.

Mandatory Skill Component in Programs.

4. (1) Every Program of Study offered by a Skills University shall contain a mandatory skill component, being the component delivered through supervised practical instruction, on-the-job training, workshop practicals, laboratory practicals, simulation-based training, industry

projects, apprenticeship training or competency-based assessments, in accordance with the applicable competency framework, that is, the structured description of the knowledge, skills and abilities required for an occupation as set out in the National Occupational Standards notified by the relevant Sector Skill Council, as distinct from classroom-based theoretical instruction.

(2) The minimum proportion of the total credits of every Program of study that shall be allocated to the skill component shall be as follows,—

NSQF Level	Type of Program	Minimum Skill Component (% of Total Credits)
Level 3 and Level 4	Certificate and Advanced Certificate	Not less than sixty per cent
Level 5	Diploma and Advanced Diploma	Not less than fifty-five per cent
Level 6	Bachelor's Degree	Not less than fifty per cent
Level 7 and 8	Master's and Doctoral Degree	Not less than forty per cent

(3) No Program of study shall be approved by the Academic Council, or commenced, unless the Program design demonstrates compliance with the minimum skill component requirements prescribed under sub-section (2).

(4) Compliance with the minimum skill component requirements shall be verified—

(a) at the Program approval stage, by the Academic Council, with reference to the applicable National Occupational Standards notified by the relevant Sector Skill Council;

(b) annually, by the Board of Assessment and Evaluation, through review of actual time-tabling, assessment records and on-job training logs; and

(c) by the independent external agency conducting the Annual Institutional Audit under section 48.

(5) The Government may, on the recommendation of the Expert Committee and in consultation with NCVET, revise the minimum skill component percentages in sub-section (2) by notification, having regard to the evolving requirements of the NSQF, NCrF and national skill development policy.

(6) For the purposes of this section, credits shall be computed in accordance with the National Credit Framework, 2023, and subsequent revisions thereof.

(7) A Skills University that fails to maintain the minimum skill component in any Program in any academic year shall be liable to action under section 56, and the Government may direct suspension of fresh admissions to the non-compliant Program until compliance is restored.

Goals and Objects of the Skills University.

5. The Goals and Objects of every Skills University established under this Act shall be as follows,—

(1) to provide for instruction, teaching, learning and training in the Skills University in the field of skills education and to make provisions for applied research, advancement and dissemination of knowledge relevant to skill development and workforce needs;

(2) to establish and maintain a campus with a skills-intensive ecosystem aligned to national employment priorities, the NSQF, the NCrF and international standards of competency-based education;

(3) to develop higher levels of occupational competency, technical expertise and professional capability in students across NSQF Levels 1 to 8;

(4) to create and maintain centres of excellence for applied skill training, industry-aligned research and development, and for sharing knowledge to foster progressive, inclusive, accessible and equitable skills education;

(5) to encourage and use digital technology for skill delivery, including online learning platforms, simulation tools, virtual laboratories and AI-driven assessment, with a competency-based approach;

(6) to develop state-of-art facilities for skill training, practical instruction, industry-standard workshops, competency assessments and applied research;

(7) to establish educational Programs for skill certificates, diplomas, undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral Programs, all aligned to NSQF and NCrF, and to offer multiple entry and exit pathways, credit banking and credit transfer to enable lifelong learning;

(8) to have strategic partnerships with national and global industry, Sector Skill Councils, research institutions and international skill certification bodies for joint Programs, dual certifications, innovations and applied skills research;

(9) to confer degrees, diplomas, certificates, RPL certifications and other academic and vocational distinctions on the basis of an approved competency-based assessment method;

(10) to ensure that the standards of all qualifications conferred are aligned to or exceed those of the relevant Regulatory Bodies, including UGC, AICTE, NCVET and the relevant Sector Skill Councils;

(11) to establish appropriate linkages with industry and society so that the Programs offered are continuously relevant to employment, to the skill development priorities of the State, with a particular focus on the priority sectors of the State of Andhra Pradesh, having regard to the dominant and emerging industries, the industrial clusters and the employment potential of the area in which the Skills University is established, as

mapped under section 49 and the rules made thereunder;

(12) to design and implement specialised RPL frameworks for persons engaged in artisanal, traditional, informal sector or community-based activities, including handloom weavers, aquaculture workers, fishermen, potters etc., enabling the conversion of experiential and non-formal learning into formal academic credentials; and

(13) to pursue any other objectives as may be approved by the Government from time to time:

Provided that notwithstanding anything contained in this Act and save as provided in any Central Act, the Skills University shall be eligible to undertake the functions of imparting skills education only in the fields for which the Government has issued a Letter of Intent or in the fields subsequently approved by the Government.

Powers and functions of the Skills University.

6. The Skills University shall exercise the following powers and perform the following functions, namely,—

(1) Skills Curriculum and Program Design

(a) design and deliver competency-based, industry-aligned Programs built on National Occupational Standards, NSQF levels and the NCrF;

(b) implement outcome-based education models aligned with NSQF, NCrF and relevant global competency frameworks;

(c) introduce flexible credit systems, modular pathways and multiple entry and exit options in line with regulations/ guidelines of national level regulatory bodies to enable cross-sector skilling, lateral mobility and lifelong learning;

(d) regularly review and upgrade curricula in mandatory consultation with the Industry Advisory Board, relevant Sector Skill Councils, academia and global industry partners;

(e) to design and deliver, in collaboration with Industry Partners, apprenticeship-embedded Programs — in which apprenticeship training under the Apprentices Act, 1961 is integrated as a credited component of the curriculum and earn-while-you-learn Programs, which enable a student to undertake paid on-job training or work concurrently with study and to earn a stipend or wage while completing the Program.

Central Act 52 of 1961.

(2) Teaching, Learning and Skill Delivery

(a) adopt technology-driven pedagogy, including MOOCs, LMS, AI-based tutoring, simulation tools, virtual laboratories and augmented reality platforms suited to competency-based skill delivery;

(b) offer blended, online, on-campus and on-job training delivery modes, with equitable digital access for all students;

(c) train faculty, master trainers and assessors continuously in innovative teaching, competency-based assessment design and skills delivery practices.

(3) Applied Research and Innovation

(a) create applied research ecosystems with support for industry-relevant, translational and action research in priority skill sectors;

(b) establish Centres of Excellence, Incubation/accelerator Hubs and Technology Transfer Offices in collaboration with Industry Partners and Sector Skill Councils;

(c) promote intellectual property rights generation, patent filings and a start up culture, with particular emphasis on grassroots and frugal innovations;

(d) enable faculty-led and student-led applied research and innovation projects tied to industry challenges and the economic priorities of the State.

(4) Industry Engagement and Placement

(a) forge and maintain binding partnerships with Industry Partners, Sector Skill Councils, national and international industry bodies and international skill certification organisations;

(b) align skill Programs and assessment standards with Sector Skill Council certifications, National Occupational Standards and, where applicable, internationally recognised skill accreditation frameworks;

(c) facilitate student placement in formal employment, self-employment and entrepreneurship through campus placement drives, industry connects, career services and the Skills Entrepreneurship Cell;

(d) prepare and submit to the Government employment outcomes data as part of the Annual Report under section 48.

(5) Equity, Inclusion and Access

(a) ensure inclusive admission policies, scholarships, fee concessions and support systems for students from Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, De-notified Tribes, Nomadic Tribes, Other Backward Classes, Economically Weaker Sections, women, persons with disabilities and students from rural and coastal communities;

(b) maintain safe, physically accessible and gender-sensitive campuses and skill centres, with zero tolerance for discrimination, harassment or ragging, in compliance with the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (POSH Act, 2013) and applicable UGC regulations;

Central Act 49 of 2016.

Central Act 14 of 2013.

(c) promote student well-being, counselling, mentorship and career guidance frameworks.

(6) Student Development and Employability

(a) facilitate industry linkages, internships, on-job training, apprenticeship training under the Apprentices Act, 1961, domestic and international placements, and career services through the Director of Industry Engagement and Placement; Central Act 52 of 1961.

(b) integrate entrepreneurship education, leadership development, financial literacy, digital skills and employability skills into the core curriculum of all diploma and degree Programs;

(c) provide RPL pathways, lifelong learning, continuing education, short-term skill courses and micro-credentialing for working adults, informal sector workers, traditional artisans and re-skilling candidates.

(7) Governance and Institutional Integrity

(a) operate as a transparent and autonomous institution governed by the Governing Body, Board of Management, Academic Council, Industry Advisory Board, Board of Assessment and Evaluation and the applicable Regulatory Bodies;

(b) implement robust internal quality assurance systems, maintain an Internal Quality Assurance Cell and commit to NAAC accreditation and Program-level SSC/NCVET accreditation;

(c) use data-driven governance tools, employment outcome dashboards and real-time compliance mechanisms to ensure accountability and continuous improvement.

(8) Sustainability and Social Impact

(a) align Skills University functions with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and contribute to the State's sustainable development objectives;

(b) encourage community engagement, rural outreach, coastal community skilling, RPL for informal workers and traditional artisans, policy advocacy and social entrepreneurship;

(c) promote green campus practices, carbon neutrality, rainwater harvesting, solar energy adoption and adopt a Green Campus Policy within five years of operationalisation;

(d) design, develop and implement RPL frameworks and award academic micro-credentials, certificates, diplomas and degrees to eligible persons upon successful RPL assessment.

(9) General Statutory and Developmental Functions

(a) confer degrees, diplomas, certificates, RPL certifications and other academic and vocational distinctions as per UGC norms, NSQF levels and Government notifications;

(b) mobilise and manage financial resources, Government scheme grants, endowments, donations and contributions from Industry Partners, in compliance with the financial provisions of this Act;

(c) establish, maintain, manage and regulate skill centres, study centres, hub campuses, spoke centres, academic infrastructure, student residences and security systems, in accordance with the hub-and-spoke model;

(d) undertake any other action necessary or incidental to the fulfilment of the Skills University's objects, mission and public mandate.

Application for establishment of Private Skills University.

7. Any Sponsoring body desirous of establishing a Private Skills University shall make an application to the Government,

containing, among other things, an outline of the purpose, vision and principal skill sector focus of the proposed Private Skills University, the proposal, and the Detailed Project Report, in such manner, with such particulars and along with such processing fee as may be prescribed.

Detailed Project Report.

