

NORMS AND STANDARDS FOR DISTANCE MODE PROGRAMMES IN SPECIAL EDUCATION FOR UNIVERSITIES / INSTITUTIONS / COLLEGES

1. Preamble:

As the annual turnover of professional manpower trained through the regular institutions hardly could meet the demand of trained manpower in the area of special education and rehabilitation, The Council to achieve its vision in rendering services to all the people with disabilities in India and providing them age and disability appropriate continuum of rehabilitation services, opted for the other mode of curriculum transaction i.e. Distance Mode. As a result, Need based and innovative Special Education Programmes through Distance Mode were initiated by the Council in 2001 in collaboration with MPBOU, Bhopal. The Council later on initiated more such programmes in collaboration 9 other universities.

The “**Distance Education Cell**” for monitoring the Distance Education programmes was established by the Rehabilitation Council of India in the year 2001. The responsibilities of this “**Cell**” expanded and subsequently due to increase in number of programmes an “**OUTREACH DIVISION**” was established in April 2004. This division is responsible for promoting, maintaining, monitoring, and coordinating the special education programs (s) offered through Open and Distance Learning system across the country. In order to safeguard the interest of the students with special needs, and to ensure the quality of special education programmes, the norms & guidelines-2010 has been framed for regulating & monitoring the Open Learning Institutions.

2. Institutions that need Approval:

The types of institutions that offer or intend to offer special education programs through distance mode and need approval from the Rehabilitation Council of India are as follows:

- 2.1 National / State Open Universities
- 2.2 DEIs (Distance Education Institutions) in conventional universities established by an Act of Parliament or State Legislature/Deemed to be universities declared by the Central Government under Section 3 of the University Grants Commission Act, 1956 and Institutions of National Importance declared under an Act of Parliament

3. The Undertakings to be given by the ODL Institutions seeking approval from the RCI:

The ODL institutions shall give and comply with the following undertakings:

- That the provisions, the standing orders, and directions of the Outreach Division established by Rehabilitation Council of India, shall be observed.
- That the Open University intends to start or which has already started special education -Distance Education Institutions (DEIs) should have a provision in its Act / MoU for running Special Education-Distance Education programme(s): Provided that the universities/institutions which have already started DEIs in absence of such provision in their Act, shall amend their Act to that extent.
- That the Open University shall not establish its Study Centres outside its jurisdiction as specified in the Open University Act / MoU. In case of Deemed to be Universities the offering of distance education programmes will be confined to the state in which the main campus of the University is

located. Except for programmes that are culturally and linguistically relevant even outside their state. Explicit approval of DEC should be obtained for offering such programmes.

- That the Open University shall have appropriate rules to monitor the academic standards and quality of its special education programmes-Distance Education.
- That the Open University shall appoint adequate and duly qualified faculty as per norms laid down by the Council, from time to time.
- That the stipulations regarding qualifications and experience for the recruitment of core /guest faculty for Disability & Non-Disability area and supporting staff shall be as per the norms laid down by the Council from time to time.
- That there shall be suitable and adequate physical facilities such as a building, library, computer facility and laboratories required for imparting instruction through the Special Education-Distance Education mode and for conducting relevant research.
- That the number of students admitted for the programme(s) of study under the Special Education-Distance Education programme shall not exceed the limits prescribed by the Council, from time to time.
- That the directions issued by the RCI will have to be strictly followed in terms of RCI prescribed curriculum for different programmes from time to time.
- That the Open University shall not permanently withdraw / discontinue the course(s) of study centre already offered, except as per the procedure laid down by the Rehabilitation Council of India.
- That the Open University shall give an undertaking that it will prepare/review/revise the self-instructional material in the form of print, audio and video or in any other form as per the guidelines of RCI and launch the programme after seeking prior approval of RCI.
- That the Open University shall not offer any special education program through the distance mode, which are not included in the list of RCI approved programs.
- The term of MoU for offering special education program through distance education programmes will normally be for a period of five years unless specified otherwise by the Council.

