

Learner Support Centres

Swadhyaya-Sahayoga-Kendra / Learner Support Centre (LSC) :-

Swadhyaya-Sahayoga-Kendra / Learner Support Centre (LSC) means a Centre established, and recognised by CSU for advising, counselling, providing interface between the teachers and the learners, rendering academic and any other related services and assistance, required inter alia by the learners of Open and Distance Learning Mode. Swadhyaya-Sahayoga-Kendras / Learner Support Centres (LSC) may be established outside the Campuses of CSU based on the need, following the norms and in consultation with the concerned Regulating Authority.

1. General Principles for establishing Learner Support Centre :-

- a. It shall be based on the need assessed by MSP/CSU and the center/ institution shall meet the criteria specified in the guidelines of Regulating Authority.
- b. The need of establishing a Swadhyaya-Sahayoga-Kendras / Learner Support Centres outside the Campuses of CSU shall be assessed based on the following :-
 - Mode of delivery of the programme offered (Whether→ ODL/Online/blended). If the programme is offered through pure online mode, then the learners may be attached to the Centers of MSP situated in the Campuses of CSU.
 - Requirement of practical-sessions/hands on experience-sessions,→ maukhika-pratyaksha-prashikshanam etc. for a programme.
 - Propagation, Encouragement→ & direct/offline-guidance required in a particular region to the prospective-learners.
- c. It shall be ensured that Swadhyaya-Sahayoga-Kendras or Learner Support Centres are established only in a College or Institute affiliated to a recognised university (other than a Private University) or a Government recognized Higher Educational Institution offering conventional mode programmes of equivalent level in the same broad areas under the relevant faculty and having all the necessary infrastructure and availability of appropriate number of qualified faculty not below the rank of qualified Assistant Professors of recognised Colleges or Institutes offering a similar programme for engaging theory contact sessions and supervising practical sessions in laboratory or field: Provided further that MSP/CSU may establish a Special Learner Support Centre for imparting instruction to persons referred to in the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995, the National Trust for Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disability Act,1999 including the employees of Defence or Security Forces and jail inmates interested to study through the Open and Distance Learning mode: Provided also that, in case of exigency or non-availability or nonwillingness of an Institution/College as specified above for a specialized programme or a special component of a programme, the MSP/CSU may activate Work-Centre / Programme-Centre at the Government aided/affiliated/recognized Research and Extension Institutions such as Krishi Vigyan Kendras, State Training Institutes/Industrial Training Institutes; Government Organizations / Departments; Accredited Laboratory;

Government Licensed Industry; and approved Vocational Institutes having infrastructure, facilities and human resource as specified by the Statutory bodies for a programme or a few courses of a programme. Any Swadhyaya-Sahayoga-Kendras (Study Centre or Learner Support Centre) shall be established by MSP/CSU after processing through the appropriate statutory bodies. While processing such approvals it is mandatory to provide evidence of the preparedness for establishing Study Centres/Learner Support Centres, providing learner support services, availability of the academic, other staff and qualified academic counselors.

- d. The MSP shall have a Standard Operating Procedure for the smooth functioning of the Swadhyaya-Sahayoga-Kendras (Study Centre or Learner Support Centre) which shall include all aspects of functions of the Study Centre or Learner Support Centre, monitoring mechanism of different services provided by the Centre, and it shall be mandatory for the Study Centre or Learner Support Centre to maintain the learner data related to conduct of counselling sessions, evaluation of assignments and effective and online grievance redressal system, which should be monitored at the level of regional centre and Head Quarters.
- e. The list of Study Centres or Learner Support Centres with details such as: Name with address of the institution where the centre is located, name of the coordinator with contact details, working hours and schedules for counselling sessions, infrastructure and other facilities available in the Study Centre or Learner Support Centre shall be displayed on the web portal of the Open and Distance Learning institution and the same information shall be made available in the prospectus for the information of the learners and other stakeholders.
- f. As per the instructions of UGC, the MSP/CSU is supposed to submit an undertaking to the Commission to the effect that the academic and instructional facilities at its Study Centres or Learner Support Centres meet all the conditions /guidelines issued by UGC from time to time, and are commensurate with the number of academic programmes and learners' strength thereto- Provided that the LSCs of Higher Educational Institution shall not carry out any of its activities related to the Open and Distance Learning mode at places other than Study Centres or Learner Support Centres under a different name such as Information Centre, Facilitation Centre, Nodal Centre, Knowledge Partner, Partner Institution, Multimedia Centres and similar such names: Provided that a Study Centre or Learner Support Centre shall not admit a learner to any programme in Open and Distance Learning mode for or on behalf of any other Higher Educational Institution.
- g. Swadhyaya-Sahayoga-Kendras (LSC established in affiliated/approved Institutions shall function as per the guidelines issued time to time in accordance with UGC (ODL/OL programmes) Regulations)