8. In addition to the particulars as may be stated in section 7, the Detailed Project Report shall contain the following, namely,-

(1) details of the Sponsoring body along with copies of its registration certificate, constitution and bye-laws, and the background, track record and governance profile of its governing members;

(2) information regarding the financial resources of the Sponsoring body along with audited financial statements for the last five immediately preceding financial years:

Provided that in the case of a Sponsoring body incorporated within five years of the application date, the requirement of five years of audited statements shall be substituted by audited statements for such years as the Sponsoring body has been in existence, together with a certified financial mobilisation plan prepared by a practising Chartered Accountant or a Category I Merchant Banker;

(3) name, location and headquarters of the proposed Skills University;

(4) track record, experience and expertise of the Sponsoring body in skill education, vocational training, workforce development or related fields;

(5) a Phased Investment Plan setting out—

(a) the total projected investment required over such period of years as may be prescribed;

(b) a detailed break-up by year and by category of expenditure, including land, construction, equipment, workshops, laboratories, faculty costs and working capital;

(c) sources of investment, including own funds, debt, Government scheme grants, contributions from Industry Partners and other sources; and

(d) year-wise investment milestones proposed as binding conditions in the Letter of Intent;

(6) the proposed principal skill sectors and areas of specialization, the programs proposed, their NSQF/NCrF alignment and their relevance to AP employment and industrial priorities;

(7) the proposed hub-and-spoke delivery architecture, identifying the hub campus location, the proposed spoke network and the rationale for each location;

(8) letters of intent or MOUs with a minimum of three Industry Partners or Sector Skill Councils, committing to curriculum co-development, on-job training, skill assessment support and placement assistance;

(9) plan for pre-commencement activities, including academic and non-academic areas, and the timeline for achieving readiness for operationalization;

(10) projected detailed financial statements with break-up of revenues including student fees, Government scheme funding, skill assessment income and consultancy income;

(11) proposed fee structure and minimum concessions for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, other Backward Classes and persons with Disabilities;

(12) the system proposed for appointment of faculty, industry experts, master trainers, certified assessors

and other employees, including proposed student-teacher ratio and full-time/adjunct proportion;

(13) the proposed RPL mechanism, including assessment process, SSC or NCVET-approved bodies to be engaged, and target groups including artisans, informal workers, handloom weavers and fishermen etc;

(14) employment outcome targets for the first five years, including program-wise placement rates, median salary benchmarks and employer satisfaction targets;

(15) arrangements for anti-ragging, gender sensitivity, physical accessibility and student grievance mechanisms;

(16) proposed approach for skill education quality assurance and accreditation, including NAAC accreditation timeline and program-level SSC/NCVET accreditation plan; and

(17) other required details as may be notified from time to time.

Constitution of Expert Committee and factors for consideration of proposal.

9. (1) The Government shall constitute an Expert Committee consisting of such persons as may be prescribed, to examine the application received under sections 7 and 8. The Commissioner for Skill Employment and Training shall be the Member Convenor of the Expert Committee and shall be present at all meetings where proposals relating to Skills Universities are examined. The Commissioner of Higher Education shall be an ex officio member of the Committee.

(2) The Expert Committee shall consider the proposal and the Detailed Project Report based on the information given under sections 7 and 8 and recommend or otherwise, as per the rules prescribed, whether the proposal to set up a Private Skills University is

acceptable and whether the Sponsoring body is competent to set up and manage the Skills University.

(3) The Expert Committee shall consider each proposal and Detailed Project Report with reference to the following factors, namely, —

(a) financial soundness and assets of the Sponsoring body and its ability to set up and sustain the infrastructure of the proposed Skills University over the long term;

(b) background of the Sponsoring body, including its experience in skill education, vocational training or workforce development, its credibility and general reputation;

(c) quality, distinctiveness and industry-alignment of the Programs proposed, their relevance to AP skill development priorities and employment in priority sectors, and the extent to which they address gaps in the existing skill training ecosystem;

(d) the strength and credibility of the proposed Industry Partner commitments and Sector Skill Council linkages;

(e) the feasibility of the proposed RPL mechanisms and the hub-and-spoke delivery model, including suitability of spoke locations and robustness of on-job training and assessment arrangements;

(f) appropriateness of the objectives against the overall goals of the State, the National Skill Development Mission and the State's employment generation priorities; and

(g) Investment capacity — adequacy of the total investment proposed, credibility of phased milestones, sustainability of funding sources and long-term financial viability.

(4) The Expert Committee may call for such other information from the Sponsoring body as it thinks proper.

(5) The Expert Committee shall endeavour to present its recommendations to the Government within sixty days of receipt of the application, including the total investment required, a year-wise phased investment milestone schedule and any conditions it recommends should be imposed on the Sponsoring body.

Additional Measures.

10. The Expert Committee may recommend to the Government appropriate additional measures for Private Skills Universities, from time to time, for the purposes of improving the standards of skill education, ensuring employment outcomes or protecting the interests of students.

Letter of Intent.

11. (1) After receipt of the recommendations of the Expert Committee under section 9(5), the Government shall, as far as possible within a period of thirty days, take a decision on accepting, rejecting or seeking modifications in the proposal:

Provided that the Government may consider additional measures as recommended by the Expert Committee under section 10.

(2) The Government shall inform the Sponsoring body of its decision within ten days of taking such decision, through a Letter of Intent, a Letter of Regret or a letter seeking additional clarifications:

Provided that if the Government seeks additional clarifications, the Sponsoring body may provide the same and that shall be treated as a re-submission of the application.

(3) The Government, while issuing the Letter of Intent, shall require the Sponsoring body to fulfil such terms and conditions, in addition to such other conditions as the Expert Committee may recommend. The University shall ordinarily offer skills education in the skill sectors specified in the Letter of Intent, and any expansion into a new skill sector not specified therein shall be undertaken with the prior approval of the Government.

(4) The Sponsoring body shall fulfil the terms and conditions and report compliance to the Government within such period as may be prescribed:

Provided that the Government may extend the period for a maximum of one year, not exceeding six months at a time, if satisfied that the Sponsoring body has taken substantial steps.

On receipt of the compliance report, the Government shall, within a period of one month, request the Expert Committee or constitute another similar committee to verify the compliance report within a period of thirty days.

Establishment of Skills University by amending Schedule.

12. If the Government is satisfied that the Sponsoring body has complied with the conditions of the Letter of Intent and on the specific recommendations of the Expert Committee, it shall endeavour within a maximum period of seven months for inclusion of the name of the Skills University in the Schedule with details of its location or locations by duly amending the Schedule of this Act.

Skill centres/ Spokes.

13. (1) Subject to the provisions of sub-section (4) of section 3, the Skills University may, as and when it deems fit and proper, establish and manage additional hub campuses, skill centres, study centres, centres of excellence,

apprenticeship centres and outreach centres within the State of Andhra Pradesh, under the hub-and-spoke model.

(2) Every new spoke skill centre established under sub-section (1) shall be registered with the Government within thirty days of its establishment. The Government shall, through the Skill Department, maintain a publicly accessible register of all skill centres of every Skills University established under this Act, published on the official website of the Government and updated within thirty days of every addition or closure.

(3) Spoke skill centres shall not be required to satisfy the minimum land area norms applicable to the hub campus but shall maintain functional training infrastructure, equipment, safety standards and student support facilities appropriate to the Programs delivered thereat, as may be prescribed.

(4) For the purposes of this Act a skill-delivery spoke, being a spoke used solely for skill training, on-job training, apprenticeship training, practical instruction and competency-based assessment leading to certificates, diplomas and other NSQF-aligned qualifications, which may be established and operated under this section in accordance with the norms of the National Council for Vocational Education and Training and the relevant Sector Skill Councils.

Recognised Skills University.

Act No.3 of 2016.

14. (1) An existing Private University established under the Andhra Pradesh Private Universities (Establishment and Regulation) Act, 2016 (hereinafter referred to as "the Act, 2016"), that satisfies the conditions specified in this section, may apply to the Government for recognition as a Brownfield Private Skills University under this Act.

(2) An application under sub-section (1) shall be made to the Government in such form and with such fee as may be prescribed, and shall be accompanied by the following, namely,—

(a) a Skill Transition Plan in such form and containing such particulars as may be prescribed;

(b) a statement demonstrating that the university has been in continuous lawful operation for not less than three years immediately preceding the date of application, without any adverse order of a court, tribunal or regulatory body; and

(c) such other documents and information as may be prescribed.

(3) The Government shall refer the application to the Expert Committee, which shall examine it with reference to the following factors, namely,—

(a) the track record of the existing Private University in skill education, vocational training or applied Programs;

(b) the quality and industry-alignment of the Programs proposed to be offered as skills Programs;

(c) the feasibility and credibility of the Skill Transition Plan submitted under sub-section (2)(a);

(d) the strength of the proposed Industry Partner commitments; and

(e) any other factor the Expert Committee considers appropriate.

The Expert Committee shall submit its recommendation to the Government within sixty days of receipt of the application.

(4) (a) If the Government satisfied that the Sponsoring body has complied with the conditions of Letter of Intent

and on the specific recommendations of the Expert Committee, it shall endeavour within a maximum period of seven months for inclusion of the name of the University in Schedule with details of its location(s) by way of amendment of Schedule.

(b) The university shall, from the date specified in the notification, cease to be governed by the Act, 2016; and

(c) the recognition and transfer shall not affect the incorporation of the university, or its properties, funds, endowments, rights, liabilities, contracts, appointments, Statutes, Ordinanaces, regulations, the students already enrolled, or any suit or legal proceeding pending by or against it, all of which shall continue and, so far as not inconsistent with this Act, be deemed to have been made, issued, done or instituted under this Acts.

Skill University Open to all.

15. (1) No person shall be excluded from any office of the Skills University or from membership of any of its authorities or from admission to any degree, diploma, certificate or other academic distinction or Program of study on the ground of sex, race, creed, class, caste, place of birth, religious belief or political or other opinion.

(2) It shall not be lawful for the Skills University to impose on any person any test whatsoever relating to sex, race, creed, caste, class, place of birth, religious belief or political or other opinion in order to entitle such person to be admitted as a student, hold any office or post, qualify for any degree, diploma or academic distinction, or enjoy any privilege of the Skills University.

(3) The Skills University shall comply with the policies of the State Government on reservation of seats in admissions

for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Backward Classes, Economically Weaker Sections and persons with disabilities, and/or other communities or categories as applicable from time to time.

(4) The Skills University shall ensure that its hub campus and all skill centres and study centres are made physically accessible to persons with disabilities in compliance with the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016.

Central Act 49 of 2016.

CHAPTER - III

OFFICERS OF THE SKILLS UNIVERSITY

Officers of the Skills University.

16. The following shall be the officers of the Skills University, namely,—

(1) the Chancellor;

(2) the Vice-Chancellor;

(3) the Registrar;

(4) the Chief Finance and Accounts Officer;

(5) the Director of Assessment and Evaluation;

(6) the Director of Industry Engagement and Placement; and

(7) such other officers as may be declared by the Statutes to be the officers of the Skills University.

