

Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences

Guidelines for conducting or appearing examinations (Theory and/ or Practical) for persons with disabilities

These guidelines are for conducting examinations (Theory and/ or Practical) for persons with disabilities and also to provide appropriate reasonable accommodation and opportunity to persons with disabilities to effectively participate in the examination process. The guidelines are based on obligations and rights enshrined in the Constitution of India, the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995 and the Right to Education Act, 2009, Guidelines for conducting written examination for persons with disabilities by Department of Disability Affairs, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India. (F.NO 16-110/2003-DD.III. These guidelines are also in alignment with India's obligations under the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), 2006 guaranteeing all human rights and fundamental freedoms at the place of study and work.

Guidelines

Definitions

“Examination” means all annual/semester examination, theory or practical conducted by the College/University.

“Disability” mean all persons who are not able to write the exams on their own, due to permanent disability or temporary.

“Blind person” means a person having the condition of blindness (100% visual disability), as defined under the existing national disability laws enforced from time to time.

“Persons with low vision” means a person having the condition of low vision as defined under the existing national disability laws enforced from time to time.

“Orthopedic disability” means a person with upper limbs disability permanently (example polio, or birth defects etc) or temporarily due to injuries (example fractures etc), that is a hindrance for candidate to write the exams.

“Disability certificate” means a certificate issued by a competent authority as defined under the existing national disability laws enforced from time to time.

“hearing and speech impairment”

General principles

- These guidelines are applicable to all the examinations conducted by the university (internal assessment/semester/annual) or by the affiliated college or institutions under RGUHS.
- The guidelines apply to all theory and practical examination.
- The examination authorities need to ensure that no candidate with disability (in any form, blindness/low vision/ orthopedic disability) will be discriminated against from an equal and fair examination taking process due to fear of malpractice, additional cost or inconvenience.
- The chief superintendent/ or authorized officer from the university shall ensure appropriate invigilation; create an accessible examination taking process for the disabled candidates.
- The facilities required by the candidates may be provided by the chief superintendent of the examination without obtaining the prior approval of the University, if the candidate possesses a valid permanent disability certificate issued the competent authorities.
- The University shall provide appropriate facilities to examination centers to smooth conduction of the examination.
- An existing valid disability certificate shall be accepted as proof of disability. The examination authorities shall not ask for any further additional disability inspection or examination of the candidates.

Scribe/Reader/Lab Assistant/interpreter

- The facility of Scribe/Reader/Lab Assistant/interpreter shall be allowed for any persons who has disability of 40% or more, blind persons, low vision person, persons with orthopedic disability (permanent or temporary) or any persons with disability where the candidate cannot write the exams on his own hands, if desired by the candidate.
- The candidates who are eligible for the facility of Scribe/Reader/Lab Assistant/interpreter may arrange their own Scribe/Reader/Lab Assistant/interpreter or request the examination authority at university or the chief superintendent of the examination centre.
- The candidates' preference for the same shall be recorded by the college/university at the time of filling up the application form for the examination or one to three weeks prior to commencement of examination.
- The candidate is allowed to take more than one Scribe/Reader/Lab Assistant/interpreter for writing different papers in an examination and also for different papers in a single day of examination, but with prior permission obtained from college/examination centre/university.
- In instance where the university or examination centre is arranging for the Scribe/Reader/Lab Assistant/interpreter the candidates shall be allowed to meet the scribe

a day before the examination so that the candidates get a chance to check and verify whether the scribe is suitable or not.

- In the event of some issues (such as slow in writing, non cooperative, or any difficulties faced by the candidate) with the Scribe/Reader/Lab Assistant/interpreter, the candidate can request of change of Scribe/Reader/Lab Assistant/interpreter 24 hours before the examinations to be written.
- In the instance where the candidate opt to bring his own Scribe/Reader/Lab Assistant/interpreter the following needs to be done:
 - The candidate has to request for a Scribe/Reader/Lab Assistant/interpreter to the college/university while filling the exam application or one to three weeks prior to the commencement of examination, through the Principal/HOD/head of the institution.
 - The candidate has to submit any one of the Scribe/Reader/Lab Assistant/interpreter's most readily available bona fine proof (college/employer ID/ or any identity proof acceptable by the institution) along with a self declaration on a plain paper from the Scribe/Reader/Lab Assistant/interpreter stating that the information provided by him/her is true and he/she meets the eligibility of the Scribe/Reader/Lab Assistant/interpreter for the said examination and he/she won't indulge in examination malpractice.
 - The Principal/HOD/head of the institution should send a written communication to the examination centre with all the details of the Scribe/Reader/Lab Assistant/interpreter and the attested copy of the declaration along with the candidate's details.
 - Scribe/Reader/Lab Assistant/interpreter should be acceptable for the candidate,
 - If the Scribe/Reader/Lab Assistant/interpreter and the candidate are from same stream, then the educational qualifications of the Scribe/Reader/Lab Assistant/interpreter should be one year /one semester below that of the candidate. Apart from this there is no other requirement.
 - If the Scribe/Reader/Lab Assistant/interpreter and the candidate are from different stream then there are no criteria regarding qualification.
- In case of emergency situations or for any last-minute change, the candidate can bring a new Scribe/Reader/Lab Assistant/interpreter with required requirements mentioned above, provided he/she meets the eligibility criteria for said Scribe/Reader/Lab Assistant/interpreter. Alternatively university/examination authorities/ examination centre/college can also keep a pool of Scribe/Reader/Lab Assistant/interpreter from which Scribe/Reader/Lab Assistant/interpreter can be utilized.