2 Norms for Empanelment of Academic Counsellors and Counselling Sessions LSC :-

a. Eligibility conditions for appointment of academic counsellors :-

The academic staff in the Study Centre or Learner Support Centre shall fulfill the minimum qualifications as laid down in the University Grants Commission (Minimum Qualifications for Appointment of Teachers and other Academic Staff in the Universities and Colleges and other Measures for the Maintenance of Standards in Higher Education) Regulations, 2018. In addition, such academic staff should have familiarity with the Characteristics of Open and Distance Learning mode learners and their needs, difference between Open and Distance Learning and conventional face-to-face education, awareness

about instructional design, familiarity with the learner centered approach in blended mode of learning, ability to use different delivery media including online and computer mediated communication and Information and Communication Technology enabled learning.

- b. Norms for Personal Contact Programmes Norms for counselling & contact sessions for ODL-mode shall be as per the guidelines issued by MSP in accordance with UGC Regulations.

3. Deployment of work force and other support at Learner Support Centres :-

The Study Centres or Learner Support Centres shall be headed by a Coordinator, not below the rank of an Assistant Professor and shall be augmented with academic and non-academic staff depending on the number of learner, assigned for adequate support to the learners. The capacity of intake per programme should be commensurate with the available qualified faculty in relevant area, well equipped laboratory (if applicable), library, online connectivity and Information and Communication Technology facilities, and appropriate infrastructure, along with the following :-

- (i) Number of qualified counsellor to number of students shall be 1:100 per theory course;
- (ii) Number of qualified supervisors per practical course of 2 credits: 1 or more;
- (iii) Availability of laboratory: The laboratory should be in a recognized Higher Educational Institution offering a similar programme in conventional mode for a period of not less than 3years.

4 Monitoring of functioning of the Learner Support Centres or Study Centres :-

The MSP shall monitor the activities of Learner Support Centres using dynamic Information and Communication Technology based interactive communication system (AMS, LMS, EMS etc.) between Head Quarters, Center of MSP / Regional Centres and Study Centres.

- (i) Head Quarters, Regional Centres and Study Centre or Learner Support Centres shall maintain a web portal giving all relevant and updated information about the Open and Distance Learning programmes being delivered. The content of these shall be updated at least on a weekly basis;
- (ii) There shall be system/plan to collect holistic report about all aspects of the functioning and quality of programme delivery of Study Centres or Learner Support Centres periodically especially during the Admissions, Examinations, and Counselling Sessions etc., and share a consolidated report with the Head Quarters on periodical basis;
- (iii) These reports alongwith responses by learners shall be periodically analysed for the quality audit of a programme and its delivery besides the quality of performance of the Learner Support Centres;
- (iv) Any remedial action shall be jointly ensured by the Head Quarters, Regional Centres and Study Centres or Learner Support Centres promptly;
- (v) Periodical visits by the academic staff for on the spot monitoring and interaction with functionaries of the Regional Centres and Study Centres or Learner Support Centres, the learners and the counsellors; and (vi) Ensuring access of —SWAYAM and other repositories of Massive Open Online Courses by the learners at Study Centres or Learner Support Centres.

5. Closure of Non-performing Study Centre or Learner Support Centre :-

The Learner'-Support-Centre established in affiliated/approved :-

- institution shall be term based and not be considered as permanent. MSP may discontinue any Learner'-Support-Centre by making proper alternative arrangement for learners' support. In case a Learner Support Centre fails to adhere to the prescribed
- norms or guidelines, MSP/CSU shall initiate action for closure of the centre by following due procedures, so that interests of learners are taken care by some alternative arrangement.