Appointment of Chancellor.

17. (1) The Chancellor shall be appointed by the Sponsoring Body from a panel of three names selected by a Search Committee by following such procedure and on such terms and conditions as may be prescribed.

For the purposes of this Section, "Search Committee" shall mean a Search Committee constituted by the Sponsoring body and consisting of a minimum of three members nominated from the Board of Management.

(2) The Chancellor shall be the Head of the Skills University.

(3) The Chancellor shall preside at the meetings of the Governing Body and at the convocation of the Skills University for conferring degrees, diplomas, certificates or other academic distinctions, and in the Chancellor's absence by any other member of the Governing Body nominated by it.

(4) The Chancellor shall have the following powers, namely,—

(a) to call for any information or record from any officer or authority of the Skills University;

(b) to appoint the Vice-Chancellor from the panel of persons recommended by the Search Committee in accordance with section 18;

(c) to remove the Vice-Chancellor in accordance with the provisions of sub-section (6) of section 18; and

(d) such other powers as may be prescribed by the Statutes.

(5) The term of the office of the Chancellor shall be as may be specified in the Statutes.

Appointment of Vice-Chancellor.

18. (1) The Vice-Chancellor shall be appointed by the Chancellor from out of a panel of three persons recommended by the Search Committee and shall, subject to the provisions of sub-section (6), hold office for a term of three years or up to the age of seventy years, whichever is earlier:

Provided that after expiry of the term of three years, a person shall be eligible for re-appointment for another term of three years subject to the upper age limit of seventy years:

Provided further that a Vice-Chancellor shall continue to hold office even after expiry of the term

till a new Vice-Chancellor takes charge of the office, but in any case this period shall not exceed one year:

Provided also that the Chancellor may appoint the first Vice-Chancellor for a period of one year or until a regular Vice-Chancellor is appointed under this section, whichever is earlier.

For the purposes of this section, 'Search Committee' means a Search Committee constituted by the Sponsoring body consisting of not less than three members, of whom at least one shall be a person of eminence in the relevant skill or academic field.

(2) The Vice-Chancellor shall be the principal executive and academic officer of the Skills University and shall exercise general superintendence and control over the affairs of the Skills University and shall execute the decisions of the various authorities of the Skills University.

(3) Where, in the opinion of the Vice-Chancellor, it is necessary to take immediate action on any matter for which powers are conferred on any other officer or authority by or under this Act, the Vice-Chancellor may take such action as is deemed necessary and shall at the earliest opportunity thereafter report such action to such officer or authority as would have in the ordinary course dealt with the matter:

Provided that if in the opinion of the concerned officer or authority such action should not have been taken by the Vice-Chancellor, then such case

shall be referred to the Chancellor, whose decision thereon shall be final:

Provided further that where any such action taken by the Vice-Chancellor affects any person in the service of the Skills University, such person shall be entitled to prefer, within three months from the date on which such action is communicated to the person, an appeal to the Governing Body, and the Governing Body may confirm, modify or reverse the action taken by the Vice-Chancellor.

(4) Where, in the opinion of the Vice-Chancellor, a decision of any officer or authority of the Skills University is not within the powers conferred by this Act or is likely to be prejudicial to the interests of the Skills University, the Vice-Chancellor shall request the concerned authority to revise its decision within fifteen days from the date of that decision, and in case the authority refuses to revise such decision wholly or partly, or fails to take any decision within fifteen days, then such matter shall be referred to the Chancellor and the Chancellor's decision thereon shall be final.

(5) The Vice-Chancellor shall exercise such powers and perform such functions as may be specified by the Statutes or the Ordinances.

(6) If, at any time, upon representation made or otherwise and after making such inquiry as may be deemed necessary, the situation so warrants and the continuance of the Vice-Chancellor is not in the interests of the Skills University, the Chancellor may, by an order in writing stating the reasons

therein, ask the Vice-Chancellor to relinquish office from such date as may be specified in the order:

Provided that before taking any action under this sub-section, the Vice-Chancellor shall be given an opportunity of being heard, in person.

Appointment of Registrar.

19. (1) The appointment of the Registrar shall be made by the Chancellor in such manner as may be specified by the Statutes.

(2) All contracts shall be signed and all documents and records shall be authenticated by the Registrar on behalf of the Skills University.

(3) The Registrar shall be the Member-Secretary of the Governing Body, the Board of Management and the Academic Council but shall not have a right to vote at any meeting of these authorities.

(4) The Registrar shall be the custodian of the records, the common seal and such other property of the Skills University as the Governing Body may commit to the Registrar's charge.

(5) The Registrar shall exercise such powers and perform such duties as may be specified by the Statutes or the Ordinances.

Appointment of Chief Finance and Accounts Officer.

20. (1) The appointment of the Chief Finance and Accounts Officer shall be made by the Chancellor in such manner as may be specified by the Statutes.

(2) The Chief Finance and Accounts Officer shall be the principal finance, accounts and audit officer of the Skills University and shall exercise such powers and perform such duties as may be specified by the Statutes or the Ordinances.

Director of Assessment and Evaluation.

21. (1) The Director of Assessment and Evaluation shall be appointed by the Chancellor in such manner and on such terms and conditions as may be specified by the Statutes.

(2) The Director of Assessment and Evaluation shall hold office for a term of three years from the date of appointment and shall be eligible for re-appointment for one further term of three years.

(3) The Director of Assessment and Evaluation shall work under the direction and superintendence of the Vice-Chancellor and shall be responsible for:—

(a) the preparation and publication, at the beginning of each academic session, of a semester-wise or annual schedule of assessments, examinations and competency evaluations for every Program offered by the Skills University;

(b) the secure printing, custody and distribution of question papers and assessment instruments;

(c) the appointment, briefing and supervision of examiners, moderators and skill assessors for all assessments;

(d) the timely declaration of results within the periods prescribed under this Act;

(e) the initiation and conduct of disciplinary proceedings against students or staff for malpractice in any assessment or examination;

(f) the maintenance of digital records of all assessments, results and qualifications awarded, including RPL assessment records; and

(g) the submission of periodic reports on assessment outcomes, result declaration timelines and

assessment quality to the Academic Council and the Board of Assessment and Evaluation.

(4) The Director of Assessment and Evaluation shall exercise such other powers and perform such other duties as may be specified by the Statutes or the Ordinances.

Director of Industry Engagement and Placement.

22. (1) Every Skills University shall appoint a Director of Industry Engagement and Placement as a full-time officer. The appointment shall be made by the Chancellor in such manner and on such terms and conditions as may be specified by the Statutes.

(2) The Director of Industry Engagement and Placement shall report directly to the Vice-Chancellor and shall be responsible for:—

(a) establishing, maintaining and continuously strengthening the relationships of the Skills University with all Industry Partners, Sector Skill Councils and industry associations;

(b) securing and managing internship, on-job training and apprenticeship training placements for students in accordance with the Apprentices Act, 1961 and the rules made thereunder;

(c) organising campus placement drives, employer engagement events and career fairs;

(d) coordinating with the Industry Advisory Board and ensuring that its recommendations on employment, placement and industry linkages are placed before the Academic Council and the Board of Management

(e) developing and maintaining a database of all graduates of the Skills University, their employment status and career progression, for alumni tracking and employment outcome verification;

(f) preparing and certifying the employment outcomes component of the Annual Report and submitting it to the Vice-Chancellor; and

(g) coordinating with the Skills Entrepreneurship Cell to facilitate self-employment and entrepreneurship among graduates.

(h) offering alumni continuing access to skill-updation, re-skilling and up-skilling opportunities, including short-term courses and micro-credentials, so as to keep their skills current with evolving industry requirements, and reporting alumni skill-progression in the Annual Report under section 48;

(3) The Director of Industry Engagement and Placement shall exercise such other powers and perform such other duties as may be specified by the Statutes or the Ordinances.

(4) Every Skills University shall maintain a register of all establishments — including industries, workplaces and Industry Partners — at which its students undergo on-job training, apprenticeship training, industry projects or hands-on practical training, containing in respect of each such establishment its name, registered address, nature of business, the applicable statutory registration or licence number, the Programs and number of students placed with it, and the period of training; and

(a) the register, and every addition to or deletion from it, shall be submitted to the Government as part of the Annual Report under section 48, and placed before the Industry Advisory Board for verification at least once in each academic year;

(b) the Government, or an agency authorised by it, shall cause to be verified, in each academic year, a sample of not

less than ten per cent of the establishments entered in the register, and may, in addition, verify the genuineness and continued existence of any such establishment at any time and require the University to furnish such further particulars or proof as it considers necessary;

(c) where any establishment is found to be non-existent, fictitious, or to have furnished false particulars, or to be otherwise unfit for the training of students, the University shall forthwith remove that establishment from the register, discontinue the training of its students at that establishment, and make alternative arrangements for the affected students to complete their training at a genuine establishment without loss of time or credit; and

(d) failure to maintain the register accurately, or to act under clause (c), or the persistent entry of fictitious or false establishments, shall be a ground for action under section 56.

Other Officers.

23. (1) The Skills University may appoint such other officers as may be necessary for its functioning.

(2) The manner of appointment of other officers of the Skills University and their powers and functions shall be such as may be specified by the Statutes or the Ordinances.

(3) The University shall have such Deans of Schools, Faculties or Clusters as may be specified in the Statutes; and the manner of their appointment, term of office, powers and duties shall be as provided in the Statutes.

CHAPTER - IV

AUTHORITIES OF THE SKILLS UNIVERSITY

Authorities of the Skills University.

24. The following shall be the authorities of the Skills University, namely,—

(1) the Governing Body;

(2) the Board of Management;

(3) the Academic Council;

(4) the Industry Advisory Board;

(5) the Board of Assessment and Evaluation; and

(6) such other authorities as may be declared by the statutes to be the authorities of the Skills University.

Constitution, tenure, powers and quorum of the Governing Body.

25. (1) The Governing Body of the Skills University shall consist of the following members, namely,—

(a) the Chancellor — Chairperson;

(b) the Vice-Chancellor;

(c) five persons nominated by the Sponsoring body, of whom-

(i) at least three shall be senior industry representatives with not less than five years of experience in skill development, vocational education or workforce development in the priority sectors relevant to the Skills University; and

(ii) the remaining nominees shall be eminent persons of standing in the fields of education, management, finance or public administration;

(iii) the Registrar — permanent invitee without the right to vote:

Provided that it shall be the duty of the Sponsoring body, in nominating the five persons under clause (c), to ensure that not less than two of the five nominees are women.

