# MANUAL ON
# ASSESSMENT OF
# ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS

**(Revised Guidelines for New & Extension Proposals w.e.f. Academic Session 2025-26)**



भारतीय पुनर्वास परिषद्

Rehabilitation Council of India
A Statutory Body of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities
(Divyangjan), Government of India New Delhi – 110016

# Contents

# 1.0 Introduction

The Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI) has consistently strived to improve the standards of education and training in rehabilitation and special education by ensuring quality curricular transaction through its approved academic institutions. Recognizing the pivotal role of these institutions, the RCI emphasizes that the quality of professionals serving persons with disabilities is directly influenced by the standards maintained by these academic institutions. Therefore, the RCI is committed to fostering both qualitative and quantitative growth of these institutions across the country for ensuring maintenance of high standards in academic institutions.

For a programme to be approved, the RCI assesses the institution's capacity to offer that programme effectively by ensuring the availability of adequate faculty and resources. This assessment is carried out systematically and scientifically to maintain credibility and reliability. From time to time, RCI has revised its assessment procedures to improve objectivity and scientific accuracy.

The revised assessment guidelines and report formats are formalized from implementation from 2025-2026 academic session onwards to provide guidance to the assessors during the assessment of rehabilitation institutes; ensure uniformity of assessment and reporting and eliminate ambiguities or doubts regarding the assessment process.

## 2.0 Objectivity in Assessment Process

The assessment process has been developed and revised as per the following objectives:

- To design a systematic process for evaluating the capabilities of academic institutions to deliver specific programs as prescribed by the curriculum approved by RCI. This ensures that all essential and desirable parameters required for an academic institution to successfully implement a program are met, thereby enhancing the quality;

- To eliminate all possible subjectivity in the assessment process and promote greater transparency and objectivity;

- To incorporate the institution's credibility, achievements, innovations, and reputation into the assessment process.

## 3.0 Components of Assessment

Assessment is comprised of two components:

- Essential Component (Part A): This includes all those parameters and sub-parameters which are considered to be essential for a Program conducted in an academic institution.
- Desirable Component (Part B): This includes all those which are complimentary for any programme as well as academic Institution.
- The distribution of weightage across various components is given below:

| Sl. | Components | Part | Weightage of Scores |
|-----|-----------|------|---------------------|
| 1 | Essential | A | 70% |
| 2 | Desirable | B | 30% |
| Total | | A+B | 100% |

## 4.0. Stages of Assessment

The assessment process is conducted in three stages to ensure thorough evaluation and objectivity:

a. **Self-Assessment/Self-Appraisal:** Academic institutions are required to conduct a self- assessment or self-appraisal of their facilities and resources. The visiting team of experts reviews the self-assessment report submitted by the institution prior to undertaking the on-site assessment

   /Online assessment.

b. **Assessment by Visiting Experts:** The visiting team of experts assesses the academic facilities and resources. The assessment visit may be conducted in person or virtually during the institution's working hours.

c. **Verification, Validation, and Decision by RCI:** The information assessed by the visiting experts is verified and validated by the RCI. Based on this verification, the Council makes a decision to approve or disapprove the programme that institution has applied.

## 5.0 Guidelines for Maintaining Minimum Standards

The visiting experts deputed by the RCI are assigned with responsibility to conduct a fair assessment without any bias or favoritism and help the RCI to maintain the minimum standards across programmes and academic institutions in the country.

Visiting experts mandatorily go through the latest curriculum available by RCI in its website for the programme they are being deputed for assessment.

In case the specific norms/guidelines are not provided in the curriculum prescribed by the RCI; the common guidelines as mentioned in this manual are required to be

followed as given here.

### a. Building

In case the norms/guidelines are not provided in the curriculum/syllabus, prescribed by the RCI regarding the building and infrastructure; then the institute should have minimum land of 1000 sq. meters including 500 sq. meters built up area for the first proposed academic programme. For each additional programme, 300 sq. meters additional built-up area is required. Classroom size has to be 25 to 30 sq. meters up to 30 students or in proportionate manner with required furniture and fixtures. The number of classrooms should be as per the duration of the programme.

### b. Human Resources

The human resources should be as prescribed by the RCI in the syllabus/curriculum of the respective programmes. The faculty members should have valid RCI registration (senior most of them will be the programme coordinator); (ii) The essential guest faculties, one in each area as necessary, should be visiting the institution as per the prescribed hours given in the curriculum for lecture, demonstration, supervising practical work and/or project.