4. Minimum Requirements for Establishment of DEIs:

a. Programmes to be offered

The Directorate of open and distance education should offer programmes as per the objectives of the MOU signed between RCI & institution/university and the National and Regional requirements of Human Resource in the field of special education. The DEIs will offer those programmes of study for which RCI has given the approval or take prior approval before the launch of any program in the field of special education-distance education.

b. Evaluation System

The University should clearly spell out the evaluation mechanism and procedure duly approved by the concerned authorities of the universities and make available staff qualified for the purpose.

c. Delivery system

All learning materials including print, audio-video (as per the needs of the students), counseling, multimedia and innovative methods should be adopted as an integral part of the delivery of programme.

d. Infrastructural Facilities

The University shall earmark sufficient building space for housing administrative and academic activities/staff, library and material storage and dispatch etc. in order to provide efficient student support services as per the guidelines of the RCI.

e. Library and Resource Centre

The University should have a separate library and Resource Centre facilities for the use of the learners, faculty members and counselors etc. It should also function as a resource centre for various types of information.

Headquarter Library: There shall be a well-equipped library with adequate number of textbooks and reference books of school and elementary teacher education. Educational Technology Library, ICT Library, Psychological Equipment, CDs Encyclopedias, Journals of Elementary Teacher Education and Distance Education. In addition, Self-instructional material in sufficient quantity shall be available in English/Hindi/Regional Language.

Study Centre Library: There shall be a library equipped with text and reference books on special education and general teacher education of respective disability area, educational encyclopedia, year- books, electronic publications, CD ROMs and journals on teacher education and Special Education, distance education etc. Attempt should be made to procure the books listed in the curriculum of the Programme prescribed by RCI.

f. Audio-Visual Production Facility

The University may ensure the availability of facilities of Audio-video Production and multimedia facilities of their own or by outsourcing.

g. ICT Facilities

All the student support services should be computerized to facilitate the effective delivery of programmes and information. The University shall provide office automation tools and communication technology as per the norms laid down by the Council from time to time.

h. Management of the Directorate

The University shall constitute an 'Advisory Committee' to manage the academic and administrative matters of the Directorate. The Advisory Committee shall report to the academic council and Executive Council of the University.

The University shall maintain a separate book of accounts for DEIs. The major part of the income shall be used for the academic enrichment, maintenance and strengthening of infrastructural facilities of the DEI & special education program (s).

i. Training of Counselors and other Personnel

The University should organize training/ workshops for coordinators /academic counselors of the study centres and others in the field of special education. The Directorate / University should establish well-equipped Study Centres in consultation with RCI. These centers should preferably be established in colleges/academic institutions/RCI recognized institutes having adequate infrastructure/faculty within the jurisdiction of the University and not beyond it.

j. Provision of infrastructural Facilities

At Headquarter Level:

Adequate number of cubical rooms for faculty members, an office room with photocopiers, a large room for computer operators for maintaining database of students, another room for production/processing of learning materials, a store for the storing and dispatch of learning materials and equipped with an audio-video studio for recording of lessons and production of CDs and a large Conference Room for conducting meetings/teleconferencing.

AT Study Center Level:

The institution selected for a study centre for contact programme for implementing the M.Ed.-SEDE, B.Ed.-SEDE, PGPD-SEDE, PGPC-SEDE or any special education courses should be able to provide necessary infrastructural facilities such as the barrier free rooms/ ramps / accessible toilet / Cabin for trainee/ faculty members, psycho Educational laboratory, language laboratory, work Experience laboratory, computer Room, internet facilities, conference room with audio visual aids. Besides, the aids and appliances necessary for training programme in the respective area of disability should also be available.

5. Procedure to be followed by the University seeking recognition from RCI:

The application should be submitted in the prescribed Performa by

5.1 The Registrar of the University.

5.2 The application should be accompanied with the requisite documents and the prescribed fee as per Programme in the form of Demand Draft, drawn in favour of 'Rehabilitation Council of India', payable at New Delhi.

6. Procedure to be followed by the institute for seeking recognition from RCI for becoming Study Centre:

The application should be submitted in the prescribed Performa by

- Director/Secretary of the Governing Body in case of colleges and other institutions.
- Secretary of Society/Trust or any other person authorised by the Society/Trust.
- The application should be accompanied with the requisite documents and the prescribed fee as per programme in the form of Demand Draft, drawn in favour of 'Rehabilitation Council of India', payable at New Delhi

7. The RCI shall scrutinize all such applications received within the:

- Prescribed time limit.
- The RCI shall cause an assessment by a Committee constituted by it for this purpose.
- The RCI may grant permission to such University (s), which fulfills the prescribed requirement taking into account the faculty, financial position, and infrastructure of the University.

