

Vimala College (Autonomous)

Thrissur



Policy on Services for the Divyangjan (Differenlty abled students)



VIMALA COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), THRISSUR
KERALA 680009

Policy No.	VC/ Policy/ 12				
Policy Name:	Policy on Services for Divyangjan (Differently abled Students)				
Drafted by	Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) in consultation with respective Working Committee	Adopted:	2019-20	Revised:	2020-21
Approved by	Governing Council	Date:	08 April 2021		
Next Revision			2022-23		




PRINCIPAL IN-CHARGE,
VIMALA COLLEGE
(AUTONOMOUS)
THRISSUR - 680 009

Preamble

Vimala College (Autonomous) is committed to provide equal access to learning, services, facilities, and activities to all prospective students and enrolled students so that no one is deprived of an opportunity due to an impairment, disability or handicap. This policy conforms with the guidelines of UGC, University of Calicut, State Government pertaining to the welfare of the differently abled students.

Scope:

This policy for the divyangjan (differently abled) ensures that the differently abled students in the campus receive equal opportunities to all academic facilities in the campus and to help them achieve their academic goals and minimise the impact a disability can have on their life at Vimala College. This Policy also provides information about the academic support; infrastructural facilities, assistive technology and personal support services provided in the campus to ensure an inclusive barrier free environment.

Objectives

- To provide a proactive and inclusive learning environment for differently abled students to enhance their full potential.
- To ensure that the differently abled students can actively engage in campus activities.
- To ensure equal opportunities in the learning process for the differently abled.



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- To facilitate needs-based assistance and strengths based approaches to the differently abled.
- To make students sensitive to the needs of persons with special needs and create opportunities for reciprocal learning among students.

Services for the differently abled in the College campus

1. **Committee for Inclusivity**: A Committee for Inclusivity was constituted with faculty representatives, student representatives and parents to investigate the needs and requirements of the differently abled in the campus. The prime objective of this cell is to provide a barrier-free environment for physically differently able students, to provide special facilities such as common room, rest room, ramps, wheelchair, Braille scripts, talking software, special toilets suiting the needs of differently abled students. The committee conducts periodical meetings with the differently abled and parents assess their specific needs and provide adequate support services. The Committee is responsible for organising special skill-based programs, information sessions on career opportunities to help them gaining meaningful employment. The Committee is responsible for mandatory reporting of the matters related to the services of the differently abled to UGC, State Government and University and timely dissemination of the college's services to the differently abled through institutional website and other means.

2. **Barrier free campus**

Vimala College ensures that all existing structures as well as future construction will address the needs of the differently abled students.



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The college provides a barrier free environment in the campus for the differently abled. The reception and enquiry counter of the college is accessible and easily identifiable by the differently abled students and is facilitated with human assistance and a wheel chair. All accessible spaces for the differently abled students in the campus have signages with appropriate visibility. Ample parking facilities have been earmarked for the differently abled students in the campus. The minimum unobstructed width of corridors is at least 1500mm to ensure free movement of the differently abled. An accessible lift facility has been provided in one of the buildings of the campus. Ramps and rails are provided in various places for easy access to buildings in the campus. All the buildings in the campus are equipped with at least one toilet specially designed for the differently abled students and are easily identifiable with the international logo of accessibility.

3. Provision for learning assistance

The college provides appropriate learning facilities for students that suit their requirements. The faculty and students provide Inclusive, learning-friendly, and barrier-free environments to each differently abled student to develop to their full academic, social, emotional, and physical potentials. The college provides suitable classroom and other facilities to the students as per their request. Easy access to the library is ensured by arranging ramps and wheelchair. For visually challenged students, the library provides Open Book Reader (Version 9'0), with its pearl and Open Book scanning and reading software, a single keystroke; Snaps a picture of text and instantly reads it back with synthesized speech. Braille Handbooks is available along with this instrument. A screen reading software is also provided to read out e-books. Faculty provides.

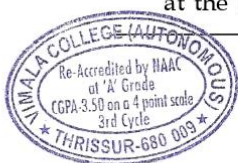


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4. Examination assistance

Following are the guidelines drafted by Vimala College (Autonomous), Thrissur for the conduct of written examination for students recognized with Benchmark Disabilities based on UGC guidelines O.M. No. 34-02/2015-DD III dated 29.08.2018.