### c. (i) Special and Inclusive Educational Infrastructure and Services *(for education related programmes)*

Academic institutions desirable to run programmes related to special and inclusive education need to have good quality and adequate Special and Inclusive Educational Infrastructure and Services. Institutions applying for special education and/or inclusive education related programmes should have the facility of Model Special School and Inclusive school. The institution should have own three- year-old functional special school with the required strength of children in respective area of disability as prescribed in the respective curriculum/syllabus. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with a local inclusive school with strength of minimum 10 children with disability may be considered in case inclusive school is not owned by the institution applying for recognition. If adequate number of children with disabilities is not available in the inclusive school, more number of such schools should be considered by the academic institution. The MOU needs to be renewed after every two years. In case the norms/guidelines are not provided in the curriculum/syllabus, prescribed by the RCI regarding Resource Room; then academic institution should have (i) equipment, tools, tests etc. as stipulated in the curriculum; (ii) one set of each test and tool stipulated in the curriculum for every 15 students; (iii) at least one room with special infrastructure for each programme.

### (ii) Clinical Infrastructure and services (for clinical/rehabilitation Programmes)

Academic institutions applying for clinical/rehabilitation programmes should have

the facility of three-year-old functional clinical services with required infrastructure as prescribed in the curriculum/syllabus. If not prescribed in the curriculum, the academic institution running/proposing Diploma level programme should have the clinical facility having: (i) 5 persons with a given impairment/disability for every student admitted each year and multiplied as per the number of programmes being run/applied for by the academic institution; (ii) 75% of the clinical population must be attending therapy / intervention program at the institute; (iii) All varieties of clinical population with the number of persons in each clinical variety be not less than 10% of the total clinical population; (iv) Requirement of equipment shall be as per RCI syllabus for a given programme; (v) A minimum of five rooms for therapy and other intervention programs and multiplied as per the number of programmes being run/applied for by the academic institution. In case the norms/guidelines are not provided in the curriculum/syllabus, prescribed by the RCI regarding the Laboratory Infrastructure; then academic institution should have (i) equipment, tools, tests etc. as stipulated in the curriculum; (ii) at least, one set of each of the tests and tools stipulated in the curriculum for every 15 students; (iii) at least one room with special infrastructure for each programme. For Bachelors, Masters and above programmes please refer the respective curriculum.

(ii) a. Guidelines for Evaluating CBID Course Infrastructure

Institutions offering the Community-Based Inclusive Development (CBID) course should prioritize experiential learning and community support. Key components include field placements in community resource centers, CBOs, NGOs, and collaboration with local hospitals and rehabilitation centers for clinical exposure and referrals. Practicum should involve community mapping, assistive technology training, and barrier assessments using Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) tools. Classrooms must be accessible and equipped with assistive devices and training tools. The campus should provide ramps, elevators, braille materials, and assistive listening devices to promote inclusivity. Additionally, institutions should offer advocacy training and utilize digital platforms for community engagement. Field-based institutions must be actively involved in disability and humanitarian services to ensure CBID trainees gain essential practical experience.

(ii) b. Guidelines for Services at Institution and in community

Institutions offering the CBID course must adopt an active, field-based approach that includes clinical exposure, therapy follow-ups, and vocational training opportunities for persons with disabilities (PWDs). They should systematically document the total number of clinical cases, vocational training participants, and community interventions. It is essential to implement effective family counselling and community empowerment initiatives to promote social inclusion. Additionally, the institution should conduct disability screenings, assessments,

and provide multidisciplinary rehabilitation services to ensure timely intervention and support. A well-equipped Resource Room should offer tailored support for students with disabilities through inclusive teaching strategies. Institutions need to implement competency-based curricula that include real-life case studies and practical problem-solving. The institute must also reach out to local governance bodies, such as the Panchayati Raj, to initiate community-centric programmes and awareness workshops on disability inclusion. Engaging individuals with disabilities (PwDs) in state and national observances would bring the programme in line with inclusive development objectives.

### d.    Library Resources

The library should ensure the availability of prescribed books and journals as outlined in the curriculum or syllabus. In cases where a prescribed book is unavailable, books with similar content by other authors may be considered as suitable alternatives.

Additionally, the following guidelines should be adhered to for an effective learning environment:

*Journals:* At least one journal should be available in the core subject area. An online journal subscription should also be maintained to facilitate access to up-to-date research and academic content.

*Computer Access*: Computers should be provided at a ratio of 1:8, meaning one computer for every eight students, and must include internet facilities to support research and learning activities.

