

Pathways to Access (Part III) - Rights of Persons with Disabilities Related to Education

List of Abbreviations:

- AICTE: All India Council for Technical Education
- CBSE: Central Board of Secondary Education
- DEPWD: Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India
- MoE: Ministry of Education, Government of India
- NCERT: National Council of Educational Research and Training
- NEP: National Education Policy, 2020
- RTE Act: Right to (Free and Compulsory) Education Act, 2009
- O.M.: Office Memorandum
- PWD Act, 1995: Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995
- RPWDA: Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016
- RPWDR: Rights of Persons with Disabilities Rules, 2017
- UGC: University Grants Commission

Framework & Approach:

This resource document provides a collated, summarised understanding and analysis of the law, and the efforts made towards realising the rights and provisions pertaining to the education of persons with disabilities. For context, a brief overview of the relevant provisions of the RPWDA, that guarantee rights to persons with disabilities with respect to their education, is provided in the section below. Specifically, this compilation contains orders/circulars/notifications of the AICTE, CBSE, MoE, NCERT, UGC and DEPWD which have been issued in pursuance to the provisions of the RPWDA. As such, the orders/circular/notifications primarily concern students with disabilities in educational institutions affiliated with CBSE, NCERT, AICTE or UGC and cover rights/entitlement/benefits/concessions provided to such students with disabilities.

The orders/circulars/notifications were included based on their evaluation against the following criteria:

- a) The order/circular/notification of the relevant Department details or clarifies the scope of a right/entitlement/benefit/concession provided to a student with a disability.

- b) The order/circular/notification of the relevant Department is issued to implement such a right/entitlement/benefit/concession provided to a student with a disability.

Only those orders/circulars/notifications which meet one or both of the aforesaid criteria have been included in the present document.

This document has been prepared in plain English with due care to ensure that their essence is not compromised. The orders were identified through the website of:

- a) AICTE (<https://www.aicte-india.org/>)
- b) CBSE (<https://www.cbse.gov.in/>)
- c) MoE (<https://www.education.gov.in/>)
- d) NCERT (<https://ncert.nic.in/>)
- e) UGC (<https://www.ugc.gov.in/>)
- f) DEPWD (<https://depwd.gov.in/>)

The particulars of the order/circular/notification are provided in the table below, and are hyperlinked for the convenience of the reader, to the document containing that order/circular/notification on the website of the relevant authority. Further, to allow easy navigation for readers interested in knowing the position of law on specific rights, entitlements, benefits, allowances or concessions, a set of tags for each entry is provided in the fourth column of the database. Appropriate tags have been identified for each entry by taking into account the specific education related right/benefit/entitlement/concession that the order/circular/notification relates to.

Brief Overview of RPWDA framework:

The relevant orders/circulars/notifications included in this compilation primarily deal with provisions of the RPWDA and RPWDR relating to the education of persons with disabilities. These include specific provisions which aim to ensure equality, non-discrimination, and the protection of rights for persons with disabilities in education, as provided below:

Definitions Related to Education (Section 2)

- Inclusive Education (Section 2(m), RPWDA): A system where students with and without disabilities learn together and the teaching and learning methods are adapted to meet the needs of students with disabilities.
- Reasonable Accommodation (Section 2(y), RPWDA): Necessary and appropriate modifications to ensure persons with disabilities can enjoy their rights equally, without imposing a disproportionate or undue burden.

Duty of Educational Institutions (Section 16 of the RPWDA)

- All educational institutions funded or recognised by the appropriate government or local authorities have to admit persons with disabilities without discrimination, and make the infrastructure, sports, recreation facilities accessible to them.
- These institutions have to provide reasonable accommodations to the individual's requirements and detect specific learning disabilities in children at the earliest and take measures to overcome them.
- These institutions have to provide transportation facilities to the children with disabilities and also the attendant of the children with disabilities having high support needs.