(2) Save as otherwise provided in this section, the term of nominated members of the Governing Body shall be a minimum of three and a maximum of five years from the date of nomination, and a nominated member shall be eligible for re-nomination:

Provided that the maximum-tenure limit under this sub-section and the requirement of retirement by rotation under sub-section (4) shall not apply to members nominated by the Sponsoring body, who may continue to be nominated for so long as the Sponsoring body deems fit.

(3) An ex officio member shall continue as a member so long as the person holds the office by virtue of which the person is such a member.

(4) As nearly as one-third of the nominated members, excluding ex officio members and members nominated by the Sponsoring body, shall retire by rotation each year. In the first two instances, the Governing Body may decide the procedure to identify the members who shall retire:

Provided that members retiring by rotation in the first or second year by reason of this sub-section shall not be entitled to claim any right based on the minimum term of three years specified in sub-section (2).

(5) A member may resign office by informing in writing to the Chairperson, but the member shall continue in office until the resignation has been accepted.

(6) The Governing Body shall be the overarching supervisory and statutory authority of the Skills University. All the movable and immovable property of the Skills University shall vest in the Governing Body.

(7) The Governing Body shall have the following powers, namely,—

(a) to provide general superintendence and directions and to control the functioning of the Skills University by exercising all such powers as are provided by this Act;

(b) to review the decisions of other authorities of the Skills University in case they are not in conformity with the provisions of this Act;

(c) to approve the budget and annual report of the Skills University;

(d) to lay down the policies to be followed by the Skills University, including policies on employment outcomes, industry engagement, Recognition of Prior Learning and student welfare;

(e) to recommend to the Sponsoring body the voluntary liquidation of the Skills University;

(f) to vest in the Board of Management or any other authority or officer such of its powers as it deems appropriate, along with appropriate governance mechanisms; and

(g) such other powers as may be prescribed by the Statutes.

(8) The Governing Body shall meet at least four times in a financial year with one meeting in each quarter.

(9) A minimum of one-half of the members shall form a quorum for a meeting of the Governing Body.

Board of Management.

26. (1) The Board of Management shall consist of a minimum of eight and a maximum of twelve members, including the following persons, namely,—

(a) the Vice-Chancellor;

(b) up to one-fourth of the total members of the Board of Management, to be nominated by the Sponsoring body from amongst the members of the Governing Body;

(c) eminent persons from the fields of industry, skill development, finance, science and technology or public administration, who are not members of the

Governing Body, to be nominated by the Sponsoring body;

(d) persons from amongst the Heads of Departments, Schools or Skill Centres of the Skills University, to be nominated by the Sponsoring body;

(e) the Director of Industry Engagement and Placement — ex officio member;

(f) the Deans of Schools;

(g) Faculties or Clusters and;

(h) the Registrar — ex officio Member-Secretary, without the right to vote:

Provided that it shall be the duty of the Sponsoring body to maintain gender parity in nominating women members, who shall in any case be not less than one-third of the total membership of the Board of Management.

(2) The Vice-Chancellor shall be the Chairperson of the Board of Management:

Provided that in the absence of the Vice-Chancellor, the Chancellor may, at the Chancellor's discretion, nominate any other member of the Board of Management to be the Chairperson for that meeting.

(3) The powers and functions of the Board of Management shall be such as may be specified by the Statutes.

(4) The Board of Management shall meet at least once in every two months.

(5) A minimum of one-half of the members shall form a quorum for a meeting of the Board of Management.

Academic Council.

27. (1) The Academic Council shall consist of the Vice-Chancellor, the Registrar, the Director of Industry Engagement and Placement and such other members as may be specified by the Statutes:

Provided that the Academic Council shall include industry practitioners and certified assessors constituting not less than one-third of the total membership of the Academic Council, with expertise in the principal skill sectors of the Skills University.

(2) The Vice-Chancellor shall be the ex officio Chairperson of the Academic Council.

(3) The Academic Council shall be the principal academic body of the Skills University and shall, subject to the provisions of this Act, the Statutes, the Ordinances and the rules made thereunder, co-ordinate and exercise general supervision over the academic policies of the Skills University, including the alignment of all Programs to the appropriate levels of the NSQF and the NCrF. The Academic Council shall not approve any new Program of study unless it is satisfied that the Program design meets the minimum skill component requirements prescribed under section 4 and, where applicable, is consistent with the binding recommendations of the Industry Advisory Board under section 28.

(4) The quorum for meetings of the Academic Council shall be such as may be specified by the Statutes.

(5) No new Program of study shall be approved by the Academic Council unless it is supported by a demand assessment, carried out in consultation with the Industry Advisory Board and the relevant Sector Skill Council, establishing the industry or market demand and the employment or self-employment potential for the skills the Program imparts; and every such demand assessment shall be reviewed periodically as may be prescribed.

Industry Advisory Board.

28. (1) Every Skills University shall constitute a mandatory Industry Advisory Board consisting of the following members, namely, —

(a) The Vice-Chancellor — Chairperson;

(b) Not less than Ten senior representatives from Industry, Sector Skill Councils active in the principal skill sectors of the Skills University, nominated by the Governing Body, of whom not less than three shall be from Sector Skill Councils and of whom at least two shall be women;

(c) Two members of the Academic Council nominated by the Vice-Chancellor; and

(d) The Director of Industry Engagement and Placement — Member-Secretary.

(2) The Industry Advisory Board shall perform the following functions, namely, —

(a) advise the Academic Council on the relevance, currency and industry-alignment of the curricula of all Programs offered by the Skills University, with reference to the applicable National Occupational Standards and NSQF levels;

(b) advise the Board of Management on technology upgrades, equipment modernization and infrastructure investments required to maintain industry-standard training facilities;

(c) review the employment outcomes data in the Annual Report of the Skills University and advise the Governing Body and the Board of Management on corrective measures;

(d) facilitate the establishment of industry mentoring Programs, guest faculty arrangements, in-plant training and collaborative applied research

between the Skills University and its Industry Partners; and

(e) advise the Academic Council on new Programs aligned to emerging industry needs, technological changes and the evolving employment priorities of the State of Andhra Pradesh.

(3) The Industry Advisory Board shall meet at least three times in every Academic year. The recommendations of the Industry Advisory Board shall be placed before the Academic Council and the Board of Management at their next meeting following each sitting of the Industry Advisory Board.

(4) The recommendations of the Industry Advisory Board on the following matters shall be binding on the Academic Council,—

(a) the NSQF level alignment of any Program or the mandatory skill component content within a Program, as determined with reference to the applicable National Occupational Standards; and

(b) the minimum industry project, on-job training and assessor involvement requirements for NSQF-aligned Programs:

Provided that where the Academic Council proposes to depart from a binding recommendation of the Industry Advisory Board under this sub-section, it shall first refer the matter to the Board of Management. The Board of Management shall decide the matter within thirty days, and its decision shall be final. The reasons for any departure shall be recorded in writing in the minutes of the relevant Board of Management meeting and communicated to the Industry Advisory Board within fifteen days.

(5) All other recommendations of the Industry Advisory Board shall be advisory in nature; however, where any recommendation is not accepted by the Academic Council or the Board of Management, reasons for such non-acceptance shall be recorded in writing in the minutes of the relevant meeting and communicated to the Industry Advisory Board within fifteen days.

(6) The term of nominated members of the Industry Advisory Board shall be three years from the date of nomination:

Provided that a nominated member shall be eligible for re-appointment for one further term of three years:

Provided further that an ex officio member shall continue as a member so long as the person holds the office by virtue of which the person is such a member.

(7) The quorum for meetings of the Industry Advisory Board shall be one-third of its total membership, provided that at least three Industry Partner or Sector Skill Council representatives are present.

(8) The Industry Advisory Board shall, in addition to its other functions, also:

(a) promote, guide and monitor the startup, incubation and entrepreneurship activities of the Skills University, including the functioning of the Skills Entrepreneurship Cell under section 50;

(b) advise the University on collaboration with the Ratan Tata Innovation Hub and other innovation, incubation or startup bodies; and

(c) review, at least once in each academic year, the startup and entrepreneurship outcomes of the

University and record its observations in the Annual Report under section 48:

Provided that the recommendations of the Board under this sub-section shall be recommendatory.

Board of Assessment and Evaluation.

29. (1) The Board of Assessment and Evaluation shall be the principal authority of the Skills University for all matters relating to the conduct of examinations and assessments and shall be responsible for making policy decisions on the following, namely,—

(a) the organization and scheduling of all assessments, examinations and competency evaluations;

(b) the scheme of competency-based evaluation, including the weighting of continuous internal assessment, practical assessments, on-job training evaluations and end-of-Program assessments;

(c) the appointment of paper-setters, examiners, moderators and skill assessors for all assessments and examinations;

(d) the norms for RPL assessments and the standards for RPL certification; and

(e) the declaration of results and the procedure for redressal of grievances relating to assessments and results.

(2) The Board of Assessment and Evaluation shall consist of the following members, namely,—

(a) the Vice-Chancellor — Chairperson;

(b) two Heads of Departments or Schools of the Skills University, by rotation, nominated by the Vice-Chancellor;

(c) one expert in educational evaluation or competency-based assessment, co-opted by the Board;

(d) at least two skill assessors representing the principal Industry Partners or Sector Skill Councils of the Skills University, nominated by the Industry Advisory Board; and

(e) the Director of Assessment and Evaluation — Member-Secretary.

(3) The powers and functions of the Board of Assessment and Evaluation shall be such as may be specified by the Statutes.

(4) The Board of Assessment and Evaluation shall meet at least four times in a financial year.

(5) A minimum of one-half of the members shall form a quorum for a meeting of the Board of Assessment and Evaluation, provided that at least one skill assessor referred to in sub-section (2)(d) is present.

Disqualifications.

30. (1) A person shall be disqualified from being a member of any of the authorities or bodies of the Skills University if,—

(a) the person is of unsound mind and stands so declared by a competent court;

(b) the person is an undischarged insolvent;

(c) the person has been convicted of any offence involving moral turpitude;

(d) the person is conducting or engaging in private coaching classes with or without pecuniary gain;

(e) the person has been punished for indulging in or promoting unfair practices in the conduct of any examination or assessment, in any form, anywhere; or

(f) the person has been removed from service by any public authority, regulatory body or company for fraud, financial misconduct or breach of fiduciary duty.

31. No act or proceedings of any authority of the Skills University shall be invalid merely by reason of any vacancy in, or any defect in the constitution of, any authority or body of the Skills University. Vacancy not to invalidate proceedings.

32. The authorities of the Skills University may constitute such committees with such terms of reference as may be necessary for specific tasks to be performed. The constitution of such committees, the powers to be exercised and the duties to be performed shall be such as may be specified by the Statutes. Committees.

