

**HIMACHAL PRADESH UNIVERSITY**  
**General Administration Section**

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No. 3-1/78-HPU(Genl.) Vol-XXII

Dated: 16-11-2021

**Notification**

The Vice-Chancellor is pleased to notify the Equal Opportunity Policy of Himachal Pradesh University for Persons with Disabilities as required under Section 21 of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 as per **Annexure** with immediate effect for its implementation in the University.



**REGISTRAR**

Dated: 16-11-2021

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Copy to:-

1. The Secretary (Education) to the Govt. of Himachal Pradesh, Shimla-171002
2. The Director, Social Justice & Empowerment of SCs, OBCs, Minorities & the Specially Abled, Himachal Pradesh, Kasumpti, Shimla-171009
3. The Director of Higher Education, Himachal Pradesh, Shimla-171001
4. The Dean of Studies/D.S.W./ Chief Warden/Dean, CDC/Dean Planning & Teachers Matters, HPU, Shimla-5
5. All the Deans of the Faculties/Chairman/Directors of the Teaching Departments/Institutes, HPU, Shimla-5
6. The Nodal Officer, Disability Affairs, ICDEOL, HPU, Shimla-5
7. The COE/ACOE/FO/Joint Controller, LAD/AR, IAO, HPU, Shimla-5
8. The Director ICDEOL / Phy.Edu. / HRDC/ DIS (IIHS)/ AERC/ PRC/ HPUBS/ PECC/ UIIT/ UCBS/ UILS/ Principal, HPUDES/ HPU Regional Centre, Dharamshala, Distt Kangra, HP.
9. The XEN(Const./Maint.)/Architect, HPU, Shimla-5
10. The Deputy Registrarb (Acad.)/(Estt.)/(Rectt.), HPU, Shimla-5
11. All the Branch/Section Officer, HPU, Shimla-5
12. SPS to Vice-Chancellor/ PA to Registrar, HPU, Shimla-5
13. The Guard File.



**REGISTRAR**

**EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES  
2021**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

Himachal Pradesh University, Shimla is an institution of higher learning which respects human rights and human dignity in letter and spirit. There is no discrimination on the basis of caste, creed, colour, religion, gender, marital status, nationality and disability in the University. It provides equal opportunities and full participation to all students, teachers and employees without any prejudice. It firmly believes that students, including the students with disabilities, are the real assets of the nation. The University is committed to providing barrier free environment, academic or otherwise, to the students, teachers, officers and non-teaching employees with disabilities to enable them to work smoothly and grow in their respective fields.

The University has formulated an Equal Opportunity Policy in the light and conformity of The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 (RPwD Act); The Himachal Pradesh Rights of Persons with Disabilities Rules, 2019; various judgments of Hon'ble Supreme Court of India and Hon'ble High Court of Himachal Pradesh; directions of the Union government; and the decisions of the Executive Council of Himachal Pradesh University pertaining to the persons with disabilities. The RPwD Act and various judgments of the Apex Court give effect to the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2006 (UNCRPD). The RPwD Act and related judgments of Hon'ble Supreme Court of India and Hon'ble High Court of Himachal Pradesh ensure equality of opportunities and adequate accessibility.

The University has already implemented a good part of the requirements under the RPwD Act, applicable judgments of Hon'ble Supreme Courts, High Court, Directions of Union Government and State Government, and plans to take care of the remaining aspects in a prioritized manner so that the requirements are fulfilled at the earliest possible time.

**2. PURPOSE**

The Equal Opportunity Policy of Himachal Pradesh University is to provide equal opportunities to the students, teachers and non-teaching staff with disabilities without any discrimination on the basis of disability, caste, creed, gender, religion, colour, marital status, nationality and race etc.

Based on the above considerations, the University shall strive to maintain a working environment that is free from any harassment. This Policy is subject to applicable



regulations, qualifications, and merit of the individuals concerned. The Policy shall be consistently applied throughout the period of studentship (for students) and employment of the individual from the recruitment process until superannuation (for employees).

The Policy shall be updated from time to time in future as per the enactments, judgments of the Supreme Court, High Court of Himachal Pradesh, directions of the Union Government and Himachal Pradesh Government; and decisions of the Executive Council of Himachal Pradesh University.

### **3. DEFINITIONS**

The definitions of different terms used in this Policy will be as per the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 and The Himachal Pradesh Rights of Persons with Disabilities Rules, 2019.