6. Difference between ODL-mode and OL-mode of delivery of programme

Norms for delivery of courses through open and distance mode (on an indicative basis) :-

S.No.	Credit Value of the course	Size of SLMs Range (in terms of units, to be divided into blocks)	No. of Assignments	Practical Sessions	No. of Counselling Sessions Theory (10 percent of total study Hours)	Study hours of Learner
1.	2 Credits	6-10 units	1	60 hours	6 hours	60 hours
2.	4 credits	14-20 units	2	120 hours	12 hours	120 hours
3.	6 credits	20-28 units	3	180 hours	18 hours	180 hours
4.	8 credits	30-34 units	4	240 hours	24 hours	240 hours

Norms for Contact Sessions for Theory and Practical Courses offered under ODL-mode :-

(Post Graduate programmes in Open and Distance Learning mode, 16 credits per semester are assigned for a total of four semesters, on an indicative basis for explaining the concept, however shall be governed by the number of credits/teaching-learning hrs. as defined by the concerned regulating authority / UGC from time to time.)

Four Courses, each of 04 Credits, with a total of 16 credits per semester			
Number of Assignments	10-12 credits for theory and 6-4 Credits for practical courses		Counselling for theory only Courses:
	Contact sessions- practical	Contact sessions- theory	Four courses of 4 credits each
Four per semester	60 hours of guided experiments with support of internal supervisor per 2 credits	30-36 hours	12 hours per course

Note (1) : Contact session up to the extent of twenty per cent., or as defined by the UGC from time to time, could be arranged by providing Massive Open Online Courses and other online programme delivery systems.

Note (2): Practical sessions to the extent of twenty per cent., or as defined by the Commission from time to time, could be provided through virtual lab mode

Norms for Delivery of Courses in Online Mode :-

S. No.	Credit value of the course	No. of Weeks	No. of Interactive Sessions		Hours of Study Material		Self-Study hours including Assessment etc.	Total Hoursof Study (basedon 30 hours per credit)
			Synchronous Online Counselling/ Webinars/ Interactive Live Lectures (1 hour per week)	Discussion Forum/ asynchronous Mentoring(2 hours per week)	e- Tutorial in hours	e- Content hours		
1.	2 credits	6 weeks	6 hours	12 hours	10	10	22	60
2.	4 credits	12 weeks	12 hours	24 hours	20	20	44	120
3.	6 credits	14 weeks	14 hours	28 hours	30	30	66	180
4.	8 Credits	16 weeks	16 hours	32 hours	40	40	88	240

7. Learners' Support Services at a glance

The following support services shall be available to the registered learners through Swadhyaya-Kendras, programme-coordinators, course-coordinators, mentors and / or through Swadhyaya-sahayoga-Kendra / academic-counsellors –

- a. Pre-admission Counseling for prospective learners to provide information to facilitate them in taking an informed decision on joining a specific programme.
- b. Support for admission related matters (Support during admission-procedure).
- c. Post admission Counseling - to ward off the feeling of difficulty seated in the mind of learners, to understand the level of understanding of the learners, to facilitate them to change the Course / Programme if it is genuine need in view of their understanding capacity/actual requirement etc.
- d. Clarification on syllabus, programme-structure, study-schedule & SLMcomponents, Clarification on methodology of teaching-learning-process adopted by MSP.
- e. The delivery of SLM in time.
- f. Support for learning-process.
- g. Learner-centric facilities through effective LMS.
- h. Contact-sessions /Online-sessions / doubt clearing tele-sessions / language skill enhancing camps according to the mode of the programme-delivery.
- i. Referred-virtual classes / on line teaching sessions.
- j. Web links of Audio/Video lessons sent via email/ compatible social media / LMS network.
- k. Teaching-comments on the performance of the learners in assignments.

- l. Facility to change study centers / examination centers (within the approved centers of MSP/ C.S.U.) if the learners desire so in view of their transfer/migration to another city (subject to certain conditions).
- m. Exam related guidance.
- n. 'Information and Communication Technology'- based network connecting the Head-Quarters and Swadhyaya-Kendra / Regional Study Centres and Learner Support Centres should be established for faster, constructive and reliable operations in order to timely support to the learners.

Note :- The type & nature of Learner support services for ODL learners and/or Online learners shall be updated time to time as per the trends set by CSU in accordance with Education policies / UGC Regulations.



Ref. :- (Regulations of Mukta Swadhyaya Peetham 2022, Page No. 27 to 33),

[https://www.sanskrit.nic.in/uploads/2022_07_25/Regulations MSP r.pdf](https://www.sanskrit.nic.in/uploads/2022_07_25/Regulations_MSP_r.pdf)