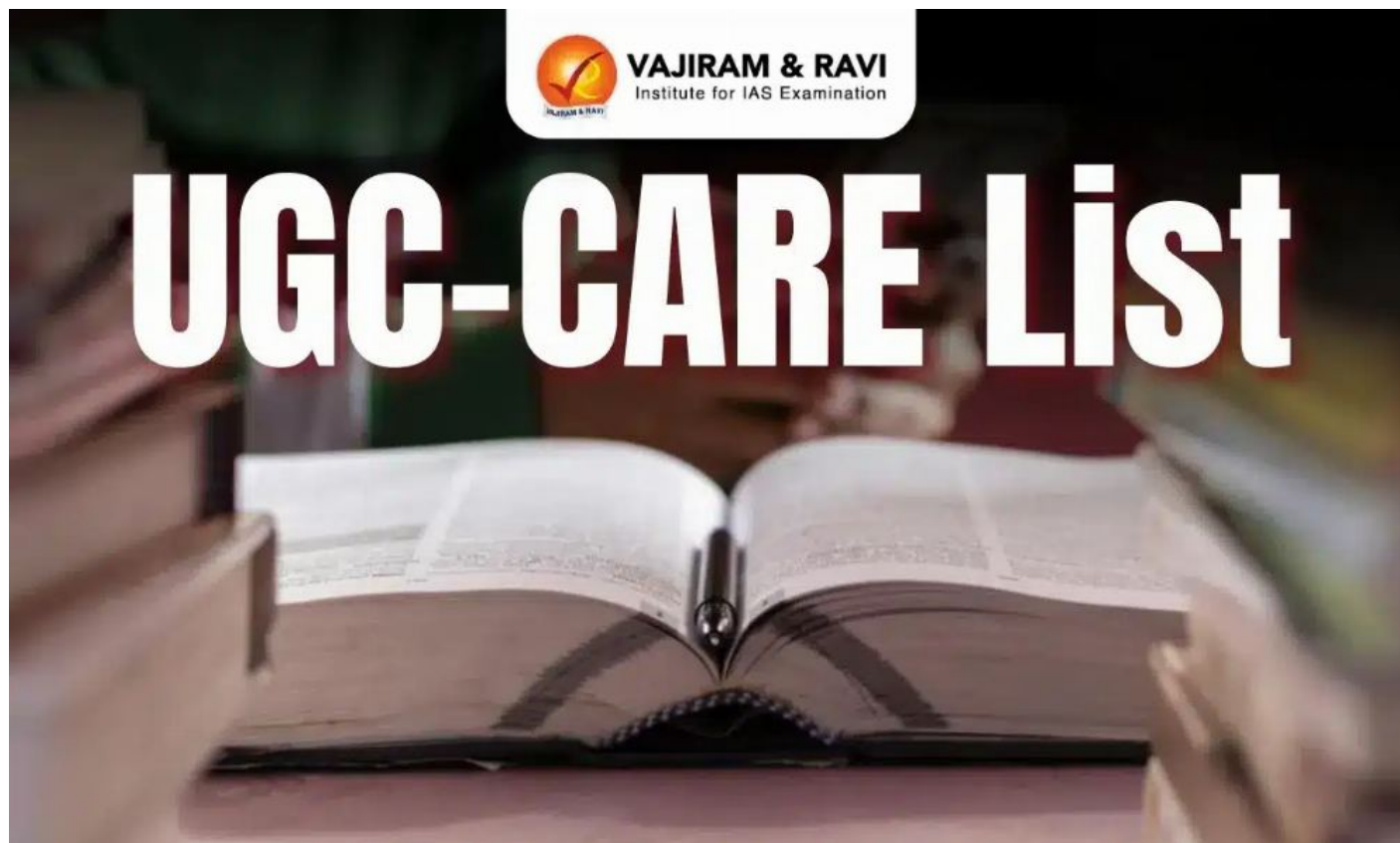


UGC-CARE List Scrapped: New Journal Evaluation System & Academic Impact

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What's in Today's Article?

- UGC-CARE list Latest News
- UGC-CARE
- Reasons for Withdrawing UGC-CARE
- Concerns Over Scrapping the CARE List
- The New Approach to Journal Evaluation
- UGC-CARE List FAQs

UGC-CARE List Latest News

- The University Grants Commission (UGC) has decided to discontinue the UGC-CARE (Consortium for Academic and Research Ethics) list of quality academic journals, first introduced in 2018.
- Instead, it will provide a set of suggestive parameters for selecting journals based on eight criteria.

UGC-CARE

- UGC-CARE was introduced in 2018 to combat the problem of predatory journals, journals that publish research in exchange for publishing fees without checks like peer reviews.