8. Procedure to be followed by University for seeking renewal of MoU from RCI:

- The University may approach to the RCI for continuation/renewal of MOU, which was initially signed, ordinarily six month prior to the date of expiry of earlier MOU.

- The RCI may constitute an Expert Committee to review and assess the present status of infrastructural facilities, and the quality of the existing academic special education programmes in the University.
- The Expert committee constituted by RCI shall visit the University to assess the facilities available with the University for the courses of study as per the norms and guidelines of the RCI and the committee shall submit its report to the RCI.
- The RCI after considering the report of the committee may permit the University to continue with the special education programme under the Open and Distance Learning system.

9. Assessment and Monitoring of the DEI by the RCI:

- University /DEI shall furnish from time to time, such reports, returns and other information as may be required by the RCI to enable it to assess the academic standards of special education programmes being offered, and the administrative and financial management.
- The Member Secretary/Chairperson, RCI shall cause every University to be assessed at least once in five years, unless specified otherwise, by an Expert Committee appointed by the Council in this regard.
- The Committee, after visiting the DEI, shall submit its report to the Member Secretary/Chairperson, RCI for consideration.
- The Member Secretary/Chairperson, RCI shall communicate the decision of the Council to the University /DEI.

10. Inspection of Study Centre by the University /RCI:

- Every Study Centre shall produce /provide such documents, reports, return and other particulars as the Visiting Experts deputed by RCI or University the may require for enabling them to judge the academic standards and efficiency of administration of the Study Centre during inspection.
- The Vice-Chancellor of the University and Member Secretary ,RCI shall cause every Study Centre to be inspected, at least once in every two years, by an team of visiting experts appointed by the RCI and University for the purpose.
- Each Study Centre shall apply to the RCI in prescribed form for the continuation of the Study Centre with the fees as prescribed by the Council, from time to time.
- The team of visiting experts shall visit the Study Centre and verify the infrastructure and other related academic matters as per the Councils norms and submit their report to the Member Secretary, RCI.
- The Member Secretary shall communicate the decision of the Council to the Study Centre.

11. Closing of Study Centre by University / RCI:

- If a Study Centre fails to comply with conditions as contained in the Certificate of Approval of RCI or in the MOU signed between Study Centre & University. The University /RCI may issue a notice to the Coordinator of the Study Centre to show cause as to why the privileges conferred on it should not be withdrawn.
- The Coordinator of the Study Centre should file his/her written statement in reply to the notice within a period of 30 days.

- If the University /RCI withdraw permission of running its programme in Study Centre then the closure of Study Centre shall be as per the procedure and time frame that may be laid down by RCI.

12. Duration of the Programmes

The duration of the programme shall be according to the maximum and minimum duration given in Table below. The commencement and completion of the programme shall be so regulated that two long spells of vacation (summer / winter / staggered) are available to the learners for guided / supervised instruction and face to face contact sessions. Sand-witching the programme between two summer vacations will be an ideal proposition.

S.No.	Name of the Programme	Minimum (Years)	Maximum(Years)*
1.	M.Ed. SEDE	Two	Four
2.	B.Ed. SEDE	Two	Four
3.	PGPD. SEDE	One	Two
4.	PGPC. SEDE	Six	one

* However, It may vary from university to university.

13. Fee Structure

The fee shall be charged as prescribed by the University & RCI from time to time.

14. Eligibility for Admission

- The eligibility criteria for admission in any special education programmes shall be as per the norms of the Council from time to time for each programme.
- The reservation for SC/ST/OBC and other categories shall be as per the rules of the Central Government / State Government, whichever is applicable.

15. Regular Faculty at the Head Quarter (University)

Appointment of full-time faculty at University head quarter for M.Ed.-SEDE & B.Ed.-SEDE for a unit of 500 at B.Ed. level & 250 at M.Ed. level according to Table-A. The Number of full time faculty required at University Headquarter as shown above will increase proportionately if the number of seats is increased.