CHAPTER - V

STATUTES, ORDINANCES AND REGULATIONS

33. (1) Subject to the provisions of this Act and the rules made thereunder, the First Statutes may provide for all or any of the following matters, namely, — First Statutes.

(a) the constitution, powers and functions of the authorities and other bodies of the Skills University as may be constituted from time to time;

(b) the terms and conditions of appointment of the Vice-Chancellor and his powers and functions;

(c) the manner and terms and conditions of appointment of the Registrar, the Chief Finance and Accounts Officer, the Director of Assessment and Evaluation and the Director of Industry Engagement and Placement, and their powers and functions;

(d) the manner and terms and conditions of appointment of other officers, teachers, industry experts, master trainers and certified assessors, and their powers and functions;

(e) the terms and conditions of service of all employees of the Skills University, including provisions relating to probation, confirmation, promotion, disciplinary proceedings and retirement benefits;

(f) the procedure for arbitration in cases of disputes between employees or students and the Skills University;

(g) the conferment of honorary degrees, honorary diplomas and honorary fellowships;

(h) the framing of policy for admissions to all programs of the Skills University, including the regulation of reservation of seats in accordance with Government policy and the procedures for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) admissions under section 41;

(i) fees to be charged from students for all programs, assessments and other services of the Skills University;

(j) the provisions regarding exemption from payment of tuition fees and awarding of scholarships, fellowships and fee concessions;

(k) the employment outcomes framework of the Skills University, including the targets for placement rates, median starting salaries and employer satisfaction ratings; and

(l) the quorum and meeting procedures for the Industry Advisory Board, to the extent consistent with section 28 of this Act;

(m) the constitution of Schools, Faculties or Clusters, and the appointment, term of office, powers and duties of their Deans;

(2) The First Statutes of the Skills University shall be made by the Governing Body and shall be submitted to the Government for its approval.

(3) The Government shall consider the First Statutes submitted by the Skills University and shall approve them as far as possible within two months from the date of their receipt, with or without modifications:

Provided that the Government shall state reasons for such modifications.

(4) The Skills University shall communicate its agreement to the First Statutes as approved by the Government, and if it desires not to give effect to any or all the modifications made by the Government under sub-section (3), it may give reasons therefor, and after considering such reasons, the Government may or may not accept the suggestions made by the said University.

(5) The Government shall publish the First Statutes, as finally approved by it, in the Andhra Pradesh Gazette, and thereafter the First Statutes shall come into force from the date of such publication.

Subsequent Statutes.

34. (1) Subject to the provisions of this Act and the rules made thereunder, the subsequent Statutes of the Skills University may provide for all or any of the following matters, namely,—

(a) the creation of new authorities of the Skills University;

(b) accounting policy and financial procedure, including the procedure for Utilisation of Government scheme grants and Industry Partner contributions;

(c) representation of teachers, industry experts and certified assessors in the authorities of the Skills University;

(d) creation of new departments, schools or skill centres, and the abolition or restructuring of existing departments, schools or skill centres;

(e) the institution of medals, prizes and awards, including industry-sponsored awards for skill excellence and outstanding employment outcomes;

(f) the procedure for creation and abolition of posts;

(g) the revision of fees for programs and assessments;

(h) the alteration of the number of seats in different programs and skill disciplines;

(i) all other matters which by or under the provisions of this Act are required to be specified by the Statutes.

(2) The Statutes of the Skills University other than the First Statutes shall be made by the Board of Management with the approval of the Governing Body.

(3) The Statutes made under sub-section (2) shall be submitted to the Government, and the Government may approve them or, if it considers necessary, give reasoned suggestions for modification as far as possible within two months from the date of their receipt.

(4) The Governing Body shall consider the modifications suggested by the Government and return the Statutes to it with its agreement to such changes or with its comments on the suggestions made by the Government.

(5) The Government shall consider the comments of the Governing Body and may approve the Statutes with or without modifications, and the Statutes so approved shall be published by the Government in the Andhra Pradesh Gazette and shall come into force from the date of such publication.

First Ordinances.

35. (1) Subject to the provisions of this Act, the rules and the Statutes made thereunder, the First Ordinances may provide for all or any of the following matters, namely,—

(a) the admission of students to the Skills University and their enrolment, including the criteria and process for merit-based admissions, entrance tests and admissions under Government reservation policy;

(b) the Programs of study to be laid down for degrees, diplomas, certificates and other academic distinctions of the Skills University, and their alignment to the appropriate NSQF levels and the NCrF;

(c) the award of degrees, diplomas, certificates, RPL certifications and other academic distinctions, and the minimum qualifications and competency standards required for each;

(d) the rules and procedures for the award of fellowships, scholarships, stipends, medals, prizes and industry-sponsored awards;

(e) the conduct of examinations, competency assessments, on-job training evaluations and RPL assessments, including the terms of office and manner of appointment and the duties of examining bodies, examiners, moderators and skill assessors;

(f) fees to be charged for the various Programs, assessments, RPL evaluations, degrees, diplomas and certificates of the Skills University;

(g) the provision of various student facilities and services, including student housing, skill training equipment, safety gear, digital learning tools and transport to spoke skill centres;

(h) provisions regarding disciplinary action against students, including action for malpractice in assessments and examinations;

(i) the creation, composition and functions of any other body considered necessary for improving the academic and skill training standards of the Skills University;

(j) the manner of co-operation and collaboration with other Skills Universities, Universities, Industrial Training Institutes, polytechnics, Sector Skill Councils and institutions of higher education, including credit transfer arrangements under the Academic Bank of Credits;

(k) the procedures for RPL admissions, including the RPL assessment process, the grant of credit exemptions to RPL candidates, the empanelment of RPL assessment agencies, the issuance of RPL certifications, credit transfer under the Academic Bank of Credits, multiple entry and multiple exit from Programs, and lateral mobility between Programs and institutions; and

(l) such other matters as are required to be provided by the Ordinances or under this Act.

(2) The First Ordinances of the Skills University shall be made by the Vice-Chancellor, which, after being approved by the Board of Management, shall be submitted to the Government for its approval.

(3) The Government shall consider the First Ordinances submitted by the Vice-Chancellor as far as possible within two months from the date of their receipt and may approve them or give reasoned suggestions for modifications therein.

(4) The Vice-Chancellor shall either modify the Ordinances incorporating the suggestions of the Government or give

reasons for not incorporating any of the suggestions made by the Government, and shall return the First Ordinances, after due consideration by the Board of Management, to the Government. On receipt of the same, the Government shall consider the comments of the Vice-Chancellor and may approve the First Ordinances of the Skills University with or without such modifications, and the First Ordinances so approved shall be published by the Government in the Andhra Pradesh Gazette and shall come into force from the date of such publication.

Subsequent Ordinances.

36. All Ordinances other than the First Ordinances shall be made by the Academic Council, which, after being approved by the Board of Management, shall be submitted to the Government for its information and publication in the Andhra Pradesh Gazette.

Regulations.

37. The authorities of the Skills University may, subject to the prior approval of the Board of Management, make Regulations consistent with this Act, the Statutes, the Ordinances and the rules made thereunder, for the conduct of the business of each such authority and the committees constituted by each such authority:

Provided that all Regulations made under this section shall be published on the publicly accessible digital repository of the Skills University, maintained under section 52 of this Act, within thirty days of their coming into force and shall be kept current and accessible at all times.

CHAPTER – VI

REGULATION AND ACCREDITATION OF SKILLS UNIVERSITY

Regulation and Accreditation of Skills University.

38. (1) The Government may, by notification, designate one or more authorities or bodies to serve as the Regulatory Authority for the following purposes in respect of Private Skills Universities,—

(a) fixing the fee structure for Government Quota seats in Skills Universities; and

(b) granting accreditation to Skills Universities in the manner as prescribed under the rules:

Provided that the parameters for accreditation shall not be in derogation of the existing regulations framed by the University Grants Commission, the All India Council for Technical Education, the National Council for Vocational Education and Training, the National Skill Development Corporation, the National Assessment and Accreditation Council or any Sector Skill Council:

Provided further that different authorities may be designated for different purposes under this sub-section, and such designation shall be effective from the date specified in the notification.

(2) The Regulatory Authority shall function under the general control of the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh.

(3) It shall be the general duty of the Regulatory Authority —

(a) to take all such steps as it considers necessary for enabling the maintenance of standards of skill training, competency evaluation and applied research in Private Skills Universities;

(b) to provide the necessary guidance and supervision to the accrediting bodies and to Sector Skill Councils acting as Program-level assessment and accreditation bodies for Private Skills Universities;

(c) to ensure that Skills Universities collect such fees and other charges as cover the cost of skill education imparted by them and also give a reasonable surplus to enable them to maintain assets, upgrade skill training equipment and infrastructure, and carry out further expansion;

(d) to ensure that a nurturing and facilitative environment is created in the Skills Universities that enables excellence in skill training while ensuring that there is no exploitation of any student from excessive collection of fees; and

(e) to take action pertaining to and consequent upon the liquidation of a Skills University, including arrangements for the completion of Programs, conduct of assessments, award of degrees, diplomas and certificates, issuance of pending RPL certifications and transfer of student academic records, by assigning such responsibilities to another recognised institution, with costs met from the Endowment Fund or the General Fund of the dissolved Skills University.

(4) When there is evidence that may necessitate an inspection of the Skills University, the Regulatory Authority shall have the power to carry out such inspection at any time after giving sufficient prior notice thereof.

(5) The findings of the Regulatory Authority shall be communicated to the Skills University formally, with a request to rectify the deficiencies or problems noted within an acceptable timeframe. The Skills University shall have both the right to appeal to the Regulatory Authority against conclusions on deficiencies or problems, as well as the responsibility to rectify them expeditiously. A well-structured mechanism for appeals and their resolution shall be framed by the Regulatory Authority, keeping in mind that an unnecessarily litigious environment should not be created.

(6) If the Regulatory Authority is not satisfied with the reply given or the remedial action taken by the Skills University, it shall report to the Government for appropriate action.

(7) The Government may issue directions on matters of policy to the Regulatory Authority which shall be binding on the Regulatory Authority.

Admission and Fee Structure.

39. (1) The Skills University shall have full autonomy, subject to the other provisions of this Act, on starting various skill Programs and on the admissions process thereof, so long as it adheres fully to the admission norms it has committed to in its approved Detailed Project Report and provided that all Programs commenced by the Skills University are aligned to the appropriate level of the NSQF and the NCrF, as applicable.

(2) The Skills University shall have full autonomy, subject to the other provisions of this Act, on setting fees for the various Programs that it decides to offer, along with full disclosure and transparency. Fees shall be determined by each Skills University through a Fees Fixation Committee which shall consist of members drawn from the Board of Management and the Academic Council, at least one representative of the Industry Advisory Board, and such external members as may be prescribed. The Fees Fixation Committee shall be headed by a member of the Board of Management.

