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भारतीय विधिज्ञ परिषद्
BAR COUNCIL OF INDIA

(Statutory Body Constituted under the Advocates Act, 1961)
21, Rouse Avenue Institutional Area, Near Bal Bhawan, New Delhi - 110002

BCI:D:1694: 2025 (LE/Std. 5.7.2025) 18.07.2025

1.	**The Registrar,** **Vidya University,** **Vidya Knowledge Park, Baghpat Road, Meerut-250002.** **registrar@vidya.edu.in**
2.	**The Dean,** **Vidya University,** **Vidya Knowledge Park, Baghpat Road, Meerut-250002.** **registrar@vidya.edu.in**

Sub: Approval Letter for recognition to Vidya University, Meerut as per Section 7(1) (i) of the Advocates Act, 1961 for the purpose of conferring the Degrees in Law along with fresh approval of affiliation to its Department of Law, Vidya University, Meerut for imparting 3-year LLB course with intake of two sections of 60 students in section and five year B.B.A.LLB(H) integrated degree course with intake of one section of 60 students for the academic year 2025-26 and 2026-27 subject to compliance of Rules of Legal Education, 2008 and all circulars/directives/guidelines/notifications issued from time to time by the Bar Council of India with respect to maintenance of standards of Legal Education in addition to the specific clauses mentioned herein under in this letter.

Detailed letter with conditions will follow.

Sir/Ma'am,

This is to bring to your kind knowledge that the Standing Committee of the Legal Education Committee of the Bar Council of India in its meeting dated 05.07.2025 has considered the inspection report of **Vidya University, Meerut** submitted by the Inspection Team.

The CLE has has applied for recognition to Vidya University as per Section 7(1) (i) of the Advocates Act, 1961 for the purpose of conferring the Degrees in Law.

The CLE has also applied for fresh approval of affiliation to its Department of Law for imparting 3-year LLB course and five year B.B.A. LL.B (H) integrated degree course with intake of two sections of 60 students in each course.

After consideration, recognition has been granted to **Vidya University, Meerut as per Section 7(1) (i) of the Advocates Act, 1961 for the purpose of conferring the Degrees in Law along with fresh approval of affiliation to its Department of Law, Vidya University, Meerut for imparting 3-year LLB course with intake of two sections of 60 students in each section and five year B.B.A.LLB(H) integrated degree course with intake of one section of 60 students for the academic year 2025-26 and 2026-27 subject to such conditions as imposed by the Inspection Team of Bar Council of India which have been approved with additions/modifications, where necessary by the Standing Committee in order to ensure compliance with Rules of Legal Education, 2008 and as per other stipulations/enumerations in the Rules of Legal Education & other guidelines/circulars issued in this regard from time to time by Bar Council of India.**

Deepak Kumar
Assistant Secretary

The CLE must comply with the conditions, which shall be duly intimated to them, and furnish a duly notarized compliance affidavit with adequate photo/documentary proof in this regard. Please note that the entire affidavit, including all pages of the affidavit, all annexures, documents and photos attached with the affidavit must be duly notarized too.

It is made clear that the detailed letter with conditions will follow.

For the time being kindly ensure to see that your CLE is in consonance with the below mentioned position.

- ***You may kindly bear in mind that the Bar Council of India is the sole and supreme sanctioning authority for seats and it does not allow any supernumerary quota of seats for law degree courses, over and above the sanctioned strength of seats and whatever reservation of seats is to done by the University under whichever quota as a rule has to be done within sanctioned strength of seats. The only supernumerary quota, as of now permitted by the Bar Council of India, is 10 percent seats in EWS quota over and above the sanctioned strength of seats allotted/approved by BCI and that too, is subject to adequate infrastructure and qualified faculty to accommodate the supernumerary seats. The same is required to be adhered to. If there is any default on such part and the same is discovered subsequently, action shall ensue.***

- ***The CLE is advised to declare the same voluntarily for consideration of the same in a manner which will not be detrimental to interests of the students admitted, if any, over and above the sanctioned seats as a one time opportunity. The same shall not be construed to be applied prospectively.***

