



CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

INTEGRATED SPECIAL AND INCLUSIVE TEACHER

EDUCATION PROGRAM

(ISITEP)

Effective from Academic Session 2024-25

Four Years Duration

Rehabilitation Council of India
(A Statutory Body of Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment)
Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan)
Government of India

B-22, Qutab Institutional Area, New Delhi - 110016

Email: rci-depwd@gov.in

Website: www.rehabcouncil.nic.in

Curriculum Framework

Integrated Special & Inclusive Teacher Education Program

(ISITEP)

Bachelor of Art/Bachelor of Commerce/Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Education (Special & Inclusive Education) B.A./B.Com./B.Sc.B.Ed.(Special & Inclusive Education)

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Message by Honorable Minister

Teachers are at the heart of learning process and must be at the centre of fundamental reforms in education system (NEP 2020).

The new National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 upholds the role of teachers and endorses that teacher preparation and their continuous development are vital in creating a pool of school teachers that will shape the future generation of our nation. Towards the attainment of quality 21st century teachers for ‘all’ learners, the teacher education is also recommended to be imparted in multidisciplinary higher education institutions with dynamic, flexible and innovative curricula. NEP 2020 is in complete accordance with the provisions of the RPWD Act 2016 and suggests ensuring creation of inclusive and equitable quality education that promotes lifelong learning opportunities for ‘all’ including the Divyangjan by 2030. The Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI), a statutory body under the DEPwD of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has a mandate for maintaining quality standards of special educators and other rehabilitation professionals. RCI has therefore taken a contemporary leap in preparing the dual degree programme that offers a comprehensive and engaging curricular framework titled Integrated Special and Inclusive Teacher Education Programme (ISITEP). This dual degree curricular framework, like the ITEP of general teacher education programme, leads to a Bachelors degree as well as a degree in special education. It addresses and aligns with the new stage wise structure in school education of 5+3+3+4 as mentioned in the NEP 2020. An additional feature of ISITEP is that it offers choice of disability specializations along with the stage wise choice of Foundational, Preparatory, Middle and Secondary Stage.

I am sure this new initiative of ISITEP of RCI will bring in newer horizons in teacher preparation that would lead to quality, inclusive and equitable education of Divyangjan, in addition to promoting multidisciplinary higher education amongst the special teachers in the country in the coming era.

(Dr Virendra Kumar)

Union Minister of Social Justice and
Empowerment

Foreword

Providing universal access to quality education is the key to achieving the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 on education by 2030. Towards achieving this goal, NEP 2020 has recommended an array of progressive measures in reaching education to ALL ranging from preschool education to higher education and lifelong learning. These include respecting diversity, equity and inclusion; identifying, and fostering the unique capabilities of each learner; achieving Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) by ‘all’ students by Grade 3; using Technology, fostering use of multilingual learning environment including use of Indian Sign Language (ISL) and conducting outstanding research in all aspects of education. NEP 2020 also provides directives to the regulatory bodies that include bringing teacher education institutes (TEIs) into the ambit of higher education. These institutes will be required to convert to multidisciplinary institutions by 2030, and offer the dual degree Bachelor’s level programme in multidisciplinary courses as well as Bachelor’s in education. It is envisaged that this four-year integrated B.Ed. by 2030 will be the minimal degree qualification for school teachers.

The Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI) is a statutory body established by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment with the objective to regulate programs in generating human resources for imparting education and other therapeutic and rehabilitation services for Divyangjan. In its constant endeavour to upgrade and update the training programs, RCI has been fulfilling the aspirational goals pertaining to special and inclusive education in the country. The present curricular framework titled ‘Integrated Special and Inclusive Teacher Education Program’ (ISITEP) is an initiative which represents a significant step forward in RCI’s commitment to providing innovative and flexible education pathways that meet the evolving needs of students and the demands of the quality **special teachers** who can work in multiple settings for addressing the educational needs of children with disabilities. ISITEP is designed to equip our student teachers with a comprehensive skill set to offer choices of class level stages in school namely Foundational, Preparatory, Middle and Secondary as per the school structure envisioned by NEP 2020. It also provides choices between six disability specializations. The curricular components of ISITEP have been drawn from the ITEP so as to have parity with Special and General education school teachers and thereby ensuring they are equally valued for their contributions and they have equal opportunities for professional growth as ALL endeavor towards the same goal: *preparing all students to realize their potentials and succeed in life, regardless of their learning needs*. One of the key characteristic features of ISITEP is that it offers several disabilities related elective courses such as visual supports for learners with Autism, management and supporting learners with severe and Multiple Disabilities (MD), working with learners with Intellectual Disability (ID) having High Support Needs. These courses will especially be useful to prospective teachers for working in inclusive settings. The practicals of ISITEP are also designed disability and stage wise that would build capacities among student teachers to facilitate learning amongst their respective students with disabilities.

RCI has great pride to offer an intricately designed ISITEP program that focuses on academics, research, innovations, right based approach for educating children with disabilities at the same time fostering personal growth of the special teachers. This effort of stage and disability focused specialized teacher training curricula would be a unique initiative and contribution of our country in the global effort towards inclusive education.

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I take this opportunity to congratulate the team ISITEP who worked tirelessly in bringing out a well-researched document of curricular framework in such a short duration. I am sure institutions offering special education teacher training programs will join hands with RCI in smooth implementation of ISITEP.

Dr. Sharanjeet Kaur
Chairperson
Rehabilitation Council of India

Preface

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 aims to address the many growing developmental imperatives of our country and proposes to revamp and revise aspects of the education structure to align with global educational standards to ensure India's continued ascent and leadership in terms of economic growth, social justice and equality, scientific temper, national integration, and cultural preservation. Towards attainment of this, it is strongly recommended that teacher education programs be imparted in multidisciplinary perspectives in higher education institutions.

The four-year dual degree curricular framework titled 'Integrated Special and Inclusive Teacher Education Program' (ISITEP) of RCI has been designed keeping in view the recommendations of NEP 2020 and the ITEP curricular framework of general education as a base structure and the RPwD (2016) focus on education for children with disabilities at all levels. ISITEP is aligned with the National Credit Framework, which involves creating a system that recognizes learning outcomes across academic and vocational streams in addition to ensuring flexibility, mobility and quality in teacher training.

The creation of this ISITEP is the result of extensive collaboration between and among experts. It ensures that each course in each of the programs has a distinct amalgamation of specific disability needs along with other general content such as use of ICT, Adapted arts, Sports and Yoga. The ability enhancement and value-added courses include such courses as inclusive and equitable education, positive behavior support, life across life span, citizenship, sustainability, philosophical and sociological perspectives of special & inclusive education. ISITEP program envisages development of **special teachers** who can think critically, adapt swiftly, and integrate knowledge from various fields. An induction program of two weeks consisting of a series of experiential activities to introduce the prospective student teachers to disabilities as a human diversity, legal provisions, the basic of communication aspects of Indian Sign Language (ISL), Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC), and skills in Braille. The practicals include observations, developing Teaching Learning Material (TLM), action research and internships in various settings. As per the guidelines of RCI, this program maintains the 60:40 ratio of practical to theory so as to ensure adequate practical hands-on experience is provided to enhance teacher competencies. Inclusive community development is yet another curricular component of ISITEP that will provide exposure to the student teachers about community engagement and participation. This program seeks to develop among student-teachers ethics of social engagement, and capacities such as problem solving, critical thinking, creative thinking, communication skills, ethical and moral reasoning, that are necessary for preparing competent teachers.

Each stage wise curriculum of ISITEP is developed across six disability specializations namely Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Hearing Impairment (HI), Intellectual Disability (ID), Multiple Disabilities (MD), Specific Learning Disability (SLD) and Visual Impairment (VI). The ISITEP curricula envision to prepare teachers with competencies to work in all settings including special schools, inclusive schools, early intervention centres, developmental centres and home-based education.

The ISITEP is a dual-major bachelor's degree programme of four-year duration, with one major in Special & Inclusive Education and the other leading to a bachelor's degree. ISITEP has maintained the credit allocation to the disciplinary/interdisciplinary courses similar to

ITEP, which will lead to a Bachelor's degree in a particular stream of Arts/Science/Commerce. The program offers choices of stages to the student teachers to specialise in teaching namely Foundational stage (early intervention to 2nd grade), Preparatory stage (3rd to 5th grade), Middle stage (6th to 8th grade) and Secondary stage (9th to 12th grade). The Foundational stage encompasses early identification and intervention starting with children of 0 to 3 years and ranging up to 8 years/second grade keeping in view the importance of critical period of development.

As we launch ISITEP, a dual degree program with a specialisation in disability studies, we are reaffirming Rehabilitation Council of India's commitment to creating an inclusive academic and professional environment. Teacher educators doing the program will have specialised knowledge and skills that foster a deeper understanding of diverse needs and abilities of students with disabilities. Aim of the program is to prepare future professionals who will advocate for and contribute to a more equitable and accessible society. We look forward to the positive impact this program will have, both within the academic community and beyond, as we shape a future where inclusivity and empowerment are at the forefront of all endeavors of RCI.

Shri Vikas Trivedi
Member Secretary
Rehabilitation Council of India

Teacher education is vital in creating a pool of school teachers that will shape the next generation (NEP, 2020)

List of Abbreviations

<i>AAC</i>	<i>- Augmentative and Alternative Communication</i>
<i>ABA</i>	<i>- Applied Behaviour Analysis</i>
<i>ADHD</i>	<i>- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder</i>
<i>ADL</i>	<i>- Activities for Daily Living</i>
<i>AR</i>	<i>- Augmented Reality</i>
<i>ASD</i>	<i>- Autism Spectrum Disorders</i>
<i>ASHA</i>	<i>- Accredited Social Health Activist.</i>
<i>AT</i>	<i>- Assistive Technology</i>
<i>AVT</i>	<i>- Auditory Verbal Therapy</i>
<i>CAI</i>	<i>- Computer-Assisted Instructions</i>
<i>CBM</i>	<i>- Cognitive Behaviour Management</i>
<i>CBR</i>	<i>- Community-Based Rehabilitation</i>
<i>CBSE</i>	<i>- Central Board of Secondary Education</i>
<i>CCE</i>	<i>- Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation</i>
<i>CDEIC</i>	<i>- Cross Disability Early Intervention Centre</i>
<i>CGPA</i>	<i>- Cumulative Grade Point Average</i>
<i>CPD</i>	<i>- Continual Professional Development</i>
<i>CRE</i>	<i>- Continuing Rehabilitation Education</i>
<i>CRT</i>	<i>- Criterion Referenced Tests</i>
<i>CWDs</i>	<i>- Children with disabilities</i>
<i>CWHI</i>	<i>- Children with Hearing Impairments</i>
<i>CWMD</i>	<i>- Children with Multiple Disabilities</i>
<i>CWSN</i>	<i>- Children with Special Needs</i>
<i>DHH</i>	<i>- Deaf and Hard of Hearing</i>
<i>DPSP</i>	<i>- Directive Principles of State Policy</i>
<i>DSM</i>	<i>- Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders</i>
<i>ECC</i>	<i>- Expanded Core Curriculum</i>
<i>ECSE</i>	<i>- Early Childhood Special Education</i>
<i>FLN</i>	<i>- Foundational Literacy and Numeracy</i>
<i>FPMS</i>	<i>- Foundation Stage, Preparatory Stage, Middle Stage, and Secondary Stage</i>
<i>FYUP</i>	<i>- Four-Year Undergraduate Programme</i>
<i>GOI</i>	<i>- Government of India</i>

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HI - Hearing Impairment
ICF - International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health
ICSE - Indian Certificate of Secondary Education
ICT - Information and Communication Technology
ID - Intellectual disability
IEDC - Integrated Education of Disabled Children
IEDSS - Integrated Education of the Disabled Children at Secondary Stage
IEP - Individualised Educational Programme
IFSP - Individualised Family Support Plan
ISAA - Indian Scale for Assessment of Autism
ISITEP - Integrated Special & Inclusive Teacher Education Program
ISL - Indian Sign Language
ITEP - Integrated Teacher Education Program
JJ - Juvenile Justice
LO - Learning Outcomes
LOCF - Learning Outcomes – Based Curriculum Framework for Undergraduate Education
MD - Multiple disabilities
MDG - Millennium Development Goal
MOOCs - Massive Online Open Courses
OER - Open Educational Resources
ODL - Open and distance learning
MOU - Memorandum of Understanding
NCF - National Curricular Framework
NCF-FS - National Curriculum Framework -Foundation Stage
NCrF - National Credit Framework
NCTE - National Council for Teacher Education
NEP - National Education Policy
NGO - Non-Governmental Organization
NIOS - National Institute of Open Schooling
NIPUN - National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy
NPE - National Policy on Education
NPST - National Professional Standards for Teachers
NRT - Norm-Referenced Testing
NTA- Act National Trust Act

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O&M - Orientation and Mobility

PBIS - Positive Behavioural Intervention and Support

PHC - Primary Health Centre

POA- Programme of Action

POCSO- Protection of Children from Sexual Offences

PRA- Participatory Rural Appraisal

PTA- Pure Tone Audiometry

PwD - Person with disability

PWDV- Protection of Women from Domestic Violence

RBSK- Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram

RCI - Rehabilitation Council of India

RMSA - Rashtriya Madhyamika Siksha Abhiyan

RPWD - Rights of Persons with Disabilities

RTE- Right to Education

SDG - Sustainable Development goal

SEDGs- Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Groups

SEL - Socio-Emotional Learning

SGPA- Semester grade point Average

SIP- Student Induction Program

SIPDA - Scheme for Implementing of Persons with Disabilities

SLD - Specific Learning Disabilities

SR - School Readiness

SSA- Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan

TLM -Teaching Learning Material

UDHR - Universal Declaration of Human Rights

UDID - Unique Disability Identity cards

UDL - Universal Design for Learning

UEE - Universalization of Elementary Education

UGC - University Grants Commission

UNCRPD - United Nations convention on rights of Persons with Disabilities

VI - Visual Impairment

VR - Virtual Reality

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1.0 Main Features of the ISITEP program

1.1. Preamble

The landscape of special education in India has undergone significant transformations since the inception of RCI in 1992, when a registered society became a statutory body that regulates the field of disability countrywide. National policy on Education in 1986, The Curriculum Framework for Quality Teacher Education in 1998, The National Curriculum Framework (NCF) in 2005, and the National Policy for PWDs in 2006 marked a pivotal shift toward learner-centered education and emphasized the importance of inclusive practices. The RPWD 2016 and The NEP 2020 have further accentuated the need for a robust special education system. It underscores the significance of early intervention, inclusive education, and the role of special educators in creating accessible and equitable learning environments.

Equity and inclusion are the primary thrust of NEP-2020. The policy reiterates the global education development agenda in Goal 4 (SDG4) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It seeks to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” by 2030.

Special emphasis has been placed on the socio-economically disadvantaged (SEDGs), which includes the “Divyangjan.” Including SEDGs with CWSNs is the policy in the context of Education. The Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPWD) Act 2016 defines:

Inclusive education as a system of education wherein students with and without disabilities learn together and the system of teaching and learning is suitably adapted to meet the learning needs of different types of students with disabilities.

The NEP-2020 is in complete accordance with the provisions of the RPWD Act 2016 and endorses all its recommendations about school education. School education needs qualified and professionally trained teachers in special and inclusive education. More skill-based, innovative, and technology-integrated special and inclusive teacher education programs are essential to attain these aims. Through the alternative teaching-learning processes and integration of technological resources such as Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and Open Educational Resources (OER), we can provide additional quality Teaching - learning resources along with direct teaching and Open and Distance Learning (ODL), which can also be utilized along with face-to-face mode. Incorporating the research findings in the field into practice will help maintain these programs' potential and quality.