Government Quota.

40. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in section 39,—

(1) The Greenfield Skills University or Brownfield Skills University shall earmark a Government Quota of a minimum of thirty-five per cent of seats in every Program of study offered by it, and shall admit students against such Government Quota seats in accordance with the rules as may be prescribed.

(2) Of the Government Quota seats earmarked under sub-section (1) in every Program, an extent equal to **five per cent of the total sanctioned seats** in that Program shall

constitute a **Recognition of Prior Learning sub-quota**, and the balance shall constitute the general Government Quota:

Provided that the Recognition of Prior Learning sub-quota shall be carved out from within, and not in addition to, the Government Quota, and shall not increase the Government Quota beyond the percentage fixed under sub-section (1).

(3) The seats forming part of the Recognition of Prior Learning sub-quota shall be filled exclusively by candidates admitted through the Recognition of Prior Learning admissions pathway under section 41; and the seats forming part of the general Government Quota shall be filled on the basis of merit among qualified candidates in the relevant Common Entrance Test conducted by the Central Government or the State Government or their instrumentalities, or through such other merit-based selection process as may be prescribed.

(4) Where, in any academic year, eligible candidates are not available to fill the Recognition of Prior Learning sub-quota in any Program, the unfilled seats shall be filled as general Government Quota seats under sub-section (3) for that academic year.

(5) The fee charged for Government Quota seats shall be determined by such authority as may be notified by the Government from time to time.

Recognition of Prior Learning Admissions.

41. (1) Every Skills University shall provide access to its Programs through a Recognition of Prior Learning admissions pathway, through which eligible candidates may be assessed for competencies acquired outside the formal education system and admitted to appropriate Programs with credit exemptions commensurate with their prior learning assessment outcomes.

(2) The procedure for RPL admissions, the empanelment of RPL assessment agencies, the grant of credit exemptions, the determination of NSQF level equivalence and the issuance of RPL certifications shall be as prescribed in the First Ordinances of the Skills University, in conformity with the guidelines of NCVET, the relevant Sector Skill Councils and the Government.

(3) A candidate admitted through the RPL pathway shall be entitled to all rights and privileges available to students admitted through the regular admissions process, including eligibility for scholarships, fee concessions and placement assistance.

Convocation. **42.** The convocations of the Skills University for conferring degrees, diplomas, certificates, RPL certifications or for any other academic or vocational purpose may be held in every academic year in the manner as may be specified by the Statutes.

Accreditation. **43.** (1) Institutional accreditation -

(a) A **Greenfield Skills University** shall, within a period of five years from the commencement of its Programs, obtain accreditation from the National Assessment and Accreditation Council or such other institutional accreditation as may be prescribed by the Government from time to time.

(b) A **Brownfield Skills University** shall, from the date of its establishment, maintain and keep current the accreditation or ranking on the strength of which it qualified for conversion under section 2(6), namely —

(i) where it is established through the Skill-Institution Sector (Category A), the grading, accreditation or quality rating referred to in section 2(6)(ii)(3)(a),and, where such accreditation is

subject to renewal, shall renew the same before its expiry; and the five-year period in clause (a) shall not apply to it:

Provided that a Brownfield Skills University established through the Skill-Institution Sector (Category A) shall, within a period of three years from the date of its establishment, attain accreditation from the National Assessment and Accreditation Council, or such other university-grade institutional accreditation as may be prescribed; and failure to do so within that period shall attract the consequences specified in sub-section (3); or

(ii) where it is established through the Higher-Education Sector (Category B), its accreditation of the National Assessment and Accreditation Council, or its National Board of Accreditation or NIRF ranking, as the case may be;

(c) A **Recognised Skills University** shall obtain or maintain institutional accreditation obtained from SSC or NCVET within the transitional period as may be prescribed.

(d) Every Skills University shall communicate the grade or rating awarded to it by the accrediting or ranking body to the Government, publish the same on its official website and digital repository, and ensure timely renewal of such accreditation from time to time.

(2) **Program-level accreditation —** In addition to the institutional accreditation under sub-section (1), the Skills University shall, within a period of three years from the commencement of each principal Program of study, obtain Program-level accreditation or certification from the

relevant Sector Skill Council or a body approved by NCVET for that Program, confirming alignment to the applicable National Occupational Standards and the relevant NSQF level:

Provided that where a Brownfield Skills University already holds a subsisting Program-level accreditation or certification from the relevant Sector Skill Council or an NCVET-approved body for a Program, that Program shall be deemed to comply with this sub-section for so long as such accreditation or certification remains valid.

(3) Failure by the Skills University to obtain or maintain institutional accreditation within the period specified in sub-section (1), or failure to obtain Program-level SSC or NCVET accreditation within the period specified in sub-section (2), may result in the suspension of fresh admissions to the relevant Programs on the direction of the Government, until such accreditation is obtained or maintained and communicated to the Government.

(4) Within a period of three years from the date of operationalization, the Skills University shall obtain recognition as an accredited RPL assessment body from NCVET, to enable it to conduct RPL assessments for candidates seeking RPL certification in its principal skill sectors.

Compliance with Regulatory Body Norms.

44. Notwithstanding anything contained in this Act, the Skills University shall be bound to comply with all the rules, regulations, norms and directions of the Regulatory Bodies applicable to it, including those of the University Grants Commission, AICTE, NAAC, NCVET, NSDC and the Sector Skill Councils relevant to its Programs, and shall provide all such facilities and assistance to such bodies as are required by them to discharge their duties and carry out their functions.

CHAPTER – VII
FUNDS OF THE SKILLS UNIVERSITY

45. (1) The Sponsoring body shall establish an Endowment Fund for the Skills University with such amount as may be determined by the Government in the Letter of Intent, on the recommendation of the Expert Committee: Endowment Fund.

Provided that the minimum amount of the Endowment Fund shall not be less than **rupees five crores**:

Provided also that a Recognised Skills University admitted under section 14 shall be exempt from the obligation to establish a fresh Endowment Fund, subject to satisfying the Government that it has already fulfilled its capital obligations under the Andhra Pradesh Private Universities (Establishment and Regulation) Act, 2016 and the Government may specify such alternative security arrangement as it deems appropriate. Act No.3 of 2016.

(2) The Endowment Fund shall be used as a security deposit to ensure that the Skills University complies with the provisions of this Act and functions as per this Act, the Statutes, the Ordinances, the Regulations and the rules. The Government shall have the power to order forfeiture of a part or the whole of the Endowment Fund in case the Skills University or the Sponsoring body contravenes the provisions of this Act or the Statutes, the Ordinances, the Regulations or the rules. The amount so forfeited shall be utilised for due compliance with the provisions of this Act.

Provided that before issuing an order of forfeiture under this sub-section, the Government shall afford a reasonable opportunity of representation to the Skills University or the Sponsoring body, as the case may be.

(3) The Skills University may, if required, Utilise up to seventy-five per cent of the income from the Endowment Fund for the development of infrastructure of the Skills University, and not for meeting the recurring expenditure of the Skills University. The balance and unutilised income shall be added to the Endowment Fund.

(4) The amount of the Endowment Fund shall be invested in highly secure and liquid instruments, including fixed deposits in nationalised banks, and shall be kept so invested until the dissolution of the Skills University.

(5) The Governing Body shall be responsible and accountable for the safety and correct Utilisation of the Endowment Fund.

(6) The Governing Body shall ensure that the Skills University prepares an audited report on the status and Utilisation of the interest proceeds of the Endowment Fund annually, which shall be submitted to the Government with the Annual Report:

Provided that a Skills University which fails to prepare or maintain such a report shall be liable to inquiry under section 56 of this Act.

General Fund.

46. Every Skills University shall establish a fund to be called the General Fund, to which the following shall be credited, namely, —

(1) fees and other charges received by the Skills University;

(2) amounts received for the procurement and upkeep of the assets of the Skills University;

(3) any income received from consultancy, skill assessments, applied research and other work undertaken in pursuance of its objects;

(4) trusts, bequests, donations, endowments and any other grants;

(5) all other sums received by the Skills University;

(6) funding or grants received from the Central Government or the State Government or their bodies under skill development schemes and any other skill training scheme notified from time to time.

Application of General Fund.

47. The General Fund shall be Utilised for the following purposes, namely, —

(1) for the repayment of debts, including interest charges, incurred by the Skills University for the purposes of this Act, with the prior approval of the Governing Body;

(2) for up keeping, maintaining and upgrading the assets of the Skills University;

(3) for the payment of fees for the audit of the funds created under sections 45 and 46;

(4) for meeting the expenses of any suit or proceedings by or against the Skills University;

(5) for the payment of salaries, allowances, Provident Fund contributions, gratuity and other benefits to officers, employees and members of the teaching, training and assessment staff;

(6) for the payment of travelling and other allowances of the members of the Governing Body, the Board of Management, the Academic Council, the Industry Advisory Board, the Board of Assessment and Evaluation, other authorities and the members of any committee appointed by any of the authorities or the Chancellor or the Vice-Chancellor;

(7) for the payment of fellowships, free-ships, scholarships, assistantships and other awards to students belonging to economically weaker sections or to any student otherwise eligible for such awards;

(8) for the payment of any expenses incurred by the Skills University in carrying out the provisions of this Act or the Statutes, the Ordinances, the Regulations or the rules;

(9) for the payment of the cost of capital, not exceeding the prime lending rate from time to time of the State Bank of India, incurred by the Sponsoring body for setting up the Skills University;

(10) for the payment of charges and expenditure relating to consultancy work, applied research and skill assessment services;

(11) for the payment of any other expenses, including service fees payable to any organisation providing any specific service, including managerial services, to the Skills University on behalf of the Sponsoring body, as approved by the Board of Management; and

(12) for the payment of on-job training stipends, apprenticeship allowances and skill assessment fees payable on behalf of students, as approved by the Board of Management:

Provided that no expenditure shall be incurred by the Skills University in excess of the limits for total recurring expenditure and total non-recurring expenditure for the year, as may be fixed by the Board of Management, without the prior approval of the Board of Management.

CHAPTER - VIII
ACCOUNTS, AUDIT AND ANNUAL REPORT

Accounts, Audit and Annual Report.

48. (A) Annual Accounts and Financial Audit –

(1) The Annual Accounts of the Skills University, including the balance sheet, shall be prepared in a fair and transparent manner and audited annually by a firm of Chartered Accountants appointed by the Skills University.

(2) A copy of the Annual Financial Statements and Audit Report shall be submitted to the Government every financial year.

(3) The Governing Body shall be responsible for accurate and detailed preparation of the Annual Financial Statements, and the timely submission of the same with the Annual Report.

