

NORMS AND REGULATIONS FOR OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAMME IN SPECIAL EDUCATION FOR UNIVERSITIES / INSTITUTIONS / COLLEGES

1. Preamble

The annual turnover of professional manpower trained through the regular institutions is unable to meet the demand of trained manpower in the area of special education and rehabilitation. The Rehabilitation Council of India opted for the Open and Distance Learning (ODL) mode of curriculum transaction 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. 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 launched more such programmes in collaboration with 11 other universities through signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with them.

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-2015 has been framed for regulating & monitoring the Open Learning Institutions.

2. Eligibility of Universities and Territorial Jurisdiction

2.1 Eligibility of Universities

Universities like the National Open University, State Open Universities and the Directorates/ School of Open & Distance Learning recognized by the UGC established for offering ODL programmes, shall be eligible to offer the teacher education programme in special education.

The deemed to be Universities, Agricultural, Technical or Allied Universities, which specialized in a field other than teacher education and other discipline specific Universities, are not eligible to offer teacher education programme through ODL.

2.2 Territorial Jurisdiction

The University offering teacher education programme in special education through ODL will have territorial jurisdiction as defined in its Act or as decided by the concerned State Government and as per the circulars issued by the UGC from time to time.

3. Duration

The duration of the programme shall be of 05 semesters (2½ years). However, students shall be permitted to complete the programme within a maximum period of five years. The commencement and completion of the programme shall be so regulated that two long spells of the programme (summer/winter/ staggered) are available to learners for guided/supervised instruction and face-to-face contact sessions. The programme can also be sandwiched between two summer vacations for face-to-face contact session.

4. Nomenclature

Nomenclature of B.Ed. Special Education courses should be as per UGC Notification of 2008 and 2014 and the new nomenclature will be B.Ed.Spl.Ed.(Name of Specialization in Disability) such as for Visual Impairment the nomenclature will be B.Ed.Spl.Ed.(VI) i.e. B.Ed.Spl.Ed.(Disability Specialization).

5. Intake, Eligibility, Admission Procedure and Fees

5.1 Intake

The maximum intake for the B.Ed.Spl.Ed. (Disability Specialization) course per academic session shall be 500 students subject to the condition that one Study Centre shall not enrol more than 50 students in a given session. However, the request for additional units shall be examined by the RCI on the basis of the availability of required facilities in respect of study centres and geographical conditions and requirement of the respective State.

5.2 Eligibility

- (a) Candidates with at least fifty percent marks either in the Bachelors Degree and/or in the Masters degree in Sciences/ Social Sciences/ Humanities, Bachelor's in Engineering or Technology with specialization in Science and Mathematics with 55% marks or any other qualification equivalent thereto, are eligible for admission to the programme.
- (b) The reservation and relaxation for SC/ST/OBC/PWD and other categories shall be as per the rules of the Central Government/ State Government, whichever is applicable.
- (c) However, weightage to be given to the candidates fulfilling any one of the following conditions:-
 1. Parent of a child with disability
 2. Person with disability possessing Disability Certificate issued by the Competent Authority
 3. Possession of any RCI approved diploma/degree

5.3 Registration as Professionals

RCI Certification is must to work as a Teacher in the field of Special Education The successful candidates of the B.Ed.Spl.Ed.(Disability Specialization) programme which has been jointly offered by State Open/ Central Universities having MoU with RCI should obtain a "Registered Professional Certificate" from the Rehabilitation Council of India to work as a teacher in the field of special education u/s 13 of (3) of RCI Act-1992. For Registration with the Council students have to apply online to RCI directly.

5.4 Admission Procedure

The University shall develop a suitable procedure for the selection of candidates for admission to B.Ed.Spl.Ed. (Disability Specialization)-ODL.

5.5 Fee Structure

The fee to be decided by the respective University. However, in the light of increased duration of course and higher cost involved in development of Self Learning Material(SLM) It is suggested that Rs. 6000/- per semester may be charged for B.Ed. Spl. Ed. (Disability Specialization)-ODL.

