

Policy for Persons with Disabilities

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I. Preamble

The Government of India, being a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), emphasizes inclusive education and indicates that as “a process of systemic reform embodying changes and modifications in content, teaching methods, approaches, structures and strategies in education to overcome barriers with a vision serving to provide all students of the relevant age range with an equitable and participatory learning experience and environment that best corresponds to their requirements and preferences” (United Nations, 2016). The **Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPWD) Act, 2016 in chapter III** mandates educational institutions to facilitate inclusive and barrier-free learning environments. Similarly, the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020** stresses the importance of education in achieving equitable opportunities for socially and economically disadvantaged groups, including persons with disabilities. Accordingly, the higher education institutions are required to adopt measures to make the admission process and curriculum inclusive as well as develop technology tools for increased participation and better learning outcomes. Ensuring accessibility and creation of disable-friendly environment is required. In this regard, the University Grants Commission (2022) has issued guidelines for Accessibility in Higher Education Institutions. In line with these frameworks, DGMC is committed to providing an accessible environment that fosters inclusive learning and ensures that students with disabilities can participate fully in academic and co-curricular activities.

II. Definitions (Key Terms)

1. **Student with benchmark disability** – A person with **at least 40% disability**, certified by an authorized medical authority, as per the RPWD Act, 2016. The 21 recognized disabilities include:
 - Blindness, Low vision
 - Leprosy-cured persons
 - Hearing impairment (deaf and hard of hearing)
 - Locomotor disability, Dwarfism
 - Intellectual disability, Mental illness
 - Autism Spectrum Disorder, Cerebral Palsy, Muscular Dystrophy
 - Specific learning disabilities, Multiple sclerosis
 - Speech and language disability



- Chronic neurological conditions
 - Thalassemia, Hemophilia, Sickle Cell Disease
 - Multiple disabilities, including deaf blindness
 - Acid attack victims, Parkinson's disease
2. **Student with special needs** – A student who does not meet the benchmark disability criteria but has specific learning requirements (e.g., ADHD, mild hearing impairment).
 3. **Reasonable accommodations** – Modifications in teaching methods, curriculum delivery, and assessments to ensure meaningful participation without compromising academic rigor.

III. Scope

This policy applies to all students of DGMC with **benchmark disabilities** and **special needs**, ensuring they receive the necessary accommodations and support to participate fully in the academic and co-curricular activities of the institution.

IV. Need for the Policy

DGMC aims to create an **inclusive and accessible learning environment** aligned with the vision of promoting equity and opportunity. As a media-focused institution committed to empowering students, DGMC strives to provide accessible education to all students, including those with disabilities, in accordance with government policies and regulations.

V. Objectives of the Policy

The objective of this policy is to:

- Promote **inclusive education** through reasonable accommodations and barrier-free infrastructure.
- Ensure compliance with government guidelines on accessibility.
- Foster an **inclusive culture** by sensitizing faculty, staff, and students towards disabilities.
- Provide students with the **necessary academic and emotional support** for their overall development.

VI. Policy Guidelines

1. Accessible Infrastructure



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- Ensure a **barrier-free campus** aligned with the **Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan** guidelines.
 - Maintain elevators, ramps, accessible restrooms, and assistive signage for ease of access.
2. **Admissions and Reservations**
- Implement the **Maharashtra state government's reservation policy** for students with benchmark disabilities.
 - Provide **course and examination concessions** as per the Directorate of Higher Education guidelines.
3. **Equal Opportunities Cell**
- Establish an **Equal Opportunities Cell** to oversee accessibility initiatives and support students with disabilities.
 - Conduct **sensitization workshops** for faculty and staff to foster acceptance and understanding of disabilities.
 - Ensure **curriculum accessibility** by providing necessary materials and support services.
4. **Universal Design for Learning (UDL)**
- Adopt **UDL principles** by offering multiple ways to present course material and engage students.
 - Use accessible formats for assignments and course content to support diverse learning needs.
5. **Accessible Library Resources**
- Provide **accessible book formats** (audio books, e-texts, large print).
 - Enable **book bank reservations** and allow buddy lending services for students with disabilities.
 - Offer **extended lending periods** and **reserved seating** in the library.
6. **Equipment and Assistive Devices**
- Ensure the timely **procurement and maintenance** of assistive devices required by students (e.g., screen readers, Braille devices, talking calculators).
7. **Counselling and Support Services**



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- Provide **counselling services** to address the emotional and psychological needs of students with disabilities.
- Offer peer mentoring programs for additional academic support.

8. Examination Concessions

- Provide **scribes, readers, or lab assistants** for students with disabilities who need support in examinations.
- Offer **choice in examination mode**, including large-font question papers, Braille, or computer-based tests.
- Allow **extra time** (20 minutes per hour) for students requiring scribe assistance.
- Permit **assistive devices** (e.g., talking calculators, Braille slates) during exams.
- Ensure that examination centers are **accessible and equipped with appropriate facilities**.

9. Accessible Online Platforms and ERP

- Develop the **institution's website** and ERP system in compliance with international accessibility standards.
- Ensure that **online examinations, study materials, and e-resources** are in accessible formats.

10. Training and Faculty Development

- Conduct **workshops and training programs** to help faculty deliver content effectively to students with disabilities.
- Encourage the development of **inclusive pedagogy** and innovative teaching strategies.

VII. Monitoring and Implementation

The **Equal Opportunities Cell** will oversee the implementation of this policy and address concerns related to accessibility and inclusion. A **grievance redressal mechanism** will be in place to handle issues faced by students with disabilities.

VIII. Conclusion

DGMC is committed to creating an **inclusive, accessible, and supportive educational environment** that empowers students with disabilities to achieve their full potential. Through this policy, DGMC ensures compliance with national and international guidelines, promoting equal access and participation for all learners.