*Photocopying/Printing Facility*: An in-house photocopying or printing facility should be available for students and staff to access study materials conveniently.

The library must align its resources with the respective curriculum to meet the academic requirements comprehensively. Preference should also be given to books written in Indian languages to support regional linguistic diversity and promote inclusive learning.

### e. Barrier Free Environment

The academic institutions should ensure the following provisions to facilitate inclusivity and accessibility:

*Built Environment*: The infrastructure should include ramps and lifts to ensure easy access to classrooms, toilets, and drinking water facilities for individuals with physical disabilities.

*Signage and Navigation*: Clear and accessible signage should be in place, including

tactile paths, adequate lighting, display boards, and signposts, to guide individuals with visual or other impairments effectively.

***Assistive Technology:*** Institutions should provide technological support such as accessible websites, screen-reading software, and mechanized equipment to aid individuals with disabilities in accessing learning resources and engaging in academic activities.

***Enquiry and Information Services***: The institution should ensure the availability of human assistance, such as readers and scribes, along with soft copies of reading material. Screen- reading software should also be provided to support individuals with visual impairments or

reading difficulties. These measures aim to create an inclusive environment that supports the diverse needs of all learners, enabling them to access educational resources and facilities without barriers.

## f. Inclusive community development program

The academic institution should undertake the following activities prior to the date of application for starting or extending an academic programme:

***Sensitization/Awareness Programs***: A minimum of four programs per year to raise awareness and sensitize stakeholders about the importance of inclusion, accessibility, and the needs of individuals with disabilities.

***Early Identification Programs/Promotion of Inclusion***: At least two programs per year focused on the early identification of disabilities and the promotion of inclusive practices in educational and community settings.

***Development of Audio-Visual/Resource Materials***: A minimum of two initiative per year aimed at creating audio-visual or resource materials to support public education and empower parents in understanding and addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities.

***Community-Based Services:*** It is desirable for the institution to promote community- based education and/or rehabilitation service as a regular outreach activity to support and strengthen the engagement with the local communities.

***Exhibitions:*** The institution is expected to have organized exhibition related the programme to showcase innovative practices, assistive technologies, and resources related to disability inclusion and education.

These activities are essential for fostering awareness, building community engagement, and promoting the principles of inclusion and accessibility within society.

**g. Faculty Development & Research (Essential For Bachelor /Master Level)**

The academic institution must meet the following criteria for Faculty Development and Research over the past five years or from the beginning of academic session after a fresh recognition (if less than five years):

**For Bachelor's Level Programs**

*Paper Presentations:*

Each core faculty member must present at least one paper annually at national or international conferences or seminars.

*Publications:*

At least one chapter, book, manual, or article must be published annually by any core faculty member.

*Participation in Academic Events:*

Each core faculty member must participate in at least one workshop, seminar, conference, or symposium annually. Paper presentations will also count as participation.

*Organizing Academic Events:*

The institution must organize at least one seminar, workshop, or Continuing Rehabilitation Education (CRE) program annually.

*Indexed and Peer Reviewed Journal Contributions:*

Core faculty members must contribute at least one publication to a national or international indexed journal every two years.

**Course Material Development:**

At least one core faculty member must write or translate course-related materials in Hindi or regional languages within a five-year period.

*Projects:*

Faculty members must undertake projects, with or without student involvement, during this period.

*Faculty Development Programs (FDPs):*

Institutions running programs for more than three years must organize Faculty Development Programs for their faculty.

**Additional Requirements for Master's Level Programs**

In addition to fulfilling the criteria for Bachelor's level programs, institutions offering Master's level programs must also meet the following requirements:

***Externally and Internally Funded Projects***: Faculty members should undertake projects funded by external or internal sources.

***Research Guidance***: Faculty members must provide research guidance at the postgraduate (PG), M.Phil., or Ph.D. levels.

***Research and Scientific Awards***: Faculty members should have received research or scientific awards during this period.

These criteria are designed to ensure continuous professional development and the enhancement of research and academic excellence within the institution.

## 6.0  Norms for Appointment of Visiting Experts

The norms for appointment of visiting experts for undertaking assessment are given here:

There will be two professionals for assessing one institution for one programme at a time from teaching institution in the respective programme and area of disability as RCI registered Professional with valid and active CRR. In case, for any programme, if there are (a) limited number of professionals or (b) one of the visiting experts need to have direct clinical exposure with persons having disability; then as special case, one expert may be appointed from clinical side from national level institutions or reputed hospitals preferably from Govt. institution having minimum 10 years of post-qualification experience from that particular area of disability. The qualification of such aforementioned professional should be at least at par or above for the programme s/he is deputed. It is essential that assessor/visiting expert receives training from RCI on how to conduct the assessment. Whenever it is conducted, one must attend it.