Table-A

	One Disability			Two Disabilities			Three Disabilities		
	Prof	Reader	Lect	Prof	Reader	Lect	Prof	Reader	Lect
B.Ed.	-	1	3	-	1	4	-	1	5
B.Ed. + M.Ed.	1	1	3	1	2	5	2	2	6

NOTE-

1. Professors and Readers as indicated above must be from the field of Special Education in the concerned disability specialization.
2. Lecturers for Common papers and Disability Specialization papers are to be appointed proportionately in case of more courses than indicated in above table.
3. The Specific disability area mentioned above refers to Visual Impairment, Hearing Impairment, Mental Retardation and Learning Disability. The specific disability areas are not interchangeable as a measure of maintenance of standard in specific education. For example, a person who has specialized in B.Ed. Special Education in visual Disability cannot get admission in M.Ed. Mental Retardation, etc. The above condition applies to the Lecturers also who are recruited in these programmes.
4. The number of full-time faculty at head quarter will be increased in the same proportion if the University willing to conduct programmes in more than one disability area.

16. Coordinator at the study Centre for M.Ed.SEDE & B.Ed.SEDE Programme

The qualifications and experience for the recruitment of Coordinator shall be as per the norms laid down by the Rehabilitation Council of India from time to time.

S.No.	Name of the Programme	Incharge	Equivalent to
1.	M.Ed. SEDE	Coordinator	Professor or Associate Professor
2.	B.Ed. SEDE	Coordinator	Associate Professor / Assistant Professor
3.	B.Ed.SEDE + PGPD. SEDE	Coordinator	-----do-----
4.	B.Ed.SEDE + PGPD.SEDE +PGPC. SEDE	Coordinator	-----do-----

Note:-

1. It is obligatory on the part of institute/ college offering B.Ed. / M.Ed. in Special Education to enter into an MOU with a College of Education offering B.Ed./ M.Ed. in General Education for teaching common papers or alternatively appoint guest faculties.

2. Any institute having more than one programme requires additional full-time faculty in the same proportion as per the norms of the Council. The expertise of coordinator must be in the same area of disability.
3. The qualification and experience for coordinator, Assistant coordinator will be same as Professor, Associate Professor, and Assistant Professor, depend upon the level of programme. (As per the norms of the Council).
4. The Specific disability area mentioned above refers to Visual Impairment, Hearing Impairment, Mental Retardation and Learning Disability. The specific disability areas are not interchangeable as a measure of maintenance of standard in specific education. For example, a person who has specialized in B.Ed. Special Education in visual Disability cannot get admission in M.Ed. Mental Retardation, etc.
5. It is mandatory that an expert from the area of special education should be appointed as Head / Coordinator of this programme by the applicant Universities / National Institutes / Colleges.

17. Part-time faculty at Study Centre

1. Part time Academic counselors
2. Resource persons to be engaged as per need of the programme which may preferably be in the ratio of 1:40

Specialized Theory Courses :

The Study Centre should have two full time lecturers in special education as per RCI norms. For meeting specific training needs the study Centre should be able to engage qualified professional staff from the locality during the contact sessions.

1. Common/ Pedagogy Course :

Post graduation in Education/ Ph.D. in Education and /or Psychology along with at least 3 years of teaching experience.

2. General Content-based methodology Theory Course
:Group I: English, Hindi & Regional language
Group II: Science, Mathematics & Social studies

Post Graduate Degree/ Ph.D. in education in the concerned subject along with B.Ed. or M.Ed.

3. Practical course
(Non Disability area)

Norms as above should be followed

Teaching practice course :
(Non Disability area)

Norms as above should be followed

4. Practical course & Teaching practice course :
(Disability area)

Norms as per 1& 2 should be followed

18. Eligibility and Conditions for a Study Centre

‘**Study Centre**’ means a centre established and maintained or approved by the University in consultation with the Council or directly by the Council for the purpose of advising, counseling or for rendering any other assistance required by the students used in the context of special education - distance education program(s). The University shall make adequate provisions for Study Centers approved by the Council within its jurisdiction having adequate student support facilities, including Academic Staff, Coordinator, and Counselors/Tutors etc.

18.1 Eligibility criteria for Study centre to conduct M.Ed.SEDE Programme

- a. A University’s Department offering B.Ed. (Special Education) and M.Ed. (Special Education)
OR
- b. National Institutes of MOSJE/ Health Ministry, having adequate infrastructure and faculties as per RCI Norms and having affiliation with a University to offer B.Ed (Special Education) and M.Ed (Special Education).
OR
- c. Any University’s Department of Education offering B.Ed. and M.Ed. General Education (subject to having collaboration with institutions conducting B.Ed. (Special Education) programme recognized by RCI).
OR
- d. Any institution offering B.Ed (Special Education) and M.Ed (Special Education) regular programmes recognized by RCI to be considered as study centre provided they have qualified faculty for common/ pedagogy papers or have collaboration with University.

