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National Council for Vocational Education and Training
Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship
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Subject: Guidelines for Provision of Comprehensive Accessibility Standards for Training of Persons with Disabilities.

1. The "Guidelines for Provision of Comprehensive Accessibility Standards for Training of Persons with Disabilities" serve as comprehensive guidelines designed to foster inclusivity and uphold equal opportunities for individuals with disabilities within vocational education, training, and skilling sectors in India.
2. The NEP 2020 places emphasis on the establishment of an inclusive education system that accommodates the diverse learning needs of all students, including those with disabilities. This inclusive approach also extends to Vocational Education and Trainings (VET), encompassing the use of assistive technologies, the development of an inclusive curriculum, and the implementation of effective training.
3. Accordingly, the Guidelines for Providing Comprehensive Accessibility Standards for Persons with Disability have been formulated by NCVET after due consultation with Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD) and Skill Council for Persons with Disabilities (SCPwD). The guidelines address the minimum standards of training, awareness building, accessible learning and reasonable accommodation, assistive technologies, inclusivity and enhanced employability opportunities for Persons with Disabilities.
4. The draft guidelines were launched for Public Consultation during the purple festival in Goa, inviting comments, inputs, and suggestions until February 10, 2024. Relevant Suggestions/feedbacks received from the ecosystem were incorporated in the guidelines.
5. The final version of the draft guidelines was presented before in the 10th Council meeting held on 21st February 2024 for approval and the council approved the same. The guidelines are being notified herewith.
6. These guidelines maybe further amended/updated from time to time with the approval of the NCVET based on the feedback and requirements during the implementation of these guidelines.



Col. Santosh Kumar
(Director)
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सत्यमेव जयते
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT
& ENTREPRENEURSHIP



Guidelines

for

Provision of Comprehensive Accessibility Standards for training of

Persons with Disabilities



**National Council for Vocational Education and
Training**

April 2024

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PREFACE



The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, founded on the principles of Access, Equity, Quality, Affordability, and Accountability, aims to establish India as a global leader in knowledge and skill development. NEP 2020 envisions a progressive, flexible, and inclusive education system that prepares students for a rapidly changing world. It emphasizes the importance of inclusive education, providing equal opportunities across society. The National Credit Framework (NCrF), initiated by the Government of India, operationalizes NEP 2020 by facilitating the accreditation of all learning types, regardless of the learner's pace.

As the regulatory authority for Vocational Education, Training, and Skilling (VETS), the National Council of Vocational Education and Training (NCVET) is committed to implementing equality and accessibility within the VETS ecosystem. NCVET's "Guidelines for Provision of Comprehensive Accessibility Standards for Training of Persons with Disability" aim to foster inclusivity and accessibility, particularly focusing on the needs of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs). These guidelines ensure equal opportunities for individuals with disabilities in VETS, addressing unique needs, promoting the use of assistive devices, inclusive infrastructure, and necessary accommodations to enhance the educational and skill development of PwDs.

Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) are vital members of our society, each with unique talents and potential. Acknowledging and catering to their specific needs promotes an inclusive, diverse community and workforce. Empowering PwDs enriches societal experiences and viewpoints, underlining the importance of creating a supportive environment for them.

These Guidelines are meticulously designed to meet the specific needs of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) by providing tailored provisions. They aim to create and refine skill-based qualifications that not only cater to the requirements of PwDs but also address their unique abilities. This involves customizing existing skill programs to suit their cognitive and pedagogical needs, thereby enhancing their employability. Additionally, the Guidelines seek to foster awareness and sensitivity within the ecosystem, advocating for a workplace conducive to PwDs. Consequently, these Guidelines will bolster the national skill development objectives by leveraging the potential of PwDs and encouraging their active involvement in economic activities.

In line with NEP 2020's vision and goals, our focus remains on inclusivity and equal education access, with specialized skilling programs for PwDs. Including PwDs in India's skill ecosystem addresses their unique requirements and improves employability. The Guidelines are designed to adapt skill-based qualifications to PwDs' needs, enhancing their job prospects and fostering a supportive ecosystem.

I am grateful to all stakeholders involved in developing these Guidelines, particularly the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD) and Skill Council of Persons with Disability (SCPwD), for their invaluable feedback. My thanks also extend to Dr. Neena Pahuja, Dr. Vinita Aggarwal, and Col. Santosh Kumar from NCVET for their contributions, along with Ms. Sarika Dixit, Mr. Parikshit Yadav, and Mr. Baiju Balan, whose insights have significantly shaped these Guidelines.

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The 'Guidelines for Provision of Comprehensive Accessibility Standards for Training of Persons with Disability' are set to bridge the accessibility and equity gap in vocational education, guiding the empowerment and skilling of Persons with Disabilities.



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Guidelines for Provision of Comprehensive Accessibility Standards for Training of Persons with Disability

1. Introduction and Background

1.1 Overview of the Skilling Ecosystem

The Skill India Mission is an initiative taken by the Government of India to bridge the gap between demand and supply of skilled manpower in different industries, in India as well as abroad, through various skill development programs across the country. Skill India has been launched to empower the youth of the country with skill sets that make them more productive in the work environment and enhance their opportunity for livelihood engagement.

Today, India is a country with 65% of its youth in the working age group. If ever there is a way to reap this demographic advantage, it has to be through the skill development of the youth so that they contribute not only to their personal growth, but to the country's economic growth as well. Skill India has responsibility for ensuring the implementation of common norms across all skill development programs in the country so that they are all standardized and aligned to one objective. The central and state governments plan and introduce multiple schemes for skill development. A more focused approach to skill development in India, came with the formulation of a separate ministry, the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), dedicated to skill development, which came into existence in November 2014.

1.2. NCVET- An Overview

The National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVET) was notified by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) on December 5, 2018 to integrate the fragmented regulatory systems in India and infuse quality assurance across the entire skilling /vocational training value chain, leading to strengthened outcomes. The NCVET is an overarching skills regulator that will regulate the functioning of entities engaged in vocational education and training, both long and short term and establish minimum standards for the functioning of such entities. The major functions of NCVET include:

- a. Recognition and regulation of Awarding Bodies (ABs), Assessment Agencies (AAs) and Skill related Information Providers
- b. Approval of qualifications
- c. Monitoring and supervision of recognized entities
- d. Grievance redressal

The key players in the skilling ecosystem in India are the Awarding Bodies, Assessment Agencies and Training Providers; wherein the Awarding Body articulates job standards and certifies competencies and Assessment Agency follows an assessment and validation procedure that formally evaluates the learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and/or competencies) of an individual while training centres are responsible for ensuring effective quality trainings

1.3. Introduction to Disability

1.3.1. Understanding Disability

A disability is any condition of the body or mind (impairment) that makes it more difficult for the person with the condition to do certain activities (activity limitation) and interact with the world around them (participation restrictions). According to the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, “Person with Disability” means a person with long term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment which, in interaction with barriers, hinders his full and effective participation in society equally with others. Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments that, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. A disability may be visible, such as seeing a person walk with a cane, or it may be invisible, such as in the case of an intellectual disability. A disability label is not an explanation of what a person can or cannot do. Persons with disabilities are not a homogeneous group. Even if they have the same type of disability or label, their abilities and needs can vary. For example, one person with visual impairment may be completely blind while the other may have partial or low vision and be able to read large print.

Different organizations define disability as follows:

- a. **The World Health Organization states that** *"Disability is an umbrella term, covering impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions. An impairment is a problem in body function or structure; an activity limitation is a difficulty encountered by an individual in executing a task or action; while a participation restriction is a problem experienced by an individual in involvement in life situations. Thus, Disability is a complex phenomenon, reflecting an interaction between features of a person's body and features of the society in which he or she lives."*
- b. As per Article 1 of **UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)**, *"Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others."*

- c. According to the **International Labour Organization (ILO)** Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.\
- d. **The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 (RPwD Act, 2016)** identifies various specified disabilities broadly **classified into five categories** as under:
 - i. **Physical Disability-** a condition that substantially limits one or more basic physical activities in life (i.e. walking, climbing stairs, reaching, carrying, or lifting)
 - ii. **Intellectual Disability** including Specific Learning Disability, Autism Spectrum Disorder.
 - iii. **Mental Behaviour (Mental Illness) Disability** caused due to: Chronic Neurological Conditions such as Parkinson's disease and Multiple Sclerosis.
 - iv. **Blood Disorders** such as Haemophilia, Thalassemia and Sickle Cell Disease.
 - v. **Multiple Disability**

1.3.2. International Scenario: Policy, Acts & Rules and Other Provisions for PwDs

a. International Policy:

Recognizing that disability is an evolving concept, various organisations around the world have defined/stated disability and its related issues. A few of them are as follows:

- i. The **World Health Organization** conceptualizes disability as being a multidimensional experience for the person involved. There may be effects on organs or body parts and there may be effects on a person's participation in areas of life.
- ii. **The World Bank** considers that leaving people with disabilities outside the economy translates **into a foregone GDP of about 5% to 7%**. In addition to individual and family benefits, there is also a strong economic imperative for increased labour force participation, which will help address the country's shortage of skilled labour force, while at the same time reducing fiscal pressures associated with welfare dependency.
- iii. The **Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities states:** Disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinder full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. It also states that "Disability results from an interaction between a non-inclusive society and individuals". For instance, a person using a wheelchair might have difficulties gaining employment not because of the wheelchair, but because

there are environmental barriers such as inaccessible buses or staircases that impede access. To enable equal access to education, we need to break down as many of the barriers as possible – both physical and attitudinal

- iv. **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), 2006:** The Convention adopted by the UN General Assembly on December 13, 2006, and opened for signing by the State Parties on March 30, 2007. Adoption of the Convention has led to the empowerment of persons with disabilities across the globe to demand their rights and make state, private, and civil society agencies accountable for enjoying their rights. India is one of the few first countries to have ratified the Convention. Consequent upon signing the Convention on March 30, 2007, India ratified the Convention on October 1, 2007. The Convention came into force on May 3, 2008. The Convention places the following three important obligations on each State Party: -
- A. Implementation of the provisions of the Convention;
 - B. Harmonization of the country laws with the Convention and
 - C. Preparation of a Country Report.