6. Eligibility Criteria for Study Centre to Conduct B.Ed.Spl.Ed.(Disability Specialization)

‘Study Centre’ means a centre established and maintained or approved by the University in consultation with the RCI or directly by the RCI for the purpose of advising, counselling 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 as per the norms.

6.1 Eligibility Criteria for any institution to become Study Centre

i. Any institution offering B.Ed.Spl.Ed.(Disability Specialization) through face-to-face mode approved by RCI and willing to appoint one additional faculty with prescribed qualification as Course Co-ordinator for B.Ed.Spl.Ed. (Disability Specialization)- ODL programme in the respective area of disability.

OR

ii. Institution having experience of successfully completion of three batches of D.Ed.Spl.Ed. Course approved by RCI and willing to appoint one additional faculty with prescribed qualification as Course Co-ordinator for B.Ed.Spl.Ed.(Disability Specialization)- ODL programme in the respective area of disability.

iii. The students allotted to a Study centres shall not exceed One Hundred Fifty (50 for the first year, 50 for the second year and 50 in the final semester of third year). The Study Centre shall provide the learners (allocated to it) access to its library, laboratories and other physical facilities.

- iv. Special teacher educators/ supervisors engaged for various activities of the Study Centre shall be fully qualified as per the RCI norms.
- v. All the functionaries associated with the activities of the Study Centres must be orientated by the Open University in the practice of the ODL system from time to time, but at least once in a year.
- vi. The request for additional unit of intake in any programme shall be examined by the RCI on the basis of availability of required facilities in respect of study centres and related support in the territorial jurisdiction of the institution. Laid down procedures shall be followed for seeking recognition for additional intake.

P.S.: Prior to this notification B.Ed.–SEDE stands for B.Ed.Special Education Distance Education, whereas now it will be termed as B.Ed.Spl.Ed. (Disability Specialization) w.e.f. the batches starting from academic session 2015-16.

7. Curriculum, Programme Implementation and Assessment

7.1 Curriculum

The curriculum of B.Ed.Spl.Ed.(Disability Specialization) offered through face-to-face mode will be the curriculum of this B.Ed. Spl. Ed. (Disability Specialization)course and shall be transformed into distance mode consisting of Block/Units as per credit hours of study. However, the concerned University may make appropriate modifications in the curriculum framework as suggested by their Academic Council or Board of Studies or any other alike bodies. The semester wise prescribed curriculum framework for B.Ed. Spl. Ed. (ODL) is appended at page no. 31.

7.2 Programme Implementation

The B.Ed.Spl.Ed.(Disability Specialization) programme aims to prepare teachers who are able to continuously assess and improve their professional practice as teachers by critically reflecting on it, who can understand that teaching is embedded in the social context of the learners and who can engage with content and subject matter that they will be teaching. The students-teachers will also be familiarised with how children learn so that they can develop and use teaching strategies that are responsive to the learning needs of all the learners in diverse and plural settings of secondary and senior secondary classrooms.

The University/ Institution shall develop curriculum based audio-video resources on its own or adapt such resources from other or Open Education Resources (OERs) and make those AV/ resources available at HQ and Study Centres (and, if possible, directly to the students). Teleconferencing facilities wherever available such as State Resource Centres, State Governments and open Universities may also be utilised.

The programme shall be developed in a blended mode by judiciously mixing the components of resource-based self learning, face-to-face counselling and workshops and technology-enabled interaction and learning.

7.2. (I) Self Learning Materials: The programme shall be conducted with full professional expertise. Self Learning materials both print and non print, must be based on the principles of instructional design and the pedagogy of self learning, and be duly approved by the appropriate mechanisms at the University/ DEC/ DEB and RCI. A blended learning approach (integration of methods and media) should be applied. The course materials shall be modular and credit-based. The study materials shall be made available to the learners in the beginning of the session itself either in one go or in a phased manner as per the requirement of the programme.

