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Top Kolkata campuses to pack dual-degree punch

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Kolkata: This will be a degree that packs a punch... or two. Jadavpur University (JU), for the first time, has tied up with the Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science (IACS) for the integrated MSc/PhD Programme in Physical Sciences, which will arm students with degrees carrying the combined weight of the two premier institutes.

The basics of the programme are simple enough: there'll be one selection test, and students who clear this will get to do a two-year MSc in physics from JU and IACS. After completing the MSc, students can choose to opt out, or continue towards a PhD from either JU or IACS, or both.

The programme, which will start from August, has obvious advantages. Foremost, of course, is the dual stamps on degrees; secondly, since it's an integrated course, students won't have to start hunting for PhD seats after completing their MSc programme; thirdly, students will be able to use the infrastructure of both institutes.

Graduate students will be required to take an admission test to earn a berth among the coveted 15 or 20 seats on offer. Both the MSc and PhD degrees will be awarded by JU, in association with IACS.

"IACS does not have the authority to award degrees, and hence it will be jointly done with JU," said JU vice-chancellor Suranjan Das.

JU vice-chancellor Suranjan Das said: "The IACS faculty will take the primary role in teaching and guiding students. The JU faculty will also extend their support in teaching. An MoU has been cleared by JU and will be signed between the two institutes by June."

The degree certificates would be awarded in accordance with JU rules. "Though JU will award the degree, IACS will be a joint programme signatory mentioned in the certificate awarded during the degree," said Soumitra Sengupta, dean (academic), IACS.

Subrata Mukhopadhyay, dean of science at JU, said: "The course will be monitored by a board of studies chaired by the director of IACS. This board will have expert nominees from both JU and IACS."

The tenure of the agreement will be five years. "It may be extended, if desired. The tenure may also be terminated by either institute on a six-month notice in writing," he said.

A general candidate seeking admission should have a minimum first division in both Class X and Class XII and a minimum first class in BSc with mathematics and chemistry/statistics/others as subsidiaries or a first class in physics, mathematics and chemistry/statistics/others for universities that do not offer honours degree at BSc level. Shortlisted applicants will have to appear for a written test. Candidates further shortlisted will be called for interview. "No person shall be eligible for admission to the integrated PhD programme unless the candidate is 20 years at the time of admission. The upper age limit would be 26 years," Mukhopadhyay said.