Taking concrete measures for effective implementation of the Convention, all the concerned Central Ministries were requested to implement the provisions of the Convention as might be applicable to each of them. Similarly, all the Chief Ministers of States and Administrators of UTs were also requested to examine different provisions/obligations under the Convention as they might relate to them and to take effective steps for their early implementation. The state Governments/UT administrators were also asked to furnish a status report in this regard so that the same could be utilized towards preparing the country report. Rigorous monitoring and follow-up were being done in this regard so as to fulfil the obligations of the Convention. India's First Country Report

([https://disabilityaffairs.gov.in/upload/uploadfiles/files/First%20Country%20Report%20\(1\)_compressed.pdf](https://disabilityaffairs.gov.in/upload/uploadfiles/files/First%20Country%20Report%20(1)_compressed.pdf)) was submitted to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons in November 2015.

- v. ***Incheon Strategy***: Incheon Strategy “To Make the Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific. The Ministers and representatives of members and associate members of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) assembled at the High Level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Final Review of the Implementation of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012 held in Incheon, Korea, from October 29 to November 2, 2012, and adopted the Incheon Strategy for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific. In its 69th Session, held from April 25 to May 1, 2013, the Senate passed a resolution endorsing the Ministerial Declaration and Incheon Strategy.

- vi. **Beijing Declaration:** The high-level inter-governmental meeting on mid-point review of the Asia and Pacific Decade for Persons with Disabilities (2013-2022) in Beijing, held from November 27 to December 1, 2017. After deliberations in the meeting, the Beijing Declaration was adopted, which outlines an action plan for the state parties to achieve the targets of the Incheon Strategy in the next five years.

1.3.3. National Scenario: Policy, Acts & Rules and Other Provisions for PwDs

The Indian government, with a view to creating an environment that provides such person's equal opportunities for protection of their rights and full participation in society, formulated and brought out the National Policy for Persons with Disabilities. The Policy aims at recognizing that persons with disabilities constitute a valuable human resource for the country and that a majority of such persons can lead a better quality of life if they have equal opportunities and effective access to rehabilitation measures. The policy outlines specific measures and strategies for ensuring the protection of the rights of PwDs and their inclusion in society.

According to census 2011, there are **2.68 Crore Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) in India** (1.49 crore male and 1.18 crore female PwDs). Even though, persons with disabilities constitute a significant percentage of the population of India, their need for meaningful employment largely remains unmet, despite implementation of "**The Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995**". In the overall population, the number of disabled is proportionately higher in rural areas, accentuated by general poverty considerations and poor access to health services. The rural disabled are significantly disconnected from skills and markets.

- a. According to the 2011 Census, about **1.34 crore people with disabilities are in the employable age range of 15 to 59 years**. About 99 lakh people with disabilities in the employable age group were non-workers or marginal workers.
- b. Very low access of the present training infrastructure to the PwDs in rural areas.
- c. Low level of involvement of the private sector in the skill training of PwDs.
- d. Urgent need to scale up the skill training infrastructure in view of the huge demand- supply gap.
- e. The skill training offered by various ministries / departments to the PwDs is overlapping and fragmented.

Category wise Number of Persons with Disabilities as per Census 2011			
Type of Disability	Persons	Males	Females
In Seeing	50,33,431	26,39,028	23,94,403
In Hearing	50,72,914	26,78,584	23,94,330
In Speech	19,98,692	11,22,987	8,75,705
In Movement	54,36,826	33,70,501	20,66,325
Mental Retardation	15,05,964	8,70,898	6,35,066
Mental Illness	7,22,880	4,15,758	3,07,122
Any Other	49,27,589	27,28,125	21,99,464
Multiple Disability	21,16,698	11,62,712	9,53,986
Total	2,68,14,994	1,49,885,93 (55.90%)	1,18,264,01 (44.10%)

2.1.2 Classification of Persons with Disability by Residential Area is as under:

Population with Disability by Residence India, 2011*			
Residence	Persons	Males	Females
Urban	81,78,636 (30.50%)	45,78,034	36,00,602
Rural	1,86,36,358 (69.50%)	1,04,10,559	82,25,799
Total	2,68,14,994	1,49,88,593	1,18,26,401

* Source: Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India

The following three Acts are applicable in the Disability Sector:-

- The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016
- The National Trust for the Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Intellectual Disability-and Multiple Disabilities Act, 1999
- Rehabilitation Council of India Act, 1992

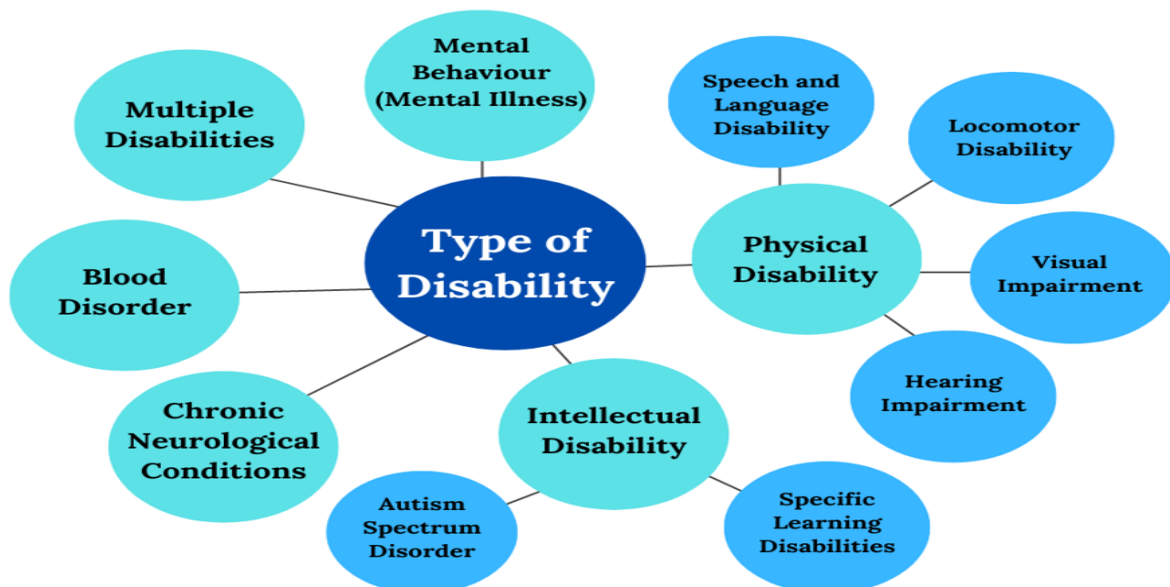
In addition, the **Unique Disability ID (UDID)** is a flagship project of the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India. The project started in 2017 with objective to create a National Database for all Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) along with their socio-economic details. The project also facilitates the issuance of a UDID card to all “Divyangjan” through a single online portal- <https://www.swavlambancard.gov.in/> across all States/UTs in India. Until November 2023 more than 1 crore UDID cards have been generated.

The Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016, was enacted on December 28, 2016, and came into force on April 19, 2017. The salient features of the Act are:-

- Responsibility has been cast upon the appropriate governments to take effective measures to ensure that the persons with disabilities enjoy their rights equally with others.
- Disability has been defined based on an evolving and dynamic concept.
- The Act covers the following specified disabilities: -
 - Physical Disability**
 - Locomotor Disability
 - Leprosy Cured Person

- Cerebral Palsy
 - Dwarfism
 - Muscular Dystrophy
 - Acid Attack Victims
- B. Visual Impairment
- Blindness
 - Low Vision
- C. Hearing Impairment
- Deaf
 - Hard of Hearing
- D. Speech and Language Disability
- ii. Intellectual Disability**
- A. Specific Learning Disabilities
- B. Autism Spectrum Disorder
- iii. Mental Behaviour (Mental Illness)**
- iv. Disability caused due to-**
- A. Chronic Neurological Conditions such as-
- i. Multiple Sclerosis
 - ii. Parkinson's Disease
- B. Blood Disorder-
- i. Haemophilia
 - ii. Thalassemia
 - iii. Sickle Cell Disease
- v. Multiple Disabilities including Deaf blindness**

An illustrative diagram indicating different types of disabilities is as below:



1.3.4. Other Provisions applicable to PwDs as per Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016

- a. **As per RPwD Act, 2016 Person with Benchmark Disabilities means a person with not less than 40% of specified disability**
- b. **Additional benefits** have been provided for persons with benchmark disabilities and those with high support needs under the RPwD Act 2016.
- c. Every child with benchmark disability between the age group of 6 and 18 years shall have the **right to free and inclusive education**.
- d. Act provisions that Govt shall take measures to promote, protect and ensure participation of persons with disabilities **in adult education and continuing education programmes** equally with others.
- e. Act provides for Government to formulate schemes and programmes including provision of loans at concessional rates to facilitate and support employment of persons with disabilities especially for their **vocational training and self-employment**.
- f. **Reservation: 5% reservation** in seats in Government and Government aided higher educational institutions for persons with benchmark disabilities. **4% reservation in Government jobs** for certain persons or class of persons with benchmark disability.
- g. Stress has been given to **ensure accessibility in public buildings** (both Government and private) in a prescribed time-frame.
- h. The Act provides for grant of **guardianship by District Court or any authority designated** by the State Government under which there will be joint decision – making between the guardian and the persons with disabilities. Broad based **Central & State Advisory Boards on Disability** to be set up as policy making bodies.
- i. The Act provides for **strengthening of the Office of Chief Commissioner of Persons with Disabilities and State Commissioners of Disabilities** which will act as regulatory bodies and Grievance Redressal agencies and also monitor implementation of the Act. These Offices will be assisted by an Advisory Committee comprising of experts in various disabilities.
- j. Creation of **National and State Fund to provide financial support** to the persons with disabilities.
- k. The Act provides for **penalties for offences** committed against persons with disabilities.
- l. Designated **special Courts to handle cases** concerning violation of rights of PwDs.

1.3.5. Rules

1. Rights of Persons with Disabilities Rules, 2016
https://www.indiacode.nic.in/bitstream/123456789/15939/1/the_rights_of_persons_with_disabilities_act%2C_2016.pdf

2. Rights of Persons with Disabilities Rules, 2017. These rules were notified on 15.06.2017 https://upload.indiacode.nic.in/showfile?actid=AC_CEN_25_54_0002_201649_1517807328299&type=rule&filename=Rules_notified_15.06.pdf
3. The Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Amendment) Rules, 2020.
4. The Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Amendment) Rules, 2023. ([https://disabilityaffairs.gov.in/upload/uploadfiles/files/RPwD%20\(Amendment\)%20Rules%2C%202023%20-%20Accessibility%20standards%20on%20ICT%20products%20and%20Services_compressed.pdf](https://disabilityaffairs.gov.in/upload/uploadfiles/files/RPwD%20(Amendment)%20Rules%2C%202023%20-%20Accessibility%20standards%20on%20ICT%20products%20and%20Services_compressed.pdf))

1.3.6. Guidelines

1. Notification on Guidelines for Assessment of Various Specified Disabilities. (https://upload.indiacode.nic.in/showfile?actid=AC_CEN_25_54_00002_201649_1517807328299&type=notification&filename=Guidelines%20notification_04.01.2018.pdf)
2. Guidelines for Evaluation and Assessment of Autism and Procedure for Certification. (<https://disabilityaffairs.gov.in/upload/uploadfiles/files/25%20April%202016%20-%20Autism%20Notification.pdf>)
3. Assessment Guidelines for disability has been amended with regard to Specific Learning Disability on 09.12.2020 (https://upload.indiacode.nic.in/showfile?actid=AC_CEN_25_54_00002_201649_1517807328299&type=notification&filename=amendment_guidelines_09.09.2020.pdf)
4. Guidelines for conducting Written Examination for Persons with Benchmark Disabilities issued on 29.08.2018. (https://www.nta.ac.in/Download/Notice/Guidelines_29_08_2018.pdf)
5. Corrigendum to the Guidelines for conducting Written Examination for Persons with Benchmark Disabilities dated 08.02.2019. (<https://disabilityaffairs.gov.in/upload/uploadfiles/files/Corrigendum-08-02-19.pdf>)
6. Guidelines for conducting written examination for persons with specified disabilities covered under the definition of Section 2(s) of the RPwD Act, 2016 having less than 40% disability and having difficulty in writing. (<https://disabilityaffairs.gov.in/upload/uploadfiles/files/Vikash%20Kumar%20Guidelines%2010-8-22.pdf>)

1.4. Importance of Vocational Education, Training and Skilling for PwD Sector

People with disabilities often face challenges on a regular basis, which makes it difficult for them to achieve their full potential. Vocational education and training would provide a platform for the trainee to enjoy the education and gain confidence. It is important for the personal growth and development of the trainee to receive a proper education.

For persons with disabilities, employment is considered a vital step towards their rehabilitation and empowerment in that it provides a sense of belonging, independence, and increases their prospects of social inclusion and overall well-being. For this reason, vocational education can play a pivotal role. Generally, persons with disabilities can perform most of the jobs, and with an enabling environment and assistive services, the majority of persons with disabilities can be as productive as persons without disabilities.

According to the Census, 2011, approximately **45% persons with disabilities are illiterate**. There is a need for mainstreaming of the persons with disabilities in the general education system through Inclusive education. The Article 21A of the Constitution guarantees education as a fundamental right and the Section 26 of the Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995, provides for free and compulsory education to be provided to all persons with disabilities up to the minimum age of 18 years.

Education, including vocational education and training, is the most effective vehicle for social and economic empowerment. The **Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) with disabilities in the age group of 15-18 years are provided free education under Integrated Education for Disabled Children (IEDC) Scheme**. IEDC Scheme implemented through the State Governments, Autonomous Bodies and Voluntary Organizations provides hundred percent financial assistance for various facilities like special teachers, books and stationery, uniform, transport, readers allowance for the visually handicapped, hostel allowance, equipment cost, removal/ modification of architectural barriers, financial assistance for purchase/ production of instructional material, training of general teachers and equipment for resource rooms.

The National Action Plan for Skill Development of Persons with Disabilities (NAP-SDP) implemented by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India. The Scheme aims to provide skill training to persons with disabilities in NCVET certified and NSQF aligned vocational courses. Its primary objective is to enhance skills of Persons with Disabilities via quality vocational training in order to enable PwDs with gainful employment (Self/Wage based). PwDs enrolled in the courses receive financial assistance for aids and assistive devices, conveyance cost and post placement support. Moreover, in order to ensure seamless implementation and secure employment opportunities, The Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, has developed a digital portal- PM-DAKSH-DEPwD (www.pmdaksh.depwd.gov.in). Under PM-DAKSH-DEPwD digital portal the Divyangjan Rozgar Setu is created as a job aggregation platform. The platform is aimed at aggregating employment opportunities across India and providing detailed geo-tagged based information on vacancies in private companies to persons with disabilities. PwDs can register themselves via their UDID number/UDID enrolment number on PM-DAKSH-DEPwD. Various Job Aggregators as well as employers of PwDs have been onboarded on PM-DAKSH-DEPwD's Rozgar Setu with the aim to provide employment opportunities to India's PwDs.

2. Requirement, Scope and Objective of the PwD Guidelines

2.1. The Requirement- Why do we need these guidelines

The Guidelines on "Accessibility standards for Persons with Disability" aim to address in detail the requirements of PwD with respect to vocational education and training. The existing gaps in bringing inclusivity for the PwDs and standardized norms in implementation of provisions of vocational education for PwDs are being addressed through these guidelines.

2.2. Scope

These guidelines aim to bring out possible opportunities in the VET ecosystem to the doorsteps of every trainee, irrespective of his/her disability limitation or strength in one or the other areas of his development by clearly spelling out the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders in the VET ecosystem like Awarding Bodies, Assessment Agencies, Training centers, etc. These guidelines will also spell out the minimum accessible standards for PwDs to be provided by ABs, AAs,TCs, etc. so as to focus on designing a structure that has the potential to overpower the disadvantages of any disability while helping the trainee to get quality education.

2.3. Objectives

The Guidelines aim to achieve the following objectives:

- a. To lay down minimum standards to be followed by the stakeholders in the VET in training delivery and related aspects.
- b. To create awareness amongst the PwD learners on the minimum standards that they need to be provided by the stakeholders concerned.
- c. To help person with disabilities in acquiring learning experiences and training by using accessibility parameters such as materials, methods, techniques, aids and equipment, assistive devices, etc. as per tune with the nature of their specific needs.
- d. Ensure that higher productivity and employability is achieved for the PwDs.

3 Accessibility for PwDs in Vocational Education, training and Skilling (VETS)

Accessibility is about giving an individual access to a product, service, or facility. This implies whether all users are able to access an equivalent user experience when they encounter a product, service, or facility. When we consider PwDs, accessibility gains significance as it is the primary tool for their empowerment and inclusion. The section further elaborates on various criteria/parameters to be considered while providing an accessible environment to PwDs.

