

PHARMACY COUNCIL OF INDIA GUIDELINES FOR INTEGRATING INDIAN KNOWLEDGE SYSTEM IN B. PHARM SYLLABUS (2026) AS PER NEP 2020

1. Preamble

The *National Educational Policy 2020* (NEP 2020) recommends the incorporation of Indian Knowledge System (IKS) into the curriculum at all levels of education:

“The heritage of ancient and eternal IKS and thought has been a guiding light for this Policy. The pursuit of Knowledge (*Jñāna*), wisdom (*Prajñā*), and truth (*Satya*) was always considered in Indian thought and philosophy as the highest human goal. The Indian education system produced great scholars such as Charaka, Susruta, Aryabhata, Varahamihira, Bhaskaracharya, Brahmagupta, Chanakya, Chakrapani Datta, Madhava, Panini, Patanjali, Nagarjuna, Gautama, Pingala, Sankardev, Maitreyi, Gargi and Thiruvalluvar, among numerous others, who made seminal contributions to world knowledge in diverse fields such as mathematics, astronomy, metallurgy, medical science and surgery, civil engineering, architecture, shipbuilding and navigation, yoga, fine arts, chess, and more. Indian culture and philosophy have had a strong influence on the world. These rich legacies to world heritage must be nurtured and preserved for posterity and researched, enhanced, and put to new uses through our education system.” (NEP 2020, p.4).

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide a roadmap for systematic study and research of various disciplines of IKS and thus help incorporate IKS into undergraduate curricula in line with the expectation embedded in NEP 2020. The IKS embedded within traditional healthcare practices such as Ayurveda, Siddha, Yoga, and medicinal plant-based therapies have significantly contributed to the foundation of modern pharmaceutical sciences. Many principles and therapeutic approaches originating from these systems have been scientifically validated over time, establishing their legitimacy and relevance in contemporary healthcare. Pharmacy education system is providing and showing the potential of IKS to the world through rigorous scientific and evidence-based approach.

2. Background

IKS encompasses all of the systematized disciplines of Knowledge which were developed to a high degree of sophistication in India from ancient times and all of the traditions and practices that the various communities of India—including the tribal communities—have evolved, refined and preserved over generations.

Ancient Indian scholars such as Charaka, Sushruta, Nagarjuna, Chakrapani Datta and others

made significant contributions to pharmacology, pharmaceuticals, therapeutics, medicinal plant sciences, surgery, toxicology, and public health. These contributions provide important contextual foundations for contemporary pharmaceutical education. Therefore, it is imperative that Pharmacy Council of India (PCI) incorporated IKS related courses in graduate program to implement the NEP 2020 in letter and spirit.

In light of the above the following policy prescriptions, emanating from NEP 2020 must be followed:

- a. Research on IKS including validation, standardization, documentation, digitization, reverse pharmacology, ethnopharmacology, traditional pharmaceuticals, and integrative healthcare approaches should be mandated tasks to be undertaken by all PCI recognized institutions.
- b. IKS relevant to pharmaceutical sciences, healthcare, wellness, and traditional medicinal knowledge which form an essential part of the curricula, should be taken as a priority by the institutions recognized by PCI.

3. Scope

The primary purpose of the guidelines is to help the institutions come up with courses that will introduce the students to aspects of IKS which are related to their fields of study and to promote interest in knowing and exploring more. The implementation of IKS in pharmacy curricula by the recognized institutions should focus on enhancing students' understanding of India's healthcare heritage while promoting critical inquiry, scientific validation, innovation, sustainability, and patient centered healthcare. A 10-year horizon is envisioned for the application of these guidelines, along with a revision and modification after five years to meet the evolving needs.

4. General Guidelines

- In view of the importance accorded in the NEP 2020 to rooting for integrating IKS in the curricula and pedagogy in the Indian context, every student enrolled in a UG programme are encouraged to take credit courses in IKS amounting to at least 30 per cent of the total mandated credits which are contributed from 24 IKS related courses as per the B. Pharm syllabus (2026). These credits are accommodated through Core Courses, Ability Enhancement Courses (AEC), Skill Enhancement Courses (SEC), and Value Added Courses, (VAC) as included in the curriculum structure. The interested students may be further encouraged to take MOOC courses in the fields of IKS.
- Special care should be taken to ensure that the course materials for these IKS courses are

based on the authentic sources—such as source texts and authentic commentaries on such texts, historical accounts, inscriptions and other records, material and other evidence, and also rigorous sociological records of current practices of different communities.

- The continuity of the IKS from the ancient times up to the relatively recent period must be emphasized in the delivery of the course content.
- Efforts must be made to highlight the characteristic features such as the objectives, methodology and core concepts of the IKS, which distinguish them from other Knowledge Traditions of the world.
- Wherever possible, contemporary applications of the IKS may be indicated.

5. Guidelines for IKS Courses in UG Programmes

- All the students who are enrolled in the four-year UG programmes should be encouraged to take adequate number of courses related to IKS so that the total credits of the courses related to IKS amount to at least five per cent of the total mandated credits.
- The students may be encouraged to take the elective courses related IKS in appropriate semester of the UG programme.
- All the students shall be encouraged to take up Foundational Course in IKS through MOOC platforms, which is designed to present a panorama of the ancient knowledge system that would help gain wisdom rather than knowledge alone. The foundational IKS course should be broad-based and cover introductory material on all wisdom related aspects. It should enable students to explore the most fundamental ideas that have shaped IKS over many millennia.
- The students may be allowed to opt for internship/apprenticeship in any of the disciplines/topics that are part of IKS.
- The students may be encouraged to choose a suitable topic related to IKS for their research project work in the 7/8th semesters of the UG programme.

6. Suggestions for effective implementation

- All institutions should make due effort to promote and nurture IKS related courses in UG programmes.

- All students should be exposed to the common underlying philosophical foundation of the various disciplines that are part of IKS.
- At least one to two lectures on the fundamental vocabulary of IKS should be conducted to familiarize faculty with the common terms used in IKS.
- A strong emphasis should be placed on providing exposure to the primary texts of IKS, which is required for acquiring a deeper understanding.
- Ready access to a wide range of primary and secondary resources should be provided to enable teachers to understand the continuous and vibrant tradition of IKS. These materials may be developed by a team of course experts and made available to teachers. Extreme care must be taken to ensure the authenticity and scholarly nature of the content that may be developed for the orientation/induction and refresher courses.
- A list of IKS content available in regional languages should be compiled and made available for the benefit of teachers.
- Sharing the life and work of contemporary scholars and innovators who have made seminal contributions in their fields using IKS would motivate teachers to explore various dimensions of IKS.
- To connect with the oral tradition of IKS, one practical session on the ancient technique of memorization, with a few examples from primary texts, would be helpful.
- A few immersive sessions on Yoga, Meditation including Self-talk, Self-inquiry, Ayurveda, Classical Music, Indian Craft traditions, etc., should be arranged to give students some grounding in the experiential aspects of IKS.