The contemporary educational landscape demands that teachers are equipped to meet the diverse needs of student in Special and Inclusive schools. NEP 2020 envisages that inclusion and equity must become critical aspects of teacher education and training for all leadership, administrative, and other school positions to generate and recruit more high-quality teachers and leaders from SEDGs and provide excellent role models for all students. Teacher education is vital in preparing school teachers that will shape the next generation.

Teacher preparation is an activity that requires multidisciplinary perspectives and knowledge, the formation of dispositions and values, and the development of practice under the best mentors. Teachers must be grounded in Indian values, languages, knowledge, ethos, and traditions, including tribal traditions while being well-versed in the latest advances in education and pedagogy. (para15.1, NEP-2020)

Highlighting the Importance of teacher and teacher education, NEP-2020 provided the vision of developing best practices through its process, i.e., Curriculum, its development, Mentoring, and maintaining Professional standards of teachers.

The Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI), a statutory body under the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of India, is solely responsible for regulating and monitoring professional development and other training programs in the field of disability.

RCI revises its syllabi from time to time, keeping in view the national goals so that the learners undergoing the programs are tuned to the country's current trends and future requirements. RCI must develop curricula to prepare teachers to teach children with disabilities. Special and inclusive education for children with disabilities is becoming a demand in contemporary society. Hence, RCI, in addition to special education programs, has also been supporting the development of programs for inclusion and sustaining the general education of children with disabilities.

NCTE recommends a four-year integrated teacher education program (ITEP) for teacher education. The model aims to provide student teachers with disciplinary and professional knowledge in an integrated manner. The program will be equivalent to an Undergraduate Degree (B.Sc./B.A./ B.Com.) and a Teacher Education Degree, as the curriculum includes courses and activities essential for both degrees (NCTE notification -2021).

Given these developments, RCI envisions developing a four-year integrated teacher education program that will facilitate preparing teachers for special and inclusive education of children with disabilities, along with specialization in subjects such as language, history, music, mathematics, computer science, chemistry, economics, art, and physical education.

1.2 Integrated Special and Inclusive Teacher Education Program (ISITEP)

Integrated Special and Inclusive Teacher Education Program (ISITEP) is a 4-year integrated dual major holistic bachelor's degree program in Special and Inclusive Education (B.Ed.-Sp.Ed. with Specialization in Specific Disability) as well as a Specialized subject such as language, history, music, mathematics, computer science, chemistry, economics, art, physical education, etc.

1.3 Learning Outcomes of the Program (ISITEP)

This curriculum framework of the ISITEP (Integrated Special & Inclusive Teacher Education Program) is based on the RCI mandate of Preparing Special Educators for students with Disabilities and a learning outcome-based curriculum framework for undergraduate education (UGC, 2020). The program incorporates the graduate attributes, qualification descriptors, and course learning outcomes.

ISITEP program aims to prepare teachers to teach children in various educational settings, specifically special and inclusive education. The program will prepare human resources to acquire content knowledge and pedagogical skills to teach all children at multiple levels, including general Education. It includes specific and generic skills, including transferable global skills and competencies that ensure comparable learning levels across the institutions/colleges/universities. It also helps the students for further studies, employment, and citizenship.

The ISITEP is a dual degree program specializing in specific disability having a bachelor's degree such as B.A.B.Ed. (Special & Inclusive Education) or B.Sc.B.Ed. (Special & Inclusive Education) or B.Com.B.Ed. (Special & Inclusive Education) etc. After completing the program and its respective courses, the student teachers demonstrate the graduate attributes in terms of knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes, and values in disciplines and special and inclusive education levels with disability-specific specialization.

The students of the ISITEP program in special and inclusive education should be able to demonstrate the following learning outcomes after completing the program.

- Develop content Knowledge of the respective disciplines, i.e., Humanities/ Liberal arts, Commerce, and Sciences, such as language, history, music, mathematics, computer science, chemistry, economics, art, physical education, etc.
- Acquire knowledge and skills in content and pedagogy of the Discipline of Education, Special Education & Inclusive Education.
- Develop specific knowledge, understanding, and skills in specified Disability areas, such as ASD, HI, ID, SLD, MD, and VI.
- Acquire skills in interdisciplinary knowledge in major Disciplines, i.e., Humanities/ Liberal arts, Commerce and Sciences, Education, and Special & Inclusive Education.
- Perform as experts in understanding the special needs of children in the context of education at different levels, i.e., Foundation, preparatory, Middle, and Secondary levels.
- Gain hands-on experience teaching at different Set ups of education, i.e., special and inclusive education.
- Prepare Appropriate Teaching-Learning Material for all children as per their Needs.
- Adaptations in assessments and evaluations practices such as curriculum for examination, choice in teacher-made test papers/ assignments, and decision over marking schemes

- Collaborate with various educational stakeholders, i.e., Parents, teachers, administrators, etc.
- Develop Appreciation and inculcation of fundamental duties, a sense of responsibility and commitment towards profession and society, and respect for human life, dignity, and diversity.
- Characterize the overall personality and enhance their life skills to address different situations encountered in professional school life without prejudice and biases.
- Develop mentoring skills to guide students (Mentees) for lifelong learning.

1.4 Reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities

The RPwD Act, 2016, Chapter III Education, Section 17 (c) *states that teachers should be trained and employed, including teachers with disabilities who are qualified in sign language and Braille and teachers trained in teaching children with intellectual disabilities.* Hence, teacher training institutions must ensure full accessibility and reasonable accommodations to encourage applications from persons with disabilities to get admission to the course.

Reasonable accommodations are to be provided for all types of disabilities per the RPWD Act, 2016, and Accessibility Guidelines and Standards for Higher Education Institutions and Universities. The Guidelines can be accessed from the following website: https://www.ugc.gov.in/ebook/Accessibility_Guidelines_and_Standards_HEI/mobile/index.html.

1.5 Credit Hours

As per the National Credit Framework (NCrF, 2022), a year program will be 1200 hours (40 credits), so the 4-year program will be 4800 hours. One credit equals 30 hours of Practical or 15 hours of theory.

RCI guidelines also suggest 16 credits (480 hours) for theory and 24 credits (720 hours) for Practicals per year due to the special nature of the course. The program (ISITEP) will be more skewed towards practical and fieldwork in 4 years, having 4800 hours in total, 1900 hours for theory, and 2900 hours for practical, respectively.

Table-1.2**Proposed Weightage for ISITEP**

Category	Credits	Proportion (Theory: Practical)	Theory weightage	Theory Hours	Practical weightage	Practical Hours	Total hours
1	0	-	0	-	0	-	-
2	30	60:40	18	-	12	-	-
3	64	50:50	32	-	32	-	-
4	16	40:60	6.4	-	9.6	-	-
5	28	25:75	7	-	21	-	-
6	20	0:100	-	-	20	-	-
7	2	0:100	-	-	2	-	-
Total	160	-	63.4 (39.6%)	1900	96.6 (60.3%)	2900	4800

1.6 Choice of Stage, and Disability-Specific Specialization

The student teachers are expected to choose the stage, disability specialization, and disciplines when filling out an application to the Program.

Stage and Disability-Specific Specialization

The National Education Policy (2020) has propounded a transformative vision for school education that reconstructs the contemporary structure of the 10+2 system into a 5+3+3+4 arrangement. The major reform in the structure will lead to redesigning the entire teacher education program. The Teacher Education curriculum at different stages, i.e., Foundational, Preparatory, Middle, and Secondary, must deliver a holistic learning experience to its learners with the competencies and Skills required to strive in the competitive 21st century.

With the changing mandate of NEP-2020, the prime concern is designing a curriculum for Special and Inclusive education at all four stages with disability-specific specializations. Making a need-based comprehensive curriculum for special & inclusive education is one of its kind and is utterly essential for both settings. It will create a pool of human resources that shall be well-equipped and fit enough to accommodate children from every age group with different Disabilities.

In the case of children with disabilities, the pre-foundational stage (0-3 years) is also crucial before the Foundational stage of education. 0-3 years of age is the time of early identification

and intervention to detect deficits, delays, and provision of essential services. The ISITEP is also designed to cater to children's needs at the pre-foundational level.

Foundational Stage Specialization (3-8 Years):

The ISITEP will prepare the student teachers for teaching children at three sub-stages at this level in the context of Special and Inclusive Education: 0-3 years of early identification and intervention, 3-6 years of Anganwadi/Pre-School / Balvatika, and 6 to 8 years-primary grades 1 and 2, which links to the preparatory stage at continuum.

Sub-stage - I (0-3 Years):

The pre-foundational stage by focusing on inclusive practices can ensure and enable that all children have equal opportunities to develop and thrive. Inclusive societies place a strong emphasis on promoting diversity, equity, and accessibility, which can have a significant impact on the development of children during this stage. The pre-foundational stage recognizes the importance of early detection, identification, and intervention, we can provide critical support to children with developmental delays or disabilities, empowering them to reach their full potential. This stage will focus on both the child and family to support the child and caregiver relationships and foster collaboration among health, welfare, early childhood caregiver education members of the team.

This ISITEP will act as a solid foundation for the next stage and shall provide a clear vision board for the future learning process of the child's education. This could be attained by having well-trained, highly qualified, and efficient special teacher educators. Special educators will help the children with special needs and their parents and family members with guidance and counseling for further referral and assessment.

Sub-Stage-II (3 to 6 years)

Flexible, multilevel, growth- and development-oriented education for children aged 3 to 6 years attending preschool, *Aanganwadi* and *Balwatika* are involved at this stage. National Curriculum Framework – Foundation Stage (2022) emphasizes the importance of the play way teaching method and joyful learning at this level. Similarly, exploratory based, inquiry-based learning helps children with or without disabilities achieve different developmental domains, i.e., Physical, motor, cognitive, Language, socio-emotional, etc. CWDs may also need an early intervention to get involved in general or special school environments or home-based instruction. If children with different disabilities are not provided enough enriching experiences as per their unique needs, their development may be delayed. The ISITEP will allow a special educator at the foundational level to work with children with disabilities and learn in any of these learning environments.

Sub-Stage -III (6-8 Years / Grades I & II)

Foundational capacities in Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) skills are facilitated to develop at early grades of primary education at this level. Concrete learning experiences are provided through textbooks, children's literature, toys, play activities, exploratory indoor and outdoor

activities, etc. Teaching-learning activities are planned to facilitate the transition from home to a formal school environment and home language to a medium of instruction. CWDs may learn at a slower pace when compared with their counterparts, such as Children with intellectual and a developmental disability. Specific learning support is required in case of disability, such as Braille or sign language for blindness or CWHIs. Collaboration with the regular teachers and peer support is also needed in an Inclusive setting.

The ISITEP at the Foundational stage is designed to prepare teachers to address the unique needs of these children in an inclusive, special school and other home-based settings, such as Academics, self-help skills, social and emotional needs, etc.

Preparatory Stage Specialization (Grade 3 to 5):

After completing the ISITEP at the Preparatory stage, student teachers will teach grades 3 to 5 with ages 8-10 years. This may differ in the case of CWSNs. Discovery-based learning, activity-based learning, Experiential learning, and interactive classroom learning pedagogical approaches must be followed. Disciplinary and inter-disciplinary areas are introduced here in the curriculum at this stage. These are languages, mathematics, Arts, Physical education, and the world around us. The world around us is an interdisciplinary area that incorporates exploration of both the natural and social world. Aspects of vocational exposure are also introduced and incorporated at this level. At The preparatory stage, a specialized, individualized educational plan is needed to ensure the continuous progress of a child with special needs and promote inclusion. To make this possible, a well-trained educator is required to be employed to facilitate and implement differentiated instruction in the classroom who is proficient enough to address different student needs and, at the same time, increase the scope of full inclusion and accessibility to inclusive teaching-learning methods, techniques, materials, learning-aid and technological aids.

The Middle Stage specialization (Grade 6-8):

The student teachers who will qualify for ISITEP with the middle Stage specialization will teach grades 6,7 and 8. This is the stage of introducing more specialized subjects and subject teachers. Subject understanding with experiential learning and interrelation between subjects will be explored. The curriculum consists of languages, mathematics, art education, physical education, science, and social science, as well as exposure to vocational education. A child with special needs requires lifetime support to lead a practical, independent life. Each stage comes with a challenging transitional phase, where the subject complexity increases and differentiated instruction and personalized one-on-one remedial sessions are required to grasp the concepts. Learners need constant support and adaptive learning styles, followed by subject-specific modification, which needs to be adopted. Adopting alternative or substitute curriculum design, if required, is also needed. A team of strong special educators must be recruited to facilitate all these facilities. To address these needs, a comprehensive teacher education plan must be added to meet the aims and objectives of the inclusive curriculum.

The Secondary Stage Specialization (Grades 9-12):

In the ISITEP program, the secondary stage comprises four years of multidisciplinary study in grades 9 & 10 and 11 & 12 based on subject-oriented and pedagogical structure as based on the middle stage with greater depth, critical thinking, and life aspirations as recommended by NEP-2020. Students have a holistic development and a wide choice of subjects. Giving children with disabilities unique chances to personalize their learning experience and choose vocational training based on their interests, strengths, and weaknesses. *“Holistic development and a wide choice of subjects and courses year to year will be the new distinguishing feature of secondary school education” [Para 4.9, NEP 2020]*. This stage acquainted the learners with skill development workshops, internships, and career exploration programs for future endeavors. This requires more elaborate IEPs and transitional plans to cater to the learner's needs. It also allows learners to choose subjects aligned with their vocational goals and interests. This stage prepares the students for the outside world, allowing them to live independently and make the correct decisions according to their career choices. This will include inductions, workshops for financial literacy, career planning, and self-advocacy.

It is a good and opportune time to understand the importance of having highly skilled and qualified educators who could support the diverse education system. At the secondary level, inclusion has been shown to have numerous benefits for students with disabilities, including improved academic outcomes, increased socialization, and enhanced self-esteem. At this stage, it is essential to improve the competencies of special and inclusive teachers through different curricular areas and apt pedagogical methodologies. The ISITEP follows the same framework as in the ITEP program.

Grades 9 and 10—Eight curricular areas include three languages: Arts Education, Physical Education, Vocational Education, Social Sciences and Humanities, Interdisciplinary Areas, Mathematics and Computational Thinking, and Sciences.

Grades 11 & 12- Choice-based courses will be offered for learning and knowledge building. Students need to choose at least two out of the three groups of the following curricular areas :

- A) Group1-Arts Education, Physical Education, and Vocational Education;
- B) Group 2- Social Sciences & Humanities, and Interdisciplinary Areas; and
- C) Group 3- Mathematics and Sciences.

The curriculum comprises the study of *two languages*, one of which is native to India, and the study of at least *four subjects* chosen from *two* out of the three groups of curricular areas mentioned above. Students are allowed to take an optional *fifth subject*.

Students will be required to take four courses related to an academic discipline while choosing an academic discipline. An illustrative list of courses about different curricular areas in Grades 11 & 12 is as follows :

- Languages: Modern Indian Languages, Classical Languages, Foreign Languages, etc.
- Arts Education: Indian Classical Music, Folk Music, Contemporary Music, Theatre, Puppetry, Sculpture, Fine Arts, Folk Painting, Graphic Design, Motion Pictures, Film Appreciation, Script Writing, Photography, Textile Design, etc.
- Physical Education: Courses on specific sports/games, Yoga and lifestyle, Sports and Nutrition, Physical Education for Children with Special Needs, Biomechanics and Sports, etc.
- Vocational Education/Courses aligned to the National Skills Qualifications Framework: Basic Cereal Production, Seed Production, Gardening, Automobile Servicing, Machining, Electronics, Community Health, Accounting Services, Data Entry and Management, Banking Services, Retail Services, Textiles & Apparel, Information Technology Enabled Services, Health Care Services, etc.
- Social Sciences & Humanities: History, Geography, Political Science, Psychology, Psychology and Mental Health, Economics, Developmental Economics, Sociology, Philosophy, Anthropology, Archaeology, etc.
- Interdisciplinary Areas: Commerce, Business Studies, Accountancy, Sustainability and Climate Change (Environmental Education), Media and Journalism, Indian Knowledge Systems, Legal Studies, etc.
- Mathematics and Computational Thinking: Mathematics, Computer Science, Business Mathematics, Advanced Mathematics, Statistics, etc.
- Sciences: Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Earth Sciences, Astronomy, Computational Biology, etc.