3.1. Special Infrastructure

It is critical to make sure that training facilities are accessible to trainees with disabilities to ensure their participation in vocational education/training. Inaccessible training facilities can create barriers for PwDs, limiting their ability to access information and resources, engage in interactive activities, and interact with peers and instructors. This can have a significant impact on their learning experience and may result in them feeling isolated or excluded from the training program.


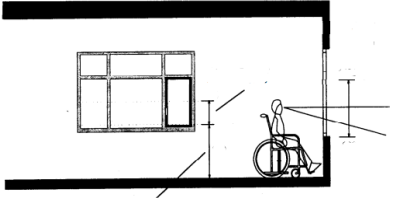

Providing infrastructure for PWD, such as wheelchair ramps, elevators, accessible restrooms, assistive technology, and staff oriented and trained on basic disability & related issues, can help to remove barriers and promote an inclusive learning environment. By creating accessible training facilities, we can ensure that all participants, regardless of their abilities, have equal opportunities to learn and grow.

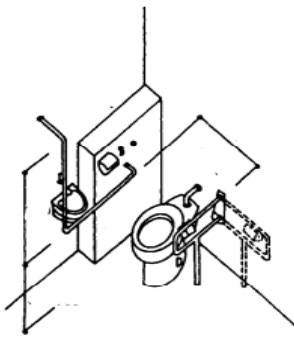


Creating inclusive infrastructure is crucial for ensuring that individuals with disabilities can fully participate in society. This includes making sure that public spaces, buildings, and transportation are accessible and accommodating to people with disabilities. When planning infrastructure projects, it's important to consider the needs of individuals with disabilities from the outset, rather than trying to retrofit solutions later. In this table, we provide examples of some infrastructure parameters that can help create more inclusive environments for individuals with disabilities. By implementing these parameters, we can create a more equitable and accessible world for everyone.


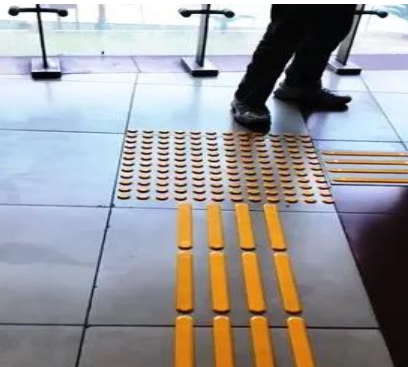
It is the design and composition of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability or disability. This is not a special requirement, for the benefit of only a minority of the population. It is a fundamental condition of good design. If an environment is accessible, usable, convenient and a pleasure to use, everyone benefits. By considering the diverse needs and abilities of all throughout the design process, universal design creates products, services and environments that meet peoples' needs. This is called the Principle of Universal Design.

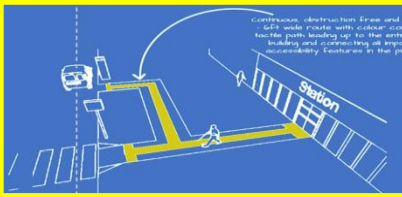
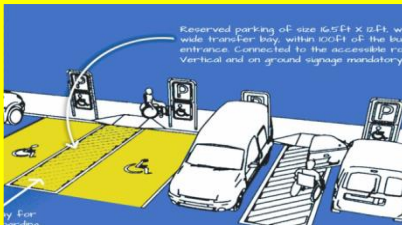
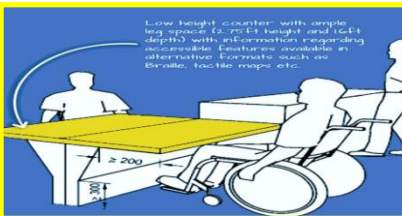



3.1.1 Table - Infrastructure parameters

List of infrastructure parameters that needs to be present at the training centre and assessment centre to ensure trainees with Disabilities have no accessibility issues. Refer to 'Harmonised Guidelines and standards for universal accessibility in India (2021) by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India' for specific dimensions of the infrastructure. The mentioned guidelines have been notified in the RPwD (Amendment) Rule 2023. The following infrastructure requirements are to be followed in order to make the training centres accessible for persons with disabilities. In cases where incorporation of the below-mentioned features is not possible in already built infrastructure, portable accessibility devices can be used. The required accessibility features are illustrative in nature and should be made available in the center based on the type of disability to be trained.

Sl. no	Infrastructure Parameter	Infrastructure requirements	Infrastructure Depiction (for reference)
1	Exit/Entrance Door with ramp	<p>a. Minimum clear opening of the entrance door with no step shall be there keeping in mind a wheelchair user.</p> <p>b. Height of the door lock should be within the reach of a wheelchair user.</p> <p>c. Ramp should have a gentle, gradient slope that allows wheelchair users to enter/exit</p> <p>d. The ramp shall be finished with non-slip material, having railings on both sides.</p>	
2	Windows	<p>a. A window should have handles/controls at a height that permits use from wheelchairs.</p> <p>b. A window should have an unobstructed viewing zone for wheelchair users.</p>	
3	Lifts	<p>a. Wherever possible, provision of at least one lift be made as per following standards:</p> <p>b. A handrail suitable for a person in a wheelchair above floor level shall be fixed adjacent to the control panel.</p> <p>c. Lift should have audio announcements of the floors for persons with visual impairment to navigate.</p> <p>d. Buttons of the lift may be made available in braille for persons with visual impairment.</p>	

		e. Rear mirrors, grab bars and alarms to be available in lift.	
4	Toilet/ Restroom	<p>a. One special wheelchair in a set of toilets shall be provided for the use of PwD with essential provision of a wash basin near the entrance for the Persons with locomotor disability.</p> <p>b. Minimum clear opening of the door for a wheelchair to enter/exit the toilet and the door shall swing out or slide.</p> <p>c. The door should be light enough to swing easily without much physical efforts.</p> <p>d. The overall toilet floor area (length and width) should be enough that rotation of the wheelchair is possible inside the washroom for comfortable usage by wheelchair users.</p> <p>e. Suitable arrangement of vertical/horizontal handrails with clearance from the wall shall be made in the toilet for wheelchair use.</p> <p>f. The toilet for persons with disabilities should have proper signage with a disability symbol on the door.</p> <p>g. A pad/diaper vending machine should be available for women and people with multiple sclerosis. If not, a cabinet at suitable height can be installed for persons with multiple sclerosis to keep their diapers/pads.</p> <p>h. Floor should be non-slippery</p>	
5	Drinking water facility	<p>a. Suitable provision of accessible drinking water facility shall be made for the PwD preferably near the special toilet provided for them.</p> <p>b. The drinking facility should be of the height suitable for a wheel-chair user</p>	<p>Drinking water fountain</p>  

6	Signage	<p>a. A person who is partially sighted needs contrasting texture alongside walkways for dangerous areas</p> <p>b. Signs should be useful to everyone, easily seen from eye level, readable by moving the fingers and well lighted for night-time identification, if needed.</p> <p>c. Signs shall indicate the direction and name of the accessible facility and incorporate the symbol of access.</p> <p>d. Signs should be in contrasting colours and embossed (Braille) to allow visually impaired trainees to obtain the information they contain by touching them.</p> <p>e. Simple symbols and contrasting colours that are universally recognized should be used, e.g., green for safety or go, yellow or amber for risk or caution, and red for danger.</p>	
7	Guiding/ Warning Floor Material	<p>a. The floor material to guide or to warn the visually impaired persons with a change of colour or material with conspicuously different texture and easily distinguishable from the rest of the surrounding floor materials is called guiding or warning floor material.</p> <p>b. The guiding/warning floor material is meant to give the directional effect or warn a person at critical places like-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. The access path to the building and to the parking area. ii. The landing lobby towards the information board, reception, lifts, staircases, and toilets. iii. Immediately at the beginning/end of the walkway where there is vehicular traffic. iv. At the location abruptly changing in level or beginning/end of a ramp. 	

		v. Immediately in front of an entrance/exit and the landing	
8	Accessible Route/ pathway	Route having anti-skid surface, tactile path, signage, well lit and unobstructed pathway. Location of the center should be near to public transport.	 A diagram showing a yellow tactile path leading from a bus stop to a station entrance. The path is unobstructed and well-lit. Text: "Contrast, obstruction free and anti-skid surface with colour and tactile path leading up to the entrance building and connecting to any necessary features in the path." "Station"
9	Parking	Reserved parking should be connected to accessible pathways and should have on-ground signage. Accessible Car Parking should be available.	 A diagram of reserved parking spaces, one of which is marked with a wheelchair icon. A white van is parked in the reserved space. Text: "Reserved parking of size 4.5m x 2.1m, wide transfer bay, within 20m of the bus entrance. Connected to the accessible route. Vertical and on ground signage mandatory." "By For"
10	Reception/ Desks	Information available in accessible formats like braille, tactile maps, etc.	 A diagram of a low-height counter with a person in a wheelchair. Text: "Low height counter with ample leg space (2.7m height and 1.2m depth) with information regarding accessible features available in alternative formats such as Braille, tactile maps etc." "≥ 200"
11	Staircase	Staircase should have colour contrasting strips, double height handrails, warning tiles and tactile flooring at the end and start of the staircase for low vision and visually impaired users.	 A photograph of a staircase with yellow and red safety strips on the steps. Handrails are visible on both sides.
12	Portable Ramps	Retractable Lightweight Portable Wheelchair Ramps are designed to provide convenient access to buildings, vehicles, and various outdoor environments. Such ramps can be installed in buildings where permanent modifications are not possible or permanent ramps are not available	  A photograph of a portable ramp placed on concrete steps. Below it is a photograph of a retractable ramp, which is a metal structure that can be extended or retracted.