- ***It is pertinent to point that no University in India can offer a 4 yearLL.B or integrated LL.B, followed by a 1 year LL.M in tie up with a foreign University under the present BCI regulations. Such a Law degree, nor the post qualification after it, is recognised by Bar Council of India. The BCI only recognizes the pattern of a 12th class +3 (graduation in any stream+3 (year Law degree) and/or a 12 + 5 year integrated law degree.***

- ***While exchange programs of teachers and students have been undertaken by Centers of Legal Education including, Law Universities in India, Dual Degrees or joint Degrees with Foreign Universities have not been permitted or recognized by BCI. It is essential to emphasize that any foreign collaboration involving legal education institutions, must strictly adhere to the regulatory framework established by the Bar Council of India. It cannot compromise on the quality of legal education mandated by the BCI It's worth noting that unless a degree is recognized by the BCI in India, it holds no validity within the country. Therefore, a degree obtained from an Indian University, being recognized solely in a foreign jurisdiction, without recognition in India, would be of no consequence to the university or its students.***

- ***Recognition and approval of law degrees are exclusively within the purview of the Bar Council of India. Consequently, if, upon thorough evaluation it is determined Law degrees are being issued by Universities against the rules and norms of Bar Council of India, recognition of such degree/s shall be***

withdrawn and such degree holders shall not be entitled to be enrolled in any State Bar Council in India.

- ***BCI and it's Legal Education Committee have time and again reiterated, stated and clarified, that it does not recognise LL.B and/or LL.M or any Law degree course through online mode, correspondence, open and/or distance learning mode.***

- ***It has further come to the attention of the Bar Council of India and its Legal Education Committee that certain institutions are offering Master of Arts (MA) programs with a Law subject, in open and distance learning mode, or online mode which attempts to mimic the structure and content of a Master of Laws (LL.M.) program. Upon careful examination, it has been observed that such an endeavor is beyond the scope and intent of a Master of Arts Degree and is deemed impermissible. It is hereby clarified that such MA degrees will not be recognized by the BCI as equivalent to a Master of Laws (LL.M.) degree and for the purpose of teaching of LL.B. Course.***

- ***It is crucial to clarify that the designation "MA" signifies "Master of Arts," whereas "LL.M." represents "Legum Magister," a Latin term denoting a "Master of Laws" Degree. The distinction between these two titles is significant, as an LL.M. degree is specifically tailored for graduates of law programs, whereas an MA degree encompasses a broader range of academic disciplines and is separate and distinguished from Master of Laws Degree. It is a deliberate attempt to bypass LL.M. in such a manner.***

- ***The BCI emphasizes that an MA degree with a Law subject does not confer the same benefits or privileges as an LL.M. degree. Individuals holding an MA degree in Law will not be entitled to the benefits typically associated with possessing an LL.M. degree, nor will they be eligible to teach in LL.B degree programs. Pursuit of legal education at the postgraduate level, in the form of an LL.M. degree, is restricted to individuals who have completed their undergraduate legal studies while it is clarified that any specialized branch of law offered at the master's level, without the LL.B./BA.LLB qualification as the requisite entry-level credential, shall not be recognised as equivalent to an LL.M. degree.***

- ***It is imperative for all stakeholders in the legal education sector to understand that the distinction between an MA degree and an LL.M. degree is significant. An MA degree with a Law subject does not fulfill the requirements for recognition by the BCI as a qualification equivalent to an LL.M. degree.***

- ***This serves to clarify the position of the BCI on the recognition of MA degrees with a Law subject and to prevent any misconceptions regarding their equivalence to LL.M. degrees.***

- ***The BCI and its Legal Education Committee has further also observed that running an MA (with Law subject) by any such mode is an attempt to mimic an LL.M, which is also not permitted by such mode.***

