



MADURAI KAMARAJ UNIVERSITY

(Reaccredited with 'A++' Grade by NAAC in IV Cycle, 2021)

(63rd Rank in NIRF-2021 Among Universities in India)

(University with Potential for Excellence)

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

2021

**In Accordance with Section 21(1) of the Rights of
Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, of the
Government of India**

1. PREAMBLE

CORE VALUES OF THE UNIVERSITY

- Building the Bridge of Equality
- Grooming Compassionate Beings
- Seeking the Truth
- Towards Empowerment
- Towards Excellence

Started as a Post Graduate Extension Centre of the University of Madras (1956) and elevated to the status of State University in the year 1965, Madurai University renamed as Madurai Kamaraj University (MKU) in the year 1979 has recorded a phenomenal growth over the years. With 106 Colleges affiliated to it, the University has become a pioneer in designing need based academic programs and is largely responsible for the growth and development of the Southern districts of Tamil Nadu, through its catalytic role in empowering people.

MKU has been reaccredited with A⁺⁺ status with CGPA of 3.54 by the NAAC in the IV cycle during March 2021. MKU is the first state University in India to attain A⁺⁺ status in the revised accreditation framework of NAAC.

MKU is placed at 63rd position in National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) 2021 rankings in the University category. The University secured 2nd rank among Higher Education Institutions in the SWACHHTA ranking process in 2017. The University entered into QS India rankings 2020 in the rank band 86-90 among Indian Universities and 351-400 band among QS Asia rankings.

The University was rightly rewarded with the status of University with Potential for Excellence (UPE) in 2005 by the University Grants Commission (UGC). The strong research culture of MKU was recognized through the award of grant under Promotion of University Research & Scientific Excellence (PURSE) programme in 2012 by the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and Rashtriya Uchchar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) in 2015 by the Ministry of Human Resource and Development.

The University has got the recognition award from Springer Nature and American Chemical Society for the highest download among the State Universities in Tamil Nadu. Apart from this MKU has got the best award for National Service Scheme (NSS) and Youth Red Cross (YRC) for extension activities and blood donation, respectively.

MKU has carved a niche for itself through its contribution in teaching, research and outreach programmes. Moreover, MKU is committed towards disseminating higher education equally to all sectors of the society. Particularly the University hearkens special attention to the differently abled persons in order to provide equal opportunity in availing the resources of the University. To enable this, MKU has framed an **Equal Opportunity Policy** in the light of “**The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016**” adopted by the Government of India.

The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 along with the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Rules, 2017, together, the “Disability Law” has been endorsed by the Government of India. The new Disability Law gives effect to the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Disability Law *inter alia* seeks to protect disabled persons from various forms of discrimination, increases measures for effective participation and inclusion in the society and ensures equality of opportunity and adequate accessibility. MKU has already implemented significant necessities under the Act and will make sure that the other requirements are completed at the earliest. The Equal Opportunity Policy has been framed in conformity with the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, to the extent viable under the present infrastructure of MKU.

2. PURPOSE

The Equal Opportunity Policy of MKU is to provide equal opportunities to the differently abled students and employees of the University without any discrimination, on the grounds of age, colour, marital status, physical ability, nationality, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation or any other relevant for the purpose. This Equal Opportunity Policy is subject to applicable regulations, qualifications and merit of the individuals concerned. This Policy shall be consistently applicable throughout the academic period for students and from the date of recruitment until superannuation for employees.

3. DEFINITION

The definitions of different terms used in this Equal Opportunity Policy is as described in the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016.

4. SCOPE

The Equal Opportunity Policy of MKU shall cover all the differently abled persons coming under the administrative control of the University, which include teaching staff (regular, staff of Directorate of Distance Education and guest lecturers), non-teaching staff (regular, CLR and CPCLR) and students (PG and research scholars). The employees and students who acquire disability during their engagement with the University would also be covered by this Policy.