3.2. Tools and Equipment for Training

In today's world, technology has had a significant impact on the lives of people with disabilities. Assistive tools and technologies have enabled individuals with disabilities to access education, employment, and social opportunities that were previously unavailable. For individuals with disabilities, skill development is crucial to gaining independence, participating in society, and achieving their goals. Fortunately, there are many assistive techniques available that can help people with disabilities acquire new skills and improve their abilities.



Provision of **assistive devices** is dependent on the nature of the job role as well as the individual needs of the employee. Selection of assistive devices should be done in consultation with the trainer and trainee as per the recommended tools/equipment list. In addition to providing assistive devices, the trainer may also have to make certain modifications/ adaptations to the tools and machinery used by the **persons with disability/trainees**. Awareness on tools and technologies developed by the Government, Private and Civil Society organizations needs to be provided to the candidates so that they can make use of the same.


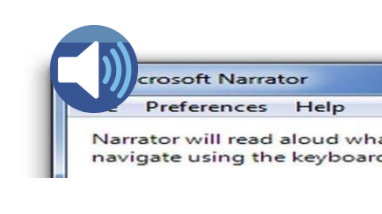
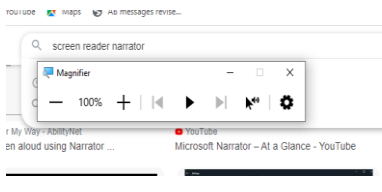

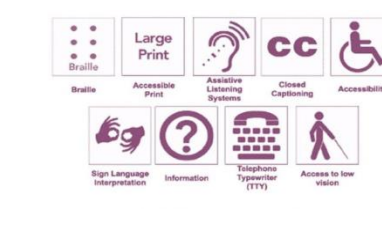

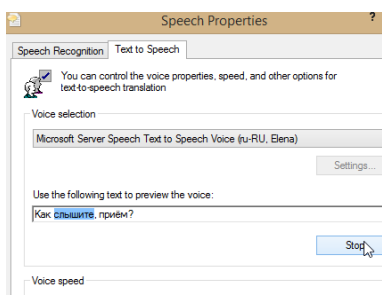
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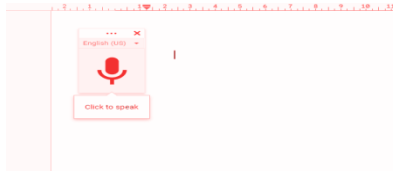


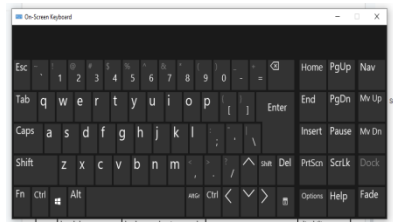
3.2.1 Training parameters: Tools and equipment for assisted learning of PwDs






(Pictures provided are for reference only, the actual device may look different)


Training Tools mentioned are Accessible Tools/Appliances/Software, which enable a Person with Disability (PwD) to carry out their training. These suggested training tools facilitate the learning process of a Person with Disability to perform at par with their peers in a conducive and enabled environment. These tools can be used in combination or isolation as per the requirement. The list of training tools mentioned below is indicative, non-exhaustive. The PwD trainees may be provided such tools/equipment as per the feasibility for the AB/ETP and as per the demand by PwDs in accordance with trainees' disability condition.

Sl.no	Name of the tool	Usage	Tool Depiction (for reference)	Intended for persons with Disability type
1	Braille learning kit	Learning materials in braille, so that a visually impaired candidate can consume the content.		Blindness, Visual impairment
2	Refreshable Braille	Displays braille characters, usually by means of round-tipped pins raised through holes in a flat surface for deafblind.		Deafblind

3	Audio books	Listen to the contents of a book, through headphones or speakers.		Blindness, visual impairment, Intellectual Disability
4	Screen Reader	This software reads aloud the content displayed on a computer screen.		Blindness, Visual impairment
5	Screen Magnifier	A specific part of the screen can be enlarged with this tool, helping people to read text and see images better.		Visual impairment, Persons with low vision.
6	Captioning and subtitling tools	Displays the captions as text underneath a video.		Hearing disability, Intellectual disability
7	Learning videos with sign language interpretation	To convey the message of the video to the user who is unable to process or hear speech.		Hearing disability, Intellectual disability
8	Speech to Text	Convert a live speech into text, so that someone with hearing disability can understand the speech.		Hearing disability
9	Speech synthesizer/speech generation devices	Convert text into speech for persons with speech and language disability to be able to voice themselves.		Learning disability, speech and language disability, cerebral palsy, stuttering.

10	Adaptive keyboard	Keyboard with a large layout and interchangeable keys to assist someone with difficulty in moving.		Locomotor disability
11	Access Switches	A person without upper and lower limbs can operate a computer by using these switches. These can be operated through mouth, limited movements of an organ to press a key and operate the computer.		Locomotor disability
12	Text to speech software	A software that can convert voice to text and add it to any word processor		Locomotor disability
13	Trackball	Instead of having to grab the mouse, the trackball can be stationary and still be able to move the mouse pointer to the desired location.		Locomotor disability
14	Mouse wear	A gadget that moves the mouse/cursor when a PwD moves their head		Helps PwDs with sensor and motor issues
15	On screen keyboard	This keyboard appears on the monitor and can be operated by mouse, people with fine motor movement challenges can use this to operate keywords.		Locomotor disability

16	Noise cancelling headphones	It is useful for those with autism spectrum disorders and other disabilities that affect their ability to focus and pay attention.		Intellectual disability
17	Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)	Systems Augmentative communication makes use of a visual learning style to help people with ASD express themselves by using pictures, symbols, or drawings.		Intellectual disability
18	Digital assistant with Touchscreen	A digital assistant with a touchscreen helps a person with an intellectual disability such as ASD to interact with computers easily.		Intellectual disability
19	Digital Sign Language Interpretation System	The Digital Sign Language Interpretation System assists people with speech and hearing impairments who use sign language as their main form of communication. It offers accessibility through a web plugin for websites, using QR codes to make documents and information accessible in sign language, and customization for specific needs like public announcements or sign language news.		Hearing disability
20	Canes / Sonar Canes	Canes and Smart Mobility sonar canes are essential tools in the training of individuals with visual disabilities, providing		Visual impairment, Persons with low vision

		enhanced mobility, spatial awareness, and independence in navigating their environment.		
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The course content provided to the trainees must be accessible. Online digital content should be Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 compliant. Digital content like videos should be accessible to PwDs. For example, for Persons with Hearing Impairment videos in Universal Design for Learning format or having videos in sign language. All course books should be made available in EPUB format or accessible via JAWS/NVDA software.

Disability specific training provisions, as an illustration, that may be considered are mentioned as below:

3.2.2 For trainees who have hearing impairment (completely or partly deaf)

- Use writing if your trainees can read.
- Use a computer tablet for interactive conversation, if available.
- Use Indian Sign Language for skill training and assessment and to communicate with the help of ISL Interpreter, if the trainee prefers communication via sign language.
- If you have a trainee who is able to read lips, make sure they can see your lips clearly.
- Incorporate pictures and drawings to facilitate understanding.
- Use captioned videos enabled with Indian Sign Language (ISL).

3.2.3 For trainees who have Visual Impairment (completely or partly blind)

- Provide notes ahead of time, preferably in an electronic format (EPUB) that are accessible via JAWS/NVDA if trainee has appropriate equipment to use such formats.
- Provide recordings of lecture if required by trainee
- Use large print notes and give to the trainee ahead of time if they have low vision.
- Explain what is being shown on visual presentations such as chalk boards or computer projections.
- Explain verbally what is being demonstrated.
- Provide laptops or tablets or PC based assessments to trainees if required
- Facilitate scribes for assessment of Pw VI, if required
- Solicit volunteers to help trainees, if needed.

3.2.4 For trainees with intellectual disabilities.

- a. Use simple language and words while giving instructions.
- b. Illustrate with concrete objects, pictures or other visual representations especially for trainees who are illiterate or of limited intellectual capacity. You may use tools such as Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)
- c. Check for understanding of all trainees and ensure nobody is left out.
- d. Parents of children with intellectual disabilities can accompany and assist their children in the training in order to provide a conducive environment and facilitation in communication in learning. Moreover, parents of PwID can also be trained if interested in vocational education so that the family of PwID can have home-based self-employment opportunities

3.2.5 For trainees with Learning Disabilities

- a. Use multiple delivery methods or if possible, provide information in writing for trainees who learn better reading; provide verbal instructions for those who need it.
- b. Provide notes ahead of time.
- c. Provide Scribe if needed.