### **4. SCOPE**

The Equal Opportunity Policy of Himachal Pradesh University shall cover all persons with disabilities, who come under the administrative control of the University. This would include students, teachers and non-teaching officers/ employees (regular, ad hoc, part time, contractual, and temporary) interns and trainees of Himachal Pradesh University, including PG Center, HPU Regional Center, Dharamshala, Department of Evening Studies, The Mall, Shimla and ICDEOL; and other campuses to come up in future.

Further, the teachers, officers, employees and students who acquire disability during their engagement with the University would also be covered by the present policy.

### **5. COMMITMENT**

As specified in the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, the University is duty bound to the following:

#### **5.1 RIGHTS AND ENTITLEMENTS**

##### **a) Equality & Non-discrimination**

- (i) The University shall ensure that all persons with disabilities enjoy the right to equality and full participation, life with dignity and respect for his or her integrity with others.
- (ii) The University shall take steps to utilize the capacity of persons with disability by providing appropriate environment.
- (iii) It will make sure that no person with any kind of disabilities is discriminated on the ground of disability.
- (iv) No person shall be deprived of his or her personal liberty on the ground of disability.

- (v) The University shall take necessary steps to ensure reasonable accommodation for persons with disability on case to case basis.
- (vi) It shall take measures to protect persons with disability from being subjected to torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.

#### **b) Protection from Abuse, Violence, and Exploitation**

The University shall take following measures to protect persons with disabilities against abuse, violence, and exploitation:

- (i) Create awareness and make available information among the public.
- (ii) Take cognizance and provide available legal protection to the persons with disabilities in matters relating to abuse, violence and exploitation.

### **5.2 EDUCATION**

To provide inclusive education to the students with disabilities the University shall-

- (i) Admit the students without discrimination and provide education and opportunities for library, sports and recreation activities equally with others;
- (ii) Provide absolutely free education in all courses, regular, correspondence and private mode, run by the University, including professional and vocational.
- (iii) Reserve 5% seats in all courses except M.Phil and Ph.D
- (iv) Reserve one supernumerary seat each year in M.Phil and Ph.D in all teaching departments.
- (v) Provide free hostel accommodation.
- (vi) Provide all necessary facilities in the Accessible Library for students with Disabilities.
- (vii) Establish a resource room for students with disabilities.
- (viii) Make the entire campus barrier free, including class rooms, offices, hostels and toilets, as far as possible keeping in view the topography, so that services become accessible to the Persons with Disabilities;
- (ix) The persons with benchmark disabilities shall be given an upper age relaxation of five years for admission for higher education.
- (x) Provide necessary support, individual or otherwise, in creating environment that would nurture academic and professional potentialities at par;



- (xi) Ensure that the teaching to persons who are with vision disability, hearing disability or deaf-blindness, is imparted in the most appropriate languages and modes and means of communication;
- (xii) Provide free transportation facilities to the students with disabilities from the city and hostels to the campus and back.
- (xiii) Promote teaching and research in disability studies by establishing a Department of Disability Studies and Research/Centre for Disability Studies.

### **5.2.1 Specific Measures to promote and Facilitate Inclusive Education**

The University shall take the following measures for the purpose of the facilitating inclusive education:

- (i) Strengthen already established Accessible Library for Persons with Disabilities.
- (ii) Establish MoU with the corporate sector/institutions/ Non-governmental Organizations from which adequate resources could be drawn for achieving specific goals of this policy.
- (iii) Promote the use of appropriate augmentative and alternative modes including means and formats of communication, Computer with necessary talking software, large print, and Braille for persons with visual disabilities; sign language for persons with hearing disabilities and appropriate means and format for the persons who are deaf-blind to fulfill their right to education.
- (iv) Provide e- books, other learning materials in accessible format like large prints; and appropriate assistive devices to students with benchmark disabilities as per their specific needs.
- (v) Ensure that all contents available in print in the Libraries of the University are converted in to accessible format and make available to the students/ teachers with visual disabilities. ;
- (vi) Assist / arrange to obtain scholarships from the State government, Union government and other agencies to students with benchmark disability;
- (vii) Make suitable modifications in the curriculum and examination system to meet the needs of students with disabilities.
- (viii) In case of persons with Blindness/ Low Vision/ and other disabilities who cannot write, no criteria of educational qualification or marks scored for scribes shall be fixed till the pool of scribes is formed.
- (ix) The endeavor of the University will be to prepare a pool of scribes to provide this facility to the persons with Blindness/ Low Vision/ and other disabilities who cannot write due to disability.
- (x) Compensatory time @ 20 minutes per hour in written examination (one hour in an examination of three hours duration) to persons with Blindness/ Low Vision/ and other disabilities who cannot write due to disability. This shall be applicable to



those also who don't opt for scribe but have disability in vision or in hands resulting is slow writing.