5. COMMITMENT

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

5.1 RIGHTS AND ENTITLEMENTS

5.1.1. Equality and Non-discrimination

- (i) MKU shall ensure that the differently abled persons enjoy the right to equality, life with dignity and respect for his or her integrity equally with others
- (ii) MKU shall take steps to utilise the capacity of differently abled persons by providing appropriate environment
- (iii) The University will ensure that no differently abled persons shall be discriminated on the ground of disability, unless it is shown that the impugned act or omission is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim
- (iv) No person shall be deprived of his or her personal liberty only on the ground of disability
- (v) The University shall take necessary steps to ensure reasonable accommodation for differently abled persons

5.1.2. Protection from Cruelty and Inhuman Treatment

- (i) MKU shall take measures to protect differently abled persons from being subjected to torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment
- (ii) No differently abled persons shall be a subject of any research without,
 - (a) his or her free and informed consent obtained through accessible modes, means and formats of communication; and
 - (b) prior permission of a Committee for Research on Disability constituted in the prescribed manner for the purpose by the appropriate Government in which not less than half of the Members shall themselves be either differently abled persons or Members of the registered organisation as defined under clause (z) of section 2 of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016

5.1.3. Protection from Abuse, Violence and Exploitation

- (i) MKU shall take following measures to protect differently abled persons against abuse, violence and exploitation:
 - (a) take cognizance of incidents of abuse, violence and exploitation and provide legal remedies available against such incidents
 - (b) take steps to avoid such incidents and prescribe the procedure for its reporting
 - (c) create awareness and make available information among the public

5.2. EDUCATION

5.2.1. Duty of Educational Institutions

- (i) MKU shall endeavor in providing inclusive education to the differently abled and shall,
 - (a) admit them without discrimination and provide education and opportunities for sports and recreation activities equally with others
 - (b) make building, campus and various facilities accessible
 - (c) provide reasonable accommodation according to the individual's requirements
 - (d) ensure that the education to persons who are blind or deaf or both is imparted in the most appropriate languages and modes and means of communication

5.2.2. Specific Measures to Promote and Facilitate Inclusive Education

- (i) MKU shall take the following measures for the purpose of providing inclusive education to the differently abled students:
 - (a) Train and employ teachers, including differently abled teachers who are qualified in sign language and Braille and also teachers who are trained in teaching children with intellectual disability
 - (b) Train the staff to support inclusive education at all levels of education
 - (c) Promote the use of appropriate augmentative and alternative modes including means and formats of communication, Braille and sign language to supplement the use of one's own speech to fulfil the daily communication needs of persons with speech, communication or language disabilities and enable them to participate and contribute to their community and society
 - (d) Provide books, other learning materials and appropriate assistive devices to students with benchmark disabilities free of cost up to the completion of the degree
 - (e) Make arrangements to obtain scholarships in appropriate cases to students with benchmark disability
 - (f) Make suitable modifications in the curriculum and examination system to meet the needs of differently abled students such as extra time for completion of examination paper and facility of scribe or amanuensis
 - (g) Establish MoU with the institutions from which adequate number of resources could be drawn for the support of all levels of education
 - (h) Promote research to improve learning
 - (i) Any other measures, as may be required

5.2.3. Guidelines for Conducting Written Examination for Persons with Benchmark Disabilities

- (i) MKU shall follow the guidelines prescribed in the office memorandum of the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India, dated 29th August, 2018

5.3. SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT

5.3.1. Vocational training and self-employment

- (i) MKU shall frame the following:
 - (a) Formulate vocational training schemes and programmes for the differently abled students and employees
 - (b) Inclusion of differently abled persons in all vocational and skill development training activities within the domain of MKU
 - (c) Provide platform for marketing the products made by the differently abled student
 - (d) Assistance to obtain loan at subsidized interest rates for the differently abled students to initiate their own economic venture (terms & conditions apply)
 - (e) Maintenance of disaggregated data on the progress made in the skill training and self-employment

5.3.2. Non-discrimination in Employment

- (i) MKU shall provide reasonable accommodation and appropriate barrier free and conducive environment to differently abled employees
- (ii) No promotion shall be denied to a person merely on the ground of disability
- (iii) MKU shall not dispense with or reduce in rank, an employee who acquires a disability during his or her service

Provided that, if an employee after acquiring disability is not suitable for the post, he/she was holding, shall be shifted to some other post with the same pay scale and service benefits

Provided further that if it is not possible to adjust the employee against any post, he/she may be kept on a supernumerary post until a suitable post is available or he/she attains the age of superannuation, whichever is earlier

- (iv) The University may frame policies for posting and/or transfer of differently abled employees (within the University)

- (v) The University shall appoint a Nodal Officer to look after the issues of implementation of reservation for the differently abled persons in employment and maintenance of rosters