1. Policy should have flexibility to accommodate the specific needs on case-to-case basis.
2. The facility of Scribe/Reader/Lab Assistant should be allowed to any with benchmark disability as defined under section 2(r) of the RPwD Act, 2016 and has limitation in writing including that of speed if so desired by her.
3. In case of persons with benchmark disabilities in the category of blindness, locomotor disability and cerebral palsy, the facility of scribe/reader/lab assistant shall be given, if so desired by the person.
4. In case of other category of benchmark disabilities, the provision of scribe/reader/lab assistant can be allowed on production of a certificate from the Chief Medical Officer/ Civil Surgeon/ Medical Superintendent of a Government health care institution as per the stipulated proforma.
5. The candidate should have the discretion of opting for his own scribe/reader/lab assistant or request the Examination Body for the same. The examining body may also identify the scribe/reader/lab assistant to make panels at the District/Division/State level as per the requirements of the examination.



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In such instances the candidates should be allowed to meet the scribe two days before the examination so that the candidates get a chance to check and verify whether the scribe is suitable or not.

6. In case the examining body provides a scribe/reader/lab assistant, it shall be ensured that qualification of the scribe should not be more than the minimum qualification criteria of the examination. However, the qualification of the scribe/reader should be matriculate or above.
7. In case the candidate is allowed to bring her own scribe, the qualification of the scribe should be one step below the qualification of the candidate taking the examination. The student with benchmark disabilities opting for own scribe/reader should submit details of the own scribe as per the prescribed proforma.
8. There should be flexibility in accommodating any change in scribe/reader/lab assistant in case of emergency. The candidate should also be allowed to take more than one scribe/reader for writing different papers especially for languages. However, there can be only one scribe per subject.
9. Candidates with benchmark disabilities should be given, as far as possible, the option of choosing the mode for taking the examination. i.e. in Braille or in the computer or in large print or even by recording the answers as the examining bodies can easily make use of technology to convert question paper in large prints, e-text or Braille and can also convert Braille text in English or regional languages.



10. In case the candidate is allowed to take the examination on computer system, she should be allowed to check the computer system one day in advance so that the problems, if any in the system/ software could be rectified. However, the candidate should not be allowed to use own computer/laptop. Enabling accessories for the computer-based examination such as keyboard, customized mouse and the like may be allowed.
11. The procedure of availing the facility of a scribe should be simplified and the necessary details should be recorded at the time of filling up of the forms. Thereafter the examining body should ensure the availability of question papers in the format requested/opted by the candidate as well as suitable seating arrangement for giving examination.
12. The disability certificate issued by a competent and recognized medical authority of any place across the country or abroad should be accepted.
13. The word 'extra time' should be replaced by the word 'compensatory time' and the same should not be less than 20 minutes per hour of examination for candidates who are allowed the use of scribe/reader/lab assistant. Candidates with benchmark disabilities who do not avail the facility of scribe may be allowed compensatory time of minimum one hour for examination of 3 hours duration. In case the duration of the examination is less than an hour, then the duration of compensatory time should be allowed on pro-rata basis. Compensatory time should not be less than 5 minutes and should be in the multiples of 5.



14. The candidate should be allowed to use assistive devices like talking calculator, tailor frame, Braille-slate, abacus, geometry kit, Braille measuring tape and augmentative communication devices like communication chart and electronic devices.
15. Proper seating arrangement (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. The time of giving the question papers should be marked accurately and timely supply of supplementary papers should be ensured.
16. Appropriate furniture suiting the need of the disabled may be provided.
17. As far as possible, the examining body should also provide reading material in Braille or e-text or on computers having suitable screen reading software for open book examination. Similarly, online examination should be in accessible format. i.e. websites, question papers and all other study material should be accessible as per the international standards laid down in this regard.
18. Alternative objective questions in lieu of descriptive questions may be provided for hearing-impaired persons in addition to the existing policy of giving alternative questions in lieu of questions requiring visual inputs, for persons with visual impairment.
19. Any student with benchmark disability who enrolls for any of the offered programmes of study, is mandatorily required to furnish the details of her



disability to the concerned tutor, along with the document certifying her disability, issued by any authorized medical agency or person. This record is to be maintained by the concerned department and forwarded to the Office of the Controller of Examination.

20. The IQAC of the College provides certificates of appreciation to the students who performed as scribes for the differently abled students.

5. Other facilities

The College has organised system of student mentoring facilitated by faculty members (class tutors). The differently abled students should inform their respective tutors regarding their special needs and the tutor ensures that adequate arrangements are made for the student to carry out her academic activities in the campus.

The College has a Counselling Centre that provides support to students which could be availed by the students upon a referral by her class tutor or the student can approach the counsellor on her own. The contact number of the counselling centre is 0487-2321265 and the Centre works from 10 am to 5 pm on all working days, including Saturdays (except second Saturdays and public holidays). The college has a sick room which can also be accessed by the differently abled. Special skill developmental activities are also arranged for the differently abled students. A whatsapp group is active with all the differently abled students as members administered by the Committee for Inclusivity.


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