- (xi) Himachal Pradesh Guidelines for Conducting Written Examination for Persons with Benchmark Disabilities, dated 11<sup>th</sup> February, 2015 shall be applicable in all examinations conducted by Himachal Pradesh University, including entrance, academic and recruitment as per Letter No. SJE-B-B(2)-2/2019-I , Dated 12h April, 2021 of Department of Social and Justice and Empowerment, Himachal Pradesh.

### 5.3 SKILL DEVELOPMENT

#### **Coaching, Vocational training and self-employment:**

The University would extend the following services:

- (i) Free coaching to students with disabilities for different competitive examinations.
- (ii) Formulation of vocational training schemes and programmes for the students and employees with disabilities;
- (iii) Inclusion of person with disability in all vocational and skill development training activities within the ambit of the University;
- (iv) Provide training to Develop soft skills.
- (v) Assist / arrange to obtain loan at subsidized interest rates for the students with disabilities to initiate their own economic venture.

### 5.4 EMPLOYMENT

#### **Non-discrimination in employment**

- (i) The University shall provide reasonable accommodation and appropriate barrier free and conducive environment to the employees with disabilities;
- (ii) No promotion shall be denied to a person on the ground of disability.
- (iii) The University shall not dispense with or reduce in rank, an employee who acquires a disability during his or her service;
- (a) Provided that, if an employee after acquiring disability is not suitable for the post he/she was holding, shall be shifted to some other post with the same pay scale and service benefits;
- (b) Provided further that if it is not possible to adjust the employee against any post, he/she may be kept on a supernumerary post until a suitable post is available or he/ she attains the age of superannuation, whichever is earlier.
- (iv) The University may frame policies for posting / transfer of employees with disabilities (within the University).

(v) The University shall organize various in-house programmes such as orientation, refresher course and other programmes as may be deemed appropriate and suitable for the employees with disabilities.

(vi) A House Allotment Policy will be framed for teachers, Officers and Non-teaching employees with disabilities so that they do not face hardships.

### **5.5 MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS**

Himachal Pradesh University shall maintain records of the persons with disability in relation to the matter of employment and enrolment of students, facilities provided and other necessary information in compliance with the provisions, in such form and manner as may be prescribed by the State Government / UGC/ Distance Education Bureau (DEB)

### **5.6 GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL CELL AND GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL OFFICER**

As per the mandate of The Rights of Persons with Disability Act, 2016, the University shall establish a Grievance Redressal Cell and appoint a Grievance Redressal Officer.

#### **5.6.1 Composition and Tenure of the Grievance Redressal Cell**

- (i) The Grievance Redressal Officer appointed under Section 23(1) of the RPwD Act, 2016, as the *Ex-Officio* Chairperson
- (ii) Two permanent teachers/ employees (one male and one female) having adequate legal knowledge or issues associated with persons with disabilities as Members.
- (iii) Two employee representatives with disabilities (one male and one female) as Members.
- (iv) Two student representatives with disabilities (one male and one female) as Members.
- (v) One External Member from a disability organization who is familiar with issues of discrimination on the basis of disability.
- (vi) Nodal Officer for Disability Affairs (for looking after the issues of implementation of reservation in education and employment, and maintenance of rosters) as the Member Secretary.

The Members from the employee side and the external member to the committee would hold the office for a period of three (3) years while the membership of the student representatives would expire on the completion of their respective academic programmes or completion of three (3) years or whichever is earlier.

#### **5.6.2 The Duties and Responsibilities of the Grievance Redressal Officer**



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- (i) Taking initiative and providing the requisite support to realize the goals of an inclusive and accessible workplace along with accommodation
- (ii) Addressing grievances of persons with benchmark disabilities;
- (iii) To maintain a register of complaints in the manner as may be prescribed by the State Government. Complaint shall be inquired within two weeks of its registration. If the aggrieved person is not satisfied with the action taken on his or her complaint, he or she may approach the Vice Chancellor of the University.
- (iv) Implementing the action plan and developing proactive strategies to prevent discrimination and harassment;
- (v) Ensuring employees and students are aware of the Equal Opportunity Policy of Himachal Pradesh University.
- (vi) The Grievance Redressal Officer will share the quarterly report with the University authority.
- (vi) Creating an environment where all students, employees and teachers are encouraged to report any incidents of violation of rights of the persons with disabilities to the concern authority.