Students will have the option to study subjects at two levels. For example, they may opt for a basic Mathematics Course, an Advanced Mathematics Course, a basic Physics Course, or an Advanced Physics Course.

1.7 Attributes of Special Educators (Graduate of ISITEP)

Graduate attributes, as envisioned by the University Grants Commission (UGC), are the significant qualities, skills, and values students acquire during their undergraduate studies. They encompass a broad spectrum of competencies, from disciplinary knowledge to global citizenship, and are designed to equip graduates for successful careers and meaningful contributions to society.

Special and Inclusive education requires specific characteristics and qualities from the student teachers who graduated from ISITEP to educate and deal comprehensively with children with special needs (CWSNs). Graduate Attributes are generic and specific. Generic graduate attributes refer to the broad competencies and qualities expected of all graduates, regardless of their field of study. These attributes are essential for effective teaching, collaboration, and advocacy for special educators. The generic attributes encompass a) General stages and types of disability and b) Personal, national, and inter-national attributes; and Specific attributes are Stage-Disability-Specific attributes.

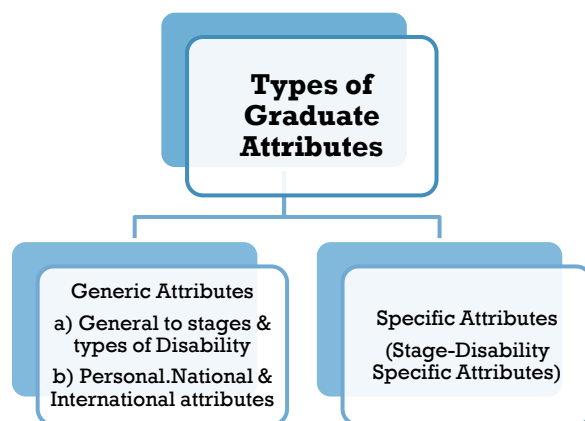


Figure - (a) Types of graduate attributes of Special Educators

First, generic attributes are related to developing deep knowledge, understanding, implementation, and application in disciplinary /inter-disciplinary areas. Second, it is about understanding the stage-specific requirements of Students, adaptation and accommodation with the Disciplinary/ inter-disciplinary knowledge, pedagogical approaches, performing educational tasks and application, and third, meeting the overall aims of education with Personal, national, and international contexts and concerns, Such as developing capacities in problem-solving, logical reasoning, critical thinking, Scientific temper, reflective thinking, effective communication, Professional upliftment, Character building, respect towards constitutional values, fundamental duties, deep-rooted pride in being Indian in spirit and action, Awareness about ourselves in a global context etc.

Core Values such as respect, care, equity, justice, democracy, and secularism are fundamental to special education. These values form the bedrock of inclusive education, ensuring that every child, regardless of their disability, has equal opportunities to learn and grow. Ethical Conduct is a cornerstone of the NPST-2023, and graduate special educators are expected to uphold the highest standards of professionalism, integrity, and accountability. Commitment, Quality, excellence, and professionalism in delivering services in the disability sector are the need of the hour, so providing a productive learning environment for student teachers is essential. Special educators need a knowledge base for effective special education practice. It must be extended to include a deep understanding of diverse disabilities, their implications for learning, and evidence-based interventions.

The stage and disability-specific attributes of special educators need to be inculcated during the program are as follows:

Foundational Stage (Birth-3 years, 3-8years) (0-3years, 3 years of preschool/Anganwadi and Grades 1-2)

The foundational stage, encompassing the vital years from birth to eight, lays the preliminary work for a child's holistic development. During these formative years, children develop essential skills and competencies that shape their future learning and life trajectories. The Integrated Special and Inclusive Teacher Education Program (ISITEP) aligns with this critical phase by emphasizing the importance of early childhood care and education (ECCE) in fostering inclusive and equitable learning environments.

The primary Focus is on Early Identification and intervention, Play-based and activity-based learning to foster cognitive, motor, and language development, and Cross disability inclusion. ISITEP, with its focus on holistic development, aligns seamlessly with the foundational stage. It recognizes the unique needs of all learners, including children with special needs. By equipping educators with the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes, ISITEP empowers them to create inclusive classrooms where every child can thrive.

Attributes of a Special Educator:

- Conduct universal screening systematically as part of the referral and assessment process
- Expertise in identifying developmental delays and disabilities.
- Conduct early identification and assessments to identify children with special learning needs.
- Develop and implement targeted early intervention programs tailored to meet specific needs.
- Possess comprehensive knowledge of early childhood development education and pedagogy.
- Demonstrate proficiency in utilizing play-based and activity-based learning methods effectively.
- Work collaboratively and closely with parents to understand the child's needs and monitor ongoing progress.
- Create and maintain an inclusive classroom environment that effectively accommodates diverse learning needs.
- Develop, implement, and monitor transition plans to prepare students for school readiness programs.
- Strengthening foundation literacy and numeracy among CWSNs as a Nation's Vision (NIPUN)
- Provide comprehensive training to general educators and actively collaborate to integrate special needs education into the mainstream curriculum.
- Deliver enriching learning experiences within a nurturing and supportive educational environment.

Preparatory Stage (8-11years) 3 years (Grades 3-5)

The preparatory stage, encompassing Grades 3 to 5 (approximately 8 to 11 years), is a pivotal period in a child's educational journey. It marks a significant transition from early childhood

to middle childhood, characterized by rapid cognitive, social, and emotional development. This phase is particularly crucial for students with special needs as it lays the foundation for meaningful academic and social integration. The Primary Focus is on transitioning to more formal classroom learning, focusing on discovery, activity-based, and interactive classroom learning. The primary objective is to develop reading, writing, physical education, art, languages, science, and mathematics skills. It is a period of increasing autonomy, where students learn self-help skills, problem-solving strategies, and decision-making abilities. This phase bridges the complexities of upper primary education, enabling students to develop the necessary skills and confidence for a smooth transition.

Attributes of a Special Educator:

- Use accommodation and adaptation in teaching to cater to diverse learning styles.
- Adapt the curriculum to align with the specific needs of children.
- Effectively manage various behaviors within the classroom environment.
- Utilize technology to facilitate learning for all students.
- Provide direct assistance to students with special needs as required in the classroom.
- Employ appropriate methods for delivering content, including using TLMs (Teaching-Learning Materials) and assistive devices.
- Ensure that all students can comprehend and engage in the classroom activities.
- Continuously update teaching methods to incorporate new approaches.
- Regularly consult parents regarding their child's behavior, progress, and educational requirements.
- Passion for advocating for the rights and needs of students with disabilities.
- Proficiency in working with general educators, parents, and other professionals to create supportive learning environments.
- Ability to develop and implement individualized transition plans to support students moving to the next educational phase.

Middle Stage (11-14 years) 3 years (Grades 6-8)

The middle stage is a critical juncture in a student's educational trajectory, marking a transition from childhood to adolescence. This phase is particularly salient for students with special needs due to the increasing complexities of academic demands, social pressures, and emerging personal identity. The primary focus is introducing theories and concepts in mathematics, sciences, social sciences, arts, and humanities. Emphasize experiential learning within each subject to enhance children's critical thinking and problem-solving skills. The middle stage is a pivotal period for students with special needs because the onset of adolescence brings about heightened social pressures and emotional complexities, which can be particularly challenging for students with special needs. Students experience rapid cognitive growth, necessitating adaptations in instructional strategies to meet their evolving learning needs. This stage is crucial for developing the academic and life skills required for a successful transition to the rigors of secondary education, and adjacent to this, there is a developing sense of self, which can be particularly complex for students with disabilities due to societal perceptions and limitations.

Attributes of a Special Educator:

- Adaption and accommodation in the curriculum to align with the specific needs of children.
- Adopt effective pedagogical approaches to ensure the curriculum delivery is engaging and impactful.
- Show social skills and actively facilitate interactions among students to promote peer integration.
- Utilize technology innovatively to support and enhance the learning experience of students with disabilities.
- Provide academic assistance, focusing on exploring complex ideas and fostering critical thinking skills.
- Encourage and promote positive interactions among students within the learning environment.
- Apply acquired knowledge effectively across various practical scenarios and contexts.
- Design comprehensive plans and strategies to manage behavioral issues in educational settings effectively.
- Develop and implement diverse learning models, activities, and assessment tools to optimize student learning outcomes.
- Understanding and respecting diverse cultural backgrounds and incorporating culturally relevant teaching strategies.
- Ability to use assessment data to inform instructional planning and monitor student progress.
- Knowledge of common adolescent mental health challenges and strategies for supporting students' emotional well-being.
- Ability to guide students in exploring career options and developing post-secondary plans.
- Commitment to promoting advocacy for the rights and needs of students with disabilities and embedding this in the form of self-advocacy among them.

Secondary Stage (Ages 14-16) 2 years (Grades 9-10)

The secondary stage, characterized by a shift from foundational learning to specialized subject-based study, this phase is pivotal in preparing students for higher education. The curriculum at this stage is designed to foster critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity while providing opportunities for students to explore their interests and aptitudes. The primary focus is on multidisciplinary study, greater depth, critical thinking, flexibility, and student choice of subjects, which are the key areas of secondary-stage education. The prime objective is to prepare students for higher education, employment, and entrepreneurship, emphasizing life skills, vocational skills, and holistic development. The secondary stage presents unique challenges and opportunities for students with special needs. This phase is more demanding, requiring higher-order thinking skills and independent learning, and greater emphasis is placed on self-directed learning, time management, and organizational skills.

Attributes of a Special Educator:

- Counsel students individually and develop comprehensive plans for their future.
- Develop personalized education or job training plans for students after school.
- Teach essential life skills such as living independently, being practical, communicating, and interacting socially.
- Provide counseling to support students' emotional and mental health needs.
- Empowering students with special needs to make informed choices, develop self-advocacy, and acquire essential life skills.
- Emphasize the importance of field-based learning and practical experiences in the curriculum.
- Guide the students in selecting subjects based on their needs, interests, and potential employability.
- Developing and implementing effective behavior management strategies for students with challenging behaviors.
- Ability to utilize and adapt assistive technology to enhance students' access to curriculum and independence.
- Engaging in ongoing professional development and reflective practice.

Secondary Stage (Ages 16-18) 2 years (Grades 11-12)

The secondary stage of education, encompassing Grades 11 and 12 for students aged 16-18, marks a pivotal phase in their academic journey. Primary Focus- The practical skills necessary to effectively carry out their professional responsibilities when teaching Grades 11 and 12. This includes utilizing teaching methods that successfully deliver the curriculum, enabling students to achieve the desired learning outcomes and competencies by the end of their secondary education. Educators at this level must possess a strong foundation in pedagogical approaches, curriculum delivery, and student assessment to ensure students are well-prepared for higher education or the workforce.

Attributes of a Special Educator:

- Guide the students in selecting subjects based on their needs, interests, and potential employability.
- Choose appropriate assessment methods and tools for Grades 11 and 12, and document student progress.
- Address the needs of students with disabilities or learning difficulties and provide inclusive learning experiences.
- Manage classroom activities and field learning and engage with parents and community members to support student success.
- A comprehensive understanding of the subjects taught at the secondary level is essential for effective instruction. Special educators must fully grasp the curriculum content, learning objectives, and relevant standards.

- Implementing Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support frameworks promotes positive behavior and creates a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students.
- Understanding the complex process of self-concept formation in adolescents with disabilities is essential for fostering positive self-esteem and identity development.
- Special educators must be knowledgeable about sexual orientation and gender identity, creating a safe and inclusive environment for all students, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender expression.
- Assisting students in exploring career options, developing job-seeking skills, and building work readiness is vital for a successful transition into adulthood.
- Teaching students with disabilities how to manage money, budget, and make informed financial decisions is essential for independent living.
- Providing age-appropriate education about relationships, intimacy, and marriage, considering the diverse needs and abilities of students with disabilities.
- Empowering students to make choices, problem-solve, and advocate for themselves is crucial for developing independence and self-determination skills.
- Developing comprehensive transition plans that address post-secondary education, employment, and independent living goals is critical for ensuring successful outcomes for students with disabilities.

2.0 Curricular Structure of the Course

2.1 General Framework of the Course

The ISITEP is a four-year program administered across eight semesters of study. It is a dual-major bachelor's degree program, with one major in a disciplinary/interdisciplinary branch of knowledge and the other in Special & Inclusive Education with a specific disability. As per the Curriculum framework of ITEP (NCTE, Delhi), *One credit is equivalent to 15 hours of teaching at the theory level, and the same (one credit) is equivalent to 30 hours of teaching at the practical level.* RCI also recommends the same for each of the specified curricular components along with UGC's guidelines of one credit, equal to 1 hour in case of lecture/tutorial, and two hours of practical and fieldwork.

2.2 Curricular Components

To keep parity with ITEP, ISITEP will also comprise seven essential curricular components of education. It includes Disability specific aspects in each of the components, such as Student induction program, Foundations of General, Special & Inclusive Education, Disciplinary/Interdisciplinary Courses, Stage & disability Specific Content - Cum - Pedagogy Courses, Ability enhancement and value-added courses, School Experience and Internship in teaching and community engagement & services. The following curricular components, along with credit distribution and courses, are as follows:

Table-2.1
Curricular Components

S. no.	Components	Courses	Credits
1	Student Induction Program	2 weeks	-
2	Foundations of General, Special & Inclusive Education	10	30
3	Disciplinary/Interdisciplinary Courses	2	64
4	Stage & disability Specific Content - Cum - Pedagogy Courses	4	16
5	Ability Enhancement and Value-Added Courses	10	28
6	School Experience & Internship	-	20
7	Community Engagement and Service	-	2
	Total	26	160

Component -1, "Student induction program," is common to all the students. It is of 2 weeks duration to orient students about the disciplines, institutions, and various aspects of higher education to prepare them for professional life. Foundations courses of general, special, and inclusive education (Category-2) are common to all students. These are compulsory across stages and disability specializations. Two Elective papers are also proposed in this section. Each paper consists of 5 units and detailed work done in theory & practicals.

Disciplinary /inter-disciplinary courses (Category-3) are based on the subject specialization at +2 level and the student's choice. Students must choose one or two discipline(s) from any school curriculum. Disciplinary/Interdisciplinary courses will be developed by the University/Institution/colleges concerned in line with the regular 4-year Undergraduate Program (FYUP).

Stage & Disability Specific Content - Cum - Pedagogy Courses (Category-4) has to be opted by the student at the time of filling out the application form. Students can opt out of the following four stages and disability specializations: (A) Foundation Stage, (B) Preparatory Stage, (C) Middle Stage and (D)Secondary stage

Specializations offered with specific reference to Disabilities for Special & Inclusive Education are:

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Hearing Impairment (HI), Intellectual Disability (ID), Multiple Disabilities (MD), Specific Learning Disability (SLD) and Visual Impairment (VI)

Ability Enhancement and Value-Added Courses of component five consist of 10 courses common to all student-teachers across stages and disability specializations. These courses are essential to understanding education's broader context, such as languages other than disciplinary subjects(L-1, L-2, ISL), Inclusive Art Education, Exploring Disability Intercepts in Indian Knowledge Systems and Ethos, Teacher and Society, ICT and Assistive Technology in Special & Inclusive Education, Educational Research and Statistics, Adaptive Sports, Nutrition, Yoga, and Understanding Self, Positive Behavior Supports, Guidance & Counselling, Life Skills Across Life Span, Citizenship, Sustainability and Environmental Education.