Reason for Setting Up UGC-CARE

- **Significance of Research Publications**

- Publications in journals play a crucial role in institutional rankings, faculty appointments, promotions, and research grants.
- The quality of research publications directly impacts the credibility and funding of higher education institutions.

- **Rise of Predatory Journals**

- Due to the importance of journal publications, substandard and predatory journals proliferated, offering publication for a fee without rigorous peer review.
- This led to concerns about academic integrity and India's global research reputation.

- **UGC's Concern and Response**

- In 2019, the UGC highlighted the negative impact of publishing in dubious journals, warning of long-term academic damage.
- An investigation by a leading media house, in 2018, revealed over 300 publishers operating predatory journals in India, charging fees between \$30 and \$1800 for publication.

- **Establishment of UGC-CARE**

- Following these concerns, UGC introduced the Consortium for Academic and Research Ethics (CARE) in 2018 to replace the previous system of university-suggested journals.
- Under CARE, a dedicated UGC cell assessed journals based on strict quality protocols.

Reasons for Withdrawing UGC-CARE

- **Concerns with the UGC-CARE List**

- The UGC-CARE list was introduced to ensure only reputable journals were considered for faculty selections, promotions, and research funding.
- However, it faced several criticisms, including:
 - **Over-centralisation** in deciding journal quality.
 - **Delays** in adding or removing journals.
 - **Limited inclusivity**, particularly in fields like Tamil studies.
 - **Lack of transparency**, leading to the exclusion of highly respected Indian-language journals.

- **Shift to a Decentralised Approach**

- The UGC argues that decentralisation will:
 - Help combat predatory journals more effectively.
 - Make institutions responsible for evaluating journals.
 - Allow flexibility for institutions to develop their own mechanisms aligned with UGC's suggested parameters.

- Ensure evaluation models can adapt to evolving fields and disciplinary needs.
- **Expert Committee Review (2023)**
 - The UGC formed an expert committee to review the CARE system. The decision to discontinue it in October 2023 was based on concerns about:
 - Over-regulation, as highlighted by NEP 2020, which criticized excessive centralisation.
 - Lack of transparency, with no clear reasoning for journal inclusions or exclusions.
 - Inefficiencies, including delays in adding high-quality journals and sudden removals affecting faculty careers.
- **Concerns from Academics**
 - Experts pointed out that CARE was not exhaustive and created pressure to publish in specific journals.
 - Academics often receive offers to pay for publications, raising concerns about predatory practices.

Concerns Over Scrapping the CARE List

- **Potential Rise of Predatory Journals**
 - Academics fear that eliminating the CARE list **removes a key safeguard** against predatory journals.
 - Without a central oversight mechanism, **low-quality and exploitative journals may thrive**.
- **Lack of Public Consultation**
 - Some experts believe the system was **still evolving** and could have helped curb predatory publishing.
 - An academic described the move as **“retrograde”**, arguing that there should have been **public consultation** before scrapping CARE.

The New Approach to Journal Evaluation

- **Suggestive Parameters for Institutions**
 - The UGC has introduced **non-binding ‘suggestive parameters’** to help institutions assess journals.
 - These parameters include evaluating **the journal’s editorial process, peer review system, and the expertise of its editorial board**.
- **Institutional Responsibility & Accountability**
 - Institutions are now responsible for developing their own mechanisms to evaluate journals.
 - Failure to do so could harm their reputation by endorsing faculty publications in **dubious journals**.
- **Decentralisation & Academic Freedom**
 - The new approach aims to **promote decentralisation, academic freedom, and institutional accountability**.
 - Faculty and researchers can assess journals **based on discipline-specific criteria** rather than relying on a centralised list.

UGC-CARE List FAQs

Q1. What does UGC mean?

Ans. UGC (University Grants Commission) is India’s higher education regulatory body, overseeing universities, academic standards, and research policies.

Q2. What is the meaning of UGC-CARE?

Ans. UGC-CARE (Consortium for Academic and Research Ethics) was a list ensuring quality academic journals to prevent predatory publishing.

Q3. What are the objectives of UGC?

Ans. UGC ensures quality education, regulates universities, funds institutions, and promotes research excellence in higher education.

Q4. What is the full form of NAAC?

Ans. NAAC stands for *National Assessment and Accreditation Council*, which evaluates and accredits higher education institutions in India.

Q5. What is the difference between UGC-approved and UGC-CARE list?

Ans. UGC-approved universities meet regulatory standards, while UGC-CARE listed journals ensured quality academic publishing and research credibility.

Source: TH | IE

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/ugc-care-list-scrapped-new-journal-evaluation-system/>

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