Duty of Government to promote inclusive education (Section 17 of the RPWDA):

- The appropriate government and local authorities are required to conduct a survey of all school-going children every five years to identify children with disabilities and whether their special needs are being met.
- They shall train and employ teachers to teach children with disabilities and to support inclusive education.
- The government shall provide books and other appropriate assistive devices to students with benchmark disabilities free of cost up to the age of eighteen years and provide scholarships in appropriate cases.
- The government shall also modify curricula and exams (e.g., extra time, scribes) and promote research in inclusive education.

Adult Education (Section 18 of the RPWDA):

- The appropriate Government and local authorities will ensure the participation of persons with disabilities in adult education.

Free Education for Children with Benchmark Disabilities (Section 31 of the RPWDA):

- Every child with a benchmark disability between the age of six to eighteen years shall have the right to free education in a neighbourhood school or in a special school of their choice.

Reservation in Higher Educational Institutions (Section 32 of the RPWDA)

- All government institutions and other high education institutions receiving aid from the government shall reserve at least five percent seats for persons with disabilities
- The persons with benchmark disabilities shall be given an upper age relaxation of five years for admission to institutions of higher education

Nodal Officer in the District Education Office (Rule 7, RPWDR)

- A designated nodal officer should be appointed in the district education office to oversee admissions and ensure facilities for children with disabilities in schools.

Disclaimers:

1. This compilation is for general informational purposes only and is not intended to serve as an official record of any such orders/circulars/notifications. If readers wish to obtain any further information about the orders/circulars/notifications mentioned in this compilation, they are requested to verify the same from the relevant primary sources.
2. The information contained in this compilation is taken from the websites of the AICTE, CBSE, MoE, NCERT, UGC, and DEPWD published and readily available, as of 6 December 2024. Further developments concerning the orders/circulars/notifications mentioned, as well as orders/circulars/notifications which may be dated 6 December 2024 (or a date prior to the said date), but were published on the said website subsequent to 6 December 2024 have not been incorporated in this compilation.
3. Since the RPWDA came into force in April 2017, replacing the PWD Act, 1995, and reflecting India's updated international commitments under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, this compilation includes orders/circulars/notifications which were issued between April 2017 and 6 December 2024 and were available as on 6 December 2024. However, exceptions have been made for any orders/circulars/notifications issued prior to April 2017, i.e., during the older regime of the PWD Act, 1995, that remain legally valid and enforceable under the RPWDA.
4. For the purpose of filtering relevant orders/circulars/notifications pertaining to the rights of persons with disabilities, only those orders/circulars/notifications have been included in the compilation which deals with substantive rights, entitlements, benefits, allowances, or concessions for persons with disabilities. Orders/circulars/notifications which may be valid only for a short period in terms of their scope and application (such as orders providing short-term or one-time scholarships to students with disabilities) have not been included in this compilation.

Compilation of orders/circulars/notifications on the rights of persons with disabilities related to Education

A. All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE)

The AICTE is a national-level body that plans, develops, and regulates technical education in India. The AICTE sets norms and standards for technical education institutions and promotes technical education schemes for women, persons with disabilities, and other underrepresented groups.

With respect to persons with disabilities, the AICTE ensures the implementation of various schemes, and guidelines in institutions to make campuses barrier-free for students with disabilities, and to provide career guidance, financial assistance, and legal remedies.

S. No.	O.M./Order No.	Rights / Provisions	Tags
1.	Assistive Inclusive Technology for Learning Manual dated 9 December 2022	<p>This manual outlines strategies and tools to enhance inclusive learning for students with disabilities, highlighting the role of assistive technology in education.</p> <p>It covers a range of assistive technologies from low-tech tools like pencil grips to high-tech solutions like text-to-speech and speech-to-text software, emphasising the need for customised solutions tailored to individual needs. Assistive Technology can be integrated into various devices and supported by artificial intelligence for personalised tutoring, identifying learning disabilities, and adapting paces.</p> <p>The manual underscores the importance of teacher training, linking assistive technology with curricular goals, and provides resources to enhance accessibility and learning outcomes.</p>	Assistive Technology