Deepak Kumar
Assistant Secretary

- ***It has also been brought to the notice of Bar Council of India that some entities claiming to be Centre of Legal Education are offering courses through distance education/correspondence mode, under the nomenclature of the degree of LL.M. or LL.M. professional, where anyone even without LL.B. can get an LL.M. degree, and, the same persons are also getting registered for Ph.D., appearing for UGC NET etc. thereby diluting quality of legal education.***

- ***This is an illegal practice and Bar Council of India shall not hesitate in taking stringent action against such centres.***

RELEVANT SUPREME COURT AND HIGH DIRECTIONS INCLUDED IN ORDERS/JUDGEMENTS AND OTHER RELEVANT ASPECTS ARE AS FOLLOWS

Recently theBombay High Court, in its judgment dated 2nd April 2025 in the case of Smt. Nathibai Damodar Thackersey Women's University Law School vs. State of Maharashtra & Ors., W.P. No. 1501 of 2019, reiterated and upheld the statutory powers and duties of the Bar Council of India under the Advocates Act, 1961, particularly in the context of regulating legal education. The petition had challenged several provisions of the Rules of Legal Education, 2008 framed by the BCI, and questioned the authority of the BCI to inspect law colleges affiliated to universities.

The Court emphasized that the BCI has a paramount statutory duty to maintain standards of legal education in the country. It observed, *"From perusal of Sections 7(1)(h), (i), (l) and (m) of the Act of 1961, it is evident that the maintenance of standards of legal education is the paramount statutory duty of the BCI"*. Further, it reaffirmed that the power of inspection is not restricted to universities alone but extends to all Centres of Legal Education, including law colleges affiliated to universities. The Court stated, *"The petitioner law school cannot claim any immunity from inspection by the Bar Council"*.

The judgment clarified the legal interpretation of Section 49(1)(d) of the Advocates Act, 1961, which grants BCI rule-making power to maintain standards in legal education. The Court held that the rule-making power under this section is both general and specific, noting that, *"Section 49(1) confers particular powers without prejudice to generality of general power already conferred and therefore, particular powers are only illustrative of general power and do not in any way restrict the general power"*. This interpretation enabled the Court to uphold the validity of the contested Rules under the 2008 framework, specifically Rules 2(iv)(a), 2(xii)(B), 14, 16(2),

Deepak Kumar
Assistant Secretary

18(2), 19(ii), 19(iii), and 26(a), declaring them intra vires the parent statute.

Importantly, the Court also addressed the relationship between the Advocates Act, 1961, the Maharashtra Public Universities Act, 2016, and the University Grants Commission Act, 1956. It held that where there is a conflict, the Advocates Act prevails, stating, "Even assuming that there is an inconsistency between the provisions of the Act of 2016 and the Act of 1961, the provisions of the Act of 1961 will prevail as they have been enacted by the Parliament"

The Court dismissed the petition and upheld the BCI's authority to regulate and inspect law colleges, reinforcing that the statutory framework established by the Advocates Act, 1961 and the Rules of Legal Education, 2008 are legally sound and necessary for maintaining the quality of legal education in India. It stated unequivocally, *"The challenge made in the petition to the Rules of 2008 being ultra vires the parent Act is without any basis".*

The Kerala High Court in the case of Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust Vs. State of Kerala, W.P. (Civil) No. 34303/2023 vide its order dated 12th December, 2023 ***held that if a College intends to start a course during the academic year 2023-24, the application before the Bar Council has to be submitted before 31.12.2022In effect, if an affiliation is granted by the University for a particular academic year, beyond such timeline, the same cannot be produced before the Bar Council of India for starting the course in the very same academic year going by the time schedules that are kept by the Bar Council of India.***

The Hon'ble court directed the University to extend the affiliation dated 20.07.2023 issued for the academic year 2023-24 to be valid for the academic year 2024-25 and comply with the time schedules that are kept by the Bar Council of India.

Therefore, in view of the above, universities are directed to adhere to the above timeline or to any timeline notified by the Bar Council of India before each academic year for providing affiliation to any Centre of Legal Education.