3.2.6 For trainees with Multiple Sclerosis (MS)

- a. Use of simple language
- b. Use of assistive technology can be explored
- c. Rest breaks should be given for persons with Multiple Sclerosis so that they are able to deal with fatigue and continue the training for longer durations.
- d. Training centres/Institutions/rooms/must not have too brightworks/lights and the tools and methods to train these individuals should not produce sharp sound/noise as people with MS, autism and epilepsy are sensitive to light and sound.

3.2.7 For trainees with Haemophilia

- a. For prevention, keep pointed and sharp object away from the person with Haemophilia.
- b. Allow rest breaks wherever possible to the person with Haemophilia, so that the individual can deal with the fatigue associated with the condition.
- c. Provide scribe, if needed for the person, as they often have swelling and pain in elbow, hand, shoulder etc.

3.3. Pedagogy for Training

Pedagogy in skilling environment can be referred to as a trainer's understanding of how the trainees learn. Pedagogy demands interactions between the trainer and trainees which create a significant impact on the trainee's mind. While imparting instructions, the trainers need to be aware of the concept of reasonable accommodations which is an adjustment made in a system to accommodate or make fair the same system for an individual based on their specific need. The needs can vary and be of academic, work-related or any other nature.

The pedagogy for various programs being imparted to PwDs have to be specific to the expository (<https://scpwd.in/training-resource>) concerned by incorporating suitable practices and keeping in mind the requirements of students belonging to different types of disabilities. To improve the quality of teaching and the training outcomes. It gives them insights into how trainees learn differently on different topics so that they can conduct lessons to suit the needs of PwD trainees.

3.3.1 Explain, more than lecture:

Explaining means telling someone how to do something or giving information. Explaining will also entail using sign language, writing, demonstration or guiding, video presentation

3.3.2 Focusing on one skill at a time:

Trainees with disabilities can find everyday activities very challenging, so it's important to focus on teaching only one thing at a time. For example, a trainee with cerebral palsy might use a lot of physical and mental energy just to sit upright in a chair, so it can be hard for them to do anything else while sitting. For a trainee with a disability, it also helps to reduce distractions and make sure that your trainee's environment is set up for them to learn.

3.3.3 Teaching by telling

This process teaches trainees how to do something by explaining what to do or how to do it in three stages:

ii. **Modelling: Teaching by showing:**

Trainees learn what to do and how to do it by watching you. This is called modelling. It means you can teach your trainees many things by showing them what to do. For example, you're more likely to 'show' rather than 'tell' your trainees how to pack toys away, wash up a cup or feed a pet. Modelling means your trainees can watch your actions and behaviour as you show them what to do Modelling can be used for:

- a. Teaching trainees how to interact with others – for example, asking a trainer for help, or introducing yourself to another person.
- b. Teach skills that are hard to explain in words, like body language and tone of voice.

- c. In cases where trainees find it hard to make eye contact.

iii. Show or Demonstrate

Showing or demonstrating means physically doing the activity you want your trainee to learn or otherwise showing them using video or some other method. Showing or demonstrating is a good way for almost all groups of people to learn, except those who are visually impaired. Showing is especially important for people who are deaf or have intellectual or certain types of learning disabilities.

iv. Learning by Doing: Guiding, Discovering and Practicing

Giving the trainee the chance to do a practical task, or learning by doing, is an important way to train. It is also a way to evaluate or test to see if the trainee is learning. It is frequently used to train persons who have limited literacy skills or learning capacity. Learning by doing is **especially suitable for persons with hearing and/or speaking difficulties** since it relies on seeing and doing rather than hearing or speaking. There are three types of learning by doing approaches: Guiding, Discovering and practicing.

3.3.4 Individual Skilling/Assessment Plan

Persons with Disabilities often need special attention and the pedagogy differ based on individual requirements. These requirements become more enhanced with respect to persons with Intellectual Disability and thus it becomes eminent to provide individual focus during skill development of PwDs. Accordingly in line with the National Education Policy 2020 that promotes creating Individual Education Plan for children with special needs including children with disabilities, developing Individual Skilling Plan for persons with disabilities enhances the capacities of PwDs to develop their skills. Consequently, creating Individual Assessment Plans for PwD trainees becomes important that is based on the ISP resulting in a progressively successful journey of skill development for PwDs trainees.

3.3.5 Additional Instructional Strategies

The following strategies apply to many of the instructional approaches already discussed or that you use.

- a. **Provide context:** Explain the importance and relevance of what you are about to teach to your trainees. E.g., you need to understand safety principles first because these power tools can be very dangerous.
- b. **Vary your approach:** Use a variety of instructional approaches to keep trainees engaged and to accommodate different learning styles. For example, lecture a bit, then demonstrate or show a video, and then ask questions. After a demonstration, let the trainees try their hands at the task.
- c. **Orient and order:** At the most basic level orientation means you let trainees know what is going to happen and what is expected of them. Everyone benefits

from proper orientation. Another smart idea is numbering or ordering things covered in instruction. By doing so, you quickly provide the order and the number of topics to be covered.

- d. **Cues:** Cueing is similar and is probably a natural part of your approach to instruction. When starting a task or demonstration you may naturally say, 'To begin,' or when you stop, you may say, 'That is the last step, now we will stop.' When something is time-limited, let trainees know how much time is left. Cues are very helpful for trainees who cannot see, hear, or process information easily or who may write or work slower than others.
- e. **Emphasize key points:** Some trainees are able to read and write but may have difficulty determining what information is important. To help those trainees, you could underline key points in red and give the trainee your speaking notes before class or point out important information when explaining.
- f. **Sequence tasks and ideas:** When you teach a task, you often sequence the subtasks in a logical manner. When you teach a concept, you may start with and build on simple ideas. Becoming aware of this sequencing process and being sure that it is logical is important for training those with learning challenges. It is an especially important training approach if you are teaching a complex, inter-related set of skills that have several steps, or if doing something out of sequence is dangerous in some way

3.4. Curriculum

For the complete development of a trainee, a well-planned curriculum is the main instrument. It helps in developing the social, physical, emotional, and intellectual aspects of the PwD trainee. Every PwD trainee has different abilities, and he/she can learn equally as other students if the curriculum is customized according to their specific requirements. The type & design of the curriculum can enable each student to develop individually according to their abilities. Designing a curriculum for persons with disability requires an inclusive and individualized approach that considers their unique needs, abilities, and goals. The following may be kept in mind while designing curriculum:

- i. The curriculum should be accessible and customized ensuring that the training material, aids, methods and assessments accommodate different learning styles and abilities. This may include providing the student with alternative methods, assistive technologies and adaptations to meet the diverse needs of the candidates.
- ii. As PwDs have comparatively less exposure to formal education than Persons without disabilities, the level of language skills for example- speaking and writing English, is not very high. Especially with regard to persons with hearing impairment there is a high demand of teaching trainees in writing grammatically correct English language. Moreover, Employability Skills become very crucial skills in order to groom PwDs for the dynamic employment market as well as develop PwDs as competitive individuals. Thus, it is important to impart

language and employability skills to PwDs at the beginning of all skill training courses for PwDs. Developing requisite employability skills and life skills include functional literacy, numeracy, communication, personal hygiene, social skills, vocational skills, digital skills and problem-solving skills – bridge modules. Moreover, the curriculum should include components related to understanding disability, rights of persons with disabilities, illustrations regarding everyday challenges faced by persons with disabilities and solutions.

- iii. Curriculum should include interactive methods of teaching and learning like group discussions, activities, role play, etc.
- iv. The Curriculum should support holistic development of students by having components on self-awareness, relationship building fostering positive social interactions, working in groups/teams with people around them.
- v. Curriculum should also have components on career planning which can make their transition for work easier after training.
- vi. The Trainers, other resource associated with Skill training should also undergo staff development programs from time to time so that they are equipped with the current updates which will enhance their ability to effectively plan and execute the curriculum and provide requisite support to the candidates with disabilities.

4 Implementation of Vocational Education, Training & Skilling for PwDs

4.1. NSQF Alignment and Approval

The NSQF is a quality assurance framework that organizes qualifications in a series of eight levels, in increasing order of complexity and competency. These levels are defined in terms of learning outcomes which are an explicit description of what a learner should know, understand and be able to do as a result of learning, regardless of whether these competencies were acquired through formal, non-formal or informal learning, also known as level descriptors. These enables learners to acquire desired competency levels, transit to the job market, and at an opportune time, return for acquiring skills as required to further upgrade their competencies.

The NSQF is based on an outcome-based approach wherein each level is defined and described in terms of competency levels that are to be achieved, thereby enabling clear provisions for mobility (both vertical and horizontal), and making progression pathways transparent for students, institutions, and employers. The various parameters defined for enabling this included entry criteria, minimum hours of training, the proposed NSQF level of training, and defined progression pathways.