Mode of Examination

- Persons with disabilities (especially for visually challenged/blind or low vision) can choose the mode for taking the examinations, in person with the help of Braille or in the computer or in large print or even by recording the answers or using the Scribe/Reader/Lab Assistant.
- The candidates will have the option of selecting a question paper in alternative formats-Braille, large fonts, electronic copy (latest accessible copies such as Unicode, HTML, RTF, ePUB, word document etc should be provided).
- Large font specification needs to be mentioned by the candidate. A maximum font size of 20 (twenty) can be requested for.
- The candidates should give the request for mode of taking the examination at time of filling the application.
- The examination bodies can make use of technology to print, convert the question paper, or Braille / e-text etc. and vice-versa.

Computer assisted examination

- If the candidates choose to use the computer as the mode of taking the examination, then
 - The university/college/examination centre will provide a computer with suitable screen reading software for the candidate where ever applicable.
 - Or the candidate can bring his/her computer/laptop with required screening reading software and headsets. (Provided the computer/laptop shall have no other data in the computer/laptop).
 - Or alternatively the candidate can provide and install screen reading software to the computer / laptop provided by college/examination centre/university provided the configuration of the computer/laptop is not less than the installation requirements of the screen reading software and screen magnification software.
 - The computer provided by the university/college/examination centre must have a functional sound card, head sets, and required software for writing the examination.
 - Candidates are allowed to bring their own keyboard that could be attached to the computer at the examination center.
 - The candidate has the choice to use their preferred assistive technology on the computer provided by the university/college/examination centre. If the university/college/examination centre is not able to provide the assistive technology preferred by the candidate, the candidate can bring his/her own assistive technology. This may be installed by the person designated by the examination centre at least one day prior to the examination.

- If the university/college/examination centre is providing the computer system, then the candidate shall be allowed to check the computer system one day prior before the examination so that they can familiarize themselves with the computer and assistive technology installed on them.
- The candidate are allowed to use assistive device like talking calculator (in case where calculators are allowed for giving exams), tailor frame, Braille slate, abacus, geometry kit, Braille measuring tape and augmentative communication devices like communication chart and other relevant electronic device necessary for writing the examination.
- If the candidate finds difficulty or problems in using the system, or fault in software/systems, then the concerned authorities shall make sure the system is rectified immediately.
- On the day of the exam, access to the computer is to be given at least 30 (thirty) minutes before the start of the examination.
- UPS/invertors for back-up support must be installed and connected at the centre.
- A soft copy of the question paper in an accessible format such as HTML/RTF/TXT/DOC/DAISY/ePUB or any latest technology that is available and can used by the candidate at that time will be provided at the start of the examination and copied to the computer being used for examination.
- If the question papers cannot be provided in an accessible digital format or preferred format due to some circumstances, the examination centre needs to provide a reader to read the question paper for the candidate.
- Its candidate's responsibility to save his/her works at regular intervals. It is the responsibility of the candidate to hand over his work to the examiner at the end of stipulated time of the examination.
- The candidate cannot store the copy of the answers in his/her system or copy to any storage device.
- Printers may be kept at the examination centre for taking the print-outs of the answer sheets.
- At the end of the examination, the work done the candidate should be printed on official stationary, that will be treated like any other answer sheet and all necessary information such as candidate's roll number, name of the examination, paper; number of pages used etc should be marked.
- After making sure the complete answer sheet had been printed on the official stationary, the examination authorities should delete the files in the computer.

Compensatory time

- Compensatory time of minimum of not less than 20 minutes per hour of examination will be granted who are making use of the Scribe/Reader/Lab Assistant.
- All the blind and low vision person not availing the facility of Scribe/Reader/Lab Assistant, but using the computer facility will also be compensatory time of minimum of 20(twenty) minutes per hour.
- All the candidates with disability not availing facility of scribe may be allowed additional time of minimum of one hour for examination of 3 (three) hours duration which could further be increased on case to case basis.

Administrative and Seating arrangements

- Proper separate seating arrangements (preferably on the ground floor) should be made prior to the commencement of examination to avoid confusion or distraction during the day of the exam.
- For candidates using Scribe/Reader/Lab Assistant adequate spacing between candidates should be provided.
- The time of issuing question papers should be marked accurately and timely supply of supplementary papers should be ensured.
- The examination centre shall ensure appropriate invigilation, and other required process for conducting the exams for persons with disability.
- Proper lighting needs to be ensured for low vision candidates / or candidates can bring their own lighting in which case, suitable power connection needs to be provided, but with prior permission from examination centre.
- Alternative questions or descriptive questions should be provided in lieu of question requiring visual inputs, for persons with visual impairment.
- The University/College authorities shall inform the respective question paper setters to include alternative questions or descriptive questions in lieu of question requiring visual inputs, for persons with visual impairment.
- No separate fee shall be charged to the candidate by the university/college/examination centre for making the separate arrangements.