7.2. (II) Contact Programme: Apart from the school based activities and practice teaching, in a programme of 05 semesters i.e. 2½ years duration, the personal contact programme shall cover counselling and workshops, seminar, presentations, report writing etc., and must be conducted at the headquarters and/or Study Centres convenient to the learners for a total period of six months. The personal contact programme shall be conducted as per details given below:

7.2.(2).I Academic Counselling: Academic counselling session shall be spread over the entire duration of the programme and be conducted on a regular basis depending on the need and convenience of the learners. The academic and personal problems related to the course shall be discussed in the counselling sessions. The counselling session shall be utilized for providing personalised guidance to the learners regarding content difficulty, fieldworks, teaching practice, projects assignments, dissertation, time management, study skills, etc., A minimum of 140 study hours spread over 05 semesters i.e. 2½ years shall be devoted to the Counselling sessions. The Counselling sessions shall be organized in the form of tutorials and not as teaching sessions as the learning materials provided to the learners shall perform the teaching function.

7.2.(2).II Workshops: In the workshop, the learners shall acquire competencies and skills required by special teacher or special teacher educator. Therefore they shall be engaged in certain activities as individuals or in groups. The Study Centres shall also make arrangements for practice teaching in classroom and on simulated situations. The learners shall also be provided training in preparation and use of ICT, research tools, worksheets, course units, assignment etc. The learners shall be given sufficient opportunities to practice what they have learnt from the theory courses and what they are supposed to do in the classrooms. There shall be two workshops (one in each year) of 6 days duration each.

7.2.(2).III School Based Activities: the learners pursuing B.Ed.Spl.Ed. (Disability Specialization) system shall be involved in activities which a teacher is supposed to perform in the school. The school based activities have been mentioned in the curriculum framework of B.Ed.Spl.Ed. (Disability Specialization). The learners shall interact with a faculty member (a senior experienced teacher /principal/ faculty of the school/college where the learner is working) to work on school based activities. Thus a learner shall be supervised/guided by the mentor for a minimum of 15 study hours.

7.2.(2).IV Teaching practice: A learner enrolled in the B.Ed.Spl.Ed.(Disability Specialization). Programme shall go through a teaching practice for 03 months in the schools where he/she works, under supervision of senior teacher/academic counsellor. Each lesson will be guided, supervised, assessed, lesson and feedback given. The learner shall be provided constructive feedback on his/ her performance (strength and weakness) by the supervisor/ teacher educators. Thus, the learners shall discuss with supervisor/teacher educators the preparation of the lesson plans, delivery of lesson and feedback on the lessons delivered. Each learner shall receive personal supervision and feedback on his/her teaching practice from the teacher.

8. Internal & External Examination

The University headquarter staff shall develop curriculum, self-learning materials, model lesson plans and multimedia learning process for use at the Study Centres. There shall be student assignment and at least 25% weightage be given to assessment of assignments. At the end of first and second years, external examinations will be conducted by the respective State Open University. Study Centres shall conduct examination of practice teaching and work experience components by appointing internal and external examiners.

9. Programme Organization

University/ Institutions offering B.Ed.Spl.Ed.(Disability Specialization) shall maintain their website to enable students to have access to all learning material and resources to interact with their peers, to facilitate-student discussions on suitable social media or networking services.

10. Website

All the University/ Institutions offering B.Ed.Spl.Ed.(Disability Specialization) shall ensure transparency by uploading detail information on their website regarding student's enrolment, list of programme study centres, academic counsellors, mentors regional consultants and the schools where the teacher trainees are expected to undergo teaching practice.

11. Academic Calendar

The University offering B.Ed.Spl.Ed.(Disability Specialization) institution shall prepare the calendar for all academic activities regarding admission notification, counselling, practicum and examinations, and ensure that they conduct their activities according to the calendar.