Each component in categories 2, 3, 4 & 5 has theory and practical elements. Category “6” and “7” components are entirely for the field-based learning experiences. It includes school observations, demonstration lessons, simulation, internships in teaching, developing TLM, school-based research projects, Supportive Skill Training, Assistive Technologies, Functional Academic Skills, Sign Language, Braille, etc., and projects in involvement and engagement with the community and community-based rehabilitation.

2.3 Curricular Structure of ISITEP

The curricular structure of ISITEP comprises a detailed description of courses prescribed for each curricular component according to the distribution of credits done each semester. All eight semesters in a four-year course have 20 credits each, for a total of 160 credits. Components-wise credit distribution is already mentioned in Table 2.1, and Table 2.2 provides the detailed Curricular structure of the ISITEP program.

Table -2.2
Curricular Structure

SL NO	Curricular Components	Courses		Credits per Semester								Credits per Course	Total Credits
				S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8		
1.	Student Induction Programme	1.0 Two weeks: Equitable Practice & Inclusive Education											
2.	Foundations of General, Special & Inclusive Education	2.1	Evolution of Indian Education & Disability Discourse	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	30
		2.2	Human Development, Deviations & Educational Psychology	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	4	
		2.3	Introduction to Disabilities	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	4	
		2.4	Learning, Teaching, Assessment & Evaluation	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	2	
		2.5	Equitable and Inclusive Education	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	2	
		2.6	Philosophical & Sociological Perspectives of Special & Inclusive Education	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	
		2.7	Curriculum Development, Adaptation and Evaluation (Stage Specific)	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	
		2.8	Perspectives on School Leadership & Management	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4	
		2.9	Acts, Policies and Provisions for Persons with Disabilities	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	
	Elective Courses	2.10	Elective Courses (Choose any one from first two i.e. a and b and any one from the remaining as per the disability specialisation)								4		
		a	Reading and Reflective Practices	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2		
		b	Disability, SEDGs, and Gender	-	-	-	-	-	-	-			
		c	Visual Supports for Learners with Autism (ASD)	-	-	-	-	-	-	2			
		d	Historical and Contemporary Issues in Education of Deaf in India (HI)	-	-	-	-	-	-				
		e	Listening and Spoken Language Therapy (HI)	-	-	-	-	-	-				
		f	Working with Learners with Intellectual Disability having High Support Needs (ID)	-	-	-	-	-	-				
		g	Management and Supporting Learners with Severe and Multiple Disabilities (MD)	-	-	-	-	-	-				
		h	Integrating Skills and Activity Participation (MD)	-	-	-	-	-	-				
		i	Research Based Practices and Therapeutic Interventions for Supporting Learners with Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD)	-	-	-	-	-	-				
		j	Education of Learners with Visual Impairment from Past to Present (VI)	-	-	-	-	-	-				
3.	Disciplinary / Inter-disciplinary courses	One/two discipline(s) from any of the school curricular areas.		8	12	12	12	12	8	-	-	64	
		3.1	Language										
		3.2	Physical Sciences (Physics, Chemistry, etc.)										
		3.3	Biological Sciences										

CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

[illegible]

2.4. Student Induction Program (Semester-1, 2 weeks Duration)

Student Induction Program is common to all pupil-teachers across stages & disability specializations. The two-week student induction program is proposed to welcome students to higher education and to orient them about the course. ‘Student preparedness’ is the keyword for SIP. The students come from different socio-economic backgrounds, so they must get familiar with mentors, institutions, peers, and disciplines. The program will help to identify and address issues of attitude, barriers and challenges, concern, and positivity towards people with disabilities. This will be done through linked activities and interactions with various stakeholders. Simulated exercises on disabilities, Watching & making short videos, role-play, debates, discussions, street play, Film watching & reflections, Puppet shows, chart making, poster making, cartoon strips, etc. may be used for the activities of Recognizing & appreciating Diversity, understanding Disabilities, use of assistive devices for intervention and Exposure to Communication systems/ modes of persons with disabilities (Braille, Sign language, AAC, etc.). Visits to early intervention centers, special schools, Integrated & Inclusive schools, therapy centers, skill training centers, NGOs, and Families of Children With disabilities can be organized. Interaction with PwDs, special teachers, classroom teachers, discussions with peers & different stakeholders, etc. can also be done during the program.

2.5 Foundations of General, Special & Inclusive Education (Semester-1 to 8, 30 Credits)

Foundation papers are common to all students regardless of stage, Discipline, and disability specializations. This category consists of 19 courses and is considered fundamental for the basic discipline of education, special education, and inclusive education, as well as for preparing special educators to teach in special and inclusive settings. The courses based on the disciplines of philosophy, psychology, sociology, history, political sciences, economics, and policy studies in context show the true nature of education as an interdisciplinary discipline/subject. Curriculum Development, Adaptation, and Evaluation papers are developed while focusing on specific stages, i.e., Foundational, preparatory, Middle, and Secondary. Ten elective papers are suggested, and students must opt for any two papers.

Evolution of Indian Education & disability Discourse (Semester-1, 4 Credits):

The course will enable learners to understand the historical development of Indian education & disability Discourse in context. The course allows the students to understand the evolution of Indian education, starting from the Vedic period till today’s contemporary world of modern Indian education, wherein they witness the specific changes in the concept and contexts of education in changing times. The course also traces developments and shifts in the disability discourse through time. The course aims to orient students regarding constitutional values and provisions for Children with Special needs, including Specific commissions, policies, programs, acts, and Curriculum Frameworks at national and international levels. It will also help students to understand the role of Major Judicial Judgements in Education and Special Education, Swadeshi and

Nationalist Attempts at Educational Reforms, and exploration in the context of challenges & need fulfillment of CWSNs will be done.

Human Development, Deviations & Educational Psychology (Semester-3, 4 Credits)

The course is designed to familiarize learners with the dynamic aspects of human growth and development over the life span with different perspectives and deviations from typical development that can manifest in various forms, including developmental disorders, behavioral issues, and social challenges. Learners will gain a deeper understanding of the theoretical Perspective on human development and its application in the classroom, an overview of fundamental concepts and principles of Indian psychology, Such as concept of *Jiva, mana (Antahkaran), Atman, Purusharth Vivechan*, theory of *Pancha-Koshiya Vikas, Antargyan*, Concept of *Trigunatit Vayaktitva*, Patanjali Yog Sutra, Yogic Meditation, Buddhistic Meditation and Educational Psychology in global contexts. It explores the cognitive, emotional, and social processes involved in learning across diverse educational settings.

Introduction to Disabilities (Semester-4, 4 Credits)

The course is intended to provide deep knowledge and understanding of different types of disabilities to prospective Special educators. It covers foundational concepts and explores the various models of disability. It introduces key frameworks like the ICF and DSM-5. Specifically, it provides an understanding of the RPWD Act (2016), which outlines the various recognized disabilities and the provisions for persons with those disabilities. The course also examines the characteristics and needs of various disabilities. Emphasizing inclusion, it addresses government responsibilities, certification processes, and legal protections to foster a supportive environment for individuals with disabilities. The course also intends to develop sensitivity toward persons with disabilities, essential when working and teaching children with disabilities.

Learning, Teaching, Assessment & Evaluation (Semester-6, 2 Credits)

This course will help learners understand learning theories and how these theories translate into teaching and learning actions. As a continuous process, assessment and evaluation focuses on identifying and monitoring the students' progress or difficulties. The course addresses the learning needs of students with disabilities and the support that the teacher needs to address them in diverse educational settings, including special and inclusive environments.

Equitable and Inclusive Education (Semester-6, 2 Credits)

The course is designed to develop an understanding of equitable and inclusive education and addressing diversity in the mainstream classroom. It is also formulated so that the learners

will know the pedagogical practices and recognize ways different stakeholders can collaborate to achieve inclusive education success.

Philosophical & Sociological Perspectives of Special & Inclusive Education (Semester-7, 2 Credits)

The discourse on Philosophical and Sociological Perspectives of Special & Inclusive Education will enable student-teachers to explore its importance and need and provide hands-on experience engaging with diverse communities, children, and schools. It also describes the various educational agencies that propagate education in our society. It throws light on the contributions of philosophers in education and inclusive education and tries to connect the sociological and philosophical foundation in the special and inclusive education field.

Curriculum Development, Adaptation, and Evaluation (Stage Specific) (Semester-7, 2 Credits)

The curriculum is the heart of any educational system. As is the curriculum, so is the educative process. This stage-specific course will provide a basic understanding of the concepts and approaches to curriculum development as per the needs and requirements of the particular stage, i.e., foundation stage, preparatory stage, middle stage, and secondary stage. It intends to develop the capacities of learners to design a curriculum keeping in view the special needs of children with disabilities. Learners are expected to go beyond the 3Rs with a broad understanding of 21st-century learning. The Prospective teachers would also develop requisite literacy skills and suitable adaptations for curricular transactions. It will also equip them with the knowledge and tools necessary to create inclusive and effective educational plans for individuals with disabilities.

Perspectives on School Leadership and Management (Semester-8, 4 Credits)

With evolving educational policies, particularly in the context of NEP 2020, school leadership and management are crucial for enhancing outcomes for students of diverse abilities. Effective leadership influences teacher capacity and school climate and fosters positive change through digital transformation and strategic initiatives. This course promotes a comprehensive understanding of educational contexts, future growth opportunities, and collaboration with school leaders. It emphasizes creating safe, inclusive spaces where all learners can thrive, engaging with parents, listening to learners and teachers, and ensuring accessibility (Indian Sign Language, Braille, and other supportive systems).

Acts, Policies, and Provisions for Persons with Disabilities (Semester-8, 2 Credits)

The course will enable student teachers to get comprehensive knowledge of various acts and policies related to education in general and the education of persons with disabilities in particular. It will discuss the acts and policies concerning national and international contexts in detail. The learners are expected to develop critical and reflective thinking on the acts and policies and establish the linkage with existing provisions and schemes to protect the rights of persons with disabilities and empower them with equitable and quality education.

Elective courses (Semester-8, 2, 2 Credits)

Elective courses are provided as additional courses aimed at developing professional competencies among student teachers, wherein students can opt for any two of the following papers according to their choice and specialization. Students can Choose any one from the first two, i.e., a and b, and anyone from the remaining as per the disability specialization. These are (A) Reading and Reflective Practices, (B) Disability, SEDGs, and Gender, and disability specialization i.e. (C) Visual Supports for Learners with Autism (ASD), (D) Historical and Contemporary Issues in Education of Deaf in India (HI) (E) Listening and Spoken Language Therapy (HI) (F) Working with Learners with Intellectual Disability having High Support Needs (ID)(G) Management and Supporting Learners with Severe and Multiple Disabilities (MD)(H) Integrating Skills and Activity Participation (MD) (I) Research-Based Practices and Therapeutic Interventions for Supporting Learners with Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD)(J) Education of Learners with Visual Impairment from Past to Present (VI)

The reading and reflective Practices course is skill-based and activity-oriented. It is designed to allow learners to enhance their reading and writing skills from a professional perspective and apply them suitably to students with disabilities. The prime aim of the Second elective, Disability, SEDGs, and Gender, is to understand the intersectionality of disability with Gender and other Socio-Economically disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs). The purpose is to teach human oneness, value, and respect for persons with disabilities regardless of their socio-cultural identities, gender, geographical conditions, and socio-economic backgrounds. This course also aims to create awareness among the learners about the legal provisions for empowering persons with disabilities belonging to different socio-economically disadvantaged groups (SEDGs). The third and fourth electives are disability-specific courses to develop foundational knowledge and skills among learners.

2.6 Disciplinary/ Inter-disciplinary Courses (Semester-1 to 6, 64 Credits)

Knowledge is comprehensive and truly interdisciplinary. Studying with disciplines is the trend and very basic to human potential at earlier ages. Teachers need to have a deep conceptual and contextual understanding of the subject/discipline for teaching subjects at a school level. The ISITEP aims to prepare student-teachers to have deep knowledge about the topic and its usability in life. It also aimed to provide opportunities for student teachers to choose among various disciplines as a major in a discipline associated with one of the 29 curriculum framework (ISITEP) curricular areas in the school education curriculum (48 credits or 64 credits). The chosen subject major will be from a discipline of one of the curricular areas, specifically from the school education curriculum, such as Languages, Arts Education, Physical Education, Vocational Education, Social Science & Humanities, Interdisciplinary Area, Mathematics and Computational Thinking, and Science.

Student-teachers should be encouraged to choose subjects to teach two subjects at the school level, precisely the foundational, preparatory, or middle stage. Student teachers can take up

courses of study relating to a chosen Major (48 Credits) relating to an academic discipline and courses relating to another academic discipline (16 Credits). The courses (relating to a discipline other than the discipline chosen as the Major) will also be based on one of the curricular areas included in the school education curriculum, such as Languages, Arts Education, Physical Education, Vocational Education, Social Science and Humanities, Interdisciplinary Area, Mathematics and Computational Thinking, and Science. This will help broaden the knowledge domain and number of teaching subjects at the school level.

2.7 Stage & Disability Specific Content -cum- Pedagogy Courses (Semester-3 to 6, 16 Credits)

The Integrated Special and Inclusive Teacher Education Program (ISITEP) is aligned with NEP-2020. This dual-major undergraduate program will develop cohorts of passionate, competent, committed, and skilled special education teachers capable of providing quality education and training for students with disabilities.

Teachers must continuously develop their skills to restructure subject matter for better student comprehension. They need to create content-specific teaching and assessment strategies, as research shows that teachers' expertise in subject matter and pedagogy is essential for effective learning. Content-cum-Pedagogy courses are crucial for integrating these elements, equipping future teachers to design developmentally appropriate learning experiences for Students at all levels. These courses provide training in various pedagogical techniques, including multi-level teaching and strategies for teaching children with disabilities. They also emphasize the use of technology to enhance learning and assessment. Student-teachers engage in experiential learning and incorporate arts and sports into their teaching practices. Practicum experiences enable student-teachers to choose practical pedagogical approaches to improve learning outcomes, including socio-emotional development. The courses include Stage & disability-specific content cum Pedagogy, i.e., FPMS and specialization in autism spectrum disorder (ASD), Hearing Impairment (HI), Intellectual Disability (ID), Multiple Disabilities (MD), Specific Learning Disability (SLD), and Visual Impairment (VI) at each stage respectively.

(a) Stage & Disability Specific Content -cum- Pedagogy Courses (Foundational Stage)- (ASD/HI/ID/MD/SLD/VI)

The foundational stage, covering the period from birth to 8 years old, is crucial because it leverages a time of significant brain development in children. It focuses on the child's overall development via the play-way method and exploration, which leads to social, emotional, and physical development. The teacher adapts the Five-Step Learning Process to present the concept, enhance understanding and comprehension abilities, and help the children apply the same in their practice. Play, Care, and learning goals are the key elements of this stage. Quality and student-centered ECCE can set the foundation for good health, nutrition, learning success, and physical, social-emotional, and cognitive development. The focus is on developing the underlying knowledge regarding language and concepts that predict later educational performance. Early diagnosis and the implementation of appropriate therapies

and educational strategies can significantly enhance development and quality of life. These years typically denote the last two years of the early childhood phase, where the children will explore being independent and, at the same time, being firmly attached to family and relationships within. They are getting better at controlling their behaviors and enjoying making friends and being a friend. They are good at sorting things into categories, basing their thinking on reality, accuracy, and emerging knowledge on cause and effect or understanding the multiple aspects of a given situation. The teacher plays the role of the person who will be shown care, attention, and support as the role of the mother is getting weaned.