### **5.7 SOCIAL SECURITY, HEALTH, CLUTURE & RECREATION & SPORTS ACTIVITIES**

(i) Social Security will be provided as per the rules of the State Government, applicable to the University.

(ii) Health care services/ facilities will be provided as per the rules of State Government applicable to the University.

(iii) Cultural and Recreation services would include facilities, support and sponsorship to pursue their interest and talents. The University would work to develop technology assistive devices, equipment to facilitate, and inclusion of persons with disabilities in recreational activities.

(iv) In Sports, Yoga and other Activities, the University, shall take following steps:

a) Measures to ensure effective participation of persons with disabilities in sports and Yoga activities;

b) Accord due recognition to the rights of persons with disabilities and shall make provisions for promotion and development of their sporting and Yoga talents;

c) Without prejudice to the provisions mentioned under (a) & (b) above, the competent authority shall take measures to-

(i) Restructure courses and programmes to ensure access, inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities in all Yoga and sporting activities;

(ii) Redesign and support infrastructure facilities of all sports activities for persons with disabilities;



- (iii) Develop technology to enhance potential of all persons with disabilities;
- (iv) Allocate funds for development of sport facilities and training of persons with disabilities;
- (vi) Promote and organize disability specific sport events for persons with disabilities and also facilitate awards to the winners and other participants of such sporting events.

### **5.8 DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE**

Himachal Pradesh University shall follow the Standards for Information and Communication Technology as given in the Himachal Pradesh Rights of Persons with Disabilities Rules, 2019 such as-

- a) Website Standards: Guidelines for Indian Government Websites (GIGW), as adopted by the State Government.
- b) Documents Standards: Electronic Publication (ePUB) or Optical Character Reader (OCR) based pdf formats.

### **5.9 OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT/ASSISTIVE AIDS REQUIRED**

The University shall endeavor to create following provisions, as far as possible:

#### **5.9.1 Locomotors**

- a) Ramps with railings/ lifts in all buildings up to the top floor including public utility areas.
- b) Wheelchair facilities in all buildings.
- c) Customized furniture as per the specific requirement of persons with disabilities.
- d) Use of low floor University buses for transportation of students and employees.
- e) Availability of Accessible toilet facility.

#### **5.9.2 Visually Impaired (VI)**

- a) E-books, all necessary talking software and other reading assistive devices in the Accessible Library.
- b) Tactile pavers on corridors and other passages.
- c) Talking ATMs for the Visually Impaired
- d) Availability of Smart Canes (with sensors)
- e) Computer with all necessary software to employees with vision disabilities.

### **5.10 SPECIAL PROVISIONS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES WITH HIGH SUPPORT NEEDS**

University shall make provisions for providing appropriate support to any person with benchmark disability who considers himself/herself to be in need of high support; or an

person or organization on his or her behalf, may apply to the University authority to provide high support.

## **5.11 MEASURES TO BE UNDERTAKEN**

### **5.11.1 Awareness Campaign**

- (a) Himachal Pradesh University shall conduct, encourage, support, or promote awareness campaigns and sensitization workshops/ programmes to ensure that the rights of the persons with disabilities provided under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 are protected.
- (b) The programmes and campaigns specified shall also:
- (i) Promote values of inclusion, tolerance, empathy and respect for diversity;
  - (ii) Advance recognition of the talent, skills, merits and abilities of persons with disabilities and of their contributions to the academics, workforce and professional front;
  - (iii) Provide orientation and sensitization at the University and professional training level on the human condition of disability and the rights of persons with disabilities;
  - (iv) Provide orientation and sensitization on disabling conditions and rights of persons with disabilities to employers, administrators, co-workers and among the students;
  - (v) Make efforts so that the rights of persons with disabilities are included in the curriculum.

## **5.12 MANDATORY OBSERVANCE OF ACCESSIBILITY NORMS**

University shall ensure that all physical infrastructures including buildings, toilets furniture, facilities and services in the building/campus are as per the latest applicable Accessibility Standards.##