2.	AICTE/P&AP/Misc/2022/ dated 27 September 2022	This AICTE circular follows-up on the actions taken pursuant to the 'Guidelines for Inclusive Education for Persons with Disabilities' issued on 5 August 2002. It requires institutions to report their actions through a designated form, demonstrating adherence to the previously issued guidelines, to ensure equitable access and opportunities for persons with disabilities.	Inclusive Education in Technical Institutions
3.	F.No. AICTE/P&AP/Misc/2022/ dated 5 August 2022	<p>Through this circular, the AICTE has introduced 'Guidelines for Inclusive Education for Persons with Disabilities'. These guidelines ensure equitable education for persons with disabilities in technical institutions, including provisions on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Facilitation Cell: Establishing a cell to support admissions, training, and placements of persons with disabilities. ➤ Accessible Infrastructure: Ensure ramps, lifts, accessible toilets, and emergency facilities. ➤ Teaching Support: Provide assistive technologies, sign language interpreters, and exam accommodations (e.g., scribes, extra time). ➤ Support Systems: Offer financial aid, assistive devices, and career guidance. ➤ Awareness: Conduct disability rights campaigns and employer sensitisation. ➤ Digital Access: Supply accessible learning materials and devices for persons with disabilities. ➤ Learning Disabilities: Set up centers to support students with specific learning disabilities. <p>As per these guidelines, institutions are required to allocate budgets for inclusion and follow UGC and AICTE standards.</p>	Inclusive Education in Technical Institutions

4.	Saksham Scholarship Scheme for Specially-Abled Students dated July 2021	<p>Saksham is a scheme being implemented by AICTE aimed at providing support to children with benchmark disabilities to pursue technical education in AICTE approved institutions.</p> <p>Eligibility: Persons with benchmark disabilities with family income less than INR 8 lakhs.</p> <p>Amount of Scholarship: INR 50,000/- per annum for every year of study i.e. maximum 3 years for first year admitted students and maximum 2 years for second year admitted students.</p>	Scholarships for Technical Education
5.	Design Manual For Barrier Free Environment in Universities and Colleges dated 29 November 2016	<p>This manual provides guidelines for creating accessible and inclusive environments in universities and colleges. It emphasises barrier-free infrastructure for students, staff, and visitors with disabilities, covering wheelchair access, ramps, elevators, handrails, and tactile indicators. It also addresses the accessibility of classrooms, libraries, hostels, restrooms, and recreational areas, emphasizing universal design principles.</p> <p>The manual advocates for retrofitting existing buildings, adopting technological solutions like assistive devices and evacuation aids, and ensuring accessible signage and emergency plans. These measures aim to enable equal access to education and facilities for persons with disabilities, fostering inclusion and independence.</p>	Accessible Infrastructure in Universities and Colleges

B. Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE)

The CBSE is a national board of education in India that governs public and private schools, controlled and managed by the Government of India.

The CBSE recommends various interventions for children with disabilities, such as accessibility features, appointment of special educators to work with students with disabilities, concessions for examinations, transportation facilities, and early detection and monitoring.

S. No.	O.M./Order No.	Right/Provision	Tags
1.	No.CBSE/AFF/2024/00974 dated 9 August 2024	<p>This CBSE circular mandates affiliated schools to ensure inclusive infrastructure and practices for children with disabilities. Key provisions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Infrastructure: Mandatory ramps, lifts, disability-inclusive toilets, accessible pathways, tactile paving, and handrails for barrier-free movement.➤ Classroom Accessibility: Wide doorways, anti-slip flooring, clear signage with Braille and contrasting colors, and emergency alarms.➤ Safety Features: Proper illumination, guardrails, and fire alarms.➤ Lift and Ramp Specifications: Minimum dimensions, slip-resistant surfaces, and audio-visual guidance for lifts.➤ Hygiene Facilities: Proper wash basin height, grab bars, and accessible water facilities, especially for adolescent girls' menstrual hygiene. <p>As per this circular, schools are required to align with the RPWDA, and CBSE Affiliation Bye-Laws, 2018 to promote inclusive education. Compliance of schools is assessed during affiliation and renewal processes.</p> <p>This circular supersedes a previous circular issued by the CBSE on the same</p>	Accessibility of Educational Institutions