The comprehensive coursework focuses on special needs education to support students in either inclusive or special school settings, covering topics like inclusive teaching strategies, assistive technologies, individualized education plans (IEPs), creating a stimulating environment, establishing a daily routine to provide stability, establish a mix of free play (that includes Art/Drama/Dance) and structured activities. Further, the teacher has to routinely engage with parents in the child's learning process through regular communication and involvement in activities with the parent or caregiver. The teacher shall use observations, checklists, and developmental screenings as assessment tools, which are normative and criterion-referenced.

At this level, the ISITEP teacher preparation program has eight courses, two credits each, covering all types of disabilities, i.e., ASD/HI/ID/MD/SLD/VI. The comprehensive coursework focuses on Early Identification of Developmental Delays and Disabilities – Importance and Methods, Early Intervention (0 To 3 Years) – Importance, Assessment and Teaching Strategies, Early Childhood Special Education (3 To 6 Years) – Cross-Disability Approach, Assessment Across Developmental Domains, Teaching Strategies for Children with Disabilities in Early Childhood, Role Of Family & Community in Early Intervention and Early Childhood Education, Implication Of Disabilities and Curricular Adaptation For Classes 1 & 2, Initiatives For Early Childhood Special & Inclusive Education.

- 1) **Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD):** At the foundational stage, Stage & Disability-Specific Content-cum-Pedagogy Courses of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) provide aspiring special educators with an in-depth understanding of early intervention, developmental strategies, and methods to assist students with spectrum disorder. At (0) to 3 years, it will aid the special educator in recognizing the early signs and symptoms and developing appropriate strategies to facilitate children with ASD. Besides, at 3 to 6 years, this shall foster in strengthening the expertise in curriculum adaptation, foundational grounds to build an inclusive environment that caters to sensory needs, foster communication skills, promote numeracy and literacy skills, and early intervention and adapting instructions will help in the transitional phase to Grade 1 & 2, among students with autism spectrum disorder.
- 2) **Hearing Impairment (HI):** At the foundational stage, Stage & disability-specific Content -cum- Pedagogy Courses of Hearing Impairment (HI) equip special Educators to understand the barriers and challenges of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) and ways

to mitigate the difficulties. Besides extensively covering the impact of hearing impairment on communication, language, and literacy development, the foundational stage courses help the learners to learn about other developmental domains and strategies for intervening at birth (0) to 3 and 3 to 6. This facilitates Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN), school readiness, and Grades 1 and 2 instructional strategies.

- 3) **Intellectual Disability (ID):** Specialization in Intellectual Disability (ID) will enable the student teachers to work in special, inclusive, and home-based environments, as the case may be. The foundation level focuses on early detection and intervention of children with developmental delay or at risk for disability in the 0 to 3 years, preschool education in 3 to 6 years, and classes 1 and 2 or special school education in 7 and 8 years. The play-way method of teaching and working with a multidisciplinary team is highlighted, considering the children's age and the condition's nature.
- 4) **Multiple Disabilities (MD):** Early intervention is critical to improving the long-term outcomes for children with multiple disabilities (MD). Working with families or caregivers is essential as they are a good source for drawing on their observations and information as they spend energy and emotion with their infants. Here, the focus is on three dimensions- namely, the readiness of the child to school, the readiness of the family, school/teachers/community, and the transition for ECE to grades I and II. The focus on developing fundamental skills such as emergent or early reading, writing, arithmetic, and basic problem-solving is specific to the age of 6-8 years (Primary School -Grades I and II) for CWMDs. Student teachers will learn to plan and implement activities to enhance fine motor skills, language development, and early critical thinking.
- 5) **Specific Learning Disability (SLD):** Specialization in Specific Learning Disability will provide student-teacher with a valuable skill set that will help in comprehending the difference between various types of learning deficits and co-morbid conditions, which shall assist in creating a diverse and inclusive classroom learning environment for students with learning deficits at the foundational stage for better academic and holistic development of the child. This course will equip them thoroughly with the Early signs, symptoms, and risk factors attached, as well as what measures and collaborative efforts are required for intervention ((0) to 3 years). Additionally, it addresses the challenges and fosters the overall development of the student by providing a supportive learning environment, supporting specific needs, and providing differentiated instructions for 3 to 6 years. Apart from this, the course opted to introduce student-teacher with diverse information about assistive technology and individualized education plans (IEP) and build confidence & competency to accommodate the smooth transition to Grades 1& 2.
- 6) **Visual impairment (VI):** The prospective teachers opted for a Visual impairment (VI) specialization, which required an understanding of various aspects relating to the education of children with blindness and low vision, such as the psycho-social and educational implications of blindness and low vision and methods and techniques of

teaching various subjects to these children at different stages of education. Further, these teachers are also helped to acquire much-needed practical skills and competencies that will facilitate their task of teaching children with visual impairment at the foundational stage of education, including early identification of visual impairment importance and methods, early intervention (0 to 3 years): importance, assessment, and teaching strategies, and early childhood special education (3 to 6 years) utilizing a cross-disability approach. Additionally, this includes evaluation across developmental domains, teaching strategies for children with visual impairment in early childhood, the role of family and community in early childhood care and education, implications of visual impairment and curricular adaptation for classes 1 and 2, and initiatives for early childhood special and inclusive education.

2) Stage & disability specific Content -cum- Pedagogy Courses (Preparatory Stage)- (ASD/HI/ID/MD/SLD/VI)

The Preparatory stage of the Stage & Disability Specific Content-Cum-Pedagogy Courses lays the groundwork for aspiring teacher-educators to become competent enough with the skills to be applied in an inclusive classroom. This philosophy understands and addresses the diverse and unique needs and caliber of students with disabilities, which results in each student feeling empowered and full of scope and potential. The Preparatory stage, sometimes called “preteens,” is when many develop into more independent individuals, explore friendships, understand appropriate social cues/contexts, and become physically stronger.

A thorough understanding of the theoretical foundations underpinning the developmental framework of the Preparatory stage is essential for comprehending the nature of educators' work with 9- to 11-year-olds. These years are best utilized by providing active learning experiences such as hands-on activities or play-based events where children are physically active, not confined to sitting and listening. This approach aligns with their readiness to explore, experiment, and engage with peers across physical, cognitive, social, and emotional domains. Children in this stage often prefer outdoor activities, leveraging their physical stamina and endurance to explore and play with minimal parental guidance. Friendships and peer interactions become more significant, marking a transition from preschool-sector support services to school-based support practices. During the Preparatory stage, children also learn societal values, and the primary developmental task can be termed integration - both within the individual and the social context. Special Educators pave the way for young learners and their families, who may experience anxiety and apprehension about transitioning to school in special or inclusive programs.

Academic and school experiences during this stage lay the foundation for future academic achievements, social relationships, and personal development. Despite their abilities, many students with disabilities find the academic and non-academic school environment ‘non-inclusive.’ Many students struggle because of the mismatch between teaching and learning styles. Many face restrictions in social participation and interactions, and many experience bullying and abuse from educators and their peers, which significantly impacts their confidence, self-esteem, and relationships in their adolescence and adulthood and has the

potential to influence the trajectory of their entire lives. A supportive, inclusive, or special school environment involving general and special educators, families, and communities can unlock these students' potential through continuous and comprehensive support.

For Classes III to V, the teaching-learning process requires a balance of free and structured activities. Activity-based teaching remains vital for concrete conceptual understanding. Assessments aim to gain greater insight into the child's learning aspects, including language comprehension, reading ability, articulation, group work skills, observation, classification, drawing, and other skills constituting learning at this stage. Interactive and flexible classroom arrangements allow easy interaction between children and the teacher, avoiding traditional teacher-centered modes.

The ISITEP program proposes eight papers at the preparatory stage, two exclusively for disabilities and six pedagogical papers, such as Languages (2), Mathematics, the World Around Us, Art Education, Physical Education, and Yoga.

1)Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD): In the Preparatory Stage, students opting for ASD will be provided with disability-specific courses from classes 3 to 5, where specific adaptation and consideration are required for children with autism spectrum disorder. The content will focus on building a familiar context within the core subject through visual support, structured routine, and sensory needs intervention. An individualized educational approach will be adopted to promote active learning by rendering positive reinforcement. Social communication and a collaborative approach will induce social interactive skills and build a cohesive learning environment in collaboration with family members, therapists, and experts to support students with spectrum disorder. Specific areas must be focused like Language for better and clear communication with the use of visual cues, teaching Mathematics with the use of manipulative and visual representation of math concepts, and The world around us, which will provide experience about hands-on learning experience about the surrounding through exploration and assistive technology support, Arts, and physical education that will present with the opportunities to express themselves and act as a communication tool, improving fine and gross motor skills. Besides, various assessment tools and alternative curriculum adaptations can be used to assess skills and better understand student conditions with autism spectrum disorder.

2)Hearing Impairment (HI): At the preparatory and middle stages, Students with a specialization in Hearing Impairment (HI) will be provided with two courses on this specific disability: Assessment Intervention of Hearing Loss and Pedagogical Supports for Education of Students with Hearing Impairment, along with the content and pedagogy of school subjects. The school pedagogy subjects include Hindi, English, Math, Environmental Science, Art, Yoga, & Physical Education. The focus of HI at Grades 3rd to 5th is on instilling an inclusive and unique classroom environment. The educator could build communication skills by integrating assistive technologies, Indian Sign Language, speech therapy, Assistive Learning Aids like headphones, and amplification technologies to improve access to spoken language. Use visual supports like charts and graphic organizers for better

content understanding and learning. This course also aims to provide supportive skill training to students with HI in areas like communications, different approaches, use of AT, and developing grade- and disability-specific TLMs to promote accessibility. Student teachers must observe and learn from experienced teacher educators through a demonstration approach appropriate for effective instructional strategies for children with hearing impairments.

3)Intellectual Disability (ID): In the preparatory stage of Intellectual Disability (ID) specialization, the educational focus is on classes 3 to 5 in inclusive schools and at the primary level in special schools. The content adaptation and teaching methods focus on Individualized Educational Programs (IEPs) and group teaching based on the context. This course will equip the student teacher to understand the language learning and emotional and psychological needs of children with ID. In addition to this, it will provide a 360-degree view of textbook content analysis and the kind of evaluative methods required. The course has innovative teaching methods, approaches, and Teacher-Learning Materials for children with ID. It encourages student-teachers to move from rote learning and enhance the student's application skills with ID through relevant hands-on experience and activity-based learning. Alternative and adaptive curriculum designs can be adopted per the learners' needs. The course will teach student-teachers to construct an environment that provides learners with a sound socio-emotional learning environment to develop their skills and competency, allowing them to explore and engage in the learning process.

4) Multiple Disabilities (MD): For students with multiple disabilities (MD), some development related to motor abilities, communication, and social-emotional experiences with peers may be limited when they reach Preparatory School. The primary task of integration and alignment within and across the social contexts is salience for this stage. At this stage, it is essential to balance the structure within which teaching-learning experiences occur and ensure flexibility and freedom to explore at their own pace and the nature of needs. The gradual shift from concrete to abstract requires activity-based learning approaches that are suitably scaffolded and delivered through Universal Instruction design. Developing higher-order thinking in students requires creativity, adaptability, and a keen understanding of each student's unique needs. The assessment and evaluation must be comprehensive, and a multi-disciplinary team must be engaged to assess the student's strengths, the nature of the Augmentative Alternative Communication tools they need, and behavior and sensory assessment to ensure equity for students to participate. Assessment and evaluation of the student's knowledge and comprehension need to include structured observation, portfolios of student work, alternative assessment such as performance-based assessment, and adaptation of the evaluation. In this stage, teacher educators can create a comprehensive and practical assessment and evaluation process that supports the diverse needs of middle school students with multiple disabilities and promotes their academic, social, and personal development.

5) Specific Learning Disability (SLD): The course will provide the student-teacher with a comprehensive lens to understand the disability, its types, and screening and assessment tools. The student teacher will learn, understand, and develop a skill for conducting

assessments across the learning domains: Reading, Writing, and mathematics. They will learn the skills to create comprehensive evaluation and program planning tools. The preparatory stage familiarizes the student-teacher with the strategies and techniques required for intervention in various areas to investigate the problem area and work through it accordingly. The course will allow the student teachers to work with the experts and clinicians to prepare them to apply pull-out or individualized educational plans. Additionally, the student-teacher will be informed about the provisions for children with learning disabilities during the examination. Besides the appropriate use of AT and TLMs, Demonstrative methods must be applied to promote accessibility to knowledge and information

6) Visual Impairment (VI): The Visual Impairment (VI) specialization will equip student teachers with an understanding of various aspects relating to the education of children with blindness and low vision, such as the psycho-social and educational implications of blindness and low vision and methods and techniques of teaching various subjects to these children at different stages of education. This course will provide the chance to observe and interact with students of VI to understand instruction methods, adaptation, and use of assistive technology. Structured and explicit instruction is required to break down complex concepts into simple ones and adapt appropriate TLMs such as Braille transcripts, audiobooks, tactile learning tools, large print, magnification tools, devices, and specialized educational software to promote autonomy and decision-making. Support skill training is required for the student-teacher to cater to students with VI by appropriately using and applying multiple formats that foster accessibility. Designing age-appropriate TLMs will help student teachers understand specific visual needs and the preferred learning style of the students with VI and simultaneously adapt the teaching techniques and strategies for students to actively engage and participate in the teaching-learning process to promote access to facts and information. AT, a multisensory approach to UDL, must be adopted to develop much-needed skills and knowledge-building capacity to support students with visual impairment. The primary stress is upon fulfilling the needs of persons with disabilities at Preparatory Stages I and II and providing specific pedagogical strategies for teaching subjects such as Hindi, English, Mathematics, Environmental Studies (EVS), Physical Education, and yoga.

3. Stage & disability specific Content -cum- Pedagogy Courses (Middle Stage)- (ASD/HI/ID/MD/SLD/VI)

The middle school of school education encompassing grades 6th to 8th. This period is marked by the rapid growth of students, which is characterized by physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development, along with a strong sense of identity. This stage of pre-adolescence features child-like curiosity and a desire for independence. This stage is significant in the student's educational journey; it is a vital bridge between the Preparatory and Secondary stages, laying the foundation for a social, academic, and personal sense of self and growth. In this stage, the student explores a broader curriculum primarily built on the preparatory stage's curricular and pedagogical learning experiences. The students at this stage are ages 11 to 14 and are coping with their physical and emotional developments and demands in the

educational setting. The students now learn from different teachers for each subject. This is a stage where students notice patterns and see events and objects in a particular alignment towards an expected outcome.

As envisaged in the NEP 2020, “The Middle Stage will comprise three years of education, building on the pedagogical and curricular style of Preparatory Stage, but with an introduction of subject teachers for learning and discussion of more abstract concepts in each subject that students will be ready at this stage across the sciences, mathematics, arts, social sciences, and humanities. Specialized Courses for Middle Group (Grades 6-8) includes several targeted modules designed to enhance the educational experience for middle school students. Specialized Course I focuses on advanced pedagogical strategies tailored to middle school students' diverse cognitive and socio-emotional needs, emphasizing differentiated instruction to cater to various learning styles. Specialized Course II builds on the foundations of the first course by delving deeper into subject-specific methodologies and integrating technology into the classroom. This course also covers classroom management techniques and formative assessment practices to boost student engagement and learning outcomes.

At the middle stage in the ISITEP Program, there are eight papers in total, two exclusively for disabilities and six pedagogy papers, namely, Hindi (L1), English (L2), Mathematics, Science, Social Science, Physical Education (PE), Yoga, and Vocational Education.

