

Capacity Building Program for Inclusion of Specific Learning Disabilities in Higher Education Institutes

Organized by the Department of Higher Education under the Ministry of Education in collaboration with
ChangeInkk Foundation

Anchored by NIEPA

The ongoing in-person workshop marks the fourth phase of the Capacity Building Program. The third phase of the program, concluded in March 2024, featured masterclasses for the heads and representatives of five departments, including the Department of Admissions. The current fourth phase, a two-day zone-wise workshop, is designed to further handhold the participants of the masterclass to foster an inclusive learning environment for students with Specific Learning Disability (SLD). Featured below are best practices in the form of a checklist that the Department of Admissions of the participating institutes can adopt with the aim of streamlining processes before and during admissions, creating inclusive outreach framework, providing scholarships to students with SLDs and ensuring a smooth onboarding process for them.

Checklist for Inclusion of Students with Specific Learning Disabilities focusing on Admissions Department

Strategies to Make Admissions Inclusive

Streamlining

Processes

<input type="checkbox"/> Appoint a nodal officer for a seamless admission cycle. All the stages of admissions - entrances, counselling, stipends, orientation, accommodations, AT, mental health facilities and mentors, should be managed by the nodal officer	Details of the Nodal officer- <input type="checkbox"/> Name of the NO- <input type="checkbox"/> Contact Details of the No Other Departments are handled by the Nodal Officer- <input type="checkbox"/> Name- <input type="checkbox"/> None-
---	--

Streamline all the following processes:

1. For securing admission:

<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure acceptance of the UDID card issued by competent authority (do not demand further verification)	<input type="checkbox"/> Only UDID is required <input type="checkbox"/> UDID needs to be further verified <input type="checkbox"/> No process for students with SLDs exists <input type="checkbox"/> Need support to streamline the process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attach the existing performa/form for declaration of disability: _____ • Current no. of PwD students: _____ • Current no. of students with SLDs: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Oversee all processes, provide individual support, provide scholarships/schemes/stipends, ensure inclusive applications, provide AT and conduct adequate outreach for candidates with SLDs	<input type="checkbox"/> Have inclusive schemes/scholarship for SLDs students <input type="checkbox"/> No inclusive schemes/scholarships for SLDs students <input type="checkbox"/> Generic schemes/scholarships are enlisted <input type="checkbox"/> Not aware of the existing inclusive schemes/scholarships <input type="checkbox"/> Inclusive schemes and scholarships are enlisted on the institute website Attach the link of the above: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> No inclusive schemes or scholarships are enlisted <input type="checkbox"/> Need support to enlist inclusive schemes/scholarships

2. Upon admission:

<input type="checkbox"/> Appoint mentors and provide support and assistance during admission	<input type="checkbox"/> Provide mentors to PwD students during admission process <input type="checkbox"/> Provide mentors to PwD students during admission process only if requested No. of PwD students availing the mentorship: _____ No. of SLDs students availing the mentorship: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Online request for mentorship can be made Attach the link of the above page: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Request application needs to be sent to the mentioned email on the website Attach the link of the above page: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Need support to create a mentorship system
<input type="checkbox"/> Mandate a need-assessment session to understand how the	<input type="checkbox"/> Conducted need-assessment session to understand how the student needs to be supported

<p>student needs to be supported by various departments at an institution</p>	<p>Mention the Departments that participated: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No need-assessment session conducted</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Need-based assessment exists for PwDs students</p> <p>No. of PwD students screened under the assessment: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Need-based assessment exists for SLDs students</p> <p>No. of SLDs students screened under the assessment: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No need-based assessment exists for PwD students</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Need support to develop need-based assessment</p>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Coordinate with the Office of Student Affairs/Campus Life to ensure preference with hostel/housing for students with SLDs</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> The process to coordinate the needs of the PwD students with other departments exists</p> <p>No. of PwD students supported through the existing process: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No process to coordinate the needs of the PwD students with other departments</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Need support to develop a process/system to coordinate the needs of the PwD students with other departments</p>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Conduct an orientation session before the academic session for students with SLDs to introduce them to the inclusive ecosystem at the institution</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Conducted orientation sessions</p> <p>No. of PwD students covered under orientation sessions: _____</p> <p>No. of SLDs students covered under orientation sessions: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No sessions conducted for students</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Need support to design orientation sessions</p>

Inclusive Outreach

<p><input type="checkbox"/> Actively engage with senior secondary students with SLDs; attract them to higher education institutions</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Conducted orientation sessions for school students</p> <p>No. of institutes covered under orientation sessions: _____</p> <p>Name of institutes covered under orientation sessions : _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No sessions conducted for school students</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Need support to design orientation sessions</p>
---	--