		subject No. CBSE/AFF/2023 , dated 6 March 2023.	
2.	CBSE/COORD/CWSN-CAMC/2022/ dated 21 December 2022	Through this circular, the CBSE introduces the 'Pariksha Sangam' portal, which can be used by children with disabilities to avail of facilities/exemptions provided by the CBSE during examinations. Schools are required to login to this portal and select the facilities required by each child with disability, from those available to them. The facility/concession should be clearly mentioned on the student's admit card and the centre superintendent should be informed of the same.	Exemptions/ Facilities During Examinations; Parkisha Sangam Portal
3.	HQRS-Coor0POLC(CWSN)/1/2021(E44735) dated 10 July 2021	Through this circular, the CBSE issued a clarification regarding the facilities extended to candidates with disabilities. The circular reiterates that the processes for medical certification of disability (especially for candidates with intellectual disability/mental illness) are the same as those laid down by the DEPWD for all persons with disabilities.	Medical Certificates
4.	CBSE/Dir[ACAD]/2021 dated 29 July 2021	Through this circular, the CBSE informed heads of schools that a survey was being conducted to understand the diverse needs of children with disabilities in schools and the efforts schools have made to ensure inclusive education. The circular clarifies that individual identity of schools would be kept confidential, and survey results would be used for the improvement of existing provisions of inclusive education and teacher training programmes.	Inclusive Practices in Schools
5.	CBSE Handbook on Inclusive Education 2020	The handbook stresses the right of children with disabilities to receive equal education in inclusive settings alongside their peers. Schools are required to provide accessible environments, adaptive learning aids, and accommodations. It highlights the importance of creating barrier-free infrastructure, using assistive technologies, and involving parents and teachers in the process. It also emphasises on continuous teacher training for effective implementation of inclusive education practices.	Inclusive Education

6.	CBSE Handbook for Teachers dated 19 October 2019	<p>This handbook is a comprehensive guide covering educators' roles, qualifications, evaluation, CBSE policies governing educators, board examinations, and resources for professional development.</p> <p>It places a strong emphasis on inclusive education for children with disabilities, promoting equitable learning environments through accessible classrooms, teacher training in assistive technologies, and curriculum adaptations tailored to diverse needs.</p> <p>It provides a framework for educators to understand different types of disabilities and how to identify children with these disabilities, which helps educators screen children, tailor their approaches to meet diverse student needs. Schools are encouraged to provide infrastructure such as ramps, tactile paths, and other facilities to ensure physical access and safety. The handbook also highlights the importance of individualised support and accommodations, including special educators and counselors, and aligns with the RPWDA, to foster participation, equity, and inclusion in education.</p>	Inclusive Education
7.	No.CBSE/COORD/11 2233/2019 dated 12 April 2019	<p>The CBSE issued a circular clarifying the exemptions/concessions available to children with benchmark disabilities for Class X and XII examinations conducted by the CBSE. Key provisions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Scribe and Extra Time: Candidates can use a scribe and are entitled to additional time based on exam duration. ➤ Flexibility in Subjects: Exemption from studying a third language and option to choose alternate subjects. ➤ Accessible Exams: Use of assistive devices, alternative questions, and separate question papers without visual inputs for specific disabilities. ➤ Fee Waivers: No registration or exam fees for visually impaired candidates. ➤ Inclusive Support: Schools must provide trained teachers, assistive 	Reasonable Accommodations during Examinations