The qualifications for training PwDs also need to be NSQF aligned and approved. Generally, PwD is a horizontal sector that implements qualifications from various sectors. Therefore, for every qualification, the core competency of the qualification remains the same, so that disability does not become the restraining factor. However, these qualifications need to cater to the disability they are catering to and, hence, often has additional learning components and durations to match the prescribed competencies.

4.2. The process for development and adoption of qualifications for PwDs

Ideally, any government funded skill-based program for training of PwD need to be NSQF aligned and implemented through a recognised awarding body of NCVET. An awarding body is an entity which is authorised to provide training on an NSQF aligned qualification in its affiliated training centres for which the assessment is done by either the same awarding body (in case of dual recognition) or by a third party NCVET recognised assessment agencies.

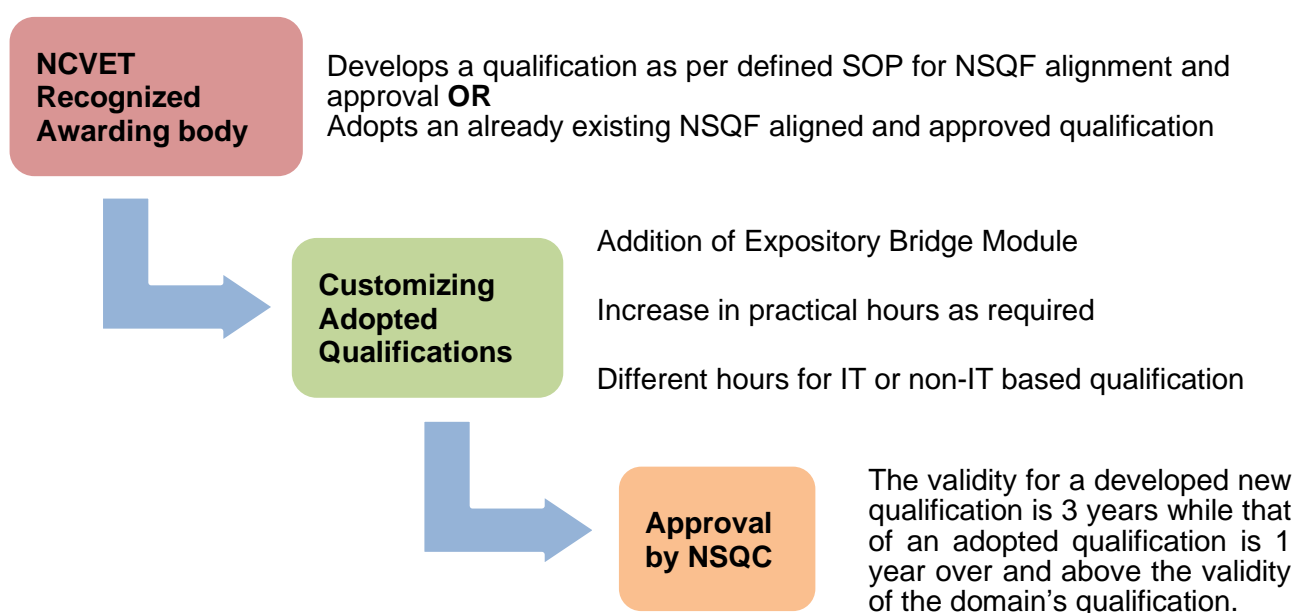
The AB is also responsible for issuance of certificates to the trained candidates after successful assessments. An awarding body can either develop a qualification or adopt a qualification of another AB following the due process laid down by the NCVET.

4.2.1. Approach for PwD Qualifications

- 4.2 A new PwD specific qualification can be developed keeping in mind the needs and requirement of the learners.

- 4.3 In the case of a PwD specific qualification that is adopted, the AB has to ensure that the job role specific competency NOS are retained and a bridge module to cater to the particular expository (disability) is added.

A flowchart depicting the process of developing / adopting an NSQF aligned qualification by recognized awarding bodies is below:



4.2.2. Major considerations for implementing a skill-based course for PwD

- For a PwD specific qualification, in addition to a bridge module, additional practical hours, if needed, may be added to cater to different types of disabilities, excluding Locomotor Disability, to ensure that the PwD candidates do not miss out on learning due to their slow pace in learning owing to their restrictions or barriers faced during early academic years.
- Awarding bodies, if felt necessary, are required to ensure additional learning hours to cater to the pedagogy and training delivery requirements specific to a disability for which the qualification is being adopted.
- As per the decision taken in the 16th and 20th meetings of NCVET's National Skill Qualification Committee (NSQC), the Employability Skills module shall be mandatory in all skill courses. Accordingly, the modules on Employability skill/ Life Skill/ Soft Skill as approved by NCVET from time to time shall be included in PwD qualifications as well.
- Wherever required, a separate NOS on English written and Communication skills may be added.
- For hearing impaired batches, ISL (Indian Sign Language) course may be added for students whose ISL skills need refinement. This would be in addition to the actual training being undertaken by the learned.

- f. Any other additional NOS/MC as felt relevant to aid in the overall learning process.

The AB must ensure that there shall not be any overlap between the contents of ES and bridge module. The AB however, if felt necessary provide additional learning on any content. The AB also include specific learning modules like Basic ISL in case of qualifications for SHI trainees or basic braille in case of trainees with LV/VI as part of bridge module.

4.3. Requirements of Trainer and Assessors for a PwD specific Qualification

4.3.1. Trainers' Requirements

- i. Trainer must have the knowledge of the domain sector and the job role concerned
- ii. Trainer must fulfil the education and experience requirement as prescribed by the Domain AB.
- iii. A certified PwD Trainer would mean
 - i. Certified ToT trainers as as per ToT Guidelines of NCVET
 - ii. Must have undergone disability specific additional PwD training module
- iv. Any other specific requirements determined by the scheme or concerned line ministry
- v. The existing trainers operating with SCPwD, who are not ToT certified, may continue to work as trainers. However, they would need to comply with the ToT Guidelines of NCVET within two (2) years of notification of these accessibility guidelines.

4.3.2. Master Trainers' Requirements

- i. A master trainer is a certified ToT trainers with 5 years of working experience with Persons with Disability

4.3.3. Assessors' Requirements

- i. Assessor must have the knowledge of the domain sector and the job role concerned
- ii. Assessor must fulfil the education and experience and experience requirement as prescribed by the Domain AB.
- iii. A Certified PwD Assessor would mean
 - i. Certified ToA Assessor as per ToA Guidelines of NCVET
 - ii. Must have undergone disability specific additional PwD training module applicable for assessors.
- iv. Fulfill any other specific requirements determined by the scheme or concerned line ministry

- v. The existing assessors operating with SCPwD, who are not ToA certified, may continue to work as Assessors. However, they would need to comply with the ToA Guidelines of NCVET within two (2) years of notification of these accessibility guidelines.

4.4. Alignment with NCrF and other government provisions

The training programs being offered to PwD shall also be under the provisions of National Credit Framework. This means that duration prescribed for a year shall be 1200 hours leading to 40 credits. However, where the courses are adopted from other sectors and the duration is higher in order to cater to the expository and additional learning requirements of PwDs, the credits assigned to the original course shall be applicable. This implies that irrespective of the pace of learning the credits for the qualification will remain as is for the domain ABs qualification.

The Skill Training for PwDs are also governed by National Action Plan for Skill Development of Persons with Disabilities (Under Scheme for Implementation of Persons with Disabilities Act (SIPDA) that is implemented by the Department of Empowerment for Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD) via PM DAKSH DEPwD digital portal.

5. Role of various stakeholder in Vocational Education, Training & Skilling in PwD Sector

5.1. Awarding Bodies

Awarding body is defined as an entity that awards or proposes to award certification to trainees for an approved qualification by ensuring quality training and reliable assessments. Awarding bodies can play an important role in the vocational education of PwD sector.

- a. **Qualifications:** Creation/Adoption of NSQF aligned & approved qualification in line with industry demand, keeping the needs of PwD trainees as a priority
- b. **Developing learning resource:** Creation of learning resources/material related to NSQF aligned and approved qualifications which are PwD friendly and as per the prescribed standards.
- c. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Awarding Bodies shall ensure that the prescribed guidelines are followed by the assessment agency and training partner. This would help identify areas of improvement and understand gaps in the guidelines and on ground practice.
- d. **Advocacy:** Awarding bodies can promote the importance of skilling persons with disability, connect with industry leaders and other important partners in the skilling ecosystem to ensure they are developing employment policies that can accommodate a skilled Person with disability, which would lead to increased jobs.
- e. **Requisite Infra at Training Centres:** The ABs are also responsible for ensuring that the training centres have infrastructure which is accessible and PwD friendly.
- f. **Availability of trained Trainer and Assessor:** The AB must ensure availability of PwD certified trainers and assessors and also create awareness and sensitize the staff dealing with PwDs on regular basis. Moreover, it is highly recommended to the ABs to engage with Persons with Disabilities and train them as trainers and assessors. This will not only ensure inclusivity but also ensure quality training based on the life experiences of persons with disabilities. Further these trainers/assessors with disability may be enrolled for Training through their UDID card number in order to have a verifiable database.
- g. **Ensuring inclusion of persons with disabilities:** To encourage inclusion of persons with disabilities in skill training programmes, Awarding Bodies must ensure that at least 5% of the total candidates nominated for skill training are persons with disabilities.
- h. The AB must **adhere with the government norms and policies** with respect to PwDs and their trainings. Further, it is strongly encouraged that ABs provide skill training to PwDs who do not fall under benchmark disabilities i.e. those with less than 40% disability to ensure inclusive and equitable skill training of PwDs.
- i. AB should **also connect its industry partners with DEPwD's PM-Daksh-DEPwD Rozgar Setu** to create a single platform for exploring employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. Apart from this, ABs should also engage

with various job aggregators and job fair organizers such as National Divyangjan Finance Development Corporation, Atypical Advantage, Swaraj Ability (Youth4Jobs), Rozgar Sarathi (Sarthak Education Trust) to secure employment for PWDs.

- j. It is mandatory for all awarding bodies to have **2-way API integration with PM-Daksh-DEPWD portal** so that all PwD students get access to various skill courses offered by the awarding bodies and job portals of various awarding bodies.
- k. The registration/enrolment of persons with disabilities in skill training may be **linked to UDID card or UDID enrolment number** and the Department may be approached for API integration of UDID database with the digital portal of awarding bodies for registration/enrolment of persons with disabilities.

5.2. Assessment Agencies

Strategies for accommodating trainees with disabilities during assessment and testing need to be structured so that trainees with disabilities are treated fairly and the content or skill they are expected to know or demonstrate is not compromised. The following must be ensured by Assessment Agencies to ensure inclusivity of the PwDs:

- a. **Accessible and Friendly Environment:** the AA must ensure accessible assessment location and resources like minimal distractions, appropriate lighting; permit use of prosthetic devices and low-tech aids as applicable.
- b. **Assessment Strategy: the AA must ensure appropriate strategy for assessing candidates of a particular disability. Like** Change print (e.g., font size, colour) of a written test or allow use of a reader in case of Visual impairment depending on the level of impairment. This may include allowing PwDs to choose between different assessment methodologies according to their disability. For example the person with visual impairment can choose to use a Scribe writer (someone else who will write for them) to record his or her answers or to use audio recorder or use a Laptop/Tablet/Computer for their assessments; question/answers in Indian Sign Language via videography or interpreter or video relay services for persons with Hearing impairment; providing keyboard based accessibility in order to appear for assessment for persons with Cerebral Palsy or Locomotor disability who cannot operate mouse, providing calculator or communication devices in providing answers; allow use of a specific tool, such as a guide for cloth on a sewing machine to complete a test.
- c. Further, with regard to assessment and certification, the awarding bodies will carry out NOS based assessment and provide mark-sheets and certificates accordingly.
- d. As per the RPwD Act, 2016, persons with disabilities may be given due reasonable accommodation in attendance and passing marks of theory and accordingly focus on marks obtained in practical.
- e. **Flexible duration:** Allow a change in length of time to take a test, number of breaks, to take test over an extended period of time
- f. **Ensuring PwD trained assessors are hired:** Assessment agencies should hire specialized PwD assessors. AA should make sure they are sending a qualified and

sensitive assessor and the assessor is equipped with the necessary tools and information to conduct assessments for PwD candidates as well.

5.3. Training Centres

- a. **Aware and sensitized:** The training centre must be aware of the needs for different types of disabilities and sensitize their staff accordingly. The training centre should have the following information: -
 - i. What are the types of disabilities?
 - ii. What are their specific needs?
 - iii. Are the trainees who want to enrol, ready? If not, what is needed to help them get ready, such as self-confidence building training?
 - iv. Is the infrastructure up to the standards mentioned in these guidelines?
- b. **Counselling:** A good training centre evaluates the abilities and interests of trainees and gives them a choice of training opportunities, with necessary support and guidance.
- c. **Practices that promote inclusivity:** Training facilities are expected to show inclusivity in action and create awareness through regarding training of PwDs. This can be done in various ways such as
 - i. Provide regular training to all the staff of the training centre on PwD rights and regulations.
 - ii. Create a special training program for PwD candidates and their families for inclusion and positives of relevant vocational education. Additionally, educate community leaders, including employers and industry level decision makers in the ecosystem.

5.4. Regulating Bodies (NCVET)

- a. The role of NCVET is to regulate the functioning of entities engaged in vocational education, training and skilling by establishing minimum standards to ensure quality outcomes.
- b. NCVET to undertake NSQF alignment and ensure approval of qualification for implementation in training institutions with required modification as applicable for PwD.
- c. NCVET shall continuously evaluate the courses and see the relevance of the same, as per the industry standards.
- d. Monitor the functioning of Awarding Bodies on the implementation of vocational education for person with disabilities.
- e. Facilitate building of capacity of Trainers and Assessors for implementation of training in Qualifications for PwDs.

5.5. Central Ministry/ Department and State Government Bodies

In India's skilling ecosystem, there are many central ministries, departments and state governments that can play an important role. There are numerous ways these departments can play an important role in the skilling of PwD sector.

5.5.1. Central Ministries and departments

- a. Ministry of Social Justice and empowerment: The Ministry of Social Justice and empowerment can launch various schemes that can ensure the PwD representation in the skilling industry and other social activities are increasing.
- b. The National Action Plan for Skill Development of PwDs provides residential and non-residential skill training of PwDs in 300+ NCVET certified job roles.
- c. The Ministry of Labour and Employment can ensure enough opportunities of employment are created for the candidates who are trained under various skilling courses. 24 National Career Service Centres for Differently Abled have been established by the Ministry of Labour & Employment to provide skill training to PwDs.

5.5.2. State Government and Departments

State governments can work on setting up dedicated training centres (TC) for PwDs that are accessible and equipped with assistive technologies. Various state government department can play a major role in providing financial assistance and support in the journey of PwD candidates becoming skilled labourers or entrepreneurs.

5.6. Industry

- a. Participation of experienced individuals from the relevant industry as experts in training & assessment.
- b. Engage with ABs in designing Qualifications, its curriculum and content to suit the requirements of PwD and in accordance with industry norms.
- c. Engage with AAs to design appropriate assessment tools to support market relevant and impartial assessments.
- d. Industry to provide trainer and assessor for training and assessment respectively and train them to suit PwD requirements.
- e. Industry to help candidates to be gainfully employed.
- f. Industry to create awareness and sensitize people towards PwDs.
- g. The Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India has developed a digital portal- PM DAKSH DEPwD (www.pmdaksh.depwd.gov.in). Under PM DAKSH DEPwD the Divyangjan Rozgar Setu is created as a job aggregator platform. The platform aims to aggregate employment opportunities across India and provide detailed geo-tagged information on vacancies to persons with disabilities. PwDs can register

themselves on PM Daksh DEPWD through their UDID Number/UDID Enrolment Number.

- h. With an aim to provide employment opportunities to PwDs of India, various job aggregators as well as PwD employers have been included on PM Daksha DEPWD's Rozgar Setu. Thus the industries hiring PwDs should collaborate with DEPWD to engage with PwDs as per the requirements of the industry.

6. Process for Modification/Updating of Guidelines from Time to Time

- a. Guidelines issued with the approval of the Council after following due process of public consultations. The guidelines shall be prepared by NCVET in consultancy with all the stakeholders and then released for public consultation for the 21 days. After the 21 days of public consultation, all the comments/ suggestions are evaluated and incorporated as per the relevance/ requirement. Then the draft guidelines are approved by the NCVET council committee and released for the implementation.
- b. Removal of Difficulties in implementation with the approval of the Chairperson, NCVET.
- c. NCVET shall designate ownership of the guidelines to a consultant/ official/ team/ committee. The owner of the guidelines shall be given responsibility to make a record of all the challenges/ difficulties which would be faced during the implementation of the policy. Subsequently, these challenges/ difficulties shall be evaluated and a possible solution shall be provided with the approval of the Chairperson, NCVET.
- d. All notifications required to be issued under the Guidelines to be issued with the approval of the Chairperson, NCVET. Urgent/ Minor modification required to be issued with the approval of the Chairperson, NCVET and to be approved post facto by the Council. Interpretation of the Council regarding any of the provisions of the guidelines to be final.

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ACROYMNS: -

Terms	Description
QF	Qualification File
NSQF	National Skills Qualification Framework
DEPwD	Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities
NSQC	National Skills Qualification Committee
NOS	National Occupational Standards
SSC	Skill Sectors Councils
NCO	National Classification of Occupations
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
SLA	Service Level Agreement
PC	Performance Criteria
PWD	Persons with Disability
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
LD	Locomotor Disability
SHI	Speech and Hearing Impairment
LV	Low-vision (Visual Impairment)
VI	Blindness /Visual Impairment
IT	Information Technology