The Division Bench of the Hon'ble High Court of Mumbai at Nagpur, in the Writ PetitionNumber 1114/2018 vide Judgment dated 08.04.2020 in re RashtrasantTukdoji Maharaj Nagpur University and others vs. State of Maharashtra and others (AIR 2020 Bom 135), ***upheld the constitutional validity of Rule 2(xxiv)"Regular Approval" means approval for not more than five years and includes permanent approval earlier granted***

to any Centre of Legal Education before these Rules come into force.

The Court observed that approval of educational institutions is procedural, and the approval granted is in the nature of an existing right rather than a vested right. Legal education, the Court noted, is a dynamic process that requires maintaining standards, which cannot be confined to any time frame or remain static.

In Bar Council of India v. Board of Management, Dayanand College of Law, Appeal (Civil) Nos. 5301–5302 of 2001 (decided on 28th November 2006), reported in (2007) 2 SCC 202, the Hon'ble Supreme Court categorically *held that only individuals possessing a degree in law are eligible to serve as the head of a law college, thereby overruling the High Court's decision which had upheld the appointment of a Principal without a law qualification. The Court unequivocally affirmed that the Bar Council of India, as the apex statutory body under the Advocates Act, 1961, is entrusted to maintain standards of the legal profession and of those who seek entry into that profession. The Supreme Court emphasized that this authority cannot be overridden by university statutes or local regulations, reiterating that the BCI's regulatory mandate extends beyond enrolment to encompass the entire educational pipeline leading to entry into the legal profession.*

Supporting this position, the Punjab & Haryana High Court in Shruti Bedi & Ors. v. Panjab University & Ors., CWP 13091 of 2023 (decided on 22.11.2023), explicitly *held that the head of a Centre of Legal Education must be a law teacher with at least fifteen years of teaching experience and a Ph.D. in Law, in strict adherence to Rule 16 of the Bar Council of India Rules of Legal Education, 2008. The High Court further clarified in para 33 that once the Director exercises academic and financial powers, the post cannot be deemed honorary or ceremonial, and thus cannot be occupied by a person without a legal background. Additionally, para 23, the Court invoked Rule 16 of the BCI Rules to underscore that this requirement is not merely academic but statutory, flowing from the Advocates Act, 1961 and enforced through BCI's regulatory framework. The Supreme Court in Dayanand further opined that the BCI's role cannot be considered to be taken away by the Universities Acts, thereby confirming that compliance with BCI norms is mandatory and binding.*

Together, these landmark judgments firmly establish that appointments, leadership roles, and governance structures within legal education must rigorously conform to standards

prescribed by the Bar Council of India, underscoring the indispensable role of BCI in safeguarding the quality, integrity, and constitutional objectives of legal education in India. Any deviation, undermines the statutory mandate and invites legal consequences

The Madhya Pradesh High Court has recently on 07.03.2025 in Vyom Garg Case, **which pertains to enrolment of those candidates who have obtained their degree from CLEs not approved/recognised by Bar Council of India, passed an order deterring malpractices and administrative laxity by Centers of Legal Education, it has held that Institutions found enrolling students without valid BCI approval now face the real threat of criminal prosecution. CLEs are now under clear judicial warning to comply strictly with BCI norms, including timely fee payments and adherence to affiliation and approval of affiliation by BCI procedures. Failure to comply not only results in loss of recognition but also exposes the institutions to legal consequences and reputational damage. This, stresses on disciplined legal education governance, with zero tolerance for institutions that jeopardize students' futures through non-compliance of BCI Rules of Legal Education Rules.**

The Hon'ble Supreme Court in the case of Bar Council of India Vs. Rabi Sahu, Civil Appeal No. 8571/2013 vide its order dated 9th June, 2023 ***has held that in view of the Bar Council of India Rules, Part IV-***

Rules of Legal Education, 2008 prescribed by Bar Council of India, only graduates from recognized/approved Centres of Legal Education (Universities, University Departments, Constituent Units, Colleges etc.) by the Bar Council of India can be enrolled as advocates