		<p>devices, and barrier-free infrastructure while ensuring all students with disabilities are informed of these provisions.</p> <p>The circular outlines standard operating procedures for availing exemptions, requiring timely requests and documentation. This circular supersedes previous circulars on the same subject issued by the CBSE, CBSE/COORD/112233/2018 dated 26 September 2018, CBSE/JS/Coord/16Feb/EC/2018 dated 27 February 2018, and CBSE/COORD/112233/2016 dated 24 January 2017.</p>	
8.	CBSE/Coord/AS[C]/2017/ dated 1 February 2018	This notification of the CBSE amends the CBSE Examination Bye-Laws, 1995 to maintain uniform terminology for persons with disabilities, and to align the CBSE Examination Bye-Laws, 1995 with the definition and categories of disabilities under the RPWDA.	Disability Terminology
9.	No/CBSE/AFF/Circular 13/2017 dated 13 June 2017	This CBSE circular directs all affiliated schools to appoint special educators to ensure quality education and effective inclusion for children with special needs, as mandated by Rule 13.11 of the CBSE Affiliation Bye-Laws, 2018. The provision aligns with the RTE Act and the RPWDA. Schools are required to comply immediately, and management committees are urged to enforce this directive for meaningful inclusion and adherence to national policies on education.	Appointment of Special Educators

C. Ministry of Education (MoE)

The MoE plays a crucial role in shaping India's socio-economic fabric by ensuring inclusive and equitable education for all. Through its two departments—School Education and Literacy, and Higher Education—it promotes universal access to quality education, addressing the needs of disadvantaged groups, including children with disabilities, by supporting the development of accessible infrastructure, scholarships, and inclusive teaching practices.

S. No.	O.M./Order No.	Rights/ Provisions	Tags
1.	F.No. 9-4/2022-IS.18 dated 10th January 2024	<p>The MoE has released the 'Accessibility Code for Educational Institutions', mandatory accessibility standards for educational institutions to ensure equitable access for students with disabilities, pursuant to Section 40 of the RPWDA and Rule 15 of the RPWDR. The guidelines emphasise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Physical Accessibility: Provision of ramps, lifts, tactile paths, accessible classrooms, and barrier-free restrooms. ➤ Inclusive Practices: Universal design principles for teaching materials, accessible communication, and supportive infrastructure. ➤ Specific Guidelines: Tailored accommodations for students with diverse disabilities, including assistive devices, accessible technology, and inclusive facilities. ➤ Implementation Timeline: Gradual compliance with Sustainable Development Goal 4 to achieve inclusive and quality education for all by 2030. <p>These measures aim to create a supportive environment in schools and higher education institutions for children with special needs, promoting inclusion and equity.</p>	Accessibility Standards for Educational Institutions

2.	Guidelines for the Development of e-Content for Children with Disabilities dated March 2021	<p>The guidelines focus on creating inclusive digital content for children with disabilities, adhering to the RPWDA and universal design principles. Key aspects include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Designing adaptable materials like text-to-speech, sign language videos, and tactile graphics. ➤ Ensuring compliance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. ➤ Converting textbooks into accessible digital formats, including Braille and audio books. ➤ Developing disability-specific content for intellectual, sensory, and physical disabilities. ➤ Ensuring accessible platforms and tools for learning. ➤ Training teachers in assistive technology and inclusive teaching practices. <p>The aim is to provide equitable education to children with disabilities through accessible and inclusive digital content.</p>	Development of E-Content for Children with Disabilities
3.	Curricular Adaptations for Children with Special Needs dated February 2016	<p>This emphasises the importance of curricular adaptations to support the inclusion of children with disabilities in mainstream education. It highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Curriculum Flexibility: Adapting content, teaching methods, and assessment techniques to meet diverse needs. ➤ Universal Design: Strategies like verbal, visual, and tactile aids; group activities; and peer tutoring to enhance learning for all. ➤ Assistive Tools: Use of Braille, tactile boards, multimedia gadgets, and speech-to-text software. ➤ Inclusive Practices: Creating welcoming environments with trained teachers and accessible infrastructure, fostering 	Curricular Adaptation

		<p>academic and social participation.</p> <p>➤ Tailored Support: Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) and differentiated instruction for cognitive, physical, and sensory disabilities.</p> <p>These adaptations align with the RTE Act, promoting equity and active learning for children with disabilities in inclusive classrooms.</p>	
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D. National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT)

The NCERT is an autonomous organisation under the Government of India that advises central and state governments on school education policies and programmes. Its objectives include conducting research, publishing model textbooks, developing educational kits, and training teachers. As a nodal agency for universalising elementary education, NCERT also promotes inclusive education by creating accessible learning materials and resources for children with disabilities.