5.3.3. Computation of Vacancies

- (i) For the purposes of computation of vacancies, four percent of the total number of vacancies including vacancies arising in the identified and non-identified posts in the cadre strength in each group of posts shall be taken into account by the appropriate Government for the persons with benchmark disabilities:

Provided that the reservation in promotion shall be in accordance with the instructions issued by the appropriate Government from time to time

- (ii) MKU shall maintain a vacancy-based roster for the purpose of calculation of vacancies for persons with benchmark disabilities in the cadre strength as per the instructions issued by the appropriate Government from time to time
- (iii) While making advertisement to fill up vacancies, MKU shall indicate the number of vacancies reserved for each class of persons with benchmark disabilities in accordance with the provisions of section 34 of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016.
- (iv) The reservation for differently abled persons in accordance with the provisions of section 34 of the Act shall be horizontal and the vacancies for persons with benchmark disabilities shall be maintained as a separate class
- (v) The University shall interchange vacancies in accordance with the provisions of section 34 of the Act, only if due process of recruitment to fill up the vacancies reserved for persons with benchmark disabilities has been complied with

5.3.4. Reservation

- (i) As per the rules of Government of India, applicable to the University

5.3.5. Casual Leave

- (i) The differently abled employee may avail extra days of special casual leave in addition to regular twelve (12) days of casual leave per year as per the provision of Government of India leave rules as notified from time to time

5.3.6. Maintenance of Records

- (i) MKU shall maintain records of the differently abled persons in relation to the matter of employment, facilities provided and other necessary information in compliance with the provisions of this Chapter in such form and manner as may be prescribed by the Central Government

- (ii) The records shall contain the following particulars, namely:
- the number of differently abled persons who are employed and the date from when they are employed;
 - the name, gender and address of the differently abled persons;
 - the nature of disability of such persons;
 - the nature of work being rendered by such employed differently abled person; and
 - the kind of facilities being provided to such differently abled persons
- (iii) The University shall produce for inspection on demand, records maintained under these rules, to the authorities under this Act and shall supply such information which may be required for the purpose of ascertaining whether the provisions have been complied with

5.3.7. Appointment of Grievance Redressal Officer

- (i) The University shall appoint an officer not below the rank of a Gazetted Officer as Grievance Redressal Officer:
- Provided that where it is not possible to appoint any Gazetted Officer, the University may appoint the senior most Officer as a Grievance Redressal Officer
- (ii) The Grievance Redressal Officer shall ensure that the employees and students are aware of the Equal Opportunity Policy
- (iii) The Grievance Redressal Officer shall address the grievances of persons with benchmark disabilities
- (iv) The Grievance Redressal Officer shall maintain a register of complaints of differently abled persons with the following particulars, namely:
- date of complaint;
 - name of complainant;
 - name of the person who is enquiring the complaint;
 - place of incident;
 - the name of establishment or person against whom the complaint is made;
 - gist of the complaint;
 - documentary evidence, if any;
 - date of disposal by the Grievance Redressal Officer;
 - details of disposal of the appeal by the district level committee; and
 - any other information.

5.4. SOCIAL SECURITY, HEALTH, REHABILITATION AND RECREATION

5.4.1. Social Security

Social Security will be provided to the differently abled persons as per the rules of Government of India, applicable to the University

5.4.2. Healthcare

Health care services and facilities will be provided to the differently abled persons as per the rules of Government of India, applicable to the University

5.4.3. Culture and Recreation

- (i) The University and the authorities shall take measures to promote and protect the rights of all differently abled persons to have a cultural life and to participate in recreational activities equally with others
- (ii) Facilities, support and sponsorship shall be rendered to the differently abled persons to pursue their interest and talents.
- (iii) The University, within the limit of its economic capacity, would promote developing technology, assistive devices and equipment to facilitate access and inclusion for differently abled persons in recreational activities

5.4.4. Sporting Activities

- (i) MKU shall take measures to ensure effective participation of the differently abled persons in sporting activities
- (ii) The University shall accord due recognition to the right of differently abled persons to participate in sports and shall make due provisions for the inclusion of differently abled persons in their schemes and programmes for the promotion and development of sporting talents
- (iii) Without prejudice to the provisions contained in sub-sections (i) and (ii), the competent authority and the sports authorities shall take measures to:
 - (a) restructure courses and programmes to ensure access, inclusion and participation of differently abled persons in all sporting activities;
 - (b) redesign and support infrastructure facilities of all sporting activities for differently abled persons;
 - (c) develop technology to enhance potential, talent, capacity and ability in sporting activities of all differently abled persons;
 - (d) provide multi-sensory essentials and features in all sporting activities to ensure effective participation of all differently abled persons;