	<input type="checkbox"/> Designed social media campaigns to communicate inclusive practices Attach the link of the campaigns: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> No social media campaigns designed to communicate inclusive practices <input type="checkbox"/> Need support to design such campaigns
<input type="checkbox"/> Inclusive and accessible application formats (WCAG compliant formats)	<input type="checkbox"/> All forms/notices are available in accessible formats Attach the link of the current accessible forms/notices: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> No accessible applications are available <input type="checkbox"/> Need support to create accessible formats
<input type="checkbox"/> Keep up-to-date records of inclusive policies and mandates (government & internal) for students with SLDs on dedicated webpage sections for students with disabilities (including SLDs)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes Attach the link of the webpage enlisting inclusive policies: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Need support to create a webpage
<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure explicit mentions of all-inclusive provisions on the website, admissions' section and collaterals (brochures, pamphlets on social media)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes Attach the link of the webpage enlisting inclusive policies: _____ Attach the link of the social media page enlisting inclusive policies: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Need support to create a webpage
<input type="checkbox"/> Collaborate with the communications team to post information on admissions and inclusive provisions (scholarships, accessible applications) on social media handles	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes Attach the link of the webpage enlisting inclusive policies: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Need support to create a webpage

<p>Document & provide case study examples (articles or videos) of students with SLDs at the institution and share their journeys</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Journey or testimonials of students with SLDs is documented and shared on social media handles <input type="checkbox"/> No journey or testimonials of students with SLDs is documented and shared on social media handles <input type="checkbox"/> Need support to create documentation
--	--

Capacity Building

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure training of counselling personnel to not demand further proof of disability after clearing entrance with UDID verification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Only UDID is required as a proof of disability <input type="checkbox"/> UDID needs to be verified
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Train admission officers to ensure availability of AT and reasonable accommodation for tasks during counselling interviews (accommodation for reading/writing heavy tasks (speech to text, text to speech) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Admission staff trained for reasonable accommodations <input type="checkbox"/> Admission staff is not trained <input type="checkbox"/> Need support to identify reasonable accommodations and training for the same
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Train admission officers to approach the students sensitively during counselling/interviews (no discrimination and comments on the student's ability to do the chosen degree) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Sensitization sessions conducted for admission staff <input type="checkbox"/> No sensitizations conducted <input type="checkbox"/> Need support to conduct these sessions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Sensitize all admission officers and other involved stakeholders at the institution before each admission cycle; highlight strengths, struggles and stigma related to SLDs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Sensitization sessions conducted for admission staff <input type="checkbox"/> No sensitizations conducted <input type="checkbox"/> Need support to conduct these sessions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Comply with legal mandates and allow the student to pursue the degree they have qualified for (do not debar based on their disability) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Awareness sessions focused on legal mandates and student's rights conducted often <input type="checkbox"/> No sessions conducted <input type="checkbox"/> Need support to conduct training

Schemes and Scholarships

<input type="checkbox"/> Implement scholarships and schemes by the government to encourage admissions of students with SLDs	<input type="checkbox"/> Have inclusive schemes/scholarship to encourage admissions SLDs students Attach the link of the above: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> No such schemes/scholarships for SLDs students <input type="checkbox"/> Need support to enlist inclusive schemes/scholarships
<input type="checkbox"/> Provide reduced application fees, scholarships and financial aid; mention the same upfront on webpages (highlight it before/during application windows)	<input type="checkbox"/> Have scholarships and financial aid to encourage admissions SLDs students Attach the link of the above: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> No such policy exists <input type="checkbox"/> Need support to identify such policy
<input type="checkbox"/> Tap into the institution's alumni network or private companies' CSR initiatives to allocate funds to scholarships and stipends	<input type="checkbox"/> Active alumni network exists <input type="checkbox"/> Alumni network exists but is dormant <input type="checkbox"/> Alumni funded scholarship Attach the link of the above: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Alumni network exists
<input type="checkbox"/> Collaborate with the communications team to post information around schemes, scholarships and stipends on social media handles periodically before the application process	<input type="checkbox"/> Active communication team exists <input type="checkbox"/> No communication team exists <input type="checkbox"/> Ad hoc teams work on communication
<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure availability of AT for individual usage and/or provide stipends for required AT software and hardware	<input type="checkbox"/> Active AT stipends exists <input type="checkbox"/> No AT stipend exists No. of PwD students covered under AT stipend: _____ No. of SLDs students covered under AT stipend: _____

For any further queries you can reach out to devendra.kumarsharma@nic.in or aparajita@changeinkk.org