S. No.	Order No.	Rights/ Provisions	Tags
1.	National Guidelines and Implementation Framework on Equitable and Inclusive Education dated 11 October 2023	<p>These guidelines focus on creating accessible and inclusive educational systems for socio-economically disadvantaged groups, including children with disabilities, in line with the NEP. The framework emphasises universal access, equitable opportunities, and high-quality education by integrating inclusive practices into schools, home-based education, and teacher training.</p> <p>Key components include early identification and intervention, accessible infrastructure, assistive technology, individualised education plans, and vocational skill development. The guidelines highlight collaborative efforts among stakeholders such as schools, parents, NGOs, and local communities to foster inclusion. The guidelines also address the need for teacher capacity-building, flexible curricula, and supportive services like counseling and therapy, ensuring equal participation and learning for all children.</p>	Implementation of Inclusive Education

2.	Prashast - A Disability Screening Checklist for Schools dated September 2022	<p>PRASHAST is a disability screening checklist which aims to help regular teachers and special educators to screen children for disabilities and developmental delays at preliminary levels and refer them for further identification at assessment camps.</p> <p>It has been prepared in a manner that is user friendly, written in simple and clear language, assimilates and presents the behavioural manifestations of the 21 disabilities, mentioned in the RPWDA for ease of identification for teachers.</p>	Disability Screening
3.	Educational Rights of Children with Special Needs - FAQs dated January 2021	<p>This NCERT handbook explains the educational rights of children with disabilities under the RTE Act, 2009, and the RPWDA. It highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Accessible infrastructure, individualised support, assistive technologies, and age-appropriate placement in schools. ➤ Curricular adaptation, activity-based learning, and non-discriminatory evaluation to support diverse learning needs. ➤ Common societal misconceptions about disabilities, promoting awareness and acceptance. ➤ Obligations of governments, schools, and teachers in implementing inclusive practices and ensuring barrier-free education. <p>This resource aims to foster inclusive, equitable education for all children, emphasising dignity and equal opportunities.</p>	Rights of Children with Disabilities
4.	Inclusion in Education - A Manual for School Management Committee dated December 2020	<p>This manual, released by NCERT, emphasises creating inclusive schools by fostering barrier-free environments, equity, and active community involvement. It highlights the roles of School Management Committees in planning, monitoring, and implementing inclusive education policies under the RTE Act and the RPWDA.</p>	Inclusive Education; School Management Committees

		<p>Key focus areas include accommodating children with disabilities through accessible infrastructure, individualised support, and inclusive teaching methods. The manual also underscores addressing barriers faced by marginalised groups and providing teacher training to enhance inclusive practices. Through these measures, the manual aims to promote equitable education and community participation in schools.</p>	
5.	<p>Responsive Teacher Programs: Guidelines Towards Inclusive Curriculum B.Ed., B.P.Ed. & B.Ed. (Spl.Ed.) dated 19 February 2018</p>	<p>These guidelines highlight the importance of preparing teachers for inclusive education, identify the gaps in existing teacher education programmes, and propose solutions to address them. The guidelines emphasise equipping teachers with skills to identify and address the needs of diverse learners, including children with disabilities, through inclusive pedagogical practices, curriculum adaptations, and collaborative teaching approaches.</p> <p>The guidelines outline criteria for inclusive teacher education programmes, focusing on foundational competencies like understanding diversity, skill-based competencies for adapting teaching methods, and reflective competencies to address biases. They also emphasise the integration of universal design for learning, individualised education plans, and the use of assistive technologies in teacher training. By fostering collaboration among general, special, and physical education teachers, the guidelines aim to create equitable, inclusive classrooms.</p>	Teacher Education for Inclusive Education

E. University Grant Commission (UGC)

The UGC is a statutory organisation under the MoE, established by an Act of Parliament in 1956 for the promotion and co-ordination of University education and for the determination and maintenance of standards of teaching, examination, and research in Universities, and for the purpose of performing its functions under this Act.