The course provides several opportunities for the teacher trainees to develop pedagogical and interpersonal skills. The curriculum design has the knowledge, information, and abilities crucial for effectively teaching students with special needs. The teacher trainee will be equipped with comprehensive modules to promote inclusivity in the classroom. Diverse learning experiences will be provided, including school observation, TLM design, hands-on experience, practical teaching exposure, supportive skill training, and the use and application of assistive tools.

1)Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD): In the middle stage of autism spectrum disorder (ASD), teaching-learning content in classes 6th to 8th stresses suitable content adaptation, adopting teaching methods, Assistive technologies, and teaching learning material (TLM). The middle-stage course in ASD will furnish the skills of aspiring special educators with a comprehensive understanding of the conditions, knowledge of pedagogy, implementation of IEP, and appropriate strategies for behavior management. Special/ Inclusive schools provide students with specialized classrooms, small group instructions, a sensory-friendly learning environment, and trained staff. The student teacher will learn evidence-based practices, effective collaboration, knowledge to conduct ongoing assessments, and effective utilization of assistive technology.

2) Hearing Impairment (HI): The Hearing Impairment (HI) specialization at the preparatory and middle stages provides two courses on disabilities: Assessment Intervention of Hearing Loss and Pedagogical Supports for Education of Students with Hearing Impairment, along with the content and pedagogy of school subjects. This course will equip pupil teachers with different types of hearing loss, their impact on communication, and the

range of auditory processing challenges students may face. Additionally, it will promote proficiency in sign language, speech-reading, and other alternative communication methods, as well as Skills to enhance auditory skills through listening activities and exercises. The future special educator disability specialist will be able to create an accessible learning environment **by** Modifying teaching strategies and materials to accommodate students' hearing loss, promote language development, and build social skills. They will be able to provide Continuous assessment **of** students' progress and adapt instruction accordingly.

3) Intellectual Disability (ID): In the Middle stage of Intellectual Disability (ID), teaching-learning content in classes 6 to 8 focuses on suitable adaptation in content, teaching methods, and teaching learning material (TLM). In special schools, preparation for vocational education is also included, considering the age of the children and the need for preparation for occupation skills if they cannot learn academics due to cognitive limitations.

4) Multiple Disabilities (MD): In middle school, content for students with Multiple Disabilities (MD) involves using particular strategies that address individualized needs to access the curriculum. Differentiated instructions tailored to accommodate different learning styles and abilities use hands-on and experiential activities related to real-world settings that cater to their needs. Collaborative learning uses a universal instruction design bridged with appropriate scaffolds aligned to the student's level, and multiple modes of assessment and evaluation are adapted to the student. Inquiry-based learning, hands-on learning, and mixed-ability grouping are ways to develop inductive reasoning skills. The differentiated needs of students with multiple disabilities require integrating assistive technology tools and devices that support the students in accessing educational materials.

5) Specific Learning Disability (SLD): The course will provide aspiring future teacher educators with a comprehensive understanding of SLD and different types of SLDs (dyslexia, dysgraphia, and dyscalculia), their characteristics, and their impact on learning. It will hone the Assessment skills by underlining their Ability to identify students with potential SLDs through screening and diagnostic assessments. In the special/inclusive classroom, the pupil-teacher can deliver differentiated instructions and provide accommodations and modifications to meet the diverse needs of students with SLD. Regular assessments will track student progress and adjust interventions as needed.

6) Visual Impairment (VI): The Visual Impairment (VI) specialization courses aim to equip future teachers with comprehensive knowledge and skills for educating children with blindness and low vision. This includes understanding the psycho-social and educational impacts of these conditions and mastering methods and techniques for teaching various subjects to these children at different academic stages.

4) Stage & disability specific Content -cum- Pedagogy Courses (Secondary Stage)- (ASD/HI/ID/MD/SLD/VI)

The secondary stage of school education covers Grades 9 – 12, ages 14 to 18 years or more. In the four years, Student-teachers in the secondary grade shall develop a solid foundational knowledge of pedagogy and subject matter expertise.

In the ISITEP program at a secondary level, a student needs to cover five papers in one particular specialization. There are three specific disability courses for each disability and two pedagogy papers, so 44 papers are available, including all types of disabilities. I.e., ASD/HI/ID/MD/SLD/VI. Credit-wise, a student needs to complete 16 credits in courses in this domain. A total of 08 Credits courses will be offered in disability-specific areas and 08 credits in the Pedagogy area as per the following:

- 1) Disability Specific Course I (Identification & Need Assessment)
- 2) Disability Specific Course II (Intervention & Teaching Strategies)
- 3) Disability Specific Course III (Technology & Family Issues)
- 4) Pedagogy -1 Course - I & II and
- 5) Pedagogy - 2 Course - I & II

For each area of disability specialization, the student selects three compulsory courses that will be offered. A student needs to choose two pedagogical course areas, and accordingly, students need to complete two courses in each pedagogical area. The students must opt for pedagogical courses in two areas/streams in line with the discipline courses they had opted for (as offered by the University/HEI under component- 3). A student of the secondary level ISITEP Program needs to select any two Pedagogical areas/streams from the list given below:

1. Agriculture
2. Arts (Visual & Performing)
3. Commerce, Accountancy & Business Studies
4. Computer Science
5. Home Science
6. Language
7. Mathematics
8. Physical Education
9. Science (Biological)
10. Science (Physical)
11. Social Science (Eco., Geo, His, & Pol.Sc.)
12. Vocational Education

1)Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD): In the secondary stage of autism spectrum disorder are three disability specialization courses. It recognizes its complexity and the challenges faced by individuals with this invisible disability. It provides student teachers with a foundational understanding of autism, its characteristics, and the diverse ways it manifests. It emphasizes the importance of recognizing the unique needs and learning styles of autistic individuals. Beyond identifying autistic individuals, the course delves into the systemic barriers that hinder their inclusion and progress. By examining the interplay of infrastructure, societal attitudes, and educational systems, the course equips educators with a critical perspective on the challenges faced by autistic students. The ability to employ both standardized and informal assessment tools is central to the course, and it will enable future

special educators to accurately evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of autistic students and develop a tailored intervention plan.

2) Hearing Impairment (HI): In the secondary stage of hearing impairment (HI), there are three disability specialization courses, two similar to the other three stages, and one more psycho-social and family issues course. Other than this, it has pedagogical courses that are suitable for choosing. Since hearing impairment is a heterogeneous group varying in modes and methods of communication, the oral/aural, Indian Sign Language (ISL), and use of educational bilingualism have been aptly covered across the four stages along with other supportive skills such as ICT, technology, and assistive devices.

3) Intellectual Disability (ID): In the Secondary stage of Intellectual Disability (ID), content cum pedagogy for classes 9 to 12 is in focus. The initial focus of this course is to provide opportunities for student teachers to develop their skills to assess the learning needs of students with intellectual disabilities accurately. The curriculum also emphasizes the importance of understanding the diverse manifestations of intellectual disability and the impact of various factors on individual development. Adaptations, accommodation, and modifications in the curricular content and teaching methods are included, considering the extent of abstract learning expected in the secondary stage. Vocational education is incorporated for special school students who cannot learn academics at the secondary level. The ISITEP curriculum provides a comprehensive overview of intervention strategies for students with intellectual disabilities. It equips educators with the knowledge and skills to select and implement effective teaching methods, considering their students' individual needs and learning styles. The curriculum also highlights the crucial role of family and the environment in educating and developing students with intellectual disabilities. It emphasizes the importance of building solid partnerships with families and creating inclusive environments that support student success.

4) Multiple Disabilities (MD): The secondary stage is a crucial transition point in the educational system for students with multiple disabilities (MD) who want to explore school-to-higher education, vocational education training, or school-to-work opportunities.

Prospective teachers shall be equipped with effective teaching strategies to support students with multiple disabilities, integrating ICT and assistive technology to help students and promote the integration of reflective practice in educational research and practice. Methods for teaching specific subjects shall be done through collaborative learning by sharing with peers that promote ways to share problems and strategies, guidance from experienced educators, learning techniques for assessing student learning, and instructional effectiveness when working with students with multiple disabilities.

Semester III, covering eight credits, focuses on Multiple Disability – Identification and Assessment, Intervention and Teaching Strategies; the third course is on Assistive Technology, Collaborative Programming, and Family. Semesters IV and V include subjects such as Languages, Commerce, Sciences, Social Sciences, Family Ecology and Home Science, Computer Science, Physical education, Arts Education, Vocational Education, and

Agriculture. The subject-specific disciplines that are offered have two credits each. In teaching each of these subjects, the teacher shall have to design and deliver content that is adapted, modified, simplified, or choose to omit content given the needs of students with multiple disabilities. The elements of appropriate teaching methods are aligned and compatible with developing 21st-century competencies for supporting students with various disabilities.

5) Specific Learning Disability (SLD): This course aims to equip future special educators with a curriculum that stresses the importance of early identification through appropriate screening and assessment tools, and by mastering assessment techniques, student-teachers can accurately diagnose SLD and develop targeted interventions. Apart from this, the course provides the pupil-teacher with an understanding of the specific learning challenges faced by students with SLD. By understanding the factors influencing the quality of life, educators can develop strategies to support students in achieving their full potential and tailoring instruction accordingly. The curriculum also emphasizes the importance of transition planning, preparing students for successful post-secondary education or employment.

6) Visual impairment (VI) -These courses aim to equip future teachers with comprehensive knowledge and skills for educating children with blindness and low vision. This includes understanding the psycho-social and educational impacts of these conditions and mastering methods and techniques for teaching various subjects to these children at different academic stages. The curriculum identifies children with visual impairment and assesses their needs, intervention and teaching strategies, and issues related to quality of life, employability, and family concerning visual impairment.

The pedagogical subjects include Pedagogy -1, Pedagogy -2, Hindi, English, Mathematics, Physical Science, Biological Science, Social Sciences, Commerce & Accountancy, Physical Education & Yoga, Vocational Education, Home Science, Art, Agriculture, and Computer Science, each offered as Course I and II.

2.8 Ability Enhancement & Value-Added Courses (Semester-1 to 8, 28 Credits)

Ability enhancement courses are comprehensive, and the education of CWSNs in a broader context is seen as an essential enterprise for humanity. These courses enable student teachers to understand education from a wider perspective and to locate themselves as valued professionals, one of the graduate attributes of the ISITEP curriculum. It helps in professional upliftment and character building. It deals with the enhancement of capabilities in languages and other areas necessary in life & future development through papers Language-I & language ---II, ISL, Inclusive Arts, Exploring Disability Intercepts in Indian Knowledge Systems and Ethos, Teacher and Society, ICT and Assistive Technology in Special & Inclusive Education, Educational Research and Statistics, Adapted Sports, Nutrition, Yoga and Understanding Self, Life Skills Across Life Span and Citizenship, Sustainability and Environmental Education.

Language I (As per the 8th Schedule of the constitution of India) (Semester-1, 4 Credits)

This comprehensive course is designed to provide student-teachers with the essential skills and knowledge required to effectively preserve and promote linguistic diversity in India, focusing on the 8th Scheduled languages. It has a sample paper on Hindi (Suggestive), one of the 8th scheduled languages. Universities and Institutions can retain this or prepare any other regional language based on the sample provided. The curriculum encompasses many topics, including understanding language acquisition, first language learning, and practical strategies for teaching first languages. It also covers developing language skills and multilingualism, utilizing local resources and the socio-cultural contexts of languages.

Language II: Indian Sign Language (ISL) and English (suggestive) (Semester-2, 4 Credits)

Language II is the language other than in the 8th Schedule of the Constitution of India. It has two sample courses, English and Indian Sign Language (ISL). It is suggested that students opting for specialization in Hearing Impairment take ISL as a mandatory course, and others may either choose ISL or any other non-schedule language. A sample course in English has been provided. Universities and institutions can retain this or prepare for any other language course based on the sample provided. The suggested ISL course will help students understand Indian Sign Language (ISL) and its importance for communicating with Deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals. The content covered includes the basics of ISL, grammar, vocabulary, and the application of ISL in educational settings. This course focuses on inclusion and equity principles to help teachers create a classroom that meets the needs of all students. The course also incorporates practical components, including fieldwork, classroom observations, and community engagement, to effectively provide hands-on experience in ISL.

English(L-2) The course aims to develop language proficiency. It enables students to improve basic communication skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing among English language learners. It is designed to enhance linguistic abilities that enable the students and empower them with practical oral presentation skills. In addition, it encourages student teachers to participate in discussions on various topics and themes. The course also introduces students to using different digital media and technology to develop their communication abilities in English and those of the pupils they would eventually teach.

Inclusive Arts Education ((Semester- 1, 2 Credits)

Art Education is an opportunity to facilitate art among student teachers and the lives they impact. The primary aim of art education is to expose students to various art forms, appreciate, learn, and reflect upon them. Inclusive Arts Education explores the rich field of Indian art and its integration into the education system, focusing on inclusive and accessible art practices. It aims to expose students to using art in teaching, learning, advocacy, and sensitization. The course also emphasizes modifications and adaptations to facilitate the participation of individuals with disabilities, ensuring that all learners have appropriate learning opportunities and evaluative tasks. Through these courses, student teachers will develop the knowledge and understanding of the practice of visual, tactile, and performing arts, including Assistive Technologies (AT) as enablers to explore Arts. Student Teachers

will gain knowledge and articulate ways to apply art education strategies to meet the students' diverse needs while scaffolding students' creative thinking.

Exploring Disability Intercepts in Indian Knowledge Systems and Ethos (Semester-1, 2 Credits)

It is understanding India through its Ancient Knowledge System and exploring disability intercepts. The course comprehensively explores the conceptualization of knowledge and knowledge traditions across central themes such as Education, philosophy, Society, literature, disability representation, etc. Understanding myths and misconceptions and finding ways to preserve the valued concepts is also a part of it. It enables students to understand the status of persons with disabilities in the past and critically trace the references of inclusivity prevailing in Indian society from a multidisciplinary perspective. This evaluation will yield valuable insights and 21st-century skills for rehabilitating and including persons with disabilities.

The role of technology in reviving, storing, and making knowledge accessible to all is also a key focus. It fosters an appreciation for India's diverse traditions while promoting inclusivity and accessibility, ensuring a professional educational approach in special education rooted in Indian philosophical tenets within the classroom setting.

Teacher and Society (Semester-2, 2 Credits)

Special and inclusive education teachers are crucial in nurturing young lives and shaping positive and inspired future generations, specifically CWSNs. NEP 2020 says, 'do everything to empower teachers and help them to do their job as effectively as possible' as teachers are second to mothers in having the opportunity to work with children during the most impressionable years of their lives and contributing so much to the development of both individual and society. The course focuses on developing an understanding among student teachers of the roles of teachers in emerging Indian culture in the context of globalization with efforts to promote national spirit and characteristics in our education system.

ICT and Assistive Technology in Special & Inclusive Education (Semester-5, 2 Credits)

This course equips future educators with the knowledge and skills to leverage Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Assistive Technology (AT) in creating inclusive learning environments for students with diverse needs. With a focus on the Indian context, the course explores various disabilities, including autism spectrum disorder (ASD), Hearing Impairment (HI), Intellectual Disability (ID), Multiple Disabilities (MD), Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD), and Visual Impairment (VI). Through hands-on activities and practical applications, educators will gain expertise in integrating these technologies to enhance student learning outcomes.

Educational Research and Statistics (Semester-6, 2 Credits)

This course aims to equip students with basic educational research and statistics skills essential to everyday situations and solutions to specific problems arising in the classroom or school. The focus will be on applying basic research and statistical concepts and developing skills in interpreting and working with data, enabling students to function effectively as professionals and futuristic-engaged academicians. In today's ever-changing educational

landscape, it is crucial to develop proficient learners by integrating basic research and statistics. Basic research, the keystone of academic study, introduces students to critical theories and methodologies, fostering a deep understanding of their chosen subjects. This foundational knowledge stimulates intellectual curiosity, enhances critical thinking skills, and enables students to evaluate data and identify gaps in their knowledge effectively.