Note: -

1. It is mandatory that an expert from the area of Special Education should be appointed as Head / Coordinator of this Programme by the applicant University/National Institute/College.
2. Each of the above mentioned institution should have experience of successfully completing three batches of B.Ed. (Special Education)/ Diploma in Special Education/ B.Ed. (General) in face to face mode.

18.2 Eligibility criteria for Study centre to conduct B.Ed.SEDE Programme

Any institution offering B.Ed. (Special Education) regular programmes recognized by RCI and nominates one faculty as co-ordinator for B.Ed.-SEDE programme in respective disability.

OR

Any institution offering RCI recognized Diploma in Special Education through regular mode and two full-time faculties having M.Ed. Special Education programme in respective disability area & nominate one of them as co-ordinator of B.Ed.-SEDE.

OR

Any institution offering B.Ed. (General) regular programmes and two full-time faculty having M.Ed. Special Education in respective disability and must have collaboration of special School. Nomination of one faculty as Coordinator working full time.

Note: Each of the above mentioned institution should have experience of successfully completing three batches of B.Ed. (Special Education) / Diploma in Special Education / B.Ed. (General) in face to face mode.

18.3 Eligibility criteria for Study centre to conduct PGPD-SEDE

Any Study centre offering B.Ed. Special Education through distance mode recognized by RCI in respective disability.

18.4 Eligibility criteria for Study centre to conduct PGPC-SEDE

Any Study centre offering B.Ed. Special Education through distance mode recognized by RCI in respective disability.

19. The number of students allotted to Study Centre

The number of students admitted for the programme(s) at study centre for each disability under the Special Education-Distance Education programme shall not exceed the limits prescribed by the Rehabilitation Council of India, from time to time.

S.No.	Name of the Programme	Number of Students per batch
1.	M.Ed. SEDE	20
2.	B.Ed. SEDE	40
3.	PGPD. SEDE	40
4.	PGPC. SEDE	40

20. Qualification and experience of the faculty:

Professor:

- a) Should have completed at least 5 years of experience as Reader in special Education in the relevant disability area.
- b) Eminent scholar with published work of high quality actually engaged in research at doctoral level.

Or

An outstanding scholar with established reputation who has made significant contribution to knowledge in special education.

Desirable additional qualification:

Publication pertaining to special education in reputed journals and research Experience.

Associate Professor:

- a) Masters Degree in any subject area with not less than 50% of marks.

- b) M.Ed. Degree in the specific disability area with not less than 55% of marks or an equivalent degree from a foreign university recognized by RCI.
- c) Ph.D. in Education with research on Special Education (In the case of existing Lecturers/ reader's, a time duration of 5 years will be given for the completion of Ph.D.)
- d) Should have completed at least 5 years of experience as lecturer in specific disability area.
- e) Should have completed at least one general orientation course and a refresher course in special education recognized by RCI.

Desirable additional qualifications:

Publication pertaining to special Education in reputed journals and research experience.

Assistant Professor:

- a) Masters Degree in any subject area with not less than 50% of marks.
- b) M.Ed. Degree in the specific disability area with not less than 55% of marks or an equivalent grade of B in 7 point scale or an equivalent degree from a foreign university recognized by RCI.

Desirable additional qualification:

- a) Ph.D. / M. Phil. in Education with research emphasis on special education.
- b) Experience for a period of at least 3 years as teacher or researcher in the area of specific disability or 3 years of teaching experience at the diploma level.

Note:-

1. National Eligibility Test (NET-UGC) is exempted for appointment of faculty in the field of Special Education & Rehabilitation till the Council develops its own eligibility criteria related mechanism.
2. It is mandatory that the faculty appointed for Special Education & Rehabilitation at State/National Open University & Study Centre(s) is registered with the Council.
3. The salary of the faculty appointed at State/National Open University & Study Centre(s) should be as per the UGC norms.
4. Every study centre should appoint a “**Coordinator**” separately for each special education distance mode programme having appropriate qualification as mentioned above at Sl. No (16). The coordinator should be a full time senior faculty for the programme and responsible for smooth implementation of the programme.
5. Institution conducting diploma level programme with primary level special schools should make necessary collaborative arrangements during teaching practice of B.-Ed. level programme at Secondary level classes in General / Special schools system.