- (e) allocate funds for development of state of art sport facilities for training of differently abled persons;
- (f) promote and organize disability specific sporting events for differently abled persons and also facilitate awards to the winners and other participants of such sporting events

5.4.5. Digital Infrastructure

- (i) MKU shall follow the Standards for Information and Communication Technology as given in the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Rules, 2017, such as
 - (a) Website Standards: Guidelines for Indian Government Websites, as adopted by Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, Government of India.
 - (b) Documents Standards: Electronic Publication (ePUB) or Optical Character Reader (OCR) based pdf formats

5.5. SPECIAL PROVISIONS FOR PERSONS WITH BENCHMARK DISABILITES

5.5.1. Reservation in Higher Educational Institutions

- (i) MKU shall reserve seats for persons with benchmark disabilities as notified by the Government of India from time to time
- (ii) The persons with benchmark disabilities shall be given an upper age relaxation of five years for admission for higher education

5.6. SPECIAL PROVISIONS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES WITH HIGH SUPPORT NEEDS

5.6.1. Special Provisions for Persons with Disabilities with High Support

- (i) MKU shall make provisions for providing appropriate support to any person with benchmark disability who considers himself/herself to be in need of high support; or any person or organization on his or her behalf, may apply to the authority to be notified by the appropriate Government, requesting to provide high support
- (ii) On receipt of an application, MKU shall refer it to an Assessment Board consisting of such members as may be prescribed by the concerned authority
- (iii) The Assessment Board shall assess the case referred to it in such manner as may be prescribed by the Central Government, and shall send a report to the authority (MKU) certifying the need of high support and its nature

- (iv) On receipt of a report, the authority (MKU) shall take steps to provide support in accordance with the report subject to relevant schemes and orders of the appropriate Government in this behalf

5.7. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.7.1. Awareness Campaigns

- (i) MKU in consultation with the Chief Commissioner or the State Commissioner, as the case may be, shall conduct, encourage, support or promote awareness campaigns and sensitization programmes to ensure that the rights of the differently abled persons provided under this Act are protected
- (ii) The programmes and campaigns specified under sub-section (i) shall also
- promote values of inclusion, tolerance, empathy and respect for diversity;
 - advance recognition of the skills, merits and abilities of differently abled persons and of their contributions to the workforce, labor market and professional fee;
 - provide orientation and sensitization at the University and professional training level on the human condition of disability and rights of differently abled persons;
 - provide orientation and sensitization on disabling conditions and rights of differently abled persons to employers, administrators and co-workers
 - ensure that the rights of differently abled persons are included in the curriculum

5.7.2. Access to Transport

- (i) MKU shall take suitable measures to provide facilities for differently abled persons to move within the University campus.

5.7.3. Access to Information and Communication Technology

- (i) MKU shall take measures to ensure that,
- contents available in audio, print and electronic media are in accessible format;
 - differently abled persons have access to electronic media by providing audio description, sign language interpretation and close captioning;
 - electronic goods and equipment which are meant for everyday use are available in universal design

5.7.4. Mandatory Observance of Accessibility Norms

- (i) MKU shall ensure that all physical infrastructures including buildings, furniture, facilities and services in the building/campus are as per the accessibility Standards given in the



Harmonized Guidelines and Space Standards for Barrier Free Environment for Persons with Disabilities and Elderly Persons, 2016 and the National Building Code, 2016

5.7.5. Time limit for making existing infrastructure and premises accessible and action for that purpose

- (i) All existing public buildings shall be made accessible in accordance with the rules formulated by the Central Government within a period not exceeding five years from the date of notification of such rules/ this policy

5.7.6. Social Audit

- (i) MKU shall undertake social audit of all general schemes and programmes involving the differently abled persons to ensure that the scheme and programmes do not have an adverse impact upon the differently abled persons and need the requirements and concerns of differently abled persons

The Equal Opportunity Policy will be updated whenever there are amendments in the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 or the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Rules, 2017 or any policies related to differently abled persons enacted by Government of India.

This Equal Opportunity Policy is approved by the competent authority of Madurai Kamaraj University


The Registrar

Madurai Kamaraj University
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