The norms for appointment of visiting experts for undertaking assessment are given below:

**For Certificate & Diploma level of courses**

i. Professional having RCI prescribed qualification and five years' post-qualification experience in the respective programme and area of disability as a core faculty for which she/he can be deputed for assessment.

   Or

Faculties and professionals at Bachelor and Master Level courses with three years of post-qualification teaching experience in the respective discipline/ clinical exposure in the respective area of disability.

ii. Faculty and professionals must possess the valid and active RCI CRR number.

B. **For Undergraduate/Degree level Programs:**

i. Teaching faculties as prescribed in the syllabi for Undergraduate/Degree level courses with minimum of 07 years of teaching post qualification experience at UG/Degree level OR
5 years of post-qualification experience in PG/Master level in the respective discipline at RCI approved academic institute/university department /national institute/hospital department.
ii. The visiting expert must possess the valid and active RCI-CRR number.

## C.   For post-graduate and above level Programs
i. Teaching Faculties as defined with minimum of 05 years of teaching post-qualification experience at Master's Level and above and working in the respective area of specialization at RCI approved academic institute/university departments /national institute.
a.   .
ii. Faculty must possess the valid and active RCI CRR number.

Preferably, the RCI nominates one visiting expert from the same state in which the institute belong and another from the other state. Professionals deputed for assessment by the RCI may be considered as official work/on duty and no leaves should be deducted by his/her employer for being absent from his/her regular duty. In case member as visiting expert does not visit the institution as requested by RCI within the specified time or refuses to visit without cause, then his/her empanelment may be discontinued for future visits for the period of 2 years.

## 6.0   Code and Conduct for Visiting Experts

i.    Act in the interest of the RCI with utmost integrity and professional ethics;

ii.   Read thoroughly the curriculum/syllabus of the course which is to be assessed;

iii.  Give sufficient time for a thorough and detailed assessment with sincerity.

iv.   Never take any kind of undue favor / valuables; use respectful language and behavior at all-time be unbiased / impartial while conducting the assessment;

v.    Do not build any pressure on academic institute for any reason;

vi.   Do not be influenced by the other expert to provide undue benefit to the institute being inspected.

vii.  Keep assessment information confidential and shall not give any assurance / commitment regarding outcome of the assessment to the academic institute being assessed.

viii. Disclose to RCI if there is any conflict of interest including (but not limited to) current or

prior working or personal relationships that may affect the neutrality of the assessment. Assessor must fill self- declaration form for impartiality, confidentiality & integrity.

ix. Adhere to the schedule. All the assessments (UG & PG courses) for an institution should be completed on the same day. All the assessors should be present till the submission of the assessment report with joint signature.

x. Do not accept any transportation, hospitality, or gift in any form directly or indirectly from the institution being inspected. Note that if at any stage assessors are found to have accepted, the assessment report sent by them would be treated as cancelled and invalid and the assessors shall be debarred by RCI from panel of assessors.

xi. Do not market, promote or represent any business interests, whilst conducting assessment.

xii. Do not get into a preaching/teaching mode and throw on them your perceived highest level of knowledge.

xiii. Do not have confrontations / unhealthy arguments while conducting the assessment. Under such circumstances, try to amicably sort out the differences.

xiv. In case of any eventuality and/or hindrance / resistance in conducting fair assessment by the academic institution, any other person and even the co-expert of the visiting team; the RCI should be kept informed by the expert(s) in writing at the earliest.

xv. In case of visiting expert(s) submit false information regarding the institution that he/she visits, or if found violation of code of conduct as entailed for the visiting expert, his/her empanelment will be cancelled forever and necessary action shall be taken by the RCI. The visiting expert(s) may also be liable on the grounds of code of conduct as per u/s 21 of RCI Act 1992

## 7.0 Guidelines for Assessment (New & Extension Proposal)

i. The visiting experts should do an assessment based on the prescribed proforma. The experts must make sure that they examine each parameter (infrastructure, human resources and all other facilities). They should not go by what the institute claims or promises. The visiting expert team should also verify all the relevant original documents and reports and if there is any discrepancy, should report to the RCI.

ii. The visiting experts must verify original documents relating to financial resources like fixed deposits, bank accounts, receipts, among others. The visiting experts shall report if there exists any discrepancy between the institute's claim and actual to the RCI.

