

An Open Letter to the Bar Council of India

To,
Sh. Manan Kumar Mishra
Chairperson
Bar Council of India

Monday, June 07, 2021

Sub - A counter representation by the final year students of Faculty of Law, University of Delhi requesting you to allow the University to carry on with the Open Book Examination for the pending intermediate exams instead of adopting the Assignment Based Evaluation.

Sir,

With utmost respect, this is to bring to your kind notice that the University of Delhi is conducting an Open Book Examination (OBE) for the students of the Faculty of Law (hereinafter referred to as “Faculty”) for all the subjects comprising from this academic session (2020-21) to all the previous academic sessions (intermediate exams, the backlogs & improvement exams) in the months of June & July 2021.

In pursuant to that, several students from the Faculty, claiming to be representing over 300 students, wrote to the Bar Council of India (BCI), requesting for the cancellation of pending intermediate exams and to direct the University of Delhi to adopt an Assignment Based Evaluation (ABE) instead.

<https://www.livelaw.in/news-updates/faculty-of-law-delhi-university-bar-council-of-india-assignment-based-evaluation-abe-175228>)

We are also the final year students from the Faculty, representing and voicing the other side of the story, hence writing this letter to oppose this motion and requesting you to allow the

University of Delhi to continue with the ongoing OBE based evaluation only for the pending intermediate exams which was objected by some.

Here are a number of reasons to substantiate our stand:

1. The impact of the pandemic

While we totally and wholeheartedly agree with the students who have voiced their concern over the plight of the pandemic and how adversely it has impacted everyone physically, mentally and emotionally, however, our point of contention begins from the manner the respite was sought by the students. At a time when they want the OBE to be cancelled so as to relieve us from studying our course subjects, we believe that conducting the OBE will actually help us in diverting our attention from all the negativity around and we will get a much needed break.

2. Reading books / Studying

If someone says that reading a book affects his mental health adversely, he is simply lying. Psychologists recommend their depressed patients to read books because it actually helps the patient positively, it digresses his attention from all the grief and the negativity around and introduces a new dimension of thinking.

3. Some students are pursuing LLB for the degree, not for the knowledge that is imparted.

Students' mental health is affected when they may have to study and appear for the exams. However, very few of them are those whose concerns are genuine, most of the students are those who are always looking for a way to somehow circumvent the exams and get a degree in hand. They are here not to study the law but to get the degree only. Their seriousness and passion is questionable when it comes to pursuing the LLB.

4. Academic insecurity and unworthiness of the degree worsens the students' mental state in reality.

There are plenty of students amongst us, even those who have actually lost their loved ones recently, want the exams to be conducted, because to us, studying or appearing for an exam does not affect our mental health adversely. However, on the contrary our academic insecurity and the unworthiness of the degree does because of the delay in exams and the declaration of results. We are pursuing LLB because we actually want to study law and incorporate it in practice someday. We are passionate about it. Our entire career is dependent on it. We find respite in diverting our attention from the loss of our loved ones to get on with our studies and do well here so as to atleast secure a good future career wise. We understand how difficult it is right now to get a decent job and know it very well that unemployment is one of the biggest sources of adverse mental health & depression and as the quality of education degrades, the rate of unemployment increases, so searching for a reason why not to study will do more harm than good for us.

5. Exemption to those students who are severally affected by the pandemic.

Unfortunately, there are also some students who have lost their loved ones in the second wave of the pandemic. An exemption in the form of a second chance can be given to them if they show their unwillingness towards the exams right now.

In the light of this, we very humbly request you to kindly allow the University of Delhi to carry on with the Open Book Examination instead of adopting the Assignment Based Evaluation. For this, we shall be grateful to you.

Yours sincerely

LLB Final Year Students' Collective

Faculty of Law, University of Delhi