They also provide grants to eligible universities and colleges, the UGC also advises the Central and State Governments on the measures which are necessary for the development of Higher Education. With respect to the disabled persons, they implement several fellowships, creating accessibility guidelines, providing grants and promoting inclusive practices.

S. No.	Order No.	Rights/ Provisions	Tags
1.	D.O. No. 1-2/2024[SCT/ Circular] - Part[1] dated 16 July 2024	<p>This circular is issued to ensure compliance of colleges and universities with the provisions of the RPWDA. This includes reservation of seats in educational institutions, compliance with accessibility guidelines, and formation of an equal opportunities cell and internal committee to address issues faced by persons with disabilities.</p> <p>The UGC regularly issues such circulars to measure compliance of higher education institutes with the RPWDA: D.O. No.F. 6-1/2018 [SCT] dated 2 September 2020, D.O.No.F.6-1/2018[SCT] dated 14 February 2020, and D.O.No.F.6-1/2018 [SCT] dated 4 December 2019.</p>	Compliance of Educational Institutions with RPWDA
2.	Guidelines for Credit Based Course on Pedagogical Aspects for Teaching Divyangjans and Persons with Specific Learning Disabilities	<p>These guidelines outline comprehensive strategies for creating an inclusive higher education environment. The guidelines aim to facilitate inclusive higher education for students with disabilities by addressing their physical, psychological, and social needs during higher education. They promote flexibility in course selection, accessible curriculum formats, the adoption of advanced technology and pedagogy, and evaluation methods tailored to diverse learning needs, ensuring equity with their peers.</p>	Accommodation for Students with Disabilities; Higher Education Institutes

	dated August 2023		
3.	Accessibility Guidelines and Standards for Higher Education Institutes , dated June 2022	<p>The guidelines emphasize inclusive and accessible environments in higher education institutions to ensure equitable education for persons with disabilities , in alignment with the RPWDA and NEP. Key provisions Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Accessible Infrastructure: Barrier-free campuses with ramps, elevators, tactile paths, accessible classrooms, and emergency preparedness systems. ➤ Inclusive Curriculum: Adapted teaching materials, flexible curricula, and universal design for learning principles. ➤ Assistive Technologies: Provision of tools like screen readers, hearing aids, and braille systems, coupled with training for effective use. ➤ Assessment and Evaluation: Accommodations such as scribes, extended time, and alternative exam formats. ➤ Inclusive Campus Life: Facilities for inclusive sports, cultural events, and accessible residential accommodations. ➤ Governance and Monitoring: Regular accessibility audits and adherence to national standards like the Accessible India Campaign guidelines. <p>The guidelines aim to foster inclusivity in higher education, ensuring that students with disabilities can fully participate and succeed in academic and campus life.</p>	Accessibility Guidelines for Higher Education Institutions
4.	D.O. No. F. 82-25/2019 [SA-III] dated 9 July 2020	<p>The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Human Resource Development recommended that details of all schemes for students with disabilities should be mandatorily displayed on the websites of all categories of universities.</p> <p>As such, through this circular, the UGC directed all higher education</p>	Access to Information on Scholarships and Schemes