Adapted Sports, Nutrition, Yoga, and Understanding Self (Semester 7, 2 Credits)

Yog is characterized by peace and tranquillity, harmony and health, love and happiness, precision and efficiency. The course seeks to engage special and inclusive student teachers with these ideas. The course focuses on being mindful of self (body, mind, emotions, thoughts, and actions). The components include a brief history of *yog*, principles, and different types and streams of *yog* practices (*Kriyas*, *Āsana*, *Prāṇāyāma*, *Bandha & mudra*, *Dhāraṇa & Dhyāna*, etc.), meditation and reflective practices, and the importance of these aspects in becoming an effective teacher with equal weightage to the theory and practicum. The course also focuses on understanding various adaptations in sports and physical education per the needs of persons with disabilities.

Life Skills Across Life Span (Semester- 8, 2 Credits)

Teaching life skills is essential for fostering independence, social integration, employability, and overall well-being throughout the lifespan of individuals with disabilities. The skills evolve along with the individual with a disability and their environment. Keeping a life span perspective is crucial as it plays a significant role in the holistic development and independence of individuals with special needs throughout their lifespan. It empowers them to lead fulfilling lives and actively participate in their communities.

Positive Behavior Supports (Semester- 2, 2 Credits)

Positive Behaviour Interventions and Support (PBIS) are the current trends in helping students learn and exhibit the appropriate behavior contextually. If planned and implemented correctly, PBIS is one of the best ways to help students in special and inclusive educational settings. The course enables the learners to practice involving the students in PBIS for positive behavior change.

Guidance & Counselling (Semester- 7, 2 Credits)

The guidance and counseling course will empower the learners to understand and apply the counseling and guidance skills to help individuals with disabilities and their families and create a supportive environment around them.

Citizenship, Sustainability and Environmental Education (Semester- 8, 2 Credits)

Promoting inclusive and equitable views is the need of the hour while addressing current global challenges. This work places importance on articulating citizenship and sustainability principles and focusing on the lived experience and needs of people with disabilities.

Essential topics include inclusive environmental policies and accessible, sustainable practices, and the course highlights the role of individuals with disabilities in civic engagement and environmental stewardship. It raises awareness of the links between disability and environmental issues and advocates for the full and effective participation of all citizens in sustainable development.

2.9 School Experience and Internship (Semester-5 to 8, 20 Credits)

School experience and internship are stage-specific special and inclusive components within the specializations of ASD/HI/ID/MD/SLD/VI. In the ISITEP program, this comprehensive Practical and fieldwork starts in the Third Year of the course, semesters 5 to 6, with 20 credits. It facilitates the special educators' hands-on experience through School observation, Demonstration lessons, School-based research projects, Internships in Teaching, Development of TLM, Supportive Skill Training, Assistive Technologies, Functional Academic Skills, Sign Language, Braille, etc.

There is a Symbiotic relationship between school education and teacher education. Teacher preparation is specifically for the students who are studying in schools. ISITEP program is purposefully designed to prepare teachers to teach students with disabilities in special and inclusive education settings. Teaching goes beyond applying theories from basic disciplines like psychology, sociology, and philosophy. Educational decisions must be made based on insights from these areas. Teacher training is primarily a reflective and experiential process. Student-teachers need to connect with children and schools in diverse ways. Interacting with students in the teacher education program is crucial to teachers, parents, and the community. Prospective Special teachers develop their educational judgment through guided practice and reflection on their own and others' teaching practices.

The ISITEP considers school experience, including teaching internships, a vital part of teacher training. It emphasizes the integration of different subjects to create interdisciplinary teaching units, making teaching more meaningful and specific for each type of disability. i.e., Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Hearing Impairment (HI), Intellectual Disabilities (ID), Multiple Disabilities (MD), Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD), and Visual Impairment (VI).

Field engagement and school experiences are crucial components of teacher education programs. They provide aspiring special education teachers with the practical skills and real-world experience necessary to succeed and work in special schools and inclusive classroom settings. They apply theoretical knowledge to real-world situations to support students with diverse learning needs.

The ISITEP program aims to equip competent special educators with the necessary skills and knowledge to support children with special needs. To this end, the program has designed multiple approaches comprising the following components to provide a rich learning experience incorporating a mix of theoretical and practical knowledge applications.

School Observation: The first component before the internship. School observation, also known as field practice, is of 2 credits, and the duration could vary from 4 to 6 weeks. This exercise allows the teacher-trainees to understand the actual special education classroom practices in real-life settings. Student-teachers learn to give differentiated instructions and accommodate each child in the classroom per the learner's needs. Through school observation, aspiring teachers learn about various types of disabilities, classroom management, curriculum adaptation, and the design of IEP; they also know and document classroom activities, multiple teaching practices, and method applications.

Demonstration lesson (Practice teaching): Practice teaching is two credits, and this activity lasts 2 to 3 weeks. These pre-internship practices allow the student-teachers to know about various special education classroom practices and learn about distinct pedagogical skills, diverse learning methods, tools and assessment processes, and classroom management. Apart from this, student teachers showcase the delivery of lesson plans via demonstration and how to apply the lesson plans with appropriate use of pedagogical skills and specialized teaching-learning material. All this will help enhance the student-teacher abilities in planning and delivering lesson plans and engaging and accommodating students with disabilities in special and inclusive settings.

School-Based Research Projects: The school-based research project is two credits in the 7th semester and lasts 8 to 12 weeks. Here, the student-teacher explores the interest-specific area in special education through research called project or action research. It is a systematic process. The student-teacher explores and identifies topics for the research and develops the research question and design, followed by data collection, analysis, and presentation of the research findings. It provides advantages of building critical skills, research skill sets, educational implications of research conducted in real-life scenarios, and defining the student-teacher research area.

Internship Teaching: Internship is a program that provides a hands-on learning experience to the student-teacher by directly teaching children with special needs. It will aid in gaining practical experience in teaching students with disabilities; at the same time, it will hone their special classroom management skills and teach them how to apply the pedagogical, teaching, and soft skills in an actual environment to facilitate students with disabilities. The internship process also gives them a chance to understand and reflect on their teaching experience from the ongoing feedback presented by their mentors.

Developing Teaching-Learning Materials: This component aims to instill the skills of developing tailor-made teaching-learning materials as per the learners' needs, which help make the learning process engaging and stimulating for students with disabilities. Developing age-appropriate and disability-appropriate teaching materials and synchronizing them with the special curriculum design for students with disabilities will exhibit the student-teacher understanding of the complex characteristics of various disabilities and how to execute them in the special classroom. Developing and designing creative and innovative teaching-learning

tools will display student-teacher knowledge and explain their learning throughout coursework.

Assistive Technologies: The introduction and integration of Assistive Technology play a pivotal role in allowing student teachers to create an inclusive classroom for students with special needs. It makes student teachers more effective and equipped to use these assistive tools. The student teachers are acquainted with the wide range of assistive technology, ranging from low-tech devices to high-tech devices, directing them with the functionalities and benefits for children with special needs. The application skills are enhanced during the course work, providing opportunities for hands-on experience and enabling them to visualize assistive devices in their classroom teaching.

A) Foundational Stage

1) Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD): The foundational stage for children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) typically refers to the early intervention period, often from birth to around age three, 3-6 years, and 6-8 years (class 1&2). This is a critical time for developing essential skills and laying the ground for future learning and development. ISITEP programs should equip pre-service teachers with the knowledge and skills to work effectively with young children with ASD during this foundational stage. This involves understanding early developmental milestones, identifying early signs of ASD, and implementing appropriate interventions. School experience and internship programs emphasize the crucial role of assistive technology (AT) in supporting children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). In this course, Pre-service teachers thoroughly learn the needs and assessments to identify appropriate AT and implement these tools effectively within the daily routine. By integrating AT into early intervention practices, the pupil-teacher will learn the importance of communication, sensory regulation, motor skills, and cognitive development for children with ASD, ultimately promoting their independence and participation in age-appropriate activities.

2) Hearing Impairment (HI): The Foundation Stage with Hearing Impairment (HI) specialization includes visits and observations of educational centers that provide assessment and intervention services. Skill-based supportive practicals, such as learning Indian Sign Language (ISL), auditory-verbal therapy (AVT), and speech reading, will enhance student-teachers self-efficacy in communicating with and educating students with hearing impairment. A diverse range of teaching-learning materials (TLM), incorporating technology-based and locally sourced materials, is essential. The development of TLM is a crucial focus, supporting student-teachers in their practice teaching and internships. Additionally, the final semester provides opportunities for demonstrating best practices and addressing disability-related aspects. School-based research projects aim to foster a scientific outlook in investigating educational issues relevant to the Foundation Stage, contributing to evidence-based practices, and establishing ethical standards in the education of students with hearing impairment.

3) Intellectual disability (ID): Students with intellectual disability (ID) can learn if provided with appropriate content and teaching process, taking into consideration their limited cognitive ability and associated conditions. As each student will have a different level of functioning, the program planned to teach them should consider their ability level in all the learning situations, whether individually, in small or large groups. This will demand adapting some children's content, processes, and materials. Considering their unique needs and the focus on inclusion, the courses in these programs are designed to bring out the best of their potential. In the Foundational Stage, the practicals include working in early intervention centers, special schools, inclusive schools, and home-based intervention. School experience and internship for children with intellectual disabilities at the foundational stage emphasize individualized and inclusive practices. Pre-service teachers learn to adapt curriculum and teaching methods to address the unique needs of each child. This involves creating sensory-rich environments, utilizing structured learning routines, and employing visual supports. Emphasis is placed on developing functional life skills, communication skills, and social interactions. By collaborating closely with families and other professionals, student teachers create comprehensive intervention plans that promote a child's overall development and independence.

4) Multiple Disabilities (MD): School experience and internship for student teachers focuses on the foundational stage of children with multiple disabilities (MD), which requires a comprehensive approach. This involves a deep understanding of the complex interplay of impairments, such as physical, sensory, cognitive, and communication challenges. During the course work, the student teacher will develop expertise in adapting curriculum, environment, and teaching methodologies to meet the unique needs of these children. Core to this preparation is the ability to conduct assessments to identify individual strengths and weaknesses, which is crucial for developing personalized Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). Assistive technology (AT) is indispensable in supporting children with MD. Pupil teachers learn to select, implement, and evaluate appropriate AT devices, such as communication aids, positioning equipment, and sensory tools. Along with this, practical experience in inclusive settings is essential. Student teachers must observe and learn from experienced professionals by collaborating to create a stimulating and accessible learning environment. They should implement evidence-based practices focusing on functional skills, sensory integration, and motor development of children with multiple disabilities.

5) Specific Learning Disability (SLD): The foundational stage for children with specific learning disabilities aims at understanding the demands of a deep understanding of early childhood development and learning processes. It requires the student teachers to be able to identify early signs of SLD, implement appropriate assessments, and design effective interventions. Emphasis is placed on developing strong foundational skills, such as phonological awareness, phonics, and early numeracy while addressing specific learning challenges. Student teachers must learn to implement evidence-based practices, such as explicit instruction and multisensory approaches, and monitor the progress. Building positive

relationships with children and their families is crucial, as it aids in advocating for appropriate support services. Through hands-on experience and reflection, pre-service teachers develop the competence to identify and address the specific needs of young learners with SLD, laying the groundwork for their future success.

6) Visual Impairment (VI): School experience and internship for pre-service teachers focuses on the foundational stage for children with visual impairment who demand specialized knowledge and skills. The student-teachers will develop expertise in creating inclusive environments that will cater to the diverse learning needs of children with VI, which shall involve understanding tactile and auditory cues, providing appropriate adaptations to the physical environment, and employing assistive technology. Emphasis is placed on developing early literacy skills, spatial awareness, and independent living skills. Student teachers learn to collaborate with other vision specialists, occupational therapists, and other professionals to create comprehensive intervention plans. Building strong partnerships with families is crucial to support the child's development at home. The program includes practical courses such as School Observation, Supportive Skill Training, Demonstration Lessons and Teaching Practice, Developing Teaching-Learning Materials (TLM) and Assistive Technology, School-based Research Projects, and Internship, along with other essential practical areas. Hands-on experience and reflection, pre-service teachers develop the competence to identify and address the specific needs of young learners with VI.

B) Preparatory Stage

1) Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD): Field engagement is a vital component of teacher education programs in the field of general as well as special and inclusive education. Through this immersion, student teachers comprehensively understand school processes, actively engage in activities, and internalize essential school-related ethics, values, and norms. This program ensures that student teachers specializing in autism spectrum disorder (ASD) are well-prepared to enter the teaching profession with practical experience, a deep understanding of inclusive practices, and the necessary skills to foster an effective learning environment for all learners under spectrum. It fosters to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application. It provides invaluable opportunities for student teachers to immerse themselves in the school environment and specialize in skills essential for quality education delivery to autistic learners. The program culminates in the ability to create supportive learning environments, develop individualized education plans, and collaborate with families and professionals to enhance the lives of autistic students

2) Hearing Impairment (HI): This stage prepares the student-teachers for practical experience in inclusive education settings; through observation, teaching practice, research, and internship, pre-service teachers develop the skills necessary to support students with hearing loss. This includes understanding these students' unique challenges, implementing effective communication strategies, utilizing assistive technology, and creating inclusive learning environments. The preparatory stages for practical areas include ensuring integration

with disability courses from Section 4, focusing on educational centers that provide assessment and intervention services. Student-teachers will engage in training for essential skills such as Indian Sign Language (ISL), Auditory Verbal Therapy (AVT), and speech reading to enhance their communication efficacy with students who have hearing impairments. Additionally, they will identify and gather a variety of Teaching-Learning Materials (TLM), both technology-based and locally sourced, that are tailored for teaching these students. Developing TLM will be a practical focus across all educational stages, emphasizing its application in practice teaching and internships. In the last semester, student-teachers will prepare to demonstrate best practices and address various disability-related aspects. They will also participate in school-based research projects to foster a scientific outlook on educational issues, promoting evidence-based practices and ethical considerations. Finally, the teacher trainees will establish a database for the specialization in education for students with hearing impairments, which will be essential to incorporating research findings and evidence-based practices.

3) Intellectual Disability (ID): This stage provides a framework to provide practical experience in inclusive education settings. Pre-service teachers develop the skills of observation, teaching practice, research, and internship, pre-service teachers to support students with ID. This includes understanding the diverse needs of individuals with ID, implementing effective instructional strategies, utilizing assistive technology, and creating inclusive learning environments. Students must practice teaching their respective subjects in special and inclusive schools in the preparatory stage. They are expected to plan the Individualized Education Plan (IEP), adapt lessons to suit the needs of the students, select suitable Teaching-Learning Materials (TLM), and collaborate with the class teacher to carry out the lessons as outlined. The intention is to provide student-teachers with experience in varied learning environments and ensure that students with intellectual disabilities receive appropriate education.

4) Multiple Disabilities (MD): The preparatory stage provides opportunities for the teacher trainees to apply theoretical knowledge to practical application and develop the necessary skills to support students with complex needs. This section will delve into the critical components of Multiple Disabilities (MD) field engagement, including the activities and expected outcomes. It prepares pre-service teachers to become competent professionals who can effectively support students with multiple disabilities in an inclusive setting, which includes developing a deep sense of understanding of the diverse range of various disabilities and their impact on the holistic development of a child and then gaining skills in assessing the individual needs of students with MD by developing appropriate Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). Post to this, implementing effective instructional strategies and adaptations to meet the needs of students with MD. Assistive technology and environmental modifications are crucial in enhancing the learning and independence of children with MD.