As per the order of the **Hon'ble Supreme Court of India dated 29.08.2019 passed in Writ Petition (Civil) No.1510 of 2018, titled as Vinit Garg Vs. University Grants Commission and as per the earlier order of Hon'ble Supreme Court of India dated 03.11.2017 passed in Civil Appeal Nos.17869-17870, arising out of SLP No. 19807-19808/2012 in the case of Odisha**

Lift Irrigation Corp Ltd. Vs Ravi Shankar Patro & Ors., ***the Hon'ble Supreme Court has held that an University has to obtain permission from the concerned regulatory body for initiating/starting, opening and conducting any distance learning course/s.***

Deepak Kumar
Assistant Secretary

As per UGC Regulations 4(A)(iv), (Open and Distance Learning Programmes & Online Programmes) Regulations, 2020, the Higher Educational Institution must have the approval or recommendations of the statutory or regulatory authority, in this case, the Bar Council of India (BCI), for offering law programs in Open and Distance Learning mode or Online mode.

Explanation: Programmes as mentioned at clause (iv) shall be considered only when these are recommended by the respective statutory or regulatory authority or regulatory council to offer in Open and Distance Learning mode or Online mode, as applicable......"

Furthermore, the Distance Education Bureau under UGC explicitly prohibits courses in engineering, law, medicine, dental, pharmacy, nursing, architecture, physiotherapy, applied arts, and other such programs from being offered through online mode without approval from the respective statutory or regulatory bodies.

Some Universities, including some reputed Universities are running such programs in flagrant violation of clear directives and guidelines as stipulated above and without even having made a request or application to BCI in this regard. It is categorically made clear, such programs have no recognition and/or approval from BCI.

NOTE

Public Meeting for Legal Education related Matters will be held from Monday to Thursday every week between 3.00 p.m. to 4.30 p.m. only at BCI office at 21 Rouse Avenue Institutional Area, New Delhi 110002 (2nd floor, Conference room) with Chancellor, Vice Chancellor, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Registrar, Director, Dean, Principal, Academician/Permanent Faculty of Law, Head of Department, /Member of Society/or Trust which has established the CLE, administrative personnel, attached to(permanently working with Center of Legal Education) and/ Society Registration documents and/or with owners whose name should be documented in Trust Deed. Allshould carry CLE photo id cards as well as Aadhar/PAN/Passport for identity along with authority letter from authorised personnel like VC, Registrar, Dean, Principal or owner whose Identity should be

Deepak Kumar
Assistant Secretary

clear from documents like Trust Deed, Society Registration papers, Photo Ids referred to above.

Authority letter has to bear original signature as on Govt. id like PAN Card/Passport, FULL NAME, DESIGNATION, MOBILE NUMBER AND EMAIL ID of person issuing authority letter as well as of person who is being issued authority letter.

No agents/touts or unauthorised personnel shall be entertained at any cost.

All visitors will have to fill the following form with attachments before the meeting.

On behalf of BCI, the meeting will be attended by Principal Secretary Mr. Srimanto Sen and/or Mr.Nalin Raj Chaturvedi, Additional Secretary and/or in absence of one/both of them by Mr. Awanish Kumar Pandey, Additional Secretary.

No other BCI employee is authorised to discuss Legal Education Related Matters.

To ensure the integrity and quality of legal education, it is essential to prevent unauthorized personnel, agents and touts from interfering in academic and administrative matters. Unauthorized interference often leads to misinformation and compromises the standards of legal education. Therefore, ONLY SENIOR AND AUTHORISED PERSONNEL AS MENTIONED ABOVE WILL BE ENTERTAINED.

Your cooperation is required to maintain transparency and uphold the highest standards in legal education. This measure is in the best interest of all stakeholders and aims to promote an environment conducive to the betterment of legal education.

This is for your information, necessary compliance and action.

Yours sincerely,

Nalin Raj Chaturvedi
Additional Secretary

Srimanto Sen
Principal Secretary

Deepak Kumar
Assistant Secretary