iii. The visiting experts must obtain the scan copy of the original documents in

respect of specific claim made by the institution such as awards received, fixed deposits, appointment of personnel, bills/invoices of equipment's purchased/procured, library books, journals. and approval of competent authorities to start the Program. Copies of Annual Reports, newspaper clippings, etc. should not be attached to the assessment report. Any deviation in the self-assessment and the actual status should be reported in the remark column as shown in the reporting format.

iv. The visiting expert team should justify the scores awarded by mentioning the norm and actual facts in respect of that sub-parameter/parameter with 'Remarks' in the Remark column to validate the scores.

v. Scores in respect of all the sub-parameters / parameters are to be given with reference to

the norms of the Rehabilitation RCI of India for a given academic program. For example, if the RCI norm stipulates minimum faculty strength of 4 in the core area for starting a program and if the institution has 4 faculty members, then award full score. Decrease the awarded scores proportionately for any shortfall. If the available infrastructure is more than the stipulated, the institutes will get only the maximum score for that category. For example, assume that RCI has stipulated four members of the core faculty as essential for a given course, and a maximum score of 16 is marked for this category. Then, if the institute has four faculty members, it will get 16 score. However, if the institute has only three members of the core faculty, then it will get only 12 score. If the institute has more infrastructure/facility than stipulated, even then they will get the maximum of 16 score only.

vi. It is desirable that institutions should have their own building. In case of rented building, the institution must have a rent/lease agreement in the name of Institution / Society / Trust for a period extending up to the date of completion of the proposed academic programme (whenever the academic program is proposed to be started).

vii. It is compulsory to attach/upload take photographs during assessment as mentioned in the proforma and enclose them with the report.

viii. The visiting experts must submit the assessment report by speed post at the end of the assessment preferably before leaving the assessment site.

ix. Assessment of the institute may be conducted on any working day with mutual consent of the visiting expert and the Institute.

x. In case of non-approval of extension proposals and score is less than 10% of the required score in any one parameter may be given a chance for reassessment. Compliance inspection may be conducted without informing the institution for taking further decision. However, the institution has to submit the compliance along with assessment fee to the RCI. Re-assessment for fresh proposals shall not

be entertained. They have to apply again for the next academic session.

## 8.0 Scoring System

The distribution of weightage across components as mentioned earlier is given below:

| Sl. | Components | Part | Weightage of Scores |
|-----|-----------|------|---------------------|
| 1 | Essential | A | 70% |
| 2 | Desirable | B | 30% |
| **Total** | | **A+B** | **100%** |

The visiting experts are required to prepare the summary sheet of the scores obtained under various parts, but not required to calculate the final score as per the table given below. However, the RCI shall calculate the final score for an academic institution based on the assessment done by the visiting experts. The percentage of scores for each parameter of essential components which have been already calculated is scored as per the table given below to get the overall score out of 100.

| **Part A** of IR (70 Marks) | **Part B** of IR (30 Marks) | **Total A+B** (100 Marks) |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Obtained total score under essential parameters (%) x 0.7= (A) | Obtained Total Score (%) x 0.3= (B) | |
| (A)= | (B)= | |

**Minimum score and conditions for granting approval with duration for New as well as Extension Proposal is:**

| Score in Part A (In Each Parameter) | Overall (A+B) | Conditions of Approval |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|------------------------|
| 80% or above | 75 or above | 5 years / batches |
| 70% or above | 65 or above | 2 years / batches |
| Less than 70% | | Regretted |

**Note:** i. For granting approval, the institute have to score minimum passing criteria (in each parameter listed under Part A) under essential parameters. Once qualified with minimum passing criteria in all parameters, the duration of approval will be decided based on the overall score i.e. A+B.

**ii. Despite fulfilling for recognition, however if academic infrastructure including land and built-up area as well as human resource not available as per norm, then sanctioned seat shall be reduced proportionately as per following formula:**

**{(% of land + % of built-up area+ % Academic Infrastructure-A1E)/3 +(% of Human Resources-B1E}}/2 x No of Sanctioned Seats**

ii.    In case of discrepancy reported in the Joint Assessment Report of the visiting experts, on the discretion of Chairperson, RCI, a temporary approval may be granted for one year on conditional basis and RCI will
enquire the matter within three months for further decision.

## 9.0  Format for Assessment and Reporting

The revised format for assessment of new and extension proposals is the same. Assessment of Curricular Transaction Parameter shall be assessed in case extension applications. The Assessment Report Format is given in the Annexures.