(4) The advice of the Government, if any, arising from the Audit Report shall be placed before the Governing Body, which shall issue such directions as it deems fit and report compliance to the Government.

(B) Annual Report

A. Every Skills University shall prepare, in respect of each

FUNDS OF THE SKILLS UNIVERSITY

comprehensive account of its functioning, which shall be approved by the Governing Body and shall contain, at a minimum, the following —

(1) a report on the academic and skill-training activities, including the Programs offered, their NSQF/NCrF alignment, student enrolment, and the Programs commenced or discontinued during the year;

(2) a statement of compliance with the minimum skill component requirements under section 4 in respect of every Program, including the outcome of the verification under section 4(4);

(3) the employment outcomes component, prepared and certified by the Director of Industry Engagement and Placement under section 22, including, (a) the Program-wise placement rate, that is, the proportion of students who, within one year of completing the Program, secured regular wage employment, an apprenticeship or contractual engagement of not less

than six months, or verifiable self-employment, computed in the manner prescribed, counted by each such category and excluding offers not taken up; (b) the median starting salary and employer-satisfaction rating for each Program; and (c) progress against the employment outcome targets committed in the approved Detailed Project Report;

(4) a report on Recognition of Prior Learning, including the number of candidates assessed and admitted through the RPL pathway, the RPL certifications issued, and the utilisation of the Recognition of Prior Learning sub-quota under section 40;

(5) the entrepreneurship outcomes reported by the Skills Entrepreneurship Cell including the number of student and alumni startups incubated against the target set under section 50;

(6) a statement on admissions, including compliance with the Government Quota and with the reservation policy referred to in section 15;

(7) the institutional and Program-level accreditation status under section 43, including grades awarded and renewals;

(8) the audited report on the status and utilisation of the income of the Endowment Fund required under sub-section (6) of section 45;

(9) a report on the establishment and functioning of skill centres and study centres under the hub-and-spoke model; and

(10) such other particulars as may be prescribed.

B. The Annual Report shall be submitted to the Government every financial year, together with the Annual Financial Statements and

Audit Report referred to in Part (A) and the report on the Endowment Fund referred to in sub-section (6) of section 45.

C. The Skills University shall publish the Annual Report on its official website and on the digital repository maintained under section 52 within such period as may be prescribed, and shall keep it accessible to the public.

(i) a report on the demand assessments undertaken under section 27 for Programs introduced or proposed during the year, and the periodic review thereof;

(ii) the outcomes of the outcome-based review of Programs under Part (E) of this section, including any Program revised, restructured or discontinued during the year;

(iii) a report on alumni skill-progression and the skill-updation, re-skilling and up-skilling opportunities offered to alumni under section 22; and

(iv) the register of establishments at which students underwent on-job, apprenticeship or hands-on training under section 22, and any establishment removed during the year as non-existent, fictitious or false.

(C) Annual Institutional Audit

(1) In addition to the financial audit under Part (A), every Skills University shall, in respect of each academic year, cause an Annual Institutional Audit to be conducted by an independent external agency empanelled or approved by the Government, or possessing such qualifications as may be prescribed, being an agency independent of the firm of Chartered Accountants appointed under Part (A).

(2) The Annual Institutional Audit shall assess and report on

(a) compliance with the minimum skill component requirements under section 4 in each Program, as referred to in clause (c) of sub-section (4) of section 4, through review of time-tabling, assessment records and on-job training logs;

(b) the adequacy and functional condition of skill-training infrastructure, workshops, laboratories and equipment at the hub campus and at every skill centre and study centre;

(c) the integrity and quality of assessments, competency evaluations and on-job training, and the maintenance of assessment and RPL records;

(d) the verification of the employment outcomes reported in the Annual Report; and

(e) compliance with the conditions of the Letter of Intent and with the provisions of this Act, the Statutes, the Ordinances, the Regulations and the rules.

(3) The report of the Annual Institutional Audit shall be placed before the Governing Body and submitted to the Government together with the Annual Report, and a summary thereof shall be published on the digital repository maintained under section 52.

(4) Where the Annual Institutional Audit discloses non-compliance, the Government may direct the Skills University to rectify the deficiency within a specified period, and persistent or material non-compliance shall be a ground for action under section 56.

(D) Gender and Safety Audit

(1) Every Skills University established or recognised under this Act shall, in respect of each academic year, undergo a Gender and Safety Audit conducted by an independent external agency empanelled by the Government for this purpose.

(2) The Gender and Safety Audit shall be conducted in accordance with such conditions and guidelines as may be prescribed by the Government from time to time.

(E) Outcome-based Review of Programs

(1) Every Program of study shall be subject to an outcome-based review, at least once every two years, assessing its skill and employment outcomes — including completion rates, competency-attainment, placement and self-employment rates, employer satisfaction and, where relevant, earnings progression — against the objectives for which it was approved.

(2) A Program that fails to achieve its intended outcomes shall be revised or restructured by the Academic Council on the recommendation of the Industry Advisory Board; and a Program that persistently fails to achieve its intended outcomes after such revision or restructuring may be discontinued.

(3) The outcome of every review under this Part shall be recorded in the Annual Report under Part (B).

CHAPTER - IX
PRIORITY SECTORS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Andhra Pradesh Priority Sector Integration.

49. (1) Every Private Skills University established under this Act shall develop and offer specialised Programs in at least one priority sector of the State of Andhra Pradesh, selected having regard to the dominant and emerging industries,

the industrial clusters, and the employment potential of the area in which the University is established, so as to ensure alignment with the skill requirements and workforce demand of that area.

(2) For the purposes of this section, the Government shall, by rules made in coordination with the Industries and Commerce Department, prescribe—

(a) the areas of the State and the priority sectors mapped to each such area, having regard to the dominant and emerging industries, industrial clusters and employment potential of that area; and

(b) the manner in which a Skills University shall select its priority sector or sectors in conformity with such area-wise mapping.

(3) Until the rules under sub-section (2) are made, or in respect of any area or sector not covered by such rules, the Skills University shall select its priority sector or sectors in accordance with sub-section (1), and the Expert Committee shall determine the suitability of the selection.

(4) Where a Skills University establishes spoke skill centres or study centres under the hub-and-spoke model in an area other than that of its hub campus, the Programs delivered at each such spoke shall, as far as practicable, conform to the area-wise mapping prescribed under sub-section (2) for the area in which that spoke is located.

(5) Every Skills University offering a Program in a priority sector under this section shall, within one year of commencing the Program, execute a Memorandum of Understanding with the relevant Sector Skill Council, the relevant State Government department, or the relevant industrial cluster, park or area authority, and shall submit a copy thereof to the Government.

(6) The Expert Committee shall, while examining a proposal under section 9, give special weight to the conformity of the proposed Programs with the area-wise mapping prescribed under sub-section (2), or, in its absence, with sub-section (1).

Skills Entrepreneurship Cell.

50. (1) Every Private Skills University shall, within one year of the date of operationalization, establish a Skills Entrepreneurship Cell as a dedicated unit of the Skills University.

(2) The Skills Entrepreneurship Cell shall,—

(a) connect graduates, students and alumni with Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise clusters, startup incubators, Common Facility Centres and State Government entrepreneurship schemes relevant to the skill sectors of the Skills University;

(b) offer entrepreneurship education modules, including financial literacy, business plan development, market linkages and regulatory compliance for small enterprises, as a component of all diploma, undergraduate and postgraduate Programs;

(c) promote and support student, graduate and alumni startups, including through idea incubation, pre-incubation and incubation support, mentorship, prototyping, access to seed funding and acceleration, and the protection of intellectual property, in alignment with the Andhra Pradesh Innovation and Startup Policy as in force from time to time;

(d) collaborate with the Ratan Tata Innovation Hub, and with such other innovation, incubation or startup body as the Government may, by notification, specify from time to time, including by establishing the Skills University or its skill centres

as a spoke or partner institution within such innovation and startup ecosystem for the incubation, funding and acceleration of startups; and

(e) maintain a database of alumni entrepreneurs, their enterprises, employment generated and turnover, for the purpose of tracking entrepreneurship outcomes and including the same in the Annual Report under section 48.

(3) The Skills Entrepreneurship Cell shall be headed by a full-time co-ordinator with relevant experience in entrepreneurship, business incubation or MSME development, appointed by the Vice-Chancellor.

(4) The Skills University shall actively promote and facilitate the creation of startups by its students, graduates, alumni and faculty, and shall set a target, to be specified in its Statutes and reported in the Annual Report under section 48, for the number of student and alumni startups to be incubated in each academic year, and shall report actual achievement against that target.

CHAPTER – X
STUDENT WELFARE

Compliance with student welfare regulations. Central Act 14 of 2013.

51. Every Private Skills University shall comply with all applicable Central and State laws relating to student welfare, including the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013, and all applicable regulations and guidelines of the University Grants Commission.

CHAPTER - XI
PUBLIC TRANSPARENCY AND DISCLOSURE

Digital Repository and public disclosure.

52. (1) Every Private Skills University shall establish and maintain a publicly accessible digital repository on its official website containing all information relevant to prospective students,

enrolled students, parents and employers — including its Statutes, Ordinances and Regulations, program details with NSQF levels and accreditation status, fee structure, faculty profile, admission process and Annual Report — and shall update such repository within fifteen days of any change in such information.

(2) No Private Skills University shall publish any advertisement, prospectus or representation, in any medium, that is false, misleading or deceptive with respect to its Programs, accreditation status, placement outcomes, fee structure or any other material particulars. Contravention of this sub-section shall be a ground for action under section 56, without prejudice to any action under the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 or any other applicable law. Central Act 35 of 2019.

CHAPTER – XII
WINDING UP OF SKILLS UNIVERSITY

53. (1) If the Sponsoring body proposes to dissolve itself according to the provisions of law governing its constitution, it shall give at least six months prior notice to the Government. Management of Skills University on dissolution of Sponsoring body.

(2) The Government shall, on receipt of such notice, make such arrangements as may be necessary for the administration of the Skills University from the date of dissolution of the Sponsoring body until the completion of Programs by the last batch of students admitted.

(3) The Government may continue the functioning of the Skills University by appointing an administrator in place of the Sponsoring body, who shall be entrusted with the prescribed powers and functions.

(4) The Government, on dissolution of the Sponsoring body and after due consideration, may dissolve the Skills University in such manner as may be prescribed.

Dissolution of the Skills University.

54. (1) The Government, after due consideration, may dissolve the Skills University in such manner as may be prescribed:

Provided that the dissolution of the Skills University shall have effect only after the last batches of students of the regular courses have completed their courses and they have been awarded degrees, diplomas or awards, as the case may be:

Provided further that the Government may continue the functioning of the Skills University by appointing an administrator in place of the Sponsoring body entrusted with powers and functions as per sub-section (3) of section 53.