5) Specific Learning Disability (SLD): This stage facilitates pre-service teachers specializing in Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD). It provides practical experience in inclusive education settings, allowing students to apply theoretical knowledge and develop the necessary skills to support students with SLD. This stage focuses on the critical areas of understanding the dynamics of teaching and learning for students with SLD in regular classrooms and conducting various assessments to identify specific learning difficulties and strengths. It also aids in promoting the rights and needs of students with SLD within the school community.

6) Visual Impairment (VI): The practical component includes activities designed to equip teachers with the necessary skills to support students with VI effectively. This encompasses school observation to understand the dynamics of inclusive classrooms, developing supportive skills through training, gaining hands-on experience through demonstration lessons and teaching practice, creating adapted teaching-learning materials (TLMs) and exploring assistive technology, conducting research to deepen understanding, and undertaking an internship to apply knowledge in real-world settings. These components collectively aim to develop competent professionals capable of creating inclusive and supportive. The practical component includes School Observation, Supportive Skill Training, Demonstration lessons and Teaching practices, Developing Teaching-Learning Materials (TLM) and Assistive Technology, School-based Research Projects, and Internships.

C) Middle stage

1) Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD): This phase involves a blend of theoretical learning and practical experiences designed to equip pre-service teachers with the competencies required for inclusive classrooms. The course consists of understanding the diverse manifestations of autism and its impact on learning, behavior, and social interactions. It's essential to explore the diagnostic criteria, assessment tools, and intervention strategies specific to ASD. Practical experience is an integral part of the middle stage, which includes opportunities to observe and work with students with ASD in inclusive settings. Pre-service teachers create and implement Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) tailored to every student's needs. The student teacher learns to use various strategies, including structured teaching, visual supports, and social skills training, to enhance learning outcomes. Another feature of the middle stage is developing strong collaboration skills. Pre-service teachers learn to work effectively with families, related service providers, and other professionals to create a supportive network for students with ASD.

2) Hearing Impairment (HI): In the middle stages, student-teachers will conduct field visits and observations of various educational centers offering assessment and interventional services. They will apply the skills learned, such as Indian Sign Language (ISL), Auditory Verbal Therapy (AVT), and speech reading, to build self-efficacy in communicating with students with hearing impairments. Additionally, they will focus on developing and adapting

teaching-learning materials (TLM) and utilizing technology-based and locally sourced materials tailored to their students. During this phase, student-teachers will implement best practices and document their experiences to assess the effectiveness of their interventions. They will also participate in school-based research projects, investigating educational issues to contribute to a database of evidence-based practices. This stage is essential for solidifying their understanding and applying concepts learned, preparing them for their final practice teaching and internships.

3) Intellectual Disability (ID): Practical experiences are integrated throughout the middle stage. The middle stage fosters the development of strong partnerships between pre-service teachers, families, and related service providers. This involves learning to communicate effectively, share information, and co-construct support plans. Teaching in special and inclusive schools focuses on planning the IEP, adapting lessons to meet student needs, selecting suitable TLM, and working alongside the class teacher to implement the lessons as delineated. This stage aims to give student-teachers further experience in diverse learning environments while ensuring that students with intellectual disabilities obtain the required education. This stage incorporates research and project-based learning to enhance critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Pre-service teachers research ID-related topics, such as assistive technology, inclusive practices, or family support. This process fosters the development of evidence-based practices and the ability to evaluate existing research critically.

4) Multiple Disabilities (MD): The middle stage outlines for teachers specializing in Multiple Disabilities (MD) as a critical period for developing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to support students with complex needs. The middle stage initiates in facilitating teacher education with a unique and inclusive learning environment focusing on the students with Multiple Disabilities (MD) and providing a comprehensive foundation for future educators. It equips them with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to create inclusive classrooms where students with MD can thrive and reach their full potential. By combining theoretical learning with practical experiences, the program aims to develop competent and compassionate professionals who can make a significant difference in the lives of individuals with MD.

5) Specific Learning Disability (SLD): The middle stage of ISITEP for teachers specializing in Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) involves a comprehensive approach to practical training. It incorporates several key components to equip pre-service teachers with the necessary skills to support students with SLD effectively. This stage helps the student teachers observe expert-led lessons, design tailored learning experiences, collaborate with professionals, and reflect on practice. Teachers develop a deep understanding of SLD and effective instructional strategies by analyzing the curriculum, creating adapted materials, and exploring available resources. This process fosters the creation of inclusive and supportive learning environments that cater to the unique needs of students with SLD.

6) Visual Impairment (VI): The school experience and internship components for pre-service teachers specializing in Visual Impairment (VI) involve a comprehensive approach to practical training. It encompasses a series of activities designed to equip teachers with the necessary skills to support students with VI effectively. This process begins with pre-internship practice, including orientation, expert demonstration lessons, and peer teaching to build foundational knowledge and skills, which is further followed by school observation, a crucial component allowing pre-service teachers to observe inclusive classrooms and specialized schools for VI. This provides insights into student teachers' challenges and opportunities to work with children with VI. It gradually allows student teachers to evolve from assisting classroom teachers to independent teaching. It is a vital aspect of the program, focusing on developing Teaching Learning Materials (TLM) that are accessible and engaging for students with VI. These components allow pre-service teachers to develop a deep understanding of the unique needs of students with VI, cater effective teaching strategies, and build the confidence to create a supportive learning environment.

D) Secondary stage

1) Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD): The secondary stage of school internship components of the ISITEP program for students specializing in autism spectrum disorder (ASD) are designed to provide hands-on experience in creating inclusive classrooms. This involves a comprehensive approach encompassing various activities, such as pre-internship practice, which focuses on building foundational knowledge and skills through orientation sessions, expert demonstrations, and peer teaching. School observation is used to understand the dynamics of inclusive education. Pre-service teachers observe classrooms to identify best practices, challenges, and opportunities for supporting students with ASD. The internship offers experience in inclusive settings and the opportunity to participate in school activities, administrative tasks, and professional development opportunities. Creating teaching-learning materials is crucial; student-teacher develops adapted Teaching Learning Materials, visual supports, and sensory tools to enhance learning experiences for students with ASD.

2) Hearing Impairment (HI): In the secondary stages, student-teachers will deepen their engagement with educational centers by conducting detailed observations and analyses of assessment and intervention practices. They will further refine their skills in Indian Sign Language (ISL), Auditory Verbal Therapy (AVT), and speech reading, applying these techniques in diverse classroom settings to enhance communication with students with hearing impairments. Student-teachers will also focus on the practical implementation of Teaching-Learning Materials (TLM) developed earlier, experimenting with technology-based and indigenous resources to assess their impact on student learning outcomes. Collaborative discussions with peers and mentors will help reflect on the successes and challenges during this process. This stage will emphasize critical reflection and adaptation of strategies, preparing student-teachers for successful practice teaching and internships while demonstrating their ability to implement evidence-based practices effectively.

3) Intellectual Disability (ID): In the secondary stage, students practice teaching in special and inclusive schools for their respective subjects. They are responsible for planning the IEP, adapting lessons according to the student's needs, choosing appropriate TLM, and collaborating with the class teacher to carry out the lessons as specified. The goal is to provide student-teachers with comprehensive experience in various learning environments, ensuring that students with intellectual disabilities receive the education that is suitable for them.

4) Multiple Disabilities (MD)

Orientation of student teachers to different educational approaches that are learner-centered, inquiry-based, collaborative, experiential, incorporating storytelling, art-integrated, sports-integrated, project-based, and ICT-integrated for developing critical thinking, attention to life aspirations, and greater flexibility and classroom management skills.

5) Specific Learning Disability (SLD): Preparing pre-service teachers to work with students with Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) necessitates a robust foundation in diverse pedagogical approaches. This involves a comprehensive understanding of learner-centered, inquiry-based, collaborative, and experiential learning methodologies. Central to this preparation is an orientation to a variety of pedagogical approaches. This includes exposure to storytelling, art integration, sports integration, project-based learning, and ICT integration. These methods are crucial for developing critical thinking, fostering life aspirations, and enhancing classroom management skills. Curriculum development is a vital component. Pre-service teachers create unit and lesson plans incorporating these diverse approaches, considering the specific needs of students with SLD. Portfolio development becomes a reflective tool, documenting the learning journey and showcasing the application of various pedagogies. Exploring available resources and creating innovative teaching-learning materials (TLMs) further enrich the learning experience.

6) Visual Impairment (VI): Field Work and Workshops for pre-service teachers specializing in Visual Impairment (VI) at the secondary stage within ISITEP are crucial for developing practical expertise. The program encompasses a series of activities designed to equip teachers with the necessary skills to support students with VI effectively. The Core components include Pre-service teachers will be exposed to various tools, including Optical aids: Magnifiers, low vision devices, and electronic magnifiers, Screen readers: Software that converts text to speech, Braille technology: Braille embossers, notetakers, and electronic braille displays; computer access: Adapted keyboards, mouse alternatives, and screen magnifiers, Communication aids: Speech-to-text software, augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices. The program also prepares pre-service teachers to transition students with VI from school to higher education or employment. This includes developing independent living skills, exploring career options and vocational training, building self-advocacy skills, and collaborating with transition services. By engaging in these activities, pre-service teachers will develop the necessary skills and knowledge to create inclusive and supportive learning environments for students with VI.

2.10 Community Engagement and Service (Semester-8, 2 Credits)

The component aimed at allowing the student teachers to be involved with the community and provide their services to learn through direct, purposeful experiences. It is one of the primary aims of education and, later, society. It will be done through Inclusive Community Engagement and Services and Community Based Rehabilitation(CBR). The action-oriented course is designed to understand real inclusion and develop skills to seek community resources for the needs of CWSNs. The focus is also to create awareness about the inclusion of PWDs and develop strategies to strengthen the role of the community in their rehabilitation. This can be done through working on CBR projects through PRA (Participatory Rural Appraisal Techniques). Visit an ongoing CBR program and write a report on its efficacy, Non-participatory observations, Discussions, Presentations, Seminars, etc. **Assessment** can include Ongoing continuous assessment, project report submission, journal writing, seminar assessment, etc.

3.0 Curriculum Transaction

The Foundation of the ISITEP curriculum lies in the basic student-centric pedagogical approach to learning, emphasis on graduate attributes development, and achieving defined learning outcomes for each course in particular and the complete program in General. Integrated Special & Inclusive Teacher Preparation is the prime aim of the course, so diverse Teaching-learning exposure strategies must be planned to fulfill the desired goal.

A learner-centric approach encourages active participation and engagement from pupil-teachers. The curriculum transaction Approach stresses activity-based, experiential learning, collaborative learning, simulations, Focus on Inclusive Practices, Case studies, Co-teaching, Universal Design for Learning (UDL), adapting small activities or lessons, Curriculum adaptation, using assistive technologies, and collaborating with other professionals. Today's techno-savvy generations can integrate technology into education, so they Utilize technology platforms and online resources to enhance learning. Create opportunities for student teachers to reflect on their experiences and receive constructive feedback on their teaching practices.

Another aspect ISITEP discusses, similar to ITEP, is graduate attributes development. The characterization of essential features of a well-qualified and skilled Special teacher educator who can teach in special and inclusive settings. Problem-solving abilities, critical thinking, divergent thinking, decision-making abilities, communication skills, and acceptance of diversity are the common attributes that are important for higher education graduates to develop. A competent, committed, Skillful, technically trained professional specifically able to handle all the needs of CWDs is essential, so performance in the work done needs to be developed through practicum, tutorials, practicals, Project work, visits, and educational excursions apart from lecture or lecture-cum-demonstration methods.

4.0 Assessment and Evaluation

The assessment process should encourage critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and a student-centered approach (NEP-2020). It should foster collaboration and teamwork among student teachers and other professionals involved in inclusive education (ITEP). Technology-based assessments can be explored to align with NEP-2020's emphasis on technology integration. Various assessment techniques can be used to assess students' learning outcomes in the form of knowledge, understanding, and skills. The competencies and Behavioral attributes can also be observed and noted systematically. Positive and constructive assessment tasks and activities should be designed with timely feedback to guide student teachers. Differentiate assessments to cater to diverse learning styles and abilities of student teachers. Whenever possible, use authentic assessments that mirror real-world teaching scenarios.

Formative Assessments are followed with Classroom Observations, Lesson Plans and Materials, Reflective Journals, and Peer Review. Regularly observe student teachers in inclusive settings, focusing on their ability to implement UDL principles, adapt lessons, utilize assistive technologies, and effectively communicate with students with impairments. Evaluate lesson plans and materials for accessibility, differentiation, and alignment with IEP goals. Encourage student teachers to maintain reflective journals where they analyze their teaching practices, successes, and areas for improvement. Facilitate peer review sessions where student teachers observe each other's teaching and provide constructive feedback.

Summative assessment techniques like simulated teaching scenarios, case studies, problem-solving tasks, and performance-based assessments can be used. Design simulated teaching scenarios that require student teachers to demonstrate their skills in areas like IEP development, collaboration with parents and professionals, and effective communication. Present student teachers with real-world case studies related to inclusive education and assess their ability to analyze situations, propose solutions, and apply relevant legal and ethical frameworks (RPWD Act 2016). Develop performance-based assessments where student teachers demonstrate their skills in using assistive technologies, adapting evaluations for students with hearing impairment, and implementing positive behavior interventions and supports (PBIS) strategies.

By implementing a comprehensive assessment and evaluation process that aligns with NEP-2020, one can ensure that future special educators have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to teach students with disabilities in inclusive settings effectively.

Suggested Grading System:

Universities or Institutions can choose their system of assessment for Special Educators. However, NEP-2020 always stressed skill-based education and learners' skills enhancement that yearns to foster holistic growth and development, which goes beyond the literacy and numeracy of the learner. Influenced by the NEP-2020, ISITEP has brought up its grading system based on similar foundational grounds as ITEP but with different parameters that focus on developing new assessment and evaluation techniques that foster project designs and

activities that curate the learners' comprehension abilities and knowledge application skills. The grading system procedure is accompanied by extensive design and implementation of rubrics and notions of peer review and self-assessment, specifically in practical activities throughout the curriculum. Learners will be graded satisfactory or unsatisfactory for Non-credit programs such as a student induction program rather than giving letter grades or grade points. It will not be a part of SGPA/CGPA assessment scores.

The Semester grade point Average (SGPA) is the ratio of the sum of the product of the number of credits with the grade points scored by a student in all the courses taken by a student and the sum of the number of credits of all the courses undergone by a student, i.e.

$$\text{SGPA (Si)} = \sum (C_i \times G_i) / \sum C_i$$

C_i is the number of credits for the i th course, and G_i is the grade point scored by the student in the i th course.

Table No-3.1
Grades and Grade Points

Letter Grade	Grade Point
O (Outstanding)	10
A+(Excellent)	9
A(Very Good)	8
B+(Good)	7
B(Above Average)	6
C(Average)	5
P (Pass)	4
F(Fail)	0
Ab (Absent)	0

Source: UGC Guidelines on Adoption of Choice-Based Credit System (2015), UGC, Delhi

The universities/ colleges/ institutes providing ISITEP courses shall have the autonomy to choose between Grades or minimum percentage of marks to pass a course, and the CGPA required to qualify to award a degree to the student after taking into consideration the affiliating or specific Standard-setting body for the course. The Cumulative Grade Point Average(CGPA) is also calculated in the same manner, taking into account all the courses a student has undertaken over all the semesters of a program, i.e.,

$$\text{CGPA} = \sum (C_i \times S_i) / \sum C_i$$

where S_i is the SGPA of the i th semester, and C_i is the total number of credits in that semester. The SGPA and CGPA shall be rounded to 2 decimal points and reported in the transcripts.

To conclude, it can be said that the Assessment and Evaluation in the Integrated Special and Inclusive Teacher Education Program (ISITEP) is student-centric and is designed to assess the critical, analytical, and application abilities of future Special educators.

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