



प्रो. राजीव कुमार
सदस्य सचिव
Prof. Rajive Kumar
Member Secretary



सत्यमेव जयते

अखिल भारतीय तकनीकी शिक्षा परिषद

(भारत सरकार का एक सांविधिक निकाय)

शिक्षा मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार

नेल्सन मंडेला मार्ग, वसंत कुंज, नई दिल्ली -110070

दूरभाष: 011-29581399

ई मेल: ms@aicte-india.org

ALL INDIA COUNCIL FOR TECHNICAL EDUCATION

(A Statutory Body of the Govt. of India)

Ministry of Education, Govt. of India

Nelson Mandela Marg, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi-110070

Phone: 011-29581399

E-mail: ms@aicte-india.org

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F. No. AICTE/P&AP/Misc/2021/

CIRCULAR

To

All Vice Chancellors of Technical Universities and
All Directors/ Principals of AICTE Approved Institutions,

Subject: Implementation of the direction given by Hon'ble Supreme Court in the W.P. (Civil) No. 600 of 2021 filed by Javed Abidi Foundation Vs Union of India & Anr. for ensuring accessibility of online education to PwD students etc.

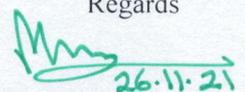
Sir/Madam,

We would like to inform you that in the case "W.P. (Civil) No. 600 of 2021 filed by Javed Abidi Foundation Vs Union of India & Anr.", Hon'ble Supreme Court has directed in its interim order dated 12.11.2021 to implement the following suggestions given by Javed Abidi Foundation during the hearing of the case.

- I) **Access to online classes:** In the lockdown period online classes were conducted by many universities. These classes which are being provided are inaccessible for persons with disabilities because of diverse reasons. The study material which is provided is at times inaccessible because it is either in the image form and no alternative text is provided for the description of the images. The scanned documents are at times not properly scanned or at times not converted via OCR reader. **Please ensure that the study material which is being provided is accessible for those having visual disabilities and specific learning disabilities.**
- II) Students with hearing disabilities are not able to participate as the lectures do not have transcripts and there are no sign language interpreters. **Necessary action may be taken to have sign language interpreters and transcripts for ensuring inclusion of people with hearing and communication disabilities.**
- III) Some people with disabilities need individualized support in specific subjects. **Necessary action may be taken to assign teaching assistants to provide the needed support.**
- IV) **Examination Schedule:** In several universities, exams are being scheduled to take place after the lockdown period gets over. However, when students with disabilities do not have access to the study material or many of them do not even have access to the electronic devices to access the online classes, how will the students prepare for their examination". Due to the lockdown they don't have access to specific organisations which also provide extra assistance to these students, be it for conversion of the material, or extra tutor facilities. **Universities are therefore advised to keep these challenges in mind while releasing the amended date sheets for conducting the examinations.** This would also help the students with disabilities to arrange for scribes and other facilities to write the examination in a proper manner.
- V) **Preventing Discrimination** in the name of Social Distancing: It is believed that social distancing is the one and only solution available as of now to control this invisible enemy. Persons with certain disabilities cannot follow this standard operation procedure as they require assistance from care givers on a day to day basis. **An advisory/direction may be issued to make people aware of the fact that social distancing should be adopted, however in case it is not possible other alternatives should be adopted. Some of the alternatives can be wearing of gloves, using hand sanitizers, etc.**

In view of the above you are required to implement these suggestions to ensure the accessibility of education to PwD students and abide by the direction given by the Hon'ble Supreme Court.

Regards


26.11.21

(Prof. Rajive Kumar)