12. Programme Catalogue

The University shall also prepare manuals for learners, and mentors, counsellors, and resource persons for the implementation of the programme activities.

13. Library at University

There shall be a well-equipped library with adequate number of prescribed textbooks and reference books in Special Education, Educational Technology Library, ICT Library,

Psychological Equipment, CDs Encyclopedias, Journals of Teacher Education and Distance Education. In addition, Self-instructional material in sufficient quantity shall be available in English/Hindi/Regional Languages.

14. Library at Study Centre

There shall be a library equipped with text and reference books on special education and general teacher education of respective disability area, educational encyclopaedia, 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 course prescribed by RCI.

15. Constitution of Advisory Committee

The University shall constitute an 'Advisory Committee' to manage the academic and administrative matters of the Special Education Department at University. 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 Special Education Department at Headquarter. The major part of the income shall be used for the academic enrichment, maintenance and strengthening of infrastructural facilities in r/o Special Education Programme at the University Department .

16. Provision of Infrastructural Facilities

16.1 At University Headquarter

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 shall be made available at University Headquarter.

16.2 At Study Centre

The institution selected for a study centre for contact programme for implementing the B.Ed.Spl.Ed.(Disability Specialization) or any special education courses shall 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.

17. Procedure to be followed by the University for Approval from RCI

The application should be submitted in the prescribed Performa by the Registrar of the University along with the requisite documents for consideration of their request by the Council for signing of MoU between them.

18. Procedure to be followed by the Institute for Approval from RCI to become Study Centre

Institution fulfils the eligibility conditions as mentioned at Para. No. 5 (i) above may apply to the Council on the prescribed format along with the requisite documents and the prescribed fee in the form of Demand Draft, drawn in favour of 'Rehabilitation Council of India-Projects', payable at New Delhi with a copy to the concerned University. On receipt of the proposal, the Council may process for further action, provided maximum intake i.e. 500 allocated to the concerned University should not exceed in a given session.

19. Procedure to be followed by University for Renewal of MoU

- 19.1 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.
- 19.2 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.
- 19.3 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.
- 19.4 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.

20. Monitoring of Programme at University Department

- 20.1 University from time to time shall furnish the detail reports in r/o year-wise, disability-wise enrolment status of trainees, faculty details, status of total fee collected, remittance of fee share to Study Centre and RCI and any other information as may be required by the Council to enable it to assess the academic standards of special education programmes being offered, and the administrative and financial management.
- 20.2 The Member Secretary/ Chairperson, RCI or nominate any experts to visit University to oversee the implementation of the training programme at least once in two years to ensure the required standards.

21. Assessment of Study Centre by the University/ RCI

- 21.1 Every Study Centre shall provide information with regard to required infrastructure facilities for physical verification by the team of visiting experts deputed by Council/ University. Accordingly, they will submit their report to RCI/ University.
- 21.2 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.
- 21.3 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 after the expiry of approval.
- 21.4 The Member Secretary shall communicate the decision of the Council to the Study Centre.

22. Closing of Study Centre by University/ RCI

- 22.1 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 show cause notice to the Institution/Study Centre as to why not disciplinary action to be taken against the institute which may lead to withdrawal of approval.
- 22.2 The Study Centre may submit their written clarification against the notice within a period of 30 days.
- 22.3 If the University/ RCI withdraw permission of running its programme from Study Centre then the closure of Study Centre shall be as per the procedure and time frame that may be laid down by RCI.

23. Norms for Regular Faculty at the University Head Quarter

The existing faculty norms (2010)- sl.no -15 will be applicable only for the first year of the academic session 2015-16. Revised norms will be applicable from the academic session 2016-17 onwards (second year of the course starting in 2015-16). Information with regard to appointment of faculty to be submitted to the Council.

NOTE: M.Ed.Spl.Ed.(ODL), PGPC and PGPD courses are provisionally kept on hold by the RCI.