		institutions including central universities, deemed to be universities, state universities to develop a separate section on their website for students with disabilities, giving important information on scholarships and fellowship schemes.	
5.	F.No.6-2/2013(SCT) dated 21 February 2019	Through this circular, the UGC notified the guidelines for conducting examinations for persons with benchmark disabilities, adopting the guidelines issued by the DEPWD in O.M. No. 34-02/2015-DD.III dated 29 August 2018. Further, the circular clarifies that “extra time” or “additional time” during examinations will henceforth be referred to as “compensatory time”, and the same shall not be less than 20 minutes per hour of examination for persons with disabilities. Colleges and universities are instructed to strictly comply with these amendments.	Examination Concessions; Compensatory Time
6.	Higher Education for Persons with Special Needs Scheme dated January 2017	<p>This scheme of the UGC aims to enhance educational access for persons with disabilities. It provides financial support to universities and colleges to implement inclusive education.</p> <p>The scheme aims to ensure equal educational opportunities for persons with disabilities in higher education by creating awareness, equipping institutions with accessible facilities and assistive devices, and monitoring the implementation of relevant legislation.</p>	Accessibility of Higher Education Institutions
7.	No.F. 1-2/2009(EC/PS)V(I) Vol. II dated 5 May 2016	Through this notification, the UGC notified the UGC (Minimum Standards and Procedure for Award of M.Phil./Ph.D. Degrees) Regulations, 2016. Sub-regulation 4.4 provides for some exemptions for persons with disabilities (over 40% disability), including a one-year extension for M.Phil. and a two-year extension for Ph.D. programmes.	M.Phil and Ph.D programmes; Exemptions

F. Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPWD)

The DEPWD promotes equitable and accessible education for students with disabilities in India, through comprehensive schemes and programmes, covering accessibility, accommodations, reservations and other support.

S. No.	Order No.	Rights/Provisions	Tags
1.	F.No. 29-6/2019-DD-III dated 10 August 2022	<p>The DEPWD issued these guidelines to ensure fair examination conditions for candidates with disabilities under Section 2(s) of the RPWDA, who have less than 40% disability but face difficulty in writing.</p> <p>These guidelines apply to central recruitment agencies and academic institutions, ensuring inclusivity and adherence to the principles of accessibility and fairness. Institutions must enforce strict measures to prevent misuse of these facilities.</p> <p>The guidelines include provisions on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Eligibility: Candidates must provide a medical certificate confirming their writing limitation and need for a scribe.➤ Medical Authority: Certification must come from a multi-member medical board including specialists such as orthopedists, neurologists, and psychologists.➤ Scribe Provisions: Candidates may choose their own scribe or request one from the examination body. Scribe qualifications must align with the examination level.➤ Assistive Devices: Candidates are allowed aids like prosthetics, hearing devices, or orthotics as recommended by medical certification.➤ Compensatory Time: Minimum of 20 extra minutes per examination hour is granted.➤ Accessible Examination Centers: Centers must be on the ground floor and accessible to candidates with disabilities.	Written Examinations

		These guidelines have been adopted by the AICTE by way of a circular F. No. AICTE/P& AP/Misc/2022/ dated 30 September 2022 and are applicable to technical universities and AICTE approved institutions.	
2.	Scheme of Scholarships for Students with Disabilities with effect from 1 April 2023	<p>This scheme, implemented by the DEPWD, aims to promote equitable education for students with benchmark disabilities (40% or more). The scheme includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Scholarship Components: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pre-Matric, Post-Matric, and Top Class Education Scholarships. ○ National Overseas Scholarships for Master's and Ph.D. programs abroad. ○ National Fellowships for M.Phil. and Ph.D. programs in India. ○ Free Coaching Scholarships for competitive and entrance exams. ➤ Financial Assistance: Covers tuition fees, maintenance, book grants, disability allowances, and travel expenses, varying by scholarship type. ➤ Eligibility: Open to Indian nationals with a disability certificate, capped family income (varies by scheme), and academic performance requirements. ➤ Monitoring and Disbursement: Scholarships are disbursed through direct benefit transfer into beneficiaries' Aadhaar-linked accounts, monitored by DEPWD and state governments. <p>The scheme promotes inclusive education by addressing financial and accessibility barriers for students with disabilities.</p> <p>There was a revision of the existing guidelines via circular No. Z-11017/85/2023-SCH dated 20 September 2024. The link to apply for the scholarship is here.</p>	Scholarship Schemes for Students with Disabilities