(2) On dissolution of the University all the assets and liabilities of the University shall vest in the sponsoring body in the manner as may be prescribed:

Provided that any specific concessions assigned by the Government to the University shall be resumed to the Government.

De-notification of Skills University consequent on its declaration as an Institution Deemed to be University.

55. (1) Where a Skills University established under this Act, or a constituent unit of such University, proposes to apply, or has applied, to be declared as an Institution Deemed to be University, or as an off-campus centre of an Institution Deemed to be University, under the University Grants Commission (Institutions Deemed to be Universities) Regulations, as amended from time to time, the Sponsoring body shall intimate the Government of such proposal.

(2) The Government may, on the application of the Sponsoring body and after such verification as it considers necessary, issue a no objection certificate to the effect that the Government shall de-notify the Skills University, or the constituent unit, as the case may be, in the event

of its being found eligible to be granted the status of an Institution Deemed to be University or of an off-campus centre of an Institution Deemed to be University.

(3) Where the Skills University, or a constituent unit thereof, is granted the status of an Institution Deemed to be University, or of an off-campus centre of an Institution Deemed to be University, by the Central Government under section 3 of the University Grants Commission Act, 1956 (Central Act 3 of 1956), the Government shall, by notification, de-notify the Skills University to that extent; and the entry relating to the Skills University in the Schedule shall be omitted or amended accordingly by duly amending the Schedule of this Act.

Central Act 3 of 1956.

(4) The Skills University, or the constituent unit, as the case may be, shall be permitted to admit students or to function as an Institution Deemed to be University, or as an off-campus centre thereof, only after the de-notification by notification under sub-section (3) takes effect; and until such de-notification, it shall continue to be governed by the provisions of this Act.

(5) The de-notification of a Skills University under this section shall not affect the interests of the students admitted to the Skills University before the date on which such de-notification takes effect. Notwithstanding such de-notification, the University shall be deemed to continue in existence as a Private University for the limited purpose of enabling every such student to complete the programme of study to which he or she has been admitted and to be conferred the degree, diploma or other qualification by the University, until the last batch of such students has completed the programme (such period being referred to as the "transition period"). During the transition period,

the credits and academic records of such students shall be duly maintained and transferred.

(6) The students admitted on or after the date on which the de-notification takes effect shall receive their degrees, diplomas or other qualifications from the Institution Deemed to be University.

(7) The Government may, for the purpose of giving effect to this section, impose such conditions and follow such procedure as may be prescribed.

Special powers of State Government in certain circumstances.

56. (1) Where the Government is of the opinion that the Skills University has contravened any of the provisions of this Act, the Statutes, the Ordinances, the Regulations or the rules made thereunder, or has violated any direction issued by it under this Act, or where a situation of financial mismanagement or maladministration has arisen in the Skills University, it shall issue a notice requiring the Skills University to show cause within forty-five days as to why an administrator should not be appointed.

(2) On receipt of the reply of the Skills University on the notice issued under sub-section (1), if the Government is satisfied that there is a prima facie case of contravention of any of the provisions of this Act, the Statutes, the Ordinances, the Regulations or the rules made thereunder, or of violation of any direction issued under this Act, or that a situation of financial mismanagement or maladministration has arisen in the Skills University, it shall make an order of such inquiry as it may consider necessary.

(3) The Government shall, for the purposes of any such inquiry under sub-section (2), appoint an inquiry officer or officers to inquire into the allegations and make a report thereon.

(4) The inquiry officer or officers appointed under sub-section (3) shall have the same powers as are vested in a Civil Court under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908 (Central Act 5 of 1908), in respect of the following matters, namely,—

(a) summoning and enforcing the attendance of any person and examining the person on oath;

(b) requiring the discovery and production of documents or any other material as may be relevant in evidence; and

(c) requisitioning any public record from any court or office.

(5) On receipt of the inquiry report, if the Government is satisfied that the Skills University has contravened any of the provisions of this Act, or that financial mismanagement or maladministration has arisen which threatens the academic standards or student welfare of the Skills University, it may appoint an administrator.

(6) The administrator appointed under sub-section (5) shall exercise all the powers and perform all the duties of the Governing Body and the Board of Management under this Act, and shall administer the affairs of the Skills University until the last batch of students of the regular Programs has completed the Program and has been awarded degrees, diplomas, certificates or awards, as the case may be.

(7) After the degrees, diplomas, certificates or awards have been awarded to the last batch of students, or after transfer of all students to other institutions, if applicable, the administrator shall make a report to that effect to the Government.

(8) On receipt of the report under sub-section (7), the Government, after due consideration, may decide to

continue the functioning of the Skills University by vesting the powers of the Governing Body in another body having similar objects, or may decide to dissolve the Skills University in such manner as may be prescribed.

CHAPTER – XIII
MISCELLANEOUS

Power of Government to make rules.

57. (1) The Government may, by notification, make rules to carry out all or any of the purposes of this Act.

(2) In particular and without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing power, such rules may provide for all or any of the following matters, namely, —

(a) the manner of making a proposal and Detailed Project Report to establish a Skills University and the processing fee payable under section 7;

(b) other particulars of the Detailed Project Report under section 8;

(c) terms and conditions under sub-section (4) of section 11;

(d) other matters relating to Statutes and Ordinances under sections 33,34 and 35;

(e) matters relating to dissolution of the Sponsoring body under section 53;

(f) matters relating to dissolution of the Skills University under sections 54 and 56;

(g) any other matter required to be prescribed under this Act.

(3) Every rule made under this Act shall, immediately after it is made, be laid before each House of the State Legislature, if it is in session, and if it is not in session, in the session immediately following, for a total period of fourteen days

which may be comprised in one session or in two successive sessions. If, before the expiration of the session in which it is so laid or the session immediately following, the Legislature of the State agrees in making any modification in the rule or in the annulment of the rule, the rule shall, from the date on which the modification or annulment is notified, have effect only in such modified form or shall stand annulled, as the case may be, so however that any such modification or annulment shall be without prejudice to the validity of anything previously done under that rule.

Power to remove difficulties.

58. (1) If any difficulty arises in giving effect to the provisions of this Act, the Government may, by order published in the Andhra Pradesh Gazette, make such provisions not inconsistent with the provisions of this Act as appear to it to be necessary or expedient for removing the difficulty:

Provided that no such order shall be made under this section after the expiry of three years from the date of commencement of this Act.

(2) Every order made under this section shall, as soon as may be after it is made, be laid before the State Legislature.

GOTTAPU PRATIBHA DEVI,
Secretary to Government,
Legal and Legislative Affairs & Justice,
Law Department.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS

The Government of Andhra Pradesh considers it necessary to establish and regulate self-financed Private Skills Universities in the State; to promote skill-based education through industry participation, recognition of prior learning, flexible learning pathways, online and blended learning, and better employment opportunities; to recognize eligible existing Private Universities as Private Skills Universities; and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

The National Education Policy, 2020, the National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF), the National Credit Framework (NCrF), and various initiatives of the Government of India encourage the integration of skill education with higher education to improve employability, entrepreneurship and lifelong learning; and whereas Andhra Pradesh is attracting investments in several key sectors, creating a growing demand for a skilled workforce to meet the changing needs of industry.

And the existing legal framework governing Private Universities in the State mainly focuses on conventional higher education and does not provide a comprehensive legal framework for establishing Universities dedicated to skill education, vocational training, competency-based learning and industry-oriented education. Therefore, it has become necessary to enact a separate law for the establishment and regulation of Private Skills Universities to strengthen the State's skill development ecosystem and promote industry-aligned higher education.

The proposed legislation seeks to incorporate established best practices in skill and vocational education, in alignment with the National Education Policy, 2020, the National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF) and the National Credit Framework (N.Cr.F), with a view to promoting industry-relevant, competency-based, flexible and outcome-oriented skill education.

Further, the proposed legislation provides for the establishment, incorporation and regulation of self-financed Private Skills Universities in the State. It provides for competency-based education with mandatory skill components, industry-integrated curriculum, apprenticeship and on-job training, Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), Academic Bank of Credits, multiple entry and exit pathways, online and blended learning, digital technologies and outcome-based education in accordance with national standards and regulatory frameworks.

The proposed legislation further promotes work-integrated learning through apprenticeship-embedded and earn-while-you-learn programmes, under which workplace training may be undertaken concurrently with academic study, and provides for a demand-driven curriculum based on assessment of market and industry requirements before introduction of new courses, so as to ensure alignment with the actual and emerging needs of employers.

Further the proposed legislation provides for outcome-based accountability through periodic review of programmes based on measurable educational and employment outcomes, with provision for revision or discontinuation of persistently under-performing programmes, a clear definition of "placement" to ensure that placement figures are genuine and verifiable, and tracking of alumni outcomes to assess the long-term effectiveness of skill education.

The proposed legislation further provides for ensuring the integrity of on-the-job training through maintenance and periodic verification of a register of establishments where such training is conducted, including mandatory removal of non-existent or fictitious establishments, so as to protect students from fraudulent or notional training and placement claims.

The proposed Act provides for effective governance and quality assurance through Governing Bodies, Industry Advisory Boards, Academic Councils and Independent Assessment Mechanisms. It also

promotes close collaboration with industry for curriculum development, practical training, internships, skill assessment, research, innovation, entrepreneurship and placement of students. The Act further promotes transparency, accreditation, public disclosure, financial accountability and monitoring of employment outcomes to ensure quality skill education and protect the interests of students.

The proposed legislation enables eligible existing Private Universities established under the Andhra Pradesh Private Universities (Establishment and Regulation) Act, 2016, to be recognised as Private Skills Universities, thereby expanding quality skill-based higher education while ensuring compliance with the standards prescribed under the proposed Act.

The proposed legislation is expected to strengthen the State's skill development ecosystem, promote industry-academia collaboration, improve employability and entrepreneurship, encourage innovation and applied research, facilitate lifelong learning through Recognition of Prior Learning, flexible learning pathways and micro-credentials aligned with the National Skills Qualifications Framework and the National Credit Framework, and provide opportunities for continuing re-skilling and up-skilling.

Accordingly, the Government has decided to make a legislation "the Andhra Pradesh Private Skills Universities (Establishment and Regulation) Act, 2026", to provide a comprehensive legal framework for the establishment and regulation of Private Skills Universities in the State.

GOTTAPU PRATIBHA DEVI,
Secretary to Government,
Legal and Legislative Affairs & Justice,
Law Department.

Printed by the Commissioner of Printing at A.P. Legislative Assembly Printing Press, Amaravati.