

St. Stephen's College, Delhi
Policy Document for Equal Opportunity

I. Vision and Mission

St. Stephen's College, Delhi (hereafter referred to as "the College") is committed to pursuing excellence in higher education, character building, full development of personality and responsible citizenship. The College aims to achieve this vision in the most inclusive manner by facilitating equal opportunities for its students and employees who are differently-abled. The College recognises the need to provide adequate and reasonable support and facilities that will empower Persons with Disabilities who are members of the College Community to actively take part in life on Campus.

II. Scope

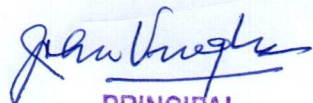
The benefits from the regulatory provisions and directives of this policy document will be applicable to every member of the College Community who fall under the PwD category as defined by the Rights of the Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 (hereafter referred to as "the RPWD Act, 2016") or any other State or Union legislation that may supersede the provisions of the RPWD Act, 2016 in future.

III. Rights and Entitlements

- a. The College shall ensure that persons with disabilities enjoy the right to equality, life with dignity, and respect for their integrity equally with others as guaranteed by the RPWD Act, 2016.
- b. The College shall ensure that no student or employee shall be deprived of their personal liberty only on the ground of disability.
- c. The College shall reserve 5% of sanctioned seats for students horizontally, across all categories, for Persons with Disabilities with 50% reservation in favour of Christian candidates. This shall be done within the framework of the provisions contained in section 32(1) of the RPWD Act, 2016 and the minority rights enjoyed by the College under Article 31(1) of the Constitution of India.
- d. The College shall provide an upper age relaxation of five years for admission to the College in accordance with section 32(2) of the RPWD Act, 2016.

IV. Policy Resolutions

- a. The College shall fully observe and follow all governmental directives on admission and education and employment of Persons with Disabilities.
- b. The College shall provide opportunities to Persons with Disabilities without discrimination and at par with others. "Discrimination" in this context i.e., in relation to disability means any distinction, exclusion, or restriction on the basis of disability which is the purpose or effect of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment, or exercise on an equal basis with others of all human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field and includes forms of discrimination and denial of reasonable accommodation.


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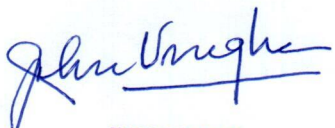


- c. The College shall make efforts to provide reasonable physical infrastructure and facilities to enable Persons with Disabilities to move freely and succeed in their aspirations.
- d. The College shall maintain a proper record of all students and employees with disabilities.
- e. All applicable institutional policies will apply to Persons with Disabilities, but with proper regard and consideration for their circumstances and level of disabilities.
- f. The College shall monitor participation, progress in terms of attainment of levels and completion of the education in respect of every student with a disability.
- g. The College shall promote the use of appropriate augmentative and alternative modes including means and formats of communication to fulfil the daily communication needs of Persons with Disabilities.
- h. The College will take positive steps to provide books, other learning materials and appropriate assistive devices to students with benchmark disabilities.
- i. The College may request information/treating doctor's certificate explaining the condition or disability of the student or employee if needed, to assess their ability to perform or adjust to the environment in order to ensure efficient functioning of the institution.

V. Redressal Mechanisms

- a. The College shall take steps to ensure that the provisions of this policy document are observed in letter and spirit.
- b. The College will take care to redress grievances of Persons with Disabilities, both students and employees.
- c. Any transgression in these provisions may be brought to the notice of the Principal, St. Stephen's College. The issue shall be directed to the Grievance Redressal Cell/Tribunal of which the Principal is the Chairperson. The decision of the Committee shall be final in all such matters.

The RPWD Act 2016 is appended to this institutional policy document. It shall serve as additional guidelines for the support and advancement of students, employees and other differently-abled persons in St. Stephen's College.


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Handbook of Services available for Students with Disabilities

St. Stephen's College is committed to providing an accessible and fair environment for students with disabilities in terms of both academics and infrastructure. We are devoted to the ideal that no student should have to compromise on the quality of their college experience. There is a Staff Advisor who guides the work and activities of the Enabling Unit. The effort to make College accessible for all is an ongoing endeavour. The following are some of our initiatives to make the College more inclusive and accessible to all our students.

Infrastructure

- Ramps or lifts which allow wheelchairs to access classrooms and corridors easily.
- Signage that includes tactile paths, signposts, display boards, etc.
- Mechanized equipment, screen-reading software, accessible college website and other assistive technological facilities.

Academic Assistance

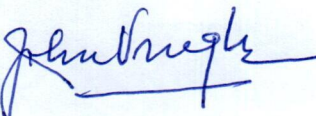
- Audio recordings and soft copies of study materials which are compatible with screen readers as well as special softwares like JAWS.
- Scribes for University examinations, class tests and assignments.
- Volunteers for filling out forms or applications, answering queries, and offering other forms of in-person support.
- Necessary support on a one-to-one basis depending on the nature of the student's specific need.

Support and Welfare

- Therapy and counseling sessions for students.
- Discussion sessions on policy reforms to make college more accessible.
- Extracurricular events for students with disabilities.
- Workshops to inculcate sensitivity in the student body.

Drishtikon

- A state-level annual fest for students with disabilities from colleges across Delhi University and beyond.
- Lunches and high teas to facilitate interaction.
- Escorts to assist participants navigate college premises during the fest.


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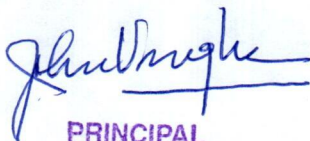


Other extracurricular activities

- Fresher's Party to welcome first-year students with disabilities in college.
- Audio-descriptive movie screenings and trips outside College for students with disabilities.
- Sensitization programs in collaboration with bodies like the Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights.
- Sessions on sound healing therapy, emotional well-being and resilience, and walkathons, in collaboration with NGOs such as *Offbeat Support*.
- Sign Language workshop in collaboration with the National Association of the Deaf.
- Providing audio descriptions for posters and newsletters released by societies regarding events happening within College.

The Equal Opportunity Cell, Enabling Unit and Social Service League

- Student-led societies that manage the services and events mentioned above.
- Council positions by election to instill leadership, management and planning skills.
- *Pragyachakshu*: A vertical of the Social Service League committed specifically to